

Southwest

Cedar Hill | DeSoto | Duncanville
MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2015

NOW



Dining
Deals
Inside!

Cougars in the Community

Students become
leaders while sharing
their passion to serve

Tale of Four Houses

At Home With
Adrian and Maya Barfield

The Healing F.A.R.M.

Finding Strength Inside

Cabinet Refresh 101

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EAGLE EXPRESS



Accelerating Expectations 2020

STRATEGIC PLAN

Help us develop the 5 year plan!

The district has contracted with *Engage! Learning Inc.* to incorporate the DeSoto ISD community in developing the strategic plan for the next five years. Over the next six months, outreach efforts to garner input from all segments of our community will include three Strategic Plan Summits in October along with an online survey followed with narrowed Focus Group sessions. The plan is to hear the desired district outcomes of every interested constituent – what will DeSoto ISD look like in five years?

"We are calling on our community to give input and be part of the future development for our school district," stated Dr. David Harris, superintendent.

DeSoto ISD will be working with *Engage! Learning Inc.* consultants Dr. Steve Waddell, Dr. Dawson Orr and Karen Permetti to facilitate the transformation model of strategic planning. The district plans to develop and prioritize goals and action plans that meet the desires of the collective community through the year 2020.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

- Strategic Planning Summits
 - o Wednesday, October 14, 6-8 p.m. at DHS Cafeteria
 - o Thursday, October 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at BLCC (behind Admin.)
 - o Thursday, October 15, 6-8 p.m. at DHS Cafeteria
- Survey Online – October 14-28
- Focus Groups – Wed.-Th., October 21-22
- Design Team – Th.-Fri., November 12-13
- Create Team Days – Th.-Fri., December 10-11
- Lead Session 1 – Monday, January 4
 - Board Update Report – Monday, January 11
- Lead Session 2 – Tuesday, January 12
- Lead Session 3 – scheduled if needed
- Board Presentation, Special Called Meeting – Monday, March 7, 6:30 p.m.

Calendar

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| • Monday, October 5 | State Fair Day – Student Holiday; Staff Dev. |
| • Tuesday, October 6, 6:30 p.m. | 1st Tuesday ISD Town Hall, DeSoto HS |
| • Monday, October 12, 6:30 p.m. | Board Meeting |
| • Tuesday, October 13, 7:30 a.m. | Coffee & Conversation, Frank Moates ES |
| • Friday, October 23 | Early Release; Parent Conferences |
| • Monday, October 26, 6:30 p.m. | Board Meeting |
| • Tuesday, October 27, 7:30 a.m. | Coffee & Conversation, Amber Terrace |
| • Tuesday, November 3, 6:30 p.m. | 1st Tuesday ISD Town Hall, McCowan MS |

NEWS TO KNOW

TRE PASSES BY 84%

Thank you to our DeSoto ISD voters for your confidence! The Tax Ratification Election passed by 84% which will lower the tax rate by one penny and bring \$4.6M to the district from the state. DeSoto ISD is Accelerating Expectations for student learning!

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent Power Hour sessions

- Oct. 29, 7 a.m. at East MS
Bullying Behaviors
- Nov. 4, 6 p.m. at Ruby Young ES
Parents are Tutors 2

Parent/Family Academy

- Sat. Nov. 14, 8 a.m.-noon
DeSoto High School
Conference sessions, free breakfast, great prizes!

DESOTO ISD - STEM WEEK

DeSoto ISD will be celebrating STEM Week from Oct. 31-Nov. 6!

- **Sat., Oct. 31 at DHS**
West Point LEADS Day
robin.ford@desotoisd.org
- **Tues., Nov. 3 -**
T-STEM Dedication
- **Wed., Nov. 4**
STEM Parent Night
- **Fri. Nov. 6 at Perot Museum**
STEM Conf. and Challenge

DESOTO EAGLES FOOTBALL

Join the Eagles this season for another exciting year.

- Oct. 8 at Mansfield
- Oct. 16 vs. S. Grand Prairie
- Oct. 23 @ Cedar Hill
- Oct. 30 vs. Midlothian (Sr. Night)

LADY EAGLES VOLLEYBALL

Home games start at 6:30 p.m.

- Oct. 6 at Midlothian
- Oct. 9 @ Mansfield
- Oct. 13 vs. Duncanville
- Oct. 16 vs. S. Grand Prairie
- Oct. 20 @ Grand Prairie
- Oct. 23 @ Cedar Hill

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ON THE COVER



Cougars Care, a service club made up of parents and students along with teacher/sponsor Whitney Merriman, is really impacting the community.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Southwest Friends!

Life certainly can change from one year to the next. Friends you thought would be a close part of your life forever no longer are. People you didn't even know last year have become an integral influence to who you are and what you pursue. Sometimes you meet someone and instantly click. Life seems to reveal what is truly valuable.

Today, the parable of the talents comes to mind. Some servants were given varying amounts of "talents" to invest. Usually, we think of those talents as money or maybe even skills. What if they were relationships as well? What if the master were saying, "Here, I will give you these relationships, how will you use them? How will you invest them?" What a disaster it would be to discard a talent meant to bless.

May you steward well what's been given to you.

Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
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Kid Zone
Kids Cook-Off Competition 10:00 AM

ALL DAY MUSIC

10:00 AM to 11:15 AM
The Straight Street Blues Band

11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
The Buddy Henderson Trio

1:30 PM to 3:00 PM
Larry Lampkin

4:00 PM to 5:30 PM
Mike Morgan & the Crawl

6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
The Michael Lee Band

8:00 PM to 10:00 PM
The Andrew "Jr. Boy" Jones Band
& Kerrie Lepai



COUGARS in Communi

— By Sara Edgell



Maria Rodriguez, Jaci Carlile, Alexis Rodriguez, Larisa Carlile and Whitney Merriman show how much Cougars care about the community.

the ty



With the new school year well underway, Whitney Merriman, a teacher at Life School Cedar Hill, looks forward to another year of working with students in the school's service club: Cougars Care. When she started the club, she envisioned leading students to serve others through acts of volunteerism and community involvement. Whitney's inspiration came from her own experiences as a young girl. Now as a teacher, she wanted to provide those same opportunities to her students to help mold strong character into concerned, compassionate people.

"Reading is my passion, so I really had to weigh my options between starting a reading group or a service club," she explained. "I felt a service club reinforced and supported the district's mission statement." The mission of the school is to train leaders for the 21st century by establishing strong academics, character

"For me, I don't need a reward for doing it. I just want to see them **HAPPY.**"





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- BEN P

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training and a parenting program, all of which is truly at the heart of the service club. "The best leaders are those who serve others," she added.

Four years ago, when the club started, Ms. Merriman sent flyers to the entire school welcoming students of all grade levels to join the Cougars Care Club. Alexis Rodriguez, a current sixth-grader, was immediately interested and joined almost instantly. She has been a member for four years now and enjoys being actively involved in helping others in school and in the community. "I love to help people, and I love to give back to the community," Alexis said. "For me, I don't need a reward for doing it. I just want to see them happy."

According to Alexis' mom, Maria, her daughter has always had an interest in service work. "I have noticed Alexis has wanted to be more helpful," Maria said. This is, in part, thanks to Maria, who has set an excellent example for her daughter about the importance of doing for others. As a volunteer at her church, with Big Brothers Big Sisters and Bridges Safehouse, Maria is no stranger to helping those in need. "I can see Alexis' passion to help and do more growing because of the club," she beamed.

Initially, the club was intended exclusively for students of all ages at the school, but Ms. Merriman quickly learned that parents and other family members wanted to be involved, too, so



she graciously welcomed them to the team. Last year, 50 families joined the club. About 26 students and 11 parents total were active. "When Alexis signed up for the club, I signed up to support her and the things they would be doing, and eventually I got pulled in," Maria laughed.

"Maria is one of the moms I can count on for anything. She is always willing to help out, and she shares the desire to help our students build good character," Ms. Merriman replied. And building strong character through service work is the primary focus of the club. In addition to helping others, students are learning about event planning and organizing, teamwork and collaboration. Each year, the club kicks off with a brainstorming session where everyone is encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas about prospective monthly events. "We are always open to new ideas," Ms. Merriman said, "and we are always happy to accept new members."

The goal is to plan one specific service work event for each month of the school year (October to May). Some traditional activities include collecting canned goods in October; providing gifts for the school's Angel Tree in November; singing Christmas carols at Crestview senior living center in December; collecting winter gear like coats, gloves, hats and scarves for Bridges Safehouse in January; making valentines and goodies for firemen in February; hosting a blood drive in March; cleaning a local park in April; and raising money for cancer research through a bike ride/run in May.



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"I love doing all of it," Alexis beamed, "but my favorite is making valentines for the firefighters because we are giving back and showing our appreciation for them. Without firefighters, lots of things could be ruined by fire." Club members make handmade cards and treats, with the help of parents and place the goodies in pretty, festive baskets to deliver to the local fire station. Another favorite is singing to seniors. "At the nursing home, we sang fun carols, and the residents were smiling and happy," Alexis remembered. "I am excited to do that again this year." In the past, the kids have also read to the seniors, but Ms. Merriman said, "Everyone enjoyed the singing more, so that's what we will continue to do."

These small, heartfelt gestures are the core of what Cougars Care is all about, and Ms. Merriman makes sure the students are at the heart of organizing and executing each activity. "We encourage the kids to do everything they can for each event because we are somewhat limited with what they can do," she explained. For instance, because there is an age restriction for donating blood, the kids weren't able to contribute. However, they did promote the event by creating posters and flyers and provided cookies for those who donated. "Being creative about how we can be involved is important," she smiled. From designing signage to organizing canned food and winter wear drop-off locations, the kids are fully invested in each and every project from day one.

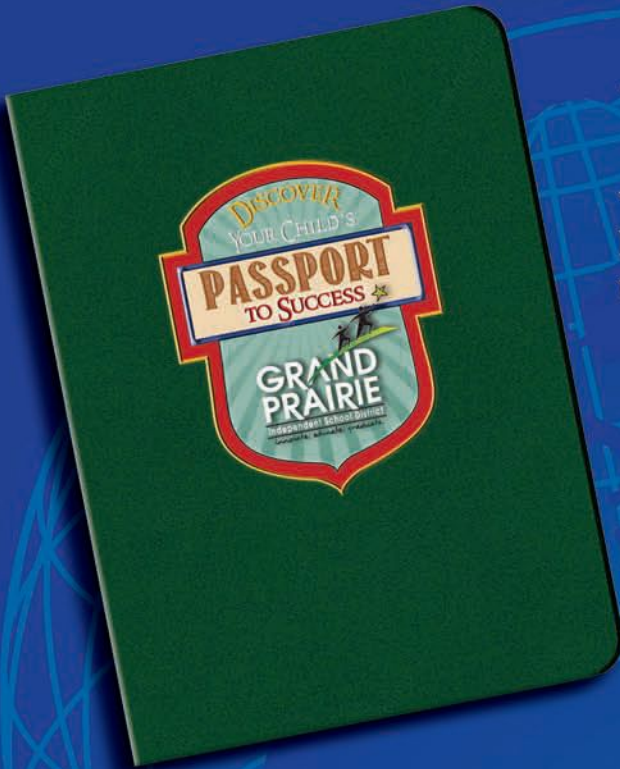
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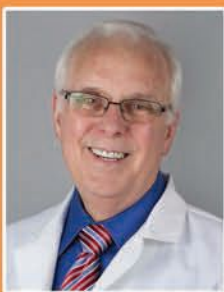


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in and won the citywide Keep Cedar Hill Beautiful Facebook video contest. With the help of the school's National Elementary Honor Society, they picked up trash around the campus and at nearby Bradford Park. The work was recorded and a video was made, which perfectly captured the spirit of the service club. The video was posted on the city's Facebook page where viewers could vote for their favorite video. When Ms. Merriman and the club learned they had won, they were thrilled. For their hard work, the Cougars Care and NEHS clubs were presented with a plaque at a city council meeting.

As each year comes to an end, Ms. Merriman hosts a club celebration party serving lunch and allowing members and their families to gather and enjoy time together. "It is always interesting to hear them talk about their most memorable moments. I am often surprised by what they share," she admitted. "What they enjoy the most is sometimes not what I would expect it to be, and that's really neat."

Looking forward, Ms. Merriman, Alexis and Maria anticipate the service club's fifth year to be the most fun and successful yet. They hope to implement new monthly activities to encourage more participation and diversity, as well as welcome new members. But ultimately, they look forward to working together and with others, teaching them to become leaders by sharing their passion for serving. **NOW**

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James Jeffers, Steve Smith and Orlando Garcia bring heart into the farm they are creating for fellow veterans.



The Healing F.A.R.M.

— By Beverly Shay

Soil contains something healing for bodies, souls and minds. In his book, 'The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture, Wendell Berry states: "The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all. It is the healer and restorer and resurrector, by which disease passes into health, age into youth, death into life. Without proper care for it we can have no community, because without proper care

for it we can have no life." Yet, when soil is properly cared for, life is restored — to the soil and to those who work it, and it can recreate community.

Just this sort of healing is being pursued and developed at a farm in DeSoto. The "urban farm" has a unique intention: providing healing and care for all veterans from any place of military service, including Iraq and Afghanistan, through raising crops full of life-giving nutrition. "Returning to civilian life after military service can be quite a challenge. These men and women have

worked in close camaraderie under stressful, high-intensity conditions like none found back home. Unless you've been there, you really cannot understand what it is like," Steve Smith stated. "They need a way to give back — something challenging, rewarding and appreciated. They need to sense the camaraderie that served them overseas. Many returning vets go into law enforcement or become firefighters. But some have sustained injuries, which will only heal over a period of time. Not all of their injuries are visible." While some returning warriors have quite visible wounds, such as missing limbs or paralysis, others have recurring issues and complications from exposure to repeated concussions resulting in interruption of cognitive function: memory loss, processing limitations, headaches and extreme fatigue and spine and back problems.

Not all of these returning vets receive needed support or care because they *look* OK. Apart from increased divorce, substance abuse and homelessness among American veterans, suicide takes a heavy toll on those who have "survived" but perhaps not healed. Steve and fellow farming vet James Jeffers report these statistics: Every 65 minutes a vet succumbs to suicide. That's 22 a day or more. "We can't allow that to continue. We have to find a way to provide a healing home for them," Steve remarked.

Both Steve and James come from military families. Steve served one tour in Kuwait. Although it didn't involve combat duty, he was injured. But he considers James a real war hero. During James'



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first deployment, he experienced many car bombs, and grenade hits occurred two to three times daily. But his second deployment included tremendous loss and death to his unit, including eight at one time. His unit saw action in one of the most dangerous areas, Haifa Street in Zone Five. Diagnosed with traumatic brain injury, which includes symptoms similar to PTSD, he remained in active duty as a consultant in a guard unit, but was unable to serve in Special Forces as he had aspired to. James' body was riddled with armor piercing inverted copper used by Iranian-supplied Iraqi troops.

Friends, the two men sought each other out back in the states and began flipping houses until the real estate industry took a discouraging turn. They were both married with children and facing some health and allergy issues neither had before their deployments. "We were convinced one of the keys to overcoming the health issues was growing



Steve Smith poses with his brother, Joseph Ankrom.



our own high-nutrient food,” Steve said. James found working in the soil both therapeutic and mind-stimulating as he researched and learned to enhance soil without using chemicals. They attended Farmers Veteran Coalition retreats in Iowa and Pennsylvania, meeting other vets who were into farming and agriculture as a means of providing hard work and healing for returning vets.

“We decided to open a nonprofit, F.A.R.M., which stands for farmers assisting returning military. The project was accelerated with the news of the suicides of two more vets with whom we had served, bringing the total to eight,” James said quietly. “I just couldn’t let any more go without creating an actual place for them to come and heal.” Along with the farm aspect, volunteer case managers have joined them to develop an assessment baseline. “We’ve been working on getting a grant to collect data in a study showing how farming and proper nutrition and food produces measurable results in healing minds and bodies, enabling vets to wean themselves from pharmaceutical dependency,” James added.

“I have been studying the effects of food in relation to depression. Some foods actually increase depression and many illnesses are related to nutrient deficiencies,” Steve explained, warming to his topic passionately. “Every vet I meet who is a farmer heals quicker and adjusts

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easier. One percent of Americans serve in the military. One percent of Americans grow our food. Both are challenging and hard jobs. We want to be those who make a difference in the lives of our vets both by providing them with healthy, nutrient-rich food and teaching them how to farm it themselves."

David Mills, a civilian, serves as production manager at the farm, bringing lots of experience and knowledge. He is also helping to garner donations and support. With the help of fellow vet, Orlando Garcia, recently recovering from yet another back surgery due to injuries sustained in Iraq while serving

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as the senior noncommissioned officer of the unit in which James served, the farm is coming together. Orlando is so grateful for the care he has received. "I always felt like a father to all the guys in my company," Orlando shared, "and now here I am, being cared for by my 'family.' Family really *is* everything." More and more people are coming on board once they understand the vision of helping vets help other vets through farming.

All it takes is a stroll across the property for James to share his passion. He loves showing off the process of enhancing the soil to produce nutrient-rich plants, such as microgreens, mini plants high in food value. Donated compost from landscape companies is mixed with food scraps from grocers and restaurants and added to fungus to create and enhance soil along with biochar, one of the cleanest forms of charcoal for use as a soil amendment. Like most charcoal, biochar is created by pyrolysis of biomass. Biochar is being researched as an approach to carbon sequestration to produce negative carbon dioxide emissions. When biochar is mixed into the compost-laden soil, the plants grown, such as mustard greens, cowpeas and buckwheat, can be tilled back in the ground, creating soil ready to grow some truly amazing crops.

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TALE OF *Four* Houses

— By Beverly Shay

Although Adrian and Maya Barfield had done extensive research and looked at some 40 houses in a 60-day period, they knew the moment they walked in the door of this house they were home for good. “Like all our friends do when they walk in the front door, the first thing I did was walk across the living room and look out the back windows at all those trees and the hill and the pond, and I knew I was home,” Maya admitted. Both Adrian and Maya are convinced this is their forever home, and it is truly a very lovely home.





Adrian grew up in Duncanville, graduated from Duncanville High School and The University of Texas at Austin and began working in the pharmaceutical industry, first in San Antonio, later in New Jersey and then on to Indianapolis. "The majority of my career has been working specifically in and around the field of oncology," Adrian explained.

Meanwhile, Maya who had grown up in Indianapolis, was in the Washington, D.C./Maryland area. Adrian joined Maya's home church because his pastor from New Jersey was friends with hers. As soon as Maya's pastor met Adrian, he knew the two needed to meet. "For me to even consider a relationship, I needed to know Christ was the center of her life. Of course, it didn't hurt that she is beautiful inside and out and was also a medical professional," Adrian shared. Maya is a veterinarian.

"Adrian met everything on 'my list,'" Maya smiled. "I saw the Lord's hand in the way my pastor wanted to introduce us. Adrian loved God. He could deal with my idiosyncrasies, and he sure could make me laugh." They met in May 2002, were engaged in March and married in

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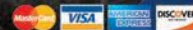
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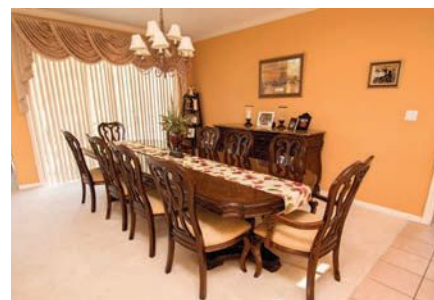
November 2003, continuing to live in Indianapolis for two years. "I thought we'd stay there forever," Maya said.

In 2005, Adrian had an opportunity to return to Dallas. "Turned out to be a good thing in many ways," Adrian shared. "Living in the DFW area gave me easy access to both the East and West coasts. Settling in Duncanville allowed me to be close to both downtown and my family. This area is also a fertile place for Christianity. Our church, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship is nearby, as is the wonderful

Christian school our children attend: Canterbury Episcopal School. And we certainly have a lot of space!" Shortly after moving here, Adrian's father was diagnosed with cancer. The move allowed a closeness that was priceless.

Adrian says this house is like the tale of four homes. "From the front, you see a one-story, fairly simple, ranch-style home," Adrian began. "But seen from down the hill at the pond, it is an elegant, two-story with a balcony all along the back. Looking toward the pond and the barn, you sense a rustic home. And now, with the addition of the smoker —" he paused with a sigh of satisfaction, "now it feels like home. It took me a while to discover how this house works," Adrian admitted.

The Barfields have four young daughters ages 2 through 10. Slowly but surely, they are inhabiting every square foot. For now though, all four



live in one very large room next to the master bedroom. "I have tried to color coordinate both the room and the girls," Maya laughed. "That way you can tell at a glance whose items belong to whom and where they are supposed to go." Vibrant girly shades of pink, purple, peach and yellow fill the room with whimsy. The room has two oversized bunk beds with drawers beneath and shelves full of books in between.

Like the girls' room, the master bedroom has large windows. Filmy curtains grace the king-size canopy bed. The master bath has a sky light and a window above the extra-large garden tub. Separate sink areas are another bonus. "I really love the exceptional size of all



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the rooms, the high ceilings and large windows with their pleasant views of nature," Maya remarked.

The living area, framed by arches and huge windows, opens to the balcony running across the entire backside of the house. A rock fireplace dominating one wall generates the sense of being outdoors even while inside. "We definitely added color. The house was basically white when we moved in," Maya stated. She invited an interior decorator friend to help her discover her palette: the warm, creamy, earthy tones Maya loves. They chose an apricot tan for the living room and the beautiful dining room opens just to the side. A huge dining table with a gun drawer will seat 10. "With Adrian's four siblings and their families nearby we needed a large table."

Their large kitchen includes a wonderful breakfast nook and additional living space. Plenty of windows overlook the expansive yard containing the swing set and play area. French doors open



to the rear balcony. Not only does the kitchen hold plenty of cupboards and a large square island — part countertop and part cutting board — a red leather, wraparound couch creates a cozy place to play or relax and a very large, round wooden table with a large lazy Susan is where the girls do homework before dinner is served. “Adrian loves to cook,” Maya smiled.

Downstairs features a rarity in Texas. The full basement, an ideal safe place during storms, provides yet another huge living area decorated with the Longhorns touch — Adrian’s team colors, jersey and steer horns above the fireplace. The room boasts toys, comfy seating, a large TV, an octagonal table and the summer kitchen along the back wall. Undoubtedly, this will become the teenage haven. On one side, a large mother-in-law suite, decorated in warm brown tones carries an African theme. At the other end of the basement, a smaller guest room, painted in contrasting yellow and red, features an Asian theme and is adorned with authentic gifts and souvenirs from China.

Adrian and Maya added a fountain, a dock and paddle boat to the stocked pond on their 14 acres. There’s a nice stable alongside a large paddock near the barn. Sloping hills, lots of trees, including a huge oak rumored to be one of the oldest in the area, are bordered by a fish-filled creek. And of course, Adrian’s smoker, surrounded by benches is far enough away to dull the happy noises of the children’s play area, while close enough to keep an eye on things. All in all, everything adds up to pure delight for the Barfield family, now landed gentry. **NOW**

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FINDING STRENGTH INSIDE

— By Katrina Lewis

October 2, 2007, a night of tragedy turned triumph, inspired Angela Jones to become the voice for a silent community in North Texas — brain aneurysm survivors. A Texas native, born in Kilgore and raised in Dallas, Angela graduated high school from Business and Management Center. The Dallas magnet school is known for its talented and gifted program and is now called the School of Business and Management at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center. After graduation, she served in the 9th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army and obtained her associate and bachelor's degrees in business.

After narrowly escaping deployment during the Desert Storm War, Angela joined the ranks of corporate America. She spent almost two decades in the financial services industry. Although it may seem an unusual leap to go from a regimented military life to a civilian one filled with less risk,



Angela's career path was perfect for her. And in some ways, it assisted her in coming back from the night that changed everything. "I've always had an interest in business and finance. A challenging childhood made me physically tough, and the Army gave me discipline. I kept that with me as I exited the Army," she explained. If you're physically fit, you can almost take on any mental challenge. In my opinion, the less physically fit we are, the less fit we are to handle other stressors of life.

Angela was unaware life was about to throw her a major curve ball. "My memory is cloudy on a lot of things, but it's not on that day. I distinctly remember October 2, 2007," she said. Preparing to go on an international business trip to Manila, Philippines, Angela worked out that morning, stopped by her



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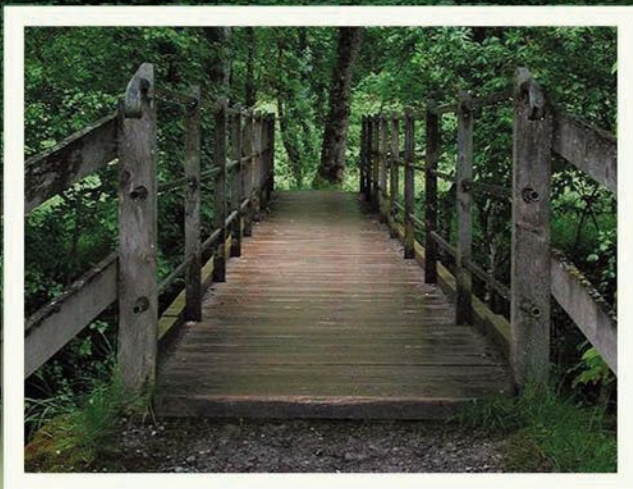
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Las Colinas-based office and flew to California to visit her now husband, Romale Jones, before her 10-day trip to Manila. Set to leave on an early morning flight from California, she was preparing for bed when something more than your average headache suddenly hit. "Imagine walking across the street, and the road looks clear. But suddenly, you get hit by a semi that comes from nowhere," she said. "It felt like a truck was trying to exit my skull. I knew something was wrong."

Noticing her slurred speech, Romale shared that sentiment and called the paramedics. "In my head, I was having a conversation. I was definitely afraid," she recounted. "I cried out to God asking what this was."

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A couple of days later, Angela awoke to find Romale and her family members at the hospital, and wondered why. She soon found out she had suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm. Doctors didn't expect her to survive, and if she did it would likely be with paralysis. Angela had no recollection of the two brain surgeries she'd undergone to alleviate cranial pressure and stop brain bleeding. As a matter of fact, she woke up still focused on her business trip and reacted in disbelief as her family and Romale told her what had happened. "I knew I had a conference and wanted to know if I'd missed my flight!" she said, laughing.

After spending two weeks in ICU making remarkable strides toward a full recovery, doctors were amazed, citing her healthy lifestyle as a factor. But Angela knew there was a greater force at work. As a Christian believer, she had no doubt God was her reason for surviving. Angela was flown back to Dallas for

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rehabilitation at Baylor University Medical Center. Despite her family's pleas for her to slow down and take her time healing, her tenacity had her recovering at record pace. She focused on getting her life back. But, she secretly wondered if things would ever be the same. "I was ready to get out of that bed. I wanted to do my daily 100 squats. Apparently, I'm a bad patient," she laughed. "We take basic freedoms and motor skills for granted. The thought of losing such basic freedoms is scary. I've never been that afraid in my life."

Amazingly, Angela returned to work a week after Thanksgiving, having suffered the aneurysm only about six weeks prior. "I was determined," she confessed. "If God let me live, it was to get better and make a difference."

Despite her determination, she still had a significant amount of recovery to undergo. Basic life skills all had to be relearned, and each night, she feared being alone and experiencing another aneurysm. "It can take years to feel like you," she said. But Angela kept going, working in financial services until a rough economy cost her job. She and Romale married on October 2, 2008, in a ceremony celebrating new life. Remaining true to who she was, she tapped into her passion for fitness, gaining her certification as a NASM certified personal trainer and launched Inside Out Coaching.

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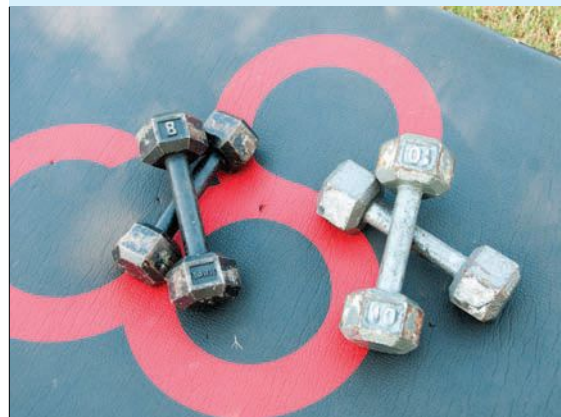
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coach and encourager of Bible-based principles. "I'm a faith-based girl before I'm anything else," she confessed.

Her experience stirred Angela to establish a nonprofit, Aneurysm Awareness Inc., to offer education, hope and comfort to those affected by brain aneurysms. "Research is limited, and no one knows why aneurysms form or why they rupture. I'm told the aneurysm itself is not the real danger. It's the rupturing of the aneurysm. In simple terms, an aneurysm is a blood vessel with a slow leak. Like a water-filled balloon, it slowly gets bigger until it ruptures. That's the real danger. I began meeting people who had been affected by brain aneurysms — some survivors and others remembering their loved ones. It confirmed the need to get awareness out there."

Still in the incubator phase, Angela is in the process of establishing a board of directors for Aneurysm Awareness Inc. and hopes to welcome a team of medical personnel to educate the public. She is also in the early stages of writing a book, which will include equal parts of her experience, life after the aneurysm, answering those hard-to-ask questions and a medical illustration in layman's terms of how the body is affected when an aneurysm ruptures. Whatever she puts in her book, no one can doubt the ending will be full of the life, vigor and optimism Angela embodies each day. "I wanted to go skydiving for my 40th birthday," she said, remembering the milestone birthday three years after her aneurysm. "So I did. I've never felt so secure in my walk with God. I was literally closer to Him when I jumped out of the plane and fully believed He would not let me fall," she smiled. "Each day is a new opportunity to love God through loving others, so love thy neighbor." **NOW**



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CABINET REFRESH 101

— By Jill Rose

Looking for an inexpensive way to dramatically change the look of your kitchen? Painting cabinets is a great way to get the look of a new kitchen without the price tag of a complete remodel.

FIND THE PERFECT COLOR

For most people, one of the hardest parts of painting kitchen cabinets is finding the right color. With all the paint options available, even opting for white cabinets can result in having to sift through hundreds of variations to find the “right” white.



One of the biggest obstacles to choosing a color is lighting. The number of windows in your space (natural lighting), as well as the type of bulbs you use (soft white, bright white, daylight, etc.), can drastically change the way a color will look. Buying your paint from a paint specialty store can alleviate a great deal of indecision, as the employees in these stores are able to provide you with the best options, depending on your lighting. Keep in mind, homes with a lot of natural light tend to cast a blue hue on white paints, whereas homes with artificial lighting can cast colors ranging from blue to orange, depending on the bulb used.



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After selecting a few sample colors, purchase scrap pieces of wood strips that are the same species as your cabinets and paint them using the sample colors. Leave the samples in your kitchen for a few days to see how the color changes throughout the day. Once you've decided on a color, select your sheen. Choose a high-gloss sheen for a more modern look or an eggshell for a more classic feel.

PREP YOUR AREA

Begin by taking the cabinet doors off and removing the hinges. Be sure to label each cabinet door and hinge for reassembly. Next, tape off the wall area around the cabinet frames.



GIVE EVERYTHING A GOOD SANDING

Whether your cabinet doors, drawers and frames are painted or covered in stain, you will need to sand them. Begin by using a 100-grit sandpaper, and then move on to 120-grit sandpaper. Note: Most of the cabinet can be sanded with an orbital sander, but the smaller areas will need to be sanded by hand.

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After sanding everything, remove the dust created. The frames are easy to clean, but doors and drawers can be tricky. Dust will ruin your paint job, and you will find yourself having to sand out specks and reapply paint. To ensure maximum dust removal, start by simply turning the cabinet door or drawer over and patting the back so most of the dust falls out. Follow this with a quick pass over with a vacuum wand. Finally, use a duster and get into the crevices. If you find you still have dust specs, use mineral spirits and a rag to remove any remaining dust.

FIX ANY GOUGES OR DENTS

If you have deep scratches or dents, fill them in with wood filler. Let it dry, and then sand it down using a 180- or 220-grit sandpaper. Be sure to clean away any excess dust.

PRIME THE CABINETS DRAWERS/FRAMES

Using a 2-inch paint brush, apply a light coat of primer to the cabinets, drawers and frames. Tinting your primer to match the color of the new cabinet paint is excellent insurance against future nicks and scratches showing.

Begin by priming the back of the cabinet door. Start in the center panel section. If you get primer on the stiles or rails, make sure you brush them out, so they don't leave a blotchy finish.

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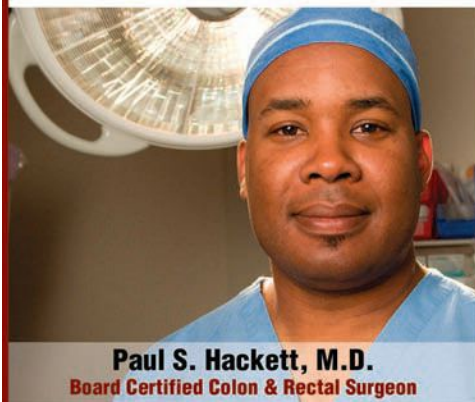
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Next, prime the rails, and then the stiles. Do not prime the edges of the cabinets at this stage. After priming the cabinet doors, move on to priming the drawers. Since drawers only have a front, prime the entire drawer (edges included). The next step is to prime the cabinet frames. If desired, prime the inside of the cabinets, also.

Once all items have been primed, allow them to cure for at least 24 hours before lightly sanding (by hand) all the primed surfaces with a 300-grit sandpaper.

Sand them just enough to remove any imperfections or random pieces of dust that may have fallen on them while they were still wet.

Turn the cabinet doors over to the front, and repeat the entire process above. Be sure to prime the edges of the cabinets, and allow them to cure for 24 hours.

PAINT THE CABINETS/ DRAWERS/FRAMES

After the primed pieces have been allowed to cure for 24 hours, begin painting. Painting is really no different than priming, and you should follow the same process as priming. Begin by painting the back of the cabinet door, and

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then lightly sand out any imperfections before moving on to the drawers and cabinet frames. Allow them to cure for 24 hours, and then repeat the entire process for a total of two coats of paint.

After the second coat has been allowed to cure for 24 hours, move on to painting the front of the cabinet doors. Again, follow the same process as above (panel, rails, stiles but now also the edges). Allow them to cure for 24 hours, and then repeat the entire process.

ADD THE POLYURETHANE

Before actually adding the polyurethane, lightly smooth out the door's finish using a 300-grit sandpaper. Apply the polyurethane with a foam brush for a suggested total of three coats on each side. Allow the polyurethane to cure per label, reassemble the cabinets and enjoy the beautiful new look of your kitchen for years to come!

TROUBLESHOOTING

The biggest concern most people have with painting their cabinets are brush marks. Inferior products are one of the biggest reasons for brush marks. If you use high-quality primer, paint and brushes, and apply the paint in thin coats, you should not have this problem. **NOW**



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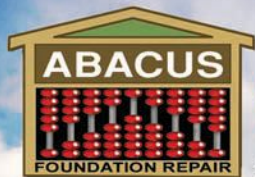
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Owner Belinda May loves the way Sherry Henry, director, and Tayloria Green and all the other teachers and staff guide and care for the children at Kosmic Kids.

KOSMIC ODYSSEY

Kosmic Kids not only provides highly accredited day care, your children will have a blast! — By Beverly Shay

Let's face it, if you have to leave your kids with someone else while you are working, you want to feel safe and secure and know your kids are having a blast. Well, at Kosmic Kids Learning Center, children launch into a galaxy of so much fun, they hardly know they are learning at the same time. Children, divided into groups by age are known as little dippers, big dippers, comets, stars, rockets and asteroids. Owner, Belinda May, set the theme for the little ones to have a safe "space" venture, but she quickly acknowledges the director, Sherry Henry, is the one who keeps the center, the staff of 18 and the children all in proper orbit.

From the moment you make it past their double security entrance through the office (known as the launching pad), which happens only if you truly belong there, you'll find a down-to-earth map of the United States rug in the multifunctional area

reserved for the 50-70 after-school kids. A Lionel train set is ready to whisk them off to a world of adventure. The children who spend the whole day at the center aren't quite as earth-bound. In the baby room where each child has his/her same crib every day, their names (in stars) keep everyone linked to their own formulas and any other designated care. "We do have a waiting list," admitted Sherry, as she stopped to greet the babies in the circle of baby seats and swings. This room, like the entire center, exudes peace and calm.

Each area on the planetary path of the 7,500-square-foot center has its own theme. Sinks, towel dispensers and toilets for the dippers, comets, stars and asteroids are just their size, as are their sleeping mats and tiny cots, tiny chairs and tables that gradually grow in size, just as the children do with their

Business **NOW**

age progression. Bulletin boards post information on daily and weekly lesson plans, match mat numbers with children's names, procedures for teachers and children, floor plans with emergency exit routes, cleaning and sanitation schedules, as well as each teacher's photo and bio. Each child has a cubby, and each teacher

**"We have
so much
fun here."**

has a locker in the 4-star (highest possible rank) accredited center licensed to care for up to 206 children. Lots of arts and crafts, dress up clothes, time outside in the play area and specific meal and rest times balance out the learning schedule. Each morning starts with prayer, a morning devotion and pledges.

"We have so much fun here," Sherry noted, "that the children often ask to stay. During the summer, our older children (explorers) go on one or two field trips daily to such places as the fire or police station, area parks, the American Airline Center, bowling, a movie or skating," Sherry added. "And we are very careful about checking our vans. Not only does the driver go through each seat, but another staff member comes out to immediately go through the returning vehicle as well."

"When the health inspectors come out to check out our cosmic kitchen, they always ask to eat here," Belinda smiled, noting the excellent ratings given by the health department. "The entire staff attends food handling classes." Miss Palmer runs a tight ship in the kitchen preparing breakfasts, lunches and afternoon snacks, including tracking substitutions for anything a child cannot eat. Parents know ahead of time what is on the four different menus that change weekly. Mr. Palmer mans the curbside service, so whether a child is picked up in the front or at the side, no child is released to anyone not preapproved. **NOW**

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Students in the STEM science class at Trinity Christian School build earthquake-proof rooms.



The Duncanville Chamber hosted an evening of burgers, bowling and business at Red Bird Lanes.



Ms. Vanessa Kelsy, agricultural teacher, is very proud to stand with Kenjinique Davis, 2015 DeSoto High School graduate who recently completed 500 internship hours and passed her CVA exam to become a Level 1 Certified Veterinarian Assistant.



Jordan Malone, DeSoto student, Moseley lifeguard and member of the Barracudas swim team, competed in the TAAF games in Nebraska and won several medals. She is shown with her brother, James.



As they say at Crescent Place, women of the magnitude of Miss Josie Roberts (recently turned 101) only grace the planet every 100 years!



Dogs and their owners enjoy splashing at Paws in the Pool in Crawford Park Cedar Hill.



Glenn Heights Police Chief Phillip Prasifka greets students with Moates Elementary Principal Wesley Pittman.



One Team Basketball Camp attendees learn from former NBA All-Star Sidney Moncrief at the Alan E. Sims Cedar Hill Recreation Center.



Nikayla Belford, a freshman at Duncanville High School, receives a Kindle eReader as a grand prize winner in the Duncanville Library's summer reading program.

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Retirement, Stage Three: Planning, Contentment and Reflection – and Your Legacy

When you are still firing on all cylinders, there may be no need to cut back on your retirement activities. Just because you have reached 75 and entered what the AARP labels the “older retirement years,” you don’t have to stop traveling, trying to perfect your golf game, working or whatever you chose to pursue during the most dynamic years of your retirement.

You may be enjoying what can be one of the most wonderfully fulfilling times of your life. More than anything else, it is likely that your state of health will determine when you must start applying the brakes. And that may not be for a very long time. It is no longer a novelty to find golfers in their 90s shooting their age or travelers in their mid-80s flying off to new destinations.

Financial Planning

Earlier in your retirement, you may have determined the smartest ways to withdraw funds from your nest egg. Perhaps you stayed invested in equities longer than previous generations, because you planned for a long, active retirement, not a short, sedentary one. As the years pass, it may be prudent to revisit your portfolio to decide whether any allocation shifts and changes in direction are needed to keep it in line with your situation.

Certainly, if you have not yet done so, it is time to update any legal documents, wills, lists of named beneficiaries and charitable causes and anything else you want to make part of your legacy. Studies show that surprisingly large numbers of even astute investors fail to tend to such matters. Names of beneficiaries on your IRAs, for example, supersede your will, so check their accuracy. In addition, make sure that a trusted family member or friend knows the whereabouts of your vital documents.


Modern technology has added a new problem — username and password confidentiality. You can save your loved ones a great deal of anguish if you share this information, or at least keep a list of usernames and passwords along with account numbers and other information. Banks and financial institutions, to guard against unauthorized persons obtaining access to your money or your identity, may require death certificates and other information before they will unlock accounts and allow anyone else in. Even spouses with joint tenancy may have to supply death certificates and corroborating information — and wait weeks — to get access, unless they know the correct information.

Defining Your Legacy

Your life may still be a fantastic journey, but there will come a time to reflect and plan your legacy. Handled appropriately, with the right financial plans, trusts, charitable contributions and family bequests, your legacy can last for decades. Just as your vision and interests defined your lifetime accomplishments, they can now determine your role in your family’s or community’s story. **NOW**

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Jonathan Pope is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.



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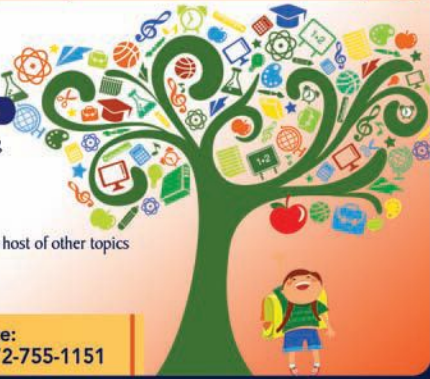
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Ghouls, Ghosts and Goblins Creative Writing Contest (5th/6th graders). Submissions due by Oct. 24 (details at DV library). (972) 707-3861.

October 3

14th Annual Celebrating Life Foundation Sister to Sister Fitness Festival & 5K/Walk: 8:00 a.m. CH Rec. Ctr. www.celebratinglife.org (972) 501- 9981.

October 3, 10, 17, 24

Fall Festivals of Cultures: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Int'l. Museum of Cultures, DV. Speaker, children's crafts, cultural food, music, dance. Cost: adults/\$5; school children/free. 3 – Mexico; 10 – Central America; 17 – India; 24 – Africa.

October 4, 11, 18, 25

Uptown/Downtown DeSoto Concerts: 3:00-5:00 p.m., Corner Theater. 4: Open Classics; 11: Felix Slovachek, and Viacheslov Grokhovski; 18: Big Band: Matt Tolentino; 25: Gary Lievinson and Baya Kakouberi. Artsdesoto.com

October 6

National Night Out: 5:00-8:30 p.m., DV Field House. (972) 780-5027.

October 8 — 10, 15 — 17

Neil Simmons' *The Odd Couple*: 8:00 p.m., Duncanville Community Theatre. Reservations: (972) 780-5707. www.dctheatre.org

October 9, 10

Old Settlers' Reunion 9: 5:30-8:00 p.m. Beans/cornbread dinner: \$7/adults; \$4/children and bingo. 10: Country Day on the Hill: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., historic downtown Cedar Hill: parade, crafts, food, contests and live local entertainment.

October 10

2nd Annual Heart of Duncanville 5K, 1 mile fun run/walk: 8:00 a.m. benefitting DV ISD Education Foundation. Bounce houses, vendors, music: Shades of Gray. Register: www.HeartOfDuncanville5K.com (972) 298-8698.

October 16

Trinity Christian School Homecoming Activities/Football Game: 7:00 p.m.

October 23, 24

Smokin' Blues & BBQ Festival, Armstrong Park. 23: 6:00 p.m., Andrew Jones Band & Kerrie Lepai. 24: BBQ cook-off; lots of music,

kids' cook-off, fun, arts/crafts. info@smokinbluesbbqfest.com. (972) 251-0251.

October 24

20th Annual Texas Country Reporter Festival: 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Waxahachie. Bob Phillips of *Texas Country Reporter*, art, music. www.waxahachiecvb.com.

October 29

Hillside Village Wine Walk: 5:00-8:00 p.m. wine, music and exclusive discounts.

Scare on the Square: 6:30-8:00 p.m., CH. Creepy tales, activities, trick-or-treating. Children with parent/guardian: free. (972) 291-5100 or (972) 291-7323.

October 31

Duncanville library Halloween party: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Games, food, spooky stories and candy hunt. Creative writing contest winner's story read.

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In the Kitchen With Denise Root

— *By Beverly Shay*

Denise Root admits she loves to cook because she feels close to her grandmother, especially when baking. “Granny had a large garden, canned everything in sight and could take the weirdest leftovers and create great new dishes,” Denise recalled. She has collected over 75 cookbooks since childhood and reads cookbooks like she would a good mystery. She and her husband, Craig, enjoy discussing what she has made to decide what could be added to improve it. “He’s my favorite taste tester!”

Denise likes to use fresh onions, garlic and red peppers. “I hate bland food,” she stated. “Spices are our friend!” She enjoys baking, and pies are her favorite. One Christmas, she got carried away and made 21 desserts! “Everyone got to take some home!” **NOW**

Denise’s Barbecue Brisket

- 1 whole brisket**
- 1 12-oz. bottle Shiner Bock beer**
- 1 32-oz. bottle Stubb’s Bar-B-Q Sauce**

- 1.** Place the brisket, fatty side up, in a pan. (A disposable pan makes cleanup easy.) Pour beer on top, and chill overnight.
- 2.** Coat meat completely with sauce. Cover the pan with foil and cook at 250 F for 15-16 hours.
- 3.** Remove meat from pan; trim off top fat and slice. Serve with additional heated sauce if desired.

Denise’s Baked Beans

- 2 28-oz. cans Bush’s Baked Beans (original)**
- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped**
- 3/4 cup Heinz ketchup**
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup Grandma’s Molasses, or to taste**

- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder**
- 2 Tbsp. French’s Mustard**
- 7-8 strips bacon**

- 1.** Mix first 7 ingredients together in a large bowl. Pour into a 9x13-inch glass baking dish.
- 2.** Cover with bacon strips. Bake for 1 hour at 350 F.

Charlene’s Potato Salad

- 1 lb. potatoes (russet or yellow)**
- 5 eggs**
- 1 cup dill pickles, chopped or 8-oz. dill pickle relish, well-drained**
- 1/2 large onion, chopped**
- 15 oz. Miracle Whip**
- 1-2 Tbsp. French’s Mustard**
- 1 4-oz. jar pimento**
- Vinegar, salt and pepper, to taste**

- 1.** Peel, chop and boil potatoes. Remove from heat, drain water and allow to cool.
- 2.** Hard boil eggs, cool and peel.

- 3.** Combine pickles and onion, set aside.
- 4.** Mash potatoes; add Miracle Whip and mustard; mix well.
- 5.** Chop eggs. Add eggs, pickles, onion and pimentos to the potato mixture. Mix well and add vinegar, salt and pepper to taste.

Alta’s Punch

- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 cup water**
- 1 46-oz. can Dole Pineapple Juice**
- 1 12-oz. can frozen lemonade**
- Ice (I use a 10-lb. bag.)**
- 2 liters ginger ale**

- 1.** In a pan, dissolve sugar in water; bring to a full boil. Remove from heat and cool completely.
- 2.** Add pineapple juice and lemonade; mix thoroughly.
- 3.** When ready to serve, pour into a punch bowl over ice and mix in the ginger ale.

Four-layer Delight

- 1 cup flour**
- 1 stick margarine**
- 1 cup pecans, chopped**
- 1 cup powdered sugar**
- 8 oz. cream cheese (or Neufchatel)**
- 1 16-oz. Lite Cool Whip (divided use)**
- 1 each 3.9-oz. chocolate and vanilla Jell-O instant pudding**
- 2 1/2 cups milk**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**

- 1. For first layer:** Mix flour, margarine and pecans together with a fork in a 9x13-inch baking dish; pat down with fingers. Bake at 350 F for 20 minutes. Cool completely.
- 2. For second layer:** Cream powdered sugar, cream cheese and 1/2 of the Cool Whip. Spread over crust; chill thoroughly.
- 3. For third layer:** Thoroughly combine pudding mixes, milk and vanilla. Spread over second layer. Return to refrigerator and chill until set.
- 4. For fourth layer:** Spread remaining Cool Whip on top. Garnish with chocolate shavings or chopped pecans, if desired.

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

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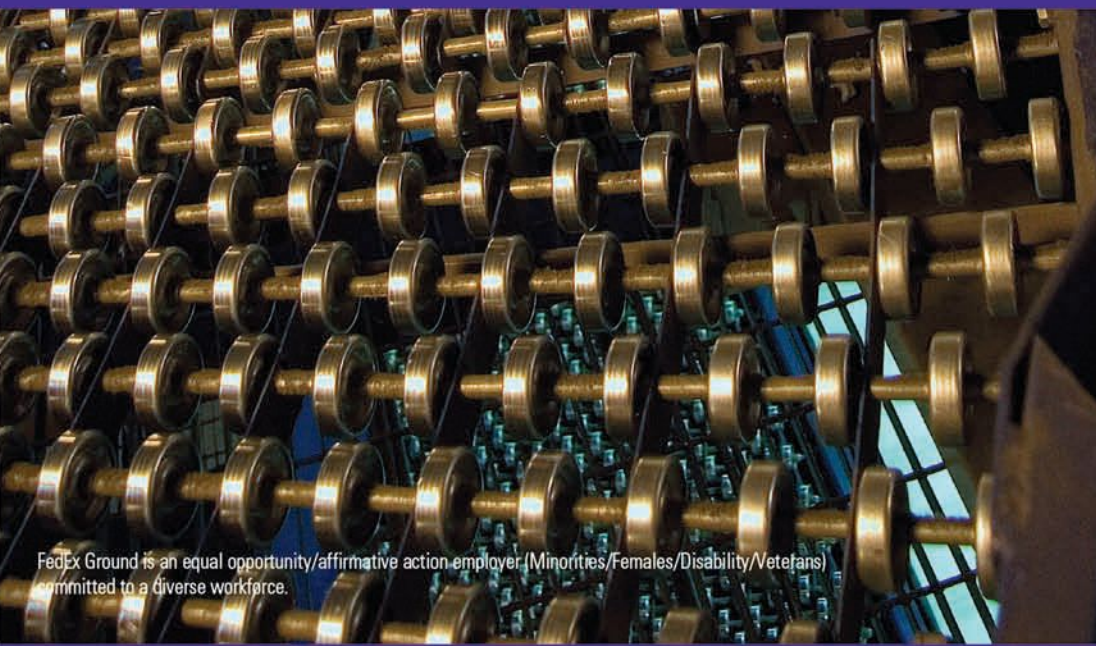
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