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creates custom
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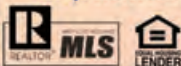
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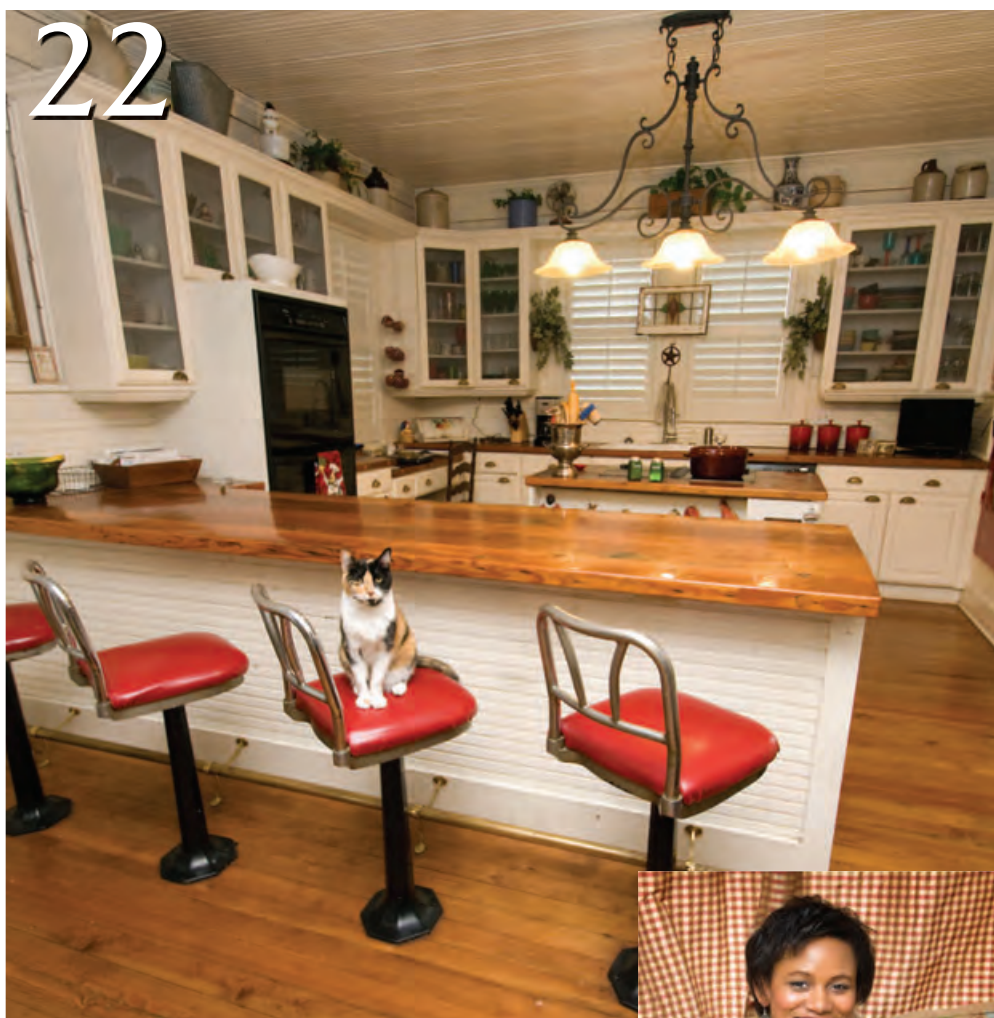
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Editor's Note

If you mustache, it's November!

While I've never crafted a construction paper mustache on a Popsicle stick for photographic purposes, I can admit the trendy pose is not without entertainment value. So, I was pleasantly surprised to discover this month gives even more credence to the mustache movement.

Since 2003, a charity favoring men's health issues has encouraged the growing of mustaches throughout this month. Dubbed "Movember,"

the effort raises awareness of prostate and testicular cancers. Participants start the month clean shaven, and seek sponsors supporting their under-the-nose growth for 30 days.

Visit Movember.com to learn more about becoming a Mo Bro and "changing the face of men's health." You'll be trendy and charitable at the same time!

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Prayerfully Stitched

— By Angel Morris



When Robyn Jefferson learned to crochet as a young girl, it was just one of many things in which she had an interest. As a result, crocheting was replaced by other endeavors, and the young woman eventually found herself in the family business as a pharmacy technician. It would be many years and take a family crisis for Robyn to return to her crochet pastime.

"My father is a pharmacist and CEO of U.S. Drug Mart Inc., with two stores in Ellis County. Pharmacy was in my blood, so I became a pharmacy technician and worked with him for all of my adult life," Robyn explained. "Five years ago, my mother fell and broke her hip and hasn't walked since. Dad asked me to leave the pharmacy and become her caretaker, and that is what I do to this day."

But like pharmacy work, crocheting is also in Robyn's blood. "All of my grandmothers and great-grandmothers on both sides of my family, my mother and many other female relatives are crafty women. I crocheted some when I was young, and then put it down for many years. When I began having grandchildren, I picked it up again," Robyn said.

In 2010, Robyn's granddaughter, Macey, was born at Methodist Mansfield Hospital. While there taking care of her daughter, Robyn began to be noticed by the nurses who saw her crocheting. "They asked if I could make demise hats. I didn't even really know what that was, so I asked. The nurse explained that when babies are born very prematurely and don't make it, they like to have a hat to place on the tiny heads of these precious angels and take their pictures for their parents," Robyn said. "Then they give the hat as a gift ... a remembrance of their baby." Nurses told Robyn to make hats that would fit a golf ball. "My heart sunk. I began making them and was able to produce about a dozen before we left. This was my saddest but, definitely, most rewarding project," Robyn said.

Ironically, it was a project in which Robyn would quickly be involved again. "We had noticed some unusual behavior in my new granddaughter while we were still in the hospital, but she was still released. A couple of hours later, we found ourselves at Cook's Children's Hospital with a seizing newborn,"

Robyn recalled. "After coding only moments after our arrival, the doctors and nurses began caring for Macey for a random brain bleed she had had



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seven to 10 days before her birth. To this day they cannot determine the cause."

The family spent the next five weeks at Ronald McDonald House across the street and every waking moment in the hospital's NICU. Maceyne had brain surgery at 21 days, and Robyn used crochet to survive the most trying moments. "Needless to say, I needed something to occupy all that time, because without it my mind wandered places it didn't need to wander," Robyn said. "We weren't alone there though — of course God was with us throughout, and we made so many new lifelong friends. We prayed, counseled, cried, rejoiced, laughed and crocheted hats for about 70 or so of the other babies there with us!"

Robyn admits she is still honing her craft and said the biggest initial challenge was learning to read the patterns for her crochet hats. "I have a dear friend from England who has helped me a great deal, and YouTube has been an awesome way to learn, as well," she said. "There are several artists on a website where I get most of my patterns that I admire. One day, I hope to be able to see an image in my head of a creation I'd like to make and then just be able to make it — to write my own pattern."

Because she loves her creations, Robyn admits she can be too obsessive about their perfection. "It is very easy to 'fudge' stitches in crochet. You can cover up almost any mistake, and unless you are very skilled at crochet yourself and really look, you'd never know it was there. But if I find a mistake, I pull out every stitch needed to get back to it to do it right. I just can't let it go," Robyn said. "I uncrocheted almost as much as I crocheted at first, although I'm getting a little less compulsive!"

In fact, her confidence has grown enough that she now offers custom products through her small business, Robyn's Caring Creations — A prayer in every stitch. "I love creating things that make people happy, and I love all of my projects. But baby hats would have to be my favorite!"

Still caring for her mother, Robyn said the only thing that interferes with her creative time is life: laundry, cooking, cleaning, eating, sleeping, etc., but she appreciates the moments she can find to crochet. "Everyone is so busy, and we are such a techno-driven world, crocheting is one of many lost arts. Sewing, letter writing and even the art of conversation are among the things we are losing," Robyn said. "To me, a perfect world would be from back in time — simpler, more family-oriented societies in which moms could stay home and pass down the handiwork they'd learned from their grandmothers," Robyn said. "We can always dream, right?"



One way Robyn makes that dream reality is being there for the daughters she calls her biggest successes: Heather, Lora and Kara. "They are all beautiful, Christian women raising wonderful children with their husbands. And I get to be 'Bubby' to all the grandkids!" Robyn said. Plus, she can pass along the hobby inspired by her granddaughter — now a healthy, happy 3-year-old — and use crochet to bring joy to others.

"I'm interested in the lives of the people I crochet for — their stories, their loves, their joy and sadness. I used to only crochet for my family, but now that family just grows each time I make something for a special time in someone else's life," Robyn said. "To me, a cute item that fits and brings a smile is all the success I need. And that comes through with a prayer sewn in every stitch!" **NOW**

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Flourishing Survivors

— By Rick Herron



The emergency shelter is another tool for helping people begin the process of healing.



As so many self-help gurus believe, what we do with the past directly affects our future. If something bad happens to a child, that memory can adversely affect everything that comes afterward and destroy self-esteem and self-worth. A survivor has to decide every day not to let the events of the past shape their life as they move on.

Alecia Peters endured such an assault when she was very young. Instead of allowing that event to cloud or control every aspect of her present life, she

decided to use it to create a future for herself where she could help others who have had similar experiences.

She took that life altering experience of her childhood and created something that can help other survivors. She is the founding director of Healing Hearts Center, based in Waxahachie. The nonprofit was created to provide support and empowerment to sexual and domestic violence survivors in Ellis County. "We began offering services to Ellis County survivors in April 2011," Alecia said.

With the assistance of board members Shelli French, Beverly Robinson and others, Healing Hearts began taking in hotline calls. In November, the center began receiving referrals from Child Protective Services, the Ellis County District Attorney's office and other



Kathy Smith, Alecia Peters, Mona Long and Shelli French are passionate about eradicating abuse from all households.



local agencies. "We depend so much on volunteers and interns," Alecia said.

The bulk of the funding for Healing Hearts comes from the United Way of West Ellis County, as well as community churches such as First United Methodist Church, Avenue Church and the Potter's House in Dallas. "We also receive funds from individuals in the community and several corporations," Alecia said. "It's vital that we get more funding so we can enhance our program services."

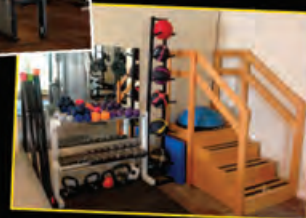
One of the goals is to eradicate all abuse from Ellis County households. "We believe we can do that through prevention and education," Alecia said.

Born in New Kensington, Pennsylvania, Alecia endured a series of assaults from family members when she was 6 years old. "I never said anything about it at the time because of fear,"

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she remembered. “When I was in college, I finally shared what had happened to me with my family. They were so supportive.”

After the assaults, Alecia went through stages of depression, low self-esteem, insecurity and fear. Wanting a fresh start, she decided to attend Tuskegee University in Alabama, where she studied social work. The turning point in her healing came when she accepted Christ during her third year in college. “When Christ entered my life, the healing really started,” she admitted. “After that, the Lord showed me I would be helping others and empowering other survivors of sexual assault.”

Alecia went to graduate school at the University of Georgia and started working for a sexual assault center. While there, she counseled survivors and did case management work, including connecting people to local resources. The knowledge she obtained during this period of her life would lay the groundwork for what would become her life’s mission. “When I moved back to Tuskegee about 11 years ago, I worked with prisoners. In a way, I *had* come full circle,” she said. “Working in the penal system gave me insight into the vicious cycle of abuse.”

Alecia learned the biggest weapon against abuse is prevention. “Education toward preventing abuse is the greatest weapon there is,” she said.

When Alecia moved to Ellis County three years ago and discovered the county had no sexual assault center, she started Healing Hearts Center in September



2010. "We try to educate people in safety planning, because the most volatile time during a cycle of abuse is the time when the survivor is exiting that environment," she said. "We make sure our clients know they are not alone and encourage them to call our hotline. One of the main things we tell them is, 'Never tell the abuser you are leaving.'"

Healing Hearts Center works with all individuals within Ellis County and sometimes gets calls from as far away as Dallas County. "Most of our clients are in Waxahachie and cover the spectrum from Hispanic, white, black, all socio-economic statuses and races," she said, adding that based on what she has experienced and learned from others, she believes the typical abuser is usually motivated by three main things — power, control and manipulation.

According to the Healing Hearts Center handout, the center provides case management services, a 24-hour crisis hotline, counseling for individuals and the option of joining support groups. The center also has an emergency shelter that is big enough to help three families, the location of which is kept a closely guarded secret.

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Healing Hearts Center

Ending the Violence

through Healing Hearts Center is called I Am an Overcomer, and focuses on how to identify abuse, how to build up self-worth and shows survivors how to re-identify themselves as they build a new life outside the cycle of abuse. "We teach survivors the importance of boundaries and how to prevent others from crossing or abusing those boundaries," Alecia said.

One of the biggest future goals of Healing Hearts Center is to educate and enlighten the public through talking to local area churches, schools, civic groups and employers. "We will go anywhere to speak about domestic abuse," Alecia said.

One way the center reaches the public is through a gala they hold each spring, which includes the participation of an Ellis County community leader. Awards are given out during the gala to the Community Leader of the Year and the Advocate of the Year. Last month, they hosted The Chocolate & Christmas Wonderland Fashion Show, with all the clothing sponsored by Belk department store.

Looking back, Alecia believes her grandmother, another survivor of assault, was a motivating factor in her decision to devote her life to helping survivors. She's also very aware, as well as grateful, for the help and assistance she's received from mentors like Chuck Waldrop of the Bill Priest Institute and Jan Langbein of the Genesis Women's Shelter in Dallas. "Besides teaching prevention, our goal at Healing Hearts Center is to break the silence through education," she said. "We want to teach people how to make healthy choices and eradicate all abuse from households." **NOW**

Editor's Note: For more information, contact Alecia Peters at (972) 388-4777 or visit www.healing-hearts-center.org. The hotline number is (800) 828-7893.

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The Appealing

Last



At Home With David and Sue Flanagan

— By Rick Herron

While some people prefer to live in homes that are relatively new, there are a growing number of homeowners who feel much more comfortable within the architecturally impressive, character-filled houses built in the early part of the 20th century. Luck was on their side when, tired of the big city life in Dallas, David and Sue Flanagan found such a house near downtown Ferris in 1999. They had both decided life in Texas would be much more appealing if they could find a turn-of-the-century home in good structural condition to slowly and methodically restore.





The two-story, wood-frame house they finally found had been built in 1918 by the Green family, and had fallen into disrepair when the Flanagans discovered it. "It had been turned into a boarding house in the 1940s and was in pretty rough shape when we bought it," Sue, a legal secretary with a Dallas law firm, said. "Redoing it has been a true work in progress that continues to this day."

David, who is on his 23rd year of teaching eighth-grade science at Red Oak Junior High, was born and reared in Dallas. He began his teaching career after first working in forestry and then as an electrician. He met Sue, who is originally from Temple, Texas, when they both lived in Dallas, and they married in 1985. They have two children, Molly and Reid, and one grandchild.

In keeping with most houses built in the early part of the 20th century, the 10-room abode has a large front porch



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that extends around to the south side and includes a door into the first floor guest bedroom. Over 40 large windows, once used to catch breezes that cooled the inside rooms, encircle the first and second floors. A dormer with a shingle roof crowns the top of the structure.

In the back, the couple added a deck accessible from the kitchen, with steps leading down to the backyard. The first story features beautifully stained hardwood floors, which David explained

are original to the home. When David took down all the Sheetrock from the walls of the first story, he exposed tongue and groove wood, complete with the original nails used by the builders — a touch which the couple believes adds an authentic, early-20th-century feel to the home.

“The walls were constructed of a layer of tongue and groove wood, then burlap, then wall paper,” David explained.

A large living room greets visitors



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arriving through the front door, and a fireplace — one of three — is the focal point of the room. The living room has several antique pieces Sue inherited from her mother and grandparents. “We converted all the fireplaces to gas, which we decided to do when we found out that the chimney of one of the fireplaces only went as far up as the attic!” Sue said. Central air and central heat keep the 3,000-square-foot structure comfortable year-round.

A guest bedroom, accessible from the living room, is full of period furnishing and artwork, including an Eastlake bed and a hope chest that belonged to Sue’s mother. Off the guest room is a spacious bathroom complete with an old ball and claw bathtub. The other three bedrooms are located on the second floor.

One interesting fact the couple discovered was that the house was built without any closets, which David learned was a common characteristic of homes of that era. “Many of these old homes were built without closets because, at the time, the more closets a home had, the more taxes the owner would have to pay,” he said.

“Over many of the doorways are transoms that were popular ‘in the day’ because, when opened, they helped keep air moving between rooms,” Sue said.

A large dining room painted in a warm shade of red contains many of Sue’s collectables accumulated over a lifetime, including a five-piece silver tea service, a collection of cut glass and a shelf of chalkware figurines. On one wall of the dining room is an old pie safe Sue inherited, along with her mother’s dough board. Two old glass and metal lights hang down from the dining room ceiling, which David said came from a pool hall in Jefferson, Texas.

In the center of the dining room,



which Sue readily admits is her favorite room in the house, is a massive rectangular oak table that can seat 10 people. "The table was here when we looked at buying the house, and it was still here when we moved in," she said. "It's so heavy, I'm sure it will be here from now on."

In the kitchen, which David says is his favorite place, he and Sue installed a double oven, put a new stove top on the island that sits in the middle of the kitchen and removed the fluorescent lighting, which both Sue and David admitted they hated. The former owners had already installed a wooden counter that stretches almost the entire width of the kitchen, and it is where the family often gathers to eat and visit. On one wall of the kitchen is a massive antique wooden cooler, which they transformed into a pantry. "The cooler weighs over 1,000 pounds, so we won't be moving it any time soon, if ever," David added.

A small half-bath is conveniently located under the stairs and is also decorated with family heirlooms and antiques. The stairway leads to a spacious landing with doors to three bedrooms and Reid's bathroom. The large master bedroom has a fireplace and bathroom complete with another claw and ball bathtub. The master bedroom, however, is a relatively new addition to the house. "It was once two bedrooms that were combined into one," Sue said.

There is also a guest room upstairs with twin beds. Reid's room is located next door, complete with his own personal bathroom. "Almost all the doors downstairs and upstairs still have the original glass doorknobs," Sue said.

Throughout the house, David and Sue have successfully managed to blend vintage family heirlooms with new amenities to create an ambience that makes visitors feel immediately at home, and they say they have no plans to ever leave. "We'll be here from now on," Sue said, "or until we can't get up the stairs." **NOW**

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June Brown and Carol Fendley are two of the friendly faces who make customers' country living dreams come true at Land Headquarters Co.

WHERE COUNTRY LIVING BEGINS

Land Headquarters Co. finds the perfect properties for its customers.

— By Angel Morris

Land Headquarters Co. of Ferris has made a business of finding the perfect parcel of land for families and individuals looking to leave behind city lights in exchange for quiet country nights. "We take the work out of looking for the ideal spot and love that we are in the business of making customers' dreams come true," Carol Fendley, vice president with Land Headquarters Co., said.

The family-owned, third-generation real estate and land sales business began in 1975 with the purchase of initial properties in Arkansas and Missouri. Today its operations have grown to include sites in Alabama, Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas, in addition to its original state locales.

"Land Headquarters Co. has been located in its current office bank building in Ferris since 1982, and I joined the company in 1985. Today, eight salespeople round out the staff, which is available for consultation with potential customers around the clock," Carol said.

Potential customers are those looking for assistance in the buying, developing or marketing of commercial or residential land. Land Headquarters Co. and its affiliates are qualified to answer this call as they have developed and sold more than 200,000 acres and some 200-plus subdivisions to clients through almost 40 years of business.

"We're very involved in a variety of land developments, but we also specialize in the development of residential subdivisions

in rural areas,” Carol explained. “That’s where our slogan, ‘Where Country Living Begins,’ got started.”

Locally, that means development of land north, east and south of Dallas, including Ellis County communities. Clients looking to own their own land can anticipate lots from one to 50 acres and will find owner financing, no credit check and low down payment opportunities. Land Headquarters Co. provides an extended choice of manufactured homes and site-built home lots, as well.

“We can owner finance our sales with easy credit and terms. Our company was built on a dream, and we do everything we can to make our customers’ dreams come true, too,” Carol said.

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While the development of residential subdivisions in rural areas such as Ferris and its neighboring communities is Land Headquarters’ forte, the company’s commitment to customers goes beyond planning and developing communities. “We are also dedicated to responsible land use and to protecting the environment, so it can be enjoyed for future generations,” Carol noted.

Land Headquarters helps families fulfill the dream of living in the country where they can enjoy fresh air, see the stars and relish the tranquility. The company simplifies the hunt for the perfect spot of land, particularly for people looking to leave behind city noise, traffic and chaos for the simplicity of country life.

“We are always moving forward, always looking to expand our current market and to tackle new territories and new challenges,” Carol said. “Our business is making sure a piece of the American dream is within our customers’ reach. And that’s a pretty amazing thing to be part of!” **NOW**

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William Stinchcomb makes headlines at Ovilla Christian School as a National Merit Semi-Finalist.



Dusti the clown offers a balloon flower to 3-year-old Erie, who came to Ellis County to visit her grandparents.



Red Oak ISD Superintendent Dr. Scott Niven and ROHS Principal Kevin Freels with National Merit Scholar Semifinalist Ellen Stanfill.



The 2013 Ferris Pee Wee Cheerleaders show their spirit at a Yellow Jacket football game.



Eight-week-old Bentley, of Ennis, is joined by 6-week-old Lynnlee, of Midlothian, during Ovilla Heritage Days.



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November 1—3

Lord's Acre: Hours vary by day at the future site of Ovilla United Methodist Church, Ovilla Road/FM 664 and Westmoreland. Dinner, auctions, country store, children's area, vendors and more. Call (972) 617-8840 for more details.

November 4, 11, 18, 25

Hot Yoga Community Class: 5:45-6:45 p.m. Dynamic Yoga for Love Studio, 558 Bluebird Ln., Red Oak. Beginner to advanced levels welcome; modifications offered for various body types and ages. Donations accepted. Visit yoga4love.net.

November 9

Gobble Wobble 1M/5K Run: 7:30 a.m. Canterbury Episcopal School, 1708 N. Westmoreland Rd., DeSoto. Pet and stroller-friendly event. Free bounce house for children. Informational business booths. Visit www.CESGobbleWobble.com.

Jog for Dogs 5K Benefit Run: 8:00 a.m., Midlothian ISD Multi-Purpose Stadium. Proceeds go toward the cost of Joshua Seller's diabetic alert service dog. Visit www.facebook.com/jogfordogsmidlothiantx for more details.

November 15, 16

Citywide Fall Clean Up: 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., 2118 S Uhl Rd., Glenn Heights. Containers will be available for city residents to dispose of household trash and debris at no charge. Call (972) 223-1690 or visit www.glennheights.com.

November 16

Ferris Trade Day: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., downtown pavilion, South Main and West Sixth streets, Ferris. Vendors welcome. Call (817) 992-9204 to rent vendor space.

November 18

Book Club: 7:00-8:30 p.m., Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. *House of Earth* by Woody Guthrie is this month's selection. Email sandyg@aircanopy.net.

November 25 — December 17

North Ellis County Outreach Santa Tags: 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m., **Monday, Wednesday and Friday**, 404 S. Hwy 342, Red Oak. Select a Santa Tag to assist children in need this Christmas. Call (972) 617-7261.

Indian Trail Master Naturalist Chapter meeting: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Ronald Reagan Room, Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy.

November 29 — December 22

3rd Annual German American Holiday Market "Christkindl": Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, Noon-9:00 p.m.; Fridays, Noon-10:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.-noon; main entrance next to the Rangers Ballpark in Arlington at Six Flags and Ballpark Way. This Old World-style festival and outdoor market offers handmade gifts, unique ornaments, live entertainment and German delicacies to eat and drink.

December 7

Christmas on the Square: All day event in historic downtown Ferris sponsored by the Ferris Downtown Association. Parade starts at 1:00 p.m. Food contests, Santa photos, live music, silent and live auctions, hayride, evening family movie.

December 7, 8

Model Railroad Open House: 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., at the home of Bob and Freda Brand, 2509 Lake Ridge Rd., Glenn Heights. Public invited, children welcome. Over 40 years of experience created the two layered, mountainous layout.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to angel.morris@nowmagazines.com.

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In The Kitchen With Heather Treadaway

— By Angel Morris

Cooking de-stresses Heather Treadaway, who has five children with her husband, Brian. “I like to follow a recipe step-by-step with the result being something the whole family enjoys,” she said. Heather learned from her father, as the three Treadaway daughters and oldest son have learned from Heather in the kitchen. Perhaps the bigger accomplishment is when Heather pleases her youngest son. “He’s our pickiest, so when he really likes what I’ve cooked, I feel I’ve hit a homerun!”

Heather uses *Taste of Home* magazine and old church cookbooks, plus Internet sites for inspiration. Hosting her church group, Momentum, every Wednesday, also provides cooking incentive. “It gives me lots of opportunity to make all sorts of cookies and treats for the students,” Heather said. **NOW**

Toasted Butter Pecan Cake

1 cup plus 2 tsp. butter, softened
(divided use)
2 2/3 cups pecans, chopped (divided use)
2 cups sugar
4 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup 2% milk

Frosting:

2 pkgs. (one 8-oz., one 3-oz.) cream
cheese, softened
2/3 cup butter, softened
6 1/2 cups confectioners’ sugar
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 to 2 Tbsp. 2% milk

1. For cake: In small heavy skillet, melt 2 tsp. butter. Add pecans; cook over medium heat until toasted,

about 4 minutes. Set aside to cool.

2. In a large bowl, cream sugar and remaining butter until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture alternating with milk. Beat just until combined. Fold in 2 cups pecans.

3. Spread evenly into three greased and waxed paper-lined 9-inch round baking pans. Bake at 350 F for 25-30 minutes, or until toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

4. For Frosting: In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, butter, confectioners’ sugar and vanilla until smooth. Beat in enough milk to achieve spreading consistency. Spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake. Sprinkle with remaining pecans. Store in refrigerator.

Green-chile Enchilada Casserole

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts

Garlic salt

18 corn tortillas, torn in half
1 28-oz. can green chile enchilada sauce
1 8-oz. container sour cream
1 onion, finely chopped
1 16-oz. pkg. shredded Monterey Jack
cheese, divided into thirds

1. Preheat oven to 350 F and lightly grease a 9x13-inch casserole dish. Season chicken with garlic salt and arrange in prepared dish. Bake 45 minutes until no longer pink and juices run clear. Let cool, shred chicken and set aside.

2. With metal tongs, char each tortilla half over burner for about 1 minute until lightly puffed. Set aside.

3. Pour about 1/4 enchilada sauce in bottom of medium baking dish, and arrange 12 tortilla halves on top.

4. Layer half the chicken, sour cream and onion, 1/3 cheese, and 1/4 enchilada sauce. Repeat for a second layer. Top with remaining 12 tortilla halves and cover with remaining enchilada sauce. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and cover. Bake for 45 minutes.

Cheesy Chicken, Rice and Peppers Skillet

2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
3 chicken breasts, cubed
Salt and pepper, to taste
1/2 red bell pepper, cubed
1/2 green bell pepper, cubed
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 onion, chopped
1/2 tsp. dried thyme
1 cup long grain rice, uncooked
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
1/3 cup sour cream
3/4 cup cheddar cheese

1. Preheat oven to 375 F.

2. Preheat oil in large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Once hot, carefully add cubed chicken in single layer. Season with salt and pepper. Let chicken caramelize by not moving it for a few minutes. Toss chicken and allow to cook through.

3. Add peppers, garlic, onion and thyme. Season again with salt and pepper, to taste, and sauté veggies for a couple of minutes.

4. Add in rice, tossing with chicken/veggie mixture for a few minutes.

5. Slowly stir in broth, scraping bits from bottom of pan. Stir in sour cream.

6. Smooth mixture into one layer and sprinkle cheese evenly over top. Immediately place in preheated oven for 30 minutes until cheese is browned and rice is cooked through.

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