

# Southwest

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M A G A Z I N E

NOVEMBER 2014

# NOW

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is a referee for  
Big 12 football

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# EAGLE EXPRESS



## Choose to BE in DeSoto ISD!



Principal for a Day Ouida Lee, Pastor at Church of the Disciple, and Woodridge Principal Robert Torres participate in the Woodridge Fine Arts Magnet Academy theater class on October 21.

### Calling all DeSoto ISD Families!

You are invited to a special DeSoto ISD Family Academy day on Saturday, November 8 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at DeSoto High School. Parents and students will enjoy free breakfast, their choice of several sessions and guest speaker Steve Perry during a free lunch. Dr. Perry is a strong advocate of personal and civic responsibilities in all aspects of life - including his new book **When Push Comes to Shove: Getting Kids the Education They Deserve, Even If It Means Picking a Fight**. He reaches the heart of his audience to motivate change in themselves and their community.

Session topics include: STAAR/EOC Testing Information, Preparation for Life, Learning Parent Portal, The Graduation Plan, Scholarships, Parent Involvement, College Readiness and much more! Registration is open online at [www.desotoisd.org](http://www.desotoisd.org).



### DeSoto secures grant and bond funding

DeSoto ISD recently announced two new funding sources to enhance teaching and learning across the district. First, the district received a \$7.8M GEAR UP grant from the U.S. Dept. of Education. The grant provides additional resources for a cohort of 1,400 current 6th and 7th graders through their first year of college. The program aims to increase college and career readiness and post-secondary success for at-risk, low-income students of color.

The district is moving forward with QZAB funding which will bring \$9.6M in Board approved bonds for renovations, energy efficiency, technology and equipment, curriculum and teacher training over the next three years. The 1% nominal interest rate will be repaid over 18 years and will save millions in effectiveness and efficiency over that time.

### Calendar

Thur., Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m. - DHS Football v. Duncanville (Senior Night), Eagle Stadium  
Sat., Nov. 8, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. - DeSoto ISD Family Academy, DeSoto HS  
Mon., Nov. 10, 6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting, Board Room  
Tue., Nov. 11 - Veteran's Day Event, DeSoto HS  
Tue., Nov. 11 - Elementary Bring Your Dad to School Day  
Thur., Nov. 13 - Secondary Bring Your Dad to School Day  
Nov. 24-28 - Thanksgiving Break, all schools and buildings closed

### NEWS TO KNOW

#### 1st Tuesday Town Hall Meetings - 6:30 p.m.

Join for an open conversation about DeSoto ISD.

- Tuesday, November 4 - East Middle School
- Tuesday, December 2 - DeSoto High School

#### Coffee & Conversations

Join Supt. David Harris for candid conversations about your campus and DeSoto ISD - each event starts at 7:30 a.m.

- Tuesday, November 18 - Amber Terrace Elementary
- Tuesday, December 16 - Woodridge Elementary

#### DeSoto ISD Senior Citizen's Spa & Happy Hour - Nov. 20

DeSoto ISD is hosting a special Senior Citizen's Spa and Happy Hour at DeSoto High School on Thursday, Nov. 20 from 4-6 p.m. The event is for DeSoto ISD volunteers and residents age 60 and up and will include special spa rates by the Cosmetology students and refreshments by the Culinary Arts program. Check the web site for details at [www.desotoisd.org](http://www.desotoisd.org)

#### Commended Student named in National Merit Program

Congratulations to DHS senior Vicky Yeung who was named a Commended Student in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Commended Student placed in the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the competition by taking the 2013 PSAT/NMSQT.



# Welcome home to health.

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## ON THE COVER



Christopher Alston thoroughly enjoys being a referee!

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 283-1170 or visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).





## Editor's Note

*Happy November!*

Each year I try to come up with fresh-sounding editor's notes. November prompts one to create lists of things to be thankful for, but I have done that frequently. Food is always a good November topic, but I have covered that as well. And, without doubt, you have endured me speaking of my children and grandchildren far too often.

November is Aviation Month (ah, the lure of travel) and National Sleep Comfort Month (think turkey and tryptophan). Days are dedicated to book lovers (*moi*), deviled eggs (yum), gunpowder (think religion and conspiracy!), Forget Me Nots (the flower and the sentiment) and cleaning your refrigerator (so there's room for "roast beast" leftovers). And wouldn't you know it, Stay At Home Because You Are Well Day (sounds like a plan) is foiled by falling on a Sunday!

Enjoy your festivity of choice!

*Beverly*

Beverly Shay  
SouthwestNOW Editor  
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# MAKING IT OFF

— By Angel Morris

*Slowly walking around the football field before each game, Christopher Alston takes in everything — the crowd, the noise and the energy. But once the whistle blows, it all slips away except for the players and the game. As an official for the Big 12 football conference, Christopher takes his job very seriously. “We, as officials, are totally focused on the plays. At halftime and game’s end, we may have to ask who won, because we aren’t keeping up with the score. We’re just intent on making the best calls we can throughout the game,” Christopher said.*


A former basketball and football player himself, Christopher grew up in Oak Cliff then North Dallas, graduating from Richardson High School before entering the Marine Corps.

After a decade in the military, he landed his first civilian job at the JCPenney warehouse in Cedar Hill. “I moved to DeSoto then and haven’t ever wanted to leave,” Christopher noted. “Shortly after that, I answered an ad for football officials just to make a little Christmas money on the side.”

First officiating Pee Wee and junior high teams,







**“We’re just  
intent on making  
the BEST calls we  
can throughout  
the game.”**

# OFFICIAL

Christopher worked his way up to high school junior varsities. After about two years with JVs, he graduated to varsity level, where he experienced one state semifinal and two state championships. “Basketball may have been my favorite when I was in school, but now it’s all about football. I spent about seven years officiating at the high school level,” Christopher said.

At that point, he advanced to working small college Division II and III games. “As you work more games, you get noticed, and you start getting invited to officiate scrimmages and camps,” Christopher explained. “I went to a camp and was awarded one game before being hired the next year with Football Championship Subdivision, the division beneath Big 12. I worked a national semifinal game during my two years with them.”

Then Christopher joined the Mountain West Conference, and during his two years there, he was selected to officiate his first bowl game. “I worked the Liberty Bowl in Memphis on New Year’s Eve in 2012. That is probably my most memorable





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game, because you can't beat the college environment," Chris recalled. "The first year I was eligible, I got selected for a bowl game, which was a big honor for me."



Last year was Christopher's first year in the Division I Big 12 Conference, and officiating became his full-time job. "People think we show up an hour





or so before a game, work the game, and then the job is done. There is so much more to officiating these days,” Christopher explained.

A typical work week for Christopher includes traveling to game sites on Fridays, officiating and reviewing game video Saturdays, then returning home late Sundays. Weekdays involve conference calls and discussions with fellow officials in preparation for the next game. “It used to be when seasons ended you were off. Now we have 30-40 days off a year, but even during that time, there can be camps and clinics, so it’s really a year-round job,” Christopher said.

In the 14 years Christopher has been officiating, the game of football has changed tremendously and, in turn, so has his job. “We have study groups all season. We have weekly tests. The rule books are updated and changed every two years, so the new mechanics of the game are constantly being ingrained in us,” he said.

Christopher noted that like police officers, officials don’t determine regulations, they simply enforce them. “Some people think referees make up the

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rules for football, but that's done by a committee of coaches. Then we learn the rules and make sure the players follow them," he said.

How well they know the game determines how officials progress in their career. "We are graded on every single play, and after the game, sometimes before we even leave the stadium, we get video to review. Unfortunately, we don't have the luxury of instant replay during games, so we have to make split-second decisions the very best we can," Christopher said.

For that reason, every official makes his share of bad calls. "There is nothing worse than making a call and having the



whole stadium booing you. But you can't get upset, you just gotta keep going and make the very best calls you can during the rest of the game," he said.

And, the better your officiating is, the better your chances of moving up in rank. "Today, officials are scouted by teams just like players. High school levels began grading their refs last year, too," Christopher said. "We're also expected to maintain our own physical fitness more than in years past. The players keep getting bigger and faster, plus they're a whole lot younger than us, so we have to be physically able to keep up with them."

Invited to work two Big 12 bowl games in three years speaks to Christopher's all-around success. His ultimate career goal would be officiating for the NFL. "I'd love to get a call from New York," he said. "That's my real dream."

In the meantime, Christopher is content to continue his role as a back judge within the 64 officials chosen by the Big 12 officiating coordinator. He said the crew is like extended family that travel all season together and even help critique those new to officiating at



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other levels. "We will go to scrimmages and give those trying to get in tips and suggestions on their calls. We are a supportive group," Christopher said.

Christopher is also part of a close-knit family including his son, Caleb (12); daughters, Brianna (17) and Christie (9); and his mom, Carolyn, who moved to DeSoto years ago to help with the kids. His two youngest children are involved in soccer. Christie is preparing to take karate, and Caleb junior high football. "It will be great, because junior high games are during the week, so I can actually attend!" Christopher said.

The family also watches games together on TV, and Christopher is a season ticket holder for the Dallas

Left to right: Brianna, Caleb, Christie and Christopher Alston



Cowboys. "I've probably made two games in five years because of my officiating schedule, but I still want to support the Cowboys whenever I can," Christopher said.

A rigorous schedule has meant being away from home on his birthday for the last six years, but Christopher's not complaining. "Officiating has taken me from coast to coast. From Seattle and San Diego to Tampa and Baltimore and everywhere around Texas," Christopher said. "I've had birthdays in Reno, New Orleans and San Diego — watching football. I'd say it's been a pretty fun tradeoff!" **NOW**





## Annamarie Kenworthy – National Merit Scholar Program Semi-Finalist

Being selected as a National Merit Scholar Program Semi-Finalist is a great honor for Duncanville High School senior Annamarie Kenworthy. The recognition means that she scored in the top one percent of United States high school seniors who took the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Annamarie will now work on a detailed scholarship application to advance to the Finalist level, which is announced in February 2015.

## Intermediate Students Create Google Play App

Five sixth-grade students from Daniel Intermediate School were given the task to create an app that could teach students the different elements of the periodic table. The team of Mark Castillo, Louis Deleon, Ramon Montes, Julio Pena and Jonas Sanchez not only completed their Engaging Learning Model project, but they also took their app a step further by submitting it to the Google Play store, where it was accepted.



To download the app, search for 4 Pics 1 Science Word in the Google Play store.



## DHS Student Receives Volunteer Service Award



Duncanville High School senior Ke'Ondra Lemons is the recipient of a high honor from President Barack Obama. She received the President's Volunteer Service Award for her work on the annual

Arlington Breast Cancer Tea Fundraiser. Lemons served as a junior volunteer and received via mail a gold President's Volunteer Service Award pin and a personalized Certificate of Achievement from the President.

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# Story of *Hope*

— By Abby Rich

*Each year, one in nine babies born in the United States will be delivered prematurely, according to the March of Dimes, a foundation designed to help mothers to have full-term pregnancies and healthy babies. Babies born even just a few weeks early are at risk for severe health problems and lifelong disabilities. The U.S. preterm birth rate dropped for the sixth consecutive year in 2012 to 11.5 percent, a 15-year low, giving thousands more babies a healthy start in life and saving billions in health and social costs. Despite the improvement, the U.S. still has the highest rate of preterm birth of any industrialized country.*



With November being Prematurity Awareness Month, the Clay family of Cedar Hill is just one of the many families to share their story involving the premature birth of their son, Curtis Jarrod Clay IV, otherwise known as Q, who is now 3 years old. Tanya and her husband, Curtis Clay, were already proud parents of two girls, Jordan and Makayla, when they decided to try assisted reproduction. Six months into her pregnancy, Tanya's water broke without any warning. She was rushed to the nearest hospital, knowing it was way too early for delivery. The doctors said they would try to prolong the pregnancy by keeping her on bed rest in the hospital, but a couple of weeks later, Tanya developed a serious infection and had to undergo a caesarean section.

Since her local hospital was only able to deliver near- or full-term babies, Tanya had to be transferred to Methodist Dallas Medical Center, a Level III newborn intensive care unit (NICU) hospital, which is one of the few hospitals in the Dallas area equipped with the sophisticated types of respiratory support to help premature babies like Q survive. Delivered at only 24 weeks, Q fought for his 1.7-ounce life. He was given only a 25-percent chance of survival at the time of his birth.

The night after Q was born Tanya began reaching out to the March of Dimes, which offers education and support programs to new parents of premature babies. They also raise money for life-saving research endeavors and medicine, so that hopefully one day they will know why premature births happen in the first place and what can be done to prevent them.

“But we were grateful he was finally home after four months of incubation.”

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**Tamika Perry, D.O.**, is passionate about preventive health and bariatric medicine; she also welcomes Medicare patients. In addition to her doctoral degree, Dr. Perry holds a master's in public health from the University of North Texas Health Science Center. She lives in Dallas with her daughter and enjoys traveling.


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After four months in the NICU, little Q was brought home, but still had to be hooked up to monitors and handled with extreme care. Since premature babies are at high risk for exposure to RSV, a potentially life-threatening respiratory virus, the Clays had to take extra precautions for the first year he was home. "During the entire first winter (the cold season) Q was home, we could barely take him out of the house or even invite friends and family over to see him for fear he would catch the slightest cold and heighten his lung issues," Tanya shared. "But we were grateful he was finally home after four months of incubation." However, Q's first birthday marked the end of winter, so there was a huge celebration with lots of friends and family.

After the first year of learning firsthand through their own struggle of having a premature baby, Tanya and Curtis were educated through the March of Dimes about the risks and statistics of babies born prematurely. In nearly 50 percent of premature births, the cause is unknown, and it affects one in eight families in North Texas from various socio-economic backgrounds. The 2012 preterm birth rate among non-Hispanic black infants remains the highest of all the racial groups at 16.8 percent, down from 18.5 percent in 2006 and the lowest in more than 20 years. The gap between

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blacks and whites has been slowly narrowing, but the preterm birth rate among non-Hispanic blacks is still more than 1.5 times the rate of non-Hispanic whites.

Coupled with their own experience and statistics from the March of Dimes, Tanya and Curtis knew they had to become involved in the organization and share their story of hope in order to help raise awareness for other expecting parents. They were chosen to be the 2014 March for Babies Ambassador Family due to their advocacy and involvement in the organization. "As ambassador family, we tell our story to corporate and potential sponsors," Curtis said, "as well as our community, in an effort to raise funds for research and increase awareness."

As the couple continues to advocate for the March of Dimes and use their story as a platform, one of the most

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important messages Tanya would like to get across to expecting mothers and their physicians is that, although



pregnancy is an exciting and hopeful time, everyone needs to be aware of the risks of a premature birth. “My hope as an ambassador is that all expectant mothers are privy to the statistics that one in nine babies will be born prematurely. Hopefully, this will empower them to initiate conversations with their obstetricians about the possibility of an early delivery and know the appropriate steps to take if needed,” she explained. “Not all hospitals are equipped to deal with that complication, especially if it’s an extremely premature birth.” Tanya’s goal is for expectant mothers not only to have a birth plan, but to also be armed with information to consider a contingency plan as part of the plan.

Sadly, the birth of their son was



not the Clays only terrifying bout with premature delivery. Two years after Q was born, Tanya's younger sister also gave birth at 24 weeks. Samiyah, who weighed only 15 ounces at birth, had only four-and-a half-months with her family before the complications of her premature birth became too much for her small body to fight. Though Tanya and her sister know



that Samiyah is an angel watching over them from heaven, it doesn't make it any easier for the family to grasp, and they truly miss her.

Due to a stroke-like condition Q experienced at birth, his left side is weaker than his right, causing a mild form of cerebral palsy that will require years of physical, occupational, speech and feeding therapies. But, Q is a survivor and a blessing to the whole Clay family. Although he has some continual oral motor and developmental delays, he is forging on as a beacon of hope for other families with similar stories. "It took a lot of work and people to get Q where he is today," Tanya explained. "Although he's only 24 pounds and wears a size 2T, he's growing a little every day — and he is definitely the man of the house." **NOW**

*Editor's Note: For more information about the March of Dimes, visit their website at [www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com).*

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# The House That John Built

— By Sydni Massey

*John Belt trained his entire life to build a dream home for his wife, Charlotte. Combining all of his past experiences and extensive education, John created a 4,200-square-foot masterpiece that exceeded Charlotte's dreams.*



John and Charlotte were married in 2001 and chose to live in a starter home in Garland, Texas, until they could decide where in the world they wanted to live. Charlotte, associate director of operations services for KPMG, could transfer to any office across the country. John, a certified petroleum geologist and professor, could analyze soil samples from his home lab and teach remotely. The Hill Country of Texas with its landscape appeal and a close proximity to the KPMG San Antonio and Austin offices was a strong contender for their permanent home.

"I was all for moving to the Hill Country, but I asked Charlotte if she had seen the hill country just south of Dallas," John said. "She had never been to the Duncanville area, and since I had received one of my MBA degrees from Dallas Baptist University, I knew the area well."

On a weekend drive around the area in 2008, John and Charlotte spotted a piece of land for sell rivaling any hill down south. The small community development, Thoroughbred Hills, had been started in the 1980s, but never finished. The roads wound through large hills and were shaded by trees hundreds of years old. Intrigued, a meeting was set with the Realtor. "We knew this was the land for us," Charlotte said. "It was beautiful, and I had never known this area even existed. Centrally located between our Dallas and Fort Worth KPMG offices, it was even better for my commute."



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The property was a giant, sloping hill. The professional geologist in John accepted the challenge and tasked a group of subcontractors to cut out the hill in order for their new house to be built. Charlotte's mother did not believe he was going to be able to fit a house onto the land. They dug down 16 feet and removed 65 dump trucks worth of dirt before anyone started to believe John's vision. "My parents and Charlotte's mother were able to see the property in progress," John said. "Unfortunately, they all passed before we finished. My dad was a home builder, and I worked with him since I was very young. Many of his tools were used in the construction of this house."

When John's father first met Charlotte, he told her John would design, draft and build her one dream house. He had been training him his whole life to build a masterpiece. However, it was paramount for John to find a local Christian home

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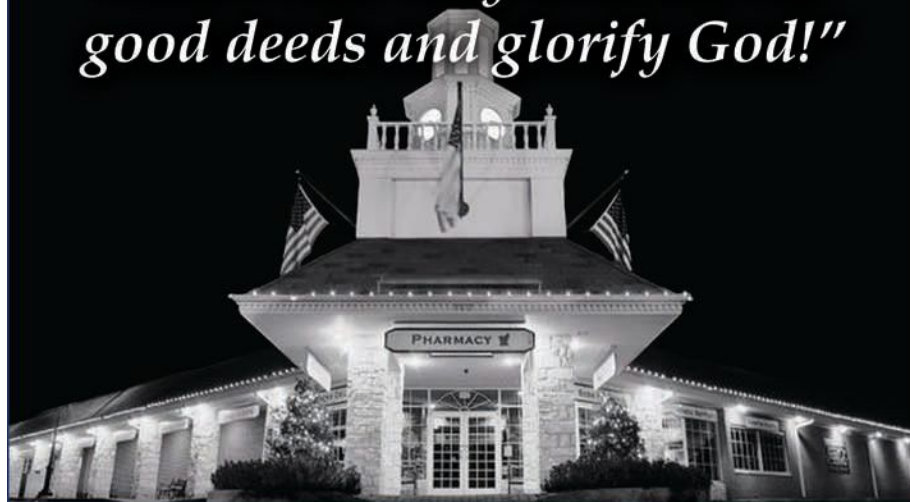
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Charlotte thought she wanted,” John said. “I had a French door installed, and it made a difference in the transition between the vanity area of the bathroom and the closet.”



builder like his father. Fortunately, John’s prayers were answered when he found Jim Higginbotham of J & C Custom Homes.

“John would ask me what I wanted, and when I didn’t know exactly what I wanted, he knew just what to do,” Charlotte admitted. The master bathroom was one of those instances. Charlotte wanted a nice, large closet and a place

to relax while getting ready for the day, but didn’t know what plan she wanted. Inspired by Tuscan style, John created a bathroom out of marble with bronze fixtures. When it came time to design the closet off of the master bathroom, Charlotte knew she wanted a California closet with a lot of storage. “I knew a solid door would not work well in the closet even though that is what

All 4,200 square feet were purposely calculated out to provide this diligent couple the necessary places for working and relaxing. Working and learning is never too far from their minds. Between them, they have 14 different degrees. If they aren’t relaxing in front of one of their 10 televisions or out fishing, they’re working. Their days start at 4:30 in the morning. John runs his petroleum

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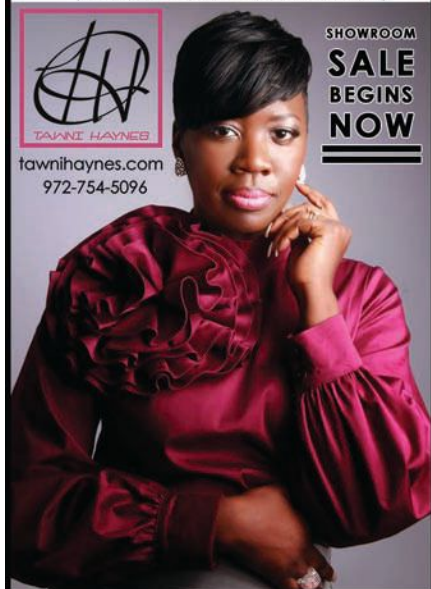
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geology business out of the geo-chemical lab in the back of the house, surrounded by soil samples, gas chromatograph (GC), analytical balance, UV-fluorimeter and test tubes. He is also an adjunct professor at California Southern University in Irvine and teaches MBA students across the world. Charlotte also uses space throughout the house for working on the weekends. John built several nooks across the house where Charlotte can dock her laptop, open a window and enjoy the fresh air while filtering through her emails.

The large windows were only part of John's ingenious plans for planning a house around the Texas seasons. When the Texas heat rolls in each year, the Belts live mostly downstairs, and when the icy winter weather comes for a visit, they retreat upstairs for the warmth. "Even though it's just the two of us in this house, we live in every square foot," Charlotte said. "The upstairs media room functions as both an entertainment and conference room for John's business."

Guests enjoy the freedom of the upstairs when they come to visit. Although there are two large guest rooms to choose from, they almost always choose the Texas suite. The built-in snack bar, enclosed balcony and tribute to Texas history and geology rival any boutique hotel suite. The room also displays their family history through photographs, memorabilia and a vintage desk that once belonged to Charlotte's father, a former Grayson County sheriff.





Having a home filled with artistic and thoughtful details drove many of John and Charlotte's decisions. The prominent players in their art collection are a grand piano standing just off the entryway and Thomas Kinkade's three-part series, *Beginning of a Perfect Evening*, that John purchased for Charlotte. Two pieces in the Kinkade collection wow viewers from their perch on the entryway staircase: a 4-foot vertical and 6-foot landscape. John and Charlotte's artistic visions were carried out in every detail throughout the house. They chose handscraped Virginia hardwood for the floors, and John installed a dark trim throughout the house to bring visual interest to the arched doorways, skylights, windows and walls.

The biggest masterpiece in the Belt collection is the house itself. Built deep into a hill and unlike any of the neighboring houses, this home was a labor of love, science, engineering and art. "Sometimes I think when I retire I'd like to move to Temecula, California," Charlotte said, "but I don't think I could ever part from this house John designed for me." **NOW**

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**Cedar Hill Collegiate Academy (CHCA)** is a 6-8 middle school that will open with an inaugural class of 6th graders in the fall of 2015. Located on the campus of Cedar Hill Collegiate High School, CHCA is a small learning community made up of passionate educators and purposeful students. CHCA students engage in an intensive and inspiring curriculum with a strong focus on college prep and community involvement.

**Cedar Hill Collegiate High School (CHCHS)** is a nationally recognized Early College High School within the Cedar Hill Independent School District. CHCHS opened in 2008 and earned an Exemplary rating from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for four consecutive years. In 2014, Collegiate High School earned six out of six Distinctions from TEA, was named to the Best Schools list by *U.S. News and World Report*, and was ranked as the 6th best Early College High School in the Nation by *Newsweek*.

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Collegiate Elementary Prep School (PreK - 5th) and Academy Middle School (opening with 6th grade) will begin accepting applications in early 2015 for the upcoming school year. Cedar Hill Collegiate High School accepts applications for incoming freshman from November to March of each year. For more information, visit [www.chisd.net/innovation](http://www.chisd.net/innovation).



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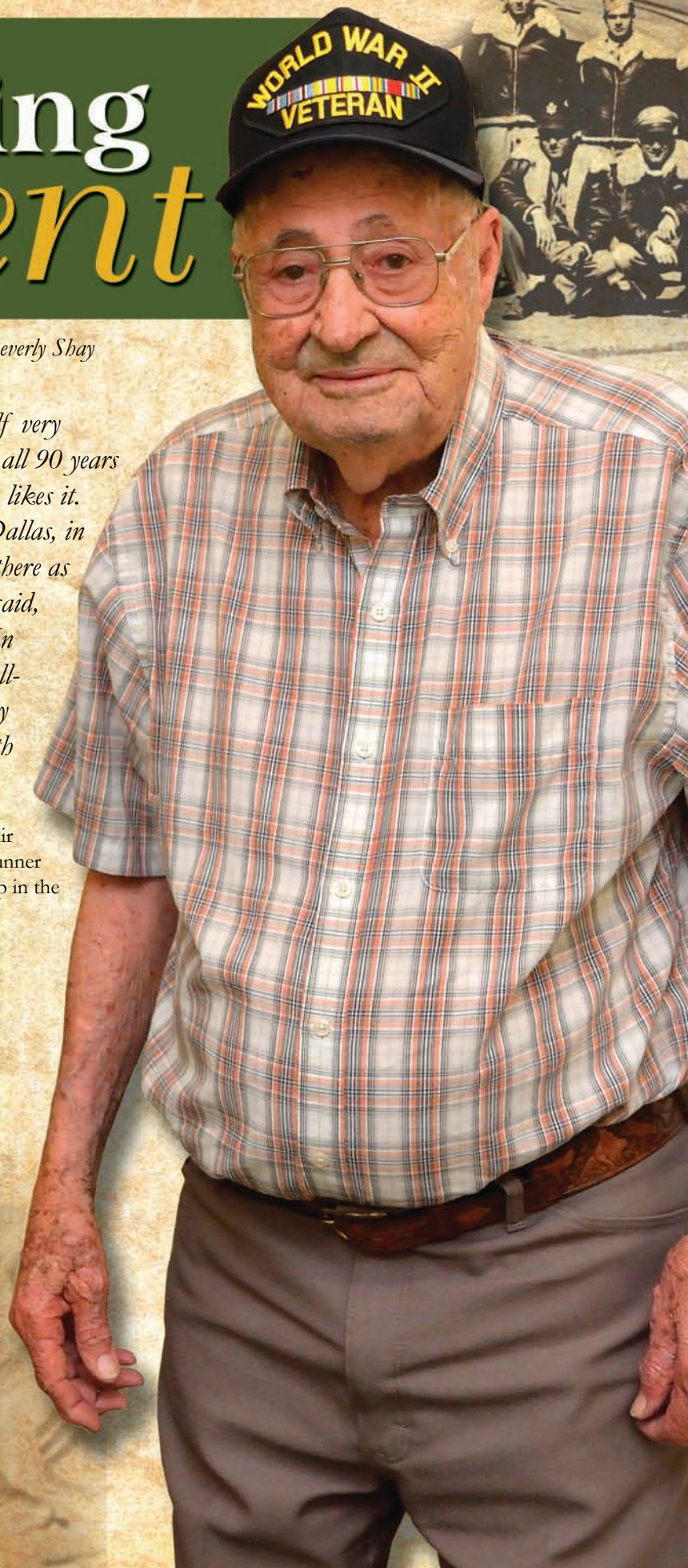


# A Defining Element

— By Beverly Shay

*Sonny Kemble is a happy man. "I consider myself very blessed," Sonny humbly remarked. His life, nearly all 90 years of it, has been filled with sports — just the way he likes it. From about second grade onward, Sonny lived in Dallas, in Trinity Heights, a place known to those who lived there as Hungry Heights. "I played football in school," he said, jumping right into the defining element of his life. In fact, as a senior in 1941, he was the second team all-state quarterback for Sunset High School when they went to state semifinals, losing to Wichita Falls with a score of 0-14.*

Along with seven of his friends, Sonny joined the Army Air Corps right after Thanksgiving in 1942. He served as a tail gunner in a B-17 with crew #45 as a part of the 100th bomber group in the







Eighth Air Force, known as the greatest air armada in history and the first group to complete 45 missions. The Mighty Eighth, as they came to be known, could dispatch more than 2,000 four-engine bombers and more than 1,000 fighters on a single mission. Their success came at a high cost — the Eighth suffered one-half of the U.S. Army Air Force casualties — 47,000-plus casualties and more than 26,000 deaths. Together, soldiers in the Eighth earned 17 Medals of Honor, 220 Distinguished Service Crosses, 850 Silver Stars, 7,000 Purple Hearts and 46,000 Air Medals.

Sonny's crew, based out of Thorpe Abbots, England, did not stop at the set 25 missions they flew over Germany and France. They completed 28, including the first daylight raid on Berlin on March 6, 1944. "We would fly in a formation of three high, three lead in the middle and six bombers behind in the lower back. That's where they got the name Tail End Charlie — that was me!" Sonny recalled. "Our last mission was on D-Day, June 6, 1944," he paused, eyes downcast. Sonny's plane was shot. He, the pilot and co-pilot were injured, and their radio operator was killed. But the pilots made it back to the base, even with the tail, where Sonny was positioned, half shot off. "Out

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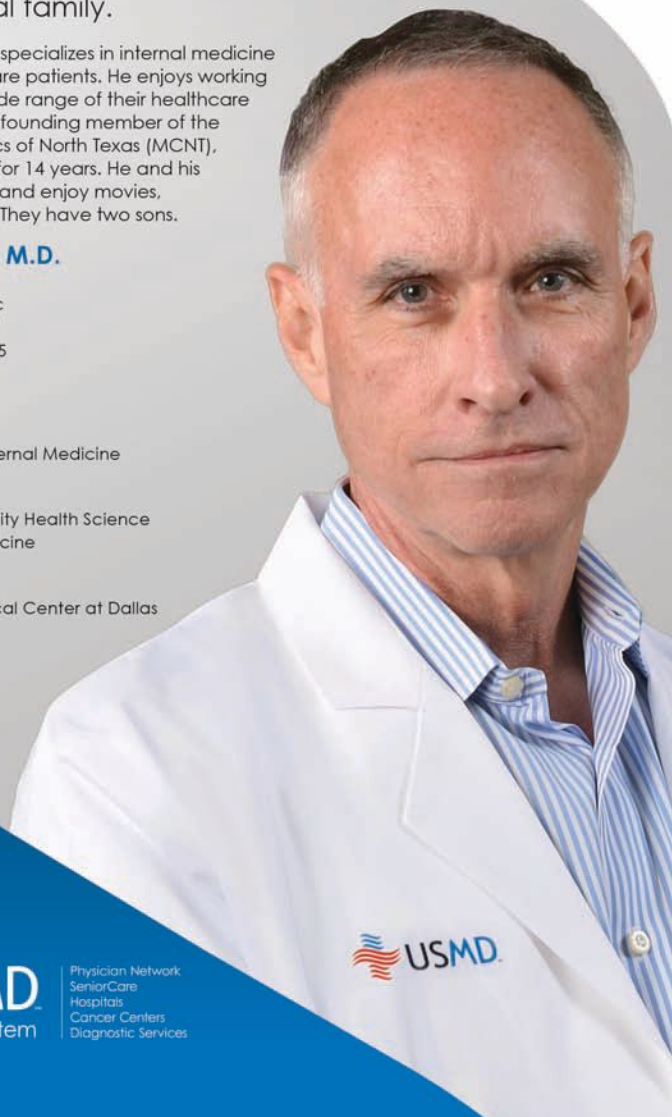
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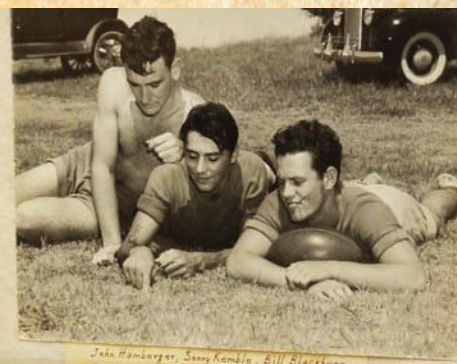
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of the 200 men that set out that day, only 30 returned. We lost 69 bombers." Sonny, himself, earned several medals: Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal and Good Conduct Medal. "The war is something you never forget, especially the friends with whom you went, but who did not return," Sonny stated quietly.



Coming back to the states with Sonny on a transport ship were 300 airmen and 300 German prisoners. Sonny's 22-day leave in Miami lasted about a week before he was sent to Amarillo to serve as a tail gun teacher. Here his sports talent came into play, when he began pitching for the base's softball team. This led to time training in Panama City before going to Salt Lake City, where their base's team won the softball championship. "I could have stayed in Salt Lake City to play both





softball and football, but by then I was no longer interested in staying in the Army," remarked Sonny, who completed his military career as a staff sergeant.

Following his time in the military, due to Sonny's successful talent as a football player, he was awarded a football scholarship to North Texas State Teachers College (now University of North Texas) in 1945. He was playing football during spring training for North Texas when



he blew out his knee. They fixed it, but after December 1946, he never played again, and therefore his scholarship was rendered moot. Undaunted, he began pole vaulting, and his sports scholarship was reinstated. Studies and sports were not all that captured his attention. "I married the most popular underclass girl on January 23, 1948," Sonny recalled with a smile. "Martha and I were happily married until she passed away four years ago," he stated.

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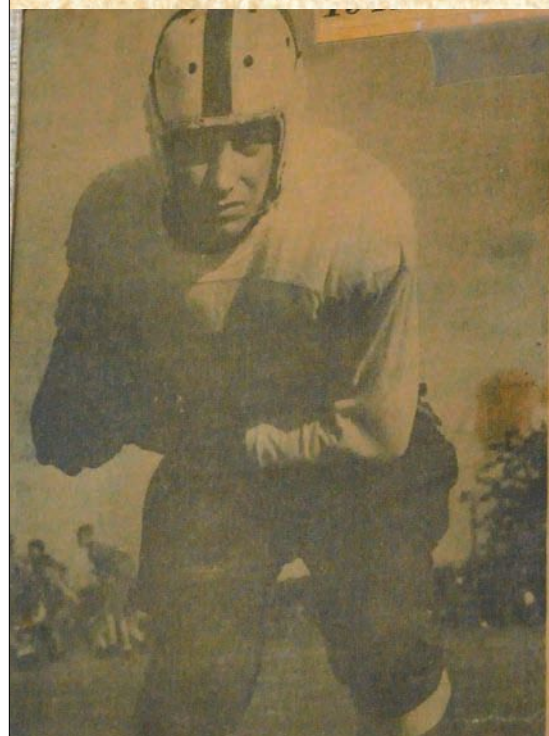
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In January 1949, Sonny earned his bachelor's in physical education with a minor in history. His coach at North Texas wrote him a letter of recommendation stating no one would run across another young gentleman who would ever know more about football. By June 1953, he had completed his master's in physical education and recreation and began coaching and teaching for Dallas ISD, a career that spanned 21 years. For another 12 years he worked as an assistant principal and principal.

Sonny continues to be involved with sports activities. Since 1992, he has been indispensable within the Duncanville ISD, assuring all the athletic events in the middle schools and high school are staffed with concessioners and ticket collectors. In an interview with *The Dallas Morning News*, Sonny remarked, "Working with the Duncanville ISD athletic department allows me to still spend time with students, and pouring my heart into young people is what I have loved my whole life."

Cathy Self-Morgan, athletic director for Duncanville ISD, and her staff of 33 coaches cannot imagine how games could ever be held without him. "Sonny handles the money from sales, schedules and manages between 18-24 people, and even though he does everything by hardcopy, without the use of a computer, he is incredibly organized," Cathy shared.



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In 2010, Sonny was inducted into the Duncanville Athletic Hall of Honor, which was “established to celebrate excellence and salute the contributions of individuals whose advancement of athletics in Duncanville ISD and beyond has made a profound difference in the lives of our young people,” states the Duncanville ISD website. Sonny is quietly pleased with this acknowledgement although he never seeks accolades.

He does, however, consider these acknowledgements at the top of the list of his most treasured adventures. In April 2013, journalist Steve Blow accompanied Sonny on a flight in a B-17 from Denton to Arlington. Then in April 2014, Sonny went to Washington, D.C., on an Honor Flight to visit the World War II Memorial. His family had nominated him, wanting him to experience the gratitude of the nation along with other World War II vets. Sonny found memories resurfacing, and his thoughts drifted to his best friend, who had been shot down and killed as he flew a B-24 over Italy. Along with others honored, Sonny was treated to a concert by Airmen of Note, premier jazz musicians; the blowing of “Taps” at the Wall of Freedom; and the changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery.

“I have been very fortunate in my life,” Sonny reiterated. “In ’57 a tornado blew down everything in the area — except the room I was standing in. My mom would say to me, ‘Son, He put you here, and He will take you away when He’s ready.’” Sonny paused, considering his blessings again. “I have three girls, of whom I am very proud, seven grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. I also have many good friends in this area — so many good people in my life.” **NOW**



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# Planning the Perfect Party

— By Amber D. Browne

*The hustle and bustle of preparing for the holiday season can be quite all-consuming. Adding a dinner party or overnight guests to the equation can increase the stress. Whether you're taking on the challenge of hosting friends for dinner or family in the guest room, having a plan in place is the key to a fun-filled occasion.*

When planning a holiday get-together, first decide who is on the guest list. You could choose to invite a few of your closest friends or a group of 20 or more. Or family

could stay for the extended holiday. In either scenario, plan the date and set a time for the holiday dinner.

Incorporating a theme is a key component to any event. The holiday itself can be used in planning for decorations, music and games, but if it's a dinner for friends, choosing a fun theme may be a good choice. Pinterest or event-planning blogs feature a variety of theme options.

Keep the following in mind if you choose to host a holiday dinner:

1. What is your budget?
2. Will it be a sit-down or buffet-style dinner?
3. What type of decor will you use?
4. Is the dinner adults-only or will children also attend?
5. What type of music and entertainment will be incorporated?





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## Budget:

The budget should include funds for food, beverages, decor and entertainment. If you plan to hire a caterer, a printer for invitations or even a cleaning crew, include those costs in the budget as well. If you don't want to host the event at your home, a local restaurant or rental facility may be the perfect place to gather. Include any rental fees in the budget. Setting aside additional funds for last-minute costs is also a good idea.



## Food & Beverage:

Planning the menu ahead of time is a priority. Cookbooks, the Internet or cherished family recipes offer delicious choices for holiday meals. If you are planning a themed meal, stick with recipes that fit the motif.

If you don't want to spend time prepping and cooking the food, hiring a caterer is an option. Many caterers provide dinnerware, serving dishes and utensils, flatware and related items. On-site caterers can help with cleanup, too. For easier cleanup or a more casual event, purchase disposable dinnerware and flatware, and make trash cans readily available to guests.

When hosting a party, you may decide to serve alcoholic beverages. You can stock the bar yourself or advise guests to bring their own alcoholic beverages. Hiring a licensed bartender to serve





drinks during the event is another option. Don't forget to provide nonalcoholic beverages and have extra ice on hand. For guests who may overindulge, have a taxi service phone number available.

## Venue, Decor & Entertainment:

Preparing your home for guests can be an undertaking, but a clean home creates a relaxed atmosphere. Stock the bathrooms with toilet paper, soap and clean or disposable hand towels. Offer guests a safe place to leave coats and purses. Lighting the fireplace or candles throughout the home creates a cozy ambience, but don't forget to extinguish the flames after the party!

Fresh flowers can brighten any table. You may choose to purchase arrangements from a local flower shop or buy seasonal flowers to create your own arrangement. Cranberries are popular this time of year and can be incorporated into the arrangement. Add one to two bags of fresh cranberries to a clear vase. Fill the vase about three-quarters full with water. "Using a sharp knife, carefully cut the ends off the fresh flowers at a 45-degree angle. Add cut flowers to vase, arranging as needed," explains a how-to page at OceanSpray.com.



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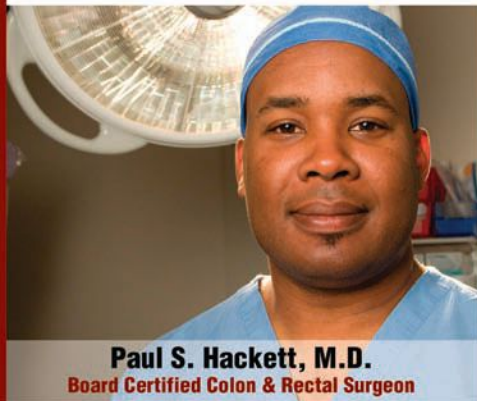
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If children and teenagers are invited, set a separate table for them. Using real dinnerware will create a more formal atmosphere and adding amusing trinkets to the table will keep the younger crowd entertained. Place holiday crackers, which hold small toys, at each table setting as a fun addition.

For entertainment, themed music can play during the event. You can incorporate games, too. For a guessing game, you can purchase a nice container and add individually wrapped candies. Make sure to count the candies first! Display the candy container alongside a jar, paper and pens for guests. Guests can write down how many candies they think are in the container and place their guesses in the jar. The one closest to the actual number wins the candy-filled container!

## Overnight Holiday Guests:

Find out beforehand what types of snacks and drinks your guests prefer, and stock the cupboard and refrigerator. When planning the meals, get your guests' input. Be sure to find out if they have any food allergies. Many overnight guests may want to help out in the kitchen and chip in on food.

An inviting guest room is a necessity. You want your guests to feel at home when they visit. Provide clean, comfortable bedding, a night light and a couple of bottles of water on the night stand. The guest bathroom should include everyday grooming items, including soap, shampoo, conditioner and cotton swabs. Include plenty of fresh towels, extra toilet paper and air freshener.

Keeping your guests entertained during their stay can be a challenge. Why not plan a shopping trip with your female guests and send the men off to play golf? Whatever you choose, don't stress! Your guests will be happy to spend quality time with you.

Hosting parties and overnight guests can take a lot of time before, during and after, so ask for help. Many hosts and hostesses often find themselves too busy to enjoy their hard work. Don't let that happen to you. Take time to sit back, chat with your guests and enjoy yourself! **NOW**

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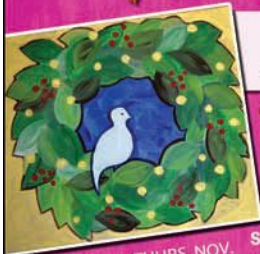
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AGES 11 AND UP

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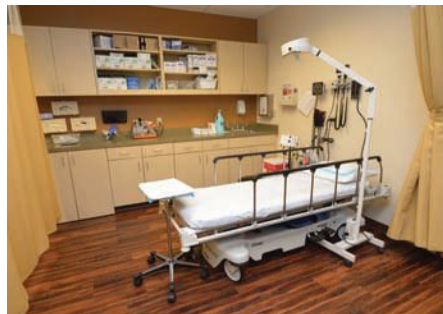


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— By Beverly Shay

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"In seventh grade I knew I wanted to be a doctor," remarked Christy, a native of Amarillo. "The short story is cutting up earthworms and frogs opened the world of anatomy to me. I wanted to be a forensic pathologist," she smiled. The Amarillo teen headed to Texas A&M University, where in '98 she earned her undergrad degree in entomology and bio-medical science. In 2002, Christy graduated from med school at Texas College

of Osteopathic Medicine (part of UNT Health Science Center) in Fort Worth, one of the nation's leading osteopathic medical schools. "I completed three rotations: forensics, pediatrics and family medicine," Christy recalled. "I liked all of them, but actually felt most comfortable with family medicine. Realizing I didn't want to spend the seven required years as a resident to become a forensic pathologist, I chose family medicine." For three years, she worked as a resident at the Osteopathic Medical Center until they closed. Christy finished her residency at Charlton Methodist Medical Center.

"During my residency, I moonlighted with CareNow. I really like their philosophy and approach to patients," Christy stated. As director of the Cedar Hill location, Christy



oversees the clinic's staff of 13, which includes nurses, lab techs, front desk representatives, two managers and an associate medical director. "We offer basic care services: company and school physicals; pre-employment drug screening; care for sports injuries; care for those with strep, flu, colds, sinus or urinary tract infections; minor lacerations, temporary broken bone care and more," Christy smiled, as she ticked off the list. On-site lab and X-ray capacities allow them to completely diagnose, screen blood and urine samples and even do breath-alcohol testing.

"One of my favorite things about working here is the constant variety. We strive to offer top-notch service and convenient, quality care, but we also listen. Listening is crucial to calming people down, especially when they are in pain," said Christy, who simply exudes calm and competence. "I also like working here because the flexibility allows me to spend time with family." Christy has three children: two sons, 5 and 7, and a 2-year-old daughter. "Each morning I pray, 'Let me do the best I can today. Give me the guidance I need to do what's best for each patient,'" she added.

When you walk in, the front desk representatives will check you in and handle the paperwork. Nurses will check vitals, administer shots, facilitate EKGs and breathing treatments and answer questions. The clinic has 13 exam rooms, an X-ray room, two triage rooms for urgent cases and an automatic external defibrillator. "For those who need urgent or advanced care, such as deep or arterial lacerations or broken bones, we will treat and stabilize them before sending them on to a hospital," Christy explained. "We are like a mini ER."

They are also certified to conduct D.O.T. physicals for bus and truck drivers. Follow-up care for illness, abscesses and work injuries and wellness checkups means the staff gets to know local people. "We even have orthopedic supplies, such as braces and protective boots for injuries," Christy added. But mostly, they offer a friendly face and competent care. **NOW**



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*Steve Martin and Amber Hatley enjoy time with Dale Hansen during Duncanville's Evening of Remembrance honoring 9/11.*



*Ms. Rebecca Moppins cleans the street in front of her home.*



*Students listen to Officer Sneed speak during the annual Cockrell Hill Elementary School 9/11 Memorial Program.*



*Carter High School band members join in the B.I.G. event at Uptown Village.*



*The DeSoto Eagles football team takes the field.*



*Stephen Mansfield, Ph.D., FACHE, president and CEO of Methodist Health System (right) is welcomed into the Mayo Clinic Care Network by Medical Director Dr. David Hayes.*



*Cotton Patch was chosen as best tasting food by adults at the Taste of Cedar Hill.*



*Duncanville Chamber members welcome Nu Beginnings with a ribbon cutting.*



*DeSoto High School cheerleaders take center stage at the Uptown Village B.I.G. event.*

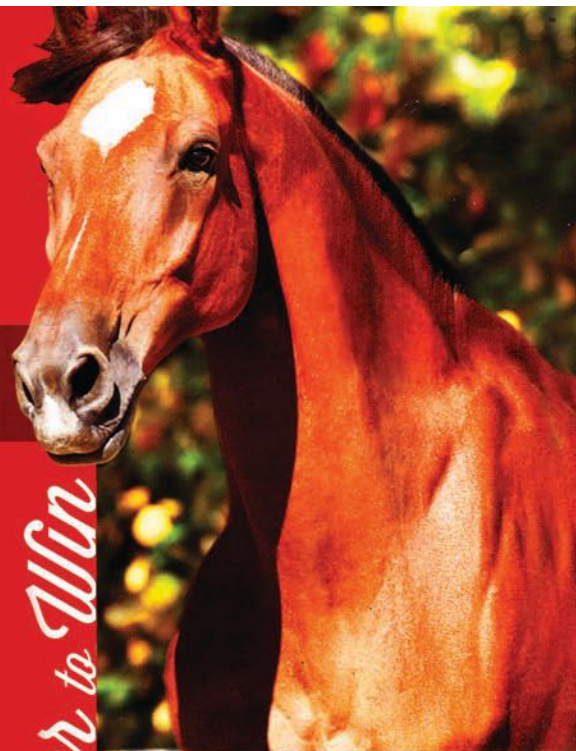


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# Are Current Stock Market Valuations Sustainable?

Recently, as the Dow Jones Industrials Average hovered around 17,000 and the S&P 500 around 2,000, there was an interesting article written on stock market valuations. The article, written by Burton G. Malkiel, author of *A Random Walk Down Wall Street*, discusses whether or not the current stock market valuations are sustainable. The answer may depend on the measure used.

Normally investors look at the price-earnings ratio, PE, (i.e. the price of the stock divided by its earnings over the last 12 months) to determine if the stock market is overvalued. With a PE ratio of 16, the stock market is not overvalued. This does not mean the market cannot have a sudden substantial decline, it just means that historically it is an average valuation. Those investors who believe the market is not overvalued based on a PE of 16 will also look at competing investments, particularly bonds. However, with bond yields at historic lows, there simply is no other substitute for stock investors. Therefore market valuation is not only sustainable but could rise.

Another measure that shows the stock market to be highly overvalued is getting more attention, especially after the Nobel Prize in Economics was awarded to Robert Shiller. The CAPE

ratio is a cyclically adjusted, 10-year average PE ratio. At 25, this measure is well above its historical average of 15 and has only been exceeded by the market peaks of 1929, 2000 and 2007. Fortunately, the CAPE seems to be a better predictor of long-term equity returns than predicting market tops.

So how can these measures be used? First neither measure can predict stock market crashes. A very high PE does raise the possibility of a decline, but it can remain elevated for a long time. Therefore, it is really a better predictor of current or short-term valuations. The current PE ratio of 16 is average, and can be sustained at this level.

The CAPE is a better predictor of long-term equity returns. Our current CAPE of 25 does not appear to be sustainable over the long term and is signaling lower-than-average equity returns over the next 10 years. **NOW**

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2014 ANNUAL

# Hometown Holiday Parade

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Stay late and join us for a showing of "A Charlie Brown Christmas" at the DeSoto Town Center after the parade!

*Saturday*  
DECEMBER 6, 2014 // 5:30 PM  
Parade begins at Seahawk Drive



## DETAILS •

The parade will begin at Seahawk Drive and travel south on Hampton Road concluding at the DeSoto Town Center.

Applications for parade participation are available by calling 972.230.9651, emailing [ccampbell@desototexas.gov](mailto:ccampbell@desototexas.gov), or by going to [www.desototexas.gov](http://www.desototexas.gov).

Join us at the Outdoor Amphitheater at DeSoto Town Center for refreshments and a free screening of "A Charlie Brown Christmas" immediately following the parade.

Applications available at [www.DeSotoTexas.gov](http://www.DeSotoTexas.gov)

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# Calendar

## NOVEMBER 2014

### November 1, 8, 15, 22

360 Volleyball tryouts : 10:00 a.m.-2:15 p.m., DV Fieldhouse. **Nov. 1** (ages 11-12), **Nov. 8** (13-14), **15** (15-16), **Nov. 22** (17-18). Must preregister at [www.ntrvolleyball.org](http://www.ntrvolleyball.org) **prior to tryout**. Call (214) 215-3726 or (888) 252-4272 for details.

### November 4

DV ISD bond election: info: [www.duncanvilleisdbond.org](http://www.duncanvilleisdbond.org) or (972) 708-2000.

Look Good ... Feel Good: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Methodist Charlton Medical Center. Free program by American Cancer Association. Must RSVP: (214) 947-5479.

### November 5

Teach Yourself: Learn A New Language: 2:00 p.m., CH library. Free language self-study resources. Class covers Mango Language Learning Resource.

### November 6 — 8, 13 — 15

Duncanville Community Theatre: *The Best Laid Plans*: 8:00 p.m., 106 S. Main St. (972) 780-5707.

### November 7

Cinema on the Square presents *Young Frankenstein*: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Pioneer Park, CH. Free movie; bring your own lawn chairs/blankets. (972) 291-5100 ext. 1084.

### November 8

46th Annual Fall Festival: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., CH FUMC (benefits: CH Food Pantry and church ministries). \$15.00 flu shots. Free: children's store/activities, Christmas wreaths, handmade crafts/goodies, silent and live auction.

### November 9

Charity Motorcycle/Car Show: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 206 N. Main St., DV. Reg.: \$10 benefits Duncanville Outreach Center. Register: (972) 365-8663/at show.

### November 11

Methodist Charlton Auxiliary's monthly meeting: 12:30-2:00 p.m. in the Auditorium. Free pot luck lunch and Christmas decorating tips. (214) 947-7777.

### November 13

Job Readiness Program: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.,

DS library. Kimesha Coleman tells how to identify skills/abilities, marketing skills and strategies on matching skills with jobs. No cost. (972) 230-9661. [www.afrendindeed.com](http://www.afrendindeed.com).

### November 15, 16

Family Campout: 6:00 p.m.-11:00 a.m., Cedar Ridge Preserve, 7171 Mountain Creek Dr., 75249. S'mores, breakfast, camping 101, night hike, crafts and more. Bring sleeping bags/tent or rent tent: \$15/small; \$30/large. Cost: \$25/person; no minors without adult. Must RSVP: (469) 526-1980 or [dcac@audubon.org](mailto:dcac@audubon.org).

### November 18

Coffee and Conversations: 7:30 a.m., Amber Terrace Elementary School. Join Supt. David Harris for candid conversations about your campus and DeSoto ISD.

### November 24

Southwest Dallas County Parkinson's Group support group. (972) 298-4556.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [beverly.shay@nowmagazines.com](mailto:beverly.shay@nowmagazines.com).*

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## In the Kitchen With Kaiya Abamu

— By Beverly Shay

Kaiya Abamu, a budding 10-year-old cook, grew up in Lancaster. “My father likes to cook and doesn’t mind my helping,” Kaiya remarked. “I cooked with my nana and my father. I wanted to learn cooking, and then I just started cooking on my own. I do go to William Sonoma and take classes on Saturdays.”

Kaiya has made desserts, such as brownies and peanut butter bars. She enjoys making stuffed peppers and jalapeño poppers. “I like to make seafood gumbo with my mama and African stew with my dad. When I cook chicken breasts, I like to use African jerk seasonings, which have many flavors blended together,” Kaiya enthused. “Cooking is fun, and I enjoy the challenge of mixing ingredients and making different dishes. And I enjoy eating what I cook!” **NOW**

### Jalapeño Poppers

**12 oz. cream cheese, softened**  
**8 oz. cheddar cheese, shredded**  
**1 Tbsp. bacon bits**  
**12 oz. jalapeño peppers, halved and seeded**  
**1 cup milk**  
**1 cup all-purpose flour**  
**1 cup dry bread crumbs**  
**2 quarts oil**

1. In a medium bowl, mix cheeses and bacon bits. Spoon mixture into pepper halves.
2. Put milk and flour into 2 separate bowls. Dip stuffed peppers into milk and then into the flour, making sure they are well-coated with each. Allow peppers to dry for about 10 minutes.
3. Dip peppers into milk again and roll in bread crumbs. Allow them to dry again. Repeat to ensure entire surface of each pepper is coated.

4. In a medium-sized skillet, heat oil to 365 F. Deep fry peppers 2-3 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from skillet and drain on paper towels.

### Great-grandmother’s Punch

*I make this for Christmas dinner.*

**6 bananas**  
**12 oz. frozen orange juice**  
**6 oz. frozen lemonade**  
**1 46-oz. can pineapple juice**  
**3 cups water**  
**2 cups sugar**  
**4 quarts Ginger Ale, chilled**

1. Mash bananas in blender with small amount of orange juice. Combine with remaining orange juice, lemonade, pineapple juice, water and sugar; mix well. Pour into container and freeze.
2. Two hours before serving, place mixture into punch bowl and add ginger ale.

### Stuffed Bell Peppers

**2 lbs. ground beef**  
**1 15-oz. can mixed vegetables, drained**  
**2 15-oz. cans tomato sauce (divided use)**  
**1/2 cup cooked rice**  
**1 small onion, chopped**  
**3 green onions, chopped**  
**3 cloves garlic, chopped**  
**1 egg**  
**Salt and ground black pepper, to taste**  
**4 large green bell peppers, tops removed, seeded**

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Combine beef, vegetables and 1 can tomato sauce. Thoroughly mix in remaining ingredients except peppers and remaining can of tomato sauce. Spoon mixture into peppers.
3. Arrange peppers in a baking dish. Spoon remaining tomato sauce over peppers. Cover dish with foil.
4. Bake until meat is no longer pink, about 1.5 hours.

### Mexican Corn on the Cob

**4 ears corn, shucked**  
**1/4 cup butter, melted**  
**1/4 cup mayonnaise**  
**1/2 cup Cotija cheese, grated**  
**4 wedges lime (optional)**

1. Preheat outdoor grill to medium-high heat.
2. Grill corn until hot and lightly charred all over, about 7-9 minutes.
3. Roll corn in butter and spread evenly with mayonnaise. Sprinkle with cheese and serve with lime wedges.

### Chocolate Drops

*This recipe is from my aunt.*

**1 cup sugar**  
**1/2 cup Karo syrup**  
**1/4 cup honey**  
**1 1/4 cup peanut butter**  
**4 cups Coco Puffs**

1. Boil sugar, syrup and honey; remove from heat and add peanut butter. Stir in cereal and drop on foil. Cool.

**To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).**



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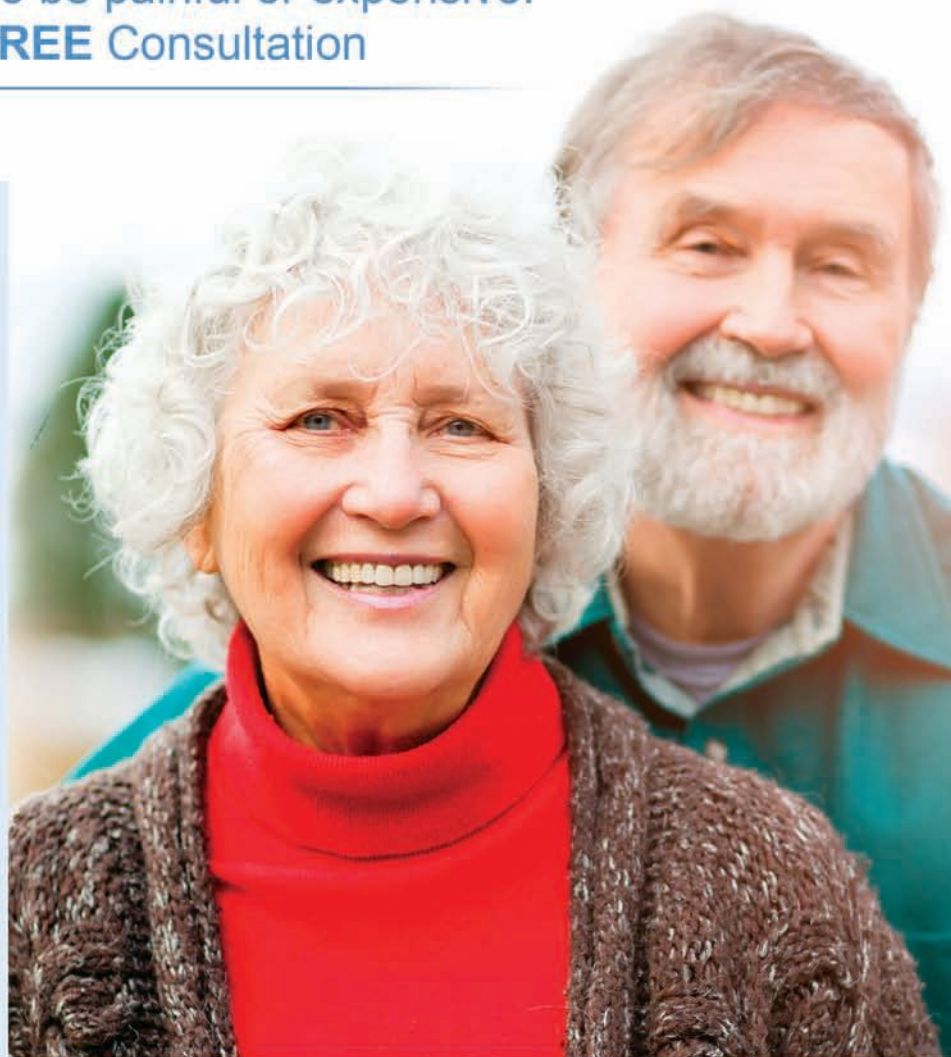


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