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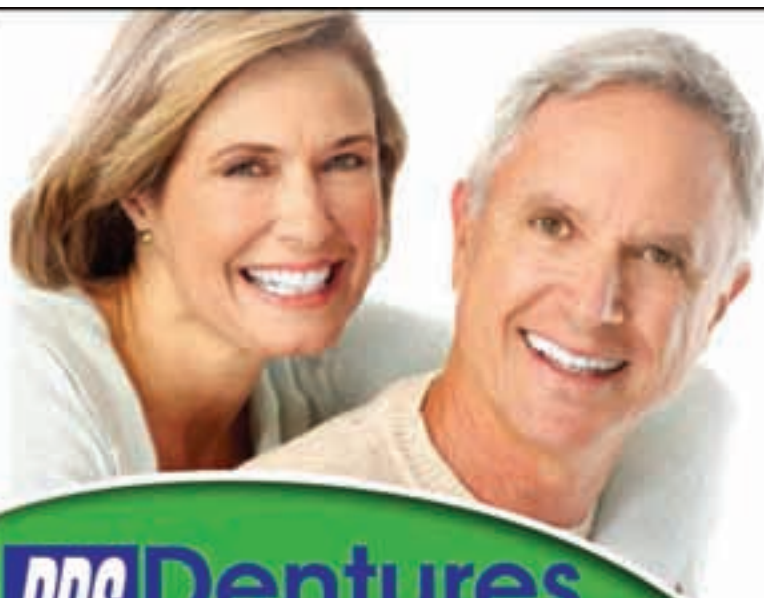
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General Manager, Rick Hensley

EDITORIAL

Managing Editor, Becky Walker

Southwest Editor, Beverly Shay

Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong

Writers, Maria Juarez . Katrina D. Lewis

Cindy Malone . Angel Morris

Editors/Proofreaders, Pat Anthony

Angel Morris . Pamela Parisi

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla

Artists, Julie Carpenter . Martha Macias

Connie VanderBeek . Allee Brand

Marshall Hinsley . Arlene Honza

Brande Morgan

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Rose

Photographer, Opaque Visuals

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives,

Linda Dean . John Powell . Rick Ausmus

Teresa Banks . Laura Fira . Bryan Frye

Melissa McCoy . Lisa Miller . Carolyn Mixon

Jami Navarro . Lori O'Connell

Steve Randle . Linda Roberson

Office Manager, Angela Mixon

On The Cover



Don and Sandi Holzwarth
pose in a moment of
rustic rest.

Photo by Opaque Visuals.

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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.

Editor's Note

Happy New Year!

The older I get, the faster the years seem to go by. With the approach of each fresh year, I wonder what might be in store. What lies ahead in this year for you? What dreams do you have? I usually find out mine when I write.

Many years ago, in the seemingly endless midst of child-rearing, a friend asked me, "If you could do anything you wanted, what would it be?"

The answer was easy — "Write!"

So, here I am — writing. I can't imagine not writing. I always tell people it is so much easier to write other people's stories, because the material is already there. Truthfully, you all have much more interesting lives to write about than mine. And I am really honored that you entrust your stories to me. But I seem to be insatiable, always looking for more. So, please keep those story ideas coming.



Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
bshay.nowmag@sbcglobal.net



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District Celebrates Gold Performance Acknowledgments



Duncanville ISD is proud to announce that 12 of 17 eligible campuses, or 70 percent of our schools, earned one or more 2011 Gold Performance Acknowledgments, and the district earned two Gold Performance Acknowledgments. The twelve Duncanville schools were recognized during the December School Board Meeting for a total of 21 Gold Performance Acknowledgments. Visit duncanvilleisd.org for a complete Gold Performance listing.

Board Members Help Our Kids Shine

Establish a vision for the education program, design a structure to achieve that vision, assure schools are accountable to the community, and strongly advocate continuous improvement in student learning — this is the job of a School Board Trustee. Their responsibilities entail an endless string of meetings and school functions, reams of reports, agendas, proposals, and other information to read and study, and a host of difficult decisions to make. Duncanville ISD applauds our Board's efforts to serve as advocates for our children and the voice of public education. Focused on the future success of each student enrolled in the district, the Duncanville ISD Board of Trustees truly helps our kids shine year after year.



District Holds First Knighting Ceremony

In an age when bullying has become of increasing concern around the country, Duncanville ISD continues to teach students character and competence, from the time they start school until the time they finish. One program that is helping the district accomplish this goal is the Early Act First Knight pilot curriculum at Central Elementary.

This character education program, created by The Knights of the Guild for students in grades K-8, teaches knightly virtues and Rotarian values such as tolerance, responsibility, confidence, perseverance, discipline, respect, honesty, compassion, friendliness, and service. Since Central Elementary's kick-off event this past September, students have been studying the character-education curriculum, devoting ten minutes of class time each day to the subject. With a different virtue spotlighted each month, knighting ceremonies are held to recognize students who best display those attributes. The school's auditorium is transformed into a medieval banquet hall, and honorees receive medallions and certificates in the presence of their friends and families. Central's first knighting ceremony was held in November, recognizing the students who demonstrated tolerance and responsibility.





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NEVER TOO OLD

— By Beverly Shay

With the advent of the New Year following holiday indulgences, many people consider reining in their appetites and creating or venturing back into a physical fitness routine. Some succeed. Some don't. Most people either make excuses or allow themselves great latitude in regard to discipline until they have no other option. Once a decision is made for a drastic and consistent lifestyle change, it helps to have others join or support them. "I never would have been able to achieve consistent improvement without my running and workout buddies, Alex, Jill and Patty and all the women who have run with me," Linda Dean remarked.

Linda Dean is a well-known figure around Duncanville, Cedar Hill, DeSoto and Midlothian, having made quite a mark within the NOW family, where she works as a sales rep for *SouthwestNOW Magazine*. Linda was born in Houston, spent her childhood in Vegas and arrived in Duncanville when she was 13 years old, living in the area ever since. Linda liked sports and played on the Byrd Middle School girls' basketball team and with a local softball league. "I graduated from Duncanville High School in a class of 505 in 1978. I wasn't playing basketball anymore — too short!" Linda said, with her trademark laugh.

Linda's diligent work habits started with a part-time job at Doctor's Pet Center at 15. She has worked for Shaw's and Linz Jewelers. By 19, she began working for Katz Communications, Inc., initially as a receptionist, then assistant sales rep and later with Young & Rubicam, Inc. as a media buyer. Around the same time, Linda began playing tennis, got married and had two sons: Clint and Trent.

Linda took a break from being a super saleswoman and went to college, where she earned an associate degree in substance abuse counseling. She



interned for a year at Haven Hospital, later working as a court-appointed special advocate for Dallas CASA. "It was an interesting job," Linda recalled, "working as diligent search coordinator looking for family members of children in CPS care. I actually developed a program that CPS incorporated." Linda, now a single mom, purchased her first home in Duncanville. She worked as a marketing manager for Claritin and started her own business selling specialty products. After working as an account executive with KLTU and ESPN Radio in Dallas, her health issues dictated a job change to Today Newspapers and *The Real Estate Book* before coming to NOW Magazines. Linda has over 30 years' experience in the advertising/marketing field.

The tag "super" has taken on a new meaning in her life. "I flat out call her Superwoman," said Jill Gueber, Linda's trainer for almost two years. Although Linda, a self-proclaimed sports fanatic, had earned a brown belt in karate, her health began to break down. By the time Jill met her, "Linda was a mess!" She was struggling with Crohn's disease, autoimmune, fibromyalgia and a rare bladder disease that necessitated an implant to aid in pain control for her bladder. Linda was like the Energizer bunny, she just kept going, but pain and exhaustion were taking a toll.



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"At 40, I vacillated between playing tennis and being too sick to play. I went to all sorts of doctors, every -ologist there was," Linda recalled. "I was tested for lupus, MS, arthritis, lymes disease. With symptoms changing, my diagnosis changed. I took chemo drugs and hurt all the time. The meds caused me to gain weight. Basically, my body was attacking itself. Meds, exhaustion and extensive blood work each month completely frazzled me," Linda admitted. "I had no option to give up. I *had* to keep going."

She decided to find a gym, knowing she would need a trainer — someone who would understand her limitations, yet work within them, to push her. She needed something to change — a miracle. When Linda met Jill in April 2010, Jill knew she had the challenge of a lifetime — getting her to believe in herself. "Linda was so young to have so many physical issues," Jill remarked. "She wanted to overcome but didn't know if she could."

Jill and Linda's friends forced Linda to forge ahead. She began kickboxing with Alex Allred. Every step of the way was hard-earned. "Alex said if we could last an hour in her class, we could run three miles. Then Alex started the Midlothian Running Club," Linda recalled. "Patty walked and ran with me until I could run a full mile. My first 5K was at Country Day on the Hill, where I got best time for my age group. I could never have








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done it alone," Linda reiterated. "The camaraderie I found with the women at Main St. Gym made me want to succeed for them, as well as for myself. I couldn't even do one sit-up when I started. Every time I worked out, everything hurt, especially the first three weeks. I couldn't even sweat," Linda recalled. She worked out at the gym two times a week and did kickboxing three times a week. By July, she was running, first one mile, then two, then three-and-a-half, then six miles and later a half marathon.

As Linda's core muscles strengthened, she felt better and got off her meds. "My goal was to run a half marathon in October. 'I remember Alex telling me, 'If you can run this, it will change your life.' That was what I was going for: a change of lifestyle."

"I HAD NO OPTION TO GIVE UP. I HAD TO KEEP GOING."

So there they were at a 13.2-mile Boo Run in the hills of Cleburne. By the end of the first 10K lap, Linda was tired but determined to finish the race. "As I came up to the straight away and the finish line, all my running buddies, who delayed their training for a full marathon, ran with me. I finished only six minutes behind them! It was the sweetest finish I'd had yet — two hours and 38 minutes. *It did change my life!*" Her friends were as excited as Linda was for her to finish.

"Linda walked into the gym for better health, never realizing what she was really in for," Alex remarked. "She has friends for life, a new respect for herself and what she can do and how strong she is."

Linda is cleared of Crohn's, completely off medications and the implant she wore for 10 years has been removed. She has done 800 sit-ups in one hour, and she has her life back. "Mostly, I want people to know that you can change your lifestyle. I didn't think I would live to be 50, but I am past that now and feeling better than I ever have in my life. I recommend changing your diet, exercising with good buddies — take care of yourself. Let God help you turn your life around." **NOW**

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Seek and Ye Shall Find

— By Angel Morris

When one door closes and another doesn't open, Job Seekers Ministries will help you find a window. During a time when landing jobs is more competitive than ever, a group of volunteers from DeSoto's First United Methodist Church is dedicated to helping locals find employment. "I had been laid off from two teaching jobs in two years when I heard of a job ministry in Spring, Texas, where my daughter lived. I visited, and what I saw was a positive, Christian setting touching on all the fundamentals of job hunting," Job Seekers Ministries coordinator, Sharon Weyker, said.

Early in 2010, Sharon brought the idea back to her home church, where Reverend Kevin Strempeke told her to hit it! "There was some discussion and approval procedures to go through, but once I got the volunteers together, things happened

pretty quickly," Sharon said.

By January 2011, the group was ready to begin. As a support ministry providing encouragement, information and job-search skills training in a Christian setting, meetings are open to job seekers of all backgrounds and religions.

"This is a nondenominational, nonpolitical thing. We are not left wing or right wing. We want the whole bird!" Reverend Strempeke said.

The first step for anyone wishing to attend a Job Seekers meeting is to register by e-mailing office@fumcdesoto.org or calling (972) 223-6118. After that, simply show up for



monthly meetings the second and third Tuesday of each month from 5:00-6:00 p.m.

One participant, Francine Holowak, is proof positive that Job Seekers works. The 85-year-old DeSoto resident had attended just a few meetings when Sharon referred her to a job. "I was at the dentist, and I overheard them talking about needing office help," Sharon recalled. "I immediately thought of three ladies in the ministry and called Francine first."

Francine made an appointment to drop off a résumé with the dentist the next morning, and by that afternoon had the job. "I had no experience in dental offices, but my background was sufficient for what they needed, and I convinced them I'm a fast learner." Francine's positive attitude may be one of the most important traits a job seeker can offer a potential employer. "I had been unemployed for two years when I saw information about Job Seekers and

"We're here to offer help and hope. Plus, we have cookies."

came to a meeting. I met people here and showed that I enjoyed everything. I really think that cheerfulness came across in my interview, and that's what got me hired," she said.

Volunteer Alina Esquivel explained putting one's best foot forward can indeed make all the difference in job searching. "There will be days when you don't feel optimistic, and that's OK, but you cannot let yourself dwell on that. You have to practice positive self-talk and concentrate on what's within your control," she said.

Alina described some key areas job seekers should tend to, including health and relationships. "Taking care of ourselves is something we might not do when we are so focused on finding a job. But eating right, getting enough sleep and exercising can help us when it comes

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to impressing in an interview," she said. "Also, it is so important to surround oneself with people who will encourage and lift you up. Look for mentors who can help you reach your job goals, and don't be afraid to ask for what you need."

Guests at a recent ministry meeting did just that when allowed to share what they felt would most help them in their job searches. From those suggestions, Job Seekers set agendas for meetings focusing on résumé production, job search skills, interview techniques and networking. "The concept is to set up the ministry in modules through which people can filter for the specific help they need. Each of our volunteers has an area of expertise that they present to the group," Reverend Strempeke noted.

Curtis Johnson, who first came as an attendee, is now a volunteer who focuses on interview skills. Linda Tate, who has reviewed thousands of résumés in her career, brings that expertise to the ministry. Other volunteers are Linda Harris, who assists with cover letters and mock interviews, and William Weyker, who covers personal presentation.

"We had 16 people attend our first meeting; now 40 have gone through the program. About 17 of those have found jobs," Sharon counted. "And we are all always listening for jobs to refer each of the program members to. Networking is so important, and being part of Job Seekers is doing just that. At the same



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time, you're gaining valuable information toward making your job search more successful."

Ultimately, Sharon would like to see the group expand beyond just its members. "I would also like to work with economic groups to try to get businesses to come to the DeSoto area," Sharon said. "We had an angel tree at Christmas with names of the unemployed and what career they were interested in. Members of the congregation took a name with the promise of mentorship and assistance finding a job."

Although Francine has already found a job, she continues to attend Job Seeker meetings. "You can always learn something new, and as we all know, jobs don't last forever anymore," she said. "I love what I'm doing now, but I figure it never hurts to keep on top of things by coming to these meetings."

Current participants range in experience from janitorial to law. Other positions now sought include security, journalism, secretarial, teaching, yard work, truck driving, nursing, collection agents, dental assistants and administrative.

"No matter one's professional experience, unemployment can be a challenging time for many as they question professional worth, job skills and even their faith," Reverend Strempe said. "We are here to help. That's all we're here to do. There's no commitment [required of attendees] other than what you're willing to put in toward better preparing yourself to find a job."

Meetings open and close in prayer as volunteers ask God's favor over those in attendance. "If nothing else, the folks who attend our meetings can expect to leave feeling better about themselves. They find they are not alone and that someone cares," Reverend Strempe said. "We're here to offer help and hope. *Plus*, we have cookies."

The snacks, like participation in the group, are free. If that's not enough, Reverend Strempe encourages folks to attend just one meeting to decide if it's for them. "Try us. You'll like what you see. Besides," he said, "if closed doors have been blocking your job search, opening a new window never hurts." **NOW**

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Anything But Square

— By Cindy Malone

Barry Hendricks, a mechanical engineer with a master's degree in business, started The Beatles' song, "When I'm 64," on his iPod. He began singing, mixing do-si-dos and swing your partners in with the words of the song. Later, he remarked, "Throughout my education and into my professional career, calling a square dance is definitely the hardest thing I've ever done." Barry is a caller, who

sometimes works for The Cliff Dwellers Square Dance Club, a dance club that meets to square dance as often as they can.

The club opened in Oak Cliff in 1973 and, two years later, moved to Duncanville. Bob and Sylvia Clark were the very first presidents. Now, their son, Mike Clark, dances with them. "Since I was a child, this has been a family activity," Mike said. "It is still what I love about square dancing. Anyone can do it,

young and old, and my entire family loves to dance."

The current president of the club, Ed Graham, pointed out the wholesomeness of square dancing is what brings many families into the club. "No square dance club, at least none that I know of, has ever allowed any alcohol or smoking inside the dances," Ed explained. "Anyone of any age can come to the dances and expect to be comfortable with music choices and actions of the members."





Hearing the twang of a banjo and the rhythm of folk music brings pictures to mind of fluffy petticoats, cowboy boots and large dance floors. But it wasn't always that way. Square dancing is a combination of several dances from countries all over the world. During the time when America was being settled, people came from all over and took wagon trains across the wilderness to open areas. Those early settlers needed a way to commune with one another and enjoy the little free time they had. But how could they do that with so many different backgrounds?

From this conundrum, square dancing was born. Everyone could dance together, taking instructions from one main caller, usually the most outspoken man in the group. Instead of using only English words, they made up some words particular only to the dance. "One interesting thing about square dancing," Ed explained, "is that it can only be called in English. If you go anywhere in the world, you can find a square dance club, and they will be making the calls in English."

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was then breathed into the same pastime the settlers had previously enjoyed.

Now, square dancing is the official dance of 19 states. Most clubs, like The Cliff Dwellers, require only a casual dress code. Most callers will work in some popular music along with the more traditional Irish Jig music. Barry remembered, "Thirty years ago, callers



had to remember all of their calls. They memorized a set and protected it with their life. It became their routine, their trademark."

Square dancing is not something people see on a regular basis. It is not featured in the Super Bowl or television dance shows. So how do people start square dancing if their parents and grandparents did not introduce them to it? Buddy and Caroline Sheppard saw an advertisement in *SouthwestNOW Magazine* and signed up for lessons one-and-a-half years ago. "We were new to the area," Buddy said. "We just moved from the coast, and we needed to make new friends." Now they are hooked and invite new people to come with them as often as possible.

Michael Martens joined the club only three years ago as "a nice way to spend time with my wife." The first line of *The Cliff Dwellers Handbook* that a new member gets upon signing up for classes reads: "You have just started on a journey of friendship and fun." For the Martens and Sheppards, this proved to be true.

Ed wishes the perception of square dancing was not that it's just for old people. "However," he admitted, "I'm not sure what can be done about that."

Barry had a suggestion. "We need to market more to empty nesters, people who suddenly find time on their hands."

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As for what the club will do about gaining new membership, Ed said, "Starting in January, we will open our doors once a month to anyone and everyone who wants to try us out. No experience necessary. Then, when they love it, like we know they will, they can sign up for lessons that will begin in September."

Also, in an effort to involve young people, the Cliff Dwellers are one of many clubs that provide scholarships toward college for high school seniors that are active in the club. "Any high school senior who has been square dancing for more than a year can apply, with an essay, for one of several scholarships," Ed stated. "The candidate must also have strong ties to the community and church."

Barry called out, "*Allemande* left then *do-si-do*," and on cue, several members of the club danced through the middle of their square and spun around. Several squares, made up of eight people, were comprised of a single family. Children danced with their shoes off and were spun around by their grandparents. One woman wore a black dress and a mask, while another wore a simple pant suit. Everyone brought food to share with the group, and between dances, each person sat, chatted and ate.

The scene looked like something out of a Norman Rockwell painting, and that is by design. "Families don't seem to have as much time together as they used to, and when they do, they deserve a safe, fun, wholesome environment," Ed explained.

Next, Barry called out, "Form your squares. In this dance, every man gets to dance with every girl. Bow to your partner. And now to your corner," and arm in arm they laughed, spun and promenaded. When they were finished, everyone grabbed hands and bowed in to the circle and said in unison, "Thank You."

Why the "Thank You" after each dance? Ed explained, "We say thank you because without the others — without the square — the dance couldn't be done. We are saying thank you for being here, for dancing with me, for completing the square." **NOW**

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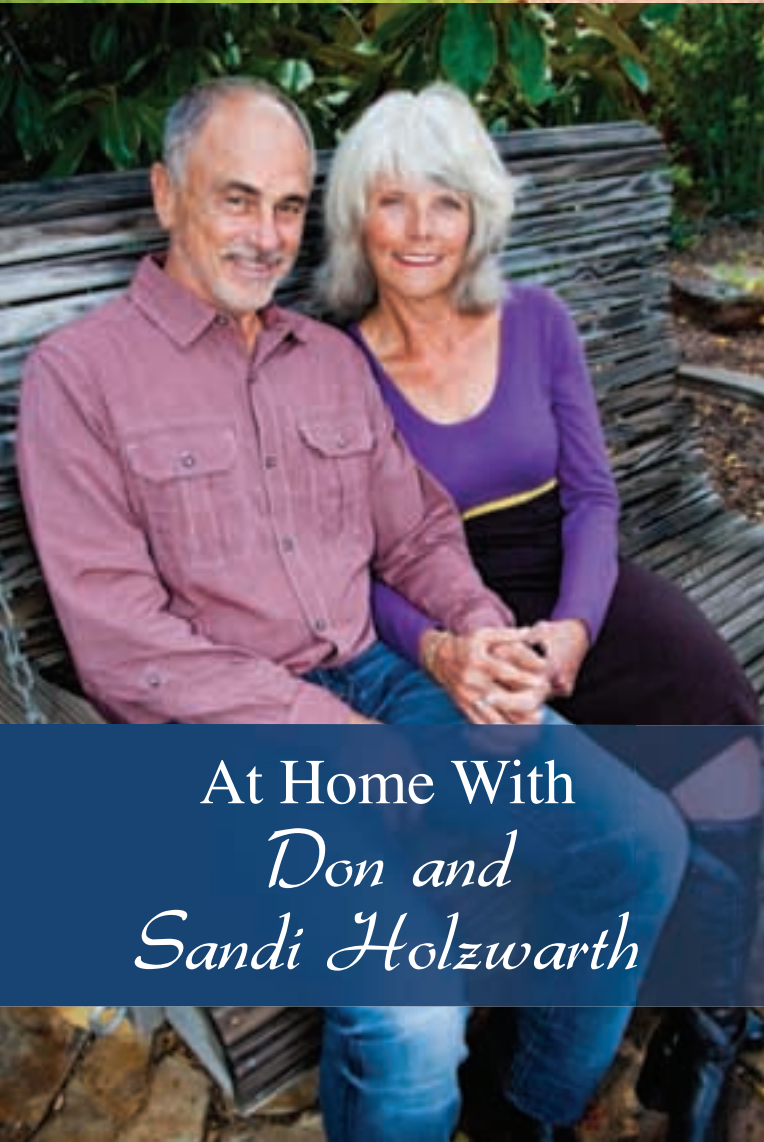
— By Katrina D. Lewis

When you think of a home nestled in the quiet streets of Cedar Hill's Lake Ridge community, swaying palm trees, gardens perfect for fairies and secret rooms echoing with children's laughter are not exactly the images that come to mind. But this is exactly what visitors will find at the home of Don and Sandi Holzwarth.

Originally from South Dakota, the Holzwarths have called Cedar Hill home for 15 years. They fell in love in college and have been married for more than 40 years. Though their roots may lie in the upper Midwest, the couple has traveled to points all over the globe, due to Don's service in the U.S. Army, and they reared three children along the way. "We moved 19 times," said Sandi, who has worked as an adult education teacher in addition to being an Army wife. "We really learned not to be clutter bugs but to also enjoy the places we were given."

As for how they came to reside in Cedar Hill, Don chuckled, "The Army will assign you where they need you to be," he said.

At Home With
Don and
Sandi Holzwarth





Community



"And you go." After retiring from the military as a colonel, Don took a position that required him to live in Dallas County. Initially residing in Grand Prairie, the couple knew it was time to build the home they've always wanted and were immediately sold on the Lake Ridge community.

Avid outdoor enthusiasts, the couple chose a lot close to Joe Pool Lake, which is visible from their front porch. This home has proven to be a dream come true for Sandi, who has become quite



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handy with do-it-yourself projects. “I told the builder I wanted a new home, but wanted a traditional feel, like we had been living there for years,” Sandi said. “Even though my kids didn’t grow up here, I wanted it to feel like home when they were here.”

One of Sandi’s personalized home touches can be seen immediately in the


front of the house, as well as every other room with a window. Beautiful stained glass windows, round and rectangular, permanently capture the beauty of various types of roses. Each room features a different window, frozen in translucent splendor. One of the most prominent windows welcomes visitors from above the front door, with the word



Rosebud artfully displayed. With many of her female relatives having the middle name of Rose, Sandi decided to pay homage by christening her home with the name of Rosebud. “That comes from my family,” Sandi said. “A lot of people ask if I did it because of the movie, but no, I didn’t!”

The formal living room centerpieces are a beautiful tapestry from Belgium and a pair of mirrors that Sandi framed in sea glass, which were found in Panama. The





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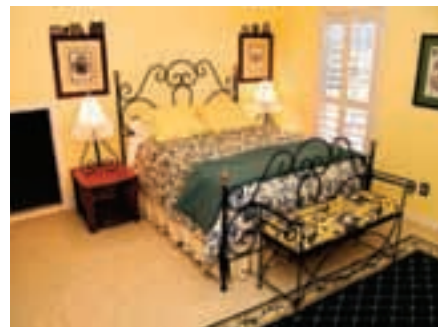
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Sandi's love of niches can be seen throughout the home — or not. To hide away common counter gadgets and keep an open airy feel throughout the home, she worked with the homebuilder to create small spaces throughout the house for storage and for highlighting pieces of artwork and pieces from around the world. In the kitchen, Sandi calls these hidden spaces her kitchen garages, and until opened, one would never know the gadgets were hidden there. The kitchen is a cook's dream, featuring sparkling, stainless steel double ovens, smooth granite countertops and a vegetable sink in the spacious center island. Though the home's entryway and downstairs living area are covered in rich and gleaming hardwood flooring, the kitchen floor adds a dash of fun and whimsy, with a black and white diamond design.

As a reminder of the family's time spent in Panama, Don and Sandi's daughter-in-law, Devon, lent her artistic talents to their decor, by painting a large mural of a man taking a siesta in a hammock. Devon also hand-painted a mural at the top of the staircase, depicting the view of their home from Joe Pool Lake, complete with a flock of egrets taking off into the horizon in front of the home. Devon not only appreciated the chance to "paint on my walls" Sandi said, but also offered her and Don great advice when it came to choosing art for

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their home. "If you like it, then do it, is what she told me," Sandi explained. "And I think that's what happened!"

Don and Sandi's master bedroom is found downstairs. Another hand-painted mural over the tub features a little red bird flying into a birdhouse in a tree of violet wisteria. The couple always wanted a door that led from their bedroom to the backyard. They incorporated such a door into their design, which leads them into a backyard area perfect for entertaining.

Despite last summer's drought, the backyard flourished and remained green, largely due to an intricate drip-hose system. A fire pit, along with an outside kitchen, provides the perfect gathering spaces for guests. Sometimes, Don and Sandi will huddle around the fire pit, even in winter, to enjoy the outdoors they love so much. Past the stone walkways and almost out of sight of the home, Don constructed a shed, designed to match the home's exterior. Running along the inside of the rich mahogany-colored cedar fence are Italian Cypress trees that still have the power to awe Don. "To see something you've planted yourself grow as tall as they are now," he said, gazing toward the sky, "is really amazing."

Inside the home and up the winding wood staircase is the study where Don displays the multiple certificates and memorabilia he has from his military career. The three upstairs bedrooms are perfect resting spots when the couple's children and grandchildren come to visit. The rooms have names, such as the Old-fashioned Room, with turn-of-the-century looking furniture, or the Savannah Room that inspires one to think of taking a walk under a canopy of magnolia flowers. One of the rooms features a small door, just large enough for a child (or a stooping adult) to enter a small hidden room, where toys and the perfect hideaway await.

Throughout their world travels, the Holzwarths have held true to one important truth, which has kept them strong and united through every move — having a sense of community. They totally agree they have found just that in their home.

"We've learned how to make friends fast and how to entertain," Sandi confessed. "We've made every place home, and that's kind of what it's been all about." **NOW**



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Jay Hoover, resident manager, poses with the Abby's Storage truck, available for local move-ins.

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— By Beverly Shay

From time to time, many people find themselves in need of a safe, nearby facility to provide temporary or long-term storage. Abby's Storage offers a variety of amenities for your convenience and peace of mind. Jay Hoover has been the resident manager since March 2009. "Having an on-site resident manager provides additional security and confidence for our clients," Jay remarked. "We keep a clean, safe, well-lit facility, so clients can access their belongings at any time. Our company and I, personally, take it seriously that people have entrusted their belongings to our care."

Abby's has 443 storage units, regular and climate-controlled, varying in six sizes from 25 square feet to 300 square feet, as well as nine parking spots for boats, RVs, mobile shops and construction vehicles. Pricing ranges from \$19.95 to \$250 per month. "People store everything from business documents to

household goods to bass boats," Jay stated. This facility was built in 2006 as one of three Abby's Storage locations.

Every space is conveniently located at ground level with latches designed to hold a high-security disc lock or padlock provided by the individual. Along with 24/7 video surveillance, the outer gate opens only to a pass code, which alerts the manager as to whom is entering the property. Once at the storage unit, a private, individual unit door alarm code must be entered, ensuring additional safety, and again, alerting the manager which unit is being opened. Jay can then be certain the person who entered the property is only accessing their own unit. Their no-cash transaction policy adds another layer of security.

Jay comes from a military background and has worked as a

senior program analyst in IT and as a marketing manager in finance. "While not ready to be fully retired, I was looking for a job with less stress. Since coming to Dallas/Ft. Worth, my wife and I have always liked the Cedar Hill area with its city amenities and country feel. This location is perfect," Jay said, adding that he finds their clients to be enjoyable, fantastic people. His responsibilities also include ground maintenance, sweeping and cleaning out units and maintaining the computer system.

"The main enemies in a storage facility are humidity and insects. So our facilities are built and maintained with that in mind. All of them are dry wall-finished on the inside. We spray for insects around all the units monthly and treat units immediately after they are vacated and again before use by someone else," Jay explained. "We recommend clients use an insect-control

"People store everything from business documents to household goods to bass boats."

program in their unit and, of course, that they don't store food items."

If you plan to store fine wood furniture, Jay advises renting a humidity-controlled unit. "If you package electronics in cartons with Styrofoam and silica gel packs, you most likely won't need a humidity-controlled unit. Another way to dissuade humidity is to place items on wood pallets and leave space between them and the walls. Sometimes, it is more convenient and cost-effective to rent two units: one for items merely stored and a smaller one for items you need to access or for which you want climate-control," Jay said.

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The (Possible) Hidden Benefits of Garlic

— By Maria Juarez, M.D.

Garlic is a bulb-shaped vegetable that belongs to the same class of plants as onions, chives, shallots, leeks and scallions. It is used for flavoring in cooking because of its characteristic odor and taste, which comes from a component called allicin that is very rich in sulfur. In addition to sulfur, garlic also contains arginine, oligosaccharides, flavonoids and selenium, all of which may be beneficial to health.

Garlic is famed for its supposed health benefits and has been used medicinally for over 5,000 years for various ailments, from lowering blood pressure to infections. The question of whether garlic can help prevent cancer, however, still remains. Laboratory research shows that it has antibacterial properties; it can block the formation in cells of cancer-causing substances or halt their activation; and it can enhance DNA repair, reduce cell proliferation and induce cell death.

All of the available information about garlic and cancer prevention comes from *observational studies* comparing cancer incidence in populations who consume or do not consume garlic (epidemiologic studies), animal models or observations with cells in culture. *These findings have not yet been verified by clinical trials in humans.*

Several population studies show an association between increased intake of garlic and reduced incidence of certain cancers, including cancer of the breast, stomach, colon, esophagus and pancreas. An analysis of data from seven population studies showed that the higher the amount of raw and cooked garlic consumed, the lower the risk of stomach and colorectal cancer.

But few studies have been done with real people to determine if garlic can prevent cancer. They used different preparations of garlic and allicin (which vary in concentration and in the number of active compounds they contain), and their results are not conclusive.

Because all garlic preparations are not the same, it is difficult to know the amount of garlic that may be needed to reduce cancer risk. The active compounds present in garlic may lose their effectiveness with time, handling and processing. The World Health Organization's (WHO) guidelines for general health promotion for adults is a daily dose of 2 to 5 g of fresh garlic (approximately one clove), 0.4 to 1.2 g of dried garlic powder, 2 to 5 mg of garlic oil, 300 to 1,000 mg of garlic extract or other formulations that are equal to 2 to 5 mg of allicin.

Excessive consumption of garlic can cause side effects, apart from strong breath and body odors. Garlic occasionally causes allergies, from mild irritation to potentially life-threatening problems. Eating fresh garlic bulbs, extracts or oil on an empty stomach may cause heartburn, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Garlic should also be avoided by people who are prone to stomach conditions, such as ulcers, as it can exacerbate the condition or cause new ones. It may also lower blood sugar levels and increase insulin.

Garlic interferes with several prescription drugs. It also acts as a natural blood thinner and, thus, should be avoided by pregnant women, people about to undergo surgery and people taking prescription blood thinners, such as warfarin.

Garlic bulbs are sometimes contaminated with the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. *C. botulinum* can grow and produce botulinum toxin in garlic-in-oil products that are not refrigerated and do not contain antibacterial agents. In addition, chemical burns, contact dermatitis and asthma can occur when garlic is applied to the skin. **NOW**

Maria Juarez, M.D. • The Cancer Institute



Time for New Year's Financial Resolutions

Once again, it's time to make some New Year's resolutions. This year, in addition to hitting the gym, learning that second language and getting better organized, why not also consider a few financial resolutions?

What types of resolutions might you consider? Here are a few suggestions:

- **Contribute more to your retirement accounts.**

The new year means that you are one year closer to retirement. To help yourself build resources for the lifestyle you've envisioned as a retiree, try to boost your contributions to your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. You can do this if you get a salary increase and devote at least part of it to your 401(k). At the same time, try to "max out" on your Individual Retirement Account (IRA). For 2012, you can contribute up to \$5,000 to an IRA, or \$6,000 if you're 50 or older.

- **Reduce your debts.**

Look for ways to cut down or consolidate your debts. It may not be easy, but it's worth the effort because the lower your debt load, the more money you'll have available to invest for the future.

- **Build an emergency fund.**

If you don't already have an emergency fund containing between six and 12 months' worth of living expenses, start building one soon. Keep the money in a liquid vehicle — one that's separate from your everyday checking and savings accounts. Without such an emergency fund, you may be forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for unexpected costs, such as a major car repair, a new furnace or a large medical bill.

- **Don't overreact to volatility.**

In 2011, the financial markets have been volatile, with big gains followed by big drops followed by big gains — a true roller-coaster pattern. Try not to let large, short-term price movements influence your investment decisions. Many of the factors that cause jumps or declines are not that relevant to long-term results — and as an investor, you want to focus on the long term. Concentrate on building a portfolio that's suitable for your individual goals and risk tolerance.

- **Be aware of different types of risk.**

For many investors, "investment risk" strictly means the possibility of losing principal when the value of an investment drops. Consequently, to cut back on their risk in the face of a volatile market, they may sell off stocks and load up on certificates of deposit (CDs), bonds and other so-called "safer" investments. But each investment actually carries its own type of risk. For example, if you own CDs that pay a two percent return, and the inflation rate is three percent, you will lose purchasing power over time. And if you wanted to sell your bonds before they had matured, you'd have to sell them at a discount if the market interest rate had risen above the "coupon" rate of your bond because no one would pay you full price for them. Just be aware that no investment is "risk-free," and try to build a diversified portfolio that can lessen the impact of one specific type of risk.

By following these suggestions, you can go a long way toward making 2012 a good year in which to make progress toward your important financial goals. So plan ahead — and make the right moves. **NOW**

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January 5

Cedar Hill Library offers tips/information on selecting/purchasing a home for first-time buyers: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

January 7, 14, 21, 28

DeSoto library offers Language Ladders Program, introducing Spanish language and culture for ages 10-18: 12:30-1:30 p.m. Speak, dance, sing; reading and writing with basic Spanish concepts. Limit: 22 persons; must register at (972) 230-9666.

January 9

Tickets go on sale (and they go quickly) for the Daddy/Daughter Dance to be held on **February 4** in DeSoto. For more information, contact Carolyn Campbell at (972) 230-9651.

January 10

Dallas Area Writers Group featured speaker will be *The Dallas Morning News* columnist, Steve Blow, at the Cedar Hill library: 7:00 p.m.

January 17

Doc Gibbs presents *The Making of a Dream* tracing Dr. King's childhood and adult experiences for the Dad's Night Out at Duncanville Public Library: 7:00-7:45 p.m. www.youseemore.com/duncanville or (972) 780-5044

January 18 and 21

The DeSoto Public Library offers free classes on using the Medline medical research database: **January 18**, 6:00-7:30 p.m. and **January 21**: 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Includes information on diseases, treatments, clinical trials, prescriptions and other drugs. Limit: 10 people; must register at (972) 230-9661.

January 27-April 6

DeSoto Library's Spring Reading Club (ages 5-12), featuring interactive stories, crafts and prizes. Sign up: **January 23**. (972) 230-9666.

January 30

Southwest Dallas County Parkinson's Group support meeting: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville. A speech pathologist from Methodist Rehabilitation Hospital will speak about LSVT (Lee Silverman Voice Training). Refreshments, exercise and speech classes are available. (972) 298-4556.

February 4

Daddy/Daughter Valentine Dance: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (Ages 4-8); 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. (Ages 9-12) at Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Road. Registration: **January 3-February 1** (limited space; register early at center). Cost: \$30/couple or \$15/person. Event features a two-hour dance with

DJ Rudy, light refreshments, a souvenir portrait and a craft. Call (972) 293-5288 or visit cedarhilltx.com.

Tuesdays

Duncanville Library's Homeschool Videos presents *U.S. History — Origins to 2000* series: 2:00 p.m. **January 17**: *Three Worlds Meet*; **January 24**: *Colonization*; **January 31**: *Slavery and Freedom*.

Duncanville Library's Bedtime Story Time presents "Be Good!": 7:00 p.m. beginning **January 24** with Sleep Well.

Thursdays

Duncanville Library's Spanish story time: 5:30 p.m. with Ms. Tamara Knapp.

Fridays

Duncanville Library's Head-to-Toe RhymeTime: 10:15 a.m., where babies and toddlers move to the beat. Starts **January 20**.

Second Saturdays

Duncanville Library's Tail-waggin' tutors: 3:00 p.m., where children read to dogs.

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

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In The Kitchen With Doris McCants

— *By Beverly Shay*

Doris McCants, who works as an administrative assistant for the Cedar Hill Chamber, grew up in Sumter, South Carolina, where cooking was a form of true Southern hospitality. “Cooking is so relaxing to me. I am inspired by my three sons, who love to eat!” Doris remarked. “When they were small, they used to watch me prepare different dishes.

“I enjoy cooking and spending time with my family,” Doris said. “My mother would put us in the kitchen when we were quite young, and we had to cook. I enjoy it more now.”

The recipes below were given to Doris by her mother, Pearl Pringle, and mother-in-law, Gladys McCants. “I thank God for them taking the time to teach me how to prepare these dishes,” Doris admitted. **NOW**

Green Bean Supreme

- 1/2 Tbsp. grated onions**
- 2 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. butter or margarine (divided use)**
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 tsp. sugar**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**
- Dash of pepper**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 1/2 cup sour cream**
- 4 oz. Swiss cheese, shredded**
- 2 1-lb. cans green beans, drained**
- 1 1/2 cups corn flakes, crumbled**

- 1.** In skillet, sauté onion in 2 Tbsp. butter, until tender.
- 2.** Remove from heat and add flour, sugar, salt, pepper, milk, sour cream, cheese and green beans. Mix thoroughly and place in a

casserole dish.

- 3.** In a separate skillet, cook corn flakes in butter (2 tsp.) over low heat, stirring until corn flakes are slightly browned. Spread corn flakes evenly over green beans.
- 4.** Bake for 45 minutes at 350 F.

Macaroni and Cheese

- 1 box or package large elbow macaroni**
- 1 small box of Velveeta cheese**
- 1 small block of sharp cheddar cheese, cut into small pieces**
- 1 stick butter**
- 3 eggs**
- 1 Tbsp. flour**
- 1 Tbsp. sugar**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 1 can condensed milk**
- 1 cup whole milk**

- 1.** In boiling water, cook macaroni until tender. Pour off water.
- 2.** Add cheese and butter; stir until slightly melted. Add eggs, flour, sugar, salt, pepper and milk. Pour into baking dish.
- 3.** Bake at 350 F for 40-45 minutes.

Red Velvet Cake

Cake:

- 2 1/2 cups sugar**
- 1 cup Wesson oil**
- 3 eggs**
- 2 Tbsp. cocoa**
- 2 1/2 cups flour**
- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 2 tsp. vinegar**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 2 oz. red food coloring**

Frosting:

- 1 stick butter**
- 1 box confectioner's sugar**
- 1 tsp. vanilla (or vanilla flavoring)**
- 1 8-oz. box cream cheese**
- 1 cup your favorite nuts, chopped**

- 1.** For cake: mix sugar, oil and eggs together. Stir in dry ingredients.
- 2.** Add buttermilk, vinegar, vanilla and food coloring. Stir until just combined.
- 3.** Pour into greased and floured cake pans.
- 4.** Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes.
- 5.** For frosting: blend butter, sugar and flavoring together, until slightly soft. Add remaining ingredients. Spread between cooled cake layers and on top and sides.

Candied Yams

- 4 large sweet potatoes, sliced less than 1/4-inch thick**
- 1 to 1 1/2 sticks butter**
- 2 1/2 cups sugar**

- 1.** Place sliced potatoes in skillet (raw, do not add water, potatoes will make their own juice).
- 2.** Add remaining ingredients to skillet. Bake at 350 F, until potatoes are tender (45 minutes to an hour).

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

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