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# Mansfield NOW

M A G A Z I N E

December 2008

**Meet the  
Masons**

**Dreams Really  
Do Come True**

**Holiday  
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**That Finishing  
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# Mansfield NOW

## Editor's Note

### *Happy Holidays!*

'Tis the season ... to run crazy with last minute shopping, overspend, under appreciate, stress out, get keyed up and melt down. What better time, then, to re-evaluate what this season is truly about? Whatever your faith, whatever your belief system, December is a month in which Americans have traditionally come together and given back to their communities.

As this new season of giving is upon us, take a moment to celebrate the wonders of this world. Talk to that neighbor you have been meaning to reach out to, enlist your entire family to give just one afternoon picking up litter or working in a soup kitchen and be so ever thankful for your health, your family and your community. Ours is a great community! In the words of that great lyricist, Louis Armstrong, "I see skies of blue and clouds of white / the bright blessed day, the dark sacred night / And I think to myself / what a wonderful world."

Your friend,  
*Alex Allred*  
MansfieldNOW Editor



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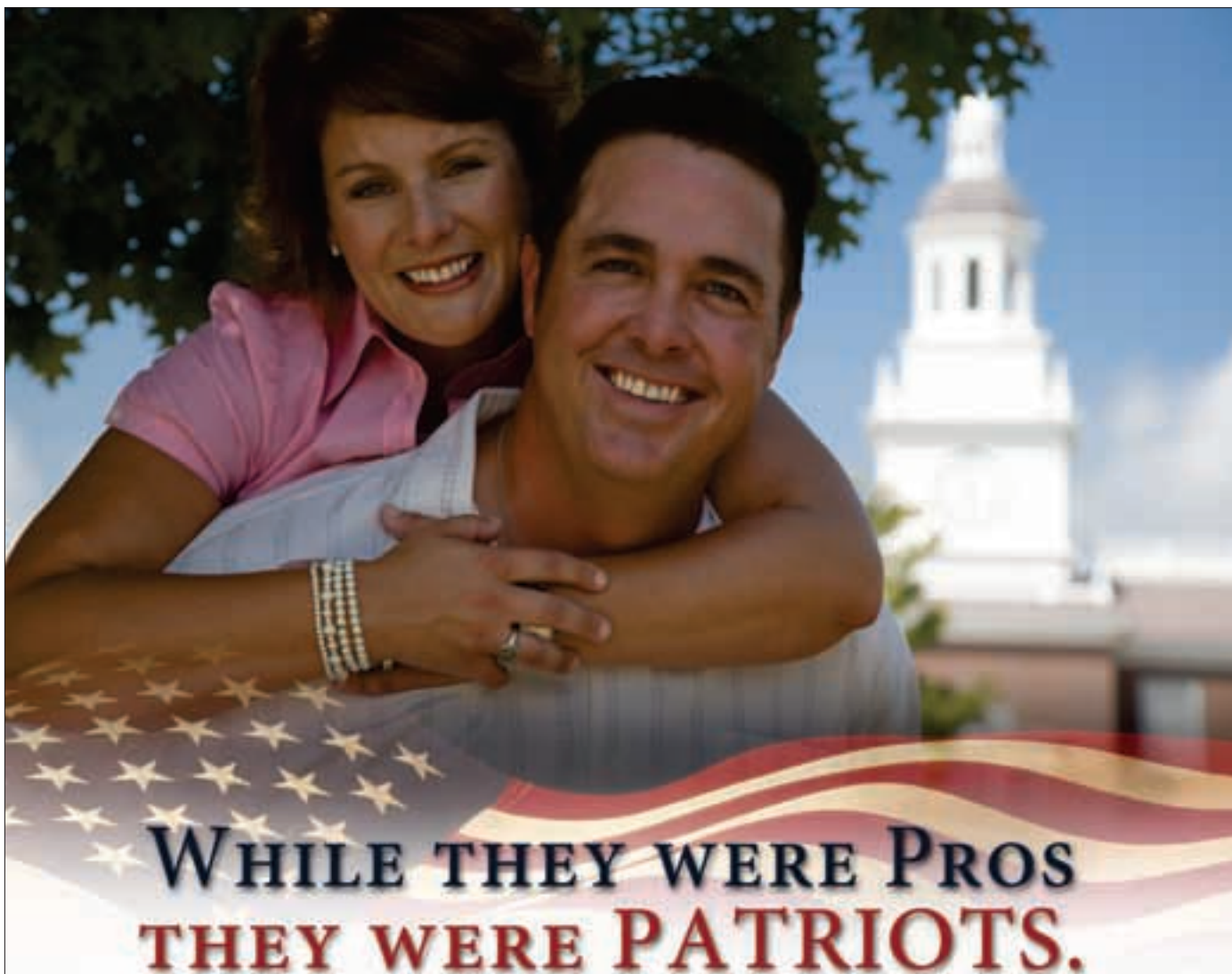
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# Meet the Masons

— By Katrina D. McNair

Front row, left to right: Dennis Murray, David Stephens, Austin Perry, Bryan Miller, Mark Hayes, Mark Huff  
Back row, left to right: Frank Fleisig, Tom Stokes, Dave Hamons, Bob Petty, Ben Miller

To say that Bryan Miller is enthusiastic about being a Mason, that he is proud of his lodge and hopeful for its future, would be a gross understatement. The affable and ever-smiling Bryan, 31, is the Worshipful Master (similar to a president) of Masonic Lodge No. 331 in Mansfield, Texas. Having been a Mason for more than four years, Bryan is bound and determined to continue the traditions of generations that came before him, and to show that Masons are just everyday guys who want the best for their city.

Bryan is a sixth-generation Mason. As Bryan was growing up, his father, Ben Miller, was very active in the lodge. Bryan remembers the good times his father had with his Masonic brothers, and these memories greatly influenced Bryan's desire to follow in his father's footsteps. "We had good times when

we were at the lodge. We used to come down here for parties and everything. I didn't know everything my dad did or what it was all about, but I knew it had to be a good thing," Bryan reflected.

One of the Masonic slogans is "to be one, ask one" and four years ago, Bryan felt in his heart it was time to do so. After talking with his wife, Denise, and his father, Bryan began the process of becoming a Mason and has never looked back. "Me joining the Masons, besides having my two kids and being married, is the best thing that ever happened to me in my life," he said. Bryan explained that the origin of the Masons goes all the way back to biblical days. Though he knows there are misconceptions about Masons and their traditions, he is ready to dispel them and let people know about the community service activities that Masonic lodges provide. Bryan indicated that it is difficult to pretend that you are a Mason. "There are questions I can ask [to verify the fact]





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and things you would have to know, but what fraternity doesn't have its traditions and secrets?"

Mansfield Lodge No. 331 (with roughly 170 members) traces its roots back more than 130 years, to 1871. "I think Mansfield should be very proud of the history they have here. I want people to know who the Mansfield Masons are," Bryan said. Many of Mansfield's prominent residents, including several city councilmen and Julian Field, the founder of Mansfield, were Masons. Nationally, many famous historical figures — including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin — were Masons. Masons also have a deep connection with Texas as a whole; Bryan explained that many of those who fought at the Alamo for Texas' independence were Masons. According to Bryan, Masons are even responsible for starting public schools in the state of Texas. Indeed, the old Mansfield High School building has a stone at one of its entrances crediting Bryan's chapter with dedicating the building.

In the process of ascending to his position, Bryan progressed through each level of Masonry — Interim Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason — to become a Worshipful Master, a position his father also held. Getting involved in the community and being visible to Mansfield's residents is important to Bryan. As the leader of his lodge, he has implemented several community service events and would love to do even more. "One of the proudest moments of me being a Mason so far, is that we fed the firefighters, police officers and military in Mansfield for 24 hours," he said. "We all put our heads together and we did it. It was very neat."

Over 100 service personnel, as well as three city councilmen, had the opportunity to enjoy a home-cooked meal during the event. Bryan and his Masonic brothers also plan to try to adopt a family for Christmas and establish several scholarships for the Mansfield Independent School District. They also plan on doing



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another 24-hour feed.

Having events such as these, while benefiting the community, also shows people the Masons are not a part of a secretive and shadowy cult society and are, at the basic level, everyday men with strong community ties. "I'm not scared to tell anybody that I'm a Mason," Bryan proudly stated, "and I don't think that anybody should be scared. We just want to get more involved in the community."

Like any organization, the Masons are affected by utility increases, food prices and the like. However, those challenges have not dampened the excitement Bryan feels when talking about his lodge's goals, and he knows being visible is key to showing the Mansfield community just how much the Masons want to work with them.



"It's kinda funny, but things still work out for the best. We're starting to get more members. When we did the feeding for the firefighters, people were interested about becoming a Mason. We had a police officer, out at the feeding, who wanted to become a Mason, and he just became one recently. So, it shows you that there's still interest and it's positive. It's exciting. I've got a fire about it and just can't talk about it enough," he said.

Though the Masons do advertise and hold recruitment drives, becoming a member starts off with just expressing interest to a Mason. As a Mason, Bryan



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and his brothers try to hold themselves to certain morals and standards. He acknowledges that keeping his beliefs close to his heart serves as a guiding compass for his life. “A lot of people think that masonry is a cult, or we’re a religion and we’re not. We take good men and make them better men,” he explained. “I try and be a better person. We’re all human; I do make mistakes. But, do I think about it, before I act sometimes? I have that emblem on my truck, and I think about how another person will look at me.”

Family involvement is an element that Bryan believes is the key to being a successful Mason, and he encourages interested members to speak with



their families about their decisions. Spouses are included in his chapter's initial interviews with interested members. "My wife supports me through and through, and I can't say enough about her. One thing that being a Mason does say is: God first, family second, work and then the Masonic life."

As for the future, Bryan's hope is that Lodge No. 331 continues to grow its membership and, of course, that it gets even more involved in the local community, including working with other Mansfield organizations. "It's the internal that makes you a Mason," he added. "We want to help, and we're always ready to go!" **TDW**



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**At Home With**

*Richard and  
Betty Jane Hanna*

# *Holiday Gatherings*

— By Alex Allred



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"My father always wanted the family to sit together all at one table," Betty Jane Hanna said fondly. So, in honor of her father, "our house was built around the dining room." In an age when it seems most difficult to get the family to gather around the dining room table, both Betty Jane and her husband, Richard, built an entire house around that premise.

This deeply spiritual and gracious couple embodies the very principles of communal gatherings. "Sitting at the table, we discovered that each of us has a unique reemergence of past times," Betty Jane said. So when she received a small inheritance after both her parents passed away, she used the money to purchase a large banquet table which seats her family: three children, three in-laws and five grandchildren. Gathering at the table allows them to slow down and truly appreciate one another.

Three generations of the Hanna family attended Mansfield High School, but it was only two-and-a-half years ago that Betty Jane and Richard decided to make the move from Rendon to build their own home in Mansfield. Even with their youngest son, Jason, designing the house, Betty Jane and Richard did not realize what a marvelous home would be created.




MansfieldNOW December 2008





"We knew when he was 2," Betty Jane joked of her son's architectural abilities, "how perceptive he was in measuring and visualizing things." With near-free reign of design, Jason created a unique blend of modern and conventional for his parents' home. Although he was still in college,

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working on his Master of Architecture, Jason factored in amenities few homebuilders consider when building a home. He made sure the hall and doorways are wheelchair accessible, including walk-in closets and showers. Although his parents are perfectly healthy, able-bodied people, he wanted to consider all possibilities as they move into their retirement years.

However, it is the great dining hall

a newcomer first notices. Not to be outdone, the foyer is also impressive with a vaulted, cathedral-like ceiling with faux leather paint and a hanging chandelier. This classic design is but a prelude to Jason's innovations. Arched doorways, hand-scraped hardwood floors matched with cream-colored carpeting are perfectly offset with the dark woods and leather bound fabric in the living area.

In addition to a large dining hall, both Betty Jane and Richard wanted a living and kitchen area large enough to hold members from their Walnut Ridge Baptist Church family. "We wanted an open area conducive to entertaining," she said.

The hope was that from the living area, visitors could also feel connected to the kitchen without the space looking like the kitchen. To create this feel, the

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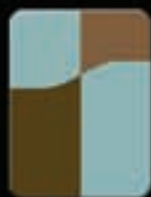
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island, a massive 9 foot by 6 foot granite top that had to be brought in by way of crane, was strategically placed between the kitchen and living room. The raised center of the one-piece stone cleverly hides the sink. In fact, this piece of granite also acts as a full-service buffet for guests from the living room area. To complete the non-kitchen look, the refrigerator and old-fashioned pantry door were placed in the hallway leading to laundry room/garage and side entrance to the dining hall. With all the modern conveniences of a warming oven, ice maker and even a mixer, which pops up from its own cabinet (one of Betty Jane's ideas), the kitchen is beautifully offset by the breakfast nook, which holds a 100-year-old table from Richard's family.

Throughout the home, a less-is-more philosophy has been

adopted in their style of decoration, and it works brilliantly. Strategically placed vases, picture frames, floral arrangements and home decor items offer just enough warmth to the home without overwhelming or detracting from the design.

However, Jason was most creative in the master bath. He was given one directive from his mother. "I wanted it to have a spa feeling," she said. In fact, it was she who designed the unique towel storage and special ordered the large mirror with a frosted etching on the border. However, it is the bathtub and "cloud" which captures the spa essence of the room.


An unusually wide bathtub sits off the floor, cradled in a wood frame which is centered in the bathroom. A wooden "cloud," roughly the diameter of a door, is suspended over the tub, offering both lights and a tremendous sense of

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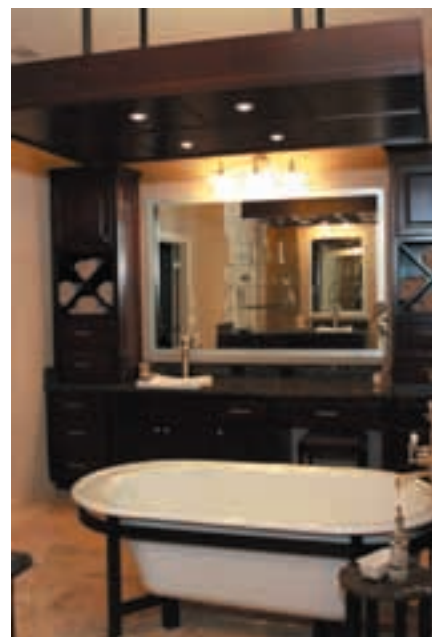
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warmth. "When this was being built," Betty Jane laughed at the memory, "the builder and I did not know what this child was talking about. A cloud?" The effect, though, when combined with a waterfall set into the wall beyond the tub, is a vision of serenity.

Beyond the bathtub, Jason placed a second sink, which also serves as a room divider between the shower and expansive walk-in closet. However, it is the shower — an open area complete



with an overhead rain shower and inlaid tiling which gives an almost 3-D effect — that makes this room feel so much like a spa. "I can't hardly get the grandkids out of here," Betty Jane laughed.

The second bathroom of this three-bedroom home is equally breathtaking.





From the bathroom door, a second doorway can be seen in the middle of the room and a step-down into the shower with more inlaid tiling to elongate the room. The red tiling complemented by Jason's own photography of red flowers with a modern splash sink and arched doorways is a true credit to his visual talents.

The front office, turned into Betty Jane's scrapbooking room, suggests Jason is not the only artist in the family. Richard also put his own creative flare into the new home. After 30 years with TXU, Richard now works as a consultant, and enjoys barbecuing and working with his smoker in the backyard. With his own chef's area, Richard has a sink, small refrigerator and an elaborate cooking setup for the special barbecue powder recipe which has been in Betty Jane's family for decades. This, combined with the hydraulic system Richard devised in his garage to carry heavier items up and down from the attic, makes this the perfect "his-and-hers" home.

The Hanna family's home is a testament to their understanding of one another — an understanding which can be traced back to the great dining hall. Statistically, we know that families who sit down to eat together are more likely to communicate, have stronger relationships and better understanding of one another. For Betty Jane, it is far more simplistic than that. "Nothing gives us more pleasure than having our family gathered for a meal at the table," she said. **NOW**

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**ARTS  
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# Dreams Really do Come True

— By Sandra McIntosh

Do you remember what you wanted to be when you grew up? Did you see yourself as a doctor, a lawyer or an elementary school teacher? Maybe you had dreams and aspirations similar to those of 9-year-old Kaeleigh Davis Crose. “I want to be a movie star,” she shared with a high level of excitement in her voice. It seems as if Kaeleigh, a happy little girl with freckles and a smile that extends from ear to ear, will not have to wait until she becomes an adult to realize her dreams.

The whirlwind ride of a lifetime began for her in the early summer and culminated with a written contract in mid-September. Sid Crose, her stepfather and close buddy, just happened to be listening to KLTY 94.9 at the right time. He overheard them talking about Fusion, an open casting call for children to be held in Fort Worth. “Kaeleigh’s mom, Donna, and I had been praying for something that would provide for Kaeleigh’s future care,” Sid said, referring to the fact that Kaeleigh was born with Down Syndrome. “Everyone, including Kaeleigh’s doctors and teachers, her grandparents and her biological father, says she is outside the norm for a child with Down Syndrome, so we knew we had to go outside the box to provide for her future.”

Once Sid returned home, they sat down and discussed what it would mean for them as a family to attend this open

call. Shortly thereafter, Kaeleigh’s registration was completed online and the wait began. This first casting call led to an invitation to another, much larger, casting call in Austin, Texas. Getting ready for this second event meant preparing a commercial and an age-appropriate monologue. “Kaeleigh and I decided to do a McDonald’s commercial, since that’s one of her favorite places,” Donna explained. “Her monologue was about recess.” There were a total of 400 eager child actors at this event. “There were also 20 talent agencies present, as well as a casting director’s panel made up of five directors. It was quite amazing,” Donna explained.

What was even more amazing was the professional way in which Kaeleigh presented herself throughout that grueling day. “Kaeleigh was only one of two special needs children out of the 400 interviewed,” Sid noted. “They treated her like any other kid, while also understanding her limitations.” Looking back, the couple laughed as they remembered how Kaeleigh had been stereotyped. “They wanted to know if she could talk,” they laughed. “She began speech therapy when she was 2,” Donna added. “She is very vocal; not shy at all.”

This boldness, as well as a strong desire to succeed, is no doubt what got her through 21 commercials and the same number of monologues that day. “She had one minute in



## ARTS NOW

each tent and one minute in front of the directors," Donna remembered. "She had to introduce herself and perform her commercial and monologue in just 30 seconds. The last 30 seconds were spent critiquing her performance." To Sid and Donna's further amazement, she completed all 21 stops without fail. As they retold the story, Kaeleigh began to share as well. "I had to say, 'Hi, my name is Kaeleigh Davis Crose. I'm 9 years old, and I have Down Syndrome,'" she said. "Then I had to do my commercial and my monologue."

Not long after returning home, the Crose family received a call from the Hollander Talent Group, a talent agency located in Hollywood, California, that has made stars out of many young talents over the years. "They are the top children's agency in the country," Donna enthusiastically noted. "Kaeleigh was going to Hollywood for another audition."



Vivian Hollander, the owner of the agency, wanted us to attend their Super Saturday event."

On September 19, Sid, Donna and Kaeleigh got on a plane and flew to Hollywood, the destination spot that has forever changed their lives. When they arrived, Kaeleigh was given lines and had to say them in a matter of minutes after standing in line awaiting her turn. "There was no real preparation time," Donna explained, "and they were only taking the children back."

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## ARTS NOW

There were no parents allowed."

This day, the rules seemed to bend toward Kaeleigh, a natural talent with a God-given gift to entertain. "Even though they weren't seeing parents, they quietly called us back. They told us they were going to represent her." The Hollander Talent Group had decided to sign Kaeleigh. They just wanted her to meet her associate in person. When they left the agency that day, to enjoy some time in Hollywood before returning to Mansfield, all Kaeleigh could say was, "I just got signed by an agent. I'm a movie star!"



**"I just got signed by an agent. I'm a movie star!"**

With Christmas right around the corner, most 9 year olds are wondering what video game they may be getting, but Kaeleigh is awaiting that role of a lifetime — the one written just for her that would put her face on the television screen and hopefully make her a household name. "The show would be called *The World According to Kaeleigh*," Sid said, smiling, "and it would be a magical world for sure." **NOW**



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Sports  
NOW

# That Finishing Kick

— By Alex Allred

Domingo Castillo is a gifted athlete, a rising star in the track world, who was named Mansfield's Athlete of the Year in 2006 and has continuously performed well at the state level. Yet, rather than the fist-pumping, chest-pounding bravado so often seen with this kind of success, Domingo is both humble and appreciative.

Domingo's career as a runner began rather serendipitously with peewee football. When a football coach noticed his natural ability to run, it was suggested that he try track. Initially, Domingo had played baseball, but found the sport too slow. As an outside linebacker and wide receiver, he could run to his heart's content. "But when he came to us," said Gina Anderson, general manager of the Mansfield Express Track, "we worked on that natural ability." They worked on what Domingo calls his "finishing kick" and polished his starts. He began running

the 400-meter, 800-meter and the mile, setting two state records in the 4 x 400-meter relay and the 800-meter.

Now at the age of 14, Domingo alternates training between the Mansfield Legacy High School cross-country team and his traveling track club. In the spring, he will double his training, performing for both the high school track team and the track club. "But, you know," added Gina, "you will never hear him complain. He will run three, four, five miles at school and then turn around at practice that evening and run another couple of miles. Not one of our coaches has ever heard him complain." She said that Domingo is one of the hardest working kids she has ever had the privilege of working with. "If you give him a task or an objective, he strives to meet it. You can see him taking himself into the competitive zone, and he's going to do what he needs to do ... he's just a



great all around kid."

For these reasons, Domingo was selected by his coaches to serve as a role model to the younger children in the track club. Widely respected for his courteous and polite nature, he is also just plain fun to watch as he finds his stride and settles in on the track. "It's hard to explain," Domingo said with a smile. "Being out there on the track and seeing how hard you can push yourself to be the best you can be ... it's part of the rush."

"We had over 100 runners this year," Gina said, "so we pulled aside some of our older athletes and talked to them about being leaders and what that



## Sports NOW

meant and asked if they were up for the task." Domingo was. While he is very serious about his training, he also takes time to teach the younger athletes about how to run the first and last laps, how to pace themselves, conserve energy and power through to the finish line.



"You should see them when Domingo is about to run," Gina said. As Domingo moves onto the track, there is an audible whisper among the students. "They light up. You can hear them say, 'Hey! Domingo is about to run!' and they stop what they are doing to see him run." "I like it," Domingo admitted about mentoring the younger runners. "It really motivates me."

In the halls of his high school, however, Domingo has another reputation. A solid student with all As and Bs, his friends call him "crazy." Domingo has a strong work ethic and self-motivation that few teenagers can relate to — gifts that he attributes to his father, Jesse.

Reared on a farm in Mexico, Jesse learned to work hard prior to his move to the United States, where he eventually earned his U.S. citizenship in 1984. For this reason alone, Domingo watched and appreciated the athletes of the Beijing Olympics from a different perspective than most sports fans. While he cheered the medal-winning performances, "I

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## Sports **NOW**

really like Bernard Lagat,” Domingo said. “Even though he didn’t qualify [in the men’s 1500-meter], he still tried his best. It was his first Olympics competing for the USA, because he [recently] got his citizenship.”

**“If you give him a task or an objective, he strives to meet it.”**

Domingo credits his athletic abilities to his mother, Hanna, who was a standout gymnast who competed at the college level. She can most relate to the competitive need in her children. Even Domingo’s younger sister, Maria, inherited the athletic gene as she is a competitive gymnast, swimmer and runner.

If and when Domingo turns in what he believes to be a less-than-stellar performance, both parents are equally supportive, reminding their son that his “best” is what is most important. But it is Jesse who has shown his son how diligence and persistence can make dreams come true.

Armed with his lucky cap and what others can only describe as an unflappable, can-do mentality, Domingo approaches each training session as he would a high school, district or state competition. He expects nothing, appreciates everything and is closely tied to his roots. While he dreams of an athletic scholarship to college, he wants nothing to be handed to him.

“I want to run the entire way,” he said, and he will. **NOW**





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**Business**  
**NOW**

## The Business

# of People

— By Alex Allred

Every Friday, you will find Martin St. Peter with a group of friends, also business leaders in the Mansfield community, at the Walnut Creek Country Club. They enjoy both camaraderie and golf. For Martin, it is more than just an opportunity to network or be with friends. "I like to have a challenge, and golf is more of a self-challenging sport," he said.

In fact, it is this very attitude that has made Martin the business leader he is today. A highly motivated, think-outside-the-box entrepreneur, Martin is both people-friendly and business-savvy. Those who knew him found it no surprise when he decided to open his own agency, All Tex Insurance.

For over 20 years, Martin was a leader in the insurance industry, racking up award after award. Following his first year with a national chain, in which he was named 'Rookie of the Year,' Martin went on to become one of the top producing agents in the company and was quickly promoted to upper

management. He was put in charge of a district, which included a quarter of the state of Texas and all of Arkansas.

When he decided it was time to challenge himself further and moved to

strength as a manager and an agent had become secondary in today's business world. The needs of the customer were replaced by the demands of corporate regulations.

"It was discouraging," he said. As he watched good, caring agents lose customers because of corporate regulations, he knew he could do better. "I told my wife that I really wanted to get out and do my own thing. I enjoy being an agent and working with people."

So, in 2001, All Tex Insurance opened its doors, and today Martin represents over 2,000 clients.

"I was my first customer," he joked, conceding he treats himself no better than anyone else. "Now," he said, "I am able to be more personal, more one-on-one with my clients."

"No one company can dictate what I

a different international company, he was awarded 'Manager of the Year' for six consecutive years. However, as this rising star grew within the industry, he became increasingly frustrated. The very quality that was his greatest





## Business NOW

do for customers. I can keep their premiums at a level, and I can make sure that they have the best coverage and best price possible. If the rates go up," he said, "I can make adjustments." In fact, the only thing Martin would do differently is, "I just wish I would have opened an independent agency 20 years ago."

He and his wife, Jeanne, have four daughters. Two are working out of state, while another is a sophomore in college in Oklahoma. His "baby," a

**"No one company can dictate what I do for customers. I can keep their premiums at a level, and I can make sure that they have the best coverage and best price possible."**

senior at Mansfield High School, is still living at home. No matter where his children are living, Martin is clearly very proud of them and their strong family ties.

The word he uses a lot when speaking about both his personal and professional life is *family*. "I'm fortunate in that I get to know families," he said of his clientele. For him, protecting his families and their assets is as important as protecting his own.

His profession may have changed, but his motivation remains steadfast. "The bottom line is, I like people," he said. Caring for families is his greatest priority, and besides, how can you go wrong with a man named St. Peter?

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# The World Around Us

— By Alex Allred

When Kether Wilson made the decision to homeschool her children, it was not an act of rebellion against the school system or a political statement. She had an overwhelming desire to be with her children as much as she could. She needed to show her children the world she so loves and respects.

"I love sitting on the couch with my kids around me, reading to them or talking about schoolwork at the table," Kether said. "I feel like my time is so short with them; I don't want to miss out on anything."

As the mother of five active, articulate children, the idea of homeschooling began when her oldest daughter, Taryn, was in the first grade. Taryn was relatively happy and doing well in school. There was no reason to be thinking about alternative education. Only when some friends began researching the idea of homeschooling, did Kether become more interested. The more she learned, the more she liked the idea.

"Of course," Kether laughed, "I had to convince my husband on the idea."

Like many people, Kether's husband, David, had preconceived notions about homeschooling. "He worried it would be too much on my plate," Kether explained, "but he also worried about giving them the best educational experience possible."

Other stereotypes persisted. Kether's children would not be socialized; they would be stifled and possibly bored. "But the one that always makes me laugh," she said of those stereotypes, "is when people meet us and say, 'Oh, you don't look like homeschoolers.' I think they have an image of us living like *Little House on the Prairie*!"

Today, Taryn is 16, and she does struggle with social issues. She has so many friends and is involved in so many activities, that it can sometimes be difficult to focus on her schoolwork. In other words, she is no different than most active high school students. A gifted dancer, Taryn hopes to earn a dance scholarship, while her 14-year-old sister,



Ashton, is in 4-H Medical Professionals Club to explore opportunities in a medical field. Twelve-year-old Neeli is active in a teen book club and is a gifted soccer player. Her 9-year-old brother, Aidan plays flag football. Finally, 6-year-old Sairi belongs to the American Girls Club, and all the children attend a Fine Arts Academy, sing in a choir and take art lessons.

"It can get hectic," Kether admitted, but it is certainly worth every moment she devotes to her children. "I want my kids to discover their true callings. I try to give them different ways to enhance their particular gifts. We all have gifts," Kether said. "I just think if everyone knew what their gift was, this world would be a better place to live in. Imagine being able to discover your calling! I just want my kids to be able to recognize what theirs is."

That, Kether said, was her "Ah-ha" moment as she traversed the homeschooling issues. As a mother, she believed providing such an opportunity was her true calling. Were she a full-time working parent, this might be an impossible task. "I talk to other [working] parents who spend hours at night working with their kids' homework, and I just don't know how they do it." For Kether, being able to tackle that same workload during the day with her children allows the family to spend more quality time together in the evenings. "We're not so





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### "We all have gifts."

stressed," she said. "We can use that time to discuss politics, social issues and what is going on in the world. We use that time to learn more about our kids — what they like, who they hang out with."

As for the children, they also enjoy the more relaxed learning atmosphere. "I like that I can work at my own pace," Taryn said. Like her siblings, she is actually ahead of her peers academically, which allows her more time to explore different activities.

"And I like how patient my mom is," Ashton said. "As my mom, she's fun. But as a teacher, she's good at explaining things and helps me understand them better."

No doubt, the learning experience in the Wilson household is far more personal than a public school setting. When David had a kidney transplant last December, it became a learning tool for the children. Research, science reports, and essays about the kidney function and medical transplants became a group project.

Field trips are what they all enjoy the most, though you would be hard pressed to discover who benefits the most — Kether or her children. Embracing the world around them, discovering new paths and taking life's journeys together are high on Kether's educational requirement list.

"We try to teach them about different world views and make them more culturally aware. David and I want them to be prepared for the world, to be able to have intelligent and sensitive conversations about what they believe in and why they believe it."

One day, Kether concedes, her children will be grown and gone. For now, however, this is her world, and she wants to treasure every precious moment of it. **NOW**



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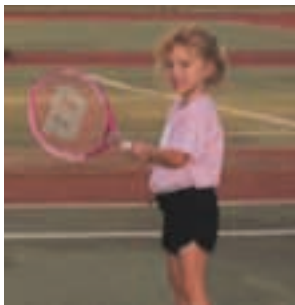


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## Around Town NOW



A clown, top left, requested a library card during the Summer Reading Club program. Children, top right, listened intently as a guest storyteller told one of his many tales. A rising tennis star, second row center, hit several balls at a local court. The Mansfield Lynx football team, second row right, took a break during a practice session. Dr. Polson, third row left, hosted a presentation for all those in attendance at the Mansfield Activities Center. The Creature Teacher, bottom left, cuddled up to one of her many creatures during a recent library program. A large group of youngsters, bottom right, learned how to make sock puppets.



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## Around Town NOW



Wonderful prizes, top left, were donated for the Pecan Festival. Metlife Stuart Insurance, top center, had a booth during the festival to provide answers to those who had insurance questions. Lots of dollars, top right, were spent trying to dunk the Mayor during the Pecan Fest. Several local residents, second row left, enjoyed the wine and cheese tasting at Wine Styles. Shaylyn Lee and Legacy mascot, second row center, smiled for the camera during the Pecan Festival. Pretty in pink was just one color seen during the fun run, second row right, held during the annual Pecan Festival. The Pecan Festival, bottom right, had offered something fun for everyone.



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— By Faith Browning

## IN THE KITCHEN WITH JANELLE COLE

### GREEN OLIVE APPETIZERS

2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded  
4 Tbsp. butter, melted  
1 cup flour  
24 - 30 pimento stuffed green olives

Mix together cheese, butter and flour to make dough. Wrap a small amount of dough around each olive. Can be baked or frozen at this point. Bake at 400 F for 15 minutes until lightly golden brown.

### APPLE CRUMB PIE

Makes 2 pies.

10 - 12 apples  
2 9-inch pie crusts (I use frozen.)  
2 1/2 cups sugar  
3 tsp. cinnamon  
1 cup flour  
2/3 cup butter

Thinly slice apples; arrange evenly in pie crust.

Mix together 1/2 cup sugar and 1 tsp. cinnamon; sprinkle over apples (repeat for second pie). Tap pie pan to settle mixture through the apples. Stir together 1/2 cup sugar, 1/2 cup flour, 1/3 cup butter until crumbly (repeat for each pie); sprinkle over apples. Bake for 40 - 50 minutes at 400 F; watch after about 30 minutes — if they start to brown, cover with foil and continue to bake.

### NEW YEAR'S BLACK-EYED PEAS

4 slices bacon  
1 cup onions, chopped  
1 cup celery, chopped  
1 12-oz. can diced tomatoes  
1 14-oz. can black-eyed peas  
2 - 3 tsp. sugar  
1 bay leaf

Cook bacon, remove from pan to drain. Sauté vegetables in bacon grease (I usually drain most of grease); add tomatoes, black-eyed peas, sugar and bay leaf. Simmer on low for 15

**T**rying new experiences and starting new traditions keeps life upbeat and exciting in Janelle's family. Her four children: Jacob, Peter, Eli and Anna Grace each celebrate their birth date every month. "They get to pick dessert that day (a rare thing otherwise) and we all take turns saying something encouraging about that person," she explained. "The kids love this! They are constantly tracking whose 'Celebrate Day' is approaching."

Janelle and her husband, Robert, are also involved with an organic co-op. Every two weeks they pick up fresh vegetables, which help them determine how to plan their daily meals. "We eat more meals with mostly veggies," she said. "We really enjoy the change to our diets, and we feel better about what we are eating too!" **NOV**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

minutes; remove bay leaf. Crumble bacon over peas when you serve.

### EGG PLANT PARMESAN

3 - 4 eggplants (good size)  
3 - 4 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded  
6 - 8 cups spaghetti sauce (homemade or store bought)  
spray olive oil or regular olive oil

Slice eggplant longwise into thin slices. Soak slices in salt water for about 30 minutes. Rinse; drain slices on kitchen towels for about 30 minutes. Sauté slices of eggplant with small amount of olive oil, until cooked through and lightly browned. In 9 x 13-inch pan, cover bottom with about 1 cup sauce. Arrange eggplant slices over the sauce. Sprinkle cheese to cover the eggplant. Pour about 2 cups of sauce over the cheese. Repeat layers of eggplant, cheese and sauce. Add layer of cheese to last layer of sauce. You can cover with foil and freeze or cook for 45 - 60 minutes at 350 F. Note: Use



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## Who's Cooking **NOW**

only olive oil; it improves the flavor a great deal. Do not skip soaking; it is key to ensuring the eggplant is not bitter. *This may seem like a difficult recipe, but it is well worth the effort!*

### PEANUT BUTTER CUP CAKES

#### CAKE:

1 box chocolate cake mix

#### FILLING:

4 oz. cream cheese

4 oz. peanut butter

1 egg

1/2 cup sugar

#### FROSTING:

1/2 cup butter

1/2 cup Crisco

1/3 cup peanut butter

1 tsp. real vanilla

4 cups powdered sugar

2 Tbsp. milk (or water)

Make cake mix according to directions; set aside. Mix filling ingredients until creamy. Line cupcake pan with cupcake papers. Spoon cake batter into cupcake liners until 1/2 full; scoop 1 tablespoon filling into middle of cupcake mix, then add enough cake batter to cover. Bake according to cake mix directions. Cool after baking. For frosting: mix butter, Crisco and peanut butter together until well blended; add vanilla. Add powdered sugar; mix well. Add milk, 1 tablespoon at a time; mix well for about 5 minutes with a stand mixer. Once frosting is creamy and light, you are ready! Frost cupcakes when cooled. Refrigerate after frosting to store.

### BLOND BROWNIES

#### PART NO. 1 INGREDIENTS:

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup shortening

2 eggs

1 egg yolk

1 tsp. vanilla

1 1/2 cups flour

1 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

#### PART NO. 2 INGREDIENTS:

2 egg whites, beaten

1 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup nuts, chopped

Grease 9 x 13-inch pan. **PART NO. 1:** Cream together sugar, shortening and eggs; add vanilla. In separate bowl; blend together flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture, mixing well. Pour into pan. **PART NO. 2:** Blend beaten egg whites with brown sugar and nuts; pour over **PART NO. 1**. Bake for 25 minutes at 375 F. Cut while warm or they will crack.

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## Finance **NOW**

# Pay Attention to Parents' Investment Strategies

— By Todd Simmons

If your parents are getting older, you may have to assist them in various aspects of daily life — one of which may be their investment strategies. And by being “proactive,” you may be able to make things much easier for Mom and Dad in their retirement years.

One of the best things you can do for your parents is to find out if they are investing in a way that's appropriate for their situation. When many people get older, they tend to get more financially conservative, choosing investments that offer significant preservation of principal, such as certificates of deposit (CDs) and U.S. Treasury securities. And of course, this is understandable, because your parents, like many people at their stage of life, probably don't want to take too many financial risks. And yet, by “taking no chances” with their money, they could actually be taking on more risk than they think.

Why? Because by investing too conservatively, they might not be able to afford the lifestyle they've chosen, given the importance of two factors: longevity and inflation.

Let's consider longevity first. The average 65-year-old man is expected to live 16.5 more years, while the average 65-year-old woman has 19.1 more years of life expectancy, according to the Social Security Administration. And these figures, as noted, are averages, which means that half of all men and half of all women can expect to live longer than 81.5 years and 84.1 years, respectively.

Consequently, your parents could easily spend two or three decades in retirement. And if they're investing predominantly in fixed-income vehicles, their returns may not even keep up with inflation. For example, suppose your parents' total cost of living is currently \$80,000 per year. If inflation were to average three percent annually over the next 20 years, your parents would then need more than \$144,000 per year just

to maintain the same standard of living that they enjoy today.

So, given the possibility of a long retirement combined with the cumulative effects of inflation, your parents will likely need at least some growth potential in their investment portfolio. A reasonable percentage of quality stocks may be able to provide them with that potential, but their mix of investments really depends

on their individual needs, lifestyle choices and risk tolerance.

Here's one other investment-related question you may want to raise with your parents: How much should they take out each year from their 401(k) and IRA? It's essential that they neither withdraw so much that they deplete their accounts nor so little that they can't afford the things they



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enjoy. Yet, because the ideal withdrawal rate depends on several factors — investment mix, risk tolerance, life expectancy, other sources of income — it's not always easy to determine the appropriate amount.

You might not have the expertise to help your parents address these two issues — choosing the right investments during their retirement years and taking out the right amounts from their 401(k) and IRA. And that's why you may want to encourage your parents to work with a professional financial advisor, if they don't already have one. At their stage of life, they really need to make the right moves with their money — so do all you can to help. You'll be glad you made the effort. **NOW**

*Todd Simmons is an Edward Jones representative based in Mansfield.*



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# Keeping the Lid On

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

Babies crying, debts mounting, family tensions and every time your boss looks at you — he frowns. No wonder your blood pressure is sky-high! If quieting the baby, stable finances and a satisfied boss could eliminate your hypertension, you could lessen the demand for blood pressure medicine.

Unfortunately, the causes of hypertension are not so simplistic. Hypertension is when the blood pressure is higher than normal. Everyone's blood pressure can vary throughout the day. Your physician can help determine what is normal for you.

The exact causes of hypertension are varied and in any one individual, multiple factors may come into play. Those most at risk are women who take birth control pills, those who are pregnant and those who have a family history of hypertension. The familiar culprits of alcohol, a diet high in fatty foods and too much salt, smoking, not enough exercise and obesity work their destructive ways in this medical situation also. Knowing you are in the high-risk group is certainly helpful, but not foolproof. There are other causes of hypertension not so easily explained or identified. The definition of blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessel walls when the heart beats (systolic pressure) and when the



heart rests in between beats (diastolic pressure). Because of that pushing force, anything that causes significant pressure against the arterial walls such as narrowing of the arteries or the heart pumping faster and harder than it should can cause hypertension. Stress cannot be overlooked as well as the risk in older individuals. Chronic kidney disease can precipitate hypertension. Some disorders of the thyroid contribute to high blood pressure.

Usually, there are no symptoms that lead to the discovery of hypertension. For this reason, many call it the silent disease. The only way to know for sure is to have your blood pressure checked. If the hypertension has become critical, you may experience severe headaches, eye changes leading to difficulty with vision, becoming easily fatigued and/or irritated. If the kidneys become involved, blood in the urine would indicate possible renal damage.

Part of the treatment for hypertension is to pursue a healthy lifestyle. Drug therapy may be initiated by your doctor along with other healthful recommendations such as: stop smoking, avoid unhealthy fatty foods, avoid foods high in sodium content, maintain a healthy weight, exercise and limit alcoholic intake. Follow-up with your physician is necessary for blood pressure checks and appropriate lab work. Hypertension can be very dangerous. It is important to maintain the regime your physician plans for you. **ADVIS**

*This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician for questions regarding this topic.*



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# December 2008

## Community Calendar

### Every Tuesday

Bouncing Babies story time for infants to 24 months: 10:30 – 11:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. – noon, Mansfield Public Library.

### Every Wednesday

On My Own story time for children: 10:30 – 11:00 a.m., Mansfield Public Library.

### Every Thursday (except holidays)

Toddler story time: 11:00 – 11:30 a.m., Mansfield Public Library.

### Every Friday

Mansfield Kiwanis Club meeting: 6:45 a.m., Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, 2700 East Broad St. (817) 473-9886.

### December 1 and 15

Planning and Zoning Development Commission meeting: 6:30 p.m., Mansfield City Hall.

### December 2

In preparation of the Hometown Holiday Parade, the line-up meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Mansfield Activities Center. Awards will include: Most Creative, Most Holiday Spirit and the Grand Marshal Award. Judging of the entries will begin at

1:00 at the line-up location (St. Jude Catholic Church). Award winners will be announced during the parade. Awards will be presented to the winners that night at the tree lighting ceremony.

Mansfield Zone Adjustment Board meeting: 6:00 p.m., City Hall.

### December 4

Mansfield Child Care will discuss "101 Projects and Activities" at 7:00 p.m., Mansfield Library community meeting room, 104 S. Wisteria St. [www.mansfieldchildcare.com](http://www.mansfieldchildcare.com).

### December 5 - 7 and 12 - 14

Travel back in time to the night Jesus Christ was born during the annual Bethlehem Revisited event held at 402 N. College St. directly behind Central Presbyterian Church from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

### December 6

Hometown Holidays Parade presented by Methodist Mansfield Medical Center and the city of Mansfield. Line-up is at noon at St. Jude Catholic Church. Parade starts at 2:30 p.m. [www.mansfield-tx.gov](http://www.mansfield-tx.gov).

Mansfield Fire Department free Heartsaver/AED class: 8:00 a.m. – noon, Station 3, 3100 E. Broad St.

All participants must be registered in advance by contacting Training Lt. Steve Gutierrez at (817) 804-5772.

### December 6 - 7 and 13 - 14,

The Waxahachie Candlelight Home Tour, 2:00 – 8:00 p.m. Each weekend will feature four different homes chosen for this year's tour. Call (972) 938-9617 or visit [www.waxahachiechamber.com](http://www.waxahachiechamber.com).

### December 8 and 22

City Council meeting: 7:00 p.m., Mansfield City Hall, 1200 Broad St.

### December 11

The African Children's Choir will perform, 7:00 p.m. at The Lighthouse, 1400 N. 9th Street, Midlothian. The African Children's Choir's goal is to change Africa's future by providing education and hope for today's children. For more information, call (972) 723-6197.

### December 13

Second Annual Teen Holiday Decorating Party: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



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