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Page-burning Tales

Jerrie Alexander is a writer on fire

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ON THE COVER



*Santa shares a home full of love
and history preserved by Larry
and Cindy Jones.*

Photo by SRC Photography.

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Editor's Note

Hello Burleson, Crowley and Joshua!

Life is wonderful, and I'm thrilled to join you all in celebrating the joys of this great community. No matter where you look in our area this month, people are focused outside of their own lives. Yes, our community is filled with folks who work hard, provide for their families and take pride in their integrity. And those self-disciplines enable us to love our neighbors as ourselves. What a beautiful thing!

This month, churches and missions throughout our community need extra donations to care for our neighbors whose circumstances are not as rosy as our own. House of Hope in Crowley, Open Door Food Bank in Joshua and Harvest House in Burleson are busy now that the weather's turned chilly. If you can spare a few groceries, blankets or dollars this month, you'll really add to someone else's joy.

Melissa

Melissa Rawlins
BurlesonNOW Editor
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P.S. The publisher and staff of NOW Magazines wish you a happy Christmas and holiday season.

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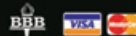
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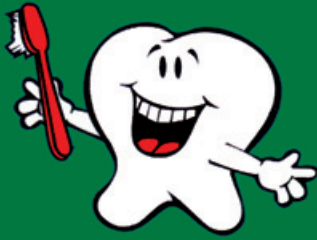
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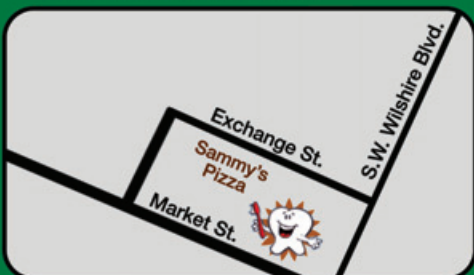
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PAGE-BURN

Tales

— By Carolyn Wills

These days, Jerrie Alexander is a writer on fire. Her page-burning tales of dark mystery and hot modern romance are making waves in the literary world of romantic suspense. Her first novel, The Green-Eyed Doll, was unveiled in December 2012 to the delight of reviewers and readers. At the age of 69, this woman has just begun to write.

Writing was an early dream for her. “I was a closet writer in my youth,” she said. When her real life story took a bold romantic turn, she packed the writing away. “Life presented me with Jim, my John Wayne husband of 53 years now,” she smiled. Life also presented her with two children and a highly successful career. “I stayed at home until the children were in junior high,” she explained. “Then, I wanted to buy a new car, a Dodge Dart,” she grinned. She found a job filling orders at Montgomery Ward.

Before long, order taking at Montgomery Ward evolved into a group leader with paid education. “I enrolled in creative writing



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classes at what was then Tarrant County Junior College,” she explained. That first job, then, morphed into bigger, more responsible positions with companies like Wal-Mart, K-Mart and Service Merchandise and ultimately, as operations manager over three import distribution centers. “I traveled a lot,” she said. “Jim sold his construction company and, off we went. We lived in Arkansas and Georgia and finally came back to Texas. We bought a house in McKinney in time for our daughter, Jackie, to give birth to our granddaughter.”

Although they were back in Texas, Jerrie still traveled from Oregon to Florida and, after another five years, time arrived for a life-changing decision. “We were preparing to leave for a company event in London,” she explained. “I was 62 and had long passed the thrill of being a platinum traveler. I told Jim I had always wanted to be a writer, and he said, ‘Go for it!’” Happily, she unpacked and retired.

“We decided to sell the house in McKinney,” she said. “Our son-in-law’s family had lived in Mansfield for many years, and we knew this is where our granddaughter, Alexa, would grow up.” Their McKinney home sold within two weeks, and with daughter Jackie’s help, they found a house on a quiet Burleson cul-de-sac on 2.5 acres. “We love our neighborhood,” Jerrie said. “Most of us are retired, and everyone watches out for each other. Nothing much happens on our street that everyone doesn’t know about!”

Not surprisingly, Alexa is the apple of



her grandmother's eye. "She's 14 now, in the ninth grade and a brainiac athlete," Jerrie said with a smile. "She attends Oakridge School in Arlington, has been on the headmaster's list every year since first grade and plays varsity volleyball."

Meanwhile, Jackie is vital to Jerrie's writing. "She reads rough drafts and is my best critic," Jerrie said. "I also have wonderful friends. When we moved to Burleson, I didn't know anyone. I looked for a writing group and that's when I heard about a book club. We call ourselves Books and Breads." They meet monthly on the second Friday at the Burleson Library. "The group was so supportive throughout the agonizing process of getting my first yes from a publisher," Jerrie smiled. "They listened to me bellyache about the rejections and then, the day I received, not one, but two contracts, their cheers were deafening. They organized a surprise book signing party for *The Green-Eyed Doll* and presented me with a plastic tiara!"

Jerrie also belongs to Romance Writers of America, a national nonprofit writers association. "They're a great networking and information source," she said. "I'm a member, too, of the North Texas chapter and an online romantic suspense writers group."

She's also savvy about reaching out to her readers. "I blog on Mondays and am active on Twitter and Facebook," she said. "I think it's good to know people and for readers to know me."

Her experiences as a logistics professional and the years of travel have proved to be rich sources for her writing.

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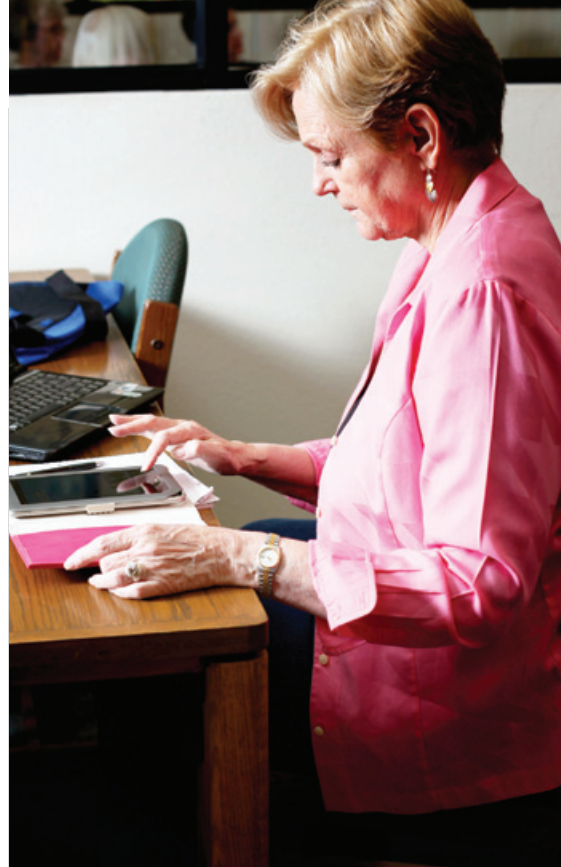
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"I'm also a research freak," she said. "I'll have as many as a 100 pages of research before I begin to write."

Her fast-paced stories are filled with tension, death and danger, hints of humor and multiple points of view. "I begin with the bad guy," she explained. "He's the reason the story is here, the impetus that sets the wheels in motion and brings the hero and heroine together. Something has to drive him to be a killer, and for the story to be real, I must know the reason — the breaking point — so I spend time searching the Internet and reading FBI profiles."

A typical day for Jerrie starts early and, always includes her Chihuahua/Pomeranian pal, Buddy. Buddy was severely injured, near death and a stray puppy when she discovered him in the backyard. Jim scooped him up. Together, they rushed him to the animal hospital. Today, Buddy is going on 3 years old, and he rules the roost. "Buddy and I get up at 6:30 a.m.," Jerrie said. "He loves his blanket and bed in my office and, it's in the mornings that I usually get most of my work done. I start by checking my Yahoo loops, Facebook and Twitter and reviewing questions and notes that I've written on a big white eraser board. Buddy stays with me until I get coffee, and then he's out the doggy door to his fenced-in yard."



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To develop characters, Jerrie finds pictures that remind her of her heroine, hero and bad guy. "I like to have at least three points of view," she said. "I create profiles for each character and post them with the pictures so I always know who I'm writing about."

Her second book, *The Last Execution*, was released in February 2013 followed by a short story *Someone to Watch Over Me* in June 2013. The first of her Lost and Found, Inc. four-book series, *Hell or High Water*, was released in July 2013 and will soon be followed by *Cold Day in Hell*.

According to Romance Writers of America, writers are either plotters or pantsters (seat of your pants). "I'm definitely a pantster," she smiled. "If I start laying out a story, I'm not having fun anymore. If I know what's happening, I'm bored."

Her covers are striking. Her stories are riveting. The tension, peril, romance and humor are as hot as they come. Boredom is not something that comes with a Jerrie Alexander novel. Fortunately, this amazing woman with tales to tell has just begun to write. **NOW**

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Hidden An

By Melissa Rawlins

Sitting in a room with no windows — only computers, maps, video surveillance monitors and databases — Phil Lewis and nine other public safety communications specialists are angels waiting to help. Hired by the Burleson Police Department about five years ago, Phil loves being part of the police family and participating in his community. “The idea that no man is an island is huge,” Phil said. “It’s rewarding to participate in something that is there for me, too, if I need it.”

If you live in Burleson and the surrounding areas, your calls to 911 most often are routed to the Burleson Police Department communications center, where at least two communications specialists are prepared to help you. Having each gone through a four- to five-month training process, they are skilled in using high-tech information systems. “Objectively finding the information in the moment when your officer needs it is probably the most challenging part of the job,” Phil said.

During a critical call, communication specialists use three consoles accessing Tarrant County and Johnson County 911 systems, weather data and police records to gain valuable information while simultaneously working on the phone with the caller and on the radio with an officer or firefighter. “It’s important to have a team for our officer or firefighter,” Phil explained. “I might be on a call while my partner is looking up information that will help on that call. It helps keep

responders safe, which is where it starts in order to keep your city safe.”

Not too many months ago, the city of Burleson recognized Lisa



gels

Pollard, communication supervisor, Karen Dawkins, lead communication specialist, as well as specialists Dana Carey, Desire Norman, Katie Reynolds, Trina Keeton and Verla Myers for their individual and team efforts in helping first responders during such emergencies as: a tornado, a plane crash at Spinks Airport, the arrest of two people and the recovery of evidence in a burglary of a motor vehicle/credit card abuse case, a

"I reached a point where I value my life more in terms of the relationships I'm in and not so much by what I am going to accomplish."

phone call from a crisis hotline involving a suicidal woman, a shooting/fatality resulting from a feud between neighbors and even an airplane's in-flight emergency that became ours when it landed on the I-35 frontage road.

Usually, Phil's busiest times are Fridays and Saturdays, when people are busy shopping, going out to eat, and driving on our roads. Yet 24/7, the communication specialists are working.



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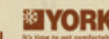
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"We get warrants to allow entrance, and requests for information from other agencies," Phil said. "And we take a lot of nonemergency calls." Whether people need city assistance outside of regular



City Hall hours, or just directions to an old friend's home, the communications specialists help. They are the nerve center of the city.

During lulls in their shifts, dispatchers encourage each other by patting each other on the back, for doing the best they could, and also by sharing techniques which have worked in similar situations. Outside of their shifts, the dispatchers' concern for each other shines through. When Phil spent a Christmas in the hospital, his co-workers made an effort



to bring the holiday to him. "There's a practical part of having a team, but also there's that emotional part," Phil said.

All of the dispatchers live in the Burleson area, and some are children



of people who grew up here. "We're interested in the schools, development and roads just like any other resident." Phil and his wife, Linda, moved here 20 years ago. The first 12 years they lived in Crowley, where they reared their son and daughter. Both have since married and live in Fort Worth, where the Lewises often go to visit their grandson. "It's great having them close while we enjoy living in this area."

Born in Maine, Phil met Linda at a Christian college in Pennsylvania. "I

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had entertained thoughts of going into ministry,” said Phil, whose father is a minister in New York. “But I worked in construction until I was injured in 1991.” While he was working on a job at a supermarket in Danbury, Connecticut, scaffolding collapsed. Phil survived with a broken vertebra. After five months in a hospital and rehab hospital, his children already in grade school, Phil and his family adjusted to his new life in a wheelchair.

Two years later, he and Linda decided to move to a warmer climate. They chose Crowley, where Linda taught school and Phil attended seminary on and off. He has used the seminary degrees in lay positions in the churches they have joined. “It’s something I enjoy doing,” said Phil, who considered becoming a teacher. But we are not always in control of our destiny.

“I reached a point where I value my life more in terms of the relationships I’m in and not so much by what I am going to accomplish,” he said. “I wake up and consider what is my wife doing, what are my kids doing and evaluate myself in terms of whether I am being a good worker, a good friend, a good church member and a good member of my community in relation to other people.”

Despite his setbacks, Phil responded to his wife’s encouragement and his own determination. “I found a way to be involved, and it’s so much more rewarding than being a recluse,” he said,



Co-workers, Karen Davis and officer Jay Davis, pose with Phil Lewis.

explaining that people with disabilities are very intimidated to look for work. "Sometimes it seems easier just to collect disability. I always encourage people to get out there and try. There are places to serve, to contribute — to be a part of society."

Prior to joining the Burleson Police Department in 2007, Phil knew few first responders. His brother, a volunteer firefighter, gave him an idea of what the dispatcher's job would be like. He recalled his time as a rural youth, when his dad pastored a church in Massachusetts in a place where getting emergency help could take a long time. Generally, a person would call the operator or a neighbor if they needed help. Phil remembers a church member who worked night shift as a police officer. "He did not talk about his job a lot," Phil said, "but we knew if we were out late and got in trouble we'd hear about it from Mr. Marcy, in a friendly way."

Now Phil works within a brave new world, where sometimes the 911 call is from a child playing with a cell phone. Sometimes it appears to be nothing but a pocket dial. "We call those back all the time. Ninety-nine times out of 100 it was nothing," Phil said, "but that one time out of a hundred, we can tell something is wrong and send officers out there just to make sure everyone's OK." It's comforting to know help is so close by. **NOW**



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Larry and Cindy Jones (front row) pose with their children Christina and Wiley Jones and niece, Jade Campbell.



Visitors Welcome

— By Erin McEndree

AT HOME WITH

Larry and Cindy Jones

This Craftsman-style house was known as one of the gathering places for young people in Joshua. In the early 20th century, people would sit on large porches and play games such as Snap, Spin the Bottle, Knock for Love or Drop the Pillow. My, how times have changed! The current owners, Larry and Cindy Jones, are

recreating nostalgia and opening their house to the community. Cindy plans to open their historic home to clubs and organizations, and has already hosted some bridal and baby showers under the large white gazebo in the backyard.

J.E. Brumbach, who owned a lumber yard in Joshua, and his wife, Estella, started building the home in 1913, but

didn't finish until 1915. The Brumbachs had no children, but with ample space, they opened their home for the youth of Joshua to gather and socialize. Often, they hosted parties in the spacious living and dining room. The five-bedroom home has always been remembered by the older neighbors as being white. After a few owners during the '40s, Homer and Hattie Strickland bought the house in 1948. They made an apartment upstairs, which they rented to many newlywed couples. The house was fondly known as the Honeymoon Hotel, and many Joshua





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couples began their marriage there. In 1963, the Stricklands sold the home to their daughter and son-in-law, Helen and Robert Bloxom, who owned it until 1985. The home had several owners from 1985 until Larry and Cindy purchased it from Jennifer Harper in 2011.

Larry and Cindy were so passionate about buying this home and restoring it that they did a lot of work and spent a lot of money on the foundation before the deal was even finished with the bank. The inspection had to be approved, and Larry

spent many hours under the porch making sure the foundation would pass muster. "Jennifer allowed us to make the improvements necessary for the bank to complete the loan," Cindy explained. "She also left us a box filled with information on the house and the past owners, which she had researched."

After getting the thumbs-up in July 2011 from the inspectors and the bank, Larry and Cindy were approved to buy the house and

became its 10th owners. They began to bring the old home back to its original splendor. They moved into the home on Christmas Eve 2011. Cindy continued stripping the hardwood floors, the wallpaper and the base boards. "There must have been four layers of wallpaper in the kitchen with paint in between," Cindy said, further explaining how tedious the work had been and how she spent hours and hours on each project.

Lots of love goes into all the scrubbing and scraping. Cindy took four months to scrape up to nine layers of paint off each step on the staircase. She used only hand tools — no power



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tools — to sand each spindle, tread and handrail. Fifteen hours were needed to prepare each door facing for a new coat of crisp, white paint. Larry took off all the hardware in the hidden pocket doors and cleaned them up like new. Cindy believes it is all worth it to preserve history for the community to enjoy. Every room of Larry and Cindy's house is packed with history. Cindy has collected a mix of pieces for the house, but admitted, "The inside is more from the Victorian era. I get stories with every piece I purchase," she shared. "I look up the history on everything."

Larry and Cindy have created their own getaway upstairs. Besides a bedroom at the top of the stairs, the master bedroom consists of three separate areas, including two sitting areas and a mantel in front of the bed. The bedroom suite once belonged to Cindy's great-grandparents. All of the beds in the home display patchwork quilts from Cracker Barrel indicative of the era. Cindy finds many antiques on Craig's List, including a free Hallet, Davis & Company piano, a fainting couch and a Victorian couch, which came with two armchairs she put in the sitting area in the master bedroom. The first antique Cindy ever refinished was an antique bar someone had painted green. She brought the wood back to its original luster, and her husband created decorative knobs by gluing the state quarter from each of the four states where they have lived.

Cindy also loves the holidays. She

dresses up the home for people to enjoy. She has so many decorations for Christmas that she recruits college girls to help her set them all up. Garland lines the stairs in the foyer, and a large Santa welcomes visitors with his jolly smile. Electric candles light each window in the dining room. Four live trees, each with a different color and theme, are arranged throughout the house.

Cindy's favorite, uniquely flocked black with white tips, is found in an extra bedroom. A red tree on the large porch has candy cane ribbon and is adorned with gold decorations. "I like to coordinate the color of the trees and rooms," Cindy said. "I get the trees from December Design, and they sponsor all the yard art for the candle walk." Standing guard on the porch is what appears to be a life-sized Nutcracker, but it is actually an antique polo player rumored to have once belonged to John Wayne's third wife. He is clothed in a red coat, gold epaulets and a tall black helmet, dressed up for the holidays each year.

Larry and Cindy were the first homeowners to showcase their home on the Candlewalk tour of homes. Many unexpected and interesting stories have come from that tour. People who lived in the house or resided in the Honeymoon Hotel back in the day, came to visit part of their past. One young 11-year-old boy stared at the antique organ so intently that Cindy allowed him to play it. Cindy is proud of the history in her home and enjoys people reminiscing about time spent there.

Larry and Cindy hope to make their historic home available to the community for events and allow school students to use the grounds for gardening projects. Cindy wants to plant red roses that would pop next to the home's white exterior. She would also like to remodel the carriage house and add a pool table and shuffle board. Her vision is to see young people enjoying the space like they did in times gone by. An adage on Cindy's bedroom wall says, *Learn From Yesterday, Live for Today, Hope for Tomorrow*. Cindy knows she is very lucky to have a home with so much history. She takes her responsibility to preserve it seriously and finds great joy in sharing it with others. **NOW**



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Yuletide CHEER

— By Sandra Strong

Do you need activities to fill the long, cold winter evenings and weekends leading up to Christmas day? We may have the answer in the Christmas crafts featured in this month's edition. We hope they fill your home with lots of holiday warmth and cheer.



TWEET TREE

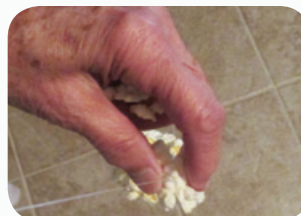
This holiday craft idea is a bit messy, but children will love watching neighborhood birds devour the three ornaments they have created. And who knows? They may even see a squirrel or two.



Finished example of popcorn garland.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: EASY

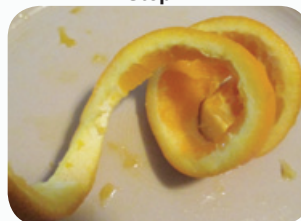
- 2 small pkgs. microwave popcorn
- Heavy thread
- Scissors
- Needle
- 3-5 medium oranges, refrigerated
- Paring knife
- Twisted jute twine
- Peanut butter
- Kitchen knife
- Bird seed
- 3-5 pine cones



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4

HOW TO DO IT. ▼

1. Make popcorn garland

by popping the corn per package instructions. Allow to cool. Using double thread cut at a length of your choosing, string popcorn.

2. Make orange swirls

by cutting a swirl pattern in oranges with a paring knife starting from the navel. Make sure to cut deep enough to reach the pulp. For safety, parents of younger crafters will need to do the cutting. If the swirls break, don't worry. You will just have more swirls for your tree.

3. **Carefully pull** or cut pulp from peel. Remove navel to make hole.

4. **Thread twine** through hole to complete hanger. If the peel breaks, a hole will need to be made with the paring knife in the pieces without a navel. Make sure loop in twine is large enough for the swirl to hang freely from the tree limb.



Step 5

5. Smear peanut butter

on white side of peeled swirl. Sprinkle heavily with bird seed.



6. Make peanut butter pine cone

by tying twine to the top of the pine cone to make hanger.

7. Generously dot the tips of the pine cone with peanut butter. Sprinkle heavily with bird seed.



Steps 6-7

8. Decorate an outdoor tree with your bird-friendly ornaments and then watch the birds enjoy eating what you've created.





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- Craft glue
- Scissors
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- 3 dry black-eyed peas
- Cool melt hot glue
- 1 yellow button shaped like a star
- 3-inch length twisted jute twine

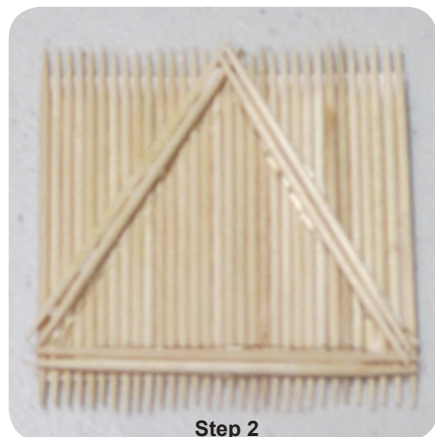
HOW TO DO IT. ▼

1. Attach 32 toothpicks to the tag board using craft glue. The tag board may need to be trimmed on one side depending on size of toothpicks. Let dry.



Step 1

2. Create manger by attaching the remaining toothpicks in a triangle, two picks to each side, using craft glue. Let dry.



Step 2



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3. Create Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus by attaching beans using cool melt hot glue as shown in photo below. Hot glue button in place. Let dry.

4. Glue looped twine to back to complete ornament. Hang on the family tree or use as a package decoration.



Steps 3-4

FRAMED WREATH

This can be an alternative to the traditional holiday wreath. When complete, it will make a unique piece you may choose to keep for yourself or share with someone special. There are so many ways to embellish your frame. Your imagination is your only limitation.



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DIFFICULTY LEVEL: MEDIUM

- Wood picture frame, size optional
- Spray paint, color of your choice, (optional)
- 3-5 yds. wired holiday ribbon
- Scissors
- Floral wire
- Wire cutters
- Cool melt hot glue
- Ornamental embellishments, (size and number used, optional)
- Twisted jute twine

HOW TO DO IT. ▼

1. Create foundation for wreath by painting frame. It's best to spray two light coats to keep paint from running. You can also use a decorative frame that doesn't need to be painted. Both examples are pictured.



Step 1

2. Make bow by folding ribbon end-over-end into layers. The length of the layers will depend on the size of bow desired. More layers will make a fuller bow. Longer lengths will make a larger bow. Leave a longer length on the first and last fold to make the tails of the bow.



Step 2

3. Create the center of the bow with floral wire. Twist the wire tightly around the center of the layers several times to secure. To form center knot, take the longest tail and wrap it around the center. Tie to the shorter tail in back of bow. Make sure wire is still accessible. Fluff ribbon. Cut tails evenly to complete.

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Step 3

4. **Attach bow to frame** using the wire, making sure to cut any excess wire with wire cutters. Reinforce with hot glue if desired.



Step 4

5. **Add finishing touches** to wreath using ornaments, photos, Christmas cards and/or holiday embellishments.



Step 5

6. **Make hanger** from twine and attach to the back of frame with hot glue. Hang completed wreath on your front door or display on a wall or mantel in your home. **NOW**

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Thursday: 10:00-8:00 p.m.
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Mother-daughter duo Elvira Adams and Robyn Adams provide full-size customers the complete shopping experience from color-coordinated outfits to matching accessories.



Family Full of Fun

The Adams ladies make shopping profitable at Fancy's Plus Size Resale. — By Melissa Rawlins

When dressing nicely is as much your priority as saving money, Fancy's Plus Size Resale offers exactly what heavier women need. From suits for work to gowns for balls — and all the accessories — the family-owned store bulges with color and style. Jeans are always available, as are shoes, scarves and headbands. Sometimes, purses by Coach and Luis Vuitton can be found. But earrings sell the most, as does any jewelry bearing either turquoise or a cross.

Blouses are color coordinated on racks to aid selection of just the right top. Elvira Adams and her daughter, Robyn Adams, have designed such thoughtful arrangements. Inspired by their experiences as consumers, the Adams ladies provide a comforting shopping experience for girls, teenagers, moms, working women and grandmothers, too, who come from as far away as North Richland Hills, Glen Rose and Grandview.

Burleson's plus-size consignment shop receives between 50 to 150 new pieces of clothing daily from people either placing the clothing on consignment or selling them directly to Fancy's. "We encourage people to leave their clothes on consignment, but are happy to help people who need money right away for paying a bill or traveling," Elvira explained.

A new consigner meets first with Robyn or Elvira, who takes time with that person to inspect their clothes while a contract is completed. Afterwards, the consigner can come in at their convenience to withdraw money from their account. "Lap band and gastric patients bring their stuff," Elvira said. "After their surgery they can no longer wear their original size, and they can rotate down as their body changes size. A lot of them can shop for free by using shop credit."

For ladies buying glamorous outfits for Christmas holiday parties or cruises, Fancy's is perfect. "People don't want to buy a \$125 dress for one night," Robyn said. "They can come here and get a real pretty dress for \$35." Fancy's offers monthly specials, promoting happiness, as well as savings. At Father's Day they gave away Texas Ranger's tickets, and this month, Robyn and Elvira host a drawing for prizes and gift certificates to help you get ready for Christmas.

Fancy's offers monthly specials, promoting happiness, as well as savings.

Customers enjoy the fun inside the store. "Robyn and Elvira know me by name, and are so good with people," Karen Scott said. "I've met a lot of people from Burleson in here. Fancy's offers a wonderful family interaction and a community service."

Selling high-quality brands as low as 20-percent off original prices, Fancy's Plus Size Resale keeps merchandise for only 50 days before it is put on the sales rack for 10 days. Unsold clothes are donated to Harvest House, Crowley House of Hope or Rachel's Hope — unless the consigner chooses to retrieve them.

Customers keep Fancy's busy. Their children have fun here, too, playing in the toy area or talking with Robyn or Elvira. "It's just a big family thing," said Elvira, who can chit-chat for hours while maintaining perfect customer service.

Robyn's sister, Michelle, opened the first Fancy's two years ago in Old Town. She soon opened a second Fancy's in Weatherford. Last year, Robyn and Elvira bought the Burleson shop from Michelle, and moved it to a larger storefront near City Market. With Robyn's background in bookkeeping and accounting, and Elvira's in management, the mother-daughter duo have made Fancy's into a fun and profitable business for everyone involved. **NOW**

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Burleson High School Elk Strutters come out to a business block party.



Haezil Cheatham, fascinated by the flowers at Tiger Farms Market, holds tight to her mama, Kim.



Josh Jacobs, with the Burleson Fire Department, honors all fallen heroes with the bagpipes.



Allison, Payten and Alex Ferguson walk through Old Town on the first annual Pitt Hopkins Syndrome Awareness Day, in honor of their friend's son, who has the rare disease.



Ethan, Matthew, Bryan and Leslie Leake enjoy a fine day at Fuzzy's porch, their pit stop before a long road trip.



Judy Rawlins and Jennifer Jensen visit with Bobby Woolard regarding a few family heirlooms.



Tony Martinez, of Jamzports, and Jerry Wolfe hold up their newest batch of T-shirts Supporting Our Soldiers!



Cynthia May, Debra Wolf and Flora Walker enjoy hors d'oeuvres with the information gleaned from Couch & Russell's Social Security Seminar at Lost Oak Winery.



Jennifer Camarillo comforts her baby, Elijah, between clients at Backstage Salon & Spa.



Mayor Ken Shetter, Superintendent Bret Jimerson and former superintendent Richard Crummel encourage Tamarah Martinez and Woodrow Tomlinson, who are studying for a bright future thanks to the Burleson Opportunity Fund.



Vera and Sherrie Rogers enjoy a breezy mother-daughter luncheon at Stone Soup.

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How Should Your Risk Tolerance Influence Investment Decisions?

As an investor, how much risk can you tolerate? It's an important question — because the answer can help you make the right investment choices.

Before you know your risk tolerance, you'll want to make sure you first understand the nature of investment risk — the risk of losing principal. This risk is especially prevalent when you invest in stocks, because stock prices will always fluctuate — and there are never any guarantees about performance. Of course, a decline in value does not mean you need to sell. You can always hold on to the stock with the hope that its value will bounce back. And this can certainly happen, but again — no guarantees.

How you respond to this type of investment risk will tell you a great deal about your own risk tolerance. Of course, no one, whether he or she has a high tolerance for risk or a low one, particularly likes to see declines. But people do react differently. If you're the sort of person who can retain your confidence in your investment mix and can focus on the long term and the potential for a recovery, you may well have a higher tolerance for risk. But if you find yourself losing sleep

over your losses (even if, at this point, they're just "paper" losses), becoming despondent about reaching your goals and questioning whether you should be investing at all, then you may have a low tolerance for risk.

This self-knowledge of your own risk tolerance should help inform your investment decisions — to a point. Even if you determine you have a high tolerance for risk, you almost certainly should not load up your portfolio exclusively with stocks. If the stock market enters a prolonged slump, you could face heavy losses that may take many years to overcome, causing you to lose significant ground in the pursuit of your financial goals. Conversely, even if you discover you don't have much tolerance for risk, you won't want to invest only in supposedly "safe" vehicles, such as certificates of deposit (CDs). During those periods when rates on CDs and similar instruments are low, as has been the case in recent years, your interest payments from these investments may not even keep up with inflation — meaning that, over time, you could end up losing purchasing power, which, over the long term, can be just as big a risk as market declines.

Ultimately, then, you'll probably want to let your risk tolerance guide your investment choices — but not dictate them with an iron hand. So, if you believe you are highly tolerant of risk, you might have a somewhat higher percentage of stocks in your portfolio than if you felt yourself to be highly risk-averse — but in any case, you'll likely benefit from building a diversified portfolio containing stocks, bonds, government securities, CDs and other investments. While this type of diversification can't guarantee profits or protect against loss, it can help reduce the effects of volatility on your portfolio.

By knowing your own risk tolerance, and the role it can play in your choices, you can help yourself create an effective, suitable investment strategy — one that you can live with for a long time and that can help you avoid the biggest risk of all: not reaching your long-term goals. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Lynn H. Bates is an Edward Jones representative based in Burleson.

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Merry Christmas

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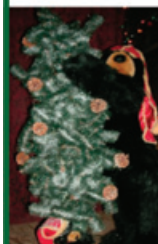
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December 2, 9, 16

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December 5

Free Horticultural Seminar: 6:00 p.m., Burleson Public Library, 248 S.W. Johnson Ave. Master gardeners from Texas A&M Agrilife extension cover tree trimming, pruning, and planting bulbs for the spring and give tips to help your trees and flowerbeds look their best next spring. Call David Lenartowicz of Keep Burleson Beautiful at (817) 426-9842.

December 6, 7, 8

Granbury — A Candlelight Tour: **Friday**, 6:00-10:00 p.m.; **Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; **Sunday**, 12:30-6:00 p.m.; Nutt House Hotel. 20th annual celebration includes: concerts, carriage rides, caroling, nativity display and tours of historic homes. Call Brenda Hyde at (817) 573-5299.

December 7

Burleson Christmas Celebrations: breakfast with Santa, 7:00-11:00 a.m., BRiCK; craft fair, 2:30 p.m., Senior Center; parade: 6:00 p.m., Old Town. Visit www.burlesontx.com.

Crowley Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting: 4:15 p.m., Main St., Crowley. Call Kelly Harris, (817) 297-2201, x4300.

Joshua Christmas Parade: 6:00 p.m., Staples Elementary is the starting point. Parade follows Main St. and ends with festivities. For more information, call Joshua Chamber of Commerce, (817) 556-2480.

December 8

Holistic Fair: 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Comfort Suites, 321 S. Burleson Blvd. Free admission to learn about alternative modalities, essential oils and beneficial health products. Contact Ospirit@sbcglobal.net.

Tour of Homes: 2:00-7:00 p.m. Mansfield Women's Club hosts. \$25 per person in advance (including children). Watch for details on Facebook or visit www.mansfieldwomensclub.com.

December 12

Holiday Casino Night: 6:00-9:30 p.m., Mimosa Hall, 10405 Shannon Valley Dr., Crowley. Benefitting Support Our Soldiers, hors d'oeuvres and dinner will be served while gifts are given away and guests play casino games. RSVP to Couch and Russell Financial Group, (817) 295-2236.

December 13, 14, 15

A Living Nativity: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Graceview Baptist Church, 1440 S. Burleson Blvd. A free, outdoor presentation complete with a rustic manger, live actors and animals, plus a live band playing Christmas music, Kids World and homemade cookies, cocoa and coffee. Contact (817) 295-2165 or visit www.graceviewbc.org.

December 23 — January 6

Public School Winter Break: For more information, visit www.burlesonisd.net or www.crowley.k12.tx.us or www.joshuaisd.org.

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

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HOLISTIC FAIR



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In The Kitchen With Amanda Harris

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

In Teague, Texas, Amanda Harris learned to cook by preparing family meals as a young child. As she grew, she experimented with new cuisines and eventually found her favorite cook: her husband, Julius. “Food is about love,” Amanda said. “We love to cook together and try new things.” This couple regularly reunites in the kitchen to relax.

“Cooking and family time in the kitchen are especially important during the holidays. We cook elaborate meals to celebrate the season and Christ’s birth with our families,” Amanda said. Their unusual menu items include prime rib, thyme creamed corn, crumpets with cream and molasses cookies, baked from Amanda’s great-grandmother’s hand-written recipe. “There are few things that set the holiday spirit quite like rolling sausage balls and baking cookies!” **NOW**

Raspberry Chipotle Bacon-Wrapped Jalapeños

Serves 10.

1 pkg. thin-cut smoked bacon
10 medium jalapeños, halved and seeded
Fischer & Wiser Roasted Raspberry Toothpicks
Chipotle Sauce

1. Thin bacon is important in this recipe: it ensures the bacon is cooked through.
2. Preheat grill to medium heat or let charcoal settle into a red coal.
3. Slice bacon pieces in half. Wrap bacon around jalapeño halves. Pin bacon into jalapeño with toothpicks.
4. Grill jalapeños, turning often to reduce flare-ups.
5. When bacon starts to brown in the middle, brush top of jalapeños with raspberry chipotle sauce.
6. Flip jalapeños. Brush top of jalapeños with

raspberry chipotle sauce.

7. Grill for another 2-3 minutes on each side to set glaze.
8. Remove jalapeños and toothpicks; let rest.
9. Serve warm or room temperature.

Molasses Cookies

Makes 2 dozen.

2 1/4 cups flour
2 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cloves
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. ginger
2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
1/2 cup shortening
1 cup light brown sugar, packed
1/4 cup Grandma’s Molasses
1 egg

1. Sift together dry ingredients.
2. Cream together shortening and

brown sugar.

3. Add molasses and egg to creamed mixture; blend thoroughly.
4. Slowly fold in sifted dry ingredients until a homogenous thick batter/dough forms.
5. Roll dough into balls; chill for 30-60 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 350 F.
7. Evenly space dough balls on cookie sheet lined with parchment. Slightly flatten dough balls. Bake 10-12 minutes or just until edge of cookies start to brown.

Sausage Balls

Makes 2-3 dozen.

1 lb. spicy pork breakfast sausage
8 oz. sharp cheddar cheese, grated/shredded
8 oz. Colby cheddar or jack cheese, grated/shredded
1 2/3 cups Bisquick
2 tsp. seasoned salt

1. Using a stand mixer (set on low using dough hook) or your hands, thoroughly mix 1 cup sausage, 1 cup cheese, 3/4 cup Bisquick and 1 tsp. seasoning. Repeat until all ingredients have been combined and homogenous sausage dough forms.
2. Preheat oven to 375 F. Line a baking pan with parchment paper.
3. Roll dough into 1-inch balls. Evenly space dough balls on baking sheet.
4. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove sausage balls from pan; drain on paper towels.
5. Wipe baking sheet and replace parchment paper before baking next batch.

Holiday-party Cranberry Spritzers

Serves 8-10.

1 16-oz. bottle cranberry juice
8 oz. high-quality ginger ale
8 oz. amaretto
1 bottle Prosecco or sparkling white wine
Cranberries and mint leaves (optional)

1. Mix cranberry juice, ginger ale and amaretto in serving pitcher or punch bowl.
2. Fill champagne flutes or serving cups half full with cranberry mixture.
3. Top flutes with Prosecco.
4. For a dramatic presentation, drop 3-4 fresh cranberries into each champagne flute and garnish flute with a mint leaf.

*Unwrap the best kept secret
in Johnson County*



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Cleburne Christmas Concert and Reception
December 8, 7:00 p.m.
Cleburne Conference Center

University Singers Concert
Gloria, A Choral Christmas
December 13, 8:00 p.m.
Keene SDA Church

Open House and Bake Sale
December 15, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Hopps Museum and Welcome Center
Southwestern Campus

Check our website and Facebook page for upcoming events!
Watch live events at swau.edu/campus-life/liveevents
or videos and archived events at www.vimeo.com/swau



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