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DECEMBER 2013

This Hat Lady's Secret

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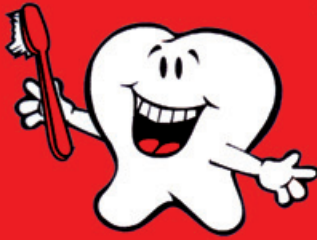
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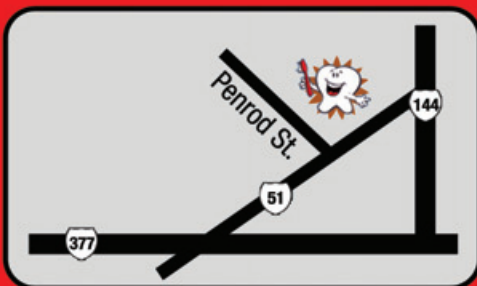
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Editor's Note

Hello Friends,

Lately I've been going through the crates. Reading my sweet mother's research into our genealogy, I've proved not only that her ancestors arrived on the *Mayflower*, but also that my dad's ancestor fought as a minuteman in the Revolutionary War. That brings to mind a 200-year-old painting of General George Washington, half-crouching on the prow of a boat, leading his men across a river at night in the sleet.

This comfort-spoiled woman cannot imagine the self-sacrifice of each and every American who followed Washington into independence. We now enjoy an ease of life our forefathers could hardly imagine. It's the end of 2013, and most of us find food on trips in heated, self-powered coaches

to climate-controlled markets filled with fresh vegetables galore and an abundance of seafood and meat packed neatly on clean ice.

Melissa

Melissa Rawlins

GranburyNOW 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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Bill Strain happily helps his wife, Wanda, do their house up big-time for the holidays.

Photo by Michelle Winters.

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This Hat Lady's Secret

— By Erin McEndree

A great hostess needs to be good with names and make everyone feel welcome. Fran McPherson is a welcoming sight. Fran is a member of Senior Circle and Healthy Woman, where she is a strong volunteer and wears a smile as she welcomes people to the many activities held during the year. Fran benefits emotionally and physically by engaging with people in the same season of life she finds herself in. She meets and greets people, donning a matching hat and some bling-bling on her fingers and eyelids. "I'm known as the hat lady," Fran laughed.

Senior Circle, a resource of Lake Granbury Medical Center, provides programs and activities for those 50 and better to age gracefully, live well, stay healthy and have fun. They provide many benefits to seniors, such as seminars about health and wellness issues, year-round activities and fellowship with friends. "We try to keep our members up-to-date with the services the hospital provides," said Jeanette Hill, the director of the Senior Circle. "Fran helps host our monthly brunch that spotlights a hospital service or a physician. Members bring food." They are also curious to see which hat Fran will wear.

Fran was also a hostess for the Opera House when it first opened. "I would meet and greet people," Fran said. "I also got a free ticket. I may not be able to get around so well anymore, but I like to get out of the house," Fran admitted. "I like working with people. I like to socialize. I don't want to stop, or I will go down hill.



Sandra Smith and Fran McPherson
volunteer at the Senior Circle office.

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Bailey McCauley and Jeanette Hill are great friends with Fran, the hat lady!

I want to do what I can do for as long as I can do it." One of the many benefits for Fran is the opportunity to get involved with friends and keep moving. Fran is a people person with a great attitude. Being with people lifts her spirits.

Senior Circle offers a wide variety of interests people can take advantage of to help them get more out of life. Fran regularly participates as a hostess on the monthly bus trip to WinStar Casino in Oklahoma. "Fran is always willing to host a trip," said Jeanette Hill, coordinator of the Senior Circle. "It takes a special person to host and handle any issues that may arise." Day trips include places like Clark Gardens in Weatherford or a Texas Ranger baseball game, but there are also some overnight trips. Five big trips are available for those who want to travel to places like Hawaii or Quebec, Canada. When Jeanette goes on the big trips, Fran volunteers in the office. Free exercise programs, social events, games, medical seminars and screenings are provided for members. "When I started coming in 2004, I helped Jeanette recruit," Fran said. "Our goal was to get 1,000 members. We have surpassed that. We have over 2,100 members!" Because membership has grown, a larger space was needed. In April, Senior Circle members were blessed with a new 5,000-square-foot facility, complete with two huge meeting rooms, a library, lots of storage and a large kitchen.

"Senior Circle also celebrated its 14th anniversary last May," Fran said. "The celebration, with a nautical theme, was held at the Granbury Resort and Conference Center on the lake. The atmosphere was so nice." Tony, Fran's son, attended the celebration with her. They spend a lot of time together. "I told Tony he could dance with my friends, Bailey and Marie," Fran laughed. "Tony is a good dancer."

Tony is involved with the seniors, too. He lives in his "man cave" on the same

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15 acres close to Fran and helps out often. "My husband, James, could do anything and fix everything," Fran said. "Tony is just like his dad."

Fran spent 26 years working at Lockheed Martin making airplane parts out of graphite. "I would climb on airplanes and work on all the special projects. It was fun," Fran said. Fran remembers training a young man named Freddy. She knew he was smart and helped him advance at work. "Before I retired, Freddy was my boss," Fran laughed. "He always called me Frannie Bell. I miss those people." A retiree dinner is held every year, and Fran enjoys seeing the people with whom she worked for so long.

The Red Hat Society is another organization where Fran gets to socialize and spend time with friends. She started a Red Hat Club in Fort Worth many years



ago and is now a member in Granbury. "We go to restaurants and go shopping," Fran said. "We also have a big Christmas party and fellowship."

Serving others is a gift Fran uses often to keep active. For about 12 years, Fran used to take care of a lady who did not have family. The woman let Fran live in a house on her property. Fran would get groceries for the woman and take her to doctor's appointments. "My family was with her to the end," Fran explained.

Fran has ties to the first settlers in Hood County through her late husband. His great-grandparents were the founding



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patriarchs of Glen Rose. Charles Barnard came from Hartford, Connecticut, to open a trading post with his brother, George. His brother ransomed a captive Spanish girl named Juana from the Comanche Indians. Charles and Juana married and had 14 children. Only four lived to adulthood. Fran is fortunate to have such a rich history, and she is proud of her heritage. Charles and Juana are memorably portrayed in a life-size, bronze statue that graces the historic courthouse lawn in Glen Rose. Today, only some foundation stones, an old barn and a windmill still exist at the site of the Barnard Trading Post. The descendants of the Barnard family still meet every year to celebrate their legacy. Fran and Tony play a large role in organizing the event.



Fran celebrates Thanksgiving with Nelda Hitchcock.

Other hobbies Fran once found enjoyable were sewing and playing the organ at church. She admits she has not been able to do those things lately. She got her musical ability from her dad. "They called him Big Boy, and he made fiddles. He had no education, but he was a smart man," Fran recalled. "He wrote poems and songs and played the fiddle."

In the future, Fran would like to do a service project with people who need encouragement. "My friend, Bailey, suggested going to the care center where she works to spend time with residents who do not get visitors," Fran said. "We need to have a project."

Volunteering and serving others is this hat lady's secret to keeping active. "People always remember Fran and come to talk to her," Jeanette said. "They have to give the hat lady a hug." **NOW**

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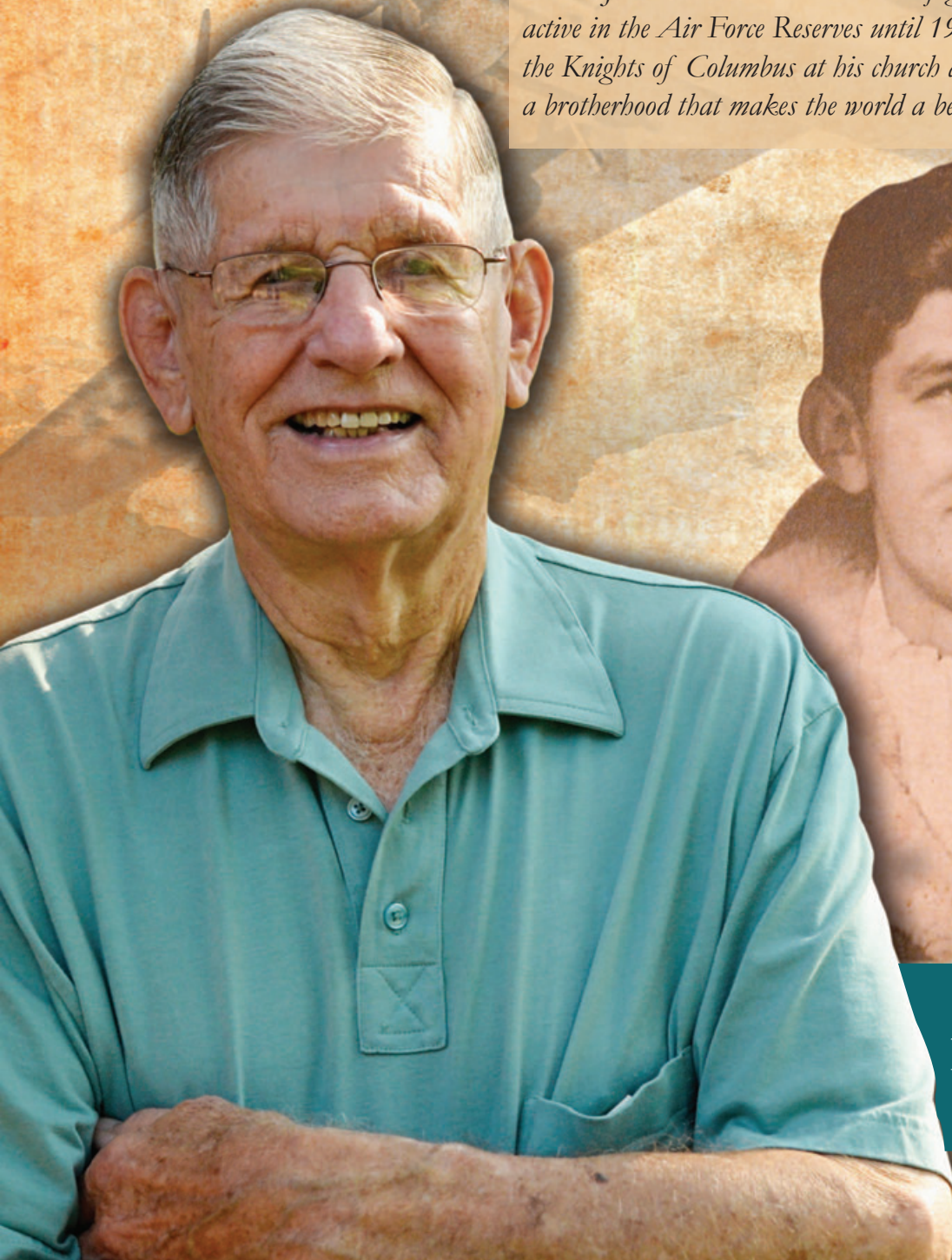
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Serving for a Lifetime

— By Erin McEndree

Service is an important part of Edward “EJ” Dittlinger’s life — it has been for 90 years. Whether serving country or community, he is always willing to get involved and make a real difference in people’s lives. EJ served in WWII as a B-24 flight engineer. He continued to be active in the Air Force Reserves until 1983. After retiring, he joined the Knights of Columbus at his church and continues to be involved in a brotherhood that makes the world a better place, one act at a time.



“He strives to help people, one act at a time.”



Upon graduating high school in 1940 in Robstown, Texas, EJ joined the National Youth Administration, founded by Franklin Delano Roosevelt. NYA's purpose was to provide education, jobs, recreation and counseling to youth, as well as financial assistance in return for a commitment of work. EJ went through the program for six months. He was employed at Duncan Field (later Kelly Field) in San Antonio. He studied aircraft engineering and worked during the day. "At the time, I was only 17 and too young to get a mechanics' job," EJ said. "I had to be a mechanics learner for half the pay." In 1942, EJ was transferred to Corpus Christi Naval Air Station where he became an apprentice engineer mechanic for one year. Then in February 1943, EJ was drafted.

While EJ was in basic training in Miami Beach, Florida, and mechanics school in Gulf Port Field, Mississippi, he was also courting Iline. The day after he met her, he announced to his aunt, "I found the girl I'm going to marry." During his time at Aerial Gunnery School in Harlingen, Texas, he would sneak home on weekends to see Iline. On leave in December 1943, they were married. Iline moved with EJ to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, near Tucson, Arizona, where they lived in an apartment. This month they celebrate their 70th anniversary.

In WWII, EJ flew 35 missions over Germany and France on a 10-man crew of a B-24 as a flight engineer. When EJ started, the number of missions for a bomber to complete was 25, but the number went up to 35 by the time he was nearing his last. EJ's 35th mission was the shortest, most memorable and most

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dangerous. On September 9, 1944, the mission started like the 34 missions before. The sky was filled with black dots that consisted of B-17s and B-24s en route to destroy the enemy. Every squadron was assigned a different color flare. The plane followed their color so they would not get separated from their squadron.



When it was time to get into formation, bedlam ensued. As another B-24 was getting into position in front of the aircraft EJ was in, the wing swiped the front turret right off his plane. Luckily, Robert Stoneburner was not in the front turret where he normally sat. He had left to talk to EJ about fixing his heated suit so he could warm up. "There were maps and glass and debris flying all around us," EJ remembered. "And it was freezing." Wires were dangling and sparking on the side of the aircraft they managed to stop. The other plane was damaged also, and both had to release their bombs in the English Channel before they could make emergency landings at the first base they could find. When EJ's aircraft landed, everyone gathered around to see the whole nose shattered off. "We were lucky we got back to a base," EJ said. "We were all happy we got credit for the mission and got to go home."

The pilot, Lt. Keith Porter, wrote in his journal, "It was a miracle [we survived]. God just wasn't ready for us to die yet, I guess. I'm going to church tomorrow to give my thanks they gave us credit for this mission. Hooray!"

Before the war was over, EJ's unit wanted to leave a memorial in England.

They took up a donation and created the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library at the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library, which are still there today. EJ was fortunate to travel to England with his family to visit the library and see his old base. A glider club was on his old base, and he took a ride in one of the gliders. "People are still so appreciative

that we were there in WWII," EJ said.

After the war, EJ went back to his old job in aircraft maintenance and repair. He retired from the Corpus Christi Army Depot repair department in 1978. While there, his son, James, apprenticed under



him. EJ continued to be in the Air Force Reserves. His son joined, too, and in 1968 they were called to go to Kelly Field, out of which they flew missions to Vietnam for a year-and-a-half during the Pueblo Crisis. He also had the opportunity to take a flight in a B-24 again. "James called from Alaska and told me to get a ticket," EJ remembered. "There were four generations of Dittlingers there. Three of us took a ride in the B-24, and a TV station came to interview us."



Throughout his military career, EJ earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and 11 other medals for his service. He retired from the military as a Chief Warrant Officer. Afterward, EJ again joined a brotherhood of men who help widows and children of a departed brother. The Knights of Columbus (KOC) appealed to EJ because their mission is founded on principles similar to a military unit. KOC members are united in service in taking care of their families and standing with their brothers.

The Knights of Columbus council that meets at the St. Francis Cabrini Catholic Church has been in existence since 1988. "We are strictly a charity group," EJ said, "giving all the money we raise to different charities."

They host a casino night fundraiser dedicated to five local charities, which receive monies monthly. The fall golf tournament was established not only to honor Father Costigan, their priest who died of cancer, but also to fund scholarships for two men studying for the priesthood. The council is currently 186 strong. Men interested in joining the KOC have to be recommended by council members, go through an interview process and be voted on. Members decide how their talents can benefit their parish and their community and work to expand its outreach. Members of the KOC can get involved in many events that change people's lives.

EJ and Iline continue to travel in their motor home to places like Alaska and New York. They love to visit their family which includes six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. EJ's whole life has been dedicated to making a difference in the lives of others, and he strives to help people, one act at a time. **NOW**



2013 Holiday Shopping Guide

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In the tradition of numerous seasonal events throughout the year for which Granbury has become known, this Christmas the town unwraps another present for all to enjoy.

The Granbury Living Christmas Cards™ is an outdoor, interactive family event on the historic square in Granbury, Texas. This holiday extravaganza takes place on the second weekend in December and is Lakeside Baptist Church's gift to the community.

Mitchell George, Director of Tourism for the city of Granbury, states "This is a partnership between Lakeside Baptist Church, Hood County and the city of Granbury. The city merchants are truly excited about this. They're hoping that it becomes an annual event."

Well, what exactly is it? Carey Dyer, minister of music and worship at Lakeside Baptist Church: "The Granbury Living Christmas Cards™ is a multi-faceted, multi-sensory holiday event. It will include art, music and inspiration – and will take participants on a whirlwind tour from sleigh bells and candy canes to the Bethlehem manger, where the true hope of Christmas can be found."

The event includes three main areas:

- 1) Several hand-constructed, hand-painted, larger-than-life Christmas cards. These cards are huge (up to 24' wide and 10' tall)! Each card depicts a different thematic scene from Christmas. They will each come to life with actors, dancers and singers who seem to have stepped right out of the card as they interact with the audience. Dyer explains, "The best way to describe it is a musical/theatrical production in which the audience moves through and interacts with the action. This is a really unique artistic experience."
- 2) A Christmas Artisans Village where people can see live demonstrations from some of the area's finest craftsmen. Artists, woodworkers, candle makers and more will come together to delight. Also included is a special "Christmas Kidz Zone" where little ones can play and create their own masterpieces.
- 3) The "bow on top" of the evening is an outdoor pavilion concert presented by the Lakeside Baptist Church music and worship ministry. This 30-minute mini-musical is sure to spread joy and inspire all who attend.

All of these exciting, memorable experiences will be rolled into one amazing holiday event. So please mark your calendars and don't miss the beginning of a new Hood County tradition. Merry Christmas!

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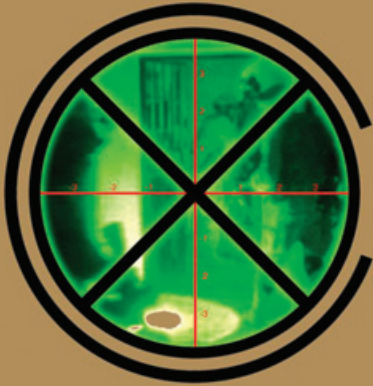
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EVERYWHERE



— By Lisa Bell



AT HOME WITH
Bill and Wanda Strain

December brings an air of excitement as people begin bringing boxes out of storage to decorate for Christmas. At the Strain home, Wanda already has decorated in anticipation of celebrating Jesus' birth and family and friends getting together. With hundreds of Santa figurines, almost a dozen trees and many other decorations, she needs a full month to get everything in place. Normally a very social person, Wanda attends events in November, but she reserves her propensity for hosting until December and extends it until after her birthday in January. The results are worth waiting to see.



Bill and Wanda visited Granbury many times during the last 15 years, but finally bought a home and moved to the area five years ago. Coming from the Dallas area, they enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of their home. Wanda grew up in the country, so she enjoyed watching a deer cross the backyard one morning. One evening they came home to the greeting of a fox coming down their driveway. On another occasion, visiting guests waited to leave, while a mama skunk and all her babies crossed the road.

Even though their home sits in a neighborhood surrounded by houses, the large yard and small subdivision make it feel somewhat secluded. "It's close enough to go to Fort Worth and the malls, but far enough out to feel like country," Bill said. After 33 years of marriage, they still maintain a sense of playfulness and allow each other freedom to pursue separate interests. Bill helps with a small amount of Wanda's decorating, but she does the majority of the work. "She loves decorating," he said.

"I tell her she should be an event planner and decorate for weddings and parties."

Wanda's not sold on that idea. "I have too much fun playing games," she admitted. She spends a lot of time with the Granbury Newcomers' Club — when she's not busy making her home fun and beautiful. Bill prefers spending his days going to the gym and catching the latest action movie.

Part of the beauty of her home is the placement of decor. The small rocking chair, a gift from her granddad for Wanda's first Christmas, has a place of honor near the staircase. An easel from England, a gift to Bill, enhances a spare bedroom. Throughout the house, her flair for artistic floral arrangements provides subtle beauty. She proudly displays artwork from Bill's early teen years. Even the porch and flower gardens add to a feeling of coming home.

Any holiday gives Wanda a reason to decorate, but as soon as November arrives, the Halloween and fall decorations go into storage. Ornate

"We celebrate
JESUS' BIRTHDAY, AND IT'S
DELIGHTFUL TO SEE ALL THE
DECORATIONS AND THE
JOY AND THE FUN WE HAVE
together."

Santa statues and reindeer, some 2 feet tall, take their place. Wreaths and garland appear on doors, shelves and mantel. White lights grace ficus trees all over the house. Lighted reindeer families watch over the yard while the porch sprouts poinsettias. White lights cover hedges across the front of the house. A Nativity scene fills the entire dresser in the master bedroom, and a slightly smaller set finds a place in another room. Angels show



up, and stuffed Christmas animals fill the stairway. Then hundreds of Santas come out to play.

Wanda had a few figurines, but began seriously collecting them in 1999. For the first three years, she purchased about 40 each year tapering off until she now purchases only a few. She makes many of the wreaths and arrangements that fill their home.

Best known for the Santa collection, Wanda isn't content to simply put

out her treasures randomly. She uses other materials to create scenes. In one bathroom — normally decorated with a western theme — the scenery changes slightly. Mr. and Mrs. Claus appear, fully decked out in their best boots. Surrounded by other festive decorations, they almost seem to two-step across the bathroom counter. Each year Wanda maintains the western atmosphere in this bathroom.

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up many different sets. They may appear in any room from year-to-year. Wanda likes changing things up, although some places seem to host certain groups. The master bathroom morphs into the perfect location for a large group of winter sports-inspired figures. Covering the garden tub with plywood, Styrofoam and other materials, the faucet is transformed into a mountain. She creatively builds the entire mountain getaway before carefully placing figures on sleds and playing in the snow.

Another set features Santa playing a variety of sports. Some other designs feature cooking, eating or other food-related activities. These work well in the breakfast nook china cabinet. The laundry room may host a group of Irish Santas or a beach scene where he floats in an inner tube or sips a cool drink under an umbrella.

One of her Santas stands about 4 feet tall, complementing brass reindeer decked out for Christmas with a Coca-Cola sled behind them. Even Bill gets into the spirit by gracing a trophy deer head in his office with familiar red caps.

Almost a dozen trees with beautiful ornaments fill the home during Christmas. Some of the Christmas

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trees feature one color. The largest tree holds a variety of designer spheres and other collectibles. This is the tree where the family gathers on Christmas Eve, exchanging gifts with one another.

Some of the balls are designed for white lights to go inside to produce an amazing effect of color and illumination. Wanda refers to one of her trees as the hanging tree, because it hangs on the wall.

Some of the figures are animated. One Santa snores, while another soaks his feet and laments over how sore they feel. Wanda enjoys these, but her favorite is a leather-clad Teddy bear who sings "Teddy Bear" by Elvis.

The collection has grown over the years. At times, she has seen special figurines and bought them before Christmas. Bill and their daughters gave many to her as gifts. The bulk of her purchases are made on the 26th of the month. As tradition has it, she and her daughters wake up by 6:00 a.m. to arrive at the first of several malls before they even open. Midafternoon, they go back to get Bill, so he can get in on the search for unique designs or the elusive matching piece in a set.

Although the decorations take a full month to arrange, Wanda doesn't mind the extra work. As she ages, anything placed up high presents a challenge. But for her it's worth the effort. Visitors who enjoy the touch of the season in every room bring her joy. "I just love Christmas," Wanda said. "We celebrate Jesus' birthday, and it's delightful to see all the decorations and the joy and the fun we have together."

Some day, she may not put forth as much effort for the holiday. This year, her home will once again announce Christmas everywhere. **NOW**

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Gary and Toya Unger keep a wall of photos of their wonderful customers, for whom the Ungers guarantee their mostly liquidation merchandise.

WHAT A SURPRISE!

For good products at good prices, make Next Door Merchants your first-stop shop.

— By Melissa Rawlins

Conveniently located between Pecan Plantation and DeCordova on Fall Creek Highway, Next Door Merchants operates in the most comfortable warehouse you've ever entered. Owner Gary Unger and his brother, Jim McElroy, designed and built the storefront. And Gary's wife, Toya, has arranged the interior to feel almost like home.

Gary and Toya, successful partners in marriage for 33 years, developed the retail store three years ago and now offer an amazing selection of name-brand items at discount prices. "We want to be fair to everyone," Toya said. "We are not making a huge profit, but because of that we have a lot of customers we've been able to help."

Toya and Gary opened this business after leaving a completely different industry. "Twenty-some-odd years ago, I had an automotive shop. Then I was a rancher for 21 years, with 10 of those years spent as ranch manager," Gary said. "When God closes one door he opens another. This was the next door He opened for us." They bought one pallet of merchandise at liquidation, and customers began to buy.

Without dreaming of it in advance, the couple found themselves selling large and small kitchen appliances, vacuum cleaners, housewares, furniture, decorative items, power tools, air compressors, hand tools, yard tools, tool boxes and toys. Everything is tested carefully before being set on

display in the showroom. Next Door Merchants guarantees each product, offering warranties from 30 to 90 days. "We're able to offer good products at discount prices because Gary has such a mechanical mind," Toya said. "He can repair something that was in liquidation because of damage."

Gary puts into practice his talents for carpentry, mechanics, welding and more, which were honed during his prior careers. "I really enjoy this business because of the diversity of things I get to test and work on," Gary said. "I can be working on a chain saw one minute and refinishing a piece of furniture an hour later and then working on an appliance."

"My most fun job is when we get a new shipment in," Toya said. "It's like Christmas! There are always a couple of surprises, and I get to play with the gadgets before putting them on the shelves."

Such interesting products invite all sorts of people to shop Next Door Merchants. "We've started a customer wall, taking their picture as we get to know them," said Toya, who has also set out a donation jar for the local Special Olympics team, the Granbury Cheetahs.

"After 21 years of seeing nothing but cows, it's nice to be able to communicate with people," Gary added. He has been known to explain the history of an item to interested customers, who are always glad to learn whether Gary has repaired the item. "We try to treat everybody fairly, and I would rather lose money on a product than have somebody feel dissatisfied."

Some offerings are prepackaged, since their mostly liquidation merchandise includes new items, closeouts, discontinued products, overstock, damaged boxes, store returns and damaged freight. "Often, the only reason we get it is because the packaging was ripped," Gary said. Some merchandise is used, and they designate it as such.

Striving to keep their prices low, Gary and Toya are willing to negotiate. "We don't hesitate when people make reasonable offers," Gary said. Next Door Merchants is a great place to start your Christmas shopping. **NOW**



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Kelsey Norman, manager of Hilton Garden Inn's Great American Grill, cuddles her baby, Ruby, during a break from work.



Kim Fancher and Heath and Sarah Ramsey harvesting grapes at Barking Rocks Winery.



Randy Baldwin visits the Nutsbell Bakery for his favorite, a Blue Bell butter pecan hand-dipped waffle cone.



Barbara Hitt presents Jennifer Jensen with a Bluff Dale Winery cabernet sauvignon during a Friday afternoon wine tasting.



One of the many vendors at the Harvest Moon Festival.



Karrie Grundy and Soozie Klinefelter enjoy an Italian wine served by Chelsea Stevenson on the patio of one of Granbury's downtown wineries, Farina's.



Kristen Stewart and Brynleigh, with grandmother Sharon Chapman, get ready for winter at Christina's Boutique.

Get Your Home and Car Winter-ready

Winter's on its way! Get ready by preparing your home and vehicle for colder weather. You can improve your safety, save money and keep comfortable throughout winter with a few simple steps:

At Home: Have you ...

- **Cleaned the gutters?** Clear debris from gutters and test downspouts for drainage to protect against water damage.
- **Trimmed trees?** Cut back dead or dying limbs and any branches that can touch the roof or siding. When it's windy, branches can rub or scratch the surfaces of your home and cause damage. They also could fall during a storm or break under heavy snow and ice.
- **Stopped the air leaks?** Eliminating air leaks will improve your home's comfort and efficiency. Your first stops? The basement and the attic. Attic leaks allow warmed air to escape and have the effect of drawing cold air in through basement leaks. Use a can of spray foam insulation to plug up the offenders in both areas.
- **Scheduled a heating system inspection?** Have your furnace professionally inspected and cleaned to reduce the risk of a breakdown and to keep the system running efficiently. If you have a fireplace, have your chimney professionally cleaned and inspected and ensure your damper opens, closes and seals tightly.
- **Winterized outdoor faucets?** Remove all hoses or devices attached to outdoor spigots. Have in-ground sprinkler systems blown out, and turn off water to outdoor spigots. Be sure to drain any water left behind in the pipes.

Your Vehicle: Have you...

- **Had your vehicle serviced?** Ask your mechanic to perform an inspection: Test the battery and brakes, inspect the exhaust, check the cooling system, check fluids, change the oil and make sure all components are working properly. Check the vehicle's owner's manual for information on the correct fluid types and recommended service intervals.
- **Checked the wiper blades?** Inspect your wiper blades to make sure they're functional and in good condition. If you live in an area

that typically sees lots of snow and ice, consider installing winter blades. Store an ice scraper in the car, and stock up on windshield washer fluid rated to withstand -30 degrees or lower temperatures.

- **Monitored the fuel line?** Today's ethanol fuels remove small amounts of water from your fuel system to help prevent freezing. In addition, you can help avoid freeze-ups by keeping your vehicle in a heated garage, avoiding refueling while the tanker truck is at the station (water and deposits from the tanker could end up in your fuel line) and keeping your gas cap secured. Another solution: Always keep the tank at least half-full.
- **Inspected the tires?** Check for uneven wear, cupping, sidewall cracking and other damage or deterioration. Also examine tire treads to make sure the grooves are deep enough to grip slick surfaces. If your tires fail any of these tests, replace them with all-season tires, or, in extreme winter environments, with winter snow tires. Wonder if your tires have enough tread? Try the penny test: Stick a penny (Lincoln head first) into one of the grooves that goes completely around the tire. If you can see the top of Lincoln's head, your tread is worn down below 2/32 of an inch and should be replaced.
- **Stocked the trunk with emergency equipment?** Essentials include: Flares, jumper cables, a shovel, a first-aid kit, a flashlight, extra batteries, nonperishable snacks and cold-weather gear. **NOW**

The information in this article was obtained from various sources. While we believe it to be reliable and accurate, we do not warrant the accuracy or reliability of the information. These suggestions are not a complete list of every loss-control measure. The information is not intended to replace manuals or instructions provided by the manufacturer or the advice of a qualified professional. Nor is it intended to effect coverage under any policy. State Farm makes no guarantees of results from use of this information. We assume no liability in connection with the information nor the suggestions made.

Jace Foreman is a State Farm agent based in Granbury.

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In The Kitchen With JulieAnn Kolman-Clark

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

When it comes to ham, JulieAnn Kolman-Clark prefers whole, unsliced. Cooking it according to recommended temperature and time, she glazes it with one of two sauces: either orange- or mustard-based. Growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, in a family with six children, JulieAnn was cooking by the time she could reach the stovetop. They always had a houseful for the holidays, which are still her favorite times, because they focus on lots of good meals and conversations. “If you have raised children,” said JulieAnn, who has two sons, Jacob and Jedidiah, “you know how difficult it can be to get everyone at the table at the same time. Holidays are great meal times, whether they come for the food or the remember-whens!” **NOW**

Overnight French Toast

Serves 12-16.

- 1 lb. firm, white bread**
- 12 large eggs**
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla**
- 3 Tbsp. sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. grated orange peel**
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg**
- 1 1/4 cups half-and-half**
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter**
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**

- 1.** Slice bread in 1-inch slices. Place single-layer in 1 or 2 baking pans.
- 2.** Beat eggs until blended, not frothy. Add vanilla, sugar, orange peel and nutmeg. Stir in half-and-half. Pour over bread, turning slices to coat both sides. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 3.** Preheat oven to 150 F.
- 4.** Melt some of the butter in skillet over medium heat and fry bread slices until browned on both sides, adding more butter as needed.

- 5.** Put slices on baking sheet in oven to keep warm.
- 6.** Dust with confectioners' sugar before serving.

Cranberry Relish

- 1 lb. cranberries**
- 2 apples**
- 2 oranges**
- 1 lemon**
- 2 1/2 cups sugar**

- 1.** Grind first 4 ingredients.
- 2.** Mix in sugar.
- 3.** Chill until ready to serve.

Ham Loaf

Serves 8-10.

- 3 cups ground ham**
- 2 cups bread crumbs**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk**

- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. horseradish**
- 1 Tbsp. onion, minced**
- 1 Tbsp. parsley, chopped**
- 1 tsp. dry mustard**
- 1 tsp. salt, or to taste**
- 1 dash of Worcestershire sauce**
- 1 tsp. seasoned pepper**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F.
- 2.** Mix all ingredients; pack into a 9x13-inch baking pan.
- 3.** Bake 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

Hot Potato Mold

Serves 12.

- 3 lbs. potatoes**
- 3 eggs, beaten**
- 1 1/2 cups milk**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated**
- 8 oz. mozzarella cheese, grated**
- 1 tsp. fresh garlic, minced**
- 1 tsp. salt, or to taste**
- 4 Tbsp. bread crumbs**
- 1 Tbsp. paprika**

- 1.** Boil, peel and dice potatoes.
- 2.** Preheat oven to 350 F.
- 3.** Mix all ingredients together except crumbs and paprika.
- 4.** Oil a 3-quart, round casserole dish. Sprinkle sides and bottom with bread crumbs and paprika.
- 5.** Pack potato mixture into dish.
- 6.** Bake 1 hour.
- 7.** Unmold on serving dish and serve.

Mustard Ham Glaze

- 1 8-oz. bottle yellow mustard**
- 1 cup brown sugar**

- 1.** Spread mustard over top and sides of ham in baking pan.
- 2.** Pat brown sugar onto mustard until ham is covered.
- 3.** Bake as directed on ham.
- 4.** One half hour before done, add additional mustard and brown sugar, which will caramelize on the ham and taste delicious.

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

Calendar

DECEMBER 2013

December 5

Granbury Newcomers ladies luncheon: 9:30 a.m., Pecan Plantation Country Club. Featuring the harmony of the Judge and Jury: Judge Ralph Walton, Stan McBroom and Ray Scott perform holiday favorites. Make reservation at www.granburynewcomers.org by **Dec 2**.

The Kids Got It Right book signing: 9:30 a.m., Doug's Sports House, 120 N. Crockett St. Meet author Jim Dent, who has written ten books including *The Junction Boys*, which became a popular ESPN movie. For more information, call Eddie Lange, (817) 579-9026.

Premiere Gala Extravaganza: 6:00-11:00 p.m., Granbury Opera House. Celebrate the Granbury Opera House renovation! Join the City of Granbury for this red-carpet, black-tie event which includes valet parking, hors d'oeuvres, champagne, live entertainment by a world class string quartet as well as excerpts from Granbury Theatre Company's production of *A Christmas Carol*. \$100. Call (817) 579-0952.

December 6

The Night They Saved Christmas: 6:30 p.m.,

Lakestone Terrace Retirement Community, 916 E. Hwy 377. Free film, shown for anyone 55 or over. Come and watch this holiday flick with popcorn, drinks and candy. For more information, call (817) 573-1214.

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. Pick up tickets along with a map of events for the community's 20th annual celebration of Christmas spirit, which include: concerts, carriage rides, caroling, nativity display and, of course, tours of historic homes. Reserve tickets on-line, www.granburysquare.com, or call Brenda Hyde at (817) 573-5299.

December 7

Christmas on the Square with First Baptist Church: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Granbury Square Plaza, 201 Pearl St. For information, contact Thearon Landrum at (817) 573-7137 or visit www.fbcgranbury.org.

Photos with Santa: 8:00-11:00 a.m., Camp El Tesoro, 7710 Fall Creek Hwy. Free for families! Holiday crafts, digital photos with Santa, hay ride, caroling and archery games.

Hot breakfast \$8. RSVP, (817) 806-5451.

December 13, 14

The Granbury Living Christmas Cards: 6:00-9:00 p.m., historic Granbury square. Multi-faceted, multi-sensory holiday event including art, music and inspiration complete with a kids zone, a mini-musical and several larger-than-life greeting "cards" filled with people who interact with their audience. Free Admission. For more information, visit www.lakesidebc.org or www.granburychristmas.com.

December 14

Girls Night Out: 5:00-8:00 p.m., historic downtown square. Drawing for \$100 downtown dollars, drinks and food for ladies who come to shop in the boutiques and galleries surrounding the courthouse. Call (817) 573-5299.

December 23 — January 3

Public School Winter Break: For more information, visit www.granburyisd.org.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com.

Merry Christmas



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