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DECEMBER 2013

# NOW

## A Mountain of Toys

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At Home With Dee Lemke

SPECIAL SECTION:  
2013 Holiday  
Shopping  
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## Yuletide Cheer

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*Make you home warm and merry  
with holiday decor.*

*Photo by Vanessa Polozola.*

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## Editor's Note

*Dear Friends,*

During the mayhem of cooking, shopping and parties, one of my favorite holiday pastimes is sitting on the couch with a mug of hot chocolate, watching the lights on the Christmas tree and meditating on the year.

For me, 2013 has been a joyous whirlwind. I have genuinely enjoyed my job as the *MansfieldNOW* editor. I was also blessed to be at the hospital when my nephew surprised us all by coming a few weeks early. I

look forward to his first Christmas.

If you're looking for some special Christmas cheer, I would love to see you on December 8 at the Holiday Home Tour, sponsored by the Mansfield Women's Club. Information is on our calendar.

Whether your year has been a pleasure or a challenge, may your holiday be a merry one with family, friends and delicious food.

Joy to the world,

# Mikaela

Mikaela Mathews  
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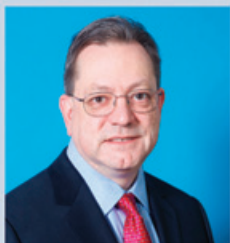
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# A MOUNTAIN OF TOYS

— By Mikaela Mathews



“I think it’s the best lesson you can give to any kid out there. Joy comes from being together with your family at an event like this.”



*In December 2012, Flo Torres just wanted 2,000 toys for their Christmas Toys for Tots drive. With the organization adding an extra drop-off date to accommodate the Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts, director Flo Torres wanted to ensure a big turnout, but she never anticipated this. “I kept saying, ‘I’m OK with 2,000 toys. That would be great,’” she remembered. “But what we got was incredible: 16,148 toys and \$15,550 in donations.” With over eight times the amount of toys than the goal, the Mansfield community showed its robust generosity and Christmas spirit.*

What became the largest single-day toy donation in Toys for Tots’ history started with a simple email. When Flo started with the center in August 2012, former superintendent Dr. Morrison expressed his desire to bring families to the center. Flo immediately thought of Toys for Tots, a nonprofit organization sponsored by the U.S. Marines to distribute toys to children in need. It was a long shot, however, since the organization already had a drop-off location in Arlington. Flo sent them an email anyway. “I told them, ‘We will not let you down. I know this community will come out in a big way, and you will be proud of them.’”

Once Toys for Tots agreed to add the center as

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an additional drop-off, the hard work began. Most toy drives are simply that: cars drive up to a drop-off location, hand over their toy and drive away. But Flo wanted to make this a bigger event. "I knew we had to hit the ground running with this," Flo recalled. "I told the team, and they got to work."

With the help of her team, Flo reached out to the principals of each school. They decorated a room with a Christmas theme and explained their expectations. "I said, 'I just want 2,000 toys, and that's it.' The promotion and excitement that happened between that conversation and the event was all them," Flo explained. Some schools even started a friendly competition to see who could donate the most toys.

After several months of planning, determination and hard work, the drop-off day came. During the day, the event was kicked off at Legacy High School and Linda Jobe Middle School. Several Marines joined students to create a long line to load toys onto a bus. Once all the toys were loaded at that location, the buses traveled on to different schools throughout the day to pick up donated

toys. The results were outstanding. "We had at least five buses filled all the way to the top," remembered Richie Escovedo, director of media and communications for the Mansfield ISD. Many of these toys ultimately went to children in need in the Mansfield community.

The event happening on a school night didn't stop the community coming out in droves for the evening activities. "I can confidently say there were at least 5,000 people there," Flo said. "It was a festival." Cars filled the parking lot and even lined down the street. Santa kicked off the evening by flying in on a helicopter and later settling in to take pictures with eager children. Free hot chocolate and nachos were offered while people mingled, dropped off toys, and celebrated the Christmas season. Show choirs from different schools performed on the stage and all of the high school mascots and a few business mascots raced around the parking lot to drop off a toy in the drop-off box. Even reindeer stamped into the Mansfield suburbs to support the community.

Hearing the stories of children not having toys for Christmas hit many of the children hard. One young boy was so inspired by Toys for Tots he asked his parents if he could donate 100 toys. His parents gave him chores to earn the money, and he later used the money to purchase all of the toys.

The automotive technology program at Ben Barber Career Tech even got in on the fun. "Every year, the auto tech students fundraise and buy toys to put together throughout the year, which they then donate," Richie explained. "They assembled 100 bikes and wheeled them across the parking lot to the event that night."

Because Fox's Channel 4 is an official sponsor of Toys for Tots, the station agreed to come out to the drop-off location that night. The extra exposure helped spread the word about the Christmas event and encouraged even more people to join the festivities, including Fox Channel 4's own employees. "Meteorologist Ron Jackson saw what was happening on TV and had to come down," Flo laughed. "It was his day off, and he said he couldn't believe it. He had to come and be a part of it."

The original plan was to unload all of the buses of their toys and reload

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them onto one large truck at the end of the night. Due to the overwhelming success and amount of toys, however, plans changed. The bus drivers agreed to drive to the Toys for Tots headquarters in Arlington to unload. "The MISD transportation team was great," Richie explained. "They just adapted and helped out."

A few weeks after the event and much to Flo's surprise, the Mansfield ISD awarded her the MISD Impact Award for her tremendous work. The award, according to the MISD website, "was established to recognize individual staff members, departments, campuses or other employee groups [who] have promoted teamwork and unity by initiating a program or event that made a positive impact within Mansfield ISD and the community." Flo acknowledged the strong, hard work from her dedicated team and volunteers to make the event a reality. "All of my team did so much and made it happen," she said. "We couldn't have done it without them."



This year, Flo and her team are going to be ready. They anticipate the same response, if not more — people, toys

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and donations. They also hope to help Toys for Tots target specific age groups that sometimes are overlooked. Because the campus drives were such a success, students can help fill the buses with toys again this year.

For Flo, last year's event was about more than free hot chocolate and Santa — it created an opportunity for children to learn about giving and helping others. “I think it's the best lesson you can give to any kid out there. Joy comes from being together with your family at an event like this,” Flo explained. “They were able to give something and see everyone else was willing to give, too.” **NOW**

*Editor's Note: The Toys for Tots drive will be on December 11 at the MISD Center for the Performing Arts. For more information, visit [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org).*

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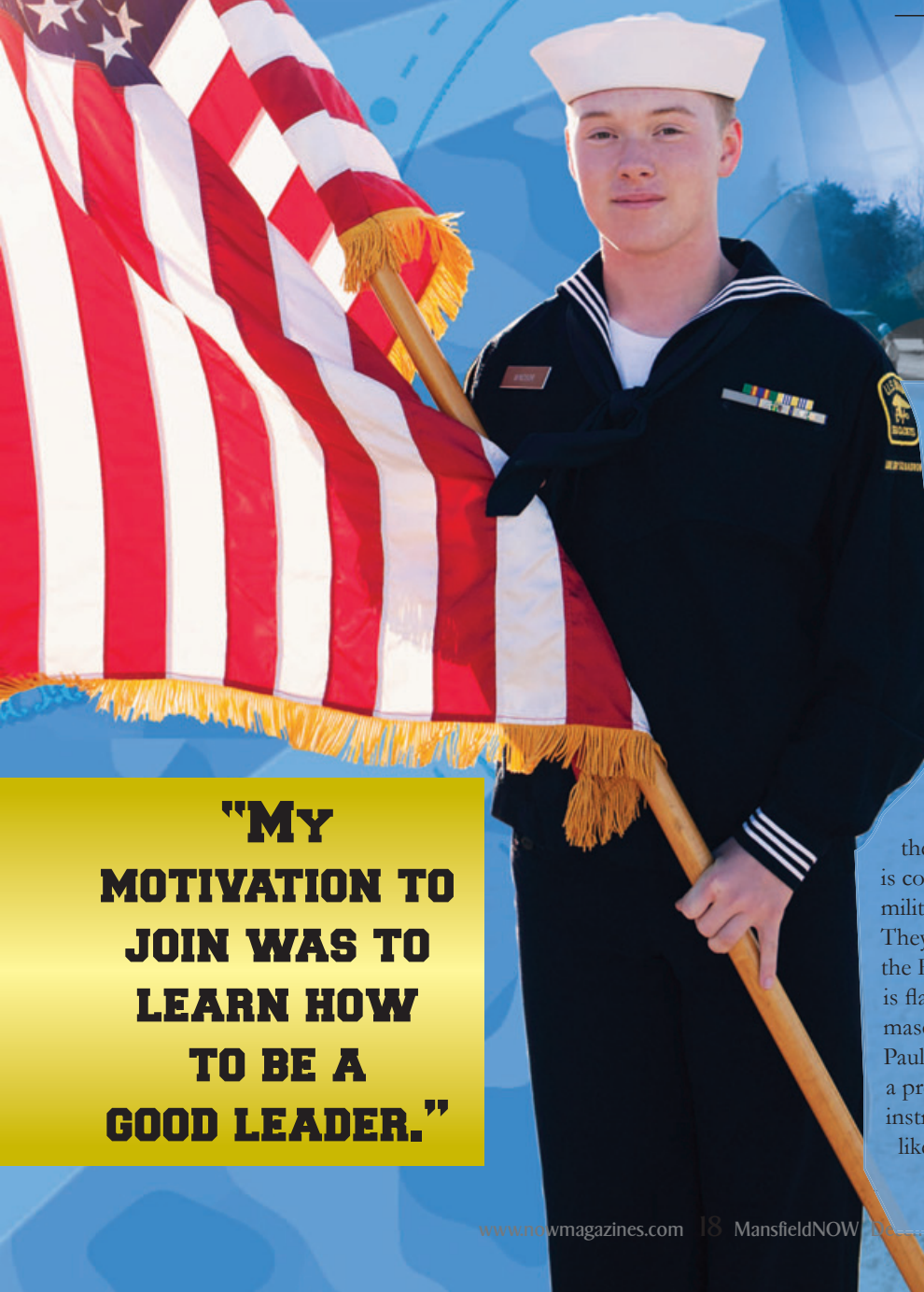
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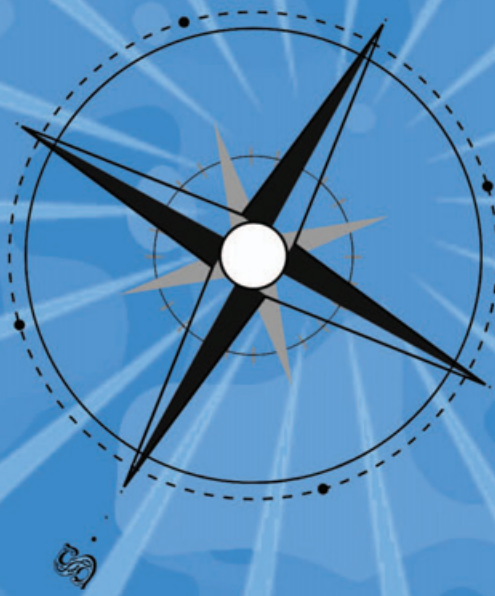
— By Sara Edgell



*Paul Windsor III is a young man not only interested in helping others, but also heavily invested in his own future. A 17-year-old senior at Mansfield High School, he is a member of the band and the ROTC. He also happens to be a member of the Navy Sea Cadet Corps in the Lone Star Squadron.*

**"MY  
MOTIVATION TO  
JOIN WAS TO  
LEARN HOW  
TO BE A  
GOOD LEADER."**

In the school band, he plays the baritone and the euphonium, which looks like a small tuba and is commonly played in military bands. The band's military-based theme this year is Earn Your Stripes. They train long hours so when they take the field for the Friday night football games, their performance is flawless. Given that the Mansfield High School mascot is the tiger, the theme is rather fitting for Paul's life in more ways than one. "Mr. Ludlow runs a pretty tight ship," he said, referring to the band instructor. "We get out there and do push-ups just like I do on my drill weekends at physical training." Paul's extracurricular activities and interests



are closely united. His involvement in ROTC plus marching in and playing a military-style instrument for a school band, that very closely follows the disciplined training of a military unit, are strongly related to the Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC). Add in a familial lineage marked by military credentials into the mix, and an obvious theme emerges: military servitude.

On his mother's side of the family tree, Paul's grandfather, Pete Chaney, was in the Navy and the Air Force. His great-grandfather, Clarence Chaney, served in World War II, as did his Uncle Red, who was actually on the *USS Arizona* battle ship in 1941 during the attack on Pearl Harbor. On his father's side, Paul's grandfather, Paul Windsor Jr., was a member of the Air Force. Paul's dad, Mark, is a police officer. Unmistakably, military style servitude runs deep and strong within the generations of Paul's family. "Most of our family has been in the military. They have been pilots and navigators in battle and also stateside."

Paul has respectfully followed in the footsteps of those in his family who have walked before him by joining the NSCC. "It's important to me, because I'm learning things I've never learned before about the armed forces," he said. Paul finds great rewards in being able to help other cadets who may be having a difficult time away from the Corps.

Paul's journey with the NSCC began in 2012 after his mother, Michelle, an intermediate school teacher, learned about the organization from one of her students during a tutoring session. "My motivation to join was to learn how to be a good leader," Paul admitted, "and to



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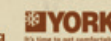
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courage, commitment — resonates the absolute importance of these factors not only in the military, but also in everyday life. “It’s all about teaching kids how to learn from the Navy,” he added. “They also focus on discipline and leadership and on giving cadets the training to live in the Navy.”

In just one year’s time, Paul has practically flown through the ranks from seaman recruit to petty officer third class. He has done exceedingly well, exhibiting self-confidence and skill proficiency. In essence, he has earned his stripes. Because Paul will soon turn 18, this will be his last year with the NSCC. Although



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he doesn't have much time left to move further up the ranks, his unwavering determination and enthusiasm to excel keep him actively participating. "I like doing this because it is fun," he confessed. "And mostly, because I get to help people who are lower rank by leading them."

As a cadet, Paul is involved in a variety of extracurricular activities that are deeply vested in military training. He regularly marches with the Color Guard, performs with the rifle drill squad and acts as master of arms on the base. One weekend of each month, he also attends drill training at





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the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Fort Worth. During these drills, Paul's squadron does a variety of things from trips to the Bush Library and camping excursions to laying wreaths on graves at the local National Cemetery and performing Color Guard services at local memorial services. They also participate in naval events around the state.



The Lone Star Squadron, a nationally ranked unit commanded by Lieutenant J.G. Bell, was honored with the opportunity to perform the Color Guard service at the commissioning of the *USS Fort Worth* in Galveston last year, as well as the anchor dedication in Fort Worth. In the Color Guard, Paul typically carries one of the flags and calls the commands. "I've been in 15 to 20 different color guards," he said. "Since I'm a petty officer third class, I get to do it because of my rank."

Furthermore, Paul has completed a number of training exercises



across the country. He did his recruit training in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In Dalworthington Gardens, Texas, he completed the master of arms training with the police department. In South Padre, he did Coast Guard training and petty officer leadership academy in Tennessee. Most recently, Paul participated in airman training with the Marines over the July Fourth weekend in Fort Worth. "That experience got me really interested in engineering. I really liked that, so it might be my future path."

For achieving these outstanding tasks, Paul has received a number of challenge coins, which are congratulatory tokens of acknowledged accomplishment. However, he has also received several rare coins from the master chief petty officer of the base in Fort Worth, the senior chief commander of the *USS Fort Worth* and the commander of the third fleet in Japan. "There are a lot of men who would love to have a few of my coins," he laughed.

Paul lives by the code of integrity and perseverance not only in the NSCC, but also in his other activities. The strong friendships and bonds formed and the lessons he has learned will surely last a lifetime. From these experiences, he has learned far more than teamwork and responsibility. He has built a sense of resolution and integrity. And in the end, that is what is so invaluable to his future. "My plans are to be a gunner's mate or to be an officer in engineering on a border ship," he stated. "I'll either go to UTA or TCC. I'm not sure yet." Joining the Navy or Air Force is a definite possibility for Paul Windsor III, who is on the cusp of a brilliant future filled with pride and success. **NOW**

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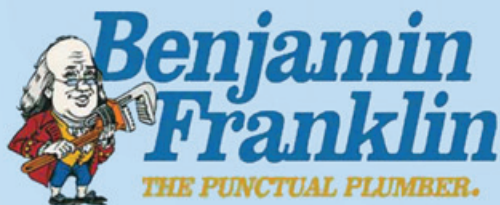
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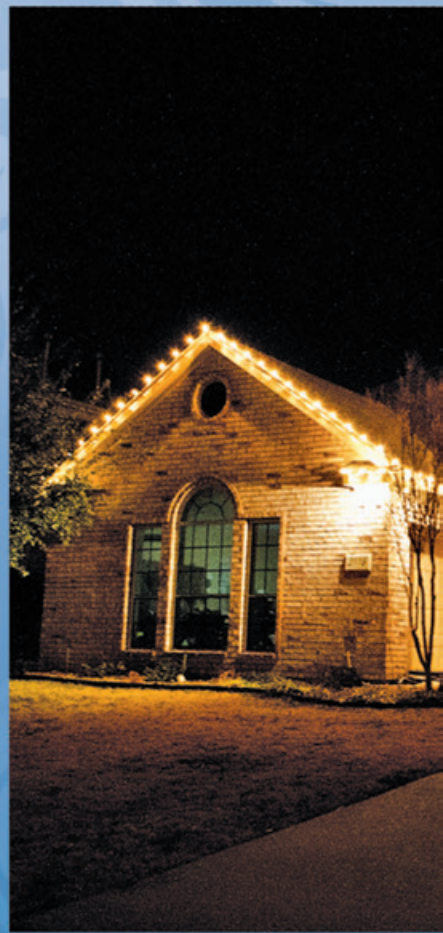
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# Happiness is a Choice

— By Carolyn Wills



## At Home With Dee Lemke

*Dee Lemke (aka Miss Dee) is the kind of teacher parents wish for and students adore. This single mother of 8-year-old twins, Mya and Ty, is also part-owner of an interior decorating service and creative director/provider of private art lessons and summer art camps for children. Beautiful and vivacious, Dee is a wonder woman with a gift for creating magical*

*spaces, dealing with life's challenges and inspiring those around her.*

Interestingly, she's also an artist who loves words. "Restarting my life after divorce, I found that inspirational quotes helped me to stay positive," she said. "They're also great lessons for my two children." Hanging in her kitchen is a saying that begins and ends with the words *Happiness is a choice ... Color outside the lines*. How Dee discovered the hidden treasure that became her family home

# Choice



and restarted its life, as well as her own, illustrates the power of these words.

"I had looked at a few houses before the Realtor showed me this one," she said. "The house was a foreclosure, and every inch of it had been trashed. When I called my Realtor back and said I would like to see it a second time, he was shocked." Admittedly, it was an absolute mess, yet there was something about the house. "One advantage was location," she smiled. "I wanted to live in the community where I teach, and this house was less than a mile from my school, which meant I could walk or run to work

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while Mya and Ty ride their scooters.”

Today, the once abused two-story, white-rose brick home is stunning. “My family and I redid everything, and I do mean everything,” Dee admitted. “It was a lot of work, and many decisions were made in little time before the school year started, but we jumped right in. I like neutrals so we used tone-on-tone creams, rich browns and whites with touches of color, patterns and a variety of textures. We added wallpaper for dramatic effect.



One wall in the formal dining room is covered in wallpaper that looks and actually feels like snakeskin.”

Amazingly, the white-tiled fireplace hearth and facing in the den had been left undamaged, and the mantel was brought back to life with a coat of white paint. Dark brown carpeting in the living/ dining areas, comfortable traditional furnishings and beautiful custom-made natural floral arrangements, ornate scrolled embellishments and inspirational

art add warmth. “I wanted a homey feeling,” she said.

A year and a half have come and gone since she purchased the house, and Dee’s vision is now a breathtakingly warm and elegant home. “The kitchen is probably my favorite room,” she said. “I love the cream-on-cream cabinets, light floor and counters and, especially, the challenge of making a room interesting when there is no color.” The main floor features a formal living and dining room, open



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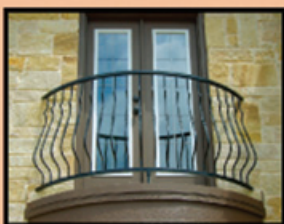


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kitchen/den/eating area, half bath and laundry. The second level includes three bedrooms, two baths and a playroom. "Having the bedrooms upstairs is great," she added. "I like being on the same floor with my kids." The spacious master suite includes a large bathroom and two walk-in closets. "Having one closet for my clothes and the other for my shoes and accessories is pretty fun," she grinned.



Like their mom, Mya and Ty are talented artists. The upstairs playroom is a gallery of their work. "Mya is really into art, while Ty is more passionate about sports and fishing," she explained. "My brother, Jeromey Clary, plays for the San Diego Chargers, and he's a most important uncle. When I asked Mya and Ty where they most wanted to go on a vacation, San Diego topped both of their lists. I'm blessed to have such a wonderful family."

Mya's bedroom is delightfully perfect for a budding young artist and animal-lover. "She wanted a Parisian theme," Dee said. "We covered one wall with a black and white zebra pattern. I painted a French cat mural on one wall and a poodle on another, and then we added a lot of pink accessories."

Ty's room was recently decorated as a surprise for him. "He was away and came home to find a football room," she said. "I cut an actual football and mounted it so that it looks like it's coming out of the black wall and scoring a field goal. Also, there's the all-important fish tank. Ty loves his fish!"

Two other VIP residents share Dee's, Mya's and Ty's quarters. The elder, Callie, is their 11-year-old calico cat, and the

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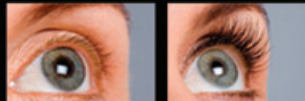


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newest black and white feline is Ivy. "I promised Mya and Ty a new cat if they could stay on green at school all year," Dee said. "That means they had to maintain good behavior every day. The school year ended, and all was green, so off we went to find Ivy."

During the summer, Dee hosts weeklong art camps for kindergarten through eighth-grade students. "We turned the garage into a studio for

private lessons and camps," she said. "My mom helps with the camps, and thanks to my dad, my uncle and several friends, the garage has been insulated and air-conditioned. We have a sink and plenty of kid-sized work spaces."

This year, Mya and Ty are in the third grade at Martha Reid Elementary School where Dee teaches. "I teach art for kindergarten through fourth grade, which means Mya and Ty are in one of my many

classes," she said. "It's been an awesome experience. They're smart, well-liked and well-behaved, and the whole class has been great."

On any day, Dee's home is beautiful. When dressed for the holidays, though, it is at its finest. "My mom made and still makes Christmas very special for our family, and I will always do that for my children," she shared. "The kids and I start decorating the week of Thanksgiving, and it's as much about doing it together as it is about the outcome." The outcome, though, is pretty spectacular with Christmas trees in every room, lights, garland, ornaments and fancy Santas everywhere. "We have the silver and white tree in the formal living room to the hot pink tree in Mya's room to the sports tree in Ty's room," she smiled.

On the outside, holiday lights against the white-rose brick lend the illusion of a dusting of snow. Dee wanted a home for her children, a place they could enjoy, feel safe and share with family and friends. "My artwork is my home," she smiled. She took a chance on a house that needed a complete transformation. For herself, her children and her home, this wonder woman chose happiness. **NOW**



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# Doing This For

By Mikaela Mathews



*If you were to scan through many people's bucket lists, you might find run a triathlon somewhere in that list. For those with this ambition, training is required to accomplish such a milestone. But Kari Shardy is different. On a whim, she signed up for a sprint triathlon and crossed the finish line in second place. "I was never an athlete, but I felt inspired to get into some different sports," she explained. "So, one day I thought, I'm going to try a triathlon and see what it's like. And I fell in love with it. It was the most fun thing I have ever done in my life."*

Since that day, Kari has finished three more triathlons and doesn't plan on stopping. The challenge of the race keeps her going. "[The race] makes you want to push harder, go longer and go faster. I like being able to do something that pushes me to my limits and forces me to be outside of my box."

Traditional triathlons include a 300-meter swim, a 15.2-mile bike ride and a 3.1-mile run, in that order. But for Kari's first triathlon, she ventured out to try a "reverse triathlon," which switched the order

# r Me

to a run, bike ride and a swim. "I didn't know any difference since it was my first one," Kari smiled. She enjoyed the swim being the last, as it's her strongest athletic ability. "I wasn't a swimmer growing up, but when I got more into it, I really started enjoying it as a sport. It just came to me naturally."

Her first triathlon sparked a love for athletic competitions that eventually led her to participate in more running events.

**"I'm a big advocate of what you put in your bodies is what you're going to get out."**

She's completed two half marathons and several 5K races. "My very first half marathon was the most challenging. It took me two-and-a-half hours to complete 13 miles, and I couldn't move for about a week after that," she shared. "But I still wanted to do another one after that." Just as the half marathon was exhausting, a 5K race in Arlington was exciting. Kari ran around the Ranger's Ballpark with her best friend, through the tunnel in the Cowboys Stadium and crossed the finish line on the 50-yard line.

Throughout the years of training, Kari has noticed her endurance has increased with each race. "As I've done more



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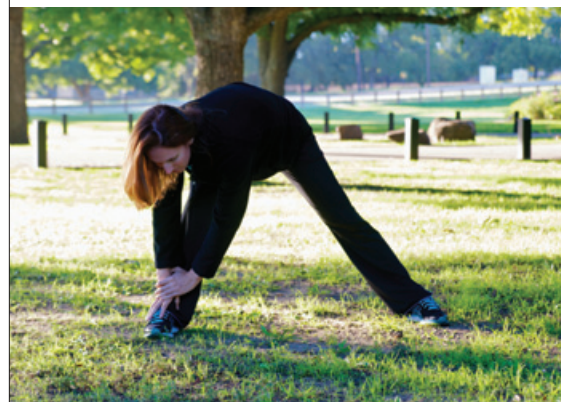
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“In the last few years, I’ve been recovering faster,” she explained. “I can run five or six miles, and it doesn’t affect me as much as it used to.”



In addition to the challenge, running is also a stress-reliever for Kari. “When I’m stressed or thinking about things, I noticed running has given me that escape,” she shared. “When I go out to the park, I can only hear what’s around



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me, and it helps me have clarity a lot of times.”

When Kari hits the pavement running, the pool swimming or the trails biking, she does it for the personal challenge. “I always say, ‘I’m going to do my best and keep going. If I don’t place, that’s fine. I’m just doing this for me,’” she explained. Even though she maintains this attitude, she still tries to find a “rabbit” while racing. “I’ll find someone in front of me and start to chase after them,” she smiled. “No matter if they’re in



my age group or not, I just use them to help me go faster.”

Although Kari has tackled several athletic challenges recently, she was never

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an athlete in school. Despite that, she fell in love with nutrition and exercise at a young age and hasn't stopped pursuing that passion. As a student at The University of Texas at Arlington, Kari is working toward a bachelor's degree in exercise science. She hopes to someday be a clinician. "I want to be in a lab coat, helping people," she explained. "I just want to help an athlete improve their sports performance or help rehabilitate them."

Kari has had a lasting impact on a number of people, but most specifically with her best friend. "I run for my best friend," she shared. "She gives me inspiration to keep going because she's overcome so much." After being inspired by Kari, her friend decided to start training for a 5K herself. She never believed she could do it, but with dedication and hard work, she's lost 45 pounds from running and eating healthy. "She never thought a day in her life that she could run a 5K. She laughed at me when I mentioned it to her," Kari smiled. "But now we run together all the time."

Kari has also long been inspired by her dad. "My dad is very much an encourager," she explained. "He's always been so positive to me throughout the years. Anytime when I have wanted to give up, he told me to not stop and to keep going. He's taught me there's no reason for me to give up."

As a personal trainer, Kari believes in the importance of nutrition. "I'm a



big advocate of what you put in your bodies is what you're going to get out. You can spin your wheels in the gym and get absolutely nothing for it if you don't change your diet," she described. "I don't believe in fad diets. I believe in a balanced diet that works for each individual." Because of this, Kari carefully watches what she eats and maintains a healthy balanced diet.

Health and fitness certainly have close places in Kari's heart. But, the No. 1 priority in her life is God. "God is a big part of my life. It's very important for me to have that close connection with Him," she explained. She is also a volunteer with the Tarrant County Union Gospel Mission in Fort Worth. Every Sunday morning for over a year, Kari has risen early to set breakfast on the table for people in need. "It feels really good to help people who are in a tough position," she said. "It gives me a little bit more appreciation for what I have. And it does remind me a lot of times that I've got it good. I've got my family, my health, food on the table and a roof over my head."

After God, Kari is thankful for the support of her family, friends and boyfriend. "I feel very complete and happy. My boyfriend is very encouraging to me. He's like my cheerleader when I need it. My family and best friend are, too. I'm very happy with things just the way they are." **NOW**

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*A quick look at the gift items and discounts available locally.*



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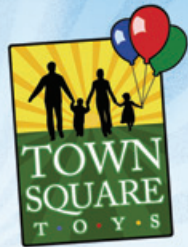
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Their adventure began over two years ago when Jackie saw a Solar Car Challenge competition on TV. "I thought it was pretty cool, but I didn't want to do it myself," he explained. "The current engineering teacher wasn't interested, so I kept building interest as I went along. When our new engineering teacher Rob Goodson came, he agreed to help, and we took off." The Solar Car Challenge holds an annual, national competition for high school students to show off their skills in building and running solar cars. The purpose is to teach students about solar energy and pique their interest in engineering.

Because the car is solar, it operates quite differently than a regular car. The panels store up the sun's energy and use it to power the battery. Depending on the speed of the car and the amount of sunlight, the car can run for an hour to as long as a day. "We've gotten [the car] up to 52 miles per hour," Jackie remembered. "It just doesn't sustain that speed for very long. But the more solar panels you put on there, the faster it will go."

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The car was nothing pretty. Jackie and his high school engineering team dubbed it Junkyard Chic. "It was the 'beg, borrow and steal method,'" Jackie laughed. "Whatever we could get for free, we took. And we built a car from it." The car was large enough to fit one adult, and team members took turns inside driving it. They spent a little less than a year building it, finishing just in time for their first race at the Texas Motor Speedway with the Solar Car Challenge.

"The Speedway is the best place to start, because you have a controlled area with flat surfaces," Jackie explained. The race is not so much a race as it is a competition of longevity. Racers are crowned the winner based on the number of laps completed. "It's not about going as fast as you can, because you'll lose power," Jackie explained. "It's about having the energy to run the entire allotment of time."

Arriving at the competition, Jackie and his team realized just how much work



they had put into their car. "We got out to the race and found out that building our car in less than a year is unusual," Jackie shared. "Most teams take two years to build a car, and they spent about \$15,000 on their car. We built ours with \$3,500."



The competition lasted for four days. Each car had a monitoring system and a judge to keep track of the number of laps. "We came in sixth place out of 12 teams," he said. "We did really well our first year, considering we didn't have a clue. Some of the veteran teams out there couldn't keep up with us."

After a successful year, the Shine Runners didn't want to stop. One student named Maci was ready to go as soon



as possible. "After the race, we were exhausted," Jackie explained. "When we were finished and on our way home, Maci said, 'What time are we meeting tomorrow?' I said, 'Why are we meeting tomorrow?' She said, 'To start on our new car!'"

The next year's Solar Car Challenge changed course from the Speedway to across the country. "We did eight days of racing from the Texas Motor Speedway to Los Angeles," he described. Sandwiched between a bus and a van, the solar car raced along two lane roads across the nation. Similar to the Speedway race, a specific number of miles were available each day. Racers who traveled the most miles in the solar car won.

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Members of the team weren't the only ones excited to get the car on the road. Companies from all over the country were clamoring to help the Shine Runners to the top. The CEO of Midnite Solar even flew in from Seattle to Texas when one of his parts, the power tracker, malfunctioned. "The power tracker controls the flow of power to the battery pack," Jackie explained. "So when the batteries get full, it shuts the power down and doesn't overload the batteries."

When it came time for inspection of the vehicle before the race, the power tracker had stopped working. One of the electrical engineers helping the team quickly got on the phone to determine how to get another one. "A little bit later, the electrical engineer called me to say the CEO of the place where we got the power tracker had booked a flight and would arrive at 5:45 a.m. the next morning, bringing two brand new power trackers," Jackie laughed. Sure enough, the CEO landed at 5:45 the next morning and hurried to the Motor Speedway to replace the power tracker, which helped them to ultimately earn fifth place out of 10 teams.

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Although Jackie and his team find the competition thrilling, their ultimate goal is to better themselves and enjoy the ride. "We are all out there for the same reason. It's competitive. Everyone still wants to win," Jackie explained. "But I just call it good, clean fun. The kids learned so much, and we heard from their parents



Jackie Bishop and Rob Goodson introduce their students to engineering through the Solar Car Challenge.

that this was a trip of a lifetime. They never would have experienced anything like that if not for the competition."

Many of the students who participated in the Solar Car Challenge go on to become engineering students. "If the kids didn't think they were going into engineering when they start the car, they do when we're done," he described. "We've got one at Texas A&M in aerospace engineering. One is at LSU for engineering. And we have two at UTA and another one at OSU. The club brings a desire for them to pursue engineering degrees." Win or lose, Jackie has one goal: to empower the students. "I didn't realize this would all be so hard. It ended up being a lot more work than I anticipated. But, the payoff is that when these kids leave, they're on fire. They're ready to go to college and to do great things." **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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## MANGER ORNAMENT

*Children learn the reason for the season using a few items that can easily be found around the house. The completed ornament will be a Christmas keepsake for years to come, or several can be crafted at one time to give as gifts.*

### DIFFICULTY LEVEL: EASY TO MEDIUM

- 38 toothpicks
- 1 piece tag board (2 5/8x2 1/8 inches in size)
- Craft glue
- Scissors
- 2 dry butter beans
- 3 dry black-eyed peas
- Cool melt hot glue
- 1 yellow button shaped like a star
- 3-inch length twisted jute twine

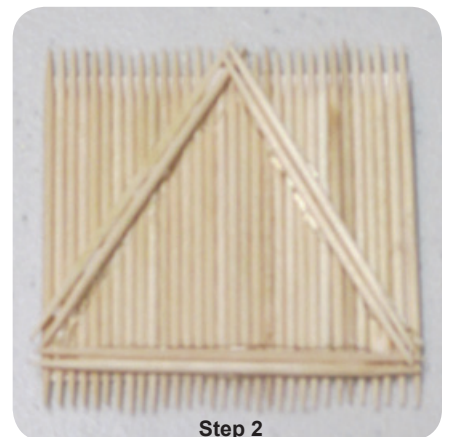
### HOW TO DO IT. ▼

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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*Tessa Pierce is a Certified Public Accountant with over 17 years of experience in accounting and finance. She has worked for small and large publicly-held companies, as an auditor at Deloitte & Touche, and as a VP of a multi-billion dollar private investment fund doing both capital management and financial reporting. Tessa has a BBA in accounting from the University of Oklahoma and an MBA in finance from Dallas Baptist University.*

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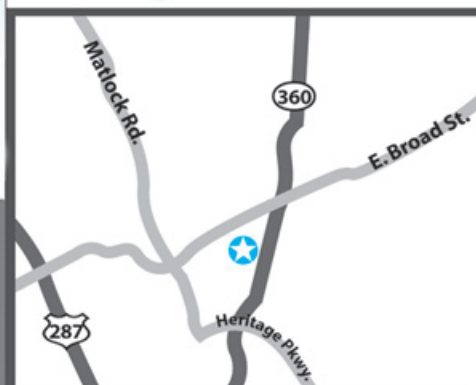
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Step 3

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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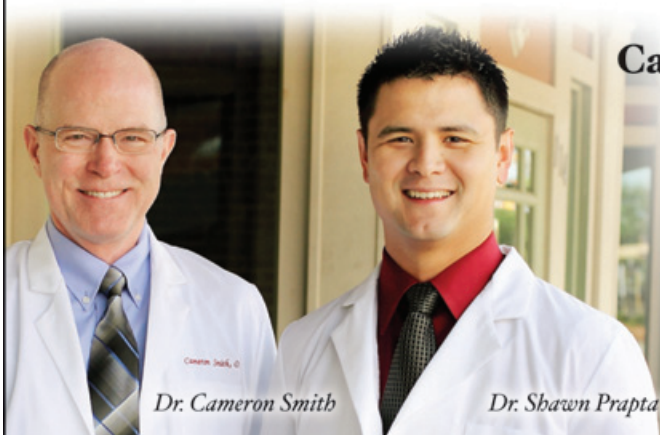


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de Cristo Mountains. Tours are available. Cameras aren't allowed during religious ceremonies, but as the natives believe, "You won't need pictures to remember Taos Pueblo. It will remain in your heart and soul forever."

Another Taos treasure, San Francisco de Asis Mission Church, heads many top 10 lists of places to see before you die. San Francisco de Asis is the most painted church in the U.S., made famous by Georgia O'Keeffe and photographer



Ansel Adams. This 18th century National Historic Landmark is re-mudded annually by the community. Don't miss *The Shadow of the Cross*, an 1896 painting by Henri Ault, which is said to take on a luminescent glow in the dark.

Just as artists and creative-types continue to be drawn to Taos for its abundant light and cultural landscape, nature lovers are attracted to Taos for its outdoor landscape, 300 days of sunshine and proclivity toward outdoor

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activities. For those who have never llama trekked before, it's yet another new experience unique to Taos. Members of TripAdvisor have ranked Wild Earth Llama Adventures' (llamaadventures.com) llama trek first among activities they enjoy in Taos, and the outdoor adventure is a multigenerational hit for those who love hiking in a beautiful setting. It's not uncommon for kids to bond with the pack llamas, who are more like furry, four-legged backpacks. Half-day, full-day and overnight trips are available and include information about area ecology, edible/medicinal plants and survival skills. It's comforting to know Wild Earth's llamas have been rescued from abuse or neglect and rehabilitated.

For many travelers whose bucket lists include branching outside of their comfort zone, rappelling or rock climbing along the recently designated Rio Grande del Norte National Monument is sure to boost a sense of confidence. Mountain Skills Rock Climbing Adventures (climbingschoolusa.com) offers year-round, half- and full-day adventures for beginners. Rock n' Raft trips, which combine white water rafting and rappelling, are also available, but only from April through October. Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, encompassing the Rio Grande Gorge and Ute Mountain, is chock-full of outdoor offerings such as hiking, fly fishing and biking. The Gorge Bridge hovers about



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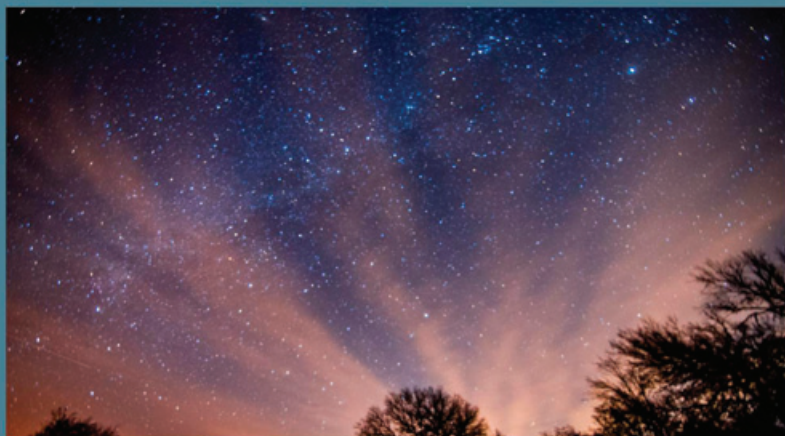
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650 feet above the Rio Grande and is not only the second highest bridge in the U.S. Highway System, it is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

Taos Ski Valley ([skitaos.org](http://skitaos.org)), just 18 miles north of Taos, is also popular among nature lovers, not only for its world-class winter skiing, but also because of its off-season hiking and biking trails and views. Wheeler Peak, New Mexico's highest mountain, is visible from Taos and Taos Ski Valley and climbs to 13,161 feet.

Taos' status as one of America's original art colonies stems from its reputation for inspiring creativity. An entire movement known as the Taos Society of Artists was formed in 1915, bringing well-known artists to the town who embraced its tri-cultural and aesthetic landscape. Whether stepping inside the 18th century Spanish Colonial Martinez Hacienda house, seeing oil heiress Millicent Rogers' arts and jewelry collection or exploring artifacts once used by Kit Carson, there are many museums in Taos that encapsulate Taos' history. For only \$25, you can visit five Taos museums, including: Harwood Museum of Art, Blumenschein Home and Museum, Millicent Rogers Museum, Taos Art Museum and La Hacienda de los Martinez. Visit [taosmuseums.org](http://taosmuseums.org) for details.

Taoseños are known to be eco-friendly, so it's no wonder that Taos is the headquarters of the Greater World Earthship Community ([earthship.com](http://earthship.com)) — a community of energy-efficient, self-sustainable homes composed of used tires and recycled materials. Earthship tours are available and can even be rented out on a nightly basis.

Unlike many tourist-driven art destinations, Taos has managed to maintain its integrity as a small, friendly town while still being recognized worldwide as a culturally rich art colony, complete with more than 80 galleries, creative workshops, ongoing events, world-class performances and attractions. So if you find yourself in Taos, expect to return home with more than you left with, but you can keep the change. **NOW**

For more information on Taos, visit <http://taos.org>. By Erica Asmus-Otero. Photos courtesy of the Town of Taos.

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# Lifetime Smile

*For 26 years, this orthodontic team has been crafting beautiful smiles.*

— By Mikaela Mathews

Walking through the office of Dr. Jergensen's orthodontic practice will calm any nervous patient. From the welcoming smiles from staff members to rooms equipped with the latest technology, patients can be confident they are in good hands. Over 25 years of experience testifies to this. "We have treated thousands and thousands of patients," Dr. Jergensen explained. Some patients, who first got their braces at the practice, are now grown and have children of their own, some of whom are now getting braces at the exact same office.

Dr. Jergensen's practice is a combination of both old and new. "We have a lot of past in this office. We've been treating patients for years," he shared. Yet, he and his team have stayed

current and even ahead of the times with their equipment, including digital X-rays, digital scanning and superior service as an Invisalign Premiere Provider. "We do quite a lot of Invisalign," Dr. Jergensen said. In order to speed along the Invisalign process, Dr. Jergensen and his team use a digital scanner to scan the teeth and immediately send the information to Invisalign to create the clear tray-style braces.

Patients who have had braces but experience a relapse with crowded teeth can also get help without the hassle of full braces again. "We have small Invisalign cases for people to get them back to a nice smile again, which isn't a long process at all," he described. Although many of these small cases are adults, Dr.

## Business **NOW**

Jergensen's office works with all age ranges. "We love working with both kids and adults."

The office also has a lab in order to provide quick and quality service for their patients. "If one of our patients gets their braces off in the morning, our lab only takes a couple of hours to get their models, pour in the mold, make the retainers and have them cleaned and ready for the patient," he explained. "Patients usually come back in a couple of hours or at the end of the day to get their retainers."

*"We have a lot of past in this office. We've been treating patients for years."*

Those who take really great care of their teeth are gifted with the Digital Rewards Program. "Each participating patient gets a card, and they can rack up points for how well they brush their teeth, floss or take care of their braces," Dr. Jergensen described. "Patients can keep track of their points online and buy different things, like toys or gift cards."

For Dr. Jergensen, taking care of teeth runs in the family. "My dad is a dentist. My brother is a dentist. And my brother-in-law is an orthodontist," he smiled. Dr. Jergensen decided to go the route of an orthodontist because of the way he could help people. "I love making a smile that lasts a lifetime," he shared. "We get to make a big difference. Patients come in because they don't like their smile. They hide their mouths. But, when they come out of our office, they're extremely happy, and they smile without hiding."

Dr. Jergensen and his team have pledged for over 20 years to take quality care of their patients while delivering an excellent product. "We go out of our way for our patients, while also keeping current in our technology," he explained. "And we have the past to prove it." For them, doing a job well is taking great care of teeth for a lifetime. "We love making smiles," he said. "And we're good at it." **NOW**



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*Payton Williams stands ready to help at the fishing booth at the Discover Historic Mansfield Festival.*



*Arrenia Thomas and Amy Ellington paint banners for the varsity locker room for the Midlothian Pink Out game in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness month.*



*Chick-fil-A employees Bree and Bailey smile big with the Chick-fil-A cow mascot.*



*First Choice Emergency Room's ribbon cutting turnout indicates how welcome they are here.*



*Daryle Perez, president of the Historic Mansfield Business Association, presents Vern Raven of the Historic Mansfield Museum a certificate of appreciation for his efforts with the HMBA.*



*Artist Sarah Nep carves the city of Mansfield's logo out of cheese!*



*Erik Walla of Rocking S Photography shows off his photography at the Historic Mansfield Festival.*



*Alma, Thomas and John Pressley are all smiles as they celebrate their 30th anniversary in Mansfield with Mansfield Fine Jewelry.*



*The Dennis family, including 4-week-old Tyson, enjoy the Pumpkin Patch at First United Methodist Mansfield.*



*The Mansfield Community Bank was dressed for the occasion on Halloween Day.*



*Richard Ward and Charles Spencer assist new Sam's Club members at their grand opening.*



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

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### December 6

Hometown Holidays: 5:00-9:00 p.m., City Hall, 1200 E. Broad St. Free. Enjoy Christmas carriage rides, fireworks after the tree lighting, the Dallas Zoo penguins and more. For more information, contact the Mansfield Activities Center at (817) 453-5420.

### December 7

Kiwanis Falalala 5k: 9:00 a.m., Katherine Rose Park, 303 N. Walnut Creek Dr. \$25 before Nov. 22; \$30 after. For more information, visit [www.falalala5k.com](http://www.falalala5k.com).

Hometown Holidays Parade: 2:30 p.m., historic downtown Mansfield. Free. Featuring over 50 entries including floats, bands and marching units. For more details, contact the Mansfield Activities Center at (817) 453-5420.

Second Annual Benefit Concert: 7:00 p.m., Steven's Garden & Grill, 223 Depot St. Admission is a donation of a necessity toiletry item for a child from infant to 18 years old. Proceeds from the raffle sales and live auction items go to the children at Texas Baptist Home for Children.

Christmas with Elvis by David Allen & the Fever Band: 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Farr

Best Theater, 109 N. Main St. \$20-25. David Allen's show was voted one of the top ten Elvis tributes in the world and named the 2008 Elvis Cruise Champion. For more information or tickets, visit [www.farrbest.com](http://www.farrbest.com).

### December 8

Mansfield Women's Club - Holiday Home Tour: 2:00-7:00 p.m., 914 McCampbell Rd. \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Six exciting homes will be available to tour and a Christmas Marketplace. Proceeds will go to the local "Feeding the Hungry" charities.

For more information, visit [www.mansfieldwomensclub.com](http://www.mansfieldwomensclub.com) or call Valorie Hauge at (682) 518-1288.

### December 11

Toys for Tots Drive: 5:00-10:30 p.m., Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts, 1110 W. Debbie Ln. Bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate and stick around for a free community-wide celebration! For more information, visit [center.mansfieldisd.org](http://center.mansfieldisd.org).

### December 14

Christmas Program: 3:00 and 7:00 p.m., Mansfield ISD Center for the Performing Arts, 1110 W. Debbie Lane. For all ages,

sharing the story of Christmas presented by First Methodist Church Mansfield and Mainstage Classic Theatre. For more information or tickets, visit [center.mansfieldisd.org](http://center.mansfieldisd.org).

The Classic Swing Band with Eddie Irving: 8:00 p.m., Farr Best Theater, 109 N. Main St. \$17-\$25. For over 10 years, Eddie Irving and the Classic Swing Band have offered some of the smoothest sounds. For more information or tickets, visit [www.farrbest.com](http://www.farrbest.com).

### December 15

Remembrance Service: 2:00 p.m., First Methodist Mansfield, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. A time for our community to honor the lives of loved ones who have passed. There will be an opportunity during the service, too, to light a candle in memory of a loved one. For more information, visit [www.firstmethodistmansfield.org](http://www.firstmethodistmansfield.org).

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

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## In The Kitchen With Karen McFarland

— By *Mikaela Mathews*

In the last decade, Karen McFarland started on an adventure into the wide world of whole foods. “I became aware of my disconnection from real food,” Karen shared. “What I was looking for and learning energized a whole new reality for me.”

Karen attended culinary classes and herbal intensives. Eventually, she became a nutritional therapy practitioner. She grows the majority of her own food, cooking with items fresh from her garden. “My inspiration for cooking comes first and foremost from the food available from my own garden,” she explained.

Karen enjoys teaching others about healthy eating, but delights most in taking care of her family. “I feel especially blessed when I have the opportunity to prepare a meal for our son and three of our grandchildren.” **NOW**

### Brined Turkey Breast

**8 cups filtered or spring water**  
**3/4 cup Celtic or Himalayan pink coarse-ground sea salt**  
**3/4 cup raw honey**  
**2 1/3 to 3 lb. boneless/skinless turkey breast**  
**1 yellow onion, cut into large chunks**  
**4-5 fresh rosemary sprigs, about 4-inches long**  
**1-2 fresh thyme sprigs**  
**5-6 fresh bay leaves**  
**1/4 cup chicken stock**  
**6 Tbsp. butter, ghee or coconut oil, melted**

1. Mix water, salt and honey until salt and honey have dissolved.
2. Place turkey breast into 1-gallon plastic storage bag; pour liquid over turkey. Soak for approximately 8 hours or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 325 F

4. Line bottom of roasting pan with onion. Layer rosemary, thyme and bay leaves; place turkey on top of herbs.
5. Pour chicken stock over the turkey, followed by butter, ghee or coconut oil.
6. Bake approximately 90 minutes. Use turkey popper thermometer placed in the thickest part of the breast if desired.

### Homemade Cranberry Sauce

**Juice and zest from 2 large oranges**  
**1-2 cinnamon sticks, optional**  
**1/2 cup currants**  
**1 large Granny Smith apple, cored and cut into bite-size pieces**  
**2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries**  
**Ground cinnamon, to taste**  
**Pinch sea salt**  
**1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, grated**

1. Place the orange juice and zest, cinnamon sticks and currants in 2-qt. pot. Turn the

heat on low; simmer for 5 minutes. Add apple and cranberries. Generously sprinkle in cinnamon; add salt.

**2.** Turn heat to medium; when the cranberries begin to pop, turn heat to low. Simmer 10-15 minutes. Turn off heat and let it rest for at least 5 minutes.

**3.** Squeeze grated ginger in your hand over pot to release the juices.

### Cleansing Beet Salad

**1 cup beets, finely grated**  
**2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil**  
**Juice and zest of 1/2 organic lemon**

1. Mix all ingredients. Eat in small quantities with your meal to support healthy fat digestion.

### Sweet Potatoes

**1/4 cup water**  
**1 inch kelp**  
**2 medium sweet potatoes**  
**Sea salt, to taste**  
**Pumpkin seed butter, to taste**

1. Pour water into pot on low heat. Add kelp.
2. While kelp warms, slice sweet potatoes.
3. Layer potato in pot; drizzle moderately with salt. Continue to layer until all potatoes are used.
4. Turn heat to medium. When the water is boiling, place the lid on the pan; lower heat and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.
5. Drizzle with pumpkin seed butter and serve.

### Mixed Green Salad With Dressing

**Dressing:**  
**2-3 fresh cloves of garlic**  
**1/2 tsp. sea salt**  
**1/4 cup Bragg's apple cider vinegar**  
**3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil**

**Salad:**  
**Variety of lettuce greens**

1. *For dressing:* Mince garlic. Sprinkle with sea salt. Let stand for several minutes. Add vinegar and oil. Mix well. Let stand at room temperature to allow flavors to develop.
2. *For salad:* Put lettuce greens in a bowl. Pour dressing over salad.

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