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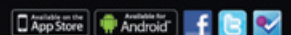
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www.hillcrestbc.com/Christmas

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ON THE COVER



This splash of vibrant color only enhances the elegance of Leonard and Allie Jones' gracious home.

Photo by Opaque Visuals

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Editor's Note

Merry Christmas, Southwest Friends!

Shhh, I'm letting you in on a secret! I'm getting some really cool presents this month. One is my very first great-nephew-in-law. I know. How can my great-niece possibly be getting married? Well, she is actually six weeks older than my son, who has been married for ... wow, four years already! I am so not old! That would be my brother — grandfather of said great-niece!

My other cool present will be time with my daughters, one home from Israel and the other from Kansas City. I do enjoy having all my kids together for the holidays. My grandson, Michael, turns 8 at the end of the month. I sure do love those grandboys!

Another cool present I have cherished this whole year has been a renewed awareness of the presence of God. *His* presence is hands down the best present ever!

Be merry! Rejoice! Emanuel is here among us!

Beverly

Beverly Shay

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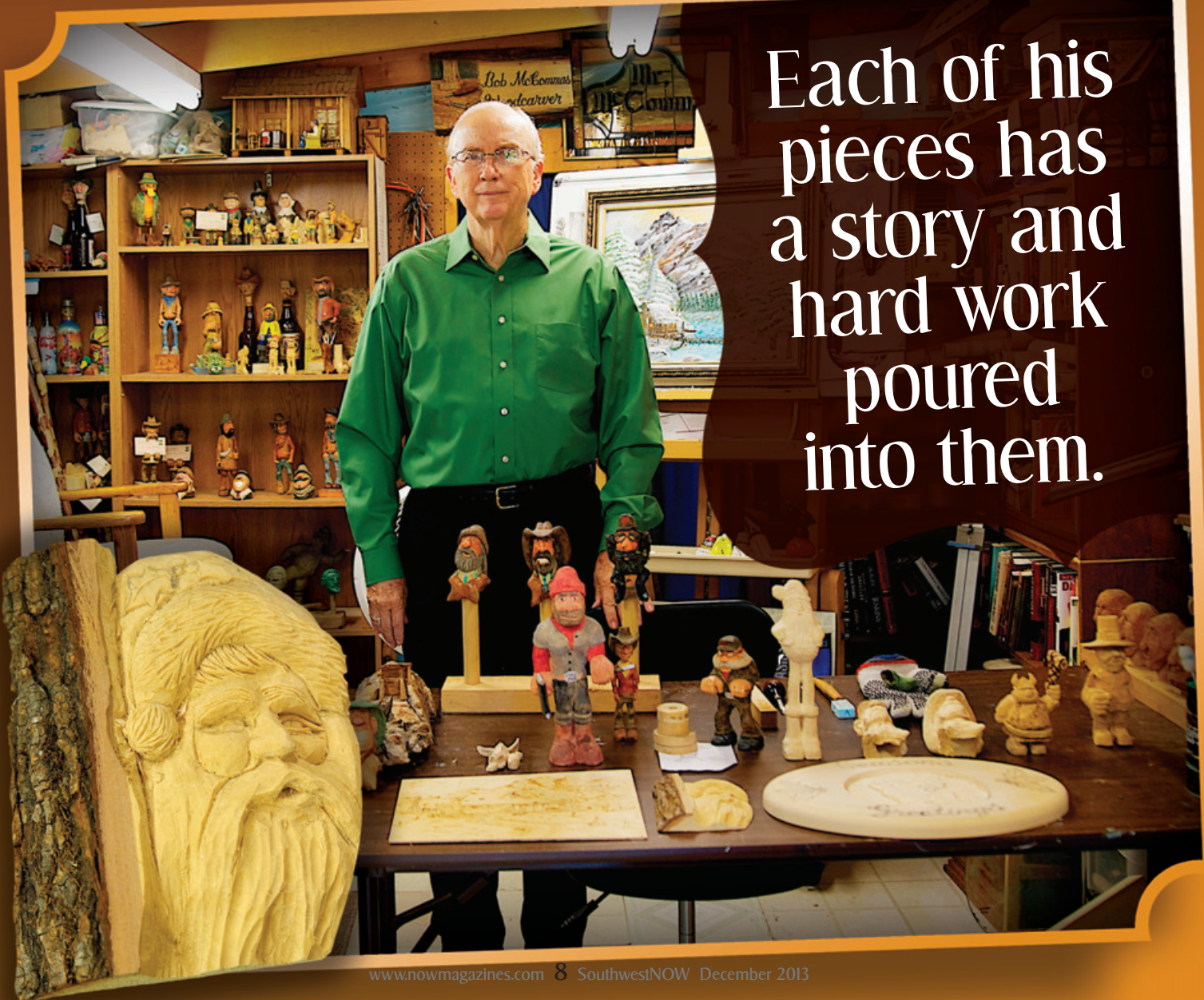
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Carving

Each of his pieces has a story and hard work poured into them.



Time

By Sydni Thomas

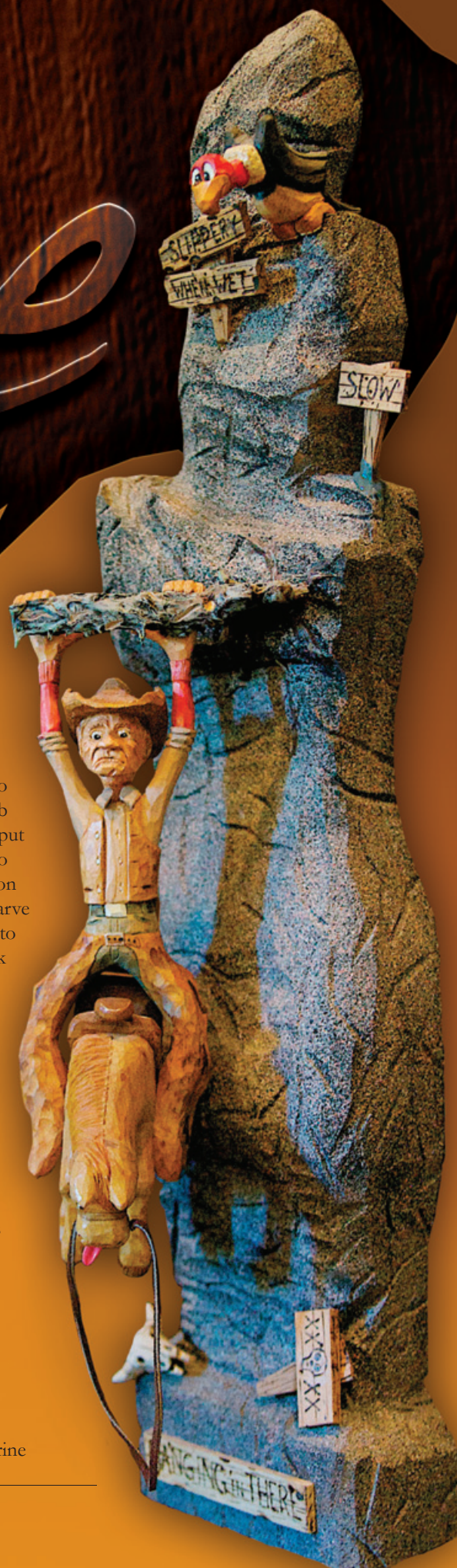
The age of retirement was several years away for Bob McCommas, a high school business teacher, when the desire to fulfill his creative talents began creeping in. Like many retirees, Bob knew he would like to travel, but that would not always be feasible. A trip to a local woodcarving store inspired Bob to pursue an artistic endeavor. Nearly two decades and over 75 Santa Claus caricatures later, Bob still hasn't found a day to just sit in his recliner. "You don't want to wait until you retire to start thinking about what you are going to do with your time," Bob said. "Traveling in retirement is great, but you can't do it forever. At some point, your body or money won't let you. So get a hobby."

In 1996, Bob attended a workshop where he made a carving of an Old West bartender, with the help of his instructor, the late Claude Bolton. After that workshop, Bob came home and carved his first solo piece, on August

4, 1996 — a lanky Santa Claus figurine. While it isn't the most impressive carving he has made, he is most proud of what it represents. Bob tried something new and stuck with it. When talking to someone who is considering learning the hobby, Bob will pull out his first Santa Claus and put it next to one he created a year later to show how first attempts are nothing on which to judge ability. "Anyone can carve wood," Bob stated. "I want my work to show that. Sure, some people can pick up a piece of wood for the first time and make a masterpiece. For the rest of us, it isn't that easy. When I started carving, I was told it would take me carving a thousand eyes before I would be able to carve one correctly. It takes time."

Bob specializes in cowboy caricatures but makes Santa Clauses because of his wife, Anne's, love for them. Each year, he carves and paints her a new one to add to their mantel. Many of Anne's favorites are not put up at the end of the holiday season.

Walking sticks are also a favorite carving project. Each walking stick Bob creates has a theme and special topper. Bob's imagination pours into these walking sticks, and he has made everything from a tough, combat Marine



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and snarling 9/11 Uncle Sam to a motorcycle rider and the Easter bunny on top of a carrot walking stick. He has carved dozens of these over the years. "Some of my favorite pieces Bob creates are relief carvings," Anne said. "He takes a piece of wood and carves a scene into it and then paints it. They look like paintings, but when you look closely you will see all of the details he carved into them."

During his first visit to the woodcarving store, Bob asked a salesman what tools he needed to get started. He left the store that day with the only three things he would ever need — a knife, a V-tool and a gouge. Now, nearly 20 years later, he has an entire workshop filled with tools. "There are a lot of different tools for carving, but the three basic ones



will get you by for a long time," Bob said. "I was lucky enough to get a salesman who didn't try to sell me everything. He also pointed me on the right track to finding out where to take classes."

Every Saturday morning, for three hours, Bob would travel to Fort Worth to learn how to carve from Claude Bolton, one of the original founders



of the Caricature Carvers of America. His woodcarving education also took him and Anne on cross-country trips for many years. Bob would attend seminars, while Anne hung out with the other wives. A group of "usuals" began showing up at each event, and the McCommases made friends from all over. They enjoyed these trips so much they attended several conferences where Bob already knew how to do what was being taught, just so they could vacation with their carving friends. "We would go to



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Missouri, Colorado and Fredericksburg, Texas, every year," Bob said. "During these trips, we made many friends. It really is a great hobby for anyone looking for one."

If Bob's week is not busy, he can start and finish an entire carving. However, he and Anne are always up to something, whether it be church, working out at the recreation center or running day-to-day errands. As a school teacher, Bob was on his feet for most of the day. Now, he enjoys going out to his workshop and carving or oil painting. The workshop also holds all his books, in case he doesn't feel like working that day. Anne always knows where to find him when it's time for dinner. "We always joke that she sends me out here, so I won't get in her way," Bob smiled. "It's where I like to come to read and create. I'm planning on taking up some music hobbies next."

Aside from carving, Bob's other mission in retirement is to advocate staying busy. He tells his friends who are close to retirement to find a hobby and to keep trying new things. When Anne retired from school teaching, he convinced her to take up creating stained glass art. To aid in his advocacy, Bob turned his workshop into a teaching studio, after he had been carving for 10 years. He invited the men from his church to come out and learn how to

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carve. For eight years, the men have been coming out once a week to carve with Bob. "I told them to give it a chance," Bob said. "They could come out and see what it was about before they went out and purchased the equipment. I provided a safe working environment for them and taught them a few things. Now, it's a time for us just to sit and carve together."

Bob's masterpieces are not for sale. Although he finds it hard to part with the pieces, he has given some to family and close friends who seem to cherish them. Each of his pieces has a story and hard work poured into them. His plan to find a retirement hobby turned into something more inspirational to those around Bob. Now that he knows what he wants to do, he will keep doing it for as long as possible, while inspiring others to give carving a try. "I'll keep carving," he said, "until my eyes won't let me." **NOW**



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METER LEADER

— By Angel Morris

Camry Grigsby is living proof that mother does, indeed, know best. The DeSoto High School track and field star was never interested in running, but her mom insisted she give summer track a try. Although Camry is a standout in many other areas, through running she has earned some of her greatest achievements to date.

"I only wanted to play basketball and be like my dad, but my mom wanted me to try track. Actually, she insisted on it," said Camry, now a senior at DeSoto High School. "I cried throughout my entire first track practice, but my attitude changed after I won my first meet."

Admitting then that track "wasn't so bad," Camry eventually realized God had given her a gift in her ability to run. Today it is her favorite activity, and the event in which she has had the most success. "Track is the one place where my mind can be free from distractions and release stress," Camry said.

As a result, Camry's track honors include being No. 1 in the nation in the 800-meter at the age of 8, numerous qualifications for Amateur Athletic Union national track meets and placing in the top eight in many of those meets. She also set the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation 800-meter record (2:47.50) and has been part of three consecutive state championships at DHS, advancing to state in 2013 in the 800-meter.

The Grigsby family is no stranger to athletic prowess.





Camry's dad, Calvin, played basketball at Texas Senior High School in Texarkana, where he earned many accolades and received a basketball scholarship at Oklahoma City University. Camry's involvement with the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation is prestigious in and of itself. The nonprofit group, which features the most talented amateur athletes in Texas, conducts summer and winter games and meets across the state. The Amateur Athletic Union also

“Staying humble, being true to God and making my parents proud, these are my biggest accomplishments. These are what matter.”

showcases skilled athletes in a range of sports in clubs across the U.S.

This preparation resulted in Camry being district and area champion in the 800-meter run and 4x400 meter relay; regional champion in the 4x400 and runner-up in the 800. At last year's

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state track meet, she placed second in the 4x400 and eighth in the 800, scoring points for the state track and field championship.

"What is most special about my daughter is her work ethic, determination



to get it right the first time, outgoing personality and her ability to stay humble," Calvin said of Camry's achievements in various athletic endeavors.

Participation in TAAF, AAU and DHS teams has allowed Camry to showcase not only her running prowess through the years but her personal side, as well. Her competitors have admired Camry's ability to remain calm and her humbleness, despite her tremendous success.





"I just appreciate this is something God allows me to do — that my talent is to help me succeed, and that I shouldn't let that go to waste or go to my head!" Camry said.

Camry hopes to further

put her talent to use by running track in college and pursuing her dream of making it to the Olympics. In the meantime, this honor society student is also focused on making the most of her time left in high school.

"Being vice president of my class is my next favorite activity after track. It allows me to help others, where running is about outracing the next person," Camry said. "They both have a place, but I think it's about finding a balance."

While her mind is "free and imaginable" on the track, Camry goes into focus mode for school. "I am



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organized when it comes to my classes. I try to prepare ahead of time for assignments to keep the stress level down," Camry said. "My mind actually goes ballistic when something new comes up. Trying to juggle work and school and athletics is a tough job."

Camry credits her mom and dad with her ability to handle whatever comes her

"Track is the one place where my mind can be free from distractions."

way, noting they inspire her and keep her life as stress-free as possible. She also said her 12 years of DeSoto teachers — from Beltline and Woodridge elementaries, The Meadows Intermediate (now an elementary school), East Middle School and DHS — have played a special part in her development.

"My mom and dad inspire me. They help me face any obstacle and support me through any struggle. They also remind me of the importance of surrounding myself with positive people," Camry said. "And I have enjoyed my teachers. Everyone has had some sort of influence on my life."

Those influences have led to Camry becoming an A/B honor roll student, ranking 19th in a class of 634 and holding a 4.6 grade point average. Growing up in DeSoto also gave Camry

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a sense of belonging and the courage to spread her wings beyond her hometown. "I'm thankful my parents chose to raise me in this family-friendly environment, and I'm grateful to have it to come home to," she said. "But I'm definitely excited



about going off to college and majoring in anesthesiology!"

Her brother, Calvin, is already a college role model, attending Southern Arkansas University this year, while dad and mom, Sharon, continue to root for both their children from the sidelines. Ironically, Camry doesn't list track, grades or extracurricular activities among her greatest achievements. Perhaps the very reason she continues to succeed in all of these is found in this statement: "Staying humble, being true to God and making my parents proud," Camry said, "these are my biggest accomplishments. These are what matter." **NOW**

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A Touch OF CLASS

By Beverly Shay

Like an aerie perched on the top of a hill, Leonard and Allie Jones' home is graced with birds throughout. Peacocks, birds of paradise, cockatiels and golden pheasants gaze at themselves in mirrors found throughout this gold and white palatial-feeling, rather Italianesque chateau.

While birds fill the interior, lions guard the doors and the arched wooden bridge at the peak of the brick stairway leading to their beautiful pool, shaped like a B amidst the palms. "The B is for Bass, John Bass of the Ft. Worth Bass family, who developed this subdivision and built this home for himself," Allie remarked. The front doors have beautifully etched, leaded-glass windows — vertical rectangles topped with ovals and set in exquisite panels of mahogany, imported from "someplace famous in Europe, although I have forgotten where," Allie conceded.

The entrance, a sweep of white marble, mirrors and ornate gold tables adorned with flowers and crystal, ushers one into what feels like a small palace. "This house has more doors and patios than you can imagine," Allie said, chuckling. "And I just love white and gold. I love all the space and all the old-fashioned, real antiques."

Space is plentiful with peaked and vaulted ceilings, once covered with dark walnut. "I couldn't abide it so dark," said Allie, admitting she removed the hardwood flooring, replacing it with marble. The gorgeous, sunken living room features a white, baby grand piano, French and Italian loveseats and petite





At Home With Leonard and Allie Jones

chairs covered with ivory and muted pastel brocade. Small tables topped with enclosed glass display little treasures, while two massive paintings above a diminutive couch depict love and despair. A large golden peacock admires himself in the mirror, his folded tail sweeping down toward the fireplace, once bricked, but now marbled.

Beyond the living room is a luxurious master bedroom suite complete with a fireplace and office nook. "My decorator found this headboard (gold filigree and mirrors) in Europe, knowing I'd want it," Allie explained. Cut down from 18 feet to fit their room, it's actually only half of the original piece. Across from the bed





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is a Dutch armoire they had flown over. Above their bed is a loft, with exercise equipment and a door out to yet another balcony.

Allie, a flight attendant with American Airlines, does all the decorating. Leonard, a golf pro, loves her taste. "She's so good



at what she does!" he enthused. "I just sit back and watch her pull it all together. She does love her crystal," he chuckled. Waterford and Baccarat bowls, vases and birds catch the light throughout their lovely home.

Allie and Leonard both graduated from L.G. Pinkston High School in West Dallas, but Leonard graduated seven years ahead of Allie. They met while Allie worked at a Tom Thumb store. "I thought Allie was as pretty as a

peach," Leonard confessed. "But she just wasn't interested." Unstymied, Leonard continued to visit the store, and one night, he struck it lucky. Allie needed a ride home. Her friend knew his family and assured Allie he was OK. Because he had a car, Allie decided to be nice to him. He took her home and stayed around to play cards with her six younger siblings. A few weeks later, when Allie was quite sick, Leonard helped out by taking her to the doctor. Her single mom

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was still heartsick at the loss of Allie's sister a few years earlier, leaving Allie to oversee the parenting, so Leonard's help was invaluable. They dated for six years following her graduation from high school, but family responsibilities kept the relationship from progressing.

"I really thought I would never marry, because that's what my mom had told me," Allie remarked. Leonard had graduated from Prairie View A&M University, where he studied business administration and accounting. He worked for Shell Corporation for 10 months, but all he really wanted to do was play golf. And play golf he could and has — serving as the golf pro at Cedar Crest Country Club for 27 years and then at LB Houston Golf Course for the past 25 years. He is a lifetime LPGA member and has played all over the U.S. and in Puerto Rico and is friends with Tiger Woods' father, Earl. Meanwhile, Allie studied business at Rutherford. She worked for Crown Life, a Canadian insurance company, becoming the supervisor of administration after two years, before applying to become a stewardess with American Airlines when they moved their base from New York to Dallas.

"I also served as an event coordinator for banquets and weddings at LB Houston. I've been able to work both jobs because my schedule fluctuates. I love flying and have been just about everywhere American flies. I was even in New Zealand for a year," Allie explained.

Leonard has two daughters from a previous marriage, and they took in Allie's brother's two children to rear as their own. They now have five granddaughters, one grandson and a

great-grandson. "Our home is the perfect place for parties," Allie remarked. "Our nieces and nephews, as well as our own children and grandkids, visit frequently. We've hosted two weddings and several graduations and many birthday parties."

Both Leonard and Allie love sitting outside by the pool or on one of their balconies or patios. Allie loves gardening and has done all the landscaping, with the help of a friend's grandson, who worked with her from the time he was 13 until he turned 21. Five gorgeous palms surround the pool. If Leonard isn't outside, he can be found in his den, watching TV.



Allie's interior touches can be found in the kitchen as well. A slight break from her white and gold theme includes the moss green wainscoting, but is picked up again in the off-white, antique-looking cabinetry, ivory countertops and gold fixtures. "But I am ready for something different in here, I think," she remarked. The formal dining room is resplendent with a built-in china buffet, showcasing her crystal, and an exquisite gold and marble buffet, all accented with mauve curtains and rosy wallpaper of leaves and flowers. "I left most of the windows uncovered to let in the light and space."

The upper floor is reached via a wooden spiral staircase with leaded windows where Baccarat cockatiels perch. What once were the kids' rooms have become Allie's and Leonard's spaces — his, a den done up with black and tan textured walls, an African mask, brown suede couch and overstuffed chair, stone-topped tables and a large TV. Hers, which doubles as the guest room, features a black lacquer four-poster bed covered in pink and blue paisley.

Their home, perched well above the street, could hold its own in any European city, yet fits remarkably well in the hills south of Dallas. Allie enthused, "We really love it here." **NOW**

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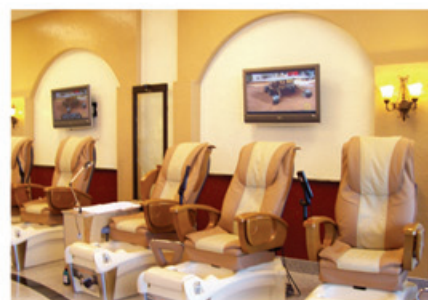


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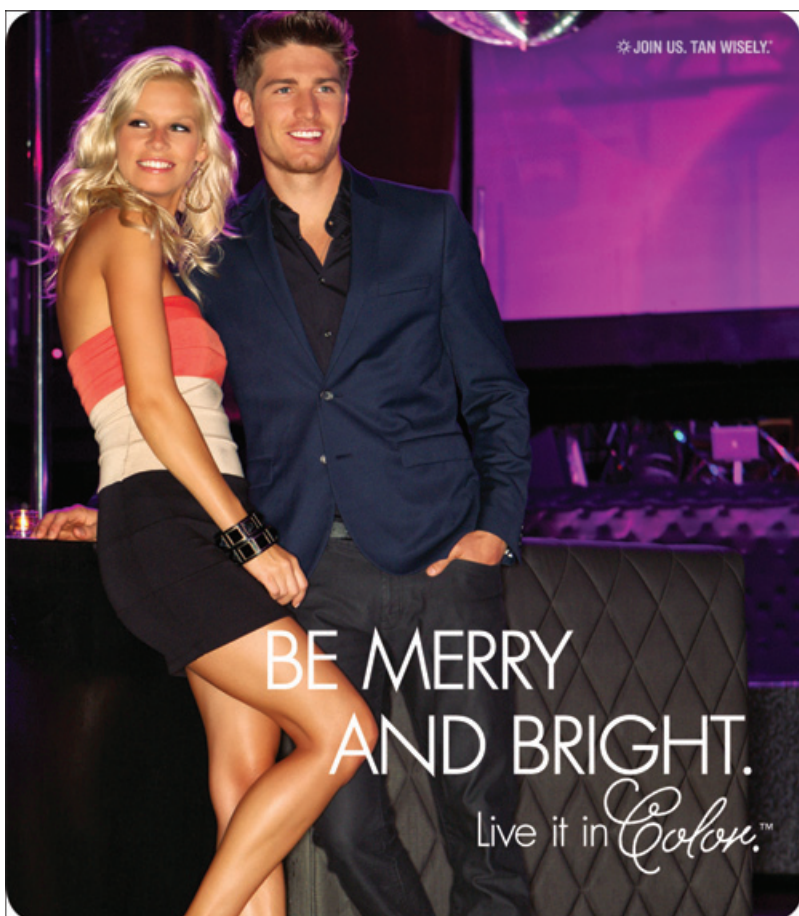
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Yuletide CHEER

— 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

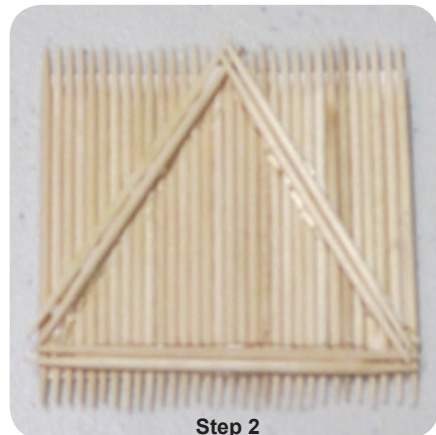
HOW TO DO IT. ▼

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

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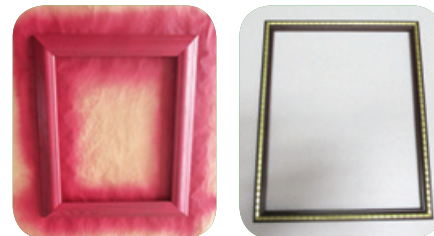
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DIFFICULTY LEVEL: MEDIUM

- 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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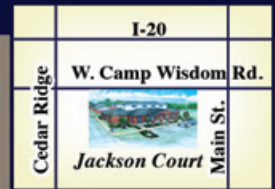


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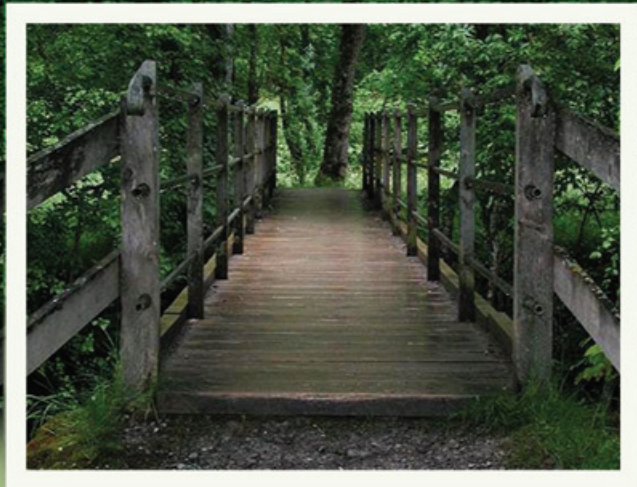
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Step 3

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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Taos, New Mexico,
Tops Many a
Bucket List



It's been said that we travel first to lose ourselves and then to find ourselves. Traveling is often the impetus of change, forcing us to step outside of our comfort zones, experience a few firsts and learn about other cultures and ourselves in the process. And there is no better classroom in which to learn than Taos, New Mexico. Taos has been at the top of many international "best" lists for a variety of reasons. In

fact, Fodor's Travel Guide recently listed Taos Pueblo as one of its top bucket-list destinations to see before you die.

Taos Pueblo (taospueblo.com) is the only living Native American community in the world that is both a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a National Historic Landmark. Visit the Rancho Milagro Collection on Bent Street to view paintings by one of Taos Pueblo's war chiefs, Jonathan Warm Day Coming, who paints joyful depictions of Pueblo life. A visit to the pueblo



feels as if you've been transported back in time. Multistoried adobe homes — made up of earth, straw and water — stand as proudly now as they did 1,000 years ago and have been continuously inhabited since then. While there, try some fry bread topped with green chile or watch a traditional dance during a feast or celebration. Handmade pottery is available for purchase, crafted from the micaceous clay of the Sangre

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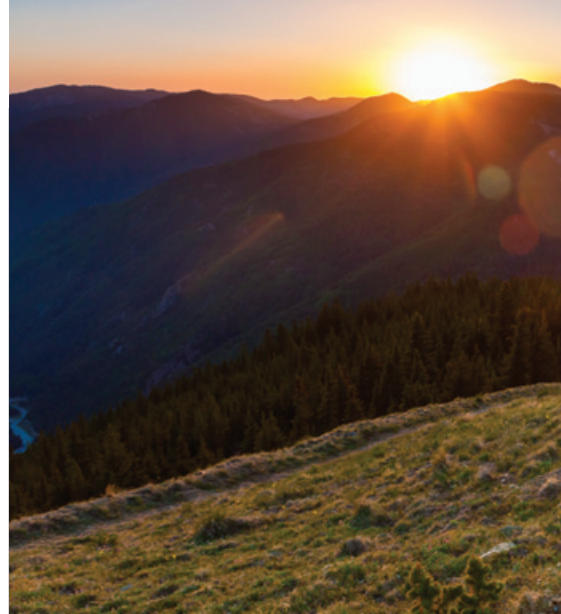
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de Cristo Mountains. Tours are available. Cameras aren't allowed during religious ceremonies, but as the natives believe, "You won't need pictures to remember Taos Pueblo. It will remain in your heart and soul forever."

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 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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Taos Ski Valley (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 for details.

Taosños are known to be eco-friendly, so it's no wonder that Taos is the headquarters of the Greater World Earthship Community (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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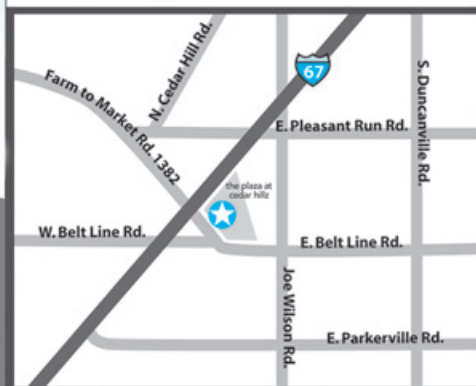
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— By Beverly Shay

Dr. William (Bill) Brown's first dental experience wasn't what you might expect. He enjoyed it, and it helped him decide what to do with the rest of his life. "My childhood dentist in Oak Cliff loved people. He wanted to help people, just as I do. He was such a nice man. He was the reason I decided to be a dentist," said Dr. Brown, who has been practicing in Duncanville for 43 years. Every day, he makes sure his patients have the same enjoyable experience as he did years ago.

His wife, Vicci, grew up in Duncanville. She has worked as her husband's office manager for 17 years. Dr. Brown is extremely proud of her. "She is No. 1 in my book. This is a family business and a true team effort," he said. Before working with Bill, Vicci used her communication arts degree in her work with Braniff

and Southwest Airlines. This work allowed her to travel with Paul McCartney, Neil Diamond, the band Chicago, the Beach Boys, the Dallas Cowboys and Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. "I would never have believed I'd be managing a dental office one day," said Vicci. "But like my husband, I love people. I have built deep, decades-long relationships here."

Stepping into Dr. Brown's office, you will see exactly what Vicci is talking about. Dr. Brown sees patients from families he's known for three or four generations. They return because Dr. Brown and his staff keep their smiles looking great. "Some patients come in 30 minutes early, just because they like the restful atmosphere," Vicci said. "They enjoy our reception area, which is more like a relaxing living room, and Bill's calming

personality. We love it, because we consider them all our friends.”

Dr. Brown graduated from SMU with his degree in biology and chemistry and completed his dental studies at Baylor College of Dentistry, graduating in 1970. “Immediately after college, I served in the Air Force during Vietnam for two years as a captain in the Dental Corps. Other than my family, the thing I am most proud of was serving as a dentist for the crews of Apollo 13, 14 and 15 at Cape Kennedy,” Bill remarked.

“I HAVE BUILT DEEP, DECADES-LONG RELATIONSHIPS HERE.”

Missing North Texas, he opened an office in Duncanville, where he has been practicing ever since. Having reared five children in the Duncanville school district, both Bill and Vicci have remained involved in the community, supporting soccer, volleyball, basketball and high school football. “We’re about family, which is why our name is Family & Cosmetic Dentistry,” Bill said.

Dr. Brown’s commitment to family and community haven’t kept him in the past — far from it. Their office is stocked with state-of-the art equipment and materials, and Dr. Brown and his six-member staff attend seminars and classes every year to make sure they are up-to-date on the latest techniques and technology to keep patients as healthy and relaxed as possible. Through cleanings, checkups, Invisalign, implants or dentures, Dr. Brown is committed to providing everything a patient needs to ensure their dental health and restore their smile. He admits he has been trying for nearly half a century now to put himself out of business by educating people in proper dental hygiene. Vicci insists you only have to floss the teeth you want to keep.

“We love people,” Vicci stated, echoing Bill’s sentiments. We live and work by the Golden Rule — treating others the way we want to be treated.” **NOW**



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Happy 101st Birthday to Mrs. Thelma Biggs!



Dr. Andy Lee and his wife, Winnie, have a great time at the Duncanville Chamber of Commerce Civic Auction with David Hira.



Kindergartener Peyton Jackson and Senior Colton Hood, both of DeSoto, show their shared martial arts interest during Canterbury Episcopal School's Congar-Cub Club Adoption.



Cockrell Elementary staff and Supt. David Harris pose with Marines under the Thank You banner made by students.



Steven Roberts of Duncanville tosses a pitch during Canterbury Episcopal School's Amazing raCES! field day activities.



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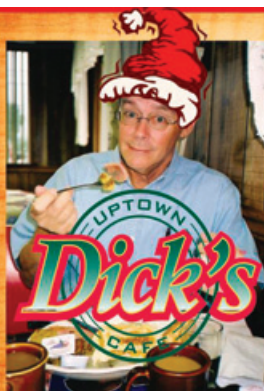


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A Coughing Nuisance

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Coughing, the hallmark of many respiratory diseases, can be a necessary aggravation. This is particularly true when it is a productive cough — meaning when you cough, it helps your body expel sputum or phlegm. This is beneficial, because your respiratory system needs to be cleared of any substance that hinders its performance. One of the diseases that falls into this category is bronchitis. Bronchitis is a disease that affects the mucus membranes lining the airways or bronchial tubes to the lungs. In the disease state, the tubes become inflamed or irritated and swollen. As the lining swells, the airways will narrow, making breathing more difficult. The mucus-producing cells are there to protect the bronchial tubes. But when irritated, the amount of mucus produced will increase.

Bronchitis has two forms — acute and chronic. Acute bronchitis may last for a few weeks. Chronic bronchitis may last for months or years with repeated incidences. Both forms may produce these symptoms:

- Cough
- Thick mucus which could be clear, white, yellow or green
- Fatigue
- Chest pain
- Mild fever
- Shortness of breath

Acute bronchitis is most often activated by viruses that affect the respiratory system. The primary culprit that causes chronic bronchitis is cigarette smoke. Second-hand smoke, industrial pollutants, air pollution, dust and toxic gases are a few of the other triggers that can cause chronic bronchitis.

Since cigarette smoke is a huge contributor to this disease, you increase your chances of becoming ill with bronchitis if you smoke. Others in your environment are also exposed to the same risk. The chemicals in the cigarette smoke will harm the cilia, hair-like structures that help move excess mucus and other irritants out of the bronchial tubes. If the exposure is frequent, over a period of time the cilia can become permanently damaged. Other risk factors include your general health, such as whether your immune system is weakened from fighting another illness. Your place of employment could put you at risk if you are exposed to irritants, pollutants or toxic substances. The elderly and infants have an increased risk, because they are more vulnerable.

Treatment will depend upon whether the bronchitis is acute or chronic. Acute bronchitis without complications can usually be treated at home. Rest, increasing your liquid intake, cough medications, expectorants and avoiding lung irritants can usually get you through an infection. Check with your physician for the best course of treatment. Chronic bronchitis will definitely require the attention of your physician. You can help yourself avoid bronchitis by washing your hands frequently — and if you smoke, please stop. That will greatly increase your chances of a good outcome. **NOW**

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

Dr. Emilio Lopez, DDS, PC

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December 5

Olde Town Holiday on the Hill: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Pioneer Park, CH: holiday tree lighting, activities, treats, shopping, photos with Santa. cedarhilltx.com/holiday.

December 6

Annual tree lighting: 7:30 p.m., DeSoto Town Center: strolling carolers, various choirs, N.I.A. kids' skit, cookies and drinks.

December 6 — 31

International Museum of Cultures Trail of Trees: ethnic decorations depict cultural food, houses, clothes, maps made by school children and private collection Nativity exhibit.

Mondays-Fridays: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and Saturdays: Noon-4:00 p.m., 411 US 67, DV. (972) 572-0462.

December 7

Christmas market and gift making: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., International Museum of Cultures, 411 US 67, DV. Local artisans display products for sale, opportunities to make decorations, photos with Santa. (972) 572-0462.

Friends of the Cedar Hill Library Holiday Open House: 2:00-4:00 p.m. Meet Mr. and Mrs. Claus, create holiday crafts, buy children's books. Bring your camera.

December 9

Cedar Hill library family gingerbread house making: 6:30-7:00 p.m.

December 14

Parents Shopping Day: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., International Museum of Cultures, 411 US 67, DV. Leave children for special holiday activities. (972) 572-0462.

Children's Book Festival: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Cedar Hill library. Meet authors of children's books, hear excerpts and buy copies. (972) 291-7323 ext. 1312.

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In The Kitchen With Mia McMurray

— *By Beverly Shay*

“I like seeing the look of enjoyment on the faces of those for whom I cook,” admitted Mia McMurray, who adjusts recipes she finds to suit her own taste. Mia particularly likes baking and down-home cooking. “One year I made peanut brittle for a cookie exchange at my job. I dozed off while the second batch was cooking and woke up to find it on fire! I never made that recipe again!” she shared. Although Mia had to replace her carpet, she is grateful to be here to share that story.

“I grew up in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where I helped my grandmother cook during the holidays. She cooked for everyone, and I learned from her.” **NOW**

Pound Cake

3 cups flour
2 cups sugar
1 lb. butter
6 eggs
1 tsp. baking powder
1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. lemon flavoring
1 tsp. butter flavoring

1. Combine all ingredients; mix until well-blended.
2. Pour batter into a greased and floured Bundt pan. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Ooey Goopy Cake

Cake:
1 box butter cake mix

1 egg
1 stick butter, room temperature

Topping:
8 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
1 stick butter, room temperature
2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. butter flavoring
16 oz. powdered sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. For cake: Combine all cake ingredients; mix well with electric mixer, but do not allow mixture to become too creamy. Pat mixture into bottom of lightly greased 9x13-inch pan.
3. For topping: In a large bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth; add butter, eggs and flavorings; mix well. Add in powdered sugar; mix well. Spread this mixture over cake batter. Bake for 45-60 minutes, until golden brown. The center should be a little gooey.

Sweet Potato Pie

This recipe comes from my grandmother, Marjorie Sue Fitzhugh.

2 large sweet potatoes
2 cups sugar
1 12-oz. can evaporated milk
1/2 lb. butter
4 eggs, slightly beaten
2 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. vanilla
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 pie crusts

1. Peel potatoes; cut in chunks and boil until cooked through.
2. Combine potatoes, sugar, milk and butter in a large bowl; mix well.
3. Add in eggs, nutmeg, vanilla and lemon juice; mix well. Bake at 350 F for about 45-60 minutes, or until well-set.

Five Pepper Chicken

3 boneless chicken breasts, halved
1 1/2 tsp. ground pepper
1 tsp. salt
1/2 green bell pepper, cut into strips
1/2 red pepper, cut into strips
1/2 orange pepper, cut into strips
1/2 yellow pepper, cut into strips
2 cups zesty Italian dressing

1. Season chicken with pepper and salt. In a large bowl combine green, red, orange and yellow peppers with Italian dressing; stir together until peppers are covered. Add chicken, cover and refrigerate 2 hours, or overnight. (Overnight is better to allow the seasoning to flavor the chicken.)
2. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9x13-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Arrange chicken in baking dish; place the peppers on each piece of chicken. Pour the remaining peppers and dressing over chicken.
3. Cover and bake for 30-45 minutes, or until the center of the chicken is no longer pink.

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

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