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MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2015

NOW

Tradition of Togetherness

At Home With Joe and Tonya Matlock

Improving the Days

Jennifer Williams loves helping the city through her executive admin position

A Life of Song

Making Merry

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Guide



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ON THE COVER



The Matlock family fills their home with Christmas spirit.

Photo by SRC Photography.

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Editor's Note

Season's Greetings, WeatherfordNOW Readers!

Christmastime always brings a smile to my face and joy to my heart. Peace and good will are on our minds during this season, as we volunteer to serve others, watch giddy children open gifts and share enjoyable conversations with friends and family. I wish you all a comforting and delightful December.

As we begin 2016, you will see a new face in the monthly Editor's Note. I am stepping down as community editor, and Lisa Bell will take on the responsibility. For the past three years, Lisa has done a tremendous job sharing community members' stories in WeatherfordNOW, BurlesonNOW and GranburyNOW. I know she will excel in her new role. Feel free to email your story ideas to her at lisa.bell@nowmagazines.com.

I will continue to share your stories as a freelance writer for *WeatherfordNOW*. My sincerest gratitude goes out to our readers and the NOW Magazines family for three exceptional years as community editor!

Until next time,

Amber

Amber D. Browne
WeatherfordNOW Editor

P.S. The publisher and staff of NOW Magazines wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and a happy holiday season!

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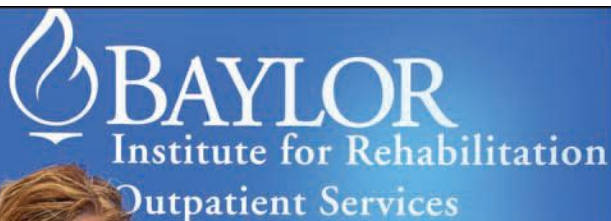
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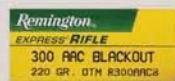
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I M P R O





OVING

the Days

— By Lisa Bell

Located a few blocks from the county courthouse in what used to be the train depot, the Chamber of Commerce serves Weatherford in many ways. Jennifer Williams occupies an office that used to be the ticket booth. When she came to work four years ago as the executive assistant to Chamber President Tammy Gazzola, Jennifer wasn't new to Weatherford. "I hit the ground running from day one," she said.

Jennifer claims a rich heritage in the city of Weatherford. Her grandfather, John L. George, was the first black man to own a business in the community. Her father, Raymond George, was the first black man to install phones from Southwestern Bell. He was also the first black elected to the Weatherford ISD school board from 1980-1986. Her mother, Bettye George, was the first black registered nurse in Weatherford. "She delivered most of my classmates. She was the community mom," Jennifer shared. "She cooked fried chicken and red beans every Wednesday, and people knew to show up." Jennifer's father also recently renovated Mount Pleasant Colored School where he attended as a child, now open for all students.

Proud of her heritage, Jennifer became a hair stylist and learned to work with all types of hair. She is the only multicultural hairstylist in Parker County. She always wanted diverse clientele and creative challenges for special styles. "Hair is my passion, and ministry is my delight," she said.

She also loves music, especially praise and worship. "I'm a worshipper by heart, which is birthed out of my relationship with Christ," Jennifer said. Married for 24 years, she joined her husband in music ministry as part of Carl Williams and Tru Praise 26 years ago. She first met Carl in fourth grade. "We couldn't stand each other," she said. "He was born in Fort Worth but raised in Weatherford." During her freshman year, their relationship changed. "He got a haircut, and he was a totally different person. I thought he was a new kid," she said. They entered a somewhat love/hate relationship, but eventually, they became best friends.

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After 24 years and three children, the couple now pastor at Promise Land Family Church, a multicultural place of worship that is Bible-based and founded on love. Carl pastors, while Jennifer handles administration, serves as the worship leader and sometimes teaches. The two of them share a passion for music and helping others. "[In marriage] a relationship with Christ conquers all," she said.

During her childhood, Jennifer's parents encouraged and modeled being active in the community, volunteering and staying involved. She also played multiple sports in high school. Jennifer and Carl taught their children the same values of being active in the community. All three, Salyce, 24; Carl Jr., 20; and Veronica, 18, volunteer at events. "Carl Jr. and Veronica see all the work behind an event. They were part of the Peach Festival and really enjoyed it," she said. "They are learning to give back without expecting anything in return. They're good kids and willing to help anyone they see who needs help." Salyce has volunteered at the Chamber and gets excited about hanging out there.

In her job at the Chamber, Jennifer handles financials and assists with events and anything else needed.

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"Tammy referred to me several times as the rock of the Chamber," she said, laughing. But Jennifer views her job from a different perspective. "I work by assignment, not by salary. Everything I do is unto the Lord," she said.

Each day brings new faces to the Chamber. Jennifer loves seeing and talking with so many people from different backgrounds. She listens to stories of people who come in with grandchildren and talk about riding the train while they point out the caboose on display. Others tell stories about their childhood in Weatherford.

Frequently, people call the Chamber with unusual questions. Jennifer's position involves helping find answers. One day an elderly woman called looking for a longtime friend. "She had been very sick and desperately wanted to find her best friend, whom she believed still lived in Weatherford," Jennifer said. "As a last resort, she called to see if we might be able to help."

Jennifer located what she believed might be family, but wasn't sure if the friend was still alive. After searching for more than 30 minutes, she asked for the woman's information and promised to call back if she found anything. The woman wanted to send her a thank you gift, but Jennifer declined saying it wasn't necessary. "I had things to do that day, but I can always stop for a God assignment. [The call] wouldn't let me go," Jennifer said. She finally made a call and found the friend.

Days later, a woman came to the Chamber of Commerce to meet Jennifer and thank her for reuniting her with the elderly woman. Knowing she helped these friends enjoy a little more time together made Jennifer's day great.



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The job keeps Jennifer involved with the community on a level above volunteering. She loves the balance of being in the office and out among people all over town. Even though large events require a lot of work, she delights in them, especially during the holidays.

Christmas on the Square is a great event, an indicator that Christmas has arrived. "Christmas is my favorite holiday," she said. The winter community event is much like the Peach Festival, on a smaller scale. Yet, there is a different vibe —cheerful, with a spirit of giving — which is why she loves Christmas. Christmas on the Square is geared more toward shopping and vendors, but visitors will still find free hot chocolate and plenty to do on Saturday, December 5. From the parade until the last vendor tears down, she and the Chamber staff cover everything to make the event successful.

Jennifer plays a part in inviting the holiday atmosphere to Weatherford. She sees the change to daytime as a good thing, bringing more people to the community. "I love serving and helping. It's just my heart," she confessed.

With little down time, Jennifer doesn't have many hobbies, but she has a secret talent. The resurfacing of a love for drawing and painting made its way back to her mom's table, which now sits in her home. One Saturday not long ago, she spent hours completely zoned-out, filled with creativity. Lost in the artist world, she didn't notice her son coming into the dining room. Her unknown talent amazed him. She received accolades from him, but she enjoyed it more as time to relax and unwind from a busy schedule. Perhaps someday her assignment will include art, as well.

For now, the community of Weatherford reaps the benefits of Jennifer's attitude, gifts and talents. "I like to be a hand in making your day better," she said. And she does it very well. **NOW**

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A Life of Song

— By Amber D. Browne

Angie Robb has been singing since fifth grade. The high school musical in her small Indiana town needed children for parts in The King and I. To practice for her audition, she sang "The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow" in front of her class. She felt at home sharing her talent in front of a crowd. Angie continued singing in middle and high school and while attending Purdue University. As a freshman at college, she auditioned for Purdue Musical Organizations. Angie was a little nervous, so she asked a friend to attend the audition with her. Her friend and everyone planning to audition stood outside the door as Angie belted out the "Star Spangled Banner." "I came out, and everyone was just looking at me, clapping." She made the University Choir. "It was an amazing experience." University Choir members didn't receive course credit for their participation. It was an extracurricular activity on the student's own time, but Angie enjoyed every minute of her college experience with the choir.



"I think the community looks forward to having the show every year. They come *rejoice* with us and celebrate and get into the *Christmas* spirit. It reflects the *true* meaning of Christmas versus all the hustle and bustle."



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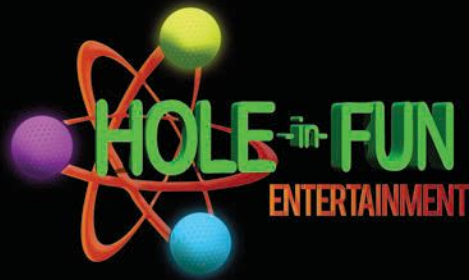
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While attending Purdue, Angie and her fellow choir members performed at churches and events across the state of Indiana. During her senior year, the group traveled to Washington, D.C., during the holidays to perform at several locations. One performance was at the White House. They toured the White House, taking in the sights and sounds of the holidays. Angie says they even got a wave from former First Lady Barbara Bush. Another stop on the Washington, D.C., performance tour was former Vice President Dan Quayle's home for a dinner party. "They served us hot cocoa and cookies after we sang," Angie explained. "That was really fun." Another experience in D.C. still sticks out in Angie's mind. After lunch at the Hard Rock Cafe, the staff turned off the juke box and requested the group sing a cappella. "That was an experience I'll never forget," she shared.

Angie enjoys listening to rock and alternative music, and she sings jazz music on her neighbor's karaoke machine. She'll sing anywhere at just about any time — while driving her car, drying her hair and even baking cakes. Angie often finds herself baking yummy treats with her part-time business, ABC Cakes. She took baking classes as a stay-at-home mom when she was pregnant with her second son, Conner. Angie had taken time off from teaching kindergarten to raise Conner and his older brother, Kevin, so she needed a creative outlet. "I like to do fun, mean cakes like over-the-hill cakes and coffin cakes," she grinned. Although Angie's business has slowed down since she took a full-time teaching position, she still enjoys baking for her die-hard clients. Angie is now in her third year of teaching at Forte Jr. High School in Azle. She teaches English Language Arts to seventh-graders and often finds herself singing with co-workers during the end-of-year talent show.

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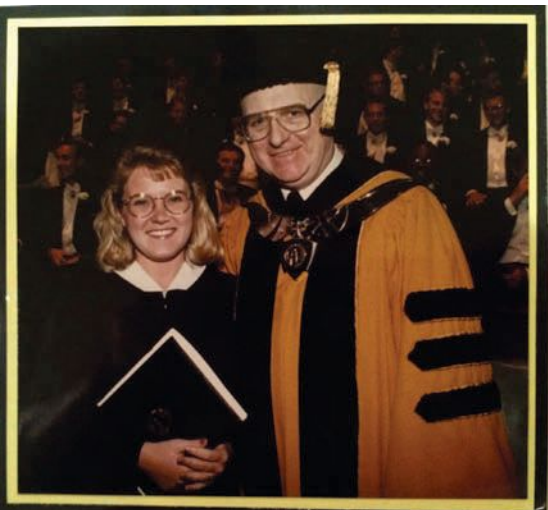
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In the midst of all the busyness of life, the holidays are an important time for Angie. It's not only the season of reconnecting with family and friends but also the time to remember the reason for the celebration. That's why an advertisement for singers in the local newspaper caught her eye six years ago. The Parker County Community Choir was auditioning for its annual presentation of Handel's *Messiah*. Baroque composer George Frideric Handel is best known for the oratorio, which debuted in April 1742. More than 250 years later, crowds still flock to theaters to experience the performance. It had been about 15 years since Angie sang on stage. "I had my kids, and I sang a lot of nursery rhymes," she grinned. "I wanted to get my voice back in shape, so I decided to try out."

She showed up at Weatherford College and found Rob Laney, PCCC director, sitting at a piano. He asked Angie to sight-read. She was a little nervous, but after her audition, she knew immediately that she had made the choir. "The first year was the hardest because I didn't know any of the music," Angie recalled.

The choir consists of community members and Weatherford College

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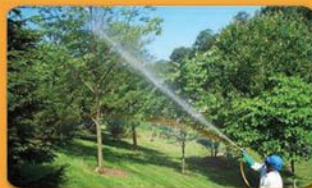
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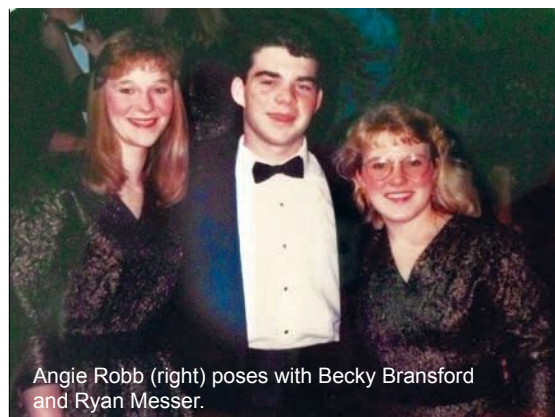
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Angie Robb (right) poses with Becky Bransford and Ryan Messer.

students. Singing with such a range of voices was a change for Angie. "I think it's interesting to hear the more mature voices, and then you hear the younger voices that are really strong. I remember when my voice sounded that strong," she laughed. Practicing with the choir each year helps Angie keep her soprano voice. For Angie, participating in the choir allows her to meet with old friends, including Judith Dowd, who Angie stands near during the performance each year. Judith sings solos, but Angie doesn't. Though she would sing solos in front of audiences numbering in the thousands during college, Angie now prefers to sing with the group. "I'm too much of a chicken," she laughed.

This year's performance was held on November 30, right after Thanksgiving. Angie feels like the performance was PCCC's Christmas present to the community. "I think the community looks forward to having the show every year," she stated. "They come rejoice with us and celebrate and get into the Christmas spirit. It reflects the true meaning of Christmas versus all the hustle and bustle. Everyone just had this big black Friday sale where everyone was going crazy, and then we got to focus on the real reason of the Christmas season."

In her free time, Angie enjoys scrapbooking and attending concerts with her boys. "I love live music. I think it's the best thing ever," she said. They often seek out lesser-known bands. "There's such good music out there if people would just go have a listen." She's also involved with her boys' school activities. Kevin is a junior at Aledo High School, where Conner is a freshman. With extracurricular activities, they stay busy but always make time to enjoy a few moments together as a family. **NOW**

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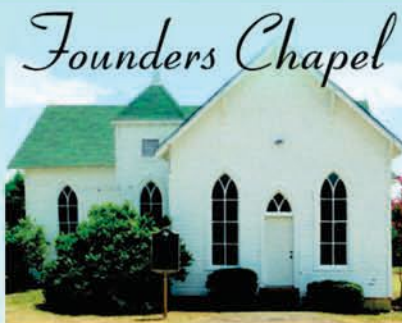
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At Home With
Joe & Tonya Matlock

Tradition of Togetherness

— By Amber D. Browne



Holiday traditions are celebrated by families each year. As families grow and children begin to age, those traditions can evolve or new customs may be born. Aledo residents Joe and Tonya Matlock continue their annual tradition of spending Christmas Eve at his parents' home, but Christmas Day is spent experiencing a new holiday practice. After opening gifts at home on Christmas, they share lunch with their boys, Joe Jr. and Jacob, at Tokyo Steakhouse in Weatherford. "We've done that for about six years. We have extended family there," Joe laughed. "We don't ever have to cook for Christmas."

Eating out allows the Matlock family more quality time together on Christmas Day. "I like watching the boys," Tonya shared. "It's all about them. They don't need anything, but anything you buy, even socks, they are as happy as can be when they open it." Underneath the 12-foot Christmas tree

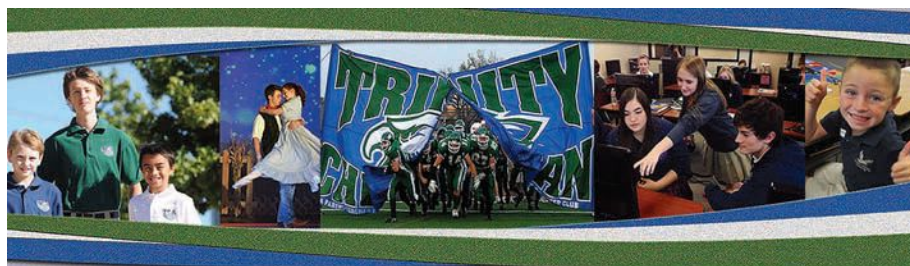


decorated in green and red in the foyer, Tonya places pre-wrapped gift boxes. After the boys opened their gifts one year, Tonya asked them to check under the tree. "Their big surprise was in there, and they'd been walking past it for a month!" Under the gift boxes, Joe and Jacob discovered their new technology. "They're very grateful for everything they get."

Christmastime brings back memories of when their teenagers were young. Holiday school projects dating back to kindergarten are displayed in their living room. "She's funny about matching and having the trees look a certain way. And then, whatever they put together in kindergarten, first or second grade, she puts out," Joe grinned.

The handprint reindeer pictures are Tonya's favorites. "You don't get those little handprints anymore," she shared. Every year, she also switches out framed photos to include Christmas pictures. One photo is the boys' first Christmas together. "It's out every year." One of Joe's favorite holiday decorations is wooden reindeer gifted to him by a resident at a health care facility he managed. The man built and painted them for Joe, and they are proudly displayed in their home each Christmas.

Pockets of Christmas decor are found throughout the Matlock's Spanish-style home. Although the open floor plan in the living and kitchen area provides ample space for entertaining, the home



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has a cozy feel to it. With wood and tile floors and dark beams on the ceiling in the living room, the ambience is welcoming and warm. Tonya decorated the home with a mixture of Spanish and western items. A round, cowhide ottoman is available for visitors to prop up their feet while sitting on the leather sofa in the living room. In the foyer, jeweled cow skulls adorn the wall, while a large leather tapestry hangs above the entryway to the dining area. The dining area features a large, cowboy painting



and throw pillows to match. “I’m a know-it-when-I-see-it kinda girl, so I’ll leave a wall blank until I find it,” she said. Many times, Tonya will have an idea of a decorative piece in mind, and she’ll share her vision with Joe. If he comes across something that matches her decorative style, he’ll send pictures to her before purchasing it.

The Matlocks moved into their custom-built home in June 2011. Building the home was easy for Joe and Tonya. “We like the same things,” he shared.

They had built several houses before, so there wasn’t a lot of debate on the style of home they chose. The exterior of the home is stone with a terra-cotta roof. Each Christmas, Tonya places poinsettias up the concrete pathway to the iron front doors. The cove above the doors and the dome ceiling in the foyer are painted to resemble copper. Family photographs are displayed on the walls and in frames on the table in the foyer.

A stone fireplace is the perfect spot for roasting marshmallows on a cold winter’s



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night. Tonya decorates a second “skinny” tree with Santas and poinsettias in the living room. The large windows overlook the covered patio and swimming pool out back. The curtains are often closed to create an atmosphere perfect for curling up on the sofa to watch scary movies as a family. Their pups Kiki, Charlie and Sally keep watch nearby.

The powder room downstairs is painted cherry tomato red and features Day of the Dead decor and a stand-alone copper sink. Another copper sink from Mexico accentuates the limestone countertop on the island in the kitchen. Turquoise accents are incorporated into the cabinetry in the kitchen, and a copper-leaf design was added above the six-burner, gas stovetop.

Downstairs is the adults’ domain, and the boys spend most of their free time upstairs playing air hockey or video games. Joe Jr., who is a junior at Aledo High School, films varsity football games and enjoys science. He is now researching colleges and has several career choices in mind. Jacob is an eighth-grader at All Saints’ Episcopal School in Fort Worth. He plays football, wrestles and runs track. “They’re best friends, but they’re polar opposites,” Joe shared. “They’re teenagers, so we rarely see them.”

Joe is the chief executive officer of Optimum Healthcare Management, and Tonya volunteers at All Saints’ as the spirit coordinator. Joe and Tonya knew each other while attending Brewer High School but didn’t date until college. They will celebrate 20 years of marriage next summer. It took about that long for Joe to once again take up the hobby of motorcycle riding. He sold his first bike to buy Tonya a wedding ring. “I went a



long, long time without a motorcycle,” he grinned. “She finally lightened up and let me get one.” Tonya has just recently started sharing in the fun riding on the back of his bike through the neighborhood. In her free time, she shops, always keeping an eye out for the perfect piece to add to their decor.

As a family, the Matlocks love to travel. Every Thanksgiving, they take a trip. This year, they traveled to Turks and Caicos. In the summer, they enjoy traveling to cooler climates. Tonya’s mother and sister live in California, so they often take trips to the West Coast. “We try to take a couple of trips a year,” Joe shared.

Family is important to them, as well as church. Every Sunday, the Matlocks attend Central Full Gospel Fellowship, which was built and founded by Joe’s father, Dr. JW Matlock, 37 years ago. Joe now plays guitar there, and his son, Jacob, plays drums. At Christmastime, the family comes together to celebrate the reason for the season and to remember the importance of building on tradition. Whether it’s sharing a meal with extended family on Christmas Eve or sharing Christmas Day lunch with restaurant strangers who have become like family, the Matlocks experience joy — together. **NOW**

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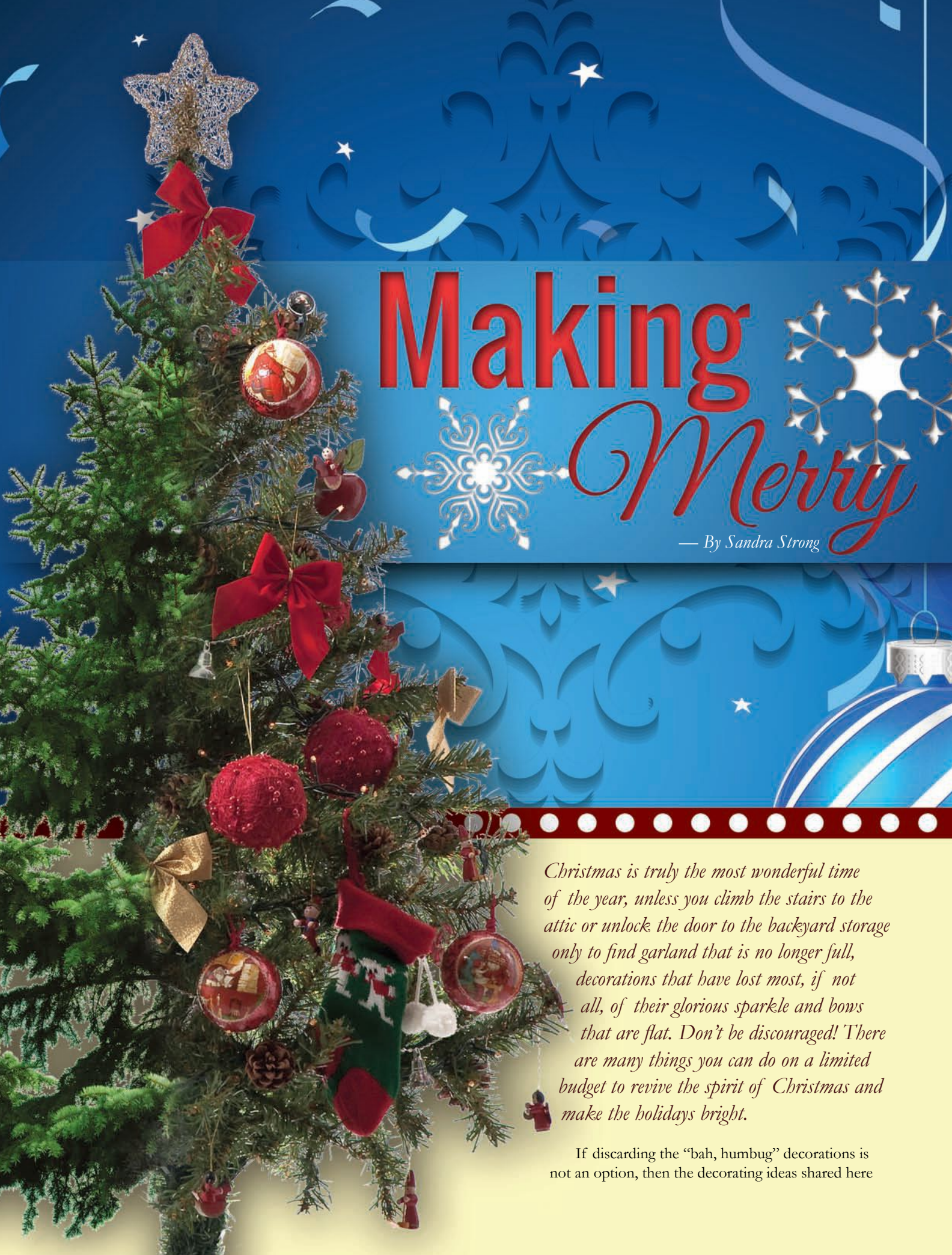
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Making Merry

— By Sandra Strong

Christmas is truly the most wonderful time of the year, unless you climb the stairs to the attic or unlock the door to the backyard storage only to find garland that is no longer full, decorations that have lost most, if not all, of their glorious sparkle and bows that are flat. Don't be discouraged! There are many things you can do on a limited budget to revive the spirit of Christmas and make the holidays bright.

If discarding the “bah, humbug” decorations is not an option, then the decorating ideas shared here



will, hopefully, be the help you need to restore your holiday favorites to their original glory. Each suggestion can be accomplished alone, but why not get everyone together for some good, old-fashioned family time. You might even start a new Christmas tradition.

Decking the Halls

Here are a few ways you can revive your garland. The easiest option is to take two strands of old garland and twist them together from one end to the next, securing both ends with floral wire. Once secured, the two strands will need



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to be entwined, one with the other. This process calls for patience and plenty of time to do it properly. As you entwine the two, you will touch each small limb on the garland strands, merging them together as you work from one end to the next.

To further fill out the garland, you can also add a string of twinkling lights and some holiday ribbon. These options can be added and removed from season-to-season in order to give the decorations a new punch each year. You might use white lights with blue ribbons one year and decide to go all out with red lights and Scotch plaid bows the next. One year, you may even decide to forgo the ribbons and bows and tie themed ornaments and festive greenery to the garland. As your taste in holiday decorating changes from year-to-year, now, so can your fluffy strands of garland.



Trimming the Tree

Some homes boast one tall, regally standing, fresh cut tree, while other homes have trees of varying shapes and sizes in every room. Regardless of how many trees you display, there are some easy guidelines you can follow to ensure the tree-decorating process is one that lends to good memories, instead of huge holiday headaches. Patience will, once again, be important as you plug in the pre-lit tree or the string of lights to begin wrapping the tree in their warm



glow. Last year, the pre-lit tree worked. You may find that it doesn't this year. The process to find the one bulb that has caused the lights to go out is difficult and, many times, impossible. In this case, you have three options — throw the tree out the backdoor, string working lights over nonworking lights or grab a trusty pair of scissors and start cutting the lights from the tree.

For those who opt for a tree that is not pre-lit, your struggles could be just as great, especially if the light Grinch somehow got into the lights that were organized and working when you stored them neatly away the year before! If you find this is the case, get a large cup of hot cocoa, have a seat and let the untangling begin.



Ornamental Revitalization

Ornaments on a Christmas tree are what keep the memories alive within the branches each year. The engraved spoon commemorating baby's first Christmas, the paper star those same little hands made once they got to kindergarten and vintage glass decorations that have been passed down through the generations evoke emotions each time the tree is trimmed. Sometimes, these same decorations need to be rejuvenated to bring back their original beauty.

Silver polish and a buffing cloth will shine up the spoon in no time. All it takes to add a button or some glitter back to the paper star is a few small dots of Elmer's glue. The vintage decorations will



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need something altogether different — something called TLC. Vintage and antique ornaments need to be stored in a dry, climate-controlled area. Hot temperatures have a tendency to tarnish and fade the colors, while colder temperatures cause these same ornaments to become brittle. The way these family heirlooms are stored is quite important in ensuring their holiday lasting power. Wrapping them in white tissue paper before placing them gently in their storage container helps keep them in one piece until you are ready to enjoy them again.

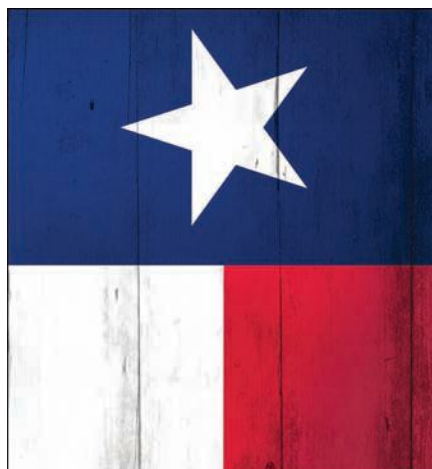




Outside the Box

Decorating outside the box takes on new meaning as children marry and have children of their own. Although it sounds like something Scrooge would do, some may choose to not put a tree up until children understand that the tree is to look at and not to touch. One unique idea, which has been passed down through the generations, is to take the baby out of the playpen and add the tree in his or her place. This allows the child to still be mesmerized by the tree's beauty, while keeping them safely away from breakable ornaments and the "no-no's" that will surely come with each touch. Another option is to simply downsize the tree, so it can be displayed on a tabletop or the fireplace mantel.

Regardless of what you decide to do, the main focus should be on having family fun. Garland, decorations and bows will come and go, but your Christmas memories can last a lifetime, if they are preserved and cared for properly. **NOW**



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Filling a Niche

From rustic furniture and decor to traditional sofas, recliners, mattresses and more, Rustic Roundup offers the perfect addition to your home.

— By Amber D. Browne

Nearly a decade ago, John Peeler drove through Weatherford, looking for a location to open a furniture store. “He had just about given up,” said John’s wife, Linda Peeler. “He happened to see the Frontier Park sign, and he pulled in.” The landlord was on the property, so John took a moment to speak with him about his business plan. “John felt that in Parker County, rustic was the niche we should be in, and it turned out to be true,” she said. In April 2008, John and Linda opened Rustic Roundup on Fort Worth Highway. “It has worked out really well for us.”

Local suppliers provide the rustic furniture, which is built in Mexico. “All of the Mexican furniture, the rustic furniture, is solid wood. There’s no particle board or veneer in any of that. The price point is also very good for what you get,” Linda

explained. The rustic furniture comes in various colors including natural stain, a darker brown finish and distressed white, red or aqua, among others. The rustic furniture may feature crosses, stars, nails, copper or rope accents. Complete bedroom sets are available, along with bunk beds and trundle beds.

Although the majority of Rustic Roundup’s sales are rustic furniture, the business offers customers a variety of styles including traditional and contemporary. Catalogues and the Rustic Roundup website are available for customers to peruse items not showcased in the store. John and Linda work with several wholesale companies in the DFW area. “Chances are, if they have it in stock, we’ll have it within a day or two,” Linda explained.

Business **NOW**

The showroom is filled with a variety of home decor. Area rugs are available, as well as cow hides. Traditional and contemporary dining sets with bench seating, buffets and unique stools and lamps are also available. Creations from local artisans are featured throughout the store including custom cedar furniture built the Amish way by Sam Yoder, barbed-wire and metal wall art by Jack Wolfson and framed Parker County arrowhead collections. "We like to support local craftsman when we can," Linda said. Oil paintings by local artist Karon Richardson are available, as well as western and historical framed prints.

Bedding ensembles from HiEnd Accents and other brands are available. Placemats, dishes and bathroom accessories can also be found at Rustic Roundup.

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Across the parking lot, a second Rustic Roundup building showcases mattresses, living room suites and American-made Catnapper sofas and recliners. "I think this year we've enjoyed about a 50-percent increase in business, due in large part to the addition of the Catnapper line," Linda shared.

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Rustic Roundup is a family-owned and -operated business including John, Linda and his son, Chris Peeler. "Tonja Kaiser also joined us last year and is a very valuable part of our team." John and Linda work in the store on Saturdays, so their staff can have a day off of work. "It's a small business, and we work hard," Linda said grinning. "We take care of our customers. If you have a problem, then we have a problem. We're going to make sure it's taken care of. Customer service is always our top priority!" **NOW**

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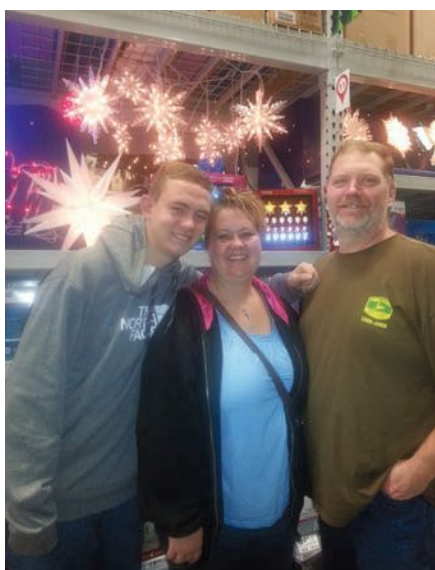
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Snowbasin provides luxurious skiing with multi-million dollar lodges, 3,000 vertical feet and high-speed gondolas. Powder Mountain's 7,000 acres, one of the largest ski basins in North America, gives skiers of all abilities a true backcountry experience. Wolf Mountain is arguably the best learn-to-ski mountain in the western United States and operates the largest night skiing venue in the state.

After absorbing Ogden's 170,000 acres of national forest, three ski resorts, miles of trails or 13,000 acres of lakes connected by pristine rivers, you can head downtown for a cool place to hang with friends. Charming, historic 25th Street is injected with local love, featuring boutique shopping, galleries,



independent restaurants and bars, including Tona, voted one of the top-10 ski-town sushi restaurants by *Ski Magazine*.

Downtown Ogden offers live entertainment, museums, culture and events. Visit Fort Buenaventura for an epic sporting event or mountain man rendezvous. Tour the Union Station's numerous museums, including the John M. Browning Firearms Museum or the Utah State Railroad Museum among others. Children will enjoy the award winning George S. Eccles Dinosaur Park, Ogden Nature Center and Treehouse Children's Museum.

Experience live theater, music and dance at Peery's Egyptian Theater or browse one of the 20 fully operating galleries displaying original works of art. A number of nationally recognized events take place throughout the year — from the independent Sundance Film Festival held in Park City and Harvest Moon Celebration to the XTERRA USA National Championships and Ogden Marathon.

The town offers luxury mountain getaways, with mountain trails at your back door, to restored historic hotels located right

downtown. In addition, the Ogden-Hinckley Airport is only five minutes away from downtown or the Salt Lake City International Airport is a quick 35-minute drive.

Travel times from Ogden are more than reasonable for educational daytrips to exotic sites like Utah's Great Salt Lake, where high-salinity water is so buoyant that people can easily float. You'll find opportunities for great hiking and wildlife viewing, including bison, antelope and birds, at Antelope Island State Park. Swimming and sunbathing are also popular on its clean, white sand beaches. Freshwater showers are available to rinse off after swimming, before the 40-minute drive back to your lovely lodging in Ogden.

For more information on great escapes available throughout the year, go to www.visitogden.com. **NOW**

By Aimee Edwards. Photos by Out of Bounds Creative.

Will Your Retirement Savings Last?

Increasing life expectancies mean you're likely looking at a longer retirement than the previous generation of workers. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average person spends 20 years in retirement — while others put the figure at 30 years or longer. And financial advisors generally suggest you'll need 70 to 80 percent of your annual preretirement income to maintain your standard of living.

Will your retirement savings be up to the test? Here's what to consider:

1. Picture your retirement.

Whether you're planning to travel extensively or kick back by a lake, your income will need to support your desired lifestyle. Once you decide how you'd prefer to spend your retirement days, you can map out a strategy that could help get you there.

2. Assess your finances.

Take a realistic look at your current financial position. Note such things as how much you've saved, the debt level you're carrying, the amount of life and disability insurance you carry and what you have available in emergency funds. Talk with a financial professional about your options.

3. Increase savings.

It's never too early — or too late — to add to your savings. If you've got plenty of time before retirement, save as much as you can to take advantage of interest compounding. If retirement is near, look into catch-up contributions, which can help improve your financial picture. Even small gains matter:

Increasing your retirement contribution by 1 to 2 percent each year adds up over time. Evaluate your savings progress with a retirement calculator.

4. Knock out debt.

Most financial professionals recommend keeping debt level manageable — no more than 35 percent of your income. Getting rid of high-interest debt, such as credit card balances, is always a good idea. And before you retire, you'll want to eliminate as much debt as possible so you aren't servicing it with your savings. Consider paying off your home before you stop working, too.

5. Monitor your plans.

Review your retirement plans with a financial professional at least annually to see that they still work for you. (It's also a good idea to review your insurance coverage periodically, and any time your life changes, such as when you marry or have a baby.) As you near retirement, you might decide to shift some of your savings to income-producing investments, such as annuities. Or, to keep your nest egg intact, your plan may be to continue working a few years more into retirement.

To review your insurance coverage as part of your retirement and financial strategy, contact your financial adviser. **NOW**

Neither State Farm nor its agents provide tax, legal or investment advice. Please consult your own adviser regarding your particular circumstances.

Article provided by The Mader-Bagley State Farm Agency.

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Straighten Up

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

“Stand up straight!” How many times have you heard that in your lifetime? It could’ve been from your mom, your teacher, dance instructor or a friend. Depending upon who gave the order, you may or may not have tried to accommodate them. But who wants to stand straight when a good slouch seems to work just as well? And, what about that cozy curl into the big chair? Why sit up straight when the opposite feels so right and comfortable? Here is an inconvenient truth: Unless you have been taught and encouraged to practice good posture, you probably need some encouraging reminders.

The correct posture follows the natural curvature of the spine. A good standing posture starts with holding your head up, shoulders back, stomach tucked, knees relaxed, not locked, and your feet a shoulder’s width apart. A good sitting posture begins with your buttocks touching the back of the chair. Have your back and shoulders straight and feet planted on the floor. Your weight should be equally distributed. Use an arm rest. If you need to turn while sitting, do not twist. Turn your whole body. Practice good computer posture by sitting with good posture and keeping your arms and wrists parallel to the floor. Make sure the computer screen is at eye level.

Posture plays a big part in your overall health. One of the areas impacted is your breathing. There is a reason programs

such as yoga and Pilates place so much emphasis on breathing. For the brain to function properly, it is critical for it to receive the oxygen it needs. This improves your critical thinking. Proper posture facilitates that. When you use good posture, your muscles, ligaments and joints are aligned as they should be, and this alignment allows internal organs to be positioned properly inside the body. When your organs are compromised because of bad posture, they can’t function as they should, and that sets up other issues, such as digestion or respiratory problems.

There is less wear and tear on the skeletal system when you maintain good posture, thereby lessening the prospect of injury. Going against this can set you up for arthritis, back pain and body fatigue. Good posture equals a more efficient system. Other considerations would be to invest in a good mattress for the good of your spine at night and an orthopedic pillow. Wear quality footwear. Sit in a solid chair that gives your back the support it needs. There are good reasons for all of this attention to posture. In addition, you will look better and exude confidence when you stand and sit up straight! **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.

December 1

History Alive! Prairie Home Seasonal Celebration: 10:30 a.m., Doss Heritage and Culture Center, 1400 Texas Dr. Register at www.dosscenter.org.

December 5

38th Annual Arts & Crafts Fair: 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., Aledo Community Center, 104 Robinson Ct., Aledo. For more information, contact City Hall at (817) 441-7016 or visit www.aledo-texas.com.

Christmas on the Square: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Historic downtown Weatherford. For details on different events and times, visit www.weatherford-chamber.com.

15th Annual Christmas Tyme in Aledo: 5:00 p.m., Aledo Square. For more information, contact City Hall at (817) 441-7016 or visit www.aledo-texas.com.

Garden a Glow 2015: 6:00-10:00 p.m., Clark Gardens, 567 Maddux Rd. Adults, \$15; children 2-12, \$10; Members, \$8. Purchase tickets online prior to event, www.clarkgardens.org.

December 10

Log Cabin Concert Series: 7:00 p.m., Weatherford College Allek Fine Arts Center, 225 College Park.

Western music band, Sons of the Pioneers, rounds up the final concert in the series, designed to raise funds for the Doss Log Cabin Village. Tickets: \$35. Purchase tickets and read more about the band, www.dosscenter.org.

December 12

Heritage Christmas: 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Doss Heritage and Culture Center, 1400 Texas Dr. Pioneer crafts, real snow, games and stories. Read more about this fun day at www.dosscenter.org. Free admission; \$3 for snow zone.

2015 Candlelight Tour of Homes: 2:00-8:00 p.m., various locations. The 2015 Candlelight Tour of Homes features seven historic homes in Parker County, Chondor Gardens and more. Adults, \$12; children under 12, \$6. Contact Abby Hamessley Lowe, (512) 538-4466 or visit www.parkercountyheritagesociety.com.

December 19

The Star of Bethlehem: 5:30-8:30 p.m., Capernaum 1st Century Village, 10700 FM 920. Experience HIStory. Sights, sounds and imagery of the first century in an outdoor, authentic setting and a 30,000-square-foot-statue garden filled with lights and music. Food to purchase in the outdoor

marketplace area. \$16 Adult; \$13 Senior; \$12 Kids 4-11; 3 and under free. \$50 Family Pack (2 Adult, 2 Kids) Group Rates Available. For more information, and to purchase tickets, visit www.CapernaumVillage.com or call (800) 489-1950.

December 24

Christmas Eve Services: 5:00 p.m., Family Service; 9:00 p.m., Lessons and Carols Service. Courts United Methodist Church, 802 N. Elm. For more information, visit www.courtmethodistchurch.com.

Candlelight Worship: 7:00-8:00 p.m., Central Christian Church, 1602 S. Main St. Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. For more information, call (817) 594-3053 or visit www.welcometothetable.us.

Aledo UMC Candlelight Services: 5:00-6:00 p.m., Family Service; 7:00-8:00 p.m. and 11:00-12:00 p.m., Traditional Candlelight Service, Aledo UMC, 100 Pecan Dr., Aledo. Visit the church website, www.aledoumc.org.

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

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Kim Mader-Bagley & Craig Bagley



In the Kitchen With Hilda Barron

— By Amber D. Browne

Tamales are a staple in Hilda Barron's home during the holidays. Hilda learned how to make tamales from her mother and grandmother while growing up in Del Rio. Each year, they would prepare the dish to share on Christmas Eve. That tradition continues for Hilda's family in Weatherford. "The tamales are more than food for the body. They are also for the soul," she shared.

Hilda enjoys cooking for her husband of 34 years, Mariano Barron, her adult children and their spouses and her six grandchildren. She is now passing down the family tamale recipe to her daughter and daughters-in-law. Hilda's free-time is spent cooking, but she works in the mortgage industry. "During the holidays, I always bring tamales for co-workers," Hilda shared. "They are a true social dish." **NOW**

Chicken Tamales

Filling:

- 3 chicken breasts, skinless**
- 5 medium tomatillos**
- 1 clove garlic**
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped**
- 1-2 jalapeños, or to taste**
- 1/2 Tbsp. salt, or to taste**
- 1/2 cup cilantro, stems and leaves, chopped**

Masa:

- 2 cups Maseca**
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder**
- 2/3 cup corn oil**
- 1 sprig coriander, chopped**
- 30 corn husks, cleaned and soaked in hot water**

- 1. For filling:** Boil chicken. Once cooked, shred chicken. Save broth for later use.
- 2. Cook tomatillos and next 4 ingredients until soft.** Cool and blend with cilantro and 1 Tbsp.

chicken broth. Add tomatillo sauce to shredded chicken; stir.

3. For masa: Add two cups of Maseca to a bowl. Slowly add 2 cups chicken broth, baking powder and next 2 ingredients. Mix well to form slightly sticky dough.

4. Prepare steamer. Spread masa onto corn husk; add filling. Roll tamale; repeat until all ingredients are used. Add tamales to steamer; cover with aluminum foil and a clean kitchen towel. Cook on medium heat for about 1 hour or until tamales are cooked and each corn husk is easily removed.

Buñuelos (Fritters)

- 3 cups flour, sifted twice**
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder**
- 1 Tbsp. salt**
- 1 Tbsp. sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine**
- 3/4 cup milk**
- Vegetable oil**

- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1/4 cup cinnamon**

- 1.** In a large bowl, mix together the first 3 ingredients.
- 2.** In a separate bowl, beat together the next 3 ingredients; stir in milk. Add mixture to dry ingredients to form a dough. If the dough is too dry, add a few more drops of milk. Knead dough until smooth. Shape into 20 balls. Cover with plastic wrap and let stand for 30 minutes.
- 3.** Add oil to a large skillet until it is 1-inch deep. Heat to 360 F.
- 4.** On a lightly floured board, roll out each ball into a very thin, 6-inch circle. Fry until golden brown, turning once. Drain on absorbent towels.
- 5.** Mix together sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle mixture on top of warm buñuelos.

Red Tomato Sauce

- 2 Serrano peppers**
- 3 Tomatoes**
- 1 clove garlic**
- Pinch of salt, or to taste**
- 1/2 onion, finely chopped**
- 3 Tbsp. cilantro, finely chopped**

- 1.** Roast peppers and tomatoes until tender.
- 2.** In a blender, combine garlic and salt until a paste forms. Add roasted peppers; add tomatoes and blend until well incorporated; add onion and cilantro, mixing well. Can be served with tacos.

Spanish Rice

- 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil**
- 1 1/2 cups medium grain rice**
- 3/4 cup white onion, finely diced**
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped**
- 1 cup tomato puree**
- 2 1/4 cups boiling water**
- 2 tsp. broth powder or 1 cube of Knorr Rice Bouillon**
- 1 cup defrosted frozen peas, uncooked**

- 1.** Heat a saucepan over medium heat. Add first 3 ingredients to the pan; fry 7-10 minutes, stirring occasionally until the rice is light brown. Add garlic and stir.
- 2.** Stir in tomato puree and next 2 ingredients. Reduce heat to a light simmer and cover. Cook 15 minutes. Turn off heat and let stand 10 minutes. Fluff rice with a fork and mix in peas.

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

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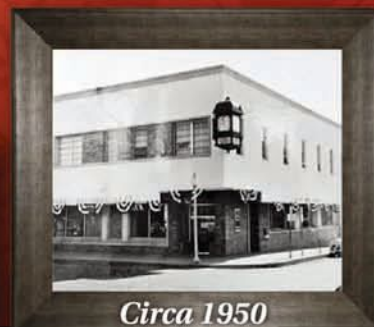
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Merry Christmas!

Luke 2:11: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.



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