

The background of the cover is a photograph of an older couple, Mark and Jerri McNair, sitting on a porch. Mark is on the left, wearing a red sweater over a white collared shirt. Jerri is on the right, wearing a green and white striped sweater with a snowflake design. They are both smiling at the camera. The porch has a brick wall and a metal railing in the background.

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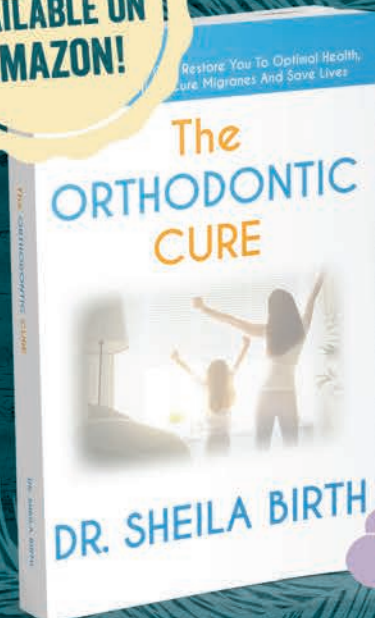


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ON THE COVER



Mark and Jerri McNair dress their home for the holidays.

Photo by SRC Photography.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (817) 477-0990 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.



Editor's Note

Hello, Friends!

Charles Coke Woods once wrote: "What a factor in the making of beauty is the wind! Did you ever think of the wind as one of the invisible brushes of the Divine Artist?" I'd have to agree when I look at some of my succulents growing with a bend toward the north thanks to southern winds blowing spring, summer and fall.

As we head into the season when coats and heaters are hauled out of closets, I'm especially grateful for the wind-breaking scarves I've collected over the years. A few precious polyester ones knitted with love by Grandmother, a coarse woolen one from Uruguay, a smoother woolen one from Peru, a double-layered possum one from New Zealand, a multicolored cotton one from India and multiple fine wool and silk weaves from boutiques throughout America. Each serves to protect my ears, neck and face from gusts that blow gently here, more bitterly in climates farther north or south.

What are you thankful for this month?

Melissa

Melissa Rawlins
BurlesonNOW Editor
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P.S. The publisher and staff of NOW Magazines wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and the happiest of holiday seasons!



Our family would like to take this opportunity to wish our many customers, friends and neighbors Season's Greetings. Wishing you a happy heart, home and many new reasons for us all to be thankful. Thanks to everyone for the trust and confidence you have shown us over the years. May Peace be your gift at Christmas and your blessing all year through!

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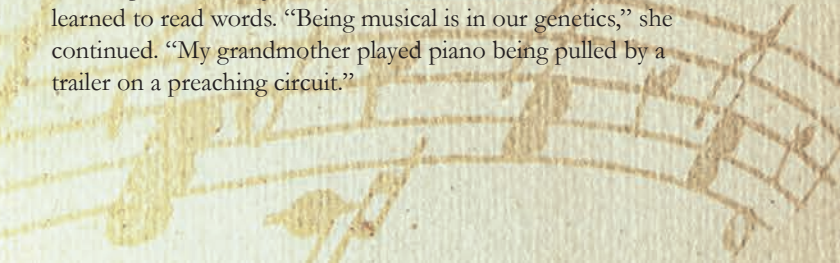
Tickling the Ivories

— By Erin McEndree

The tinkling sounds of the keys that accompany hymns echo through the rafters as the congregation sings. Jeanette Burns and Marilyn Slack accompany singers on the ivories at their respective churches — First United Methodist Church and First Baptist Church, both in Crowley. Their collective experience is more than 120 years. Patience, perseverance, commitment and flexibility are exhibited as they continue to impact people around the community with their music. Many pastors and music directors have come and gone in 40 years, but Jeanette and

Marilyn have been constant for Sunday worship, choir rehearsals, holiday services and events, such as weddings, talent shows, funerals and clubs, as needed. Most of all, they play to bring people into the presence of God. “It is about impacting people for the Lord, not impressing them,” Jeanette said.

“There is nothing like music that gives you that feeling of being close to God,” Jeanette said. “Music opens up the brain, and it opens doors.” Jeanette learned to read music before she learned to read words. “Being musical is in our genetics,” she continued. “My grandmother played piano being pulled by a trailer on a preaching circuit.”





Jeanette Burns and Marilyn Slack share the honor of feeding the souls of generations of Crowley church goers.

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Jeanette's gift is sight-reading music. She has a strong ability to combine music memory with spontaneity based on thousands of hours of practice. "When I was 12, my daddy moved us here and bought the first grocery store. Back then the population was 450," she said. "I remember watching men build the Methodist Church. From my classroom window across the street, I watched them bring in huge beams." Presently, the building across the street is the Crowley ISD Administration Building.

When Marilyn was about 5 years old, she would come home from church and pick out songs on the piano. "My dad was a farmer in Oklahoma but became a Baptist minister later in life," Marilyn said. "I took lessons for 50 cents a lesson when I was 7 or 8. We were so poor." When Marilyn's house burned, the lessons stopped, but when they moved to Wichita Falls, a lady from the Methodist Church taught her. "I remember telling her I wanted to play church music, so she got a hymn book and taught me," Marilyn laughed.

Marilyn's gift is to play by ear, but she admits she does not read music well. She can embellish a musical piece with ease



by decorating the melody with different notes that tease the listener's ear. "When Marilyn plays, I hear a lot of chords that I don't recognize," Jeanette said. They have different approaches to playing music, but each is unique and special, and it fits their particular personality.

Jeanette and Marilyn met in the early '70s. The Methodist Church on Peach Street has always been open to the community for meetings, such as: Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, line dancing and Golden Eagles. "My mom attended a senior citizens group at the Methodist Church with Jeanette's parents, and our families became good friends," Marilyn said.

"This [Methodist] church ties our community together as it serves the public," Jeanette said. "It is what people need nowadays. People are so mobile, it makes them isolated. They need roots and people around them to help them when they have tragedies."

Both ladies tried their hand at teaching piano to students at one point. "I taught for seven years to help out my oldest in college," Jeanette said. "It was often after school, and I had to be the teacher, bookkeeper and housekeeper." Jeanette admitted it benefited her because she was practicing over and over, and she grew as a pianist. She loves gospel, traditional and classical, but admits jazz is her favorite genre.

Marilyn taught at a music store in Wichita Falls. "I taught small children for six months," she said. "I did not enjoy it." Marilyn enjoys playing for residents in nursing homes, especially around Christmastime, and will continue to play as long as she has the opportunity. "I love to bring joy with the old songs for

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people who have not heard them in a long time. I get requests for ‘Leaning on the Everlasting Arms,’ ‘Darktown Strutter’s Ball,’ ‘Stardust’ or ‘Shine on Harvest Moon,’” Marilyn said. “I will use my talent for the Lord because if I don’t use it, I believe it might be taken away.”

Jeanette and Marilyn use their musical abilities when their churches combine choirs for special events, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas performances. They presented *The Messiah* by George Frideric Handel. “We had a small orchestra, but the pianist played all the parts. It was hard,” Jeanette said. “The voices from the choir helped fill in all the pieces.” Jeanette and Marilyn have fond memories of the churches in the community being congenial and cooperative with one another.

“There was a huge difference in 15 singers and 50,” Marilyn said. “When we sang all together, it was phenomenal.”

Now that Jeanette and Marilyn are getting older, they admit they are slowing down. “It gets harder and harder to play because there are fewer piano players to fill in when we need them,” Marilyn explained. “Jeanette and I play every Sunday and Wednesday, all the holidays, weddings, funerals and club meetings.”

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There is much preparation involved. "My music director's style complements my musical style, and that is nice," Marilyn said. "Most songs are made up of three chords, so I can play a tune on request."

"Sometimes, I work on a piece for weeks or months," Jeanette said. "Last year, I prepared over 200 special scores" Jeanette also works well with her pastor's style. "My pastor is good about planning ahead, so I can choose songs to accompany the lesson beforehand," she shared.

Jeanette chose to be a stay-at-home-mom, and Marilyn became a lawyer later in life. "You can be anything you want to be and be a musician at the same time," Jeanette said. "Music is forever."

Marilyn and Jeanette have had so many opportunities open to them over the years because of their musical talents. Both played on television shows in the '60s. Marilyn will never forget playing for President George W. Bush at the home of Roger Williams near Weatherford. They feel privileged to have this talent God gave them and aspire to impact people for God, not impress them.

Impacting others through music is Jeanette and Marilyn's way of "paying it forward." They love bringing joy to others through music, which is the strongest connection binding them together as friends. Inspiring people to get closer to God with the hymns they perform is their passion. As long as their fingers can tickle the ivories, they will continue to fill rafters and hearts with beautiful music. **NOW**



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In a world of video games and YouTube, it's possible to learn about surviving in the great outdoors without ever experiencing it. But once you've started a fire without using a lighter or a match, you can relax on a camping trip. Encouraging confidence through self-sufficiency, Toby Ford and the men volunteering with Troop TX-0110, the local Trail Life USA chapter, are giving boys and young men the chance to learn skills for living both in the woods and in community.

Toby was born in Burleson and grew up with a father fond of fishing. On camping trips, Toby's dad taught him to identify and avoid things like poison ivy and bull nettle, how to remove a fishhook lodged in your leg past the barb and how to safely create a campfire from scratch. "People who have never done it don't know," Toby said. "You can't start with a big log and hold a match under it!"

Fortunate to have a dad to learn such things from, Toby grew up to become a husband, father, civil engineer and community servant. He married Brenda in 1988, and the couple reared their two boys in the tender, loving care of the Burleson Church of Christ.

Toby also gave time to his hometown. He served as a city councilman for two terms from 1998-2001, as well as sat on the Parks



— By Melissa Rawlins

VEN

and Recreation Board and Planning and Zoning Commission. He currently serves on the 4B Board for the city of Burleson, as well as on the board of directors for the Johnson County Central Appraisal District. His two sons, Cason, 24, and Logan, 21, are developing homes and careers of their own. Meanwhile, Toby, a co-owner of Dunaway Associates engineering consulting firm where he has worked since 1995, is devoting two days every week to Trail Life Troop TX-0110.

"It's my other life," he said, describing the rewards of working with this

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Isaiah 9:6

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organization dedicated to “guiding generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others and experience outdoor adventure.” The men who are leaders coach boys from three age groups, and they camp together at least once a month — with the exception of the hot summer months. These are usually two-night trips to places, such as: Dinosaur Valley State Park, Monahans Sandhills State Park, Enchanted Rock State Natural Area or private property in the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

“There’s value in learning from a man who knows what to do,” Toby explained. When they combine the middle school and high school age groups, the older boys have the opportunity to teach and mentor younger ones.

By the time boys graduate from the kindergarten-fifth grade level, at Woodland Trails, they are ready to leave an entirely adult-led program. The Navigator program for middle school boys provides a transition time when the adults are hands-on, while the boys learn to lead. At the high school Adventurer level, the adults are there simply to advise as needed. “We expect the boys to be self-contained and self-sufficient and offer the training to the younger boys, so that the younger boys can earn their trail badges,” said Toby, who remains hands-off while watching constantly to ensure the boys are not allowing an unsafe situation to develop.

He is thrilled when he sees the boys working together as a team, the older boys issuing orders and the youngsters learning from their mistakes. “I delight to see a young man who has confidence to lead and is learning to walk in authority,” Toby said. “We have great men willing to give of

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themselves and speak into the boys' lives, and their leadership has been extremely rewarding to participate with."

Trail Life USA requires male mentors to be age 18, or older, and pass a background check and a two-hour youth protection course, as well as sign a statement professing their Christian faith. In the Burleson program's three-year history, most of the leaders have been parents and a few have been grandfathers. Toby became involved because Ricky Free, another member of Burleson Church of Christ, wanted his three sons to participate in Trail Life.

It's been a learning curve for Ricky and Toby, who held their official first meeting in January 2014, not long after the national organization launched. "We've grown with the program," Toby said. Top priority was ensuring they had enough adult leaders to cover all the bases.

These men invest a lot of time and energy guiding the boys to safely complete projects designed to train them to be what Trail Life USA calls Ready Trailmen. "We emphasize the patrol method, in which four to six boys work together to accomplish everything necessary in a campout," Toby said. "All boys have challenges, which sometimes can come just from the fact that they're boys. We have all been boys in the past, so none of it's a shock to us, and we're all equipped to deal with it."

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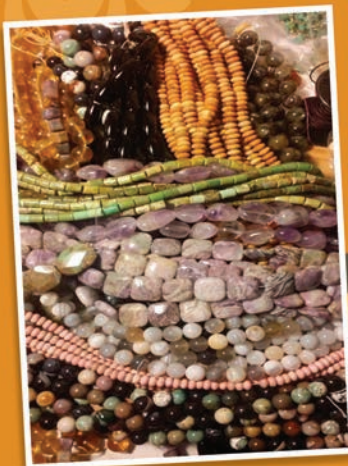
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wood tools, camping and building fires, working with ropes, outdoor cooking and more. Once they've completed certain requirements to get them halfway to "ready," they are considered Able Trailmen and given a dark-stained chestnut walking stick called a troop standard, which is then covered with

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medallions awarded as the boy progresses even further in skills like offering first aid and, of course, trail navigation, aquatics and respect for the American flag. The Adventurer boys work for three awards, which progressively require additional skills and training, such as: citizenship, family life, cycling, archery, shooting sports and more.

In addition to learned skills, the boys at every level are required to donate service hours to the community. The Trail Life honor code leads boys to pledge: "On my honor, I will do my best to serve God and my country; to respect authority; to be a good steward of creation; and to treat others as I want to be treated." For the boys who take it seriously, the benefits are great.

"These are boys from a variety of backgrounds, and I've been very pleased with the way we've had excellent cooperation," Toby said. "We have boys who care about each other and work together to accomplish their goals."

This month, Trail Life Troop TX-0110 hosts an award ceremony to recognize each boy's achievements. Next month, they'll pack the troop's 18-foot trailer, donated early on by Burleson Outdoor Power Equipment, and head to the 400-acre private Beakley Ranch in Brownwood for another weekend outdoors. Braving the elements and conquering selfishness, the boys will develop friendships while embracing the great outdoors. And Toby? He will enjoy being part of the blessing. **NOW**

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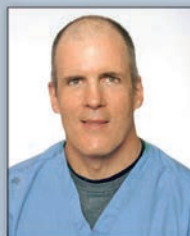


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Lots to Love

— By Rick Mauch



When you've got a home this big, there's room for a variety of tastes and treasures. And inside the three-story, 4,000-square-foot, custom-built home of Mark and Jerri McNair of Burleson is a host of different things to enjoy. There's old and new, and even some things that are in-between. And though they've only lived in the home eight years, the stone-and-brick abode already has plenty of memories.

The variety in their house matches their personalities. Mark, 62, and Jerri, 63, enjoy a plethora of things in life, from his bicycling to her volunteer work. He has been a pilot since age 16, now with American Airlines, and holds a degree from the Air Force Academy. She is a retired high school principal from the Mansfield ISD and taught 28 years in Burleson.

At Home With Mark & Jerri McNair



They met in the choir at their church. He is a baritone. She is a soprano. And though it's been awhile, they have even shared a theater stage together, with one of their fondest memories being their participation in the musical *Li'l Abner* — he in the title role, and she as Mammy Yokum. “He kept wanting to carry me out on his shoulder,” Jerri said, recalling a scene.

“I had no idea she was afraid of heights,” Mark said with a chuckle.

Their family includes three daughters and a son. Twin 3-year-old grandsons, Owen and Graham, belong to oldest daughter, Emily, 35, and her wife, Annie, who live in Austin. Their daughter, Katie, 25, named after Jerri's mom and sister, is a model and has moved back home from New York, where Emily also once lived. Their son, David, 30, and daughter, Molly Jackson, 28, live nearby. Molly is expecting a baby boy on December 31.

There is plenty of room for the children and grandchildren. In fact, a



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walk up the black wrought-iron spiral staircase just outside the three back patios (one on each floor) takes one to the top of the tallest tree in the backyard, about 35 feet tall. “When we moved in, you could see over the trees,” Mark said.

The top patio is more intimate, perfect for stepping out onto and sitting to watch

the moon on a restless night. The middle is more designed for cookouts, with lots of lounge furniture. It’s a great place to enjoy a morning cup of coffee.

Upon first entering the home, directly by the door is a small wooden bench. It is from the old Burleson High School gym, where Jerri, born and raised in Burleson,



saw many basketball games. “When I was in high school, that’s what I sat on,” she said.

A look to the left reveals a dining room highlighted by knotty alder wood cabinets painted a dry white color with dark stains. On a shelf between the cabinets is an old candle box, complete with candles, albeit

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electric. "I love the vintage look, and I love to mix it with new pieces," Jerri said.

Jerri also loves clocks, which is proven by the many throughout the house. There is one that is very special above the 5-foot-by-7-foot fireplace in one of several dens. "My dad was an auto mechanic, and he loved how clocks worked," Jerri said. "I remember going with dad to get it. It's a German clock."

On one side of this den is an old bookcase with sliding glass doors and lots of books on the shelves. On another side is an old chifferobe that, when opened, has been transformed into an entertainment center. On the wall heading into a second den is another special clock. This one has connections to an uncle of Jerri's who was once a disc jockey at radio station KCLE in Cleburne. "I think when he retired, they gave it to him," she said. "I believe it hung in the station when he worked there."

The kitchen area features a homey, smaller dining table. Next to it is a chest-high wood-burning fireplace surrounded by red bricks. "They said to put it up this high so we can see the fire when we're sitting over there," Jerri said, pointing to some seats in a lounging area.

The kitchen has darker, tannish-brown alder wood cabinets. It also has the most modern of appliances, along with some old country charm, such as hand-made aprons from Jerri's grandmother.

Downstairs in the basement is a third den, this one featuring Jerri's 1998-99 Texas Teacher of the Year Award, sitting on the desk she used at Mansfield. There is also a big collection of Mark's airplane pictures on the walls. "I flew that back in 1978-80. I was a co-pilot," Mark said, pointing to a picture of a Spectre. "It's still probably the most accurate in the Air Force. From 2 miles away, you don't miss





by more than a foot.” Then he pointed to a drawing of an F-16, and added, “A friend of mine, an Air Force officer, drew this.”

The upstairs landing on the third floor has a piano that belonged to the family of Jerri’s mom. Almost destroyed in a fire, it has since become a restored family heirloom. “They were going to give it away, and my mom said, ‘No,’” Jerri said. “Now, see how great it looks?”

When they aren’t enjoying their home, Mark is an avid cyclist, often riding many miles and competing in events, such as the Peach Pedal in Weatherford and the Burleson Honey Tour. Among Jerri’s dearest projects is her work as a volunteer to help fight human trafficking, educating families and children on the dangers that exist right here in North Texas. “It’s a big problem, and there’s a misconception,” she said. “It’s the fastest growing crime in the U.S.”

Children are dear to the McNairs. Each Halloween they welcome youngsters seeking candy by decorating their yard with pumpkins, jack-o’-lanterns and a couple of semi-scary items, such as a laughing skull and what Mark calls a “witchy thing.” “We have so many trick-or-treaters in our neighborhood,” Jerri said. “They come in droves. I love to see the kids.”

Halloween turns to Thanksgiving and then to Christmas. They decorate the inside of their house in a way so that, when they leave the front curtains open, passers-by can see inside to share the holiday glory. “People drive through the neighborhood and can see in. It looks festive,” Jerri said.

“The house is more like a wrapped Christmas box,” Mark said, chuckling. And what’s inside most Christmas boxes? Just like the McNair home, it is something special. **NOW**

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Christmastime is near, and you may already see adornment and trimming on your neighbors' houses. Many people have family heirlooms or other sentimental pieces inside their homes, but they are typically more open to trying something new on the outside of the house. Be creative, and let your house front be your pallet. If you are ready to change up how you dress your house for the holidays, here are some ideas to win your neighborhood decorating contest!

Lights, Decor, Action!

- *Know your options.* There are dozens of styles of light strings, with slight variations along the way. While regular





— By Zachary R. Urquhart

indoor lighting has been moving away from traditional incandescent bulbs in favor of more eco-friendly models, Christmas lights are still offered in any number of styles. You can buy strands relatively cheap that will have the same yellow “soft-white” you have seen for decades, or you may opt for new light-emitting diode styles that will cost more up front but save money on electricity for years to come.

• *Bulbs are not created equal.* The other side of having plenty of options is that you have to be careful when buying new strands. When it comes to LED’s, especially, every company will have slightly different hues, so buy enough strands. Lights are categorized by size,



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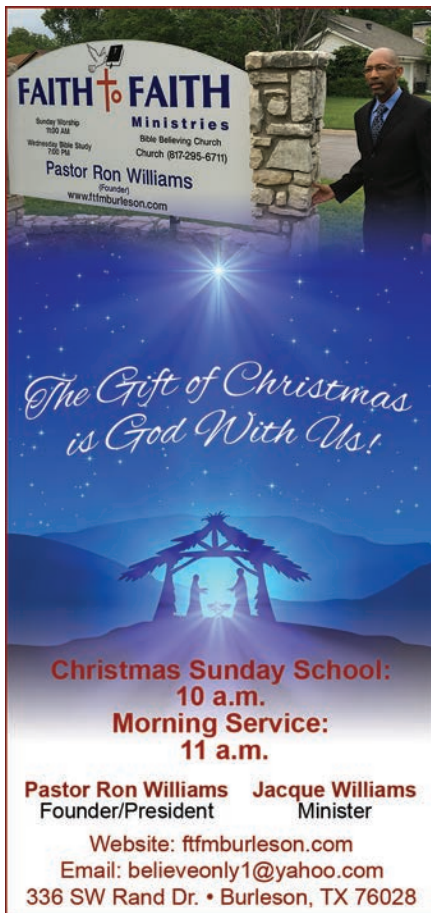
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but even sizes can fluctuate between brands. When you find the color and style you want, consider buying several extra strands. Spending a little now will outweigh having to start over in a few years just because a few strands are dead.

• *Plan before you hang.* When decorating, it is a major source of frustration to reach the end of your last



strand just before you get to the edge of your house. Measure your edge, and factor in losing a few inches per strand for the slack you will inevitably have and the inches you lose at each strand connection spot. If you end up with extra lights, you can either hide them in the gutter, or you can take out a bulb to cut the power to the excess lights. A professional Christmas light installation company can assist you in creating the look you are dreaming of.

Use the Yard

- *Less is more, sometimes.* Somewhere between an empty front yard and a Griswold-style Christmas, there is a happy medium, displaying just the right amount of holiday cheer. You want to avoid crowding too much outside, but think about adding lights to your trees or bushes. Companies even make light nets that make it easier than ever to cover your shrubs and small trees.

- *Include a statement piece.* There is much more than lights available for decorating your yard. There is an ever-growing list of variety in inflatable decorations, so you can be the first on your block with the latest trends.

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Reindeer made of wire or cut out of wood are a great addition, and you can even use hunting decoys with a few accessories for a truly unique look. A Nativity scene is a popular choice with lots of options. You can display something as simple as Jesus, Mary and Joseph, or opt for the entire scene, complete with wise men, animals and a lit up Star of Bethlehem.

- *"Spruce" it up.* Most people put either an artificial tree or a cut-down real tree in their house for the season. One fun option is to plant a Christmas tree in your front yard. There are many varieties of pine trees, especially, that will grow well, and their increasing size lets each year be a new decorating experience. This is especially great if you have young children who grow older as the tree gets bigger each year.

- *Plan your power.* If you are adding lights to your trees, make sure to start the chord at the bottom, otherwise, you will have to run power up into your branches. Also, have an idea of where you will plug each chord running into your yard. You want to avoid too many possible tripping hazards, and if you can, try to hide the cords so as not to detract from the yard's beauty in the daylight hours.



Themes Bring Everything Together

• *Take it "light-ly."* There is no specific right combination of lights, especially when decorating the outside. You can go all white, colored or settle on a blend of the two. But, symmetry is usually more visually appealing, so try to have a pattern to your light and ornament setup. The key is to avoid one strand or section that looks out of place among the rest.

• *Your lawn needs focus.* If you have a hunting Santa next to a newborn Jesus, all behind a skeleton from *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, your display may be sending mixed signals. Pick a genre and fit your decorations within that theme. Some great options include: gingerbread men, toy soldiers, Santa and his elves or religious themes. You can also get creative and add lights, red hats and jingle bells to any lawn motif to make a theme of your own.

• *Plan with the neighbors.* If you can get people on your block to agree, consider having an entire neighborhood theme. One option is to do something simple like coordinating your light color and placement. For something really special, work together to put on the 12 Days of Christmas, or you can even create an entire Dickens' Christmas village.

Whether you want a simple yard with well-placed, coordinated lights, or you want to transform your entire neighborhood into a white winter wonderland, use these tips and start with a solid plan to ensure your yard is full of holiday cheer! **NOW**

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The staff at Texas Coalition for Animal Protection focuses on the welfare of animals and providing great customer service at the lowest cost possible.



Quality Pet Care

People at Texas Coalition for Animal Protection love animals and their owners. — By Melissa Rawlins

If your pets need care and money seems a little tight, you'll find help at discount prices right in the middle of our three-city area. The Texas Coalition for Animal Protection established itself here in November 2009. TCAP's clientele has proven loyal, demonstrating this nonprofit organization is mitigating the issues that so moved its founder.

Stacey Schumacher worked in animal rescue during high school in Sulphur Springs, and in 1994, she graduated high school and started a spay and neuter clinic soon thereafter. "When you see perfectly adoptable pets being put to sleep, you know there are too many pets," she said.

Once Stacey finished graduate school, she entered the corporate world but couldn't get the welfare of animals off her mind. In 2002, she started TCAP in Denton, Texas, to provide

quality pet care and outstanding customer service at the lowest cost possible. "Spaying and neutering is our focus," she said. "But, we place a very high priority on rabies control because that obviously impacts community health. We charge \$5 because we want every animal vaccinated for community safety."

Licensed veterinarians partner with TCAP to perform vital surgeries and wellness care. By designing their procedures for efficiency and referring all sick and injured pets back to local veterinarians, TCAP is able to provide low-cost services in a high-volume setting.

In 2007, the Humane Society of the United States chose TCAP as the most innovative approach to animal welfare in the nation. More than 50 percent of the people bringing their pets to TCAP have never made a vet visit of any kind. And more

Business **NOW**

than once a week, TCAP veterinarians and staff travel to outlying areas to help more people.

Until 2009, they served the Johnson County area by working at the Cleburne Animal Shelter. It was difficult to pack and transport all their supplies and tools — including anesthesia machines — from Denton to Cleburne. For this reason, TCAP opened its doors in Burleson.

The lines can sometimes be long for walk-in vaccination services. But, with TCAP's efficient procedures in place, clients are in and out in no time. Other wellness services include prescription products and dental cleanings. To date, TCAP has performed more than 259,000 spays/neuters.

By designing their procedures for efficiency and referring all sick and injured pets back to local veterinarians, TCAP is able to provide low-cost services in a high-volume setting.

The discount that TCAP offers averages 75-percent lower than traditional veterinary clinics, because TCAP is not charging an office visit fee and only provides basic preventative pet care. "We don't offer X-rays. We're not treating sick or injured pets," Stacey said. "We're providing services and products necessary to keep the pet overpopulation problem at bay and to help keep pets healthy." TCAP always refers more serious issues back to local veterinarians in full-service clinics.

TCAP is just as selective in the veterinarians and staff they hire. Realizing their client is the pet owner, TCAP staff love animals and their owners. The organization gives regular training to their staff on good customer service, knowing that satisfied clients will bring their animals in for help.

"Having really great people makes the difference," said Stacey, whose staff enjoys serving both clients and their pets. "Because we've worked to recruit great people, it never feels like work. It just feels like playing with puppies and kittens." When you're in need of affordable, safe veterinary services, bring your pet to the compassionate people at Texas Coalition for Animal Protection. **NOW**

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Between clients, stylist Lauren Weaver rearranges some of the accessories offered in the lobby of La Vue Day Salon.



Ashley Reid and Savannah Watson place penants in preparation for the fundraiser at Dalton's Corner for the families of Daniel Haros and Phillip Evans.



Centennial High School JV Spartan cheerleaders give their football players a huge heart for a huge win.



Ellie Lemire and her friends, Skylar Ramirez (left) and Allison Ramirez (right), enjoy Girls Day Out at Our Place.



Neil Sanyer puts his bike away after a ride to Ell's Place in Sand Flat with his Burleson and Beyond buddies.



Employees at Lendmark enjoy '70s Day during Employee Appreciation Week.



Joe Confessore sets out a sign announcing doors are open at the new location of Tune City Music.



Tana Howell stands with Senator Konni Burton, who is prepared for the upcoming 85th Legislative Session.



Members of the BISD FFA celebrate the 81st birthday of their charter at their new pig barn.



Kain Rodriguez and Burleson FFA's goat, Little Crumpet, honor the U.S. Navy at the Joshua NJROTC Birthday Ball.

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Time for a Year-end Investment Review

With the holiday season upon us, you may well be busier than usual. However, by spending a few minutes reviewing your investment scenario of this past year, you can see where you've been, where you might be going, and what you need to do to keep moving forward toward your long-term financial goals.

So, as you look back at 2016, pay close attention to these elements of your investment picture:

- **Performance.** Reviewing your investment performance over time is important in helping you determine if you're on track to achieve your financial goals. So, in evaluating how your investments did in 2016, ask yourself some key questions: How did your investments do relative to their performance in past years? If there was a big difference, what might have accounted for it? Were your returns relevant to your long-term goals? In other words, if you have already established a return rate you'll need to reach your goals — and you should indeed set such a rate — were your actual returns “on track” to help you make progress toward your objectives? And, just as importantly, were your return expectations realistic,



Merry Christmas

During this holiday season, we wish you all the best.



Lynn H Bates Jr, AAMS®
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based on your investment mix and the market environment?

• *Investment mix.* If you are a diligent investor following a well-designed strategy, you probably started out in 2016 with an investment mix that reflects your risk tolerance, time horizon, and short- and long-term goals. But over time, your investment mix can change, even without your having done so on purpose. If you owned a certain percentage of an asset, such as growth stocks, and those stocks appreciated in price substantially, they could take up a larger percentage of your portfolio than you had intended, thereby exposing you to a higher risk level than that with which you are comfortable. So now that the year is coming to a close, examine your investment mix to see if it needs “rebalancing.”

• *Contribution levels.* Are you taking full advantage of your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan? Specifically, if you got a raise this past year, did you boost your contributions to your plan? The more you invest now, and throughout your working life, the less likely it will be that you have to play catch-up in the years immediately preceding your retirement.

• *Mistakes.* We all make mistakes in every walk of life — including the way we invest. In looking back over 2016, can you spot some investment mistakes you might have made? Did you temporarily bail out on investing immediately after the “Brexit” vote, only to find, a few weeks later, that the markets had soared to record highs? Did you act on impulse and buy a so-called hot stock that turned out to be inappropriate for your needs and risk level? While mistakes like these might be costly in the short term, they can ultimately prove invaluable — if you learn from them.

We’re just about ready to turn the page on the 2016 calendar. So, as you review your investment decisions for the past year, try to determine what worked, what didn’t — and what you can do to improve your results in 2017. **NOW**

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



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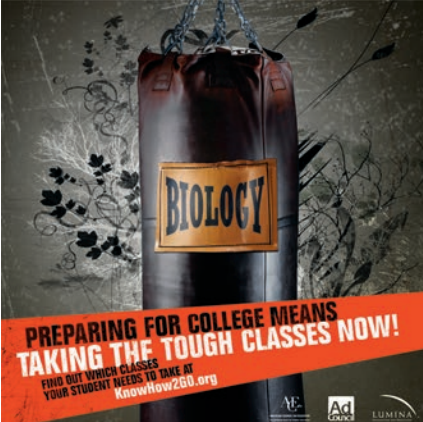
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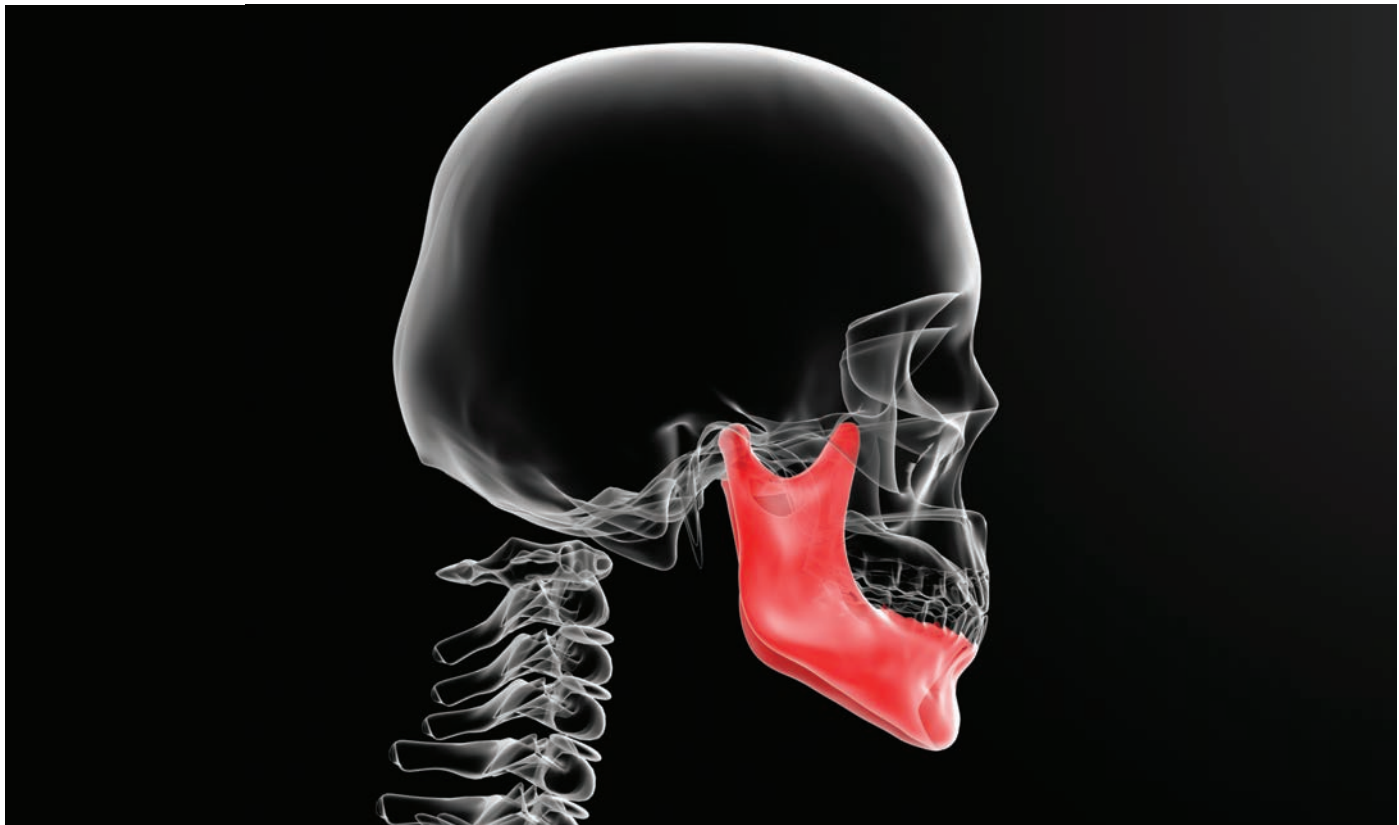
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A Multifaceted Jaw Problem

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Do you ever think about your chewing mechanism? Probably not, because it is as natural and automatic as breathing. However, if something interferes with it, you will think about it a lot! The action that makes all this activity possible begins in the temporomandibular joint. Think of it as a hinge that connects the lower jaw, called the mandible, to the skull. Put your fingers in front of your ears and open your mouth. Now move your jaw up and down and side to side. This is what gives you the ability to chew on whatever you want. Because this joint is so multifaceted and complex, its actions can create challenges if there are problems.

When these problems occur, they are known as temporomandibular joint disorders, or TMD. These disorders are characterized by an aching pain and tenderness in the joint and surrounding area. Or, there may be no discomfort at all. Chewing, talking or opening the mouth widely can cause distress. Along with those symptoms, one might experience persistent headaches, limited function in the jaw, noises of clicking, popping and grating in the area or a feeling that your bite is off. Sometimes, the jaw area can lock or feel as if it's stuck when the mouth is open.

These symptoms are difficult to treat because the cause of TMD has not been established. However, there are factors that

can increase your risk or exacerbate the condition. Someone with arthritis may experience the affliction in that joint. Extended periods where the mouth is open wide for a significant amount of time, such as a long dental procedure, can precipitate the discomfort. Other possible causes are autoimmune diseases, injuries to the area and stress, which may cause grinding of the teeth or jaw clenching.

One of the goals for treatment is to alleviate the pain. Over-the-counter pain medications and, sometimes, prescription medications may be used. Eat soft foods that won't aggravate the condition. Try to consciously rest the jaw area and become aware of grinding or clenching episodes when awake. Bite guards at night may be a good option, if you tend to grind or clench in your sleep. If the muscles in your face feel especially tense, a massage of that area and a warm pack may provide some relief.

For some, the discomfort from TMD is temporary and not very severe. It may come and go as factors that affect it present themselves. For those experiencing significant discomfort that doesn't go away with home treatments, it may be necessary to see a health care professional for help. **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.



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Crowley Christmas Tree Lighting Festivities: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Crowley City Hall. Santa, live entertainment, Winter Wonderland Snow, face painting, food vendor, decorate cookies and more. (817) 297-2201, ext. 4300.

December 3

Santa's Breakfast: 7:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m., BRiCk, 550 N.W. Summercrest Blvd. Pancakes and orange juice are all part of the fun. Pay at the door: \$5 children, \$7 adults. (817) 426-9104.

Grocery Giveaway: 8:00-10:00 a.m., OpenDoor Food Bank, 6601 CR 912, Joshua. Families in need are invited to receive free food, dry goods and encouragement. www.opendoorexperience.com.

Joshua Christmas Parade and Shopping Bazaar: Bazaar, 3:00 p.m.; Parade, 6:00 p.m., Joshua Owl School Stadium. Arts, crafts, merchandise and food available before the Classic Christmas Specials parade. (817) 556-2480.

Burleson Christmas Parade, Tree Lighting and Fireworks: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Burleson City Hall, 141 W. Renfro. (817) 426-9104.

December 8

Crowley Chamber 4th Quarterly Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church of Crowley, 509 W. Peach St. \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. Contact Crowley Area Chamber of Commerce, (817) 297-4211 or info@crowleyareachamber.org.

Diamonds & Dice Ball: 6:00-9:30 p.m., The Oaks Event Center, 13765 Southern Oaks Dr. Join your hosts, Couch & Russell, to support the Chisholm Trail 100 Club as they support Johnson County first responders' families in need. Call (817) 295-2236 or visit www.couchandrussell.com.

December 10

Christmas Craft Fair: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Senior Activity Center, 216 S.W. Johnson Ave., Burleson. Local vendors showcase their handiwork, from sewing to jewelry to art. (817) 426-9104.

Burleson Elk Strutters 9th Annual Craft Fair: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Burleson High School, 100 Elk Dr. Numerous craft fair vendors, entertainment and pictures with Santa. Call Chuck Hiehle, (682) 564-4993.

The Texas Roadshow Christmas Market: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Old Town Burleson, 141 W. Renfro St. Parking is free and donations of new, unwrapped toys valued \$10 or more will be accepted for ACH Child and Family Services. Contact maxonproductionandevents@gmail.com

Wings of Hope Christmas Party: 3:00-4:30 p.m., Wings of Hope equitherapy barn, 4200 CR 806, Cleburne. Celebrate the season and investigate ways you can help Wings of Hope. (817) 790-8810.

December 13

Business After Hours: 5:30-7:00 p.m., Northstar Bank of Texas, 201 W. Ellison. Free to Burleson Chamber of Commerce members. (817) 295-6121.

December 15

Breast Cancer Care Support Group: 6:00-7:00 p.m., Pathway Church, 250 N.W. Tarrant Ave., Suite L. Call Nedra Lamar, (817) 915-5529.

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



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In the Kitchen With Tori Blanton

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

Sometimes Tori Blanton and her mother make cookies for no reason. They just enjoy spending time together, and the art they make with food thrills more people than just Tori. She's been cooking since she was 5, but around the age of 9, it seemed all her friends and family started complimenting her offerings. "I like to make tortillas, enchiladas, homemade salsa, lasagna, spaghetti, pizza, stuffed chicken breast, guacamole, gourmet grilled sandwiches, macaroni and cheese, pancakes, muffins, cupcakes, cookies, smoothies and eggs (scrambled, fried and omelets)," she said. "I have even helped my mom make a kosher Passover meal."

This time of year, she's preparing holiday desserts. "Desserts make people smile, and happiness is important in life." Here, she shares recipes for some of her favorite things. **NOW**

Edible Table Placement

- 1 pkg. Hostess Sno Balls**
- 1 pkg. toothpicks**
- 1 small pkg. black gum drops (Crows by Tootsie) or gummy bears**
- 1 Chick-O-Stick candy bar**
- 1 marshmallow**
- 1 24-oz. pkg. Almond Bark Chocolate Baking Bar**
- 1 Oreo cookie**
- 1 red or green Sour Belt candy strip for a scarf (optional)**
- 1 8-oz. pkg. shredded coconut**

- 1.** Unwrap Sno Balls. On a fancy dessert plate, use toothpicks or a dowel rod to put one Sno Ball on top of the other and create a snowman.
- 2.** Use black gum drop or gummy bears to

create eyes and buttons. Break the Chick-O-Stick and use a smaller piece as the nose.

- 3.** Dip the marshmallow in melted almond bark. Also use the almond bark to "glue" the marshmallow to the Oreo and the Oreo to the top of the snowman's head.
- 4.** Use a Sour Belt candy strip for a scarf, if desired.
- 5.** Place shredded coconut around the snowman on the plate to look like snow.

Christmas Mice

- 2 24-oz. pkgs. Almond Bark Chocolate Baking Bar**
- 1 1/2 lb. maraschino cherries**
- 1 6-oz. bag sliced almonds**
- 1 family-size bag HERSHEY'S KISSES**
- 3 Wilton brand decorating gels in green, blue and red**

- 1.** Using a small Crock-Pot on lowest setting, melt almond bark, stirring occasionally to keep from burning the bottom.
- 2.** Drain the cherries (do not rinse) and lay on paper towels to dry. Make sure that you have a large counter space or table to work on.
- 3.** Lay waxed paper across your counter or table. Pour some sliced almonds in a pile on the waxed paper for you to sort through.
- 4.** Unwrap HERSHEY'S KISSES and set in a pile on the waxed paper. After the cherries are somewhat dry, use the cherries that have stems. Pick the cherry up by the stem and dip into the melted chocolate. Then immediately set on waxed paper, placing the cherry stem so that it looks like a tail.
- 5.** Remember that almond bark dries fairly quickly. Immediately press one kiss onto the front to appear as a face. Before the chocolate dries, find 2 sliced almonds and put them in between the cherry and the kiss to make the appearance of mouse ears. You may have to hold until chocolate dries.
- 6.** Repeat until cherries or kisses are gone. Make sure you place each mouse on the waxed paper close together as you go, so you don't run out of room.
- 7.** Once all the mice are dry, use the red decorating gel to make noses and the green and blue decorating gel to make eyes. All the mice are supposed to have character. Some mice will look normal, some will look sad, but it will be cute.

Cherries Jubilee

Crust:

- 3/4 cup butter**
- 2 cups graham cracker crumbs**

Filling:

- 2 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese**
- 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 to 2 Tbsp. lemon juice, to taste**

Topping:

- 1 21-oz. can cherry pie filling**
- 8 oz. whipped cream (optional)**

- 1.** *For crust:* Melt butter; mix with the graham cracker crumbs. Press into the bottom of an 8x8-inch glass pan.
- 2.** *For filling:* Whip ingredients in a medium mixing bowl until creamy. Smooth over the cracker crust. Chill for 10 minutes in the refrigerator.
- 3.** *For topping:* Pour cherry pie filling over the top of the filling. You can also add whipped cream, if desired.

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