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M A G A Z I N E

DECEMBER 2017

A Crowd of Santas

At Home With Bill
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2017 Holiday
Shopping Guide

Accepting the Challenge

Twelve friends stay calm
and Mah Jongg on

Spirit to Win

Money Cents

Dancing for Life

In the Kitchen With

Victoria Howley

Dr. Richard R. Knight, M.D.

Cheryl, Mansfield, TX

I'm 43 years old and have finally started to lose weight, thanks to Diet Solution Center! I have tried numerous plans, pills, shakes, etc. I was successful within the first two weeks, only to plateau, get frustrated and stop...Sound familiar? That meant putting all the weight right back on - plus some! I saw the ads come through for DSC and, with full support from my family, I wanted to try it. It was a huge learning curve, though!!! Learning how to eat differently and being held accountable was what I needed. Most online diets are just that - ONLINE. DSC has you coming in weekly and talking to their amazing nurses who are there to support you. I also needed to increase my workouts because just walking wasn't cutting it anymore. I joined Camp Gladiator to get in shape. Doing both at the same time has been a struggle but it's so worth it. My story isn't over, though, because I'm going to see where I am come February!



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ON THE COVER



*Bill and Darlene Hornback
enjoy a house filled
with Santas.*

Photo by Elenams - Dreamstime.com

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Editor's Note

Hello, Burleson, Crowley and Joshua!

During a recent Crowley Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon, I listened to Marlon Jones describe the work being accomplished by his Youth Entrepreneurs team at the Bill R. Johnson Career and Technology Education Center. Describing his goal to help move people beyond their potential, Marlon recalled a quote he once heard that went something like this: "You never want to be remembered for your potential."

That reminded me of the story I heard earlier that morning, while driving and listening to Classical 101.1 FM radio. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Symphony No. 31 was written in 1778 while he was in Paris looking for work. He never found the work he hoped for. But he did not let that stop him from following his passion and turning his potential into something tangible. Two centuries later his legacy resounds in my vehicle, effectively resurrecting my positive outlook.

Here's wishing you many more musical massages,

Melissa

Melissa Rawlins
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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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Photos include:
- Fishing in Port A
- Dinner & Dice Ball
- Houston Pride
- Smores Maker at 7:11
- Blue 42, Blue 42



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A top-down view of a wooden table with several Mah Jongg tiles scattered around. The tiles are white with green, red, and black markings. In the upper right corner, there is a small white card with a blue border. The card has the text "OFFICIAL STANDARD HANDS AND RULES" at the top, followed by "2017 NATIONAL MAH JONGG LEAGUE, INC." and "80th Year" in a circular logo. Below this, there is a small illustration of a person and some fine print. The main title "ACCEPT THE CHA" is centered on the page, with "ACCEPT" in a large, light blue serif font and "THE CHA" in a large, white sans-serif font.

ACCEPT THE CHA

There's a group of women in town who love to be kind. They also love to play Mah Jongg, and their games have bonded them in a sweet sisterhood. When a newcomer joins their Monday games, the group focuses more on making the visitor feel welcome than on collecting bams, cracks or dots — much less doing the Charleston, which is a seven-time exchange of unwanted tiles and one of the unusual rules of the International Mah Jongg League. "Although we're very competitive, we always treat each other with respect," a gregarious, six-year-player, Becky Dunbar, said. "And we enjoy relaxing on the rules, if we need to help somebody."

Most new members need a lot of help when they begin playing. This special group has flexibility, patience and a sense of humor, as well as spacious tables for spreading out tiles engraved with strange symbols that take much time and practice to memorize. Though its roots are Chinese, Mah Jongg's inherent capacity to prolong social hours has promoted its popularity in America since the 1920s.



TING LLENGE

— By Melissa Rawlins



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It hit Burleson six years ago, when Diane Prunty invited anyone already a member of Circle of Friends to visit her house and learn the game. Five trailblazers, knowing nothing about Mah Jongg, watched Diane demonstrate the play. Visions of colorful Lucite bars pushing around 1-inch ivory tiles sporting a multitude of flowers, winds and dragons filled the ladies' heads.

"Our minds were blown, and we wanted to learn," said Becky, recalling how Diane P. patiently and effectively coached five ladies simultaneously. "She would go around the tables and teach us. I was discouraged at the beginning, but I was not going to quit. After about eight weeks, I found I liked it more than I thought," she said. Becky is a 78-year-young adventure-lover who learned to love zip lining around the same time she





accepted the challenge to Mah Jongg. "It took about eight months to conquer the game. I would have learned it faster if I were learning it now, in this group, because all our members can and do help one on one."

Diane P. visits, sometimes, from her new home at Robson Ranch in Denton. She recently told Becky, "I may have created this group. I may have taught you all, but you and the others are what make the group. You have continued, and you all have formed this wonderful team that I am very proud of."

Becky and Diane Lybbert are the only two left from that original group. "Just through word of mouth and through the Circle of Friends, we now have 11 in our Mah Jongg group," Becky said. "This team includes: Brenda, Dena, Diane L., Diane P., Jackie, Janet, Karla, Lynda, Shirley, Wanda and myself."

Every lady playing is able to multitask. Becky, who spent 12 years as a professional teacher in elementary school settings, knows that even mathematically challenged people can play Mah Jongg, if they have patience. "We talk to them and help them individually."

Sometimes, the hands confuse even the experts, and winning is never guaranteed. "We say if we could just win one time, we're satisfied. One person might win five times in one Monday, and the next week she might not win any," Becky said. The ladies do what they must to keep the new players who have become discouraged. "It gives you pleasure to know that you've



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helped that person gain confidence in this game. We want that person in our group. If we didn't, we wouldn't keep bribing her with her favorite dessert, or a new purse!"

Accessories do give the ladies something more to smile about. Two years ago, they had tasteful T-shirts printed, announcing their group's motto: *Stay Calm & Mah Jongg On*. Diane L. gave them beautiful bracelets made of used tiles, which they wear to enhance their camaraderie. "We laugh the whole time we're playing," Becky said. "This game gives us such an outlet, and the communication between us is outstanding."

The group's genesis in Circle of Friends means each player is strong, very likeable and hospitable. Outside of taking turns hosting Monday Mah Jongg games, each of these women enjoys joining the Circle of Friends for their special events. "Once or twice a year, we go together on overnight trips," said Becky, who is on the Circle of Friends planning committee. Last September, they gathered funds and purchased gas cards and gift cards for back-to-school clothes for clients of Crazy8 Ministries. In October, they went to Salado, Texas, on a two-night trip. This month, they expect a fun and crazy time at their Christmas party. Next February, around Valentine's Day, they'll enjoy a meet and



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AN OUTLET,
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COMMUNICATION
BETWEEN US IS
OUTSTANDING.”**

greet at the home of Peggy Harkins, who began the Circle of Friends with Mary Slaney 10 years ago.

That's about the time Becky and her husband chose to move to Burleson, for its small-town feel. It took her awhile to find friends. “Eight years ago, a chance meeting with a lady at Huguley Fitness Center changed my social life. She invited me to an event with the Circle of Friends,” Becky said. Jumping in with her whole heart, she found women with a zeal for friendliness. Once the Mah Jongg group started, it was only natural that the ladies became a support group for each other outside of game day.

But on Mondays, “What you hear at Mah Jongg stays in Mah Jongg,” Becky said. During their playfulness, they sometimes get distracted from which direction their play should go, even though it is still competitive. With oldies music playing, they can't help but dance in their seats while they talk and talk. “The strength of our friendship is remarkable.” **NOW**

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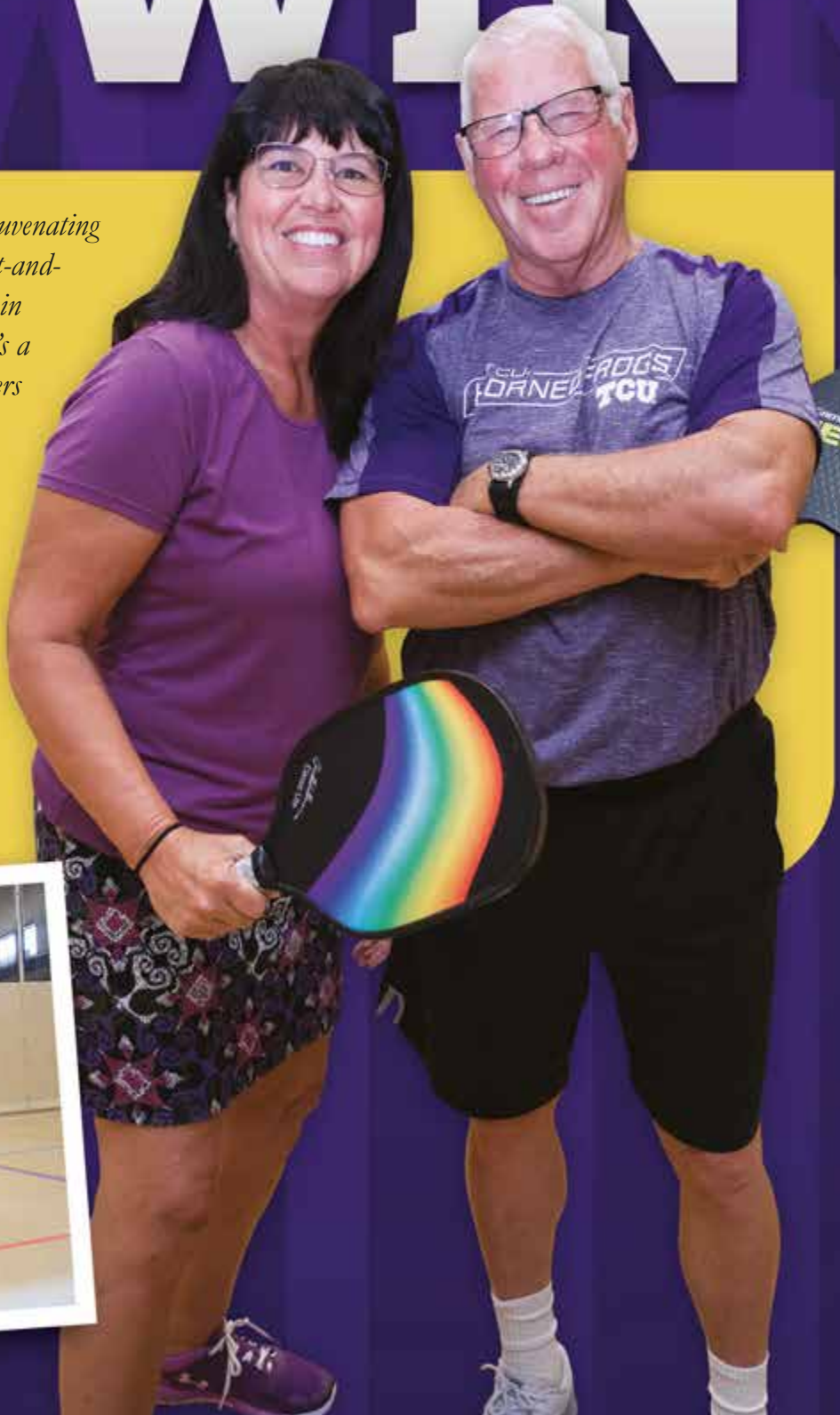
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SPIRIT TO WIN

— By Melissa Rawlins

Carl and Jenny Youngblood are rejuvenating people with pickleball. The indoor net-and-racket team sport was already strong in retirement areas nationwide. Now, it's a popular co-ed sport in recreation centers in Burleson, Mansfield and Crowley. Last fall, the Crowley Recreation Center invested in 36-inch-tall nets, wooden racquets and hard, plastic Wiffle balls at the request of Coach Carl, a longtime resident who had watched people play in San Antonio at the National Senior Games. He and his equally vivacious wife have so much fun playing on their still-temporary pickleball courts,



and a core group of regulars has joined them in the sport. It doesn't take long for curious bystanders to pick up on the lingo, which includes sayings like, "Way to dink into the kitchen!" or "We have been pickled!"

You're more likely to savor the moment when Coach Carl and Jenny explain things to you. Yet, it's possible to learn a lot online. For instance, www.pickleballcentral.com offers resources from equipment sales to court instruction. A couple of the site's choice bits of advice are:

Pickleball is a noisy sport. Paddles are solid. Balls are hard. The classic "pop" paddles make is a beloved sound by players of the sport. While we can take steps to minimize the "pop," to ease the concerns of neighbors or other unhappy people, that sound will always be there.

A good player makes any paddle work for them, but it's also true that certain paddles will complement your strengths better than others.

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STRATEGY."**

Tennis courts across the United States are being converted into pickleball courts — one tennis court into either two or four pickleball courts, depending upon how tightly your athletes play. When Carl needs a court, he tapes pickleball boundaries with red tape on top of a basketball court. At Tarrant County College, where Carl coaches pickleball professionally, the court is painted on the basketball court. "If you have a 40-by-40-foot area," he said, "you tape courts in your driveway and play."

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who can travel to any number of recreation centers in the DFW Metroplex and play to their hearts' content. And for local businesspeople like Tyler and Telsa Hildebrandt, the open door for open play extended by Crowley Recreation Center makes it quite convenient to give their bodies proper exercise while having fun together. They usually play on their lunch break, from 10:30 a.m. until noon, as well as on Saturdays.

A dancer during high school in Weatherford, Telsa never played a net/racquet/ball sport but is in the habit



of exercising at the gym. In eight years of marriage to Tyler, the two began frequenting the Crowley Recreation Center. One day after her workout, about eight months ago, she caught sight of Carl and Jenny through the gymnasium window. Interested players gather in the gymnasium and wait their turn on the bleachers. Up to 12 people at a time can play on the three courts that Carl and Jenny have set up at the Crowley Recreation Center. "One day, I sat in there to watch. The next day, I came back, picked up a paddle provided by the rec center and started playing," Telsa said. "I went about three weeks later to buy my own paddle."

"She started a month before me, and was begging me to play," said her husband, who had tried his hand at tennis, but mainly played basketball or football. "I haven't met anyone yet who has played and didn't like it. It's addictive."

It also caused some soreness in them both during their initial learning curve. "We actually work out quite a bit throughout the week anyway, but it's using different muscles than when you're lifting weights or running. His booty hurt, and we knew it was pickleball," Telsa recalled.

"It helps with endurance and feels almost like you've been jogging on a treadmill after a few games in a row," Tyler said. Wearing regular gym shorts, a shirt and court shoes with a flat surface to give them better stopping ability, the

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Hildebrants have fun and play hard. “It doesn’t matter your age or ability, if you realize the strategy. Bennie and Ann play strategy and know exactly where to set up in the right spot to hit the ball. For someone like me, who can run all over the place, it’s still a challenge to play them.”

Coach Carl believes pickleball is a good supplemental sport. A mid-morning game certainly appeals to Kristen Brown-Wilson, one of Carl’s protégés. Her husband, Cody, plays when he can, and her 10-year-old son, Hollis, sometimes plays with her. Kristen had been working out with weights for two years before she became curious about pickleball, which she saw played in the gym.

“This is my cardio now. This is also my stress relief,” said Kristen, an older student taking nine hours at Tarrant County College, while also homeschooling Hollis. “If I need to write a paper, I’m going to play pickleball first, to clear my mind. I’ve definitely lost some weight through this. And Hollis’ coordination has improved, compared to when he started. He’s so fast, and when he focuses, you can’t beat him. He’s also



getting to interact with a wide range of people who play pickleball with us.”

Hollis may not appreciate the fact that Coach Carl is a retired air traffic controller, whose spatial orientation perfectly qualified him for this coaching job. Being able to keep track of multiple moving objects at a time is incredibly helpful both in his profession, as well as on the pickleball court. “If you think about what’s going on, look at the other people [and] get ready to move, you’ll be so much more effective.”

Carl teaches people where to place the ball on the court. “We like to win, but strategy is the essential part of the sport,” he said. “After three months, you’ll be able to play in tournaments.” In Chicago, Carl coached baseball and racquetball, a sport he played as a youth in California. He thinks it’s fun to see people learn new things. He’s watched Jennifer’s progression with joy. “Both of her knees are titanium. Now that she can play, she likes to hit that good shot. She’s got the spirit to win.”

After her knee replacements, Jenny was afraid to hurt them. “I took it easy, felt worse and worse and gained weight,” she recalled. “Then Carl said, ‘I found something I think you might be able to play, not very physically taxing and lots of older people with issues like yours play the game.’ When we started doing pickleball, I turned the corner into doing good aerobic exercise twice a week and also doing senior yoga twice a week. Honestly, it’s given me a whole new life.” **NOW**

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A Crowd of Santas

— By Erin McEndree


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For many, Christmas is a favorite time of year. Some people have a hard time packing up all the Christmas decorations when the holidays are over. Bill and Darlene Hornback keep the hope of the season in their home and in their hearts all year round.

Bill and Darlene met three years ago on the Internet. Darlene has lived in Crowley most her life and has been a Realtor for 10 years. Bill, after 25 years, retired from IBM and now does IT contract work. After meeting face-to-face at a restaurant, they were hooked on each other. Bill asked Darlene to marry him at a company Christmas party. They married on a cruise ship with a few friends in attendance. "When the crew found out we were newlyweds, they treated us like royalty," Darlene laughed. "We even played The Newlywed Game on board the ship." Then came the hard part of blending two homes.



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"We had enough furnishings left over to completely supply two apartments for our daughters, right down to the bathroom towels," Darlene explained. "But neither wanted the style we had, so we had a huge garage sale." When their living room furniture finally sold, they picked out something together. However, Bill's dark wood, extra-tall, square table fit

perfectly between the kitchen and living room. All four sides flip up to create a round, larger table when they have friends or family over. A Lazy Susan is inset in the middle of the table and makes it easy to pass the salt and pepper or play card games.

Darlene bought their current residence 10 years ago. She removed two walls in

the kitchen and living room to create one big space. She also painted all the wood paneling white, removed the blue carpet and scraped off the popcorn ceiling. The sunroom was transformed from a dark cave into a cream-colored oasis. Now, a military Santa sits proudly by a neatly folded flag in a triangle display box. "I have my grandfather's flag, my dad's flag and my father-in-law's flag in display cases," Darlene said. A small electric fireplace glows in the corner. Another Santa with a flowing robe is flocked in white.

"The patio area was so overgrown with huge hedges that I didn't even know it had a pool," Darlene laughed. The pool is now a beautiful blue and is surrounded by rocks and greenery. The grandkids love



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to come over and swim. The waterfall drowns out any traffic noise. Bill and Darlene enjoy the pool as Lola, their tiny Chihuahua, hangs out to watch them swim.

In the front yard, for Christmas, Bill decorates with lights and yard ornaments. There is a sleigh on the front porch where Santa sits. "We have blow-up firemen and a Santa in a fire truck," Bill said. "We like to honor our first responders." A huge red bench is under the front window. "Darlene made me stop on the side of the road and pick up this huge bed someone was throwing away," Bill explained. "Our son-in-law and Darlene cut it up, used the four posters in the corners and created a large bench that we painted red."

During the holidays, Darlene has an ornament and recipe exchange party. One of her favorite ornaments is the Santa holding baby Jesus. There are 2- and 3-foot Santas atop the entertainment center dressed in different winter outfits. Atop the credenza, there is a crowd of Santas all in billowing robes. "One time, a lady commented that Christmas was not all about Santa," Darlene said. "So, I found a sign that said, *My house may be full of Santas, but my heart is full of Jesus.*" A Chef Santa with an apron is displayed in the kitchen. He is wearing red checks and has a basket of food.

Darlene has more than 100 Santas. Her favorites are an antique Santa and Mrs. Claus. "My mother-in-law remade their outfits for me, and I keep them in a safe place in my room so they do not get mishandled," Darlene said. "When I choose a Santa, I look at his eyes. I



pick the ones with happy eyes. You can tell.” There is a Santa on a carousel horse, a Santa painting a toy soldier on the bathroom counter and even a Santa talking to the Easter bunny. “My closet, attic and part of the garage are full of boxes that hold my Santa collection,” Darlene said.



In the warm months, Bill and Darlene like to bike ride and have ridden the Burleson Honey Tour. They like to be active, playing pickleball and going country-western dancing once or twice a week. They even have a Jet Ski they enjoy taking on the lake with friends. “I have coached Little League Baseball for 10 years,” Bill said. “I love NASCAR and have driven one of Jeff Gordon’s cars.”

Blending two styles and families takes a little compromise. Bill and Darlene have graciously accepted one another’s collections and interests and brought them together under one roof. There is always a crowd of Santas in their home, and many times a crowd of loving family and friends whom they cherish year-round. **NOW**

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With the holidays in full swing, it's easy to focus on decorating, buying presents and planning parties all the way through New Year's Day. But this is also the time to be thinking about some key end-of-the-year tasks, especially with regard to your finances. By following these tips, you can be sure to end your financial year with a flourish befitting the festive time of year.



MONEY CENTS

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

Helping Others the Financially Sound Way

• *Give before it's too late.* While waiting until after New Year's to give to charity just means you will have to wait to claim until next year's tax returns, it can be nice to use part of your holiday bonus to give one last time to the church or nonprofit of your choosing. Even if you cannot physically hand a donation over before January begins, getting your check postmarked by December 31 should



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ensure that you can use that last gift on this year's tax return. And if you work at a large company, ask if they have used all their charitable funds. Many businesses offer a charity matching program to incentivize employees to give. You could be doubling the contribution to a charity just by asking a simple question at the office.

- *Keep records of your giving.* The rattle of change hitting a red kettle at the mall or grocery store is as much a sound of the season as the bells the volunteers are ringing. If you are wanting to give more than just your pocket change to The Salvation Army, or any nonprofit for that matter, it is better to donate online or with a check, so you can keep track of your giving. Your taxes are nowhere near the most important part of giving to others, but it is nice to get a small break in April as a result.

- *Do not assume paperwork is coming.* If you are giving to a charity you have not previously supported, make sure they will send a letter you can use in case the IRS tries to disallow your exemption. Most large nonprofit organizations do this regularly, but you may want to double check before giving a large sum away. If you wait until the IRS has denied a return, it will probably be too late to avoid penalties.



Prepare Now for Taxes Later

- *Start collecting paperwork.* You will not have all the forms you need to file your taxes for a few months, but you can still start consolidating papers and receipts now. Try to make it a goal to have a file with all the tax paperwork already in your possession before the new year begins. And if you moved into a new home this year, you will want to be sure you have your Homestead Exemption Form ready to file at the start of the year.

- *Check your accounts.* You may not need to do much between now and the flipping of the new calendar, but the

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end of the year is a good time to assess your accounts. Be sure you are paid up and ready for the next round on any property taxes or business taxes if you are self-employed. Make sure there are no changes you need to think about for any bank accounts or mutual funds.

- *Buy now to save later.* If you are already thinking about making any big purchases, it may make sense to buy them before the end of the year. You might forget to claim the exemptions or sales tax on a fridge if you buy it in January and have to wait until next year's tax return. Check if there are any energy-efficient tax credits for appliances you are looking for, as those are not guaranteed to remain next year.

A Penny Saved

- *Know your deadlines and limits.* When it comes to retirement accounts,



you have until the filing deadline, as opposed to the end of the year, to claim contributions on your taxes. The other thing to consider is your yearly limit. You can contribute thousands of dollars through your 401(k), if applicable, at your job. For individual retirement accounts, you can claim up to \$5,500 dollars each year, and you can double that if you are married and file jointly with your spouse. If you receive a large bonus, or anticipate a large raise next year, it might be in your best interest to maximize this year's contributions.

- *Find other ways to save.* Aside from typical mutual funds and retirement accounts, there are other options, especially if you are trying to save money for your children. There are multiple college savings accounts available, and they typically have more flexible limits than retirement funds.

- *Reflect on the year.* If you are taking advantage of an employer's 401(k) matching offer, there is a science involved in maximizing your contribution. You can top out too early or wait too long, so look at the end of the year to see if you did all you could.

This season, while you are staying warm by the fire or watching your favorite holiday movies, take some time to make sure you ring out the old year with as much financial stability as you can. **NOW**

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Hours:

Monday-Friday: 3:00-9:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.



Instructors Lavoy King and Kristin Cox support Cristin Leoni's mission to prepare youthful dancers for success in life.

DANCING FOR LIFE

Studio C Dance Studio energizes people in full-spectrum, high-energy forward motion. — By Melissa Rawlins

The heart of Cristin Herr Leoni's 16-year-young Studio C Dance are the youth. "The dreamers, the kids who can't keep their feet still, the silly kids, the shy kids who are sparked by the music, the creative thinkers — they come in with an energy that gets reflected back off the teachers," Cristin said.

The hip-hop program has grown over the last eight years to include boys-only classes with up to 44 in one session. Cristin has noticed some familiar faces mixed with all the new students. "They come in wondering what jazz is all about," she said, "and soon they're yearning for tap shoes."

When Cristin launched Studio C Dance in a state-of-the-art facility designed to safeguard every dancer, she taught tap for adults. Tap had been her first love, and this year, she put

adult tap classes back on the schedule to build the spectrum of programs at Studio C.

On December 9 at 1:00 p.m., Studio C Dance presents its traditional Holiday Performance in the Burleson High School Auditorium. There is a performance by adult tappers, boy hip-hopppers and the excited 2-year-olds walking on stage in their sparkling tutus.

At 2 years of age, Cristin's first performance was on the stage in what is now Hughes Middle School. "My shiny tap shoes looked exactly like those I see walking in our doors every day. My dance studio was where Orr Real Estate is now," she recalled. After dancing her way through childhood, graduating with A's from Joshua High School and, later, the University of

North Texas, she pursued careers in both professional dance and publishing. Then Cristin married and returned to Burleson, where she launched Studio C Dance.

"I'm trying to prepare dancers for life outside of the dance studio," she said. Cristin and her well-connected faculty prepare students for college and theater auditions. "Our teen dance instructor runs the dance program at a local high school. Our hip-hop teacher is out and about in Dallas, performing and teaching. My ballet teacher tours with *The Nutcracker* and works with professional dance companies." Those looking to join a competition team will find Studio C has earned first-place national titles, and Cristin displays a multitude of trophies in the lobby.

"I'M TRYING TO PREPARE DANCERS FOR LIFE OUTSIDE OF THE DANCE STUDIO."

Studio C Dance offers well-rounded musical theater education and vocal instruction. Students and teachers have adopted music editing with the smartphone. Studio C staff members challenge themselves to be the best teachers for each different style of learner. "My focus is the whole picture of what dance encompasses," said Cristin, whose faculty personalizes lessons and opportunities to each and every student.

Outside of Studio C Dance's daily and weekly classes, Cristin offers special opportunities for anyone in the community. In a recent master class, the professional sat with youth and adults and described his career in Broadway choreography — including his story about how he got there. Another workshop with a cruise line dance teacher gave students insight into a unique career.

Last year Cristin put cameras in both studios, so parents who have two children in two different studios simultaneously can watch their dancers. Interested newcomers are invited to benefit from that technology.

Come check out the action. Whether you simply want exercise and recreation, or preparation for a career as a professional dancer, you are welcome to take a class for free. Join in, and feel the energy at Studio C Dance. **NOW**



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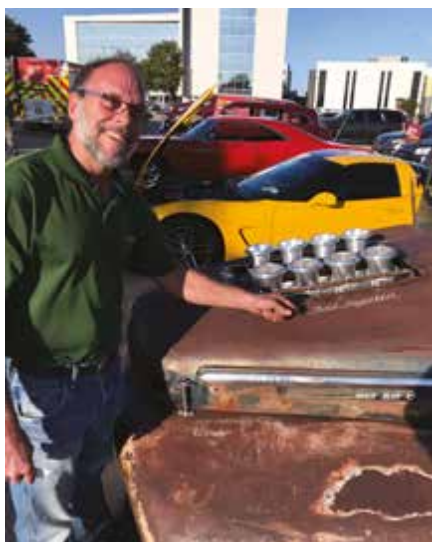
Holiday Performance

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Check us out on Facebook for schedules, photos and info!



Bobby and Caryl Woolard always know how to host a good time.



Brian Libbey points to the fool injection system, one of many jokes incorporated into the antique Male Delivery Truck on display during Texas Health Huguley's men's event.



Joshua Area Chamber of Commerce welcomes NOW Magazines as re-newed members of the growing business community.



Frieda Davis and her daughter-in-law, Dena Davis, host the biannual Junkin Jubilee barn sale.



Two directors of Little Tyke Child Care, Shari Gordon of Crowley and Jorene Jackson of Fort Worth, share a table at the Crowley Chamber Luncheon.



BACC Ambassadors and their guests enjoy a fun night out painting wine glasses at Southern Oaks Golf Course.



Pastor Troy Brewer and Ted Vanlandeghem (Zarit) join to host the Open Door Church messianic services every first Friday.



Staff Sergeant Joshua Williams, the Marine recruiter in Cleburne, celebrates the 242nd birthday of the US Navy with Johnson County Sheriff's Deputy Hoover, who daily watches over students at Joshua High School.



Local couples share date night Good Will Style.

Merry Christmas!

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During Holidays, Be Extra Vigilant About Protecting Financial Data

To help achieve your long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement, you should save and invest regularly. But that's only part of the picture. You also need to *protect* your financial assets in various ways. One such method is guarding your personal information — especially any information that could be linked to your financial accounts. It's obviously important to be vigilant at any time, but you need to be even more on your toes during the holiday season, when fraudsters are particularly active.

So, to help keep your important data under wraps during the holidays, consider these suggestions:

- *Extend your protection to all mobile devices.* Identity thieves can now compromise your mobile devices by installing spyware that steals usernames, passwords and credit card information. Fortunately, you can fight back. By doing a little research online, you can find the best mobile security software for your needs.

- *Use multiple passwords.* Online security specialists recommend that you use different passwords for each new online shopping site you visit during the holiday season.



Although this might seem like a hassle, it can be helpful, because even if identity thieves were to grab one of your new passwords, they still couldn't use it for other sites you may visit. And you can even find a free online program that can help you keep track of all your passwords.

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





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• *Be suspicious of "huge savings."* It happens every holiday season — identity thieves develop fake sites with attractive graphics and stunningly low prices on a variety of items, especially digital devices. If you fall for these pitches, you won't get any merchandise, but you might get a handful of headaches once the bad guys have your credit card number and other personal information. To prevent this, be wary of any deal that sounds too good to be true, and do some digging on the websites that offer these mega-savings.

• *Watch for fake shipping notices.* During the holidays, when you may do a lot of online shopping, you will probably receive some legitimate shipping notices. But the bad guys have gotten pretty good at generating fake notices designed to resemble those from UPS, FedEx and even the U.S. Postal Service. If you were to click on the link provided by one of these bogus notices, you could either take on some malware or get taken to a "phishing" website created by the shipping notice forgers. Your best defense: Only shop with legitimate merchants, and only use the tracking numbers given to you in the email you received immediately after making your purchases.

• *Keep your Social Security number to yourself.* As a general rule, don't give out your Social Security number online — to anyone. No legitimate retailer needs this number.

Finally, be aware that not all attempts at stealing your personal information will come online. When you're out shopping at old-fashioned, brick-and-mortar stores, consider bringing just one credit card with you — and protect that card from prying eyes.

By following these precautions, you should be able to greatly reduce the risk of being victimized by identity thieves and other miscreants. And the more comfortable you are in doing your holiday shopping, the more you can enjoy the season. **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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The Amazing Liver

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

The largest organ inside the body reveals remarkable regenerative properties. You can lose a majority portion of your liver, and the remaining tissue can grow into a whole organ once again. Amazing! This vital organ performs numerous functions, and without it, the body would perish.

It is located in the upper right side of the abdomen and below the diaphragm. One of its more important jobs is to remove waste products from the bloodstream by performing as a filter. Drugs, alcohol and environmental substances are just a few of the substances removed or neutralized by the liver. The liver produces and regulates cholesterol and manufactures clotting factors for the blood and other proteins. It helps to maintain the balance of hormones. Making and secreting bile and storing some vitamins and minerals are among the more well-known functions. The liver also helps to regulate blood sugar levels by storing glycogen.

There are many things you can do to keep your liver healthy. Excessive intake of alcohol is the leading cause of liver disease, so drink in moderation. Use over-the-counter medications and herbal or natural remedies with caution. Your liver still has to process these, whether they are man-made or “natural.” Even high doses of certain vitamins can be harmful. Follow your physician’s instructions on any prescribed medication. Limit or avoid any exposure to environmental hazards and toxins, such as certain cleaners and insecticides. If you

can breathe it, consume it or have it penetrate your skin, it will eventually reach your liver. So, use gloves and a mask in a well-ventilated area when handling hazardous chemicals. Try to avoid foods that are high in unhealthy fats. Hepatitis A, B and C can cause significant damage to the liver, but there are vaccines available for Hepatitis A and B. Since the virus is spread by contact with another’s bodily fluids or blood, try to avoid contact with these substances.

Although it can regenerate itself, the liver is not indestructible. Some of the signs and symptoms that your liver could be headed for trouble may, at first, be too vague for a diagnosis. Nausea, weakness, lack of energy and a change in appetite can be attributed to a host of diseases. The more specific indications that are cause for alarm are yellowing of the skin, eyes and urine (jaundice). Advanced cases would present with symptoms such as unexplained itching of the skin, abdominal pain and swelling, in addition to the previous presenting symptoms.

These symptoms are cause for concern and warrant monitoring by your physician. Many liver ailments can be treated. The best course of action is to protect yourself and keep you and your liver safe. **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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Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays

From the

NOW Magazines family to yours!

December 1

Christmas in Crowley: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Crowley Recreation Center, 405 S. Oak St. Live performances by Frances Lea Dance Group add to the fun with Santa, crafts, train ride, food truck and cookie decorating. Bring unwrapped toys for House of Hope. Don't miss the Christmas Tree Lighting by the mayor at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Contact (817) 297-2201, ext 7000.

Careity Celebrity Cutting and Concert: 7:00 p.m., Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum, Ft. Worth. Support Careity Foundation's work in the cancer community while watching people — some experienced and some novice — challenge cattle to outwit horses. Food, music and a silent auction add to the fun. Tickets, ranging from \$20-\$150, are available at www.careity.org.

December 2

Santa's Breakfast: 7:00-10:30 a.m., The BRiCk, 550 N.W. Summercrest Blvd. Join the City of Burleson for breakfast with Santa. Guests will enjoy making holiday crafts, exploring Santa's workshop and visiting Santa for great photos. (817) 426-9104.

Reindeer Run: 8:00 a.m., Crowley Recreation Center, 405 S. Oak St. Women, youth and men challenge themselves to run 5 kilometers in and around Crowley. For details, email jdenton@ci.crowley.tx.us.

Coffee Talk Women: 8:00 a.m.-noon, Pathway Church, 325 N.W. Renfro St., Burleson. This "Boots on the Ground" conference caters to women from teen years through their 80s who want encouragement before the holiday season. Childcare is free. Breakfast taquitos, fresh fruit, coffee and juice, plus crafts and gifts for Christmas will be on sale. \$10 entrance donation requested. Contact Tracy Branch, (817) 312-9131.

Christmas Parade, Tree Lighting & Fireworks: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Burleson City Hall. The Burleson Rotary Club hosts this annual lighted Christmas parade, beginning at Kerr Middle School and ending in Old Town, followed by the City's tree lighting and fireworks show. (817) 426-9104.

December 5

C & C Florist After Hours: 5:30-7:30 p.m., 209 W. Main St., Crowley. Learn about living the good life in Crowley while networking with members of the Crowley Area Chamber of Commerce. Call (817) 297-4211.

Celebrating A Year of Love, Growth and Partnership: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Cleburne Conference Center, 1501 W. Henderson St., Cleburne. Join Crazy8 Ministries dinner and auction. For

more information, call (817) 202-8408.

December 8 — 10

A Living Nativity: 6:00-9:00 p.m., 1440 S. Burleson Blvd. This free outdoor presentation involves a rustic manger, live actors and live animals. Other free activities include bounce houses and train, hayride, homemade treats, coffee and hot chocolate. Call Angie Catron, (817) 295-2165.

December 9

Holiday Craft Fair: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Senior Activity Center, 216 S.W. Johnson Ave. Everyone is welcome to peruse one-of-a-kind items created by locals showcasing their handmade art, jewelry and crafts. (817) 295-6611.

December 11

Burleson Area Retired School Employees Association meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 590 McAlister, Burleson. Carleton Hurdle (Elvis impersonator) is the entertainment. RSVP required for this catered lunch. Mail \$12 to BARSEA, P.O. Box 1135, Burleson, TX 76097, by Dec. 4. Contact Linda Henderson (817) 996-5261.

December 12

Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Networking: 5:30-7:00 p.m., Citizens National Bank of Texas, 1651 S.W. Wilshire Blvd. For more information, contact Shana Hopkins, BACC, (817) 295-6121.

December 14

Crowley Area Chamber of Commerce 4th Quarterly Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 509 W. Peach St., Crowley. Email info@crowleyareachamber.org or call (817) 297-4211.

December 16

Christmas on the Farm: 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. CR 714. Festivities include photo sessions with a donkey wearing antlers, cowboy poetry, Christmas trees decorated by community clubs and organizations, hay rides, handmade crafts for sale and tours of the historic Russell-Boren house Russell Farm Art Center gallery. Concessions include hot cocoa, cookies, coffee and ice cream. (817) 447-3316.

December 23

Bird Walk: 8:30 a.m., Bailey Lake, 280 W. Hidden Creek Pkwy. Hosted by Wild Birds Unlimited of Burleson, the child-friendly morning stroll around Burleson's hidden gem is free but requires good walking shoes and comfortable clothing. A few binoculars will be available to borrow. For more information, contact Michelle Eder

at burlapbirds@gmail.com.

December 30

Masonic Lodge Pancake Breakfast: 7:00-10:00 a.m., 209 N. Magnolia St., Crowley. For more information, contact Jim Hirth, (817) 297-1942.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Toastmasters: 6:30-7:30 p.m., Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce. Contact Gary Miller, (817) 919-3243.

Tuesdays

Widowed Persons Service meeting: 8:00-11:00 a.m., Our Place Restaurant, 950 N. Burleson Blvd. Enjoy breakfast, fellowship and sharing your helpful heart. Contact Don Jordan, (817) 483-5458.

Tinker Tuesday: 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., Crowley Public Library, 409 S. Oak St. This is a drop-in program with no advance registration required. For information, call the Crowley Public Library, (817) 297-6707, ext. 2090.

Burleson Kiwanis Club meeting: Noon-1:00 p.m., Golden Corral Restaurant, 301 S.W. Wilshire Blvd. Contact bur88kiwanis@gmail.com.

Wednesdays

Burleson Business Connections: 7:30-9:00 a.m., Burleson Police Department Community Room. Contact Ruth Moor, (817) 517-9808.

Saturdays

Russell-Boren House tours: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Russell Farm, 405 W. CR 714. Free. Built in 1877 by Martha Glenn Russell, an independent pioneer woman, the house sheltered not only Martha and her five children but also descendants of the Russell family for 135 years. Middle-school aged and older students should be accompanied by their teacher or parents. For more information, call (817) 447-3316.

Widowed Persons Fellowship: 3:30-8:00 p.m., Senior Center, 216 S.W. Johnson. Join WPS members for potluck meal and games. Call Myrtle Lindsey, (817) 447-0775.

Third Saturdays

VFW Post 6872 Breakfast: 9:00 a.m., 3409 CR 920, Crowley. Join the Ladies Auxiliary for good food and fellowship. (817) 645-2436.

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

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Merry Christmas



In the Kitchen With Victoria Howley

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

Victoria Howley, a farrier/blacksmith by trade, takes great joy in preparing goodies. Her mother taught her to cook, but preparing her great-grandmother's famous candied yams recipe has honed her skills. She figured out she is a good cook because her blacksmithing friends repeatedly asked for certain desserts she made for their gatherings every Tuesday.

Here, Victoria shares her family's traditional recipes of southern and northern cooking. "I hope you enjoy the Monster Cookies recipe as much as I do," Victoria said. "It's a fun recipe for parties and to bake with kids. I've resorted to using my hands, which makes mixing this thick cookie dough easy, and no equipment gets broken." Her advice is to enjoy the warm cookies with a glass of milk. **NOW**

Monster Cookies

- 2 sticks salted butter**
- 2 cups dark brown sugar**
- 2 tsp. Mexican vanilla**
- 1 cup creamy, honey-roasted peanut butter**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 tsp. baking soda**
- 3 cups old-fashioned oats**
- 2/3 cup each: M&Ms, caramel baking bits, mini semi-sweet chocolate chips, REESE'S PIECES and HEATH Toffee Baking Bits**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F
- 2.** Knead above ingredients with hands until thoroughly mixed.
- 3.** Scoop mixture with cookie scoop onto parchment-lined pans and flatten slightly.
- 4.** Bake in the oven for 11 to 13 minutes, or until golden brown.

Dr Pepper Glazed Ham

- 1 15- to 18-lb. whole, fully cooked, bone-in ham**
- 3 cups brown sugar**
- 1/2 cup spicy brown mustard**
- 3 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar**
- 1/2 tsp. ground cloves**
- 1 can Dr Pepper**

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 325 F. Place the ham in a large roasting pan with a rack; tent it with foil. Bake for 2 to 2 1/2 hours, or longer, depending on the package directions.
- 2.** Heat the brown sugar, mustard, vinegar, cloves and Dr Pepper in a small saucepan until bubbly. Cook until reduced and a bit thicker, about 15 minutes.
- 3.** After about 2 hours of baking time, remove the foil and brush the glaze on the ham in 20-minute intervals until it's nice and glossy. (Put the ham back in the oven, uncovered, in between each basting.)

- 4.** Remove from the oven; allow to rest 15-20 minutes before carving. Pour any leftover glaze over the sliced ham.

Close to Granny's Sweet Potatoes

- 5 sweet potatoes**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 stick butter**
- 1 Tbsp. nutmeg**
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract, vanilla bean or vanilla bean paste**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**

- 1.** Peel and cut sweet potatoes into 1/2-inch slices.
- 2.** Place potatoes into a large pot on the stovetop in 1/4 cup of water. Bring to a rolling boil.
- 3.** Add remaining ingredients. Bring to a second rolling boil.
- 4.** Lower heat; allow to simmer for 20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

Fruitcake Cookies

- 1 17.5-oz. pkg. Betty Crocker Oatmeal Cookie Mix**
- 1/2 cup butter**
- 1 Tbsp. water**
- 1 egg**
- 1 tsp. cinnamon**
- 1/2 tsp. ground cloves**
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg**
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract**
- 1/2 cup fruitcake cherries**
- 1 cup mixed dried fruit**
- 1/2 cup pecans or walnuts**

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or lightly spray the cookie sheet with cooking spray.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, make cookie mix according to package instructions with butter, water and egg. Add spices and vanilla.
- 3.** Chop cherries in half; add dried fruit and nuts. Fold into cookie dough.
- 4.** Roll the cookies into 1-inch balls and drop onto a lined cookie sheet about 2 inches apart.
- 5.** Bake for 12 minutes, or until edges are lightly browned. Don't overcook, or they won't be as chewy. Cool for 10 minutes on the cookie sheet.

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