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DECEMBER 2017

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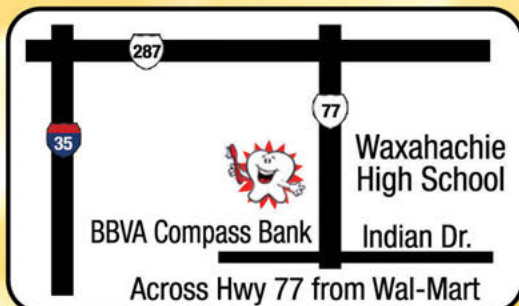
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ON THE COVER



Holiday warmth abounds at the Needham home.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Santa Claus is coming to town!

As I look at the photos taken of me the Christmas I was probably no more than 10, I can't help but wonder what my parents were thinking. As the family tomboy, I was not one who liked to comb my hair much, and I liked wearing dresses even less. Why then would they gift me with three dresses and a pair of leotards that would fit someone three times my height? As I look at these Polaroid shots, I see a stack of wrinkles choking my ankles. As my eyes move up, I see a brown plaid, button-up dress with a thin brown belt. The look on my face then still says it all now. *Yuck!*

Although many Christmases have come and gone since this most-memorable one, I still find solace in being able to look back at photographs to see what family looks like. It's about the laughter, the tears and even an ugly dress or two or three.

Here's hoping your leotards fit perfectly!

Sandra

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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!



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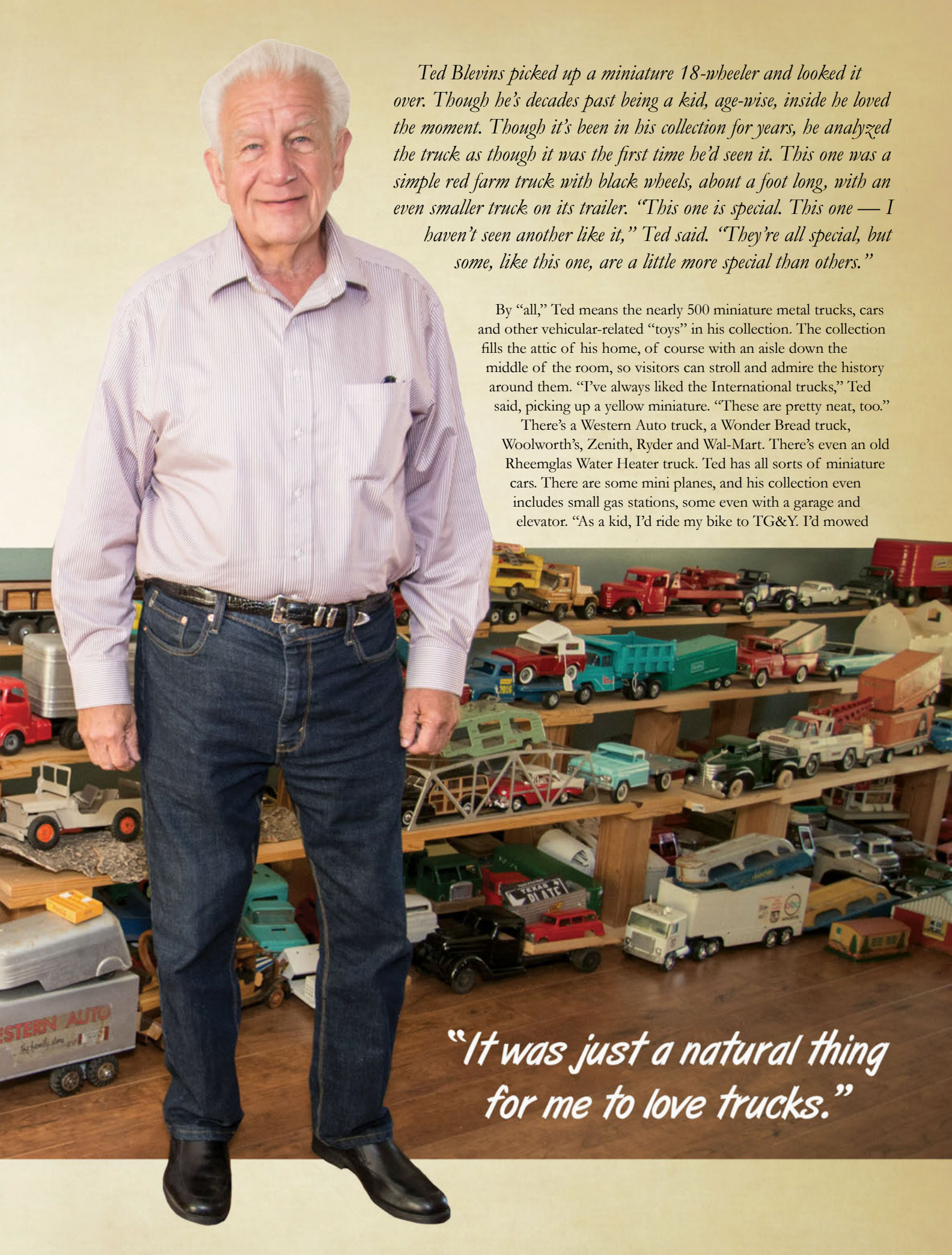
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Miniature Fascination

— By Rick Mauch



A full-length photograph of an elderly man with white hair, smiling, standing in a room filled with miniature trucks. He is wearing a light purple and white striped button-down shirt, dark blue jeans, and black shoes. Behind him are several wooden shelves packed with a vast collection of miniature metal trucks, cars, and other vehicles. The collection includes various types of trucks like dump trucks, flatbeds, and semi-trucks, as well as smaller cars and a gas station model. The floor is also covered with more miniature vehicles, including a large white semi-truck and a small red car. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Ted Blevins picked up a miniature 18-wheeler and looked it over. Though he's decades past being a kid, age-wise, inside he loved the moment. Though it's been in his collection for years, he analyzed the truck as though it was the first time he'd seen it. This one was a simple red farm truck with black wheels, about a foot long, with an even smaller truck on its trailer. "This one is special. This one — I haven't seen another like it," Ted said. "They're all special, but some, like this one, are a little more special than others."

By "all," Ted means the nearly 500 miniature metal trucks, cars and other vehicular-related "toys" in his collection. The collection fills the attic of his home, of course with an aisle down the middle of the room, so visitors can stroll and admire the history around them. "I've always liked the International trucks," Ted said, picking up a yellow miniature. "These are pretty neat, too."

There's a Western Auto truck, a Wonder Bread truck, Woolworth's, Zenith, Ryder and Wal-Mart. There's even an old Rheemglas Water Heater truck. Ted has all sorts of miniature cars. There are some mini planes, and his collection even includes small gas stations, some even with a garage and elevator. "As a kid, I'd ride my bike to TG&Y. I'd mowed

"It was just a natural thing for me to love trucks."



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a lawn, and I couldn't wait to spend my money for a model," Ted remembered.

Ted's love for miniature vehicles and such grew from watching his father working as a foreman for a large truck manufacturing company in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Their house was right next door, and Ted would jump the fence to go spend time with his dad. He was driving a forklift by the time he was in the eighth grade. Ted even worked for his dad upon entering high school, driving trucks to deliver parts to a dam construction site. "I watched those trucks being built, the sandblasters, engine guys, transmission guys," he said. "It was just a natural thing for me to love trucks."

Though Ted, who is in his third year with Alzheimer's disease, can't recall the first truck he bought, most of his collection that spans more than four decades is many years old. Some are





almost as old as him, 68. "This is from the '60s," he said, pointing to a truck bursting with red and yellow colors with the label, *The Wild Animal Circus*, on the side of the truck and its trailer. "Some others are from the '50s. And, maybe, this is the oldest. I've had it for a long time, and I've put some work into it."



It is a simple red truck (that's a prominent color in his collection), again one that might be used on a farm, with a crane on the back. It didn't have a bed when Ted bought it, so he created one out of wood. "I took this from a leftover flooring job and made it," he said. "Not bad, huh?"

Ted also hopes his collection will inspire others with Alzheimer's to realize

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that life can still be fun and fulfilling. He said that his memory comes and goes, but he knows virtually every detail about his beloved collection. Ted spent 27 years as executive director of the Lena Pope Home in Fort Worth, a place for children from challenged backgrounds. And yes, the children loved his collection.

"The guys, especially the ones close to their teenage years, they were into them," Ted said. "Today, though, there's just not the interest in stuff like this."

When Ted was at Lena Pope, he would often travel. He'd always make time to look for some miniatures wherever he went. "No matter where I go, I search them out," he said. "I've been to Hawaii — you name it. When I'd go out of town on business, I'd always take a couple hours to look."

Now, though, it's getting harder to build his collection. That is partly because such miniatures aren't made very much anymore, and there's not much out there that Ted doesn't already have. "You just don't see them anymore," he said. "But I'm still always looking."

His father also got some enjoyment out of the collection before passing several years ago. He would often share some history with Ted. Ted's wife, Dollie,

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is a maker and collector of quilts. She understands his passion probably better than anyone. “I help him find them,” she said. “If he’s not with me, I’ll text him pictures. I told him I’m going to have to buy a lot of quilts to catch up with him.”

Ted has looked everywhere to expand his collection. Many of his finds come from antique shops and estate sales, often with folks in the latter not knowing the valuable items they possess — or not caring, if they do know. “Even if I tell them it’s worth something, most of the time they’ll say, ‘Eh, give me 10 bucks. We never wanted them anyway,’” Ted said.

Dollie’s daughter, Nikki, has no interest in taking over the collection. Same with their grandson, granddaughter and great-granddaughter. While they think it is a cool collection, they are more interested in other things. So, Ted doesn’t know where the collection will eventually end up. But as long as he’s alive, he will work to add to it. “I love this, and I want it in the hands of someone who loves it as much as me,” he said. “Who better to take care of it than me? You’ve got to really appreciate it if you’re going to do it, especially as long as I have. You bet I’m going to do this as long as I can.” **NOW**

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A photograph of Santa Claus, wearing his traditional red suit and white beard, sitting next to a young child. The child is wearing a red sweater and has a surprised or excited expression. The background is a warm, red-toned setting, possibly a fireplace or holiday-themed backdrop.

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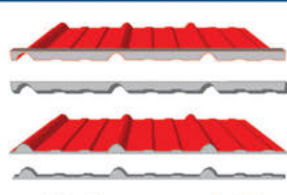
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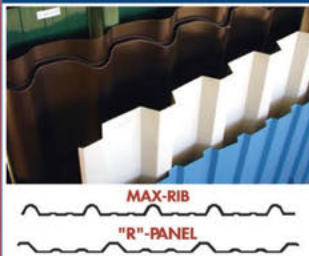
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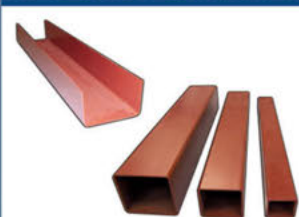


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What can a palm-size, funny shaped rock do to bring a whole community as large as Waxahachie together? The answer is easy. Just “Like” the Rocks-a-Hachie Facebook page and become part of the movement that is taking the painting of rocks to a level far beyond just being a project for kids at summer camp. But it took the persistence of 12-year-old Jules Minyard to get a group formed in Waxahachie. “I kept saying, ‘No,’ to her, but I finally gave in. Rocks-a-Hachie’s so much fun and beneficial in so many ways. In hindsight, I wish I had never said, ‘No,’” Tammy Minyard, Jules’ mom, reflected.

Rocks-a-Hachie Re

— By Virginia Riddle

ROCK



Jules isn't allowed on social media yet, so she needed her mom's help to name the group and get a Facebook page started. "Some of our friends had started the group in Mansfield and told us about it," Tammy explained. "I checked, and there was no group in Waxahachie, so we got it started."

The word is out now. The group numbers more than 1,700 followers on Facebook and is steadily growing. "We have all ages participating, and you don't have to be an artist to do this. One lady in her 90s is painting, hiding and finding rocks. It gives her something to do on her walks," Tammy said.

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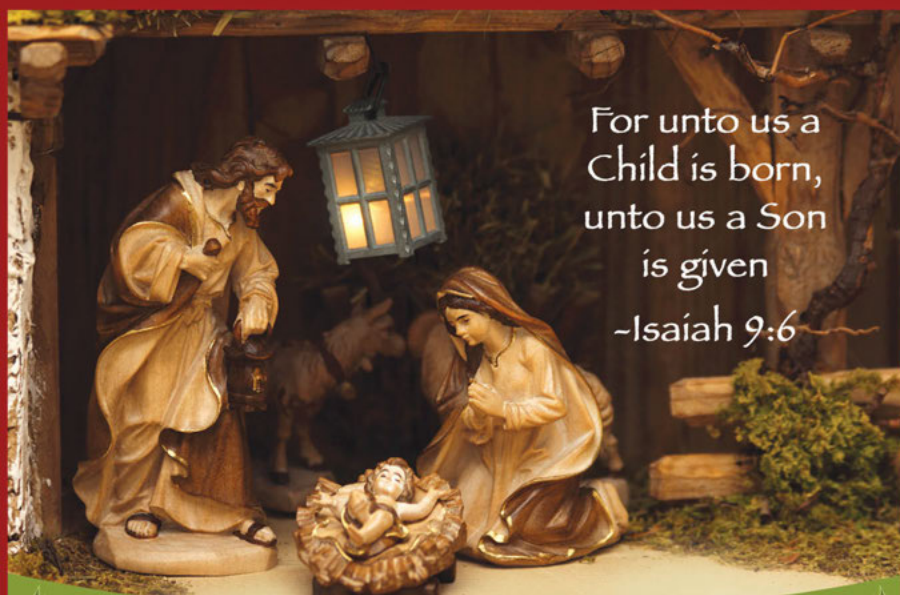


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"Mistakes in painting can create art, and I have a neighbor whose 3-year-old daughter is painting rocks," Kristen Marcroft, another mom whose kids are participating, stated.

"It's kind of like a game or a treasure hunt," Jules explained. "I like to find and hide."

It all starts with the painting of a rock. Designs vary but must be child-friendly. Then it's time to find a hiding place for the finished rock somewhere in the community. Banks are off limits, and if it's on private property like a business, the courthouse or someone's home, participants must ask permission before hiding their rock there. Once a rock is hidden (usually in plain sight), the artist (or his or her parent) takes a photo and posts the photo and/or written clues on the group's Facebook page. Then, the hunt's on!

Once found, the hunter can choose to keep the rock, after posting the find on the group's Facebook page, or they can hide it again, and the game continues. "It's a big hide-and-seek," Kristen said.



Her four children, all of whom Kristen homeschools, are definite fans of Rocks-a-Hachie. Three daughters, Adelyn, 15; Avery, 14; and Brynna, 6; and one son, 10-year-old Owen, fill out this family which, along with dad, Jayson, moved to Waxahachie three years ago. "We've gotten to explore this city and learn about new places like the parks and a lot of the downtown stores," Kristen explained. "We often keep a rock for a little while, enjoy it and then recycle it when we find a new one we like."

"Painting rocks makes a great rainy-day project, and it's a great, cheap way to have family time," said Tammy, who also homeschools Jules. Tammy, Jules and her siblings, Peyton and Carson, and father, Ted, moved to Waxahachie about a year ago from Canton, Texas. "We love the small-town feel, while still being able to run to Dallas easily," Tammy said.

Designs, colors, shapes and sizes of the rocks vary. During sports seasons, the designs signify favorite teams. The holiday season has brought out traditional designs and colors. "There are all types of rocks for both boys and girls," Kristen said.

Jules favors painting encouraging words or phrases on her rocks. "A lady found one of my rocks that reflected the word *Hope*. She told us she had needed that message right at that time," Jules recalled.

To paint a rock, both families suggest the following process. Begin by washing the rock. Painting a base coat is recommended but not required, and acrylic paint or nail polish is used. Some people like to sketch a design first, and others free-hand draw the design. A clear coat sealer or clear spray paint is used after the paint dries. "We pull everything out and will make a day of painting," Kristen said.



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"We've easily done hundreds of rocks, since we joined the group last March," Tammy added. "*Love and You are awesome* are messages we like to paint."

Some area businesses have gotten into the swing of Rocks-a-Hachie. "We can bring in a painted rock that has been created by a business, such as Chick-fil-A, and redeem it for a free meal. They've even invited families to come and paint," Kristen said.

"And Ozzy's Shaved Ice has a rock garden in front of its stand. They will do a rock exchange — a rock created at their location for a free cone of shaved ice," Tammy added. "Our goals are to get more businesses involved and start hosting paint parties at community events."

Both Tammy and Kristen agree that the project can be worked into their children's studies. "It's art time, and this experience has pushed Jules into community and public service. She's done interviews with business owners," Tammy shared.

Kristen added, "There are many applicable life skills to be learned from this experience."

The kids had their own excited words to add. "It's challenging to find the rocks, and it's always a race. Rocks-a-Hachie makes a club, and we're making new friends through it. We even had a painting party with our neighbors," Owen remembered. He expresses his artistic talents through another medium — brightly colored pipe-cleaner creatures.

Avery, a budding artist, writer and dancer, reflected, "This is like a whole community game."



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"It brings so many other people joy," Jules, a church volleyball player, added.

Their dads don't paint but are supportive in other ways. Jayson is the around-town driver, especially at night, while everyone's on the hunt, and it's apparent to all that Rocks-a-Hachie brings out Ted's competitiveness. "My best memory of this experience came when we got to see it through my visiting niece's eyes. She was doing this for the first time," Kristen remembered. "I got to see my kids and niece interacting and having so much fun."

When not painting, hiding, posting and seeking rocks, the Marcroft kids are busy with studies, taking care of their pets (chickens, dogs and cats) and backyard vegetable gardening. "I'll always remember seeing my daughter, at such a young age, develop a passion, have a plan and do great things with it," Tammy, a former public school educator, stated. "Kids can come up with some pretty cool ideas!" **NOW**

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AT HOME WITH Mary

— By Sandra Strong



Memories have a way of moving us forward in times of great sorrow. It was the memories that Mary Needham had seared in her heart that made it possible for her to move from the home in Dallas she had shared with her late husband, David, to the beautiful and inviting home she lives in now. “David passed away at 59. It took me four years to move,” Mary remembered. “When I understood that I could carry all the memories that were in the walls of the only home we’d ever shared in my heart, I realized it was time to begin anew.”

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The three-bedroom, two-bath home is filled with keepsakes, antiques and reminders of a life well lived. It was made to order. Their son, Casey Needham, designed and contracted the home to Mary's specifications, leaving nothing out. The kitchen is open to the living room, allowing her to feel like she's amid the fun when family and friends gather, especially during the Christmas holidays.

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Going “all out” is putting it mildly when talking about the holiday decorations she lovingly places throughout the home. Mary reserves the full week before Thanksgiving Day, as well as the week following, to transform her quaint home into a Christmas winter wonderland. Before retiring from Methodist Hospital after

43 years of service, Mary would take a week’s vacation to get her house in holiday order. “I decorate the whole house myself,” she shared. “People refer to me as ‘Mrs. Claus’ 365 days a year. The only thing I don’t do is the outside lights.” She also welcomes the help from family when it comes time to move the large containers from the garage into the

house. “I’m mostly on my own when the decorating starts, and I like it that way!”

Mary has never been fond of pre-lit trees, so when decorating begins, one of the initial things she does is string twinkling lights on trees that are displayed throughout the home. And she has never limited herself to a specific theme. “I love Jesus first,” she admitted, “but I also display a large collection of Santas,



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snowmen and angels.” The *only* pre-lit tree is found in the foyer.

Her favorite color is red, so poinsettias are her decoration of choice in the formal dining room and in the master bath. One of the collections she is most proud of was purchased at a garage sale and is displayed in a glass cabinet in the dining area. The 12-piece place setting of Morning Glory china by Haviland was transferred home in a beach towel. “We paid \$25 dollars for the full set. Those people didn’t know what they had, and not a single piece was broken in the trip home.” Angels rest among the flowers in the master bath, while several other cherubs sit atop the window cornices.

The centerpiece of the Blue Room is a 6-foot tree adorned with Santas and Mary’s collection of angel tree toppers. “I must have 30-35 of them,” she confessed. “I try to add one to the collection each year when decorations go on sale.”

When Mary thinks of the color gold, all she needs to do is look up. Her mother-in-law, Margaret Needham, gifted the golden garland to Mary some time ago. After using it for many years in the old home, she just couldn’t part with it, so it drapes over the fireplace mantel in the den. Four heavy, golden angels that once represented the four grandchildren she had at the time are posed within the garland. She now has five grands, but she’s been unable to find the one angel she needs for a correct representation.

The big tree located in the parlor takes the most time to trim, and it’s the last one Mary tackles each year. After she’s fluffed the branches and added the lights, the placement of the decorations takes her over eight hours to complete. “The ornaments date back



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to my oldest daughter and her first Christmas,” Mary added.

The sunroom just barely holds the Christmas villages she’s added to over the years. Last count, she had over 200 pieces. And there’s at least one snowman in each room, as well as several at the home’s entryway. Mary stopped counting her snowmen when the tally reached 300.

The family Mary dearly loves is represented throughout the home in family photos, handmade gifts and mementoes. The built-in bookcases are overflowing with smiling faces, while several detailed counted-cross-stitch masterpieces hang on walls. One of her all-time favorite framed pictures is of David holding a tricycle he’d received one Christmas as a young child. “His mom sold it in a garage sale,” Mary explained. “David and I thought it was lost forever, but the people who purchased it re-gifted it to David several years later. It now has a special place in the front flowerbed.”

Mary started a new tradition soon after settling into her new home. She hosts an invitation-only gathering for family and friends. Following a full home tour, the children in attendance, who are age 10 and under, get to select a special gift from Santa’s chest of goodies. Mary loves people and Christmas. Put the two together, and you have Mrs. Mary’s Christmas Open House. Her warm abode becomes Santa’s home away from home right here in Waxahachie.

As she sits enjoying her handiwork, Mary can’t help but look forward to future garage sales and all those after-Christmas sales. “I try to buy at least one new thing to add to my Christmas collection every year,” she said. “It may come from a garage sale, but it’s new to me!” **NOW**



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Madelynn James didn't want to play soccer the first time she stepped on the field at age 3. In fact, she begged her mother, who was a coach, not to put her in. "She would hang onto my leg. She cried and cried," her mother, Dana James, said. Then, something happened that changed Madelynn's thinking. She scored a goal. "Ever since then she's been booked," Dana said. "Her interest skyrocketed after that. I never had a doubt she was going to keep playing."

Not only did Madelynn keep playing, she kept getting better. Now, at age 16, the Waxahachie High School junior is among the best in her age group. Madelynn made the Lady Indians varsity squad as a freshman. She also plays for Invictus

OAL

— By Rick Mauch



in Grand Prairie, one of the elite club teams in North Texas, joining the team this past summer after 11 years of success with the Waxahachie Dragons club team.

Madelynn plays the center/midfield position. She likes to score — and she's quite good at it. "I usually can play wherever, but that's my spot," she said. "It's a fun position to play. I like making goals happen — and scoring."

She played other sports when she was younger. In junior high she competed in volleyball, basketball and track. But, there has always been something special about soccer that drew her to the sport, so she decided to make that her focus in high school. "It's just something I enjoy doing," she said. "Everyone has their favorite sport, and soccer is mine."



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Madelynn joined Invictus for more exposure to college scouts and to face even tougher competition. Invictus is one of the top club teams around and competes in a variety of the most prestigious tournaments. "I definitely want to play in college," Madelynn admitted. "We actually scrimmaged some colleges. We traveled to Ranger and Cisco."

Traveling is nothing new for Madelynn. With the Dragons, she went to places such as Oklahoma, Austin and San Antonio for tournaments. She and Invictus went to Tulsa for a tournament in November.

The James family stays on the go, as well. Madelynn has twin younger sisters, 9-year-olds Emma and Addison, and they both play soccer, also. Often, Dana and her husband, Mark, are going different directions, one taking Madelynn to Grand Prairie for practice or to a club or high school game, while the other is taking the twins to their practice or game.

Madelynn offers her siblings advice. She said they pretend not to listen, but she knows they do. "If I help them with something, they'll say, 'Whatever,'" she said. "But then I'll watch them, and they're doing exactly what I said. They're good, for their age especially."

The three sisters inherited some athletic ability from their parents. Dana was on the drill team at WHS and was also the Indian mascot. Mark, like his daughters, played soccer. In fact, Madelynn wears No. 10, just as he did. It's also the number of her favorite

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player, U.S. Women's Team member Carli Lloyd. "Every time I watch her play, I want to be like her," Madelynn said.

And, she might someday. Her new coach with Invictus, Steve Rodriguez, was impressed enough to add her to his elite squad. "Madelynn James, that's a name I can say a thousand times and not get tired. I have been coaching the game of soccer for over 30 years, from recreational to the university level.





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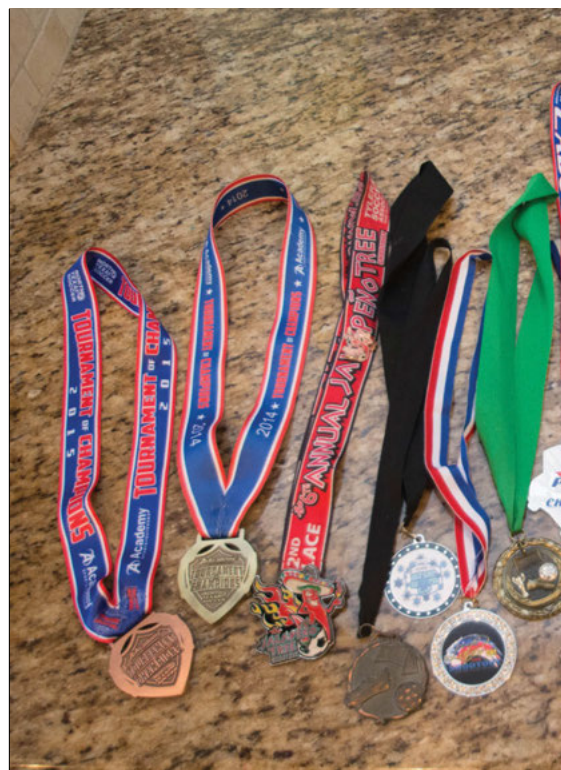
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This young lady caught my eye back in February 2016,” he said. “At 5 feet 1 inch and 110 pounds, people laugh when they see her. However, when the whistle blows, how quickly that changes!”

The coach added that there are components to the game that go beyond simply having talent, such as intelligence, hard work, knowing how to get to the ball and good decision skills topping the list. He noted that Madelynn has those — along with talent. “Since joining the team, I can see that her work ethic is rubbing off on the other players, as well,” he said. “The one thing I admire best about her is her humility. In my experience, people who are humble are the ones who make it.”

The Dragons enjoyed much success during Madelynn’s time playing for them and Coach Jason Duvall. She is, in fact, the team’s all-time leading scorer. “We were a very successful team, and she was a key contributor to the team’s success,” he said. “Her potential is exceptional.”

Madelynn’s high school season begins later this month. She’s excited because she missed much of the latter part of the 2016 season (and district play) with an ankle injury. It came a year after she helped the Lady Indians reach the second round of the Class 5A playoffs as a freshman. “It was tough not being



She used the experience to think about what she wants to study in college. She wants to be either a high school coach or an athletic trainer. She takes advanced placement classes, so being ready for college academically is set. Where she goes, however, depends on who will give her the best playing opportunity. "I'd like to play at Stephen F. Austin State University. My mom went there," she explained. "But anywhere I can play, that's where I'll go. I just want to play soccer as long as I can." **NOW**

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Frank Weaver and his crew take pride in caring for the moving needs of their customers.

LESSENING THE STRESS

A1A is moving the world one packing box at a time. — By Virginia Riddle and Sandra Strong

A1A Moving is a full-service, customer-oriented, one-stop packing and moving service provider. “We work to build rapport and a positive relationship with each customer and strive for a high level of performance,” Frank Weaver, owner of A1A Moving, said. “We are a hometown business, and the majority of our customers are from Waxahachie and Midlothian.”

Frank, an Ennis native son, is a proud graduate of Texas A&M University. Frank had already become a business owner when his former college roommate asked him to join his moving business. In 2004, Frank opened A1A Moving as a subcontractor to larger companies, such as his roommate’s company. “Most of our customers are in Ellis, Navarro and Kaufman counties,” Frank stated. “A1A Moving is authorized to operate anywhere in Texas, as well as make interstate moves. “We handle

residential and commercial moves. Every move is different, so we completely customize that move according to a customer’s needs,” Frank explained.

The customized service can include full packing services; secured handling of sensitive legal, medical or financial documents; and special handling of family heirlooms, valuable art collections, antiques or very fragile pieces. “For instance, all crew members are trained to look for antique fragile parts and give them special attention when packing and loading,” Frank shared. “We handle a great many jobs in the Dallas art and design district for artists and decorators who change out furnishings repeatedly until they get the mix they want. In all we do, the crew realizes that even happy moves are stressful to the customer, so we try to lessen the stress.”

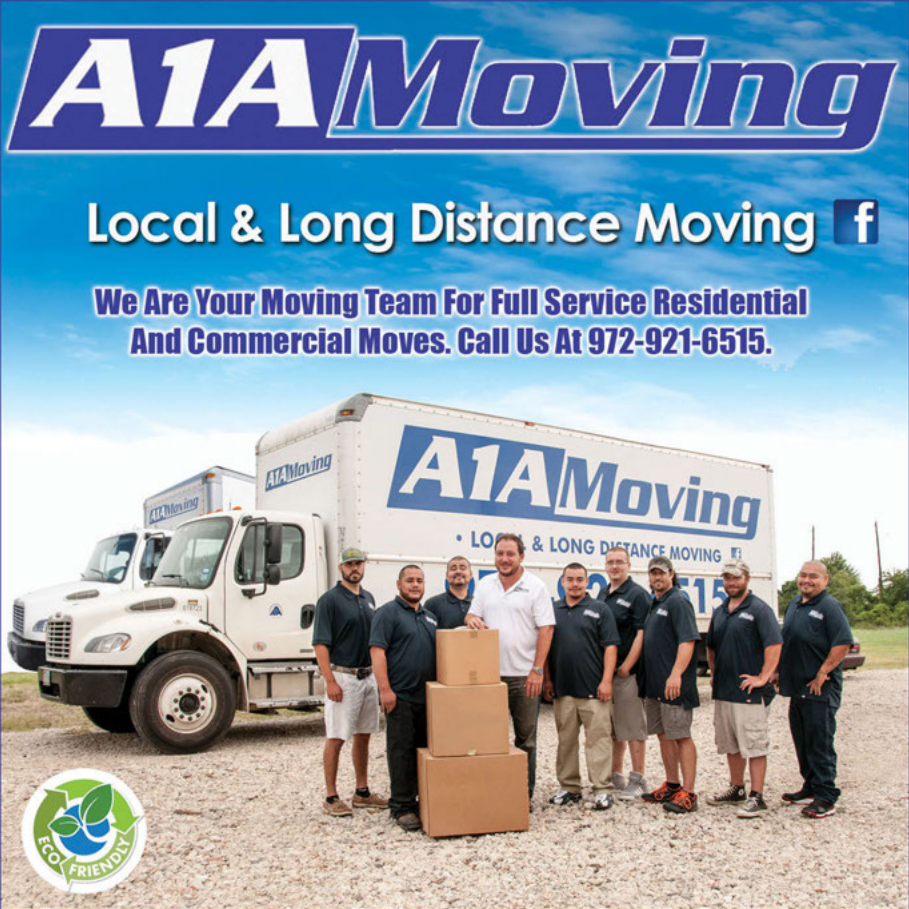
With A1A Moving, the customer's belongings are the only load on the truck, and the customer decides the schedule of pickup and delivery of those belongings. "We have worked jobs in inclement weather, but we will pull off the road if it gets too hazardous to drive safely," Frank said. "The same crew that packs will unload and unpack, if the customer wants that level of service. We unhook appliances and re-hook them at the other end of the move. We give free quotes that will not increase, unless the customer changes a variable." Most customers who wish for a full-service move are businesses and homeowners.

"In all we do, the crew realizes that even happy moves are stressful to the customer, so we try to lessen the stress."

The rapid growth in the Waxahachie and Midlothian areas has added the need for a fleet of four trucks with multiple crews. "A1A Moving can handle whatever the needs of our customers may be," Frank added, stating that movers are a luxury, since individuals can always pack and move themselves. "Our crew of eight is experienced, and they love what they do."

Not all moves are stress-free. The crew handles emergency moves that might be necessitated by abusive relationships, floods, roof damage, hoarders or eviction of the owner. "We also offer temporary, onsite storage for customers who need a few weeks or so before they can locate and/or occupy a new residence," Frank said.

Loading belongings onto the truck is very much like fitting jigsaw pieces together, and the moving industry offers many challenges. However, Frank and his crew at A1A Moving handle every situation professionally. "We know we are dealing with an intimate part of a customer's life," Frank shared. "We want them to be able to breathe a sigh of relief and be completely satisfied at the end of the day." **NOW**



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Luis Delgado, one of the best waiters at El Fenix, stops for a moment to smile for the camera.



Several members of the Therapy Thursday group enjoy spending quality time together at Pit Stop BBQ.



Annie Nguyen of Regal Nails waits for her next customer to arrive.



Lyn Davis, Beverly Cranford, Elias Carreon and Mary Pierce oversee the annual book sale held during the Texas Country Reporter Festival.



Pastor Cox washes his car at a local carwash following several days of rainy weather.



Baylor Auxiliary Thrift Store volunteers Bobbie Dollins, Betty Hunter and Debbie McConico are always smiling.



Lt. Robert Coriston of The Salvation Army takes time away from the Downtown Dash 5K to smile for the camera.



Matt Dawson uses balloons to create lots of fun things for the children at the St. Joseph's Oktoberfest event.



Ruthe Groth and Judy Baergen enjoy a busy Saturday behind the counter at The Dove's Nest.

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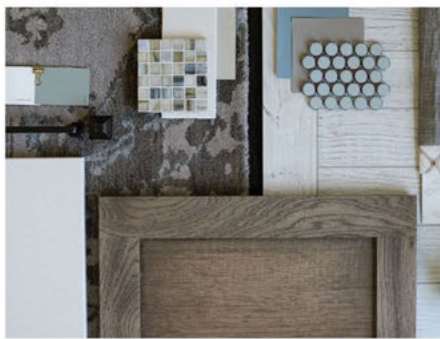
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For Men Only

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

There was a time when men rarely thought about their prostate. That was before the advent of the seemingly never-ending parade of commercials promoting various drug treatments for prostate illness. With the increased focus on the prostate today, men are more aware of the risks associated with this gland. The prostate is part of the male reproductive system. Located in front of the rectum and below the bladder, it makes a slightly alkaline fluid that is the liquid part of semen. This fluid protects sperm cells in semen and aids in the motility of sperm. Although a gland, the prostate is also a muscular organ, which helps propel semen through the penis.

The anatomy of the prostate lends itself to possible problems as a man ages. Part of the structure of this organ is the urethra, which is the tube that transports urine and semen. The prostate gland grows until a man reaches adulthood, but often the inner part of the organ that surrounds the urethra continues to grow. This can set up the beginning of a condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), which is an enlarged prostate.

In BPH, the surrounding tissue presses on the urethra, which can cause difficulty in urination. On average, this issue does not occur until after the age of 50 in most men. Other than difficulty in passing urine, some additional problems associated with this condition are frequent urination,

sensation of the bladder not being empty after urination, stopping and starting repeatedly during urination, dribbling urine and a frequent need to get up at night to urinate. Anyone with these symptoms should see their doctor.

When visiting the physician for a yearly physical or investigation of a complaint involving the prostate, a digital rectal exam is performed. The physician looks for lumps, tenderness and other abnormalities. Another part of the examination, the Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test, also aids in screening for possible prostate cancer. The PSA is a protein found in the prostate cells. It is normal for all men to have low levels of PSA. A higher number does not automatically lend itself to prostate cancer. It may be cause for concern in that you may be at higher risk for the disease. Your health care provider can weigh all of the factors and determine what level is normal for you. They can also recommend when screening is appropriate for you and if further tests or treatment are warranted. PSA is a great screening tool, but it is only the beginning. After that comes the rest of the story. **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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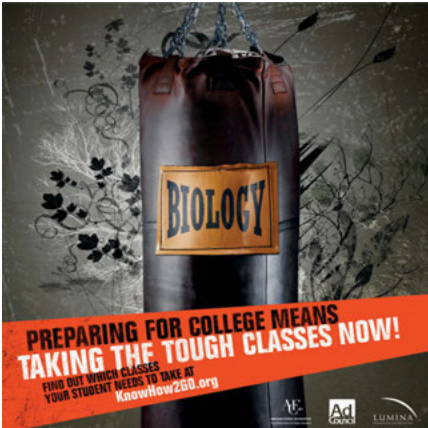
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December 1, 2

Christmas Market & Gift Show: 6:00-9:00 p.m., **Friday**, preview party; 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., **Saturday**, main event, Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Ln. The event is sponsored by the Waxahachie Junior Service League. Tickets for the VIP Shopping Party on **Friday** are \$25. They may be purchased online at www.waxahachiejls.org. Tickets at the door **Saturday** will be \$8, and children under 10 are free.

December 1 — 3

A Christmas Carol: SAGU Theatre, Hagee Communications Center Performance Hall, 7:30 p.m., **Friday** and **Saturday**; 3:00 p.m., **Sunday**. Tickets are \$10. To reserve tickets, visit www.sagu.edu/christmascarol.

December 1 — 3, 8 — 10

Bethlehem Revisited: 6:00-9:00 p.m., 402 N. College St., behind Central Presbyterian Church. Free admission, but donations are also welcome. The event will take you back in time to the city of Bethlehem where Joseph and Mary traveled to pay their taxes and where baby Jesus was born.

December 2, 3, 9, 10

Candlelight Home Tour: 2:00-8:00 p.m.,

three unique homes will dress up in the holiday finest each of the two weekends. Tickets are \$15 per each weekend and children under 12 are admitted free. Tickets are available for purchase online at www.downtownwaxahachie.com or at the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce or at the Ellis County Museum.

December 2, 9

Christmas Hayride & Photos With Santa: 4:00-8:00 p.m., photos with Santa; 6:00-8:00 p.m., hayride down Main Street, downtown Waxahachie.

December 3

An English Christmas Tea: 2:00-4:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie. Tickets are \$25 per person and may be purchased online at www.downtownwaxahachie.com.

December 8 — 10

A *Charlie Brown Christmas*: Chautauqua Auditorium in Getzendaner Park. Show times and ticket purchases are available online at www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com.

December 9

YMCA Santa Run: 8:00 a.m., race begins,

downtown Waxahachie. All participating runners will be wearing Santa costumes.

Chocolate Sip 'N Stroll: 2:00-6:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie with participating merchants.

December 9, 10

Turkish Van Cat Connection Cat Show: Ellis County Expo Center. For more information, visit www.waxahachiecvb.com.

December 10

Native American Arts & Crafts Show: 5:00-11:00 p.m., Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th St., Midlothian. Attendees will enjoy music, jewelry, books and a market of Native American arts and crafts. For more information, call Toni Bowers at (903) 744-0305 or Alicia Alvarado at (214) 926-3995.

Kids Crew Crafts With Santa: 1:00-3:00 p.m., Midlothian Dairy Queen, 1080 Hwy. 287 E., Midlothian.

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In the Kitchen With Annie Johnson

— *By Virginia Riddle*

Annie Johnson enjoys cooking, especially baking. “I forget all problems,” she said. Her dad taught her mom to cook, and Annie grew up helping in the kitchen. “I have a lot of recipes that I’ve inherited from my family and my husband, Lane’s, family,” she said.

Like many really experienced cooks, Annie cooks many of her creations without measuring, but when sharing recipes, she must measure. “I just guess at amounts,” she explained.

Normally, Annie loves cooking healthy and sugar-free for her family, work family at the office of Seth Atkin’s DDS and church friends, but Christmas allows her to prepare longtime popular recipes that aren’t quite so healthy. “I’m sharing my favorite Christmas baking recipes that I love making.” **NOW**

Pumpkin Cake With Cream Cheese Icing

Cake:

- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 1/2 cups oil**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 cups flour**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 2 tsp. baking soda**
- 3 tsp. cinnamon**
- 1 15-oz. can pumpkin**

Icing:

- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese**
- 1 stick butter**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 1 16-oz. box powdered sugar**
- 1 cup pecans**

- 1. For cake:** Grease and flour a Bundt pan; preheat oven to 350 F.
- 2.** Beat sugar, oil and eggs together. Mix dry ingredients; add to sugar mixture.
- 3.** Add pumpkin; mix well by hand. Bake for 55-60 minutes.
- 4. For icing:** In a bowl, mix all icing ingredients well. Ice the cake after it has completely cooled.

Scotch Cake

Cake:

- 2 cups flour**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 tsp. baking soda**
- 2 sticks butter or margarine**
- 1 cup cool water**
- 4 Tbsp. cocoa**

- 2 eggs, slightly beaten**
- 1/2 cup buttermilk or regular milk with**
- 1 tsp. vinegar**
- 1 tsp. cinnamon**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**

Icing:

- 1 stick butter or margarine**
- 4 Tbsp. cocoa**
- 1/3 cup milk**
- 1 16-oz. box powdered sugar**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 1 cup pecans, chopped**
- 1 cup coconut**

- 1. For cake:** Grease and flour a 9x12-inch cake pan; preheat oven to 350 F.
- 2.** In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar and baking soda.
- 3.** In a saucepan, melt butter; add water and cocoa. Stir; bring mixture to a boil. Pour over the dry ingredients.
- 4.** Add remaining ingredients; mix well. Pour cake batter into pan; bake 30 minutes.
- 5. For icing:** Combine all ingredients; mix well. Powdered sugar may be substituted for the pecans and coconut, if preferred.
- 6.** Add icing to cake; return iced cake to oven for an additional 5 minutes.

Sugar-free Strawberry Pie

- 1 0.6-oz. pkg. sugar-free strawberry Jell-O**
- 6 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- 1 cup cold water**
- 1 qt. strawberries, thinly sliced (reserve a perfect strawberry for garnishing)**
- 1 Keebler graham cracker crust**
- 1 8-oz. tub Cool Whip, placed in refrigerator overnight before use**

- 1.** In a small saucepan, combine Jell-O, cornstarch and water; mix well until everything is dissolved.
- 2.** On medium-high heat, stir mixture until it thickens. Pour over sliced strawberries; mix well and pour pie filling into the graham cracker crust.
- 3.** Top with Cool Whip; garnish with a whole strawberry.

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

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Medical Director, Chief of Nephrology
Baylor Scott & White Hospital Waxahachie



Dr. Mahboob Khan MD, M.S.P.H

Diplomat of American Board of Internal Medicine and Nephrology; Active staff member at Baylor Scott & White And US Renal Care

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