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M A G A Z I N E

March 2009

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## Greetings, Southwest Friends!

Spring — the season of warmth, outdoors, dirt and sunshine, fresh starts, lawn projects and youth. Cedar Hill resident, Chris Turnage, will educate you on an outdoor sport many young people — and kids of, uhm, all ages — enjoy: paintball. Tommy Hernandez, another fine, young man, introduces us to the world of woodcarving and print making, while Coach Richard Lauer showcases his skilled girls' volleyball team from Christway Academy in Duncanville.

While not quite all are as young as those above, the African American Theater Company exudes enthusiasm and talent, and you will not want to miss their DeSoto production of *A Raisin in the Sun*, celebrating its 50th anniversary. Alan and E'Lynne Elliott invite us to tour their beautiful Victorian home, where writing, music and reading compete with all things vintage Dr Pepper. DeSoto's own Cammy Jackson shares succulent recipes and the Pope Financial Group is ready to help you spring-clean and update your financial portfolio.

Beverly Shay  
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# A COLORFUL Marksman

— By Beverly Shay

The term “marksman” usually causes one to think of those who shoot guns with bullets or possibly an archer. Since June of 1981, another genre of marksmen was born and has grown into an international branch of competitive sportsmanship; as groups, they are known as paintball teams and leagues. As individuals, they are mostly kids (regardless of age) out there having a blast taking out the “bad guys,” a.k.a. the other team, made up of friends, dads and those whose skills you would like to emulate. Chris Turnage, 18-year-old Cedar Hill resident, is a longtime marksman and avid promoter of all things paintball. “I first got involved around 2001/2002 when my best friend told me how much fun it was. I bought my first gun at Wal-Mart and we basically played around in a vacant lot near my house. As our interest grew, we began to build our own fields with bunkers made from whatever we could get our hands on. Other friends grew interested; we actually built countless fields, but the best one was in my friend’s five-acre backyard,” Chris shared, eyes alight with enthusiasm.

Chris’ interest led first to playing at, and later working for, Madd Dogz Paintball Park in Waxahachie. “Paintballers play according to skill level, beginning as novices or rookies then moving up to amateurs and, eventually, as pros. Once you pass a level, you aren’t allowed to compete at that level anymore,” Chris explained. “The size of the field can determine how many players can be on a team. Teams are made up of three to seven or even 10 players. There could be four to 20

teams playing, depending on the size of the field.”

Fields consist of bunkers placed symmetrically providing equal advantage to opposing teams. The bunkers are made of inflatable materials, in different shapes for pro players, or plywood and sheet metal. They offer covering from all sides, except the rear. “In the fields we designed in our yards, we used mattresses, fencing, whatever we could find to hide behind. There is a real skill to learning how to take shots from the sides of the bunkers without exposing yourself to being shot. You learn to shoot with both hands,” Chris further elucidated.

Tournaments consist of capturing the flag and winners are determined by the points they accrue. “You get five points for shooting opposing team members. Once shot, you have to leave the field without calling out information to fellow team members. Five points are deducted when one of your team members is shot out. Each team starts in front of their bunker, known as the dead box. The goal is to advance, without being shot, capture the opposing team’s flag and take over their home bunker,” Chris stated.

While rules for pro tournaments are pretty much set, individual teams usually meet and set their own rules for that day’s play. “Each park will also have their own requirements, but universal regulations require that each player wear a paintball mask that consists of goggles over the eyes above a slotted mask that covers the nose and mouth. Many people wear chest guards and/or knee and elbow pads,” Chris remarked.

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250 paintballs and are fired by means of compressed air (more high-end) or CO<sup>2</sup> cartridges. Players wear a pod pack for extra paintballs; the pods are plastic test-tube-like containers, each containing another 250 paintballs. Pod packs can carry two to eight pods. "The more pods you have, the bulkier you are as a target, increasing your risk of getting shot. I usually go through two pods per game, depending on the skill level of my opponents. You really want to play someone who is more advanced than you are to increase your skill level and to learn from their maneuvers. You learn agility, as well as learning to strategize. This sport develops your mental assessment skills, enabling you to think on your feet, and you sharpen



your reflexes to make split-second course changes. Plus it builds teamwork. Communication is key; that's why it's good to play with your best friends or someone whose moves and body language you already know," Chris said.

"You learn to mature from game to game, improving and learning from mistakes — yours and others'. I think one of the best things about paintball is anyone can play. It isn't a sport just for the most athletic or the fastest. All ages can play. I have even seen players who have no legs. And there are referees to make sure play is fair. This sport definitely builds your confidence as well as your passion," Chris enthused.

As well as hosting tournaments on a "regular" playing field, some parks provide "scenario fields," such as urban courses where bunkers may consist of cars or fabricated buildings, or all-terrain courses in the woods. One competitive

## Cedar Hill **NOW**

league bills themselves thus on their Web site: "The SPPL (Scenario Paintball Player's League) is an international competitive paintball league that is centered on the fundamental principles of honor and camaraderie among players. The SPPL enshrines exceptional sportsmanship, as demonstrated by the League's sportsmanship prize packages. At regional and national SPPL tournaments, participating teams and event referees vote (anonymously) for the team most deserving of the Sportsmanship Award. The prize package for Sportsmanship winners is equal in value to winnings presented to first-place finishers."<sup>1</sup>

A popular scenario tournament takes place in Oklahoma at the D-Day Adventure Park, touted as "Home of the World's Largest Paintball Event." As you might guess, it is a WWII re-enactment complete with paintball guns, tanks and grenade launchers. ATV (All Terrain Vehicle), bike and jeep rallies are also held there. The park attracts visitors from across the nation and world. Combatants pay a registration fee, but spectators can attend free, although they must sign a waiver. Other countries have similar events.

Paintball games are illegal in over 100 countries, yet the sport is played in at least 150 countries. Some countries only have designated parks where players are not allowed to bring in their own equipment but, instead, use what the park provides. The regulations there are stricter than what is found at most U.S. paintball sites.

"To get started, go to a local paintball park and play several times," Chris recommended. "Once your interest is secured, buy your own equipment. You can start out inexpensively and upgrade as your skill level improves. You can always customize your frame, barrel and grip. It can be as expensive of a sport as you want it to be," he grinned. **NOW**

Source:

1. [www.playsppl.com/](http://www.playsppl.com/) Click on About.

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# Southwest AART

— By Katrina D. McNair

What happens to a dream deferred? In a classic poem, Langston Hughes pondered the outcome of dreams left unattended and unfulfilled. Fortunately, citizens of DeSoto can reap the benefits of a dream Regina Washington refused to let die.

Regina is the managing director of the African-American Repertory Theater (AART), the resident theater company for the city of DeSoto. Since being established in 2007, the company has put on several productions, including the debut production of *A Soldier's Play*. They will perform *A Raisin in the Sun* later this month.

Born and reared in Italy, Texas, Regina is a graduate of the University of Texas-Austin. Though she pays bills working as a systems manager for a major retail company, Regina has always loved the arts, and theater has always been her passion. "I have always wanted a theater company," she said, "but it was one of those things that I kinda looked at like a pie-in-the-sky. Maybe one day I'll get there — and then you never know if it's going to come into fruition. But, theater has always been my passion and has always been a love of mine."

Regina was asked to chair the arts and letters committee of her sorority in Dallas. In that position, Regina presented the idea of producing Lorraine Hansberry's classic *A Raisin in the Sun*, where the idea was enthusiastically received by her sorority sisters. After approaching the city of DeSoto and being awarded a grant, the production was put on in 2007 at the Corner Theater.

The success of this production showed that a theater company could fill an artistic void in DeSoto. Kathy Maples, with the city of DeSoto, contacted Regina wanting to know if she had an interest in starting a theater company. "And, of course, the answer was yes," Regina laughed. "Sometimes opportunity just knocks, and when it knocks, you have to be ready to take advantage of it."

Though Regina's enthusiasm and dedication could not be questioned, she knew she would need some assistance to get the company going. Irma P. Hall and Vince McGill, veterans



**"Sometimes opportunity just knocks,  
and when it knocks, you have to  
be ready to take advantage of it."**

of both stage and films, graciously took on the roles of artistic director and educational director, respectively. Irma was a co-founder of the Dallas Minority Repertory Theatre, one of the most successful companies in the area, and her knowledge and guidance were priceless. Vince, one of the area's most critically acclaimed stage actors, has served as a facilitator for Arts in Education programs for youth in the Dallas area.

As the managing director of the startup company, Regina has her hands filled with many administrative tasks, in addition to her role as board president. "I'm pretty much doing more than just managing," she laughed. "It's keeping track of the financial records and making sure all the paperwork is filed on time; all the producing end of it. Right now, everybody is doing a little bit of everything — just making sure we get it nurtured and developed and where it needs to go."

Although the AART has a mission to produce engaging and culturally rich theater from an African-American perspective, Regina and her co-founders plan to cultivate talent, no matter the ethnic or racial background, as it fits their productions. "Our goal and one of the things that we put in our mission



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## DeSoto

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statement is that we want to be an all-inclusive tapestry. When I think of tapestry, I think of every color of the rainbow. I think of all the ethnicities and not just doing traditional black theater." Indeed, the company's first production, *A Soldier's Play*, featured actors in pivotal roles who were not African-American.

While the AART will have some focus on exercising nontraditional casting to reflect the community, Regina also wants the company to serve as an outlet for the abundance of talented African-



American thespians in the area. "There is a void in this city for that. One of the reasons we wanted to develop this theater was because there are so many talented African-American actors and actresses in this area, and there aren't many places where they can get work day-in and day-out," she said. "All the other theaters, which I commend them for it, would do an African-American show occasionally or do some shows, which required African-American roles, but you'd have all these people fighting for those few roles. This just gives us another venue," she added.

As great as they are to receive, the acclamations and the successes of AART do collide with the real-life challenges of running a startup company. "The first

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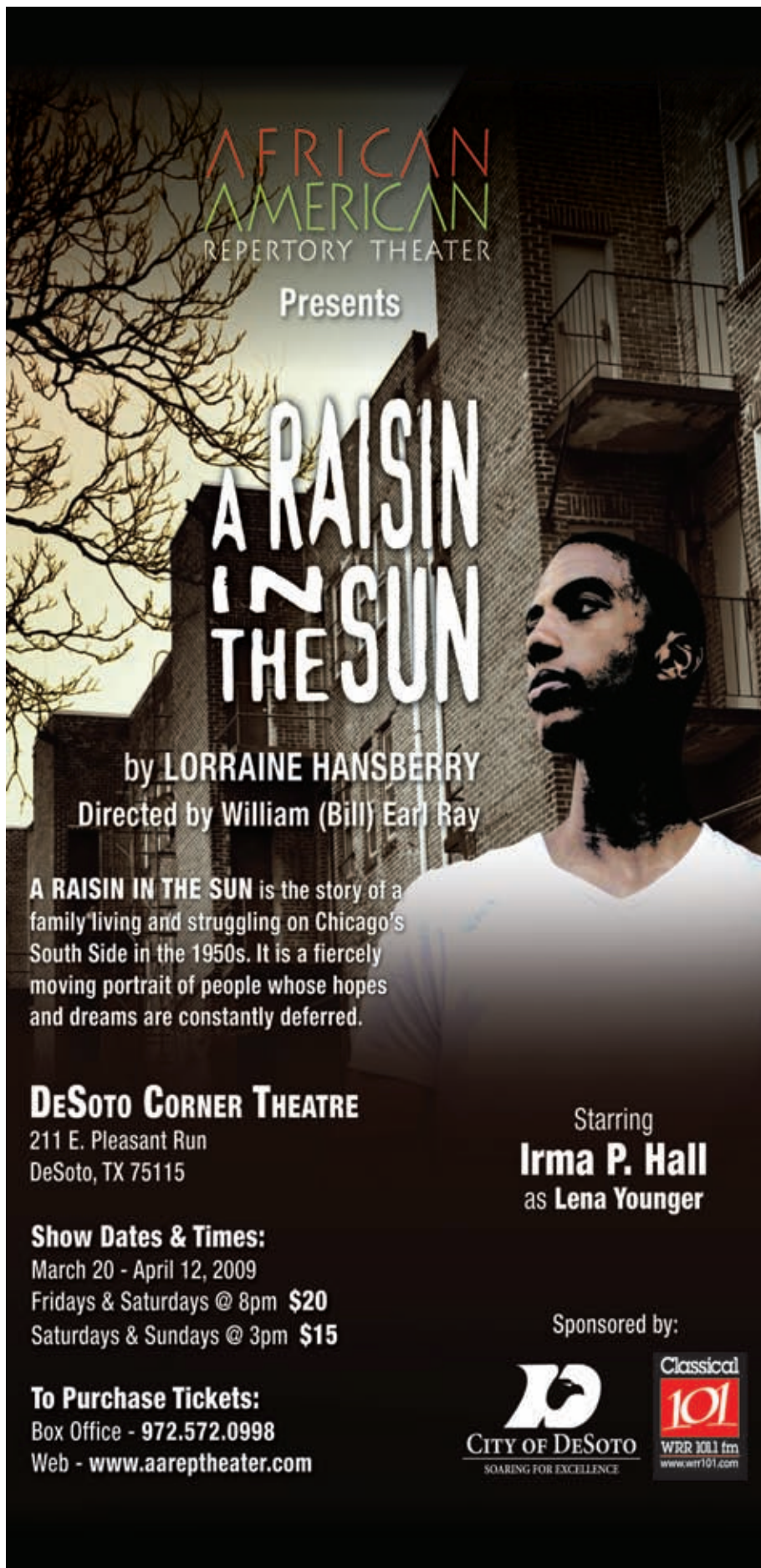
one that hits me is the whole financial piece of it," Regina said. "Even though we get grants from the city of DeSoto, that will not pay for it all. Building an audience base has been a real challenge for us. We're putting up the quality, getting wonderful reviews, but not being able to fill a house. Part of that is just letting them know we're here."

Despite the challenges, Regina knows the audiences will grow and the city of DeSoto will continue to support the company. "I believe that 60 percent of our audience needs to come from the Southwest sector," she said. "They're excited to have theater so close to home. If we can get them in, we can hook them."

Audiences will soon have the chance to view the upcoming production of *A Raisin in the Sun*. This is a particularly important play to Regina and the entire company this year. "That's going to be the 50th anniversary of that show on Broadway. It was on Broadway on March 11, 1959, and we're going to do it in March of 2009. She [Lorraine Hansberry] was the first African-American female playwright to ever get on Broadway," Regina explained. Irma, Vince and Regina will recapitulate their celebrated roles.

In the future, Regina would like the company to do much more than put on productions. The furtherance of her dream includes fostering playwrights and conducting workshops that would focus on the development of up-and-coming actors. "Because we have those skill sets in our core, then we're able to share those and put them out at large," she said. "As we equip these people, then we can get them up on stage. This will help them not only get work with us, but get work elsewhere, too."

Regina desires a diverse, season-ticket audience base, and for them to have a greater awareness of theater at large. "In theater, you want to touch lives, and that's what we're doing," she stated. "Hopefully, it will impact you, and you will go out and impact the world." **NOW**



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# Coach Dad=

— By Jaime Ruark

Coach Richard Lauer's office is a crowded one. However, the small space is not cramped because it is home to his desk and teaching paraphernalia; it is the haphazard daily temporary storage of his students' books, bags and personal items that clutters his space. A team of high school girls can mean a lot of such items, and he excuses the resulting mess with an amused smile.

A picture of the 11 girls on the Christway Academy Chaparral's volleyball team hanging on the wall above Coach Lauer's desk is a testament to the pride he feels in his girls. It shows just why he finds it so easy to excuse the clutter. It is also the first thing he references when asked about his job. "We went to state this past year in November for the first time in 15 years," he said.

"We got beat in the semifinals, but we have all our girls back, except two seniors, so next time it should be very interesting."

Because Coach Lauer is such a tall man, to guess he played sports in the past seems obvious. Yet when he begins to list people he has played with and schools he has coached, the list is long and quite impressive, including the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and Texas Christian University (TCU). "I've lived in Texas since '88. I was coaching in California before that," he began. "I was the assistant women's coach at UCLA. A friend of mine, Fran Garmen, was starting the



women's program at TCU, and she asked if I could help."

Coach Lauer moved to Texas, worked for TCU, building their program, and then began coaching on the high school level. Coach Lauer, who said he "loves a challenge," modestly admitted his talent lies in building teams, teaching them the basic building blocks they need to win and moving on to the next team in need. "My first high school coaching job here in Texas was at Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth. Then I moved on to Oakridge, a large private school in Arlington, then ... let's see," he said, thinking back with a chuckle. "Then there was Tyler Street in Dallas and Trinity Christian in Dallas, First Baptist in Dallas and Lighthouse Christian, which closed down [its secondary school], and then I came here." Adding up the years in his head he said, "That means I've been coaching for 36 years."

Despite his lengthy résumé, the coach required some prompting to admit to his past glory days. "I played basketball after college, and after I got out of that, I really didn't know what I wanted to do, so I went back to school to finish up my teaching degree," he recalled. Coach Lauer played for the Virginia Squires in the American Basketball Association (ABA), a team that was once touted as one of the most memorable in the league, with such players on its roster as Charlie Scott, George Gervin and Julius "Dr. J" Erving.

A photograph of a man and a young boy in a festive setting, likely a home decorated for Christmas. The man, wearing a tan sweater over a collared shirt, is holding a yellow and black ornament. The boy, wearing a blue polo shirt, is holding a clear ornament with colorful beads inside. They are both looking at the ornaments with interest. The background is softly blurred, showing Christmas lights and decorations.

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The basketball player turned to volleyball while living in sunny California. "I met some guys at the beach when I lived in Santa Monica," he shared. "Wilt Chamberlain and some guys were playing there." Those other "guys" included Gene Selznick, known as one of the most dominant indoor volleyball players in the history of the game, and Butch May, father of 2004 and 2008 beach volleyball Summer Olympic gold medalist Misty May-Treanor. "We played on a team in the USA Volleyball Association (VBA). They were all really, really good players, and I was just an athlete learning," he laughed.

Coach Lauer, who also teaches physical education, health, elementary track and basketball at Christway Academy, now brings his skills to the 11 girls who make up the Lady Chaps volleyball team. His third year of

**The determination the coach feels is echoed in the hearts of his girls' team.**

coaching helped bring a team to the state championship that, the year before he came to Duncanville, had not even existed. "Doug Bowman, our principal, was interested in volleyball. He would practice with them after school, on his own time, so they could play. There was already some interest when I came," Richard said. "I did have to tell a couple of girls that they were going to play, though. Luckily, they believed me when I told them we could be pretty decent. Our first year, we made the play-offs and then lost in the first round. This year, we went undefeated in our district. We were 26-8 overall for the season. Next year, I expect us to go to state and win it."

The team that beat his girls at state in November, Wichita Falls Notre Dame Catholic School, will have a tough competition next time they come up against the Lady Chaps. "I've



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## Duncanville **NOW**

already talked to their coach," Richard smiled. "I let him know we'd be there next year. We're just going to keep getting better. Our district is small, but we're already beating teams with schools bigger than ours. We played Trinity Christian, a 4A school, and we beat them pretty good all four times."

The determination the coach feels is echoed in the hearts of his girls' team. They are chomping at the bit for the chance to prove themselves, not only to the other teams in their district, but especially to their coach — a man who has quickly become an important part of their lives. Senior Deborah Bartels, who has been a student at Christway for four years, said, "Coach Lauer is really cool. He knows a lot about volleyball, and he's pretty good at teaching us. He's big on learning the basics, rather than teaching us fancy moves that look impressive, but don't really do much."

Freshmen Victoria Bowens, Crystal Carter, Kelsey Steuben and TyAnah Washington; sophomores Camryn Barron, TaQuisha Campbell and Jacklyn O'Connor; juniors Avia Gray and Kami Earle; and senior Emily Ross-Istok all clamor to say a good word about their coach. "He gives you self-confidence and boosts you up when you feel bad," Kelsey shared.

Avia agreed, "We all love him. He's taught us a lot, and he has a lot of patience."

TyAnah said with a giggle, "Coach is kind of like a second father."

Kami added with a laugh, "Sometimes, I call him 'Dad' by accident!"

This team, which might seem like the underdogs to some, is well on its way to another winning season. Ask the girls if they know about their coach's impressive résumé, and they will shake their heads with a bit of surprise in their eyes. To them, Coach Lauer is simply the man who has taught them the skills to win, both on and off the court, and the man they sometimes accidentally call "Dad." **NOW**

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# A Home Where Words Work

— By Beverly Shay

**At Home With**  
*Alan and E'Lynne Elliott*

Native Texans Alan and E'Lynne Elliott met on Match.com in 2002. "I was immediately intrigued with her when I saw her site name listed as Narniabound," remarked Alan, who has always considered C. S. Lewis as one of his favorite authors. "My father, Dr. Pat Wortman, was an English professor at Baylor University where he taught a course on C. S. Lewis. He and my mother, Libby, sponsored some 19 trips with students to England, so Narnia (*The Chronicles of Narnia*) has long been a part of my life," stated E'Lynne.

E'Lynne was born in Beaumont but moved to Waco at the age of 14 when her father began teaching at Baylor. Alan grew up in Dallas. They have now been married for five-and-a-half years and live in a charming, two-story Victorian home in Duncanville. Located on the corner lot of a cul-de-sac, the circular drive, front yard lamp posts and wraparound porch extend a pleasant invitation to come inside and explore. "We really liked the Victorian look," Alan admitted. "Plus there was room for an office

upstairs where I can write," he said of their decision to buy the roomy, three-bedroom, 2,800-square-foot home.

The double wicker rocker on the front porch tempts guests to linger, but the welcoming light that pours through the front door invites them to come inside. The foyer features parquet flooring with a staircase winding up to the left, complete with a nook for the cherry grandfather clock, which is uniquely grandfather-ish. "I bought the clock with some of my inheritance money from my grandparents," E'Lynne remarked, explaining how the cylindrical weights have her grandparents' names etched on them. Square-arched entries



lead either to the dining room on the right or forward into the family/living room. Both the wall above the living room arch and a square glass-topped coffee table in the living room feature several of the many and diverse crosses E'Lynne has collected over the years.

The living room is cozy and elegant at the same time. Tapestry-covered couches, a piano and a gorgeous mantle clock above the bricked fireplace all spell elegance, while the well-stocked book shelves, entertainment center and two gregarious dogs (Mitsy and Maverick) indicate this truly is a "living" room. The breakfast nook and kitchen around the corner showcase Alan's Dr

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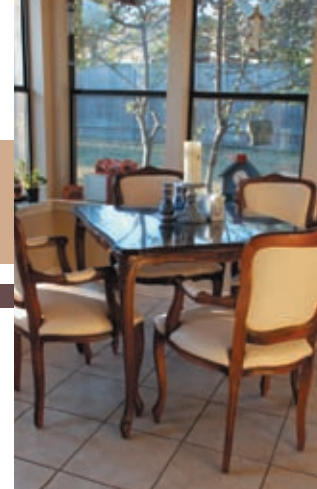
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the wraparound porch. A blue-and-white patch quilt adds to the colonial decor. "Alan had the wardrobe made for me," E'Lynne smiled. "It's on the front wall of the house and beyond, in the yard, is the lamppost," she said with yet another allusion to C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*. A photomontage in the hallway chronicles the growth of their children. "They may even be related," E'Lynne stated, noting Alan's children, Mary and William, are descendants of George Washington's mother. E'Lynne's children, Angela and Scott, are descendants of Robert E. Lee's cousin. There is intermarriage between the Lee and Washington families.

Directly at the top of the stairs is Alan's writing lair. Filled with books and keyboards — "E'Lynne and I compose and record a Christmas CD each year for family and friends" — a computer, printers, a quilt-covered daybed, an easy chair and a desk that bespeaks of research, study and composition — this is Alan's workplace. Framed copies of the covers of his some 15 published books circle a good portion of the room. Titles include a Portuguese translation of one book and a Chinese translation of *A Daily Dose of the American Dream*. He has written books on history, computing, science and Texas lore. His latest book, due for release this April, a collaboration with Patricia Summey and Gayla Brooks Kokel, is titled *Images*



of *America: Oak Cliff*. The book features anecdotes and a pictorial history of Oak Cliff, where all three authors have lived a significant portion of their lives. Poster-sized artwork of the cover of that book and the movie *Closure: The Problem with Money*, a screenplay which Alan co-authored, hang opposite the walls decorated with two of his paintings and some vintage Dr Pepper prints, clocks and signage.

Alan has long enjoyed writing. In high school, he wrote poems and short stories. In college, he wrote some magazine articles on computing. His very first published book, *On Sunday the Wind Came*, is also his only children's book. "I sent it out 100 times, before it was accepted," he reminisced. "Persistence is more important than talent."

Out in the hallway are shadowboxes, filled with IDs and memorabilia of Alan's dad and former father-in-law. A trademark of the builder is the "phone closet" found in the hallway with its glass door etched "Telephone." Two bedrooms round out the upstairs, one for E'Lynne's son, Scott, and a guest room, also known as the guitar-room, which houses a dollhouse E'Lynne built from a kit, and an inviting puff-quilted bed.

While Alan's talent lies in the written word, E'Lynne's encompasses the spoken word in her work as a speech therapist. You could say the two of them make words work. **NOV**

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# Creating My Own Art

— By Beverly Shay

Tommy Hernandez and his sister, Diane, were artistic as children, yet Tommy remained under Diane's shadow. "My sister's artwork is more outside-the-box than mine," Tommy said, indicating the canvas hanging behind the couch, its large, colorful pastel swirls somewhat resembling a nautilus. "She is able to create many things from her mind. Painting is just not my thing. I started out drawing with charcoal, but I had to draw backwards because I am left-handed. I quit because I always smeared things."

Tommy hung some of his art at the Starbucks where he works to create a homey atmosphere. Both patrons and management noticed the work of this employee known for his huge heart and excellent memory of names and details of others' lives. Indeed, his character reflects his artistic nature: expressive and compassionate. He was invited to hang his work in a Starbucks tent at a Fort Worth art show. In fact, one of his prints is a creative rendition of the Starbucks Siren.

This self-effacing young man hesitated to speak about himself, although he

enthusiastically discussed the art form he has made his own. "My sister is recognized as more imaginative and creative in her artwork, thus creating a sense of competition, yet she is actually the one who has most encouraged me to be confident as an artist," Tommy remarked with obvious admiration for the sister who understands him better than any other person.

"She encouraged me to take the art class where I was first exposed to print making. Initially, we worked with linoleum; when my teacher saw my quick retention and skill, she introduced me to wood printing," Tommy recalled. Opening his large art portfolio, Tommy displayed both prints and the wood and linoleum that he had cut to create them. "The hardest part is always finding something I want to do," he confided.

Creating linoleum prints produces an entirely different look than wood prints because linoleum is smooth and free of the imperfections found in the grain and knots of wood. "You can cut deeper into linoleum which, in turn, defines the picture creating greater contrast. The pressure of running a

press over inked linoleum causes the print to be more defined," he explained. "But I like to work with wood better; the grain and knots and even cuts in the wood all create a look unique to that piece of wood."

He has a box of small, hand-held chisels with different angles and points, each able to create a specific cut. As he handles them, they seem to become an extension of his hand.

"You can use just about any kind of wood. Bass wood is easier to work with because it's softer, but it's also more expensive," Tommy said of the favorite wood used by wood printers. "One of my prints was cut on a piece of plywood I found in my grandfather's garage. It was the hardest one to cut, but I made my favorite print from it. Actually it is everyone's favorite," he enthused.

The rice paper print shows a Japanese woman playing the flute. "I got my inspiration from an egg roll wrapper. I enlarged the design on a printer before rubbing it onto the wood," he said, admitting it was the most fun to do. "But I got calluses and blisters on my fingers and under my nails during


the three weeks it took to carve it," he said, albeit with obvious satisfaction.

After rubbing the print onto the wood, Tommy carves the details first, using what he calls a wood scoop. Various other chisels are used to create the background lines, which produces an almost dimensional look to set off the image. When the carving is complete, he mixes ink with thinner, and spreads it evenly on the raised surface of the wood. The ink remains wet for many days. After spraying paper lightly with water, he presses it evenly against the wood. "Unlike linoleum prints, wood prints have to be pressed by hand. I use a spoon to rub the rice paper over the wood. Rice paper picks up the ink well to create the print," Tommy elaborated. Only one print is made per pressing.

**"This type of art is calming and gives my busy hands an outlet."**

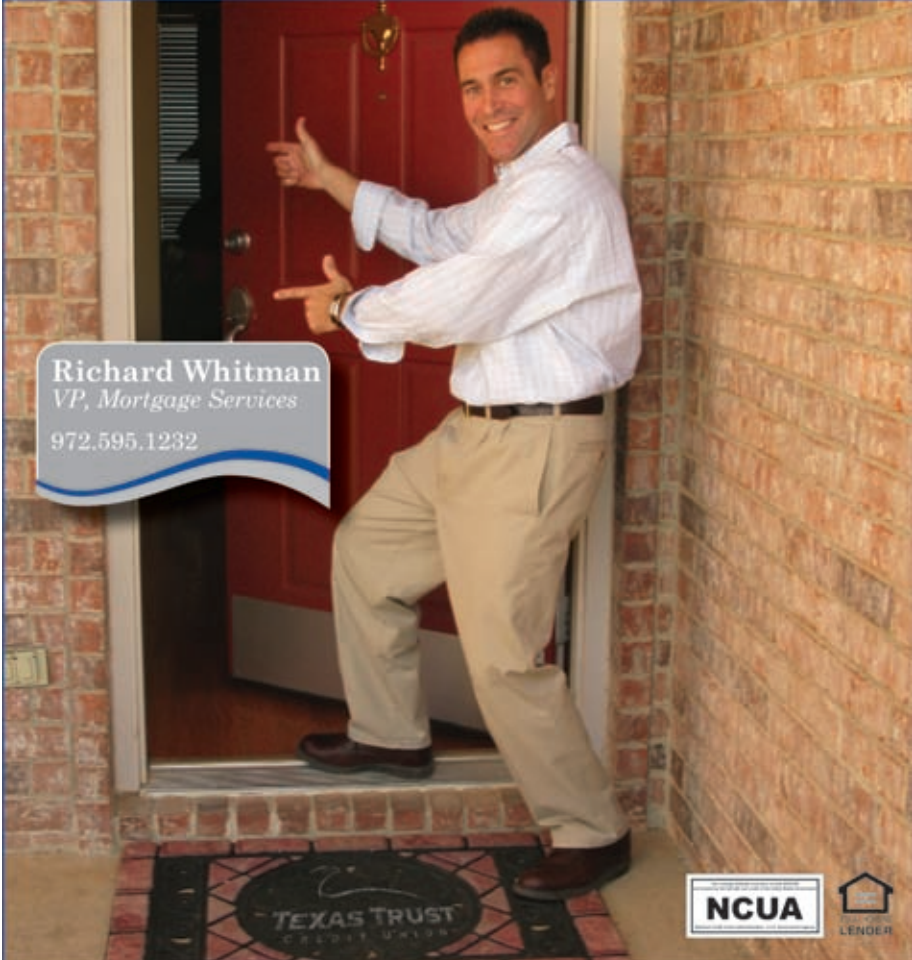
One of Tommy's prints is two lacrosse players and another features three faces and a pair of eyes. "Usually when an idea comes to me, I have to sketch it out immediately or I will forget it," he admitted. "This type of art is calming and gives my busy hands an outlet. But I have to listen to music to keep focused on it. I listen to something calm, while I carve the initial details, and then something alternative and faster-paced, as I carve the background strokes."

While he has not sold any of his artwork, Tommy has given his prints as gifts (some to his customers) or traded them. "My art helped pull me out of a dark period in my life and enabled me to learn to live with myself for who I am. I am actually more laid-back and easygoing about life, and I attribute that to my art," he quietly stated. **ARTS NOW**




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# Developing Your Finances

— By Beverly Shay

Being in a sound, progressive financial state is something everyone wants to achieve. The Pope Financial Group of Raymond James & Associates Inc. offers 66 years combined experience to help you identify, plan and succeed at your goals. “We initially ask our clients a combination of questions, enabling them to define their goals and discovering an overall view that will help us serve them in achieving them. From their answers, we assess their experience and risk-tolerance levels in order to provide them with a correct financial strategy, while helping to protect them from unnecessary risk,” commented Don Pope who has been offering financial services in Duncanville since 1984.

Their staff consists of Don; his wife, Brenda, who has worked with him all along as his assistant and receptionist;

his son, Jon, who joined Don in January 2007; and Jon’s assistant, Janel Fahey. Between them, Don and Jon serve over 1,000 clients. “We offer investment advice on stocks, bonds, mutual funds, annuities, options and financial planning through vehicles such as: IRAs, Roth IRAs, 403(b)s, 401(k)s and others. But what really makes us stand out is the service we offer and the relationships we have developed with our clients,” Don further explained.

Pope Financial’s mission statement truly captures Don and Jon’s intent: “Recognizing the importance of well-informed investors, we make every effort to educate all clients about the complexities of investing, while encouraging reasonable expectations of investment results. We are dedicated to the success of our clients through quality

planning and thoughtful advice. We assist clients in mapping action plans designed so they may reach their financial goals. We focus on each client’s complete financial picture, from building a nest egg to passing assets on to heirs.”

Jon explained how they tend to focus on individual investors and small business owners with an emphasis on retirement planning, tax reduction and saving for children/grandchildren’s college costs. They meet with clients face-to-face at least annually to review their portfolio, discuss the market’s direction and assess whether current investments are still targeting the client’s overall goals.

Don, as he puts it, was a Wal-Mart store manager in his previous life, investing as a hobby. As other managers and friends began to seek his advice on investments, Don realized he was in the

wrong business and made the career change, graduating from the College for Financial Planning in 1989. "I turned my avocation into a vocation," he remarked. He has continued in career training and is certified as an Investment Management Consultant and a Certified Financial Planner™.

Jon has been in the industry for 12 years. Having graduated from Texas Tech, he is an Accredited Asset Management Specialist®, a registered investment advisor representative and holds Series 7, 63 and insurance licenses.

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"We are pleased to offer our services on a commission or fee-based basis and can set up plans for employees, owners or combined groups," Don elaborated. "By looking at income needs, both currently and for the future, we can help identify and fulfill dreams. Financial stability and increase will not come through some get-rich scheme, so we don't offer one. My advice is to begin where you are at — it's never too late to start — to implement a consistent savings plan. Make it something you can maintain over the long haul without unnecessary risks." Jon added, "Identify your goal and work toward it; you can't get there until you know where you are headed."

The hours for Pope Financial Group, located at 222 E. Wheatland Rd., are 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Fridays or by appointment. Call Don at (972) 780-0533 or Jon at (972) 780-2679. **NOW**

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Northwood University's Texas Alumni Leadership Council, top left, posed for a photograph. Christopher Giles, director of Northwood's Learning Resource Center, second row left, spoke during the Martin Luther King Junior Day program. Ribbon cuttings were held at: Firestone American Discount Tire, top right; and the Education Foundation's Founding Donor Wall, third row. Dr. Tara Peters, division chair of management, bottom left, also spoke at the MLK Junior Day program. A welcome basket, bottom right, was presented to Firestone president, Paul Dvorak, by Teresa Snyder and Dr. Lesa Ansell.

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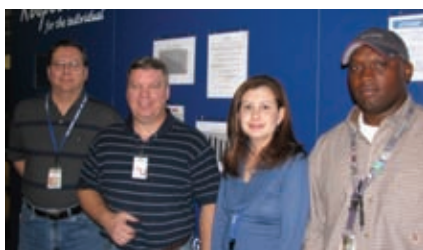
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DeSoto High School coach Larry Goad, top left, was recently selected as the 2008 Southwest Coach of the Year for girls basketball. Members of the DHS TAFE, top right, gathered for a photo during the TAFE Region 10 Conference. Woodridge fourth-grader Jabari Royal-Beasley, second row left in dark shirt, showed off his trophy after winning the DeSoto ISD Spelling Bee. *SouthwestNOW* community editor Beverly Shay and advertising representative Linda Dean second row right, enjoyed a fun evening at the DeSoto Gala. Sam's/Wal-Mart staff, third row left, presented a \$6,000 check to the DeSoto ISD. Jasmynne Alexander, Haley King and Allyson Gordon, bottom left, earned 2008 Academic All-Star Awards from the Athletic Trainer's Association for their outstanding effort over the past three-and-a-half years. The second grade classes from Canterbury Episcopal School, bottom right, enjoyed a field trip to the African American Museum at the Texas State Fair.



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After singing at The Holy Spirit Catholic Church, the Goldenaires, top, were recognized for all their hard work. Rosemary Rumbly, second row left, served as the guest speaker at the January meeting of the Duncanville Women's Club. Mary Jo Farris, bottom left, was the winner of the Duncanville Shop Hop. Ribbon cuttings were held at: Southwest Hyundai, second row center; Snap Fitness of Duncanville, second row right; and Personnel Resources, bottom right.

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# Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

## IN THE KITCHEN WITH CAMMY JACKSON

**T**rying new dessert recipes and preparing Italian dishes are Cammy Jackson's favorite way of sharing her love of cooking with her husband, Alan, and daughter, Taylor. "I am 100-percent Italian, so growing up, I was involved in the kitchen helping make sauces and pastas," she said. "Now my daughter and I love to cook together."

Cammy is currently president of the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce. Besides cooking, her other interests include working out, collecting cookbooks, scrapbooking, sewing and knitting handbags for various auctions around town. She also enjoys giving her time to another blessed young girl. "I have a little sister (with Big Brothers Big Sisters) who is the same age as my daughter," she explained. "The three of us like to hang out together. We usually shop!" **now**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

### "BAKED POTATO" POTATO SALAD

6 1/4 lbs. red potatoes, cubed  
2 1/2 cups sour cream  
1 1/4 cups mayonnaise  
1 1/4 bunches green onions, chopped  
2 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese  
2 Tbsp. plus 1/2 tsp. real bacon bits  
Boil potatoes until done. Cool. Mix remaining ingredients together. Gently stir in the cooled potatoes. Serves 15.

### ITALIAN COOKIES

#### COOKIE INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup butter, softened  
1 cup white sugar  
2 eggs  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
8 oz. ricotta cheese  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 tsp. baking soda  
1/4 tsp. salt

#### ICING:

2 Tbsp. butter, softened  
2 cups confectioner's sugar  
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract  
1 1/2 Tbsp. milk

Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease cookie sheet. In a medium bowl, cream together butter and white sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs one at a time; stir in vanilla and ricotta cheese. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt; gradually stir into the cheese mixture. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 inches apart onto the prepared cookie sheet. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until edges are golden. Allow cookies to cool on baking sheet for 5 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely. In a medium bowl, cream together remaining butter and confectioner's sugar. Beat in vanilla and milk gradually until a spreadable consistency is reached. Frost cooled cookies.

### PUMPKIN PIE BARS

1 18.25-oz. pkg. yellow cake mix  
1/2 cup butter, melted  
3 eggs  
3 cups canned pumpkin  
2/3 cup milk  
1/4 cup white sugar  
1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1/4 cup butter  
Cool Whip, optional  
Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease bottom of 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Pour 1 cup of yellow cake mix into a medium sized mixing bowl; set aside. Combine remaining cake mix, 1/2 cup butter and 1 egg; mix well. Press into baking dish. Combine pumpkin pie filling, two eggs and milk in a medium-sized mixing bowl; mix until smooth. Pour evenly over the crust in the baking dish. Pour the sugar and cinnamon into the mixing bowl containing the 1 cup of yellow cake mix. Cut in the butter until the mixture looks crumbly. Sprinkle this mixture over the pumpkin filling. Bake for 45-50 minutes or until a knife inserted into the bars comes out clean. Cool before cutting. Serve with Cool Whip, if desired.

### SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

3 cups sweet potatoes, mashed  
1 cup sugar  
2 eggs  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/3 cup milk  
1/2 cup butter

#### TOPPING:

1 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1/3 cup flour  
1/3 cup butter  
1 cup finely chopped pecans  
Mix topping ingredients together and sprinkle over casserole. Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes.

### TRADITIONAL ITALIAN LASAGNA

This recipe is adapted from the recipes of my mom and my two grandmothers. It looks more complicated than it really is!

2 lbs. ground beef (or use mixture of ground beef and ground pork)  
1/2 to 1 cup plain bread crumbs  
1-2 eggs  
salt, to taste  
pepper, to taste  
basil, to taste  
oregano, to taste  
rosemary, to taste  
parsley, to taste  
5-6 mild or sweet Italian sausage links  
1 pkg. lasagna noodles  
2 15-oz. pkgs. ricotta cheese

1 8-oz. pkg. shredded mozzarella cheese  
salt, pepper and other seasonings, to taste  
2 eggs  
homemade tomato sauce  
1 cup Parmesan cheese

Mix first 9 ingredients together. Start with 1/2 cup bread crumbs and one egg. Add more bread crumbs to help hold meat mixture together. Add a second egg for moister meatballs. Season as desired. Form into meatballs. Cook meatballs in microwave until done. Cool on paper towels to drain; when cool, crumble. While meatballs are cooking, cook sausage links in skillet until cooked through. Cool; cut into thin slices. Cook lasagna noodles according to package directions or use no-bake noodles. If cooking noodles, turn off heat when lasagna noodles are al dente and rinse in cold water. Make cheese layer by mixing ricotta cheese, mozzarella cheese, salt, pepper and other seasonings to taste. Mix in 1-2 eggs to moisten. Refrigerate until ready to assemble lasagna. Assemble lasagna in large pan. Spread thin layer of tomato sauce in bottom of pan. Place a layer of lasagna noodles on top of sauce, overlapping edges of noodles. Spread crumbled meatballs over noodles. Layer sliced sausage over meatballs. Spread a thin layer of tomato sauce over sausage, again overlapping edges. Spread cheese mixture over lasagna noodles and spread a thin layer of tomato sauce over cheese mixture. Layer lasagna noodles over cheese mixture. Spread a thin layer of tomato sauce over noodles; sprinkle Parmesan cheese over sauce. Cover lasagna with aluminum foil. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean.

### HOMEMADE TOMATO SAUCE

2 large boxes or cans crushed tomatoes  
1 small can tomato paste (for thicker sauce)  
salt, pepper, garlic, basil, rosemary, parsley and oregano, to taste  
2 Tbsp. olive oil  
sprinkle of sugar  
Cook crushed tomatoes in large saucepan. For thicker sauce, add tomato paste. Season with salt, pepper, garlic, basil, rosemary, parsley and oregano. Add olive oil and a sprinkle of sugar (reduces the acidity of the tomatoes). Cook over low heat for several hours. Stir often.



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# WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO REFINANCE?

— By Richard Whitman



With today's attractive mortgage rates, many people are asking if they should consider refinancing their current mortgage. For many people, refinancing can reduce their monthly payments, reduce their mortgage terms or build equity faster. For others, refinancing can move them from a variable-rate mortgage to a fixed-rate mortgage, allow them to draw cash on their equity or allow them to remove PMI.

Refinancing, however, does come at a price. Many of the same closing costs associated with the purchase of a

home will also apply to the refinance. Fees such as points, appraisal, title and other closing costs will typically be assessed on a refinance. Additionally, prepayment penalties or other costs associated with the current mortgage may also be applied. So the question is, is it really worth it?

While you may save on your monthly payment by refinancing, it really only makes sense to refinance if you are certain that you will be able to recover the refinancing costs during the time you own the home.

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even" — the amount of time it takes your monthly savings to equal your refinancing costs. If your "break even" is many years away or beyond the time you expect to stay in the home, it may not be in your best interest to refinance.

Mortgage rates are always changing, so the rates available today may not be around for long; however, refinancing is not a decision to take lightly. Work closely with your chosen lender and examine all of your options to determine if a refinance is the right solution for you. **NOW**

*Richard Whitman is vice president of mortgage services at Texas Trust Credit Union in Cedar Hill.*

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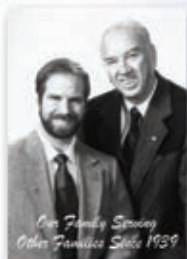
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# Psoriasis

— By Leah Pittmon, B.S., D.C.

What is psoriasis? The National Institutes of Health (NIH) describes psoriasis as “an immune system disorder that affects the skin, and occasionally the eyes, nails and joints.” The most common type of psoriasis causes patches of skin to become inflamed and covered with silvery-white scales, often on the elbows, knees, scalp, and back. In this disorder, the immune system attacks the skin cells, causing acceleration of the growth cycle of skin from the normal 28-30 days to just three to four days.

Joints can be affected as well, about 15 percent of psoriasis sufferers also develop psoriatic arthritis. The joints that tend to be most affected are in the hands and feet, but the spine and sacroiliac joints (in the low back) can also suffer. Pain and joint erosion are often seen.

Conventional healthcare focuses first on attempts to alleviate the symptoms most prevalent: skin irritation. Topical steroid creams are usually tried first. However, steroids are not recommended for long-term usage, as they often lead to thin, dry, fragile skin. They can also affect adrenal gland function, glands which are very important in the production and balance of hormones. The newer approach is to use immunosuppressive drugs such as Methotrexate or Enbrel.

At what cost do drug companies try to calm an overactive immune system? Many side-effects are signs of a too-far-suppressed immune system. Side effects of these drugs include serious infection,

lymphoma, worsened heart failure, TB reactivation and skin conditions such as infection, eczema and even psoriasis!

So what is the good news? Nature Immunology published research from the University of Washington suggesting that allergies contribute to autoimmune diseases by relaxing the controls that usually eliminate self-reactive B-cells — the cells most often responsible for autoimmune diseases. This should provide opportunity to approach the problems of autoimmune diseases from a whole new angle.

More good news: The National Psoriasis Foundation reports that 80 percent of those who use daily doses of sunlight see improvement or clearing of plaque psoriasis. Special care must be taken not to burn, as this can worsen psoriasis, as well as increase skin cancer risk.

Alternative healthcare, such as chiropractic, seeks to calm and normalize the immune system. This is done by decreasing allergens, improving diet, reducing stress, increasing exposure to natural sunlight and balancing the master system of your body, the nervous system. Chiropractic adjustments balance the nervous system by reducing irritation to your spine. This can also decrease the physical burden of stress on the body by reducing pain, swelling, abnormal joint motion, muscle irritation and improving blood flow. Chiropractors are also a good resource for nutritional, supplemental and detoxifying information. **NOW**

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# March 2009

## Community Calendar

### Every Monday and Tuesday

Cedar Hill Recreation Center presents Caliente Salsa: 8:00-9:30 p.m. Monthly Fee: \$50, for ages 12 and older. Learn the Salsa, Cha Cha, Rumba, West Coast and Fast Step Swing, Lindy Hop, Latin Hustle and the newest and most popular club scene line dances!

### Every Monday and Wednesday

Cedar Hill Recreation Center presents 21<sup>st</sup> Century Media and Sports: 6:30-8:30 p.m. An 8-week program to educate and integrate sports athletes for those interested in journalism and communications: features group discussions, hands-on activities, exploration of a variety of media formats, examining testimonials and interviewing successful athletes/coaches/broadcast professionals, discussions of media as a communication tool and the benefits of becoming media-literate in today's society. Ages 10-17 register at Rec. Center.

### Every Tuesday and Thursday

Cedar Hill Recreation Center presents an 8-week College Navigation Workshop: 6:30-8:30 p.m. for future college students 10<sup>th</sup> grade and above and/or parents to gain understanding of basic rules, terminology and standards colleges use. Topics include: Why college? What's in college? Public v. Private; Choosing a college; Financial Aid; Visuals; Alternatives to going directly to college; Are you a long-distance learner? Register at Rec. Center.

### Every Thursday

Duncanville Chamber has SCORE counselors available (by appointment) to offer free advice for any small business, new or established. Call the Chamber at (972) 780-4990.

### Every Wednesday

Rotary Club of Cedar Hill: 7:00-8:00 a.m. at CH Recreation Center, 310 East Parkerville Road.

### Every Wednesday and Friday

Preschool story time at CH Library: 10:30-11:45 a.m. (972) 291-7323.

### First Mondays

Readers on the Hill Book Club: 7:00 p.m. at CH Library (972) 291-7323.

### First Thursdays

Duncanville Networkers Luncheon: 11:30 a.m. RSVP to DV Chamber at (972) 780-4990.

### First and Third Tuesdays

Training Academy for Dental Assistants' free informational sessions: 5:30 p.m. (972) 842-2999.

### First and Third Wednesdays

Duncanville Business Interchange: 7:30 a.m. at Chamber offices.

### Fourth Tuesdays

Duncanville Chamber Champions Luncheon: 11:30 a.m. at various locations.

### Second and Fourth Mondays

Texas Ladies Networking: 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at Ryan's Grill, Waxahachie. (214) 587-1221.

### Second Tuesdays

The Dallas Area Writers Group: 7:00 p.m. at CH Library. Visit [dallaswriters.org](http://dallaswriters.org).

### Second and Fourth Wednesdays

Cedar Hill Business on the Hill: 7:30 a.m. at Chamber offices. This month, 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. is at Wells Fargo Bank, 375 N. Hwy. 67.

### March 3

DV Library and Sandy Shrout present *The Little Red Hen* (with puppets): 7:00 p.m.

### March 5, 12, 19 and 26

Surviving Parenthood: 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Duncanville Library. By the end of this free six-hour course you will have gained knowledge and skills that will contribute to successful parenting. Call (972) 780-5044.

### March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2

Midweek Lenten Vesper Services: 7:30 p.m. at St. Mark Lutheran Church, 610 N. Cedar Ridge Rd. in Duncanville. (972) 298-0891. The theme of our Lenten walk to the cross and empty tomb this year is "What Grace is this...?" Come see the incredible and undeserved love that your Savior Jesus has for you! A small soup and sandwich meal precedes each service beginning at 6:30 p.m.

### March 7

Cedar Hill's 4th Annual Citywide Neighborhood Block Party and Rec. Center Anniversary: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at CH Rec. Center. (972) 293-5288.

### March 9

Last day to sign up for booth at Taste of Duncanville (March 19). Call DV Chamber (972) 780-4990.

### March 9 and 23

Methodist Health System's mobile mammography van will offer mammograms for women age 35 and older with no breast implants or current

problems at the Methodist Charlton Midlothian Imaging Center, 2210 Bryan Place (intersection of Hwy. 287 and Plainview Rd.) Most major insurance plans, including Medicare Part B and Medicaid are accepted. Non-insurance cost: \$219.80 due at time (cash, check, Visa or MasterCard). Appointments are required: (972) 775-7410.

### March 11

Keep Cedar Hill Beautiful presents rain barrel classes: 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Cedar Hill Recreation Center. Instructors Pam and Rick Daniel teach how to save money by making your own rain barrel to capture rain water for personal use. Cost is \$30/person for materials and instruction. Contact Josh McLerran (972) 291-5126, ext. 2818 for more info or to sign up.

### March 11 - April 12

DeSoto's Corner Theatre & African American Repertory Theater present *A Raisin in the Sun*. Thurs: 7:30 p.m.; Fri. and Sat.: 8:00 p.m. (\$20); Matinee on Sat. and Sun.: 3:00 p.m. (\$15).

### March 16-20

Spring Break Week

DeSoto Rec. Center presents Spring Break Camp for ages 6-12. Program will include educational, recreational, fitness, social skills, life skills and cultural activities; includes lunch and much, much more! Call Roderick Turner (972) 230-9655.

### March 16

Northwood University hosts prospective students for a day of class observations, campus tours and interaction with faculty and the campus community in a program called My Mondays. Register online for My Mondays at <http://www.northwood.edu/forms/admissions/bx/mymondays/>.

### March 19

Taste of Duncanville: 4:00-5:00 p.m. seniors only; 5:00-8:00 p.m. at Duncanville High School. Cost: \$8/adults; \$5/seniors and children; under 5: free.

### March 20-22

DeSoto hosts TAAF Youth Basketball Championships (boys/girls) at Rec. Center and ISD gyms.

For more community events,  
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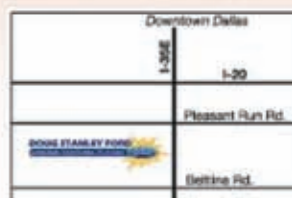


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