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On The Cover

Craig Root: cross-country traveler and photographer.

Photo by Ashley Kinney.

Editor's Note

Hello again, Southwest Friends,

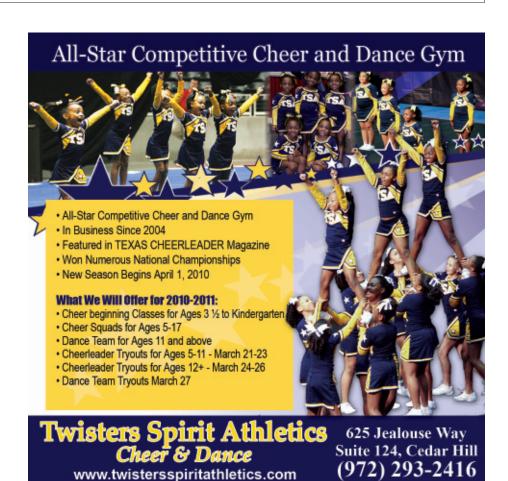
One of the aspects I enjoy most about my job as community editor for *SouthwestNOW* magazine is meeting the delightful people of the cities our magazine covers.

For example, Edna Merrill, one of DeSoto's centurions, proved to be articulate, inspiring and pure fun. Craig Root reawakened my wanderlust as he shared anecdotes and photos of his recent meditative journey. Joyce Price moonlights as an artist when not at her job as principal of Hardin Intermediate School in Duncanville. Be sure to catch up with the latest endeavors of "chick magnet," Earle Jones. Jerry and Sue Ann Raines open their home, much as they have opened their hearts to the community, and Shelley Strock's unique flair for entertaining will have your mouth watering to try her recipes. I absolutely love uncovering the treasures of our communities and sharing them with all of you.

Beverly Shay

SouthwestNOW Editor

P.S. Send your story ideas to bshay.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.







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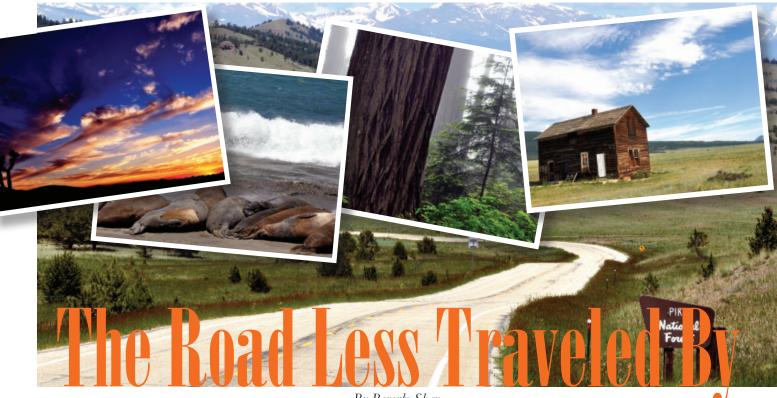
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Cedar Hill NOW



— By Beverly Shay

Many daydream of the chance to hit the road, leaving the cares of business, family and day-to-day duties behind to simply see the sights and gain the

time to process or, perhaps, reprocess our values. For most it remains just a dream. One well-known Cedar Hill resident actually took the trip, however, journaling through the lens of his camera, what he describes as yet another trip of a lifetime.

"It really is hard to capture 14 days in a row to do anything. Sometimes, you just have to take it and make it work," Craig Root remarked. "I knew I needed to be alone, but wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do or how to go about it. Because so many years of hectic life had piled up, I knew it

would take more than a long weekend to achieve the reflection time I needed."

And so, goal in mind, Craig began to formulate a plan. "I wanted to take time to be alone, but not just sit around. I had been working at growing and strengthening my inner spiritual connection with God, and I knew I needed consecutive time

away from the demands of life to continue that connecting process. What better place than out in God's creation?" he decided. "I had always wanted to see the redwoods in Northern California, so while I made that my goal, I didn't want to have to

hurry or even be somewhere by a certain time on a certain day." The plan was to drive only during the day, so he could capture whatever photograph beckoned.

"I had no idea where I would stay or sleep, except one stop to visit a close friend and former colleague from Northwood, who now lives in Buena Vista, Colorado. I was prepared to camp out if necessary, but never had to."

Craig started out in his 2006 Chevy HHR with less than 50,000 miles on it, on a 4,986mile adventure through Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California, Arizona

and New Mexico. "A couple of times, I had to turn back because I saw something I thought might make a good photo, but out of habit was still trying to 'get somewhere.' Those photos I turned around for are some of the best from the trip. I was learning to listen to inner directions," Craig admitted. The whole trip became a lesson in slowing down and listening, relaxing and





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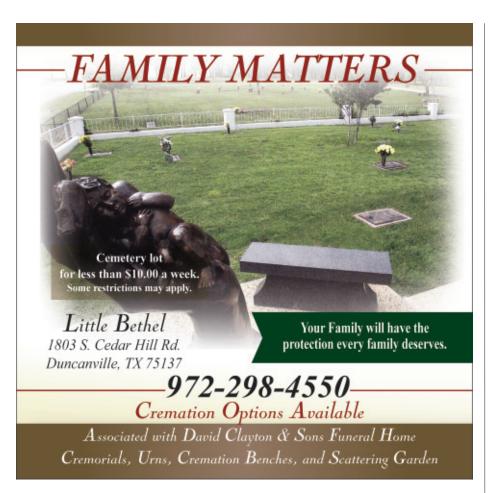
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Cedar Hill NOW

seeing, not only the beautiful creation, but the Creator.

Sticking to two-lane roads as much as possible, Craig found himself tuning into a radio program with a style of music he had never heard before. "I found the music of K-LOVE was broadcast on different stations just about everywhere I went. The music by such artists as Casting Crowns, Toby Mac, Third Day, Newsboys, Matthew West, the David Crowder Band, Tenth Avenue North and many others was very in tune, in message and style, with what I desired to accomplish in my trip. That was definitely a high point," Craig reflected.

In between photo shoots and just being in awe of the amazing scenery, Craig found the music helping him to understand where he was at personally

"The whole trip became a lesson in slowing down and listening, relaxing and seeing, not only the beautiful creation, but the Creator."

and where he was trying to go with his faith. "It also reinforced the importance of what I am involved in with community work in Cedar Hill with the food pantry, Bridges Safe House, the Cedar Hill Education Foundation, the Lions Club, Big Brothers, Big Sisters and the other service organizations I volunteer with.

"I soaked in as much of what I was seeing as I could while I drove and each time I stopped. When I got back and began to edit and organize my photos, I was struck all over again with the beauty and the awesomeness of God and His attention to detail. I got blessed again. I was even more surprised by people's responses to the photos I posted on Facebook! They thanked me for giving them the opportunity to 'go with me."

Taking the photo journey with Craig and hearing his narration and anecdotes was even better than viewing the photos alone. Each photo or series of photos brought a smile and unearthed another memoir or vignette. Several photos depicted the nostalgia of the town of St. Elmo, population two. Old signs help hold up the weathered wooden façade of the one "store" in town. The wall was propped up with iron-rimmed wheels

-Cedar Hill**NOW**

of undefined vintage. Some photos are close-ups; others reveal the majestic backdrop of the Colorado Rockies. "I have used several of the photos in the 2010 calendar I put together," Craig said.

The scenery varied from a mountain peak so full of iron that it is known as the most lightning-struck mountain, to metal arches of a bridge spanning the South Canadian River to round hay bales, the reds of Utah, breathtaking pinnacles and rocks, some protruding from sand dunes, to split-rail fences bordering lonesome meadows to huge blocks of blown ash miles from their parent volcano. "Of course, the redwoods were everything I hoped: like being in a majestic, solemn cathedral with ancient 2,000-year-old monoliths next to tender, young saplings. The coolness of the grove contrasted with the sun-drenched barrenness of the Badlands," Craig recalled.

"The weather for the whole trip was amazing; although I saw thunderheads drop their rain over distant peaks, the only storm I encountered was a brief, drive-through hail storm on the loneliest road in America — Highway 50. The pea-sized hail was so heavy I couldn't see through it, but then it stopped abruptly, leaving a line on the road: clear ahead, ice pellets nearly obliterating the pavement behind."

Fog and sun competed for his camera's attention along the Pacific Coast Highway. "Elephant sea lions lay basking nude on the beach amid patches of shed, winter 'fur,' while parasailers dipped in and out of the ocean. I felt like I had new eyes," Craig reminisced. The fog rolled in each evening, bringing obscurity after the fiery sunset.

Turning inland to make his way home, Craig captured the silhouette of two cacti against yet another sunset. "You can't help but get closer to God when you see the vastness of His creation. I learned so much about my life and where I am; that I need to slow down even with life going on around me. I realized I am being watched over, and if I pay attention, I'll find Him every day. I resolved to keep my bond with God strong, to keep listening for that inner voice." As Robert Frost proclaimed, Craig took the road less traveled by and it has made all the difference.





ONE HUNDRED YEARS

By Beverly Shay

One hundred years spans a lot of change. Not many live long enough to see that sort of thing. "I've had a full, full life — a happy life — I have no regrets," Edna Mae Merrill stated. Her voice is as clear as her mind, and her memory does not falter. At

100 years, Edna still lives alone and, for the most part, looks after herself.

Not long ago, Edna was discovered, like Lana Turner well, almost like Lana Turner - and found sudden fame as a movie star. She fell awhile back, and a home health agency was called in to help her get back on her feet. "I miss that handsome young man, Brett," Edna remarked, a twinkle in her eye. "He was a good looking young fellow." As much as Brett, her therapist, impressed her, Edna impressed him even more. He ended up making a DVD of her doing her therapy exercises, so he could show those 30 years younger than she that they had no reason to complain. Her fame as a movie starlet has greatly encouraged others to quit feeling sorry for themselves and work at regaining what they lost.

"Brett was so impressed with Edna's willingness to regain her

strength and mobility. Clients decades younger were telling him they were too old to be asked to do what he knew would get them going again. Edna's been such an encouragement to so many," Carolyn Legg of Infinite Home Health Care remarked.

Edna credits much of her strength of character to her good life. "I had a wonderful childhood in a loving home. I was happy all the time. Although we had no electricity, my dad and I would sit at our round table, and he would read a chapter from the Bible every night by light from a coal lamp, and then we would sing hymns," she reminisced, a smile lighting her face. "Sundays in West Texas were spent at church, where nearly everyone was

> kin to each other. We'd have picnics after church, and the kids would chase rabbits and have egg hunts. I did everything the boys did."

"You were a tomboy, weren't you?" chipped in Nellie, Edna's daughter, who is obviously quite a fan of her mother.

When Edna was still a child, her family moved back to the Dallas area, where Edna attended Lisbon Elementary a little southwest of Oak Cliff, James Bowie in Oak Cliff and later, Oak Cliff High School, now called Adamson. "I quit school at 17 to work for Western Electric to support our family. Dad was sick and Mom didn't work. Two years later, I transferred to the telephone company. Although Mom didn't work, she could really stretch a dollar; it seemed she could make something out of nothing," Edna said.

"I lived through the Depression," Edna paused,

recalling. "I ended up making pies. I'd make 200 individual pies a day. I would get up at 4:00 a.m. to bake them, and my husband would sell them to stores. I made fruit pies and cream pies and pecan pies. We sold them for six cents each, and the stores











DeSotoNOW

sold them for a dime. My two babies would play with pots in the kitchen while I baked, and that's how we got by. I don't make many pies anymore," she commented quietly. "We made use of everything. I canned peaches and blackeyed peas we picked for a man who had extra lots. We never asked anyone for anything, even though we got pretty tired of peaches and peas."

"I always liked the pickled peaches,"



Nellie added. Edna's mother was the one who pickled the peaches and sealed them in tin cans.

"Once a week the neighbors would pool their food and eat together, so everyone could have a balanced meal. We'd eat at someone's barn and then square dance. Even though we were all poor, we had a good time. I can't complain." Throughout the story of her life, Edna would repeat that refrain.

Determined to quit making and selling pies, her husband found a job at the paper mill located by the railroad tracks, near where the Dallas Zoo is now. Edna went back to work for the telephone company until the next baby came along. Later, she worked for Mr. Harris in downtown Dallas and transferred to what became Sanger Harris at Kiest and Hwy. 67, overseeing the jewelry department until she retired. "I have done just about everything a person could do during my life," Edna stated.

Edna had met her husband, Charles, while she worked at Western Electric. "I always called him Charlie," she said. "We

-DeSoto MDW

were married for 25 years when he died in 1953. I didn't want to marry again. Every Sunday, I would eat lunch at my mother's, and she would invite the man who lived next door. So we had lunch together for three years. I decided my youngest daughter, 12 at the time, needed a man in her life, so I married him. He turned out to be a pretty good husband. I can't complain," Edna stated simply. Mr. Merrill, as she called him, died in 1969.

Then began Edna's years of travel. "I have been to Europe seven times. They call me the traveling woman," Edna

"I have done just about everything a person could do during my life."

mentioned. She has been on cruises to Alaska and the Caribbean. "I like to see other countries, what the people are like and what they eat. Mr. Merrill and I traveled to nearly every state in the United States, but never out of the country. My favorite trip was to Israel; I was walking where Jesus did," she recalled.

Nellie interjected that she liked Switzerland best, remembering the beauty of the Matterhorn. "We had to take a train to get up there; that was the only way up."

Just last November, family and friends gathered at the Church of Christ in Cedar Hill to celebrate Edna's 100th birthday. Someone quipped about the party being held at a building that still says "funeral home" on it. One of the cards Edna received was signed by all the orphans from an orphanage in San Benito she has supported for more than 10 years. Remembering the party, Edna remarked, "I've had a good life; I'm still having one. I've lost my mom and dad, one brother and two husbands, but I don't let that stop me."

Her children tease her that she spent the first 50 years of her life growing up and rearing children and the second 50 years traveling. They wonder what she'll do with the next 50 years, to which Edna responded, "Fifty years sounds like a lot to plan for. Maybe I will just consider the next 10 years."



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Dr. Jones is married and enjoys reading and traveling. She is also very involved in community service, especially through her local church healthcare ministry.

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Duncanville W

Committed to Community – By Adam Walker

Earle Jones Jr. has seen a lot of changes in Duncanville during the 37 years he has called it home. In fact, he has played a major role in many of those changes during nearly a decade of service in Duncanville's city government, where he is now director of economic development.

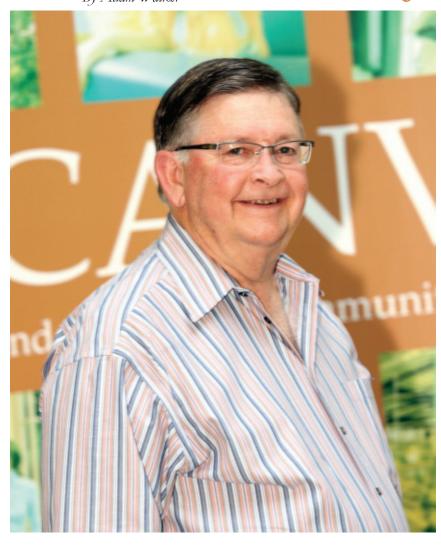
Earle, along with a team of many, has played a major role remodeling Duncanville's economic landscape by bringing in such projects as Main Station, which was the cornerstone of the project to revitalize Main Street and has brought the city significant grant money to continue the revitalization. He was originally approached by a previous mayor to help bring in Duncanville's first hotel — resulting in the Hilton Garden Inn. He then stayed on with the city to work on other projects. He was instrumental in bringing Costco to Duncanville and adding to the retail and living opportunities with the Shops at Waterview Park, as well as the adjacent apartments.

With so much accomplished, you might think he would be thinking about retirement and relaxation, after all, he is 69 and has already "retired" once from a successful career as a real estate and mortgage broker. Earle himself said, "By every measure, I'm a wealthy man — friends, family, loved ones — I couldn't ask for a better life." But Earle has no plans for retirement. He is

actively working on new projects for the future of Duncanville, while continuing to lure new businesses to the area, like the new ALDI grocery store. Also underway is the conversion of the old hockey center to the new Bob Knight's Fieldhouse for basketball and volleyball. "I thrive on contact with people and a day-to-day challenge," Earle said, "and this job is never routine; there's always something different."

Following the success of the Champions Cove senior living center, Duncanville has been designated as a Certified Retirement Community, and Earle sees more desire for senior services. He would like to see further projects for senior citizens developed. Earle stated the reason Duncanville is attractive to seniors is because "we are close to Dallas, but we are still a small town; a friendly community."

You might think that a job this big would be enough to keep



two men half Earle's age busy to the point of distraction, and you would probably be right. But Earle finds time to be involved in an endless list of other community projects. "At my age," he said, "I want to give back, to benefit others, to make things better. It sounds cliché, but it's true. It's the way my parents raised me. Besides, I'm in a better position financially and have fewer family responsibilities now, so I have more time." The charitable and civic organizations with which he serves or has served include: the Duncanville Chamber of Commerce; the Duncanville ISD Education Foundation; Big Brothers, Big Sisters; Brighter Tomorrows Women's Shelter; Best Southwest Alliance; Duncanville Outreach Ministries; Duncanville Police Academy Alumni; and Boy Scouts of America. His more than 1,660 hours of volunteer service to the Duncanville Police Department earned him recognition from President George W.

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Making the Grade, Again

Students in Duncanville continue to perform at high academic levels, as indicated by a recent national list of high performing schools released by the National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA) 2009 Just for the Kids Campaign and the 2009-10 Texas Education Agency's Distinguished Performance Schools list. Seven Duncanville ISD schools made the prestigious Just for the Kids Campaign list and nine made the Distinguished Performance Schools lists.

The Just for the Kids Campaign recognizes schools that grow their students' performance more than demographically-similar schools across the nation. Only 19% of Texas schools made this prestigious list, compared to the 61% earning an Exemplary or Recognized state rating by Texas Education Agency. Unlike the TEA state rating system, the NCEA high performing schools list is based on three years of performance data rather than just one year.

Distinguished schools are Title I, Part A campuses that have met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2008 and 2009, received an Exemplary rating by TEA in 2009, and were Exemplary or Recognized in 2008 and 2007 with a population of 40% or more economically disadvantaged students. Duncanville ISD has twelve Title I schools, nine of which earned this top recognition.

Just for Kids Campaign

- · Acton Elementary
- · Alexander Elementary
- · Fairmeadows Elementary
- · Hyman Elementary
- Merrifield Elementary
- · Smith Elementary
- · Brandenburg Intermediate

Title I Distinguished Performance

- · Acton Elementary
- · Alexander Elementary
- · Bilhartz Elementary
- · Central Elementary
- · Fairmeadows Elementary
- · Hyman Elementary
- · Smith Elementary
- · Merrifield Elementary

· Brandenburg Intermediate

Fun For All



With more than 1,300 enrolled in our special education classes, Duncanville ISD is leading the way in meeting the needs of these students. And with teachers like Duncanville High School's Krystal Morrow, it is no wonder that parents seek out our schools from across the United States. Ms. Morrow has made it her mission to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to have fun.

Krystal teaches Partners PE, a course offered to Duncanville juniors and seniors. In the class, students with disabilities are paired with "partners" who help them run, jump rope, play basketball, dance, and engage in other physical activities. Assisting classmates with disabilities is a

privilege for those students who pass the application and interview process. But Partners PE doesn't only benefit the athletes involved. "It's a great experience for everyone," Morrow explained. "The students in special education classes have a chance to get out, have fun, and meet people they might not otherwise see. Their partners get a chance to learn new leadership skills, feel good about themselves, and gain an appreciation for the little things in life."

This is the second year for Partners PE classes at the high school, and colleagues say that Morrow's new leadership is changing the program for the better. "She took the kids on their first field trip," commented teacher Jessica Perez-Woodrum. "Krystal goes above and beyond to get her students included in everyday activities." These are activities like going to the mall - that's where Morrow took nearly 100 athletes and partners last semester - or the Dallas Zoo, where a second field trip is planned for later this school year. Krystal is also responsible for the first-ever Partners PE Appreciation Night that took place at a football game last semester, as well as an inaugural Halloween dance contest. "I want to give these students some new experiences," she explained. "If I touch just one kid's life, then my job is done."

Three For Three

The word's out about the great things that Duncanville ISD staff and students are doing - we've been featured by local news organizations three times in the past three months!

Bus driver Johnny Campbell was chosen as Channel 8's "Our Neighbor" for his efforts to better our youth, one bus route at a time. His feature aired during WFAA-TV's morning newscast on December 15.



And Duncanville High School drafting instructor Glenn Detgen made his daytime television debut on January 25. Fox 4 News anchor Clarice Tinsley chose Mr. Detgen as her "Hometown Hero" for his humanitarian efforts and commitment to teaching DHS students the importance of community service.

But it was the district's efforts to bring relief to Haiti that made headlines on February 2 - the launch of Kennemer Middle School's Pennies for Port-au-Prince fundraising campaign was featured on Channel 8. Reporter Shelly Slater interviewed Kennemer French teacher Louis Adam and a member of the school's National Junior Honor Society about their goal to collect enough change to repair the

school that Mr. Adam helped to build in his hard-hit homeland.

Read more about these stories at: www.duncanvilleisd.org



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Bush, and Ebby Halliday awarded him the Ebby Rose of Distinction for his volunteerism.

Those awards could hold a place of pride in his office, but such is not the case with Earle. His office is filled with hard hats from Duncanville construction projects and pictures of his wife of 44 years, their two sons and daughters-in-law and his grandchildren. He currently has two grandchildren, but is about to have two more when his youngest son and daughter-in-law complete the adoption of two siblings from the Edna Gladney Home.

Another prominent decoration in Earle's office is the dressing-mirrorsized frame, which holds four large



embroidered patches such as you might see displayed on the back of a motorcycle jacket. These patches honor the fallen heroes of the police and fire departments, who lost their lives on 9/11, the astronauts of Apollo 1, space shuttles Columbia and Challenger and the soldiers and

sailors of the armed forces. "I'm very patriotic," Earle explained. "Mom, apple pie, Boy Scouts, police, firefighters, sailors — I'm old school."

Earle proclaims himself "one of the biggest characters around," and he has the stories of his antics to back that up. He called himself "the chick magnet" then gave his mid-section a pat and his gray hair a rub while laughing heartily. When asked what the zaniest thing he had done might be, he responded, "That I can repeat? Several things come to mind, but I don't want to say one is the zaniest unless that's true." After some thought, he told a tale of going to a corporate Christmas party wearing a hard hat with an emergency strobe light on top. He walked in and announced, "I need to see the owner of the car with

Duncanville **NOW**

such-and-such a license plate. You're illegally parked." All the while the strobe flashed away atop his head. "I had the whole place laughing!" Earle bragged with a smile on his face.

He also has fond memories of wearing his zoot suit around town. "I bought it at the International Suit Warehouse. It



was black with white stripes, and I had black and white checked shoes to go with it." He had so much fun wearing it that he still has the suit, even though it is no longer his size. He said, "I take a lighthearted view of life, and I'm a positive thinker. That's due to my mother."

Earle is proud of Duncanville. "I take pride in what we have been, what we are and what we can be. I know people want more progress." Earle certainly has plans for more growth and expansion of Duncanville's economic base even in tough economic times, but he explained that two to three years of work go into each project before people on the streets see any evidence of what his office has been working toward.

So what keeps Earle going? "I guess it's the people — the joy of meeting new people and the joy of having old friends. People are interesting and valuable. Each one has their own hopes and dreams. I enjoy being part of the human race. If you saw me together with 30 friends, they'd be from all walks of life, races, economic situations, young, old — I see value in everyone." But Earle does not think he is unique in the way he looks at things. "There are a lot of people like me around. Duncanville has a lot of real people." Earle summed up, "I'm extremely grateful for the life I've had. There's no way I can't be grateful." There's no way I can't be grateful."







Country Comfort Restrict to the Country Comfort Restrict to the Country Coun

As pastor of Hampton Road Baptist Church, Jerry Raines, along with his wife, Sue Ann, have an entire congregation that is like a second family to them. A tour of their DeSoto home makes it evident that not only their church family and faith, but their own brood, are at the center of their world. 'I went to school in the country, went to church in the country. I never really had much to do with the town, until we had to go and do things that farmers had to do in town," Jerry laughed. From Lamesa, Texas, Jerry attended Howard Payne University, where he majored in Bible and English, minored in

psychology and met Sue Ann, a former teacher, who now assists him as he leads his congregation. Born in Nocona, Texas, Sue Ann also has deep roots in the country lifestyle and church life, since her father was a pastor.

Homage to both Jerry and Sue Ann's country upbringing is clear from the start. Stepping onto the front porch of their home, a small wooden bench welcomes visitors. On a small table inside the foyer rests the couple's family Bible, a gift from Sue Ann's parents to celebrate their wedding. They were married over 40 years ago in Sue Ann's father's church in Wichita Falls. A window from Sue Ann's mother's home, decorated with a twisting green vine, hangs on the wall above the Bible, providing her with a memento from her mother's childhood.

After moving from Temple, Texas, the couple relocated to DeSoto, where they





have lived for 13 years. Over the years, their family has grown to include a son, two daughters and eight grandchildren. Two of the couple's children and their families are currently living overseas doing mission work. A large wall map in their living area has red push pins to mark the children's current locations.

The Raines' living area has a comfortable and homey feel, with touches that are a testimony to the importance of both their spiritual and family lives. Two paintings in the living room have significant meaning to the couple. A signed work by famed artist



Thomas Kinkade, titled *The Mountain Chapel*, hangs on one wall. The painting was created using special oils, which give it a "shimmery" effect. When the lighting is dimmed, the chapel windows in the painting appear to glow from an inner light, and the rays of an unseen setting sun give the illusion of evening drawing









near. On the opposite wall, another oil painting depicts an elderly man, sitting on the running board of a Model T-type car. The oil painting, by Terrell O'Brien, was painted using a photograph of Jerry's great-grandfather.

Just off the living room is what can only be called a retro treasure room. Descending into the room, which is a screened-in back porch, is like entering a time capsule of the Raines' family life. "We got all the keepsakes out of the attic; things our kids had when they were little — like old records, toys and such.



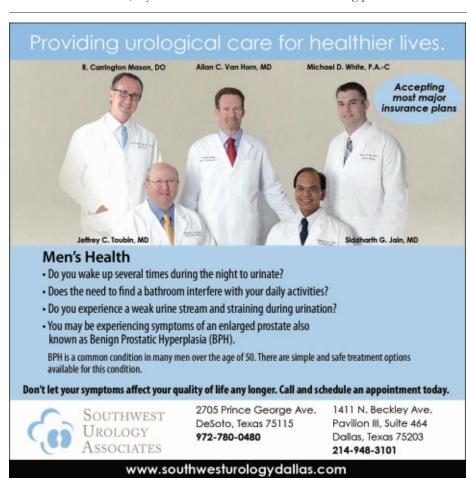
The kids love it," Sue Ann admitted. The room is filled with generational treasures — from Jerry's old college radio and first tennis racket, to games the couple's own children played with, which their grandchildren enjoy on visits.

A few steps out of this room lead up into the kitchen. A set of bay windows overlooks the backyard. Inset in one of them is a beautiful stained glass window, its match inset in another window overlooking the expansive front yard. The stained glass windows are set in weathered-looking painted wooden



frames, with the glass itself probably from the '20s or '30s, according to Jerry. "I think it's called the Tulip design," he added. "It's a real old, wellknown design."

The kitchen is where Sue Ann showcases a set of ceramic plates and other pieces she has, carrying on a tradition of her mother's. "When we were growing up, she had a set of Blue Ridge dishes with a Crabapple pattern," Sue Ann remembered. The collection has a cheerful red and green pattern with a bright red apple at the center of the









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design. Her mother's original piece is a plate, but over the years, by scouring antique shows and garage sales, Sue Ann has amassed a collection of pieces in that design, created years ago by women who lived in the Blue Ridge mountain area in Tennessee as a way to generate income.

Another decorative plate in their home has a pattern which is an exact replica of a church floor located in Israel, with symbols celebrating Jesus feeding the 5,000, as recorded in the Bible. "There's a sign outside that church you have never seen in front of a church," Jerry recalled, chuckling at the memory. "It says, 'No Guns Allowed.' In Israel, all young people are required to serve in the army, and they all carry their guns all the time. But if they go in that church, they have



to leave their guns outside."

A curio cabinet holds other religious symbols. Among them is a striking collection of Nativity scenes created from different materials, including stained glass, wood and one sewn into a tapestry.

A short hallway leads visitors to the three bedrooms in the home. The master bedroom is large and open. A vivid oil painting of a rose with a single drop of dew (painted by Sue Ann) hangs in their room. Inside the master bath, the eye is immediately drawn to the garden tub. Sunk deeply into the floor, the tub is flanked on either side by white pillars, giving the bath a slightly Roman touch. "Our grandkids have all loved taking baths in that tub," Jerry said. "They think it's really fun to climb down into it."



The two remaining bedrooms of the home serve as a guest room and office space. A baby portrait of Jerry hangs in one room. In that same room, with a small four-poster bed perfect for sleepovers, hangs a single baby outfit from each of the couple's children, a reminder of just how small they used to be.

The Raines' large front yard is the central gathering place for a block party they host twice a year. The gathering gives Jerry and Sue Ann a chance to speak and connect with their neighbors, further showing their dedication to the extended family outside their four walls. "We've been doing it since we came," Sue Ann said, "because we felt God wanted us to know our neighbors and keep up with each other." "NOW"



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The staff of Camp Bow Wow pose at their ribbon



















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Around Town NOW





Cleo Raymond smiles as she stocks the gift shop shelves at Methodist Charlton Medical Center.

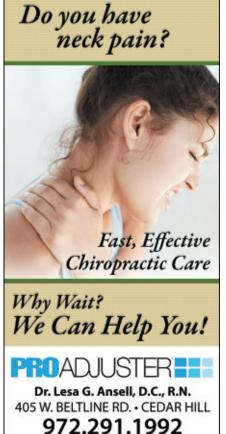


DeSoto Chamber members enjoy food and fellowship at Go 4th Thursday.



Nine of the players from the DeSoto High School Class of 2010 who have signed letters of intent take a break from the celebration to pose for a group photo.







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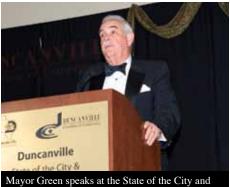
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Sometimes you get a certain picture in your mind of how a person looks or acts when you have been told what they do. Just saying the word "artist," for example, conjures up an image of someone more or less eclectic, freespirited, a bit unconstrained, perhaps more ethereal than pragmatic, bursting



with creativity. Consider a principal and you probably envision someone more austere, authoritative, in control, firm and assertive, pedantic rather than creative. It might seem contradictory to consider blending the two images to come up with a person who is both a principal and an artist, but that is exactly who Joyce Price is.

"I knew when I was little I wanted to be a teacher," began Joyce, "but when I became a teacher, I wanted to impact even more people. I like to teach, and I like coaching others as they teach, so being a principal has been a really good fit," Joyce explained. Joyce grew up in Oak Cliff, graduated from Tyler Street Christian Academy and later, at the age of 20, from Dallas Baptist University with a bachelor's in secondary education. She





taught freshman English in Duncanville for five years.

Meanwhile, Joyce completed her education administration degree from the University of North Texas in the summer of 1992. She was only 25 when she began her assistant principal phase, working at Merrifield Elementary, Brandenburg Intermediate

School and Reed Middle School. "I have now been principal at Hardin Intermediate School for over 10 years," she beamed.

"The older I get, the more I recognize and respect the influence I have on others, especially children, not just as a principal, but as a person. I am known by my actions, speech, how I relate to adults and students. They remember and are impacted," Joyce reflected. "It is a huge responsibility to be the right kind of role model for an average of 600 students, their parents and siblings. I am less afraid to admit I am wrong and work to figure out a solution, to show respect by listening and honoring others, to bring them value. Doing that brings me great joy."

Joy is a large component in Joyce's life.



Joy is the same word she uses to describe her foray into art. "One Saturday at the beginning of a school year, I was home alone and I found this art show on TV. I thought, I can do that. So I ordered the paint set from the show. But when it came, I was too busy to open it. A few days later, my husband came home with an easel for me, which motivated me to get my paints out, and I began doodling in my sketch book," Joyce recalled, opening her sketch book to her first "doodles." Page after page of pretty impressive "doodles" soon evolved into paintings, as she copied techniques she gleaned from art books.

"Initially I only thought of using acrylics, because that's what I tried first, but I knew I needed to try more stuff, because I found such happiness in art. I felt God was leading me into a very different outlet for joy than working with students," Joyce confided. "I wondered why God had waited until I was 37 to bring me this joy through creating art."

Joyce has painted some 50 pictures, eventually branching out into oils, a few pastels and painting on different surfaces, even getting into abstracts. "I attended a workshop in the Dallas area given by an artist, Jerry Yarnell, from

ArtsMM

Oklahoma. He invited me to attend a two-day summer workshop at his studio, where he gives 12 or so students some very individual input. He really pours out his knowledge and experience," Joyce said, adding he acknowledged she had a lot of natural talent.

"Eventually, I wanted to find a local group of artists that I could 'hang with," Joyce stated. A year-and-a-half ago, Joyce discovered the Visual Arts School in Cedar Hill and began taking weekly classes with Kelli Howie. "She was the



one who got me to venture into oils and abstracts. I am still evolving as an artist, but I love the balance of realism and abstract work. I still want to learn about doing portraits."

Although encouraged to sell her work, Joyce prefers to paint for the joy of it. She has pieces on display at Nancy Evans Dentistry in Duncanville and Bakery on a Hill, in Uptown Village. For two years, she has made Christmas cards, each with an original painting and her own stylized Haiku version of scriptures. This year, she made the paper for her cards. The card she gave to all her teachers is based on the Bible's Isaiah 52:15a:

> Foretold, He would come Sprinkle our world with His peace And kings will be still.

"It gave me such joy to see their response. I have such satisfaction in creating and giving," Joyce remarked. Her office is a gallery where students, teachers and parents are surrounded with the evidence of her joy, both in painting and in education administration. •VDW



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Business NOW





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"My dad was a plumber in Dallas," Rick stated, explaining why he went into the plumbing business. Following high school, Rick attended the Plumbers and Steamfitters Union trade school for five years as an apprentice to get his plumber's license; he worked for the

union for 13 years.

"While Rick was in school and working for the union, I worked for a builder," Jamie, his wife of 39 years, explained. "When we decided to go into business for ourselves, we worked from our home for 12 years before moving to this location 18 years ago. About five years ago, we changed our name from Liberty Plumbing when we bought the Best Southwest franchise for Benjamin Franklin Plumbing®, 'The Punctual PlumbersTM' through Clockwork Home Services Inc." This gives them freedom as owners, with the added benefit of being part of a larger organization. Clockwork Home Services will be featured on the TV show, Celebrity Apprentice, this spring. Initially, the Gattos' company worked



From left:

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Business **VOW**

new residential and custom homes, now they work mostly residential service and repair. "We handle anything from simple repairs to remodels, sewer lines and energy efficiency changes," Rick remarked. "We commit to showing up within a two-hour window of the appointment. If there is a delay, we pay the client \$5/minute up to \$300."

"We have had to do that occasionally," Iamie admitted.

Often the first contact clients have is with Mary Seivert, the nine-year "quarterback" of the team, who takes and dispatches service calls. Their six plumbers are licensed through the state of Texas and take continuing education classes to maintain their certification. "As well, we provide in-house training and specialized training in St. Louis, Missouri, at Clockworks," Rick said. With 24/7 access to a live person, usually Rick or Jamie, you can be sure your plumbing need will be quickly and accurately diagnosed and serviced.

Currently, it is peak season for water heaters and yard leaks. Spring necessitates work on sewer lines due to growth of tree roots. "Whatever type of plumbing need you have, if we don't have the answer, we will research and find it," Jamie said. "Our signature blue box trucks are veritable warehouses on wheels, carrying 98-percent of the parts we use. Occasionally, we have to order a specialized part. We firmly believe if we don't take care of our clients, somebody else will — that's a big part of why we respect their time."

Jamie is the past chairman of the board for the Duncanville Chamber of Commerce, and their business is a member of all the local chambers. All three of their daughters were educated in the Duncanville Independent School District and all have worked in the education field. Robin Bullock currently serves as interim superintendent for the Midlothian ISD. Regina Anderson, who works in Plano, and Leslie Smith, who works in Houston, both have their master's in counseling. "We are so proud of them and adore our four grandchildren," Jamie said. "Duncanville has been a good area for our family and our business."



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In The Kitchen With Shelly Strock

Since August when Shelly Strock's youngest child left for college, she has been an absent figure in her kitchen. "I've more or less retired from the kitchen. My poor husband, Bill, is hoping it's a temporary retirement," she explained. "What I do still enjoy is cooking for parties and small groups of friends. This house, which Bill insisted on designing with the kitchen in the center of things, is

great for entertaining."

When entertaining, Shelly relies on triedbut-true favorites to serve to her guests. "I think there's actually a state law here against entertaining without tortilla chips and the sacred trio of Tex-Mex: guacamole, queso and salsa," she expressed. "Hawaiian Ribs are a hearty favorite, summer or winter. The sauce can be made up ahead of time, and it goes nicely with Mom's marinade." NOW



MARINATED CHICKEN AND PEPPER KABOBS

MOM'S MARINADE:

1 cup sov sauce

1/2 cup red wine vinegar

1/2 cup red wine

1/2 cup olive oil

1/2 cup water

1/4 tsp. powdered garlic

1 tsp. powdered mustard

KABOBS:

Chicken tenders or strips, 1/2 lb. per person Bell peppers (red. vellow, green and orange). seeded and cut into chunks Bamboo skewers (use the short ones if you're not doing a sit-down dinner)

- 1. Combine ingredients of marinade.
- 2. Marinate chicken strips for 4 to 6 hours, then cut into bite-sized pieces. (I buy the bags of frozen chicken tenders from Costco, and if I'm in a hurry I just let them thaw in the marinade.)
- 3. Alternate chicken on the skewers with the pepper chunks.
- 4. Grill over medium heat 2 to 3 minutes on each side and serve.

HAWAIIAN RIBS

- 4 lbs. meaty spareribs (have the butcher cut them into small pieces)
- 2 jars junior apricot baby food
- 1/3 cup tarragon vinegar
- 1/3 cup catsup
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp. ginger
- Salt and pepper

- 1. Put ribs (meat side up) in a shallow baking dish and bake at 450 F for 15 minutes.
- 2. Combine the other ingredients, pour over ribs and bake at 350 F for another hour-and-a-half, basting every half hour

GUACAMOLE EL PINTO STYLE

5 whole avocados 1/4 cup onions, chopped 1/2 cup tomatoes, chopped 1/2 cup El Pinto Original Salsa Juice from a fresh lime wedge

- 1. Peel avocados, remove seeds and cut into large chunks.
- 2. Add onions, tomatoes, salsa, salt and lime juice to avocado and cut (with two table knives) it all together. Stop while it is still chunky, serve fresh.

SHELLEY'S CHEATER GUACAMOLE

- 1 pkg. prepared guacamole from the refrigerator section at the grocery store
- 1 whole avocado
- 2 Tbsp. salsa (any kind)

Splash of lime juice (fresh if you have it)

1. Cut the avocado into chunks and mix gently with the prepared guacamole, salsa and lime juice.

QUESO BLANCO

1 cup shredded Asadero. Chihuahua or **Monterey Jack cheese**

4 oz. diced green chilies

1/4 cup half-and-half

2 Tbsp. onion, finely chopped 2 tsp. ground cumin

1/2 tsp. salt

1 serrano pepper, finely chopped (optional)

1 Tbsp. cilantro, finely chopped (optional)

1. Put all ingredients in a double boiler; cook over medium heat until melted and well-blended, stirring occasionally.

Simple syrup (2 cups sugar dissolved into 1 cup hot water)

2 cups strong tea

1 cup lemon juice

1 cup pineapple juice

1 cup frozen strawberry juice concentrate

2 cups frozen strawberries

1 quart ginger ale

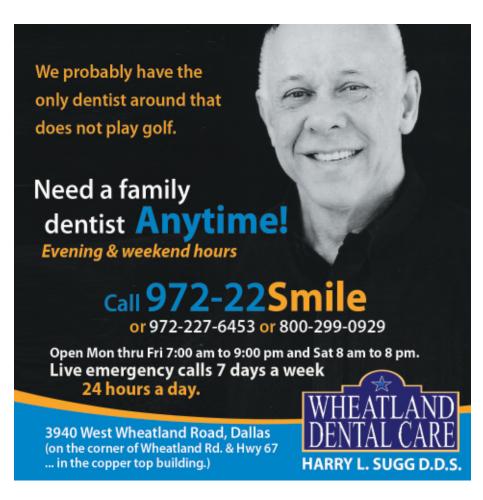
- 1. Mix first 5 ingredients.
- 2. Just before serving, add last 2 inaredients.
- 3. I like to freeze a can of mandarin oranges, the leftover strawberry juice concentrate and a little pineapple juice in a Jell-O mold. It looks pretty in the punch bowl and keeps the tea cold.

SASSY SARAH

4 parts vanilla vodka 3 parts rum 3 parts simple syrup

1. Shake over ice and serve in a martini glass with a single jalapeño slice.

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our Web site at www.nowmagazines.com.







Finance **NOW**



Put Your Tax Refund

It's tax refund season again. This year, if you're going to get a check from your Uncle Sam, why not put it to work to help you meet your financial goals?

Last year, the average tax refund was more than \$2,700, according to the IRS. The size of your refund, or whether you will get one at all, depends on your individual circumstances. But if you are going to get a refund, plan ahead for what you'll do with it. Here are a few possibilities:

Pay down some debts.

In these difficult economic times, you may be carrying a higher debt load than usual. If so, you may want to use some of your refund to pay down some of these debts. The lower your debt payments, the better your cash flow and the more money you'll have to invest for the future.

Build an emergency fund.

If you don't already have an emergency fund containing six to 12 months' worth of living expenses, you could use your tax refund to start one. Without such a fund, you may find yourself constantly dipping into your long-term investments to pay for unexpected costs, such as a new furnace or an expensive car repair. Keep your emergency fund in a liquid account — one that you don't draw on for your day-to-day expenses.

Help fund your IRA.

In 2010, you can put up to \$5,000 into your IRA. Consequently, if you received a \$2,700 refund, you'd have more than half of what you need to fully fund your IRA for the year. (If you're 50 or older, however, you can contribute up to \$6,000 per year.) You might not think that your \$2,700 would make much of a difference in the long run. But by investing your refund and giving it many years of growth potential, you could end up with a sizable amount.

Consider the following: If you put \$2,700 in your IRA, and you earned, on average, seven percent a year for 30 years, you'd end up with about \$20,000, even if you never invested another dime. If you put \$2,700 every year in that same IRA, again earning an average seven percent annual return, you'd end up with more than \$270,000 after 30 years. (These examples are hypothetical illustrations and do not represent any currently available investments.)

You'd eventually have to pay taxes on your earnings, typically when you make withdrawals at retirement. And if you qualified for a Roth IRA, you'd never have to pay taxes on your earnings, as long as you had your account for at least five years and didn't start taking withdrawals until you were at least 59 1/2.

Contribute to a Section 529 plan.

If you have children or grandchildren, you may want to establish Section 529 plans to help them pay for college. You can contribute virtually any amount, and the earnings grow taxfree, provided the money is used for higher education expenses. (Withdrawals used for expenses other than qualified education expenses may be subject to federal, state and penalty taxes. Contributions are tax-deductible in certain states for residents who participate in their own state's plan. Please note that a 529 college savings plan could impact a beneficiary's ability to qualify for financial aid.)

You may be tempted to spend your tax refund on things you want today — but, with a little planning, you can use it for things you need tomorrow. TOW

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Good Fats?

— By Leah Pittmon, D.C.



Most Americans have heard that eating fish is good for you because of the omega-3 fatty acids in it. Eggs from chickens that are fed an organic diet rich in omega-3 fats are now readily available. Many people even take a fish oil supplement. But most people do not know why these Omega-3s are so good for you.

Omega-3 fatty acids are a family of polyunsaturated fats which humans need but cannot make on their own. The omega-3 gets its name from the way the carbons in the fat are bonded in the ω -3 position. Important omega-3 fats in the diet include α -linolenic acid (ALA), docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). These are three fats the body

can not synthesize and so must be included in our diets. The body can make all of the other necessary omega-3 fats from ALA.

Omega-6 fatty acids are also necessary in the diet. These fats are derived mainly from vegetable oils such as: corn, safflower, sunflower, canola and soy. While these are necessary in our diet, the typical American takes in an excessive amount of these to the detriment of their health.

Our hunter-gather ancestors' diets consisted largely of a mix of meat, fruits and vegetables. These are all rich in omega-3s. This type of diet keeps the omega-3 to omega-6 fat ratio at an ideal 1-1 ratio — an equal amount of each. The typical American actually has an omega-6 to omega-3 ratio in the range of 20-1 to 50-1! This large imbalance often leads to health problems that can be severe.

There have been over 2,000 studies which have demonstrated a wide range of health problems associated with omega-3 deficiencies such as: learning disorders, depression, heart disease, autoimmune conditions, skin problems and low birth weight in infants. There are also a multitude of studies showing the benefits of increasing omega-3 fats. Omega-3 fats can reduce inflammation, help regulate cholesterol levels, fight cancer, reduce bone loss, help balance hormones and a whole host of other positive health benefits.

The good news is the problem is easily fixed by changing the diet! To decrease omega-6 fats, one needs to cut back on processed, fried and greasy foods. To increase omega-3 rich foods, include free-range meats, eggs, fish, certain seeds and nuts (example: raw walnuts), green leafy vegetables and flax seed oil. Shop wisely; many commercially sold fish are highly toxic with substances, such as mercury, and they can do more harm than good. One of the best and easiest ways to get omega-3s in the diet is to take a good-quality fish oil supplement. With supplements, you often get what you pay for. Most fish oils sold at grocery store drug areas are already rancid. A good rule of thumb is if it smells like fish, then it is already bad. Most health food stores carry a variety of different, high-quality fish oils, including ones especially made for children.

NOTE: Any supplementation or diet changes should be discussed with your health care provider.

Leah Pittmon, D.C., Pittmon Family Chiropractic Center





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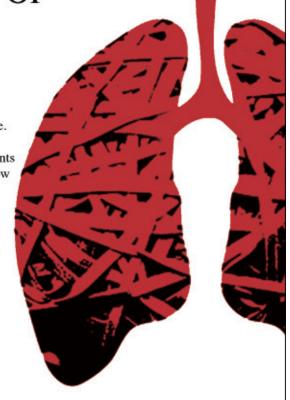
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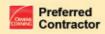
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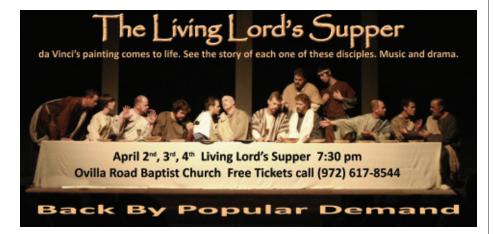
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Happening **M**

All Month

You Too Can Soar: noon-12:45 p.m., DeSoto Library. Free five-week series offered by Phyllis J. Bedford, author of *A Personal Journey: "Finding Wings with Shattered Pieces"* to help women manage their lives, change and loss.

Ongoing

New classes (photography, spin, spring adult sports) are being offered at the Cedar Hill Recreation Center. Register online at cedarhilltx.com or at Rec. Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd. (972) 293-5288.

Mondays

Parkinson's Group exercise class: 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville. Last Monday of the month: support group programs and discussion: 6:30-8:00 p.m. (972) 298-4556.

First Mondays

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

Second Mondays

Diabetes Support Group: 6:00 p.m. at Methodist Charlton. (214) 947-7262.

Tuesdays

Senior Access Tai Chai classes: 8:00-8:45 a.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center. Cost is \$6 to learn ancient art of combining exercise, stretching and balance. (214) 947-4628.

Wii games, chess, Cranium, dominoes and other games available for teenagers: 4:30-6:00 p.m. at CH Library. www.zulabwylielib.org.

Sound Options Pregnancy Center parenting class: 6:00-8:00 p.m. at 658 Big Stone Gap, Duncanville. Especially good for pregnant or new parents. RSVP to (972) 230-8101.

Second Tuesdays

Dallas Area Writers Group: 7:00 p.m. at CH Library. www.dallaswriters.org.

Wednesdays through April 14

AARP Tax Help: 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the DeSoto Senior Center, 204 Lion St. Bring last year's tax return, Social Security card and all documents necessary for completing 2008 tax return. Priority is senior citizens, but the preparers will help anyone as time permits. For more information, call (972) 230-5825.

AARP Tax Help at the Duncanville Library: noon-3:00 p.m. (972) 780-5050.

First and Third Wednesdays

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

Second Wednesdays

Cedar Hill/Duncanville Early Childhood PTA:

-Happening<mark>MOW</mark>

10:00 a.m. at Cedar Hill Hope Lutheran Church, 917 N. Straus Rd.

Thursdays

Sound Options Pregnancy Center parenting class: 4:00-6:00 p.m. at 658 Big Stone Gap, Duncanville. Especially good for pregnant or new parents. RSVP to (972) 230-8101.

Third Thursdays

Visual Artists of Cedar Hill (VACH): 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Creative Arts School, 1435 N. US-67 S. (at The Ranch in Cedar Hill). Open to any artist 18 or older.

Fridays

Walking program: 9:00-10:00 a.m. at Methodist Charlton Medical Center, conference room 6. (214) 947-4628.

First and Second Fridays

Line dancing: 11:00 a.m.-noon in the Methodist Charlton Medical Center auditorium. Reservation required: (214) 947-4628.

Second Saturdays

Baby Boutique Resale: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Sound Options Pregnancy Services, 658 Big Stone Gap, Duncanville. Formula and lots of gently-used baby clothes/items. (972) 230-8101.

Third Saturdays

Cedar Hill Star Party: sunset-11:00 p.m. at J. W. Williams Park, 1605 High Pointe Ln. (beside West Intermediate School). Bring your own telescope or use ours. (972) 291-1505.

Through March 27

The Zula B. Wylie Library in Cedar Hill is offering free GED preparation classes to provide developmental tools needed for reading, math, writing, social studies and science.

Attendees must be on an eighth-grade reading level or above to enroll. Limited space. RSVP to Diane Rayburn at (972) 291-7323, ext. 1313.

March 4, 6, 13

Methodist Weight Management Institute weight-loss workshop at Methodist Dallas. To register, contact (214) 947-0004 or www.methodisthealthsystem.org/weightmgmt.

March 6

Joint Celebration of Cedar Hill Recreation Center's 5th Anniversary and Neighborhood Services' Annual Citywide Block Party: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at CH Rec. Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd. Free children's activities, health fair, class information, entertainment, tours, giveaways and more.

March 10

Spring Open House at Canterbury Episcopal School: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. For more information, contact burksm@ thecanterburyschool.org or (972) 572-7200, ext. 145. www.thecanterburyschool.org.









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Happening WDW -

March 11

25th anniversary/reunion of the Texas Storytelling Festival at the city of Denton's Civic Center. Cedar Hill's Toni Simmons has been selected as one of 25 elite storytellers. Weekend passes, day passes and individual concert tickets are available at www.tejasstorytelling.com or by calling (940) 382-7014.

March 13

Therapeutic Riding of Texas (TROT) Spring Open House: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Gemini Farm, 1701 S. Duncanville Rd., Cedar Hill. Meet the students, staff, volunteers and horses. All staff are volunteers; organization run on donations. (512) 627-8489. www.trottx.org.

March 14

Daylight Saving Time begins.

March 15-19

Duncanville Parks and Recreation Spring Break Adventure Camp: 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. for ages 10-17. \$90/child includes outdoor excursions, horseback riding, canoeing, rock climbing, overnight camp and more. (972) 780-4970.

Bob Knight's Fieldhouse Spring Break Sports Camp: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. for boys/girls K-8th grade. Includes T-shirt, lunch, snacks, experienced instructors, onsite nurse and first aid. (972) 283-6111.

March 18-20

DeSoto Art League presents James Spurlock Art Workshops: 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at DeSoto Presbyterian Church, 212 W. Pleasant Run Rd. Cost: \$195/members, \$200/non-members. \$100 deposit due March 5. Limit 10/class. Additional workshop in Waxahachie March 25-27. For more information, contact (972) 217-1546 or sandy@sandyreese.com.

March 23

Current DeSoto freshman parent registration information meeting: 6:00 p.m. at DeSoto High School Auditorium.

March 27

Household hazardous waste collection: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in Duncanville High School softball parking lot. (972) 780-4900.

Ellis County Master Gardeners' Expo: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the Waxahachie Civic Center. Featuring varieties of landscape plants, vegetables and herbs. (972) 825-5175. www.ecmp.com.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.



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