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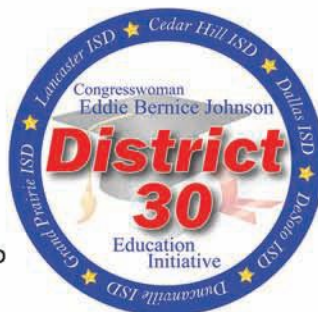
Choose to BE in DeSoto ISD!

Join us for the area Early Childhood Education Summit

Mark the date and sign up today for the **Embracing the Vision for Early Childhood Education Summit** on Saturday, March 21 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at DeSoto High School, 600 Eagle Drive.

This summit focuses on early learning in Texas District 30 with **Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson**, presiding. The summit includes participants from her district including parents; six public school systems - Cedar Hill, Dallas, DeSoto, Duncanville, Grand Prairie and Lancaster; Head Start programs; daycare providers; pediatric and medical professionals; education advocates and many more who wish to be part of the movement!

The event is designed to develop dialogue between all parties to take away the best practices that can be used across District 30, and beyond. The Summit agenda includes a national overview by Dr. Libby Doggett, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education; breakout sessions for all participants to engage; closing session report out of findings. Interested individuals can sign up on the link from their area ISD or Congresswoman Johnson's website.



DeSoto ISD Pre-K Round Up - April 6-8

DeSoto ISD will host a Pre-K Round Up for DeSoto ISD students to register on Monday, April 6 through Wednesday, April 8 at the DeSoto Town Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. Starting in the fall, Pre-K students will attend the new **DeSoto Discovery and Design Early Childhood Academy** which will be located at the current Amber Terrace Elementary following a conversion this summer!

A child is eligible for Pre-K if the child is age 4 on or before Sept. 1 and any of the following: on free- or reduced-meals; child is non-English speaking; child is homeless; a military child; or child of state conservatorship. Check the district website for registration materials needed for eligible Pre-K students!

Ruby Young 50th Anniversary

Ruby Young Elementary will celebrate their 50th Anniversary on Friday, March 20 at the school. A public celebration will be held from 4-6 p.m. for all alumni, parents, former teachers and community members who are invited to attend this wonderful event. Please call the campus for details at 972-223-6505.

Calendar

March 9-13 - Spring Break

Tuesday, March 17, 7:30 a.m. - Coffee & Conversation, Ruby Young Elementary

Friday, March 20, 4-6 p.m. - Ruby Young ES 50th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, March 21, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. - Early Childhood Summit, DeSoto HS

Monday, March 23, 6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting, Board Room

Friday, April 3 - Good Friday Holiday, No School, All ISD Closed

Tuesday, April 7, 7:30 a.m. - Coffee & Conversation, Northside Elementary

Saturday, April 11, 6 p.m. - Education Foundation Gala, Hilton Garden Inn

NEWS TO KNOW

DeSoto ISD - Celebrate Texas Public Schools Week

DeSoto ISD will be hosting parents, students, community members and the public to celebrate Texas Public Schools the week of February 27 through March 6. Join us for open houses at each campus and much more!

Making schools safer

DeSoto ISD has made great strides in creating secure facilities - single marked entrances, Raptor system, ID badges, etc. Starting after spring break, most DeSoto ISD schools will have a new system in place during school hours for guests to enter at the main entrance. All doors will be locked and guests must use a intercom system at the door to contact the front desk, state their business at the school and be buzzed in. Cameras will allow the front desk to see who is at the entrance. This new measure will prevent any unnecessary traffic into the school and further ensure safe campuses.

Hall of Honor Nominations

Nominations will be accepted January 30 through April 1 for the DeSoto ISD Hall of Honor. Forms are online for both the DHS Alumni Hall of Fame and Distinguished Service Award categories. The Hall of Honor Induction Ceremony will take place Friday, May 1 at DeSoto High School. For more information, visit www.desotoisd.org.

Coffee & Conversations

Join Supt. David Harris for candid conversations about your campus and DeSoto ISD.

- Tuesday, March 17 - 7:30 a.m.
Ruby Young Elementary
- Tuesday, April 7 - 7:30 a.m.
Northside Elementary

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EDITORIAL

Managing Editor, Becky Walker

Southwest Editor, Beverly Shay

Editorial Coordinator, Sandra Strong

Writers, Lisa Bell . Dennis Brock

Sydni Massey . Virginia Riddle. Betty Tryon

Editors/Proofreaders, Pat Anthony

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla

Artists, Kristin Bato . Julie Carpenter

Morgan Christensen . Martha Macias

Brande Morgan . Shannon Pfaff . Felipe Ruiz

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Rose

Photographers, Amy Ramirez

Amanda Rooney

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ON THE COVER



After 26 years of marriage, Patrick and Jacquelyne Harvey still love holding hands.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Happy change of season ...

I'm in a quandary. Ready for a change of season, I wonder, which season is my favorite? I love winter's pristine whiteness and her dead colors — the dull tans and golds and supremely faded gray-greens. I love spring's warmth, the re-greening and potential for life. I love summer — the beach, the sun, the sand. I love fall — the colors, the returning coolness. Which to pick as favorite?

My quandary is: I am one of those people who has to use every crayon in the box. Nothing and no one can be left out. One of the more pleasant aspects of living in Texas is four distinct seasons, which means most colors in the box have representation in nature. The choice is tough. So rather than leave out three of the four seasons — I'm going with: Soup is my favorite season.

Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
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Acton Teachers Help Design New School

Acton Elementary School teachers and staff met with architects from Huckabee to begin designing their new building. Huckabee representatives brought preliminary designs and spent two days taking input from Acton staff about their preferences for the new school.

Charlesetta Washington, a teacher at Acton for 12 years, says Huckabee architects welcomed her requests. As a kindergarten team leader Ms. Washington asked for separate playgrounds for younger children and older elementary students. Ms. Washington says she is also excited about plans to build a garden where her students can grow vegetables.

The new Acton is the first construction project for the \$102.545 bond overwhelmingly approved by Duncanville voters in November 2014. Groundbreaking is scheduled for June.

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Painting

— By Lisa Bell



The parks and recreation building in Waxahachie has a new face — or rather several new faces. A welcome addition to the building, lead painter Aryn Dalton transformed the brick and stucco wall into a larger-than-life depiction of sports figures and symbols. Within the painting, sub-scenes create a unique design sure to capture the attention of visitors.

Aryn, a Cedar Hill resident, has always loved painting. His grandmother first influenced him, allowing a 10-year-old boy



LARGE

access to her studio and supplies. Learning from her expertise, he produced his first oil painting of a seascape.

Painting and sculpture came easily to Aryn, but he also loved drafting. In his senior year of high school, he took a two-hour art class, a two-hour drafting class and study hall. At that point, his weekdays consisted of pretty much drawing all day.

A Texas resident for 20 years, Aryn grew up in a small Arkansas town. Straight out of high school, he and some friends headed to the closest big city where he knew someone — Dallas. Although he had initially planned to move to Georgia and pursue a fine arts degree, at the last minute, he changed his mind. Also a musician, he wanted to see what might happen in that arena. For about a decade, Aryn toured around and worked odd jobs.

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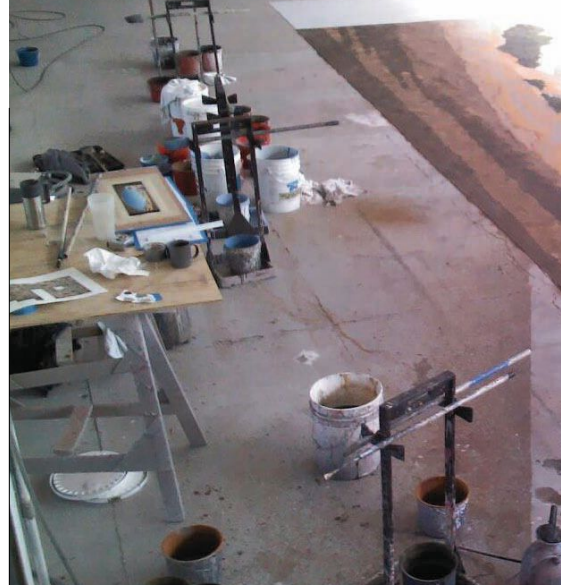
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"I was lucky enough to land a job at DS Arts," he said. "That's where I cut my teeth, learning the trade of commercial art." The company creates custom scenery and exhibits. In addition to new painting skills, he also developed leadership abilities during his 12-year career there.

With the downturn in the economy, the company underwent a series of layoffs five years ago. Aryn was the last to go. "Being laid off opened a lot of doors. I'm really glad it happened," he said. Maintaining a good relationship with his former employer, he launched himself as a freelancer. Working with EyeCon Studios, which produces murals for commercial and residential clients,

**"ANYONE CAN
LEARN TO DRAW. IT'S
JUST PRACTICE.
Art NEEDS TO
SAY SOMETHING."**

gave Aryn amazing opportunities. Having never created a mural before, he had to learn how to paint them. His experience in backdrops helped. He already had the skill set and eye, but the owners mentored him in techniques they had learned working toward fine art degrees. Some of these were methods he had never thought about using. He's thankful for great mentors while painting fine art outdoors.



Although they don't keep him busy 365 days a year, he has worked on 20-30 murals with them. Sometimes his former employer gets busy and hires him for projects. In his spare time, Aryn works on personal pieces. A culmination of his love for painting and sculpting, he fills his art with symbolism in conceptual, abstract expressions capable of speaking to any person looking at it. Often, people with little or no art background see unique things in his work.

Aryn's wife, Cheri, is a fashion designer. The couple share studio space in their home. With a 5-year-old daughter, Scarlet, Cheri has less time available for creating her masterpieces. Nevertheless, they are taking steps to fulfill the dream of eventually having a boutique business featuring hand-picked artists.

Drafting skills enable Aryn to use dimensional design techniques when needed for a project. The ability to draw a design complete with specs, makes the process easier later. Producing art on a building offers challenges. Going from a smooth canvas to rough and sometimes

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varying surfaces is only the beginning. For the sports mural in Waxahachie, the team moved between brick and stucco. But the elements play a big part in the finished product.

In Texas, about two months of the year are great for painting outside — and unfortunately, they are usually in the studio during those months. At 105 F, paint dries almost immediately, making gradient colors difficult to achieve. During cold weather, paint colors mix where the painter does not want them to combine. Aryn takes the adversity in stride. Regardless of any obstacle, the mural painting team must achieve a quality equal to that of painting on



canvas in a climate-controlled studio. Fortunately, he is meticulous in his work and gets things done, expecting the same from those he leads on projects. "You take issues as they come, jumping in with confidence in your abilities," he said.

All of Aryn's personal artwork has its own ideal attached to it. "Anyone can learn to draw. It's just practice. Art needs to say something," he said. Each piece starts with a concept — a visual idea in mind. Then the piece grows and evolves, sometimes completely changing to a new ideal. The end result may look nothing like he originally planned, but often more wonderful. "That's the fun in it," Aryn said. "Keeps it interesting."

Recurring themes run between his work, stringing together his style and branding, yet keeping them one-of-a-



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kind. The themes focus on relationships, life and death, or struggles to find who you are. He tries to keep the themes broad, inviting viewers to see what is most meaningful to them. Leaving the interpretation open to some extent makes his work speak at different levels and distinctive for each person.

Aryn incorporates the love of sculpturing into personal paintings. His paintings have texture, but also may include bits and pieces of metal objects or something else he found somewhere. An assemblage sculpture in his studio includes parts of three different trees.



The trunk came from one tree. Branches from a second tree were painted to resemble bones. Leaves from a third tree, were painted black with the finishing touch of a symbol of eternity on the trunk. In the piece, Aryn captures the concept of rebirth.

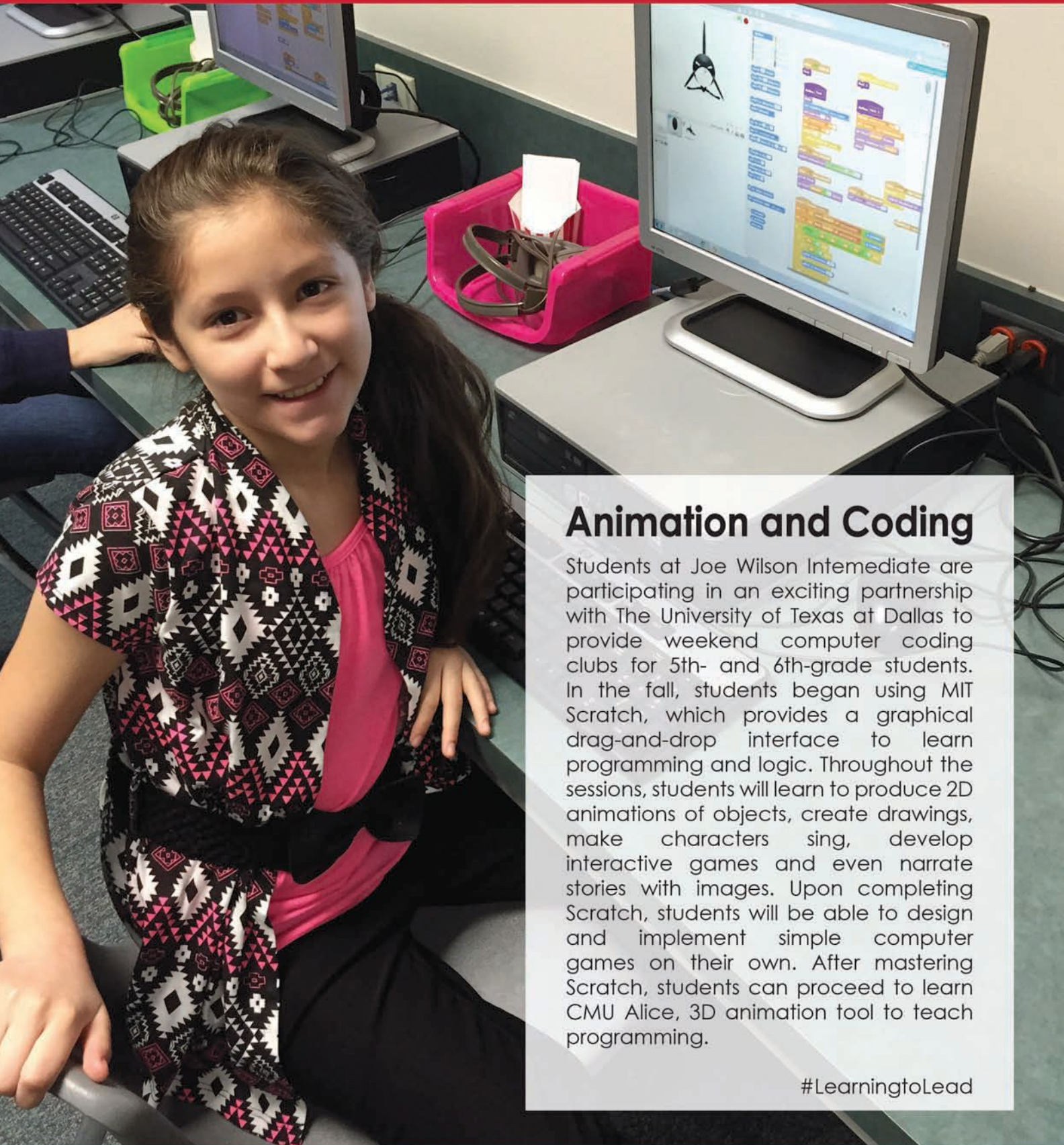
Although Aryn didn't make it to Georgia and a fine arts degree, he's learned well from working with other artists and honed his skills over time. His path took a detour but turned out better than he expected. Much like his art, the road of life took turns that led him to paint large and widely share his gift. **NOW**



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Students at Joe Wilson Intermediate are participating in an exciting partnership with The University of Texas at Dallas to provide weekend computer coding clubs for 5th- and 6th-grade students. In the fall, students began using MIT Scratch, which provides a graphical drag-and-drop interface to learn programming and logic. Throughout the sessions, students will learn to produce 2D animations of objects, create drawings, make characters sing, develop interactive games and even narrate stories with images. Upon completing Scratch, students will be able to design and implement simple computer games on their own. After mastering Scratch, students can proceed to learn CMU Alice, 3D animation tool to teach programming.

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WATER CHANGES EVERYTHING

— By Beverly Shay

Water, especially clean, drinkable, available water, has taken on a whole new meaning for students at Brandenburg Intermediate School in Duncanville. The sixth-grade classes especially have come to realize water simply cannot be taken for granted. Texas has been experiencing drought for a while now, but not one grade school student has to walk for miles just to bring home water, nor are they subjected to water-related disease.



“Did you know that every 15 seconds a child in Africa, especially in Ethiopia, dies due to water-related disease?” Diana Iraheta asked, with all the sincerity of a child finding out an untenable fact. “Donating money to build a water well makes me feel like I am helping,” she added. Brandenburg has partnered with Go Standard Nursery and Primary School in the Kumi District of Uganda, and the students here are raising money to build a water well there.

Last year, the sixth-grade students of Debi Scott and Courtney Crowe began a problem-based learning unit to present information and solutions regarding water problems throughout the world. “The children were so moved when they realized children their age in other countries did not have clean water. They wrote a proposal based on their research and presented it to our principal, Mr. Cyprian, asking if they could build a water well,” Debi Scott shared. One of

the great motivators was watching videos produced by H2O for Life, with whom the school is now partnering to build a well that will serve two villages. The well, which will cost \$3,850, will provide water for 400-600 students for seven to 10 years with proper maintenance.

H2O for Life's mission statement is: "H2O for Life educates, engages and inspires youth to learn, take action and become global citizens. We provide students with a unique and valuable learning experience through service-learning opportunities focused on the global water crisis." The organization does this "for schools, youth groups and faith-based organizations to raise awareness about the water crisis, while taking action to provide funds for water, sanitation and hygiene education for a partner school in a developing country."



When the children made a presentation of their research to their parents, the media from the school district was present, as well. "One student donated \$20 he had gotten for his birthday, and from there, students started bringing in donations. The children gathered \$500 to donate throughout last school year. Now our total is up to \$1,900 — we're halfway there!" Debi related. "We have until the end of the school year to come up with the total amount. But what really amazes me is how the children have brought in coins and a dollar here and there from their own individual endeavors. We hope to have the parents come to eat as a

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fundraiser in the spring and do another fundraising event, as well. For example, in May we're having a Walk for Water, where those involved will carry two 20-ounce bottles of water while walking the four-block perimeter of the school to visualize how many people around the world have to carry water back to their homes, because there is no water source in the village," Debi explained.

Not only are the children raising money for water elsewhere, they have thought of ways to conserve water themselves. "We can turn the water off while we are brushing our teeth or take shorter showers," volunteered Jose Sembrano, another sixth-grader in Debi Scott's class. "The videos made me teary-eyed," Jose admitted. "Some of the children in other countries don't live to the age of 15. They walk miles to collect



“WE HAVE LEARNED OTHERS DON'T HAVE THINGS WE TAKE FOR GRANTED.”

water and then need to use pills to make the water clean.”

“One out of 10 kids in Ethiopia dies before he or she turns 5. Most of them can't even go to school, because they spend about 60 percent of their day getting water,” Diana explained. The sixth-grade students looked at two different projects in 12 different countries through H2O for Life. They could have adopted a hand-sanitation project, but what really captured their attention was simply providing water. The school in Uganda was assigned to them, and they have embraced their new African friends wholeheartedly, especially once they saw their photos.

“I am looking forward to seeing smiles on the faces of those children when they get their well,” Jose added. While the Brandenburg students have seen pictures

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of the school, the students in Uganda do not have the technology to Skype or even Facebook with students here. Once the students saw the type of well their funds will build, they got even more excited.

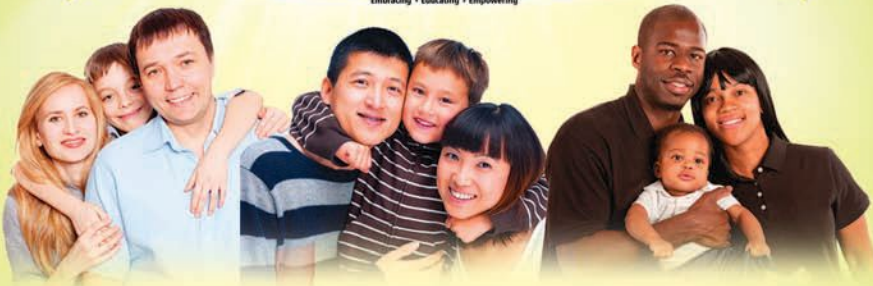
"This project has given me the opportunity to talk about persuasive writing as a means of touching others," Debi added. "And I have noticed the students are expressing more gratitude about what they have." Her lessons in persuasive communication have worked, as Diana and Jose demonstrated while recounting information they have gleaned through their research. Diana was impressed with statistics, such as 1 billion people in the world do not have access to clean water. Jose was more impacted by the changes a water well will bring to the lives of the children in the village, citing that having water will improve their hygiene and lessen the likelihood of illness. He also noted they will be able to spend more time in school, since they will no longer have to travel to find and carry water home.

Diana and Jose both have more of a world perspective than some other students might. Diana's parents are from El Salvador. Jose was born in the Philippines and shared how his grandparents had worked very hard

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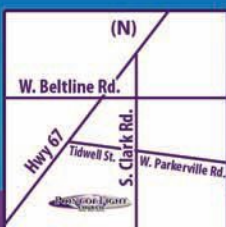
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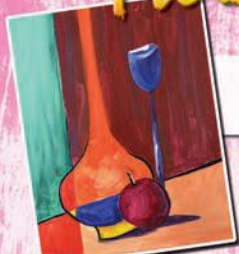
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Sixth-grade teachers Debi Scott and Courtney Crowe are as excited as their students about funding a water well in Uganda.

to raise money to send their children and grandchildren to America, where they might have a better chance at life. Perhaps their backgrounds lend a bit more understanding and urgency to the thought of raising money to better someone else's life.

"I was surprised at how much money the students have raised so quickly," Diana remarked.

"And it was mostly pennies, nickels and dimes. I was surprised the whole school got involved," Jose was quick to share.

"This is the power of project-based learning," Debi explained enthusiastically. The students work together but also take turns at creating or managing projects, while all of them do research. The teamwork they experience means they are learning from one another and discovering their own leadership skills. They have also learned how to include everyone.

"I wonder now why we waste money on nonessentials. Really, all we need is shelter, food, water and clothing," Diana concluded. "We have learned others don't have things we take for granted." Diana thinks she may become a doctor or a lawyer or maybe even a technical engineer.

Jose doesn't really know what he wants to be when he grows up, but for now, he is intent on seeing the children at their partner school in Uganda get their clean water. "After all," Jose intoned, "water changes everything!" **NOW**

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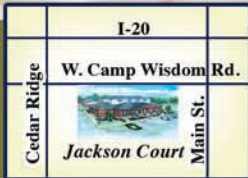


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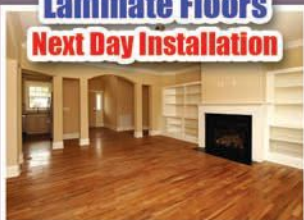
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STORIES ON THE WALLS

— By Sydni Massey

If the walls in Patrick and Jacquelyne Harvey's Duncanville house could tell stories, they would share tales from across Africa that span many centuries. Their 2,700-square-foot home, built in 1985, houses a museum-worthy collection of pieces from Malawi, Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana.

Leslie M. Thomas, Jacquelyne's godmother, began the collection and promised Jacquelyne would inherit it one day. Thinking the inheritance would come after Leslie's passing, Jacquelyne was surprised when she received an assortment of Kente cloth, vibrant threads depicting each clan's history, in the mail in 1982. Since the collection has grown so much over the decades, their home is running out of spaces to store items. "I began finding pieces, also, when I was studying at Howard University," Jacquelyne said. "Being located near a museum,



AT HOME WITH PATRICK AND JACQUELYNE HARVEY



many of the pieces that were not antique-quality were sold to private collectors in nearby shops."

Jacquelyne's collection is evident upon entering the home. Guests are instantly transported to a different time and culture. Ceremonial drums, headdresses and heritage carvings flank the doorway into the living room. Two favorite pieces, Mo and Jo, stools carved from ebony wood, rest near the living room fireplace inviting guests to sit and hear a story from the walls of this room. From the leather furniture with tribal accents to the deep



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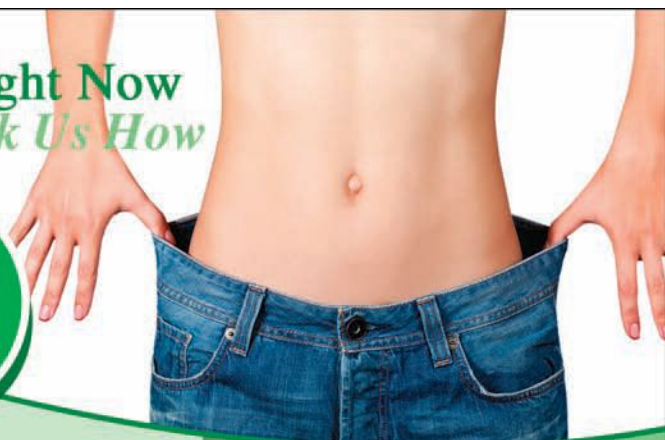


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shade of red on the walls, everything in the living room purposely draws the eyes up toward the masks hanging on the walls. The Harveys' collection includes death masks, known for not having eyes; sun and moon masks, representing harvest time; and king masks, a heavy

mask worn by a great leader and fierce warrior. Each mask has a purpose and story, many of which Jacquelyne has carefully researched. She has spent many years studying each piece in her collection.

"While these masks are authentically handcrafted, they have never been used in ceremonies," Jacquelyne said. "It would be considered sacrilegious to sell or transport a complete ceremonial piece. All of these pieces are beautiful to look at but, also, serve a real purpose. This is the opposite of American culture where many of the things we have are pretty to look at but have no practical use."

Past the living room is the family room, where the majority of their art collection is displayed. Built-in shelves and cabinetry from the original construction of the home line one of the walls. They hold fertility fans, sculptures, ancestral poles, bridal combs and other, more delicate



pieces Jacquelyne has collected. The majority of the couple's downtime is spent relaxing in this room, reading a book or watching television. "This room is one of my favorite rooms in the house," Patrick said.



"It is the gathering place when all our family comes over. If I'm not working in my office or working out in our workout room, this is the room that I'm in. It is a relaxing place."

Each piece in the Harveys' home has a place, but that doesn't mean it stays there all of the time. When Jacquelyne, now retired, was teaching, she would take

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most of her collection down from the walls and shelves each February to share with students at her school. Now that she is retired, the collection has a permanent place on the walls, but she still tries to share her knowledge of African history and art as much as possible. She has been a guest lecturer for a friend and brought in her collection.

The importance of the couple's art and collections played a part in their home-buying search. In 2001, the Harveys began shopping for a new home. Already Duncanville residents, they didn't expect to find another home in town to fit their needs. With only one in Duncanville on the list, the main search took place in DeSoto. However, when the Harveys walked into what later became their current home, Jacquelyne knew she had found her dream home. She began imagining her masks on the walls and the shelves filled with carvings and statues. "We looked at five houses," Patrick said. "Four of them were in DeSoto, and we thought we would be living there. Then we found this house — Jacquelyne's dream home — and I knew we needed it."

As soon as the Harveys moved in, they pulled up all of the carpet and replaced it with tile. They also installed new cabinetry in the kitchen. Other than those changes and updating paint colors throughout the house, Patrick and Jacquelyne left the house as close to the original state as possible. "They stopped making houses like this," Patrick said. "It's very seldom you find two identical houses in this neighborhood. That's the great thing about Duncanville. The houses may be older, but they are quality. In years to come, people are going to value that more."

Passionate about their home city, Patrick serves as Duncanville's city councilman member at-large. Although Patrick's career has been in city government over the last 30 years, working for the cities of Dallas, DeSoto and Glenn Heights and now as the finance director for Seagoville, he never imagined he would serve on a city council. Not political in nature, the decision to run surprised Patrick almost as much as it did Jacquelyne. He wanted to help preserve Duncanville's small-town charm and improve the city's quality of life. With a full-time job and his council duties, Patrick spends a lot of time working in his home office.

While Patrick is busy with city business, Jacquelyne enjoys traveling with friends, most recently going to Paris. She's been to Alaska, Rome and Canada, walked down the Damascus Road and seen the Vatican. One day soon, she hopes to travel to Africa to see the homeland and creators of her beautiful collection. "Right now, it's too much of a safety risk to travel where I want to go to in Africa," Jacquelyne said.



When they do step away from work and travel, they can most likely be found gathering with family. Patrick's brother decided to move away from their hometown, New Orleans, Louisiana, and into the house directly across the street. Jacquelyne's family lives nearby in DeSoto, Lancaster and Wylie and come to visit often. The Harvey house is the congregating place for the family.

"We are really big on family," Patrick said. "Our family is very family-oriented. We enjoy being around each other as often as we can." **NOW**

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Growing Your Own Veggies

— By Virginia Riddle

Fresh takes on a new meaning when vegetables are homegrown and harvested. No matter where you live, you can enjoy the epicurean and nutritional benefits with even a small investment of time, effort and money. March is the perfect month to begin planning your gardening project that will produce veggies well into the fall. Let's get started by answering a few easy, but important questions!

Who?

Gardening can be beneficial exercise for all ages and abilities. Because it's family- and neighborhood-friendly, everyone can get involved. Children who are picky veggie eaters may be willing to try new choices they have grown themselves.

Older gardeners, who have valuable gardening knowledge, may appreciate raised beds that eliminate stooping and kneeling.

Opportunities abound for all ages to enjoy this pastime. Consider coordinating gardens with neighbors to enlarge your vegetable choices and share the harvest.

What?

Endless vegetables are easy to grow depending on the season of the year. If you are a first-time veggie gardener, keep things simple. Plant easy-to-grow vegetables or your favorites that have been recommended by neighbors or nurseries in the area. Spring and summer plant choices include all varieties of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, summer



squash, peas, beans, okra and nearly all herbs. Swiss chard is a green that will survive the Texas summer heat.

Where?

Most veggies require a sunny, well-drained area, but if that's not possible, try a potted garden or a hydroponic system in a sunny patio or balcony area. One patio tomato plant can produce a plentiful and continuous supply when planted in a pot. Local garden centers have a large range of pots. You can also create your own pot by cutting drainage holes into the bottom of a potted soil bag, splitting open the top of the bag, removing about half the soil, rolling the bag's sides down, and finally, planting a vegetable inside. Hydroponic systems are pricier but can yield produce for years to come. And since most vegetable

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plants blossom, they are attractive when incorporated into favorite sunny flower beds.

If you are carving a vegetable plot out of your backyard, have your soil tested. Use either a commercial kit or ask your county extension agent for advice. Almost any type of soil can be amended to give good plant growth. Your choice of mulch and fertilizer depends on soil type and available supplies.

What kind of watering system is available for your location? For small gardens or potted veggies, a watering can or diffused sprayer may work well. However, for larger plots, you may wish to lay soaker hoses on timers.

Invest in great time-saving gardening tools and keep them sharpened, cleaned and organized throughout the years to come. Simple hand tools are available, as well as powered tools.

When?

Planning begins now. However, planting out-of-doors needs to wait until the danger of a late frost or freeze is over. One of the best indicators of that date is when you notice buds on native-to-Texas pecan or mesquite trees. Vegetables, even tomatoes, can be started from seeds planted in starter trays purchased, along with quality potting soil, at your local nursery. Just follow the

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directions on the seed packet. The trays are easy to set outside during warm days



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How?

Now is the time to choose between organic or nonorganic vegetable gardens. Start a compost pile and investigate appropriate choices for fertilizer and pesticides that work best in your area. Your local garden nurseries, county extension agents and Master Gardeners are great resources for information that will help you whether you decide to go organic or not.

If your veggie garden is going to encompass more than a few square feet, rent or purchase a tiller from an area garden center or hardware store. Break the soil and turn the subsoil at a depth of about 6 inches. Remove rocks, make



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furrows for proper drainage, plant seeds or seedlings and lay down a 3-inch layer of mulch for weed control and water retention.

Plan your plantings so mature, larger plants will not shade smaller ones. Larger plants, like tomatoes, may need to be



staked as they grow. To save space, beans, peas, melons and squash can be grown on easy-to-construct trellises, cages or A-frames.

Check your garden daily for insects and pull weeds that crowd your plants, taking water and nutrients from the soil. Water when moisture cannot be felt 1-inch deep into the soil and fertilize on

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recommended cycles. Harvest veggies when they are at their ripest point or before damaging weather, such as hail is predicted.

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- **Most veggies can be frozen, canned or dehydrated for future use.** Research methods online or with your county extension agents. Follow food-handling safety tips exactly.

- **Donate produce to a local food bank.** Their clients love to see fresh vegetable offerings. Your charitable donations may be tax deductible — check with your income tax specialist.



- **Share with friends and family.** They will know it is a gift from your heart!

Growing your own vegetables can be a fun, educational experience for family, friends and neighbors, and the physical exercise and healthy eating can elevate your spirits after our cold winter days. Welcome spring by enjoying watching your new veggie garden thrive! **NOW**

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Roger and Betsy Vance and the entire staff at Champions Cove enjoy working with the fun residents who live there. Betsy was honored as Woman of the Year for 2014 in Duncanville.

Comfortable and Fun Retirement Living

Champions Cove offers a delightful and secure transition into an independent senior lifestyle. — By Beverly Shay

Champions Cove has been designed as your first independent senior living/retirement home. Six floor plans of luxurious apartments, with one or two bedrooms and one or two baths, vary in size from 736 to 1,264 square feet. "Our residents must be senior adults," Betsy Vance explained. Roger and Betsy Vance co-manage the independent living facility.

Both Betsy and Roger worked in apartment management for 18 years as vice presidents with the largest national firm in the U.S. at the time. Betsy was the first woman president of Pinealles/Clearwater Apartment Association. Roger was chairman of the National Apartment Association, serving in education, and past president of Florida Apartment Association.

"Roger had the opportunity to join WindRiver Companies on August 23, 2004, when Champions Cove was under construction,"

Betsy recalled. On November 23, 2004, the senior living center was certified to open. "Many original residents are still here. One-third of our residents have been here six years, and one-half have been here over four years. Currently, all of our 150 apartments are rented. In fact, we have been full since 2007," Betsy said. "Our residents don't leave by choice, only by need. You should begin looking for an apartment well in advance."

Managing senior living is very different from what Roger and Betsy experienced previously. "Before, we only saw residents when there were problems. Here, we see our residents more than their families do," Betsy explained. "We feel we have an extended family. Someone is always having coffee in the lobby area. People who come to see us always comment on how stylish and beautiful the facility and grounds are."

Business **NOW**

The property is regularly updated to provide exceptional housing, and residents enjoy 24/7 on-call maintenance service and in-house housekeeping service. Long-term, caring staff is an integral part of Champion Cove's success. "Our diverse group of residents from all over the United States can join in some 39 events a year planned and executed by the staff. Every day of each week, there is something they can participate in — from games and bingo to themed monthly potlucks," Betsy remarked.

Residents can invite guests to Fiesta, Mardi Gras, Oktoberfest and Margaritaville. "We decorate several days ahead, so our residents and their families can anticipate the first-class events," Roger added. "For Mardi Gras, we make 16 gallons of red beans and rice from scratch. Other events are catered. We have breakfasts and cocktail parties." Champions Cove has a free coffee bar, an exercise room, aerobic classes, two libraries, a theater and an area for church services. Approved Home Health, Lone Star Credit Union, Ben Franklin Pharmacy and The Cove Salon, operated by Phyllis Buttram, are located on premises with set business hours.

"Most of our residents thought they were fairly social, until they find what is available here," Betsy shared. "People's lives change when they move here. They flourish and make new friends. Residents develop their own interest-based clubs or gatherings. They give each other birthday cards and look after one another." Safety is a priority in this gated community. The front doors are only open during business hours, and all apartments have interior doors, which remain locked. Optional covered parking and garages are also available. Trash is collected from their front doors twice weekly.

"We have a monthly ice cream social for birthdays, anniversaries and new members," Betsy mentioned. "One resident donated our popcorn machine, and another donated an organ for the chapel. We share tears and laughter every day, but much more laughter. This is a rewarding place for all our staff to work." **NOW**



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School Board President Warren Seay Jr., a DeSoto High School and SMU alumnus, poses 'pony up' with James Proche and Kevin Thomas, who signed letters of intent to play collegiate football at SMU next year.



Duncanville High School High Hats and drumline march in 2015 Texas Inaugural Parade in Austin, proudly performing for Governor Greg Abbott who graduated from DHS in 1976.



Little Tiger cheerleader cheers at the varsity Tiger game at Trinity Christian School.



DeSoto ISD eighth graders learn about the health science classes from current students, plus HB5 endorsements, academic programs, extra-curriculars and clubs at the Eighth-grade EXPO.



Young women are learning about robotics and basic engineering in Erika Johnson's class at Duncanville High School.



PROforma is welcomed by area Chambers with a ribbon cutting.



Toderika L. Green's mom gives her a congratulatory hug at her graduation from DeSoto ISD's WINGS program.



Jake and Cliff Stewart prepare to grill at their home in Bent Creek.



Nearly 400 participants joined in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration sponsored by the Zula B. Wylie Public Library at the CHISD Performing Arts Center for a program full of grace and honor.

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grow, taxes on the growth will be deferred until you withdraw them. You can withdraw your money any time, but if you do so before age 59 1/2, you will have to pay taxes and a 10-percent penalty. When you become 70 1/2, you must begin withdrawals from your Traditional IRA. Note: If you are covered by a retirement plan, your income will dictate whether or not your contribution is deductible.

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Free AARP tax assistance for elderly/low-income citizens: Wednesdays: 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., DV library. Bring 2013 tax return, SSNs, 1099 and W-2 forms.

March 2 — 13

Spring break tech activities (ages 13-18): DS library. Starts with raffle drawing; ends with review challenge on *Divergent Trilogy*. Detailed info: (972) 230-9661.

March 7

Restock Food Pantry Community Walk: 8:00 a.m., Alan E. Sims Rec. Ctr. \$10/person. Register: cedarhilltx.com/pard.

CH Rec. Center's 10 Year Anniversary and Citywide Block Party: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. See what is offered, children activities, connect with city organizations.

March 8

The Color Half Marathon (8:00 a.m.) and 5K (8:30 a.m.) benefitting Dogwood Audubon Canyon, CH State Park. Pricing/registration: www.colorhalf.com.

Charity car/motorcycle show: DV

Outreach: 1:00-5:00 p.m., 206 N. Main St.

March 12

12th Annual Flavor of Duncanville Expo: 4:00-8:00 p.m., Duncanville High School. Over 80 local businesses and restaurants. Silent auction, free medical screenings/door prizes. Adults/\$10; students/seniors (65+)/\$7. (972) 780-1900.

March 17, 24

DeSoto High School culinary arts: full-menu dinners by reservation only: 5:00-8:00 p.m. One hour only. Cash only. Reservations: (972) 230-0726.

March 19

Congestive Heart Failure Workshop: 3:00 p.m., Methodist Charlton. Nutritional ideas, physical activity options, recognizing depression. (214) 947-9694.

March 19 — 21, 26 — 28

Duncanville Community Theatre's *Talley's Folly*: 8:00 p.m. (972) 780-5707.

March 21

Fairies in the Garden Tea Party: 2:00 p.m., CH library.

March 25

Clearing Your Public Record program:

6:00-7:30 p.m., DeSoto library.

March 26

The Desoto Art League: 7:00 p.m. Desoto Presbyterian Church, 212 W. Pleasant Run Rd., Desoto. Artist demonstrations, refreshments. www.desotoartleague.com

March 27

Lecture Luncheon Spring Fashion Show (presented by Belk's): 11:00 a.m., Clarion Hotel, DS. Members and their children model. Lunch included. (817) 417-0476.

March 30

SW Dallas Co. Parkinson's Group: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Trinity UMC, DV. Grace Presbyterian Village therapists present LSVT Big and Loud. (972) 298-4556.

Women's Wellness & Balance Workshop:

6:30 p.m., CH library. Laura Morlando offers 5-minute stress relievers/tips. Register: (972) 291-7323 ext. 1313.

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



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In the Kitchen With Marc Grizanti-Evans

— By Beverly Shay

Growing up with a mom from Alabama and an Italian father, Marc Grizanti-Evans' cooking style is usually either Italian or good old Southern. "Many of my recipes have come from my momma or from friends, and I also enjoy watching cooking shows and adapting the recipes to my own style," Marc shared. Marc also made a point to spend time with his Granny Marcella, when she was in her 90s to learn how she made her awesome buttermilk biscuits without a recipe.

After dealing with two bouts of cancer some years back, Marc knew he was on his way back to normal and was looking toward the future when he fixed a spaghetti dinner for friends and family. **NOW**

Granny Marcella's Biscuits

2 cups self-rising flour
1/2 cup canola oil
1 cup buttermilk

1. Preheat oven to 515 F (check oven temp with a thermometer).
2. Sift flour into a large bowl. Make a small hole in the flour; pour oil into hole. Pour buttermilk into the same hole. Slowly mix with hands or spoon by turning flour into liquid. Do not mush. Mixture should be wet, yet somewhat elastic. If mixture is too wet, add more flour. If it is too dry, add more buttermilk.
3. Prepare a cast-iron skillet by putting 1 Tbsp. oil into skillet, and placing it in the oven. When oil is hot, but not smoking, remove skillet from oven.
4. Pour small amount of oil on dough. Using a large spoon, scoop out small amounts of dough. Using your hands, roll dough into biscuit shape and place in hot skillet. Allow biscuits to rise 5-10 minutes.

5. Bake biscuits 16-18 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve with butter and honey or top with Colby Jack cheese or cinnamon sugar.

Legacy of Love Lasagna

15 oz. ricotta cheese
24 oz. Sargento mozzarella cheese (divided use)
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 large eggs
1/2 tsp. each: salt, ground pepper and Italian seasoning
1/4 cup fresh basil
3-5 cups spaghetti sauce of choice (I use my secret family recipe.)
1 8-oz. box Skinner lasagna, uncooked
1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a 13x9-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, combine ricotta and 1 1/4 cups mozzarella with next 6 ingredients.
3. Pour 1 cup spaghetti sauce into the baking

dish; lay 3 lasagna noodles over the sauce; cover with more sauce. Spread 1/2 cheese mixture evenly over sauce. Repeat layers. Top with remaining noodles and sauce. Cover completely with remaining mozzarella. Sprinkle lightly with parsley.

4. Cover with foil and bake 45 minutes. Remove foil; bake an additional 15 minutes, or until cheese is bubbling. Allow to sit for 10 minutes before serving.

Perfect Pasta

12 quarts water
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp. sea salt
1 Tbsp. Lawry's Seasoned Salt
2 lbs. pasta of choice (I use Divella Bucatini 6 or De Cecco spaghetti no. 12.)
3 cups spaghetti sauce, or to taste
2 cups Parmesan cheese
2-4 Tbsp. dried parsley
Several leaves fresh basil

1. Fill a large pot with water; bring to boil. Add next 3 ingredients. Allow water to boil 10-15 minutes. Add pasta; immediately use tongs to separate pasta for a few minutes, until it begins to cook. Cook Bucatini for about 6 minutes. Cook spaghetti about 10-12 minutes. Drain in a large colander. Do not rinse with cold water.
2. Place several ladles of spaghetti sauce into pot; immediately add drained noodles. With tongs, lightly coat noodles with sauce. Serve pasta on individual plates, topping it with Parmesan, a sprinkle of parsley and a fresh basil leaf.

Cosimo's Cabbage

3 Tbsp. canola oil
1 white onion
3/4 cup minced garlic
2 lbs. ground beef
1 Tbsp. dried parsley
1/2 tsp. coarse ground pepper
3 tsp. garlic salt
2 Tbsp. sugar
1 head red cabbage
4 cups water

1. Place oil in a 10-qt. pot over medium heat. Sauté onions and garlic until soft and slightly translucent. Add beef to mixture and brown. Add all seasonings and stir well.
2. Chop cabbage; add to pot and mix well. Add water and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-high and cover. Cook 40-45 minutes, until cabbage is tender. Add more water, if desired. Serve over white rice.

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