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ON THE COVER



*Jillian Key takes Look Up
to Manhattan with
Kids Who Care.*

Photo by Vanessa Polozola.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Friends!

This is that time of year when people all around Joshua, Crowley and Burleson are springing into action. All sorts of deadlines are approaching, keeping professionals of every style on their toes. The first half of the month requires high-energy preparation for the fun we call spring break. At one time in Texas, this seasonal intermission from studies gave family farms an opportunity to plant for summer crops. Now, it gives families time to reconnect and strengthen themselves for the growing season that

lies ahead. We are much like the people Rudyard Kipling once wrote about:


*Our England is a garden,
And such gardens are not made
By singing: — 'Oh how beautiful,'
And sitting in the shade.*

I hope our community receives just the right amount of sun, rain and wind to support our endeavors. And may each of you find a resting place every now and then, just to sit and watch your garden grow!

Have a wonderful month!

Melissa

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MAKING H



PEOPLE APPY

— By Melissa Rawlins

This month, a lithe seventh-grader from Crowley's H.F. Stephens Middle School will be in New York City. Jillian Key is hoping to visit Juilliard, the college she's dreamed of since she was 7 years old. Her mission in The Big Apple is to perform in a musical called Look Up with a troupe of over 50 students from Joshua, Burleson, Crowley and many other communities surrounding Fort Worth. Jillian and the other actors and actresses have been fundraising and saving their allowance money since last fall to pay for their trip.

They've also been rehearsing to make an impact from the stage. Jillian has especially worked to overcome stage anxiety, which translates into a quiet, calm stage presence that does not always do justice to the passionate ideas expressed in *Look Up*, the musical written by Kids Who Care alumni, students, artistic staff, guest writers and associates — including award-winning filmmaker and spoken word artist, Gary Turk. In fact, it is his essay spoken aloud in "Power Down Look Up," one of Jillian's favorite scenes in the production. This is the 22nd original work from Kids Who Care, and during the emotional musical, audiences are treated to hilarious commentaries on technology-driven realities, such as the overuse of selfies, the value of emoticons and the plight of social media addicts.

Look Up was produced by the Kids Who Care 2015-2016 Resident Company. The students involved receive college preparatory arts training by industry professionals and have the opportunity to apply to be part of the KidPower Leadership training offered exclusively at Kids Who Care. The Resident Company has toured *Look Up* since September 2015, with performances live at the Scott Theatre, Sundance Square, Cook Children's Hospital and special engagements with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. In addition to local performances, the company starts their study tour this month and will perform the musical in Manhattan.

"When I'm at home and there's nobody watching me, I will dance, sing and act so loudly, with so much energy. I'll even stub my toes on things, I'll just be dancing so much," Jillian said. "I want to do that on stage better."

Ever since she joined KWC last August, Jillian has received coaching in all of the performing arts, from dancing to singing to acting. She's growing in other areas, too, including time management, self-confidence



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**The mentoring
at KWC
empowers
the students
to know their
voices are
relevant.**

and communication skills. The more tenured members of her troupe prioritize and stay organized, so they experience very little stress. Even when they travel to perform, they have developed methods for getting schoolwork done and maintaining excellent grades.

Alvaro Aguilar, a 15-year-old Burleson resident who is a student at Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts, shares 10 hours of his time each week with KWC — not counting performances. “The people are so lovely and so talented,” Alvaro said. “Kids Who Care gives me the opportunity to do what I love — make people happy.” Through three years with KWC and encouragement from family, Alvaro has learned how to manage his time to rehearse, take additional dance and vocal classes

and still make straight A's. His family enforces a rule that when Alvaro has a B in any class, he must bring it up in order to perform.

Centennial High School student Emily Friedman manages several A's and a couple of B's, while also devoting seven hours each week to KWC. "I want to contribute my talent in any way possible to the organization," Emily said. "And I



would like to take whatever I can out of the experience, so I can work better and harder to become a better actor, singer, dancer and leader."

A brother-sister duo, Sumner and Jacob Bulgarelli, are each homeschooled and give five to six hours weekly to be part of KWC. "I enjoy the positive atmosphere," 16-year-old Sumner said. "Also, I feel challenged to do my best and more. I gift this time to myself to recharge emotionally and physically from long hours of school." Her 13-year-old brother finds KWC to be fun and exciting. He's a good student outside of the troupe, because he works hard — even bringing schoolwork to the theater. If they are running a scene he is not in, then he does his schoolwork.

The Thiebaud sisters, Evie and Macy, spend six hardworking, fun and intense hours at KWC, weekly. Nine-year-old

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- Dr. Susan Andrews, Chief of Staff,
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Evie, a student at The Academy at Nola Dunn, is not allowed to participate in the theatrical preparatory work, unless she keeps her grades up in school. "Since I'm only traveling on weekends and very few school days, I'm able to do my schoolwork on most school nights," she said.

Her sister, a 12-year-old student at Elder Elementary in Joshua, always maintains her schoolwork. "People ask me, 'Isn't your musical theater getting you backed up on homework?' But I reply, 'No, Kids Who Care encourages me to do my schoolwork along with musical theater,'" Macy said. "I am keeping straight A's, and I listen to my teachers. I think Kids Who Care influenced that because of the leadership, goal setting and fundraising skills I learn. These skills won't just help me now, but will help me in my future."

While in Manhattan, Sami FitzGerald will be doing some of her homeschool



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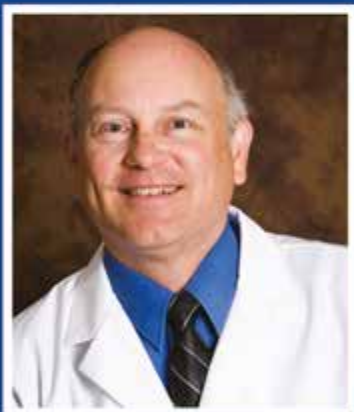
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Jenn Key makes life happy with her daughter, Jillian

classes online. A 15-year-old from a family of entrepreneurs living in Mountain Valley, Sami said, "Learning and growing my mindset and helping others are part of everyday living for me. I receive as many blessings, if not more, than I give to Kids Who Care." During the year, when she's not on the study tour, Sami manages her time to get her schoolwork done first, before doing fun things with friends.

Her fellow theatrical students welcomed Jillian into the fold. They sometimes have chaperoned sleepovers when they're not too tired from studying, practicing and performing all week long. The mentoring at KWC empowers the students to know their voices are relevant, and that it's important to make things safe for others. An exercise the students do weekly, as part of their leadership practice, has had a great impact on Jillian. "We always hold hands in a circle and pass the squeeze and say, 'Keep a positive thought because a positive thought cannot be denied.' It's really easy for me when we're performing because the others are always there for you if you're about to fall, or forget to come in with your line!"

In the beginning, Jillian had to rely upon people who were in the scenes before or after hers for help. Not so much anymore. As her mother, Jenn, likes to say, "Life is full of ad lib, isn't it, kid?" **NOW**



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The ARMY GUY

— By Virginia Riddle



What do car racing, mud runs and 5K runs, basketball drilling, baseball coaching, physical fitness training and recruiting all have in common? The answer is one person — U.S. Army Staff Sergeant William Tryon. A native of Glen Rose, Texas, SSG Tryon and his wife, Mary, also a native of Glen Rose, are the parents of two sons and are active members of their community. “People are very supportive of the military here. There were lines of people waiting for me when I came back home from deployment. As a recruiter assigned to the Burleson Recruiting Station, there’s lots of pressure to maintain a high standard in the community,” SSG Tryon said. “Even when we’re off duty, we’re still the Army guys.”

He and his fellow recruiters are the go-to guys for an area that stretches from Burleson to Itasca and “everything in between.” “We have a very large impact on communities and work with 30-plus schools in this area now,” SSG Tryon stated.

They work with JROTC and ROTC units on campuses, make presentations at schools and special events such as the National Robotics Week at The University of Texas at Arlington Research Institute and participate in veterans’ ceremonies. As a recruiter, it’s his job to help young men and women decide if service in the U.S. Army is the right career move for them. SSG Tryon also helps each prospect through the enlistment process until the recruit reports for Basic Combat Training. “We look for the total soldier conception in a recruit — grades and a capability to perform on schedule — and we interview them with their family to find out if they qualify under the Army’s more stringent rules. Recruits have to pass background checks and be smarter and more intelligent,” SSG Tryon explained.

Recruiters are experienced soldiers who know what will be expected of newly minted soldiers. SSG Tryon enlisted



in the Army upon his graduation from Glen Rose High School and has served for 15 years, three of which have been at his current duty station. His basic training was taken at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. At Fort Eustis, Virginia, SSG Tryon received training in aviation (helicopters). He then served in South Korea; at Fort Drum, New York; two tours in Iraq; at Fort Stewart, Georgia; one tour in Afghanistan; and is now stationed in Burleson.

Along the way, SSG Tryon has taken advantage of one of the military's greatest assets and picked up some college credits and skills that can be used in the civilian world. "Getting some college credits is almost mandatory in today's Army," he stated. Army career paths include health care professionals, lawyers, engineers, electricians, IT professionals, drone or helicopter pilots and maintenance crews, linguists, musicians and chaplains. Soldiers can qualify for Special Forces and the elite Rangers.



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Thursday nights at the recruitment station find SSG Tryon and fellow recruiters holding a series of nine classes in which they take prospects through physical fitness drills, marching, standard drills and ceremonies and first aid. "We give them the basics. Ninety percent are future soldiers waiting to report, and this program, which is unique to this station, gives them an idea of what to expect in basic training, which will still be a major shock," SSG Tryon explained.

He stays physically fit through a number of activities. SSG Tryon is joined by other recruiters, friends and family members in runs, such as the Armageddon Ambush Mud Run in Fort Worth, runs in Glen Rose, the Foam Glow 5K in Fort Worth, and he placed fourth in the Heart Heroes 5K. A former high school basketball player, SSG Tryon still shoots the hoops. He played on a team while in South Korea, and now he and his fellow recruiters annually play the Rio Vista High School varsity basketball team "just for fun." "They hold a pep rally, and lots of people attend. We've played them close but haven't won yet," SSG Tryon said.





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Coaching his sons in basketball and T-ball with the Burleson Youth Association has been a fun, physical time for SSG Tryon. “We made team shirts and provided water bottles from the station for them. All the guys were learning and having fun, and in the end, we won some games,” he said proudly.

Some weekends from March through October annually find SSG Tryon on a dirt track competing in factory stock car racing. “We’ve been racing in my family for a while,” he said. “I bought my first car while in high school, and I raced while I was in Georgia.” His car has a Regal body and an ’80s Monte Carlo look. “We shopped the junk yards for parts,” SSG Tryon explained. He’s placed high in races and been in the Top 10 points. “That’s pretty significant, since I often work away from home on weekends and can’t race,” he said.

Racing cars is a family event. “My crew chief is my cousin, and he is the



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expert. The rest of the crew is family and friends, and other folks who are racing that day help out. I like the speed and the environment — the family feeling and the community of racing. It's fast, fun and similar to flying helicopters," SSG Tryon explained.

His sons raced for a while in go-carts. "Racing, or any other activity that you do with your kids on the weekends, keeps them out of trouble. On Saturday nights, we are racing together," SSG Tryon stated. This month, he hopes to be introducing his new car to area tracks at Kennedale, Waco and Boyd. "These are all local tracks, and they do have rules. Safety gear is required. Our cars have to pass inspection before we can race," he explained. While someone else has built his new car, SSG Tryon and his crew repair it during the week between races.

U.S. Army General Douglas MacArthur once said, "Duty, Honor, Country. Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be." From the time the Army was formed, with the first shots at Lexington and Concord during the Revolutionary War to today, soldiers have joined the ranks to protect everyone's freedom.

"As recruiters, we have an impact on the future of the Army, and we are able to change the lives of a lot of young men and women in this community. That gives me great pleasure," SSG Tryon said. **NOW**

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— By Carolyn Wills

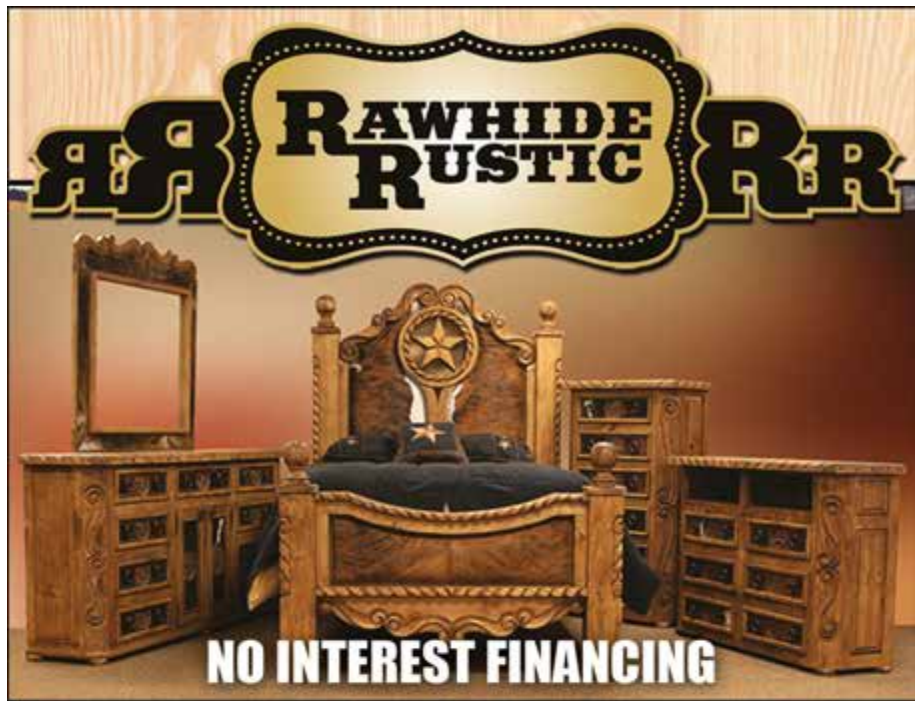


Perhaps it is the commanding brick fireplace in the living room or the fresh smell of homemade cinnamon rolls, or it might be the spacious bay-windowed kitchen nook doubling as a schoolroom that, in many ways, makes Bart and Crystal Thom's home a modern day "Little House on the Prairie." True, 1,800-plus square feet would have seemed a mansion to the Ingallses, but like its pioneer predecessor, the Thom's home echoes of deep connections to community, history and, above all, to faith and family.

Bart and Crystal moved to Burleson in 2005 when Crystal accepted a teaching job at Kerr Middle School. "We had been living in Arlington, and it had become so busy, we were thrilled to move to Burleson," she said.

Even more exciting was the discovery of a new three-bedroom, all-brick home in a great family-friendly neighborhood. "We were driving around looking at houses," she recalled. "This one had just been built, and when I saw the kitchen through the window, I fell in love."

Through the years, their house has evolved, and the family has grown. Crystal is now a stay-at-home mom, talented photographer and her children's homeschool teacher. Bart and Crystal have two sons, 12-year-old Miles and 3-year-old Marshall, plus a beautiful daughter, 9-year-old Murphie. And there's Tank, the family's beloved Jack Russell Terrier-Miniature Pincher mix who, despite his small stature, thinks he's a big



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dog. The back porch and yard are Tank's domain and a magical playland where the kids spend a lot of time.

Thanks to a very special design style, the home reflects each of its family members, as well as many who came before. "Many of our belongings have been handed down," Crystal explained. "Bart and I love history. Even if something is new, we want it to look like it's had a long life."

At the home's center is a living room with a vaulted ceiling and tall wood-burning fireplace. "It's my favorite room," Bart smiled. "After work, I enjoy coming home to family, a comfy chair and a fire in the fireplace."

In addition to the sofa, chairs and coffee table, the living room is filled

with heirlooms and photos, including two end tables that once belonged to Crystal's great-grandmother. "You can still see initials on the surface and marks from where crossword puzzles were done and magazines were laid," she said with a smile. "Those are cherished memories." Other treasures include a shelf made of wood salvaged from Crystal's grandfather's garage, books once belonging to her mother and grandfather and a cotton puller from Bart's great-grandparents.

Behind the sofa, a wall arrangement displays family photos, many printed on canvas and taken by Crystal. "I love photography," she said. "I started with our kids, and then people began asking if I would photograph their families and

special events." With as many as nine photo sessions in a weekend, her passion practically becomes a full-time job in the spring and fall.

The living room is flanked on one side by the kitchen, laundry room and eating area and, on the other side, by three bedrooms and two baths. "The kitchen is my favorite room," Crystal shared. "It's the place where people gather and the area for our homeschool."

The large, oblong kitchen features a diagonal, light-colored ceramic tile floor, to-the-ceiling wood cabinets and a huge island. A state-of-the-art crushed granite sink (an anniversary gift from Bart) is complete with accessories like cutting boards, a strainer and a gorgeous brushed nickel faucet.



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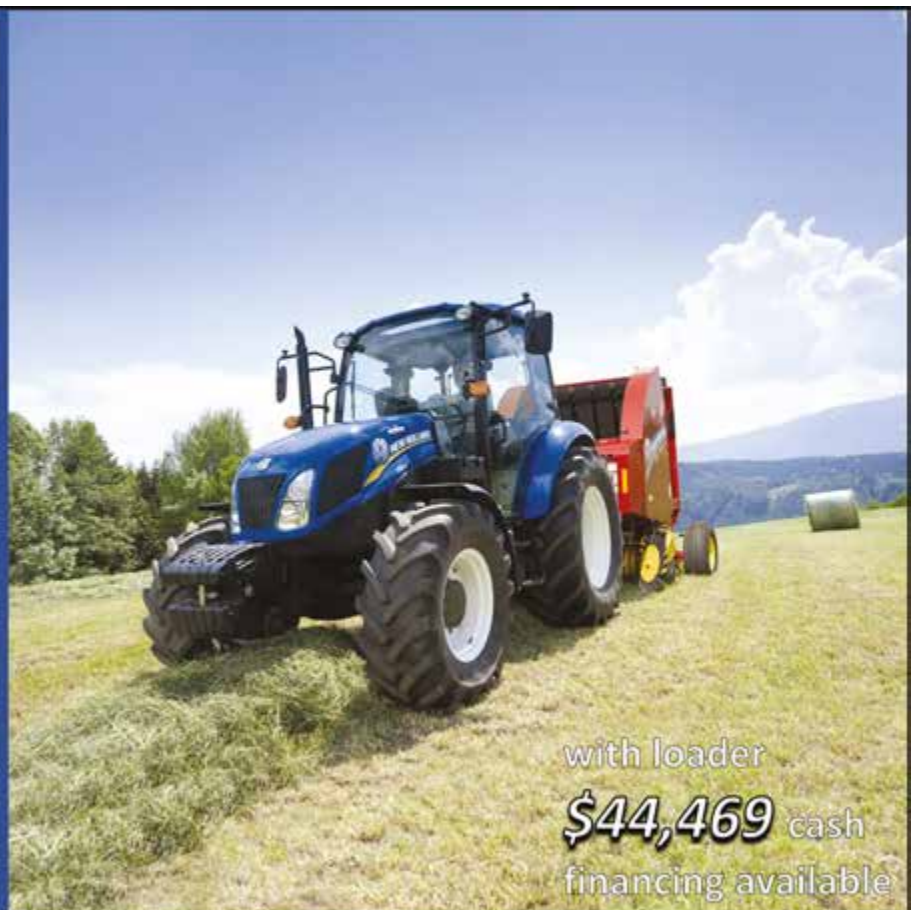
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The eating nook/schoolroom, framed by the front bay window, is topped by an octagonal tray ceiling. A large table is used for both eating and studying. Crystal has added a bright turquoise chest of drawers for storage and a whimsical wall-mounted baby bed for displaying the children's art.

"The kitchen has tons of storage, and I enjoy cooking," she said. About a year ago, though, when Murphie's severe allergies were confirmed, the family's diet changed dramatically. "She's allergic to dairy, nuts, wheat, eggs and beef," Crystal explained. Their organic, whole food diet made this transition easier. Fortunately, the Thoms enjoy gardening. "Our compost actually originated at my grandfather's house," Crystal continued. "We're not self-sustained yet, but we have two small gardens and have grown tomatoes, peppers, herbs, squash and greens."

The bedrooms are located on the opposite side of the house from the kitchen. Miles and Marshall's room is 'all boy,' with bunk beds, sports memorabilia, computer and LEGOs. "Miles has played soccer since he was 4," Crystal said. "Like Bart, he's also a 'builder of all things' and loves gears and anything mechanical." Meanwhile, Marshall adores his older brother. "He thinks Miles hangs the moon," she smiled.

As a Christmas surprise, Bart and Crystal redecorated Murphie's room last



December. Murphie had grown tired of “little girl” pink and brown, it seems, and had asked for a white, black, gold and navy theme. To her delight, it arrived as a special gift.

The spacious master bedroom with its tray ceiling trimmed with molding features furniture from Crystal’s great-grandmother, a mirror from her grandparents and an antique washstand, which once belonged to Bart’s grandmother. The upholstered and tufted headboard was made by Bart and Crystal, and next to the bed, is a quilt stand. “One of the quilts is from Bart’s grandmother,” Crystal said. “It was her last one, and I’m so honored she made it for me.”



Clearly, Bart and Crystal stand united when it comes to family and history. A self-taught “tinkerer,” Bart grew up taking radios, clocks and watches apart just so he could put them back together again. “The first thing I took apart was my sister’s Easy-Bake Oven, and it’s still apart,” he said with a smile.

“He’s actually very impressive,” Crystal said. “He’s a Jack-of-all-trades and good at anything that needs fixing. Our friends and neighbors love to bring broken lawn mowers and computers to him.”

Bart especially likes old clocks. “We’re fortunate to have one that was handmade by Crystal’s grandfather after he returned from the Korean War and another that belonged to my grandmother,” he shared.

The Thoms are native Texans. Bart works as a tactical communications specialist and disaster district liaison for the Texas Department of State Health Services, and before that, he spent 16 years with the Tarrant County Sheriff’s office. He’s four years older than Crystal, and the two met in church when she was in the fifth grade. Married now for 16 years, these two, clearly and above all, are devoted to faith, family (past and present) and to each other. **NOW**

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— By Melissa Swedowski

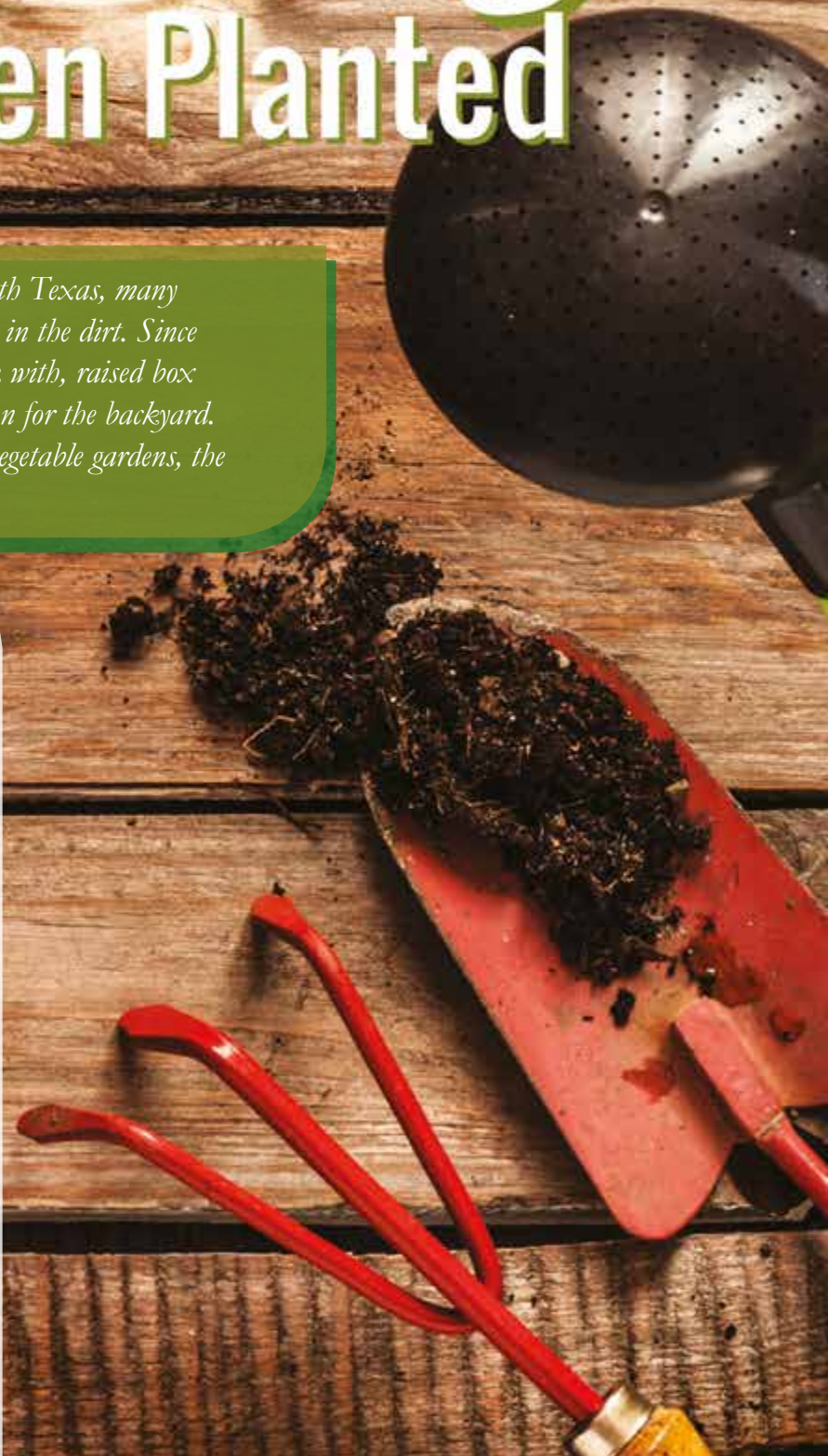
As spring unfurls its sunny beams across North Texas, many are ready to get back outside and get their hands in the dirt. Since most of the soils in the area are difficult to work with, raised box gardens offer a creative, as well as versatile, option for the backyard. From small, square boxes to large, rectangular vegetable gardens, the choices are limited only by your imagination.

Before building, determine the amount of useable room you have available. Consider how many plants, flowers or vegetables you want inside the raised garden and the square footage that can be allotted. Planter boxes, the self-contained version of garden boxes, can be placed on concrete or grass, while raised beds are best in the yard.

Material Requirements

As interest in home improvement projects has grown, so have the options. Raised beds can be made with lumber, stone, concrete blocks or almost any other material, even burlap sacks. The simplest way is to create a raised pile of soil, which gets the plants away from the not-so-good native soil and promotes good drainage. The real investment will be in the choice of soil, and in this area of Texas, ideal soil is a mix of minerals, sand, clay and organic matter, and can include a quality compost.

Pressure-treated wood or cedar are the top options for raised garden boxes, since both are easy to work with and durable against natural elements. There's also "construction heart" redwood that is exceedingly rot-resistant. Pine is a popular choice by the do-it-yourself





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crowd, but humidity and direct sun take their toll on any structure. Always pre-treat and seal the wood you select. Balance out durability with budget constraints to choose the right wood for you.

A word to the wise: You will need saws, drills, clamps, wood glue, measuring tape, paper, pencil, screws, wire cutters, shovel, staple gun, level, bird netting and/or row cover. Most raised beds are weekend DIY adventures, but stopping multiple times for a trip to the home improvement store could extend that. If you don't have large table saws, purchase pre-cut lumber that will only require sanding and sealing.

Construction

Using raised beds means growing more in less space with less work. Read seed packages to determine how much space is required for each plant, so you can lay out the garden correctly. Wider and



deeper rows need less water and produce more, while more plants can be planted in a rectangular bed than in a long narrow bed measuring the same square footage. For a garden of plants and/or flowers, best results will come with breaking up the sod, removing it to eliminate weeds, and tilling the soil, which especially helps clay soil.

Vegetables generally need eight hours of direct sunlight to have a good harvest, so make sure you pick a location in your yard that can supply that. Make it as level as possible, well drained and near a water source. Build the frame and mark the location. Move the lumber and dig 1-inch deep holes for posts. Put the lumber back in place, and attach it to the posts. Loosen the soil to about 12 inches deep, allowing for proper drainage.

Mix the topsoil with some humus, sand and manure inside the frame, then rake it until smooth. Choose your veggies, lay them in the box based on spacing requirements and dig a hole big enough for the root ball. Plant it, fill it with soil, and then water thoroughly. Use stakes, if there is a need, and add mulch to the base of the plants for an extra boost. For this part of Texas, tomatoes, green beans,



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squash, corn, peppers and cucumbers are common, but be sure that the last freeze has occurred and the soil is slightly warmed up before planting.

In a more limited space, craft a waist-high planter box that measures 6 feet long, but only 22 inches deep and 12 inches wide. This also allows for adjustment in budget, since the frame can be made from pine wood, while only the box needs to be made out of cedar. You can have room for multiple kinds of vegetables, although in smaller quantities than with the raised-bed style.

If you prefer the full planter box style, fasten the boards using galvanized screws, since they are less likely to rust, in a rectangular shape. Put the bottom board inside the box and attach it. Create four or five drainage holes in the bottom of the box, add a layer of nylon or vinyl screen on the bottom to protect the wood, and then prime, paint or stain it. Add a thin layer of gravel to help with drainage, and then add the soil.



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Flowers

If the garden is in the shade, consider using the very hardy Chinese Wild Ginger, or even the Begonia *semperflorens* Kaylen, which shares a lovely shade of burgundy. For smaller, less showy flowers, try *dianella tasmanica*, with wide spike-like leaves outlined in bright white.

When the full, hot Texas sun hits in the summer, several flowers can make your raised garden as beautiful as during the spring. From the Black-eyed Susan to the Victoria Blue Sage, colors abound. Lantana comes in a number of colors, while Dwarf Mexican Petunia brings in the lavender shade, and there's the always popular Autumn Sage as well as the Pink Skullcap.

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The star attraction is the Indiana Dunes, which is 15,000 acres of beaches, prairies, wetlands, savannas and forests, 70 miles of trails and 15 miles of sandy beaches along Lake Michigan. The dunes area of Indiana draws bird watchers all year, but especially during the

spring and fall migrations when many of the 369 species of birds found in the dunes are present. Flowers carpet the landscape during the spring, while the leaves turn bright shades of red, yellow and orange during the autumn. Summer is when beach lovers flock to the shore to build sandcastles, play volleyball and relax with a good book. Winter has its own charm, with the dunes getting used for sledding and cross-country skiing. People come from all around to view the mountains of snow and ice that form in Lake Michigan, which the locals call shelf ice.

The Indiana Dunes is actually two parks — the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Indiana Dunes State Park. The national lakeshore is home to great beach sites and the historic Bailly Homestead and Chellberg Farm, as well as the Century of Progress Homes, which were futuristic





homes built for the 1933 Chicago World's Fair and then transported by barge to the Indiana Dunes. People can drive or walk past the homes year-round or arrange to tour them during the annual tours in October. The national lakeshore is also home to Pinhook Bog, which is believed to be the only true bog in Indiana. Visitors can traverse the bog on a floating boardwalk and see insect-eating plants and other wonders.

The state park features The 3 Dune Challenge trail, which can be tackled any day of the year. To conquer it, a person must hike a special 1.5-mile course,



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climbing Mount Jackson (elevation 176 feet), Mount Holden (184 feet) and Mount Tom (192 feet). These are the three highest dunes in the park. Some parts of The 3 Dune Challenge trail feature 40-degree slopes, so each step is that much more challenging. In the sand, it's common to take two steps forward and slide one step back.

In the nearby town of Beverly Shores, be sure to stop at Bartlett's Gourmet Grill & Tavern for gourmet food in a roadhouse setting, or get a pizza from The Rolling Stonebaker, a pizza truck that parks in Beverly Shores and at the European Market, which is an open-air market open from May to October in the nearby town of





Chesterton. Chesterton is also home to the gourmet burger restaurant, Octave Grill, and the acclaimed Italian restaurant, Lucrezia. And Chesterton is a mecca for antique shops.

A 20-minute drive gets you to downtown Valparaiso, with a downtown park featuring a summer splash pad and an irresistible tourist trap — a bronze statue of popcorn king Orville Redenbacher. Sit on the bench next to Orville, who called Valparaiso home, and get a souvenir selfie. Valparaiso's downtown is also home to great shops and art galleries, and great dining spots like Don Quijote Restaurant, one of only a few Spanish restaurants in the

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Just outside of Valparaiso, be sure to visit the Taltree Arboretum Railway Garden and Broken Wagon Bison Farm. At Taltree, the trains run daily from April to October, but the arboretum trails are open year-round. At Broken Wagon, people can arrange a tour or take part in the open tours at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays from June through September. Visitors can see bison up close, learn about them and purchase bison jerky and other products in the farm store.

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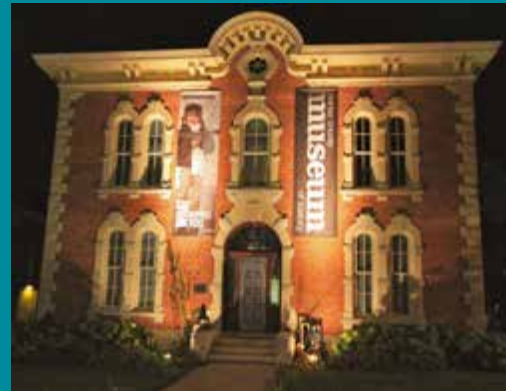
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leaving out of Porter County Regional Airport in Valparaiso or take a boat tour or charter fishing expedition into Lake Michigan from the marinas in the city of Portage? There are many other attractions to round out an Indiana Dunes Country adventure, like visiting Valparaiso University to see the famous Chapel of the Resurrection and to tour the university's Brauer Museum of Art.

Valparaiso is also home to the Porter County Museum and the historic Memorial Opera House, which has a full schedule of live entertainment. Chesterton's Brown Mansion is another historical site not to miss. The 49er Drive-In Theater in Valparaiso is one of only about 300 drive-ins left in the nation, while Portage 16 IMAX offers visitors a chance to experience the power of an IMAX movie.

A lot of visitors stay in Indiana Dunes Country and take side trips to places like Chicago or Northern Indiana's Amish country. For more information about the Indiana Dunes Country, visit www.indianadunes.com, or call (800) 283-8687 to request the official Indiana Dunes Country Activities Guide. **NOW**

By Ken Kosky. Photos courtesy of Indiana Dunes Tourism.

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Everyday Glamour

The Upper Cut Salon gives everything you want and need for a style that suits you.

— By Melissa Rawlins

The experience at The Upper Cut Salon is vintage. In her year as owner, Danielle Elston has produced a pleasing mix of good, old-fashioned customer service with sleek, modern product and technique. Customers of every generation enjoy coming here for down-to-earth beauty management.

The staff has worked together for 13 years, since well before Danielle joined the salon as a professional makeup artist and stylist in 2012. The Upper Cut Salon's website introduces the staff, along with pictures of their work. Services range from cuts, styles, colors and perms to airbrush makeup, special occasion up-dos and some waxing.

Sheila Littlejohn does cuts and perms, but her specialty is colors. Darlene Frost has an older clientele, and while she is

skilled in every hair service, she excels at roller sets. Rachelle Houston, who does Danielle's hair, specializes in colors and hair cutting. Tina Pate handles every service for people of every age, and most often creates haircuts and color. Macy Carlock is the newest addition to The Upper Cut's team. "She's really good at vibrant colors," Danielle said, "and many of her customers are the younger set."

With a focus on making sure each client gets everything they want and need, The Upper Cut Salon hosts classes for beauty industry professionals, and the staff frequently attends different classes. "Building our business and our knowledge, we are learning new techniques," Danielle said. The newest trend in color is hand painting the hair, instead of foiling. "The benefit

to the customer is placement. The colors don't have to start right on top of your head. We can give them whatever look they're wanting by just painting the colors on."

Danielle is also skilled at redecorating, and the interior of The Upper Cut Salon looks very different than it did in 1981, when the salon first opened. "We're big fans of *Fixer Upper* on HGTV," said Danielle, who was inspired to renovate with woods, metals and different prints combined with a baroque look. She added a stellar dandelion-shaped vintage chandelier to the lobby, where The Desperado Rose Boutique sells unique clothing. Across from the front desk, a retail section provides customers with several tried-and-tested products.

Amazing and affordable shampoos and conditioners made by Wella Professionals — a good styling line which has just been revamped — are offered alongside specialty products like Nioxin, formulated to help hair grow and make it feel thicker. The line by Sebastien, known for its hairspray, is presented next to Amika, a wonderful-smelling line that produces effects like texture and smoothing.

Surprisingly, The Upper Cut Salon offers no makeup for sale. However, their makeup services are in high demand. "In March, people are gearing up for prom and wedding season," said Danielle, who will work with her staff on many senior girls' graduation photography makeup.

Danielle Elston is the preferred makeup artist for nearly 20 brides annually. Bridal parties require a great time commitment. "We give a consultation and a trial run, go through what the bride wants, and then tweak it after they do the trial run to see what they want to change before the big day," Danielle explained. "Rachelle goes on location with me to help with hair while I do the makeup, or the clients come here and any of the girls help."

Everybody's good at up-dos at The Upper Cut Salon. Yet, these six ladies will inspire you for everyday glamour. Danielle and her staff welcome the opportunity to show you how beautiful you are. **NOW**



Danielle Elston

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Tori Blanton makes a salad in a jar with her mom, Rachel Sparks, at a JuicePlus party at Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce.



Keller Pope enjoys an afternoon snack at Sweet Frog.



Inside the cozy Elks Diner, Debbie Johnson serves coffee to Leanne Farris and her friend, Cherry Parrish.



Bryce Bennett and Jordan Rodgers celebrate their engagement with their new puppy, Rawlings.



Superintendent Bret Jimerson helps students start the semester at BISD's new Science, Technology, Engineering, graphic Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Middle School of choice.



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Jasmine Acosta and her friend, Barrett, practice their target shooting.



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Will the Presidential Election Affect Investment Outlook?

Presidential election season is in full swing. As a voter, you may be keenly interested in the election process. But as an investor, should you be concerned?

If you take a look back, you might be somewhat encouraged over the prospects of the financial markets this year. In the last 12 presidential election years, the Dow Jones Industrial Average has been up nine times and down just three. So, election years must be good for the financial markets, right?

Not necessarily. In every year, the markets are influenced by a variety of factors — interest rates, inflation, corporate profits, geopolitical events, economic growth, even the weather. And it's safe to say that 2016 will be no different. At this early stage of the year, one could say that some of these factors, such as continued low interest rates and a reasonably strong economy, might bode well for investors. But there's a lot of 2016 ahead of us — and it's notoriously difficult for anybody, even so-called experts, to accurately predict the market's performance over a relatively short time, such as a year.

Still, the market's history of pretty good results in presidential election years may not be entirely random. For one



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thing, the White House is never the only office being contested. Elections are also held for every congressional district and many seats in the Senate. Consequently, during these election years, campaigning often takes precedence over legislating. This legislative inactivity tends to be welcomed by the financial markets, which generally dislike surprises, big changes and new directions.

However, you can't really count on past trends to provide a certain roadmap for the year ahead, in terms of the performance of the financial markets. As mentioned above, many factors influence this performance, and at this early stage in the year, we just can't predict which of these factors will take precedence.

So, instead of worrying about things you can't control, focus on those that you can. For starters, review your investment mix. Does it still properly reflect your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon? Over time, even if you haven't made many changes to your portfolio, it can become "unbalanced." For example, if you own some stocks that have increased greatly in value over the years, these stocks may now be taking up a larger percentage of your holdings than you had intended, bringing with them a higher degree of risk. Consequently, you might want to consider selling off some of these stocks and using the proceeds to fill in other gaps in your portfolio.

On the other hand, if you think your mix of investments is not providing you with the returns you need to help make progress toward your long-term objectives, you may need to add some vehicles that can provide you with more growth potential. After all, it's 2016 now, so whatever your age, you are another year closer to retirement.

Will this year look like past presidential election years, as far as good returns from the stock market? No one can say for sure. But if you "vote" for smart investment moves, you won't be sorry. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Lynn H. Bates is an Edward Jones representative based in Burleson.





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March 5

Mardi Gras Gala: 6:00 p.m.-midnight, Walnut Creek Country Club, Mansfield. In the true New Orleans tradition, breakfast is served at 11:00 p.m. after a VIP reception, casino play, silent and live auctions and hors d'oeuvres. Hosted by the ATHENAs to support their charitable programs. Get details at www.athenasocietyofburluson.org/athena-gala/.

March 6

Healthy Vegetarian Cooking Classes: 3:00 p.m., Crowley Seventh-day Adventist Church, W. 1187 and Cleburne Road. Register at the door. Call (817) 615-9314 for more information.

March 8

Business After Hours Networking: 5:30-7:00 p.m., Heritage Place Assisted Living & Memory Care. Free to members! (817) 295-6121.

March 10

Crowley Chamber First Quarter Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 405 S. Oak St. Guest speaker will be Dr. Dan Powell, CISD Superintendent. RSVP (817) 297-2201 or info@crowleyareachamber.org.

March 17

Breast Cancer Care Support Group: 6:00-7:00 p.m.,

Pathway Church, 250 N.W. Tarrant Ave., Suite L. Call Nedra Lamar, (817) 915-5529.

March 18

Crowley Easter Egg Hunt: 9:00 a.m.-noon, Bicentennial Park, 900 E. Glendale. The egg hunt will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. Breakfast with the Bunny at 9:00 a.m. at the Community Center. (817) 297-6707.

Relay for Life Golf Tournament: Noon-5:00 p.m., Hidden Creek Golf Club. 8th annual tournament, hosted this year by Friends For Life, raises funds for American Cancer Society. RSVP by **March 4** to (817) 426-6268.

March 19

Aqua Egg Hunt: 9:30 a.m.-noon, The BRiCK, 550 N.W. Summercrest Blvd. Diving for Easter eggs? If you're 11 and under, this invitation could be for you. \$2 fee per child. For more information, call the BRiCK at (817) 426-9104. Call The BRiCK, (817) 426-9104, ext. 2090.

Bunny Daze: Noon-2:00 p.m., The Ball Fields at Hidden Creek Sports Complex, 295 E. Hidden Creek Pkwy. The Easter Bunny meets, greets and poses for pictures. Free! Every child, including those with special needs, are welcome to hunt for

prize eggs. Call The BRiCK, (817) 426-9104, ext. 2090.

March 26

Easter with Joey the Donkey: 11:00 a.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. County Rd. 714. Joey hosts the Easter egg hunt for children up to 4 years old. Bring your own camera and Easter baskets. Call (817) 447-3316.

March 30

Formal Inspection: 8:30 a.m., Multi Purpose Activity Center, Joshua High School, 909 S. Broadway. Contact Jim Davidson, (817) 202-2500, x1148.

April 1

Power of Heels luncheon: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Pathway Church. Learn keys for building successful relationships, increasing productivity, reducing stress and better understanding yourself and others. (817) 295-6121.

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

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In the Kitchen With Janice Smith

— *By Melissa Rawlins*

Cleanliness and order are of utmost importance to Janice Smith when she prepares meals for friends and church family. A Pennsylvanian-turned-Texan, Janice follows lessons learned late in life in culinary school, a birthday present to herself. Always polishing skills modeled early in life by her sister and their mother — whose fastidious ways in the kitchen produced excellent food and perfect blueberry pie — Janice favors sweets that enhance meals and endeavors to produce tasty, good-looking desserts using healthy ingredients. She adds an extra tablespoon of oil, to absorb some of the gluten in flour, and applesauce, to not only moisten cakes but also substitute for oil, eggs and even flour. Experimenting with what she learns sharpens her skills and continues to earn her friends' rave reviews. **NOW**

Baked Macaroni and Cheese

Serves 8.

- 4 quarts water**
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil**
- 1 16-oz. box macaroni**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- 1 cup milk**
- 4 Tbsp. butter**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 2 8-oz. blocks extra sharp cheese, shredded**

- 1.** Pour water into a large saucepan. Add olive oil. Heat to boiling. Add macaroni, and then stir frequently. Cook 7-10 minutes; drain and rinse macaroni to get rid of starch. Drain again.
- 2.** Mix egg with milk, pour over macaroni in the saucepan and stir well over low heat. Add butter, and stir well. Add salt and pepper, and then stir in about half the cheese. Scrape cheese off the spoon, as needed, and incorporate into the macaroni.

- 3.** Place macaroni mixture in a greased baking dish, or foil pan, with remaining cheese, alternating cheese and macaroni.
- 4.** Place dish, or pan, on the middle rack in the oven; bake approximately 40 minutes at 350 F, or until cheese is thoroughly melted and top cheese layer is firm, not runny.
- 5.** Remove from oven, allow to sit about 5-10 minutes, and then serve.

Blueberry Pie

- 1 refrigerated pie crust**
- 4 cups blueberries (divided use)**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- 2 Tbsp. water**
- 1 Tbsp. butter**
- 1/2 tsp. grated lemon peel**

- 1.** Roll out one sheet of pie crust to flatten. Fit into a 9-inch pie dish.
- 2.** In a medium saucepan, combine 1 cup blueberries, sugar, cornstarch and water.

Bring to a boil. Cook and stir until mixture is thickened and clear.

- 3.** Stir in butter. Cool 5 minutes.
- 4.** Stir in remaining 3 cups of blueberries and lemon peel. Preheat oven to 400 F. Turn into cooled pie shell.
- 5.** Lay remaining crust on a sheet of waxed paper. Roll out to flatten. Place on top of the blueberries. Press ends of dough into edges of bottom crust and crimp to seal.
- 6.** Place pie on baking sheet. Bake about 30 minutes in the bottom third of the oven until the crust is golden and filling bubbles gently.
- 7.** Cool on rack.

Pan-seared Lamb Chops With Parsnip Potato Puree

Lamb:

- 8 3-oz. lamb chops with rib bone frenched**
- 1 tsp. kosher salt**
- 1 tsp. black pepper**
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil**
- 1/4 cup Ortalli Fig Balsamic Vinegar Glaze**
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped**

Parsnip Potato Puree:

- 2 large parsnips, peeled and cut into large chunks**
- 1 large potato, peeled and cut into large chunks**
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter**
- 1/4 cup sour cream**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- Pinch cayenne pepper**

- 1. To prepare lamb:** Remove lamb from refrigerator 30 minutes before cooking. Season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Sear chops, cooking 3-4 minutes per side for medium rare meat. Remove lamb from pan and place on a tray.
- 2.** Place Ortalli Fig Balsamic Vinegar Glaze with thyme in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds and set aside.
- 3. To prepare parsnip potato puree:** Place parsnips and potato chunks in a large pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium and cover with a lid. Cook about 20 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Drain well. Return vegetables to the pan and smash with a potato masher. Add butter, sour cream, salt and pepper; continue to mash until smooth.
- 4.** Serve chops and parsnip potato puree drizzled with thyme glaze.

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