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MAY 2011

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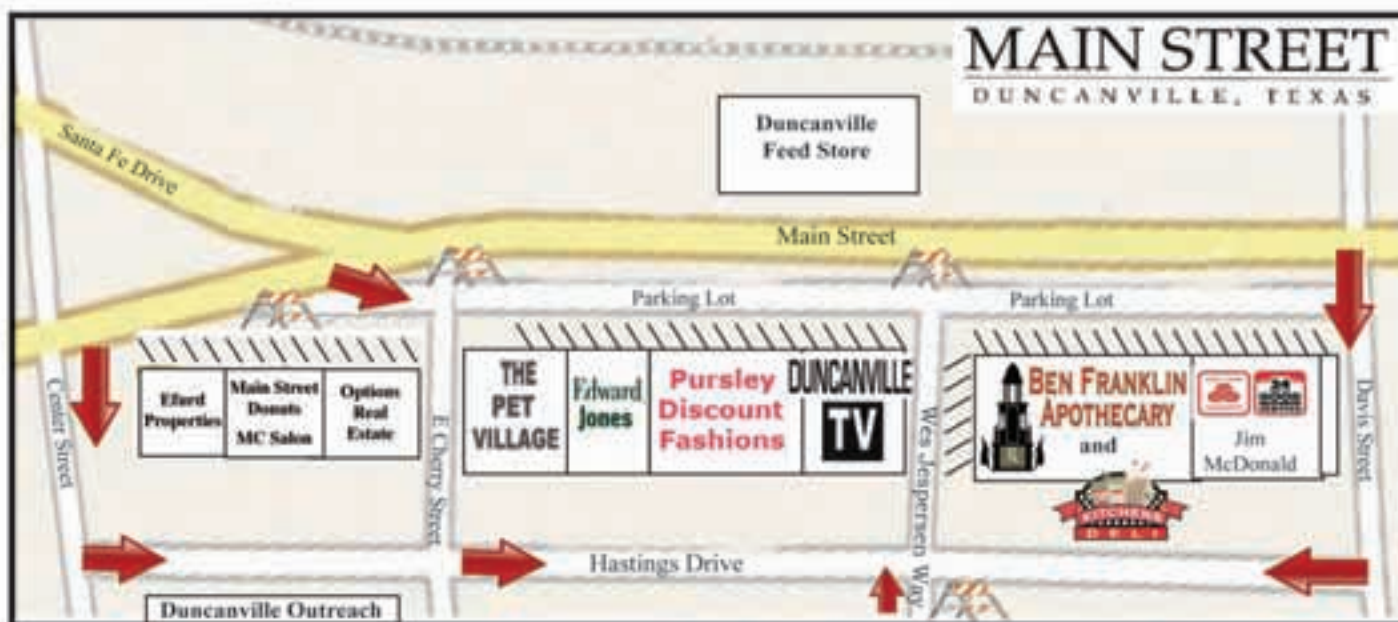
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Shirley Chambers  
shows middle school  
students how to be  
global humanitarians.

*Photo by Opaque Visuals.*

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## Editor's Note

*Hello, my Southwest Friends,*

Welcome to May, the beginning and the end. For many, like my great-niece, Crissi, May marks the end of high school and that much-anticipated, ever-anxious launch on toward college and life as an "adult." (I call this time period quasi-adulthood.)

For many, May is made of Mother's Day celebrations, picnics, vacations and the remembrance of those who have served and continue to serve our nation in the military.

For me, it also marks another year of God's amazing grace in my marriage and the anniversary of my youngest son's birth, lo these many years ago.

As we end another school year and begin another summer, I trust the One who epitomizes both the beginning and the end of all things will keep you safe. May He bless the works of your hands, the thoughts and intents of your hearts and minds and fulfill the number of your days.



*Beverly*

Beverly Shay

*SouthwestNOW* Editor

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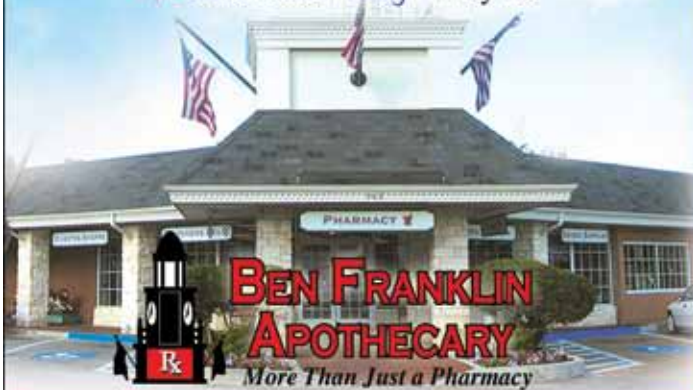
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# Peace Through Business

— By Beverly Shay

*Our own Cedar Hill is making an international impact. Local businesswomen and Northwood University have partnered with Dr. Terry Neese of The Institute for Economic Empowerment of Women (IEEW) and businesswomen nationwide to “pay it forward” by mentoring women from Rwanda and Afghanistan, as a means of improving their lives and bringing peace to their nations. “This is such a natural fit with our goals as a university,” Dr. Fegan, provost of the Cedar Hill campus of Northwood University, remarked. “We are always conscientious about our responsibility to our students, society in general and especially about being a good neighbor and maintaining a valuable partnership within the community. To also provide a global footprint through mentoring the women from these countries in business and entrepreneurial skills fits right in line with our philosophy of political and economic freedom for all people.”*





The program, Peace Through Business, was conceived following a conference call Dr. Terry Neese received from the State Department of Education and the White House. Dr. Neese, who grew up in an entrepreneurial family, developed Terry Neese Personnel Services 35 years ago, which her daughter now runs. Owning her business led her to become active in NAWBO (National Alliance of Women Business Owners). "I became a member in 1986. Up until this point in my life, I had done very little travel outside of Oklahoma," Dr. Neese recalled with a small grin. "By 1988, I was on the national board of the organization with 35 chapters nationwide. In 1989, as president elect, I understood the need to be an advocate for women business owners. Soon, I had traveled to almost all 50 states." As president, Dr. Neese's goal was for members to travel to Washington, D.C. to inform Congress on the unique issues businesswomen face.

Her experiences led to the formation of IEEW, a nonprofit institute which teaches women how to get involved in public policy, network and advocate for small businesses. "I wrote a training manual on the importance of getting to know your congressman and political leaders (federal, state and county). Following a 14-state tour with the manual, I received the conference call, which thrust me into global businesswomen's issues," Dr. Neese summarized.

Invited to Washington to brainstorm ways to help Afghan women become self-employed and self-reliant, Dr. Neese was appointed to the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, originally formed in 2002, with a mixture of women from the United States and Afghanistan. "When I went to Afghanistan and saw firsthand the challenges they face, I couldn't even really comprehend it. There is no infrastructure. Women aren't allowed to drive. Bomb threats are daily realities. Each day, these women leave their homes never knowing whether that day will be safe or not," Dr. Neese recalled. "That trip changed my life and made me more aware of the blessings of freedom. I wanted to help. I felt I had been working my whole life to come to

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this place. My destiny is in helping these women." In both Afghanistan and Rwanda, so many men have been killed, that it is up to the women to reestablish economic stability in their countries. Yet this is especially difficult in societies where women have been seen and treated as property.

As a plan began to unfold, Dr. Neese knew she would have to find a university partner to complete the plan. Dr. Fry, then president of Northwood, offered her use of their facilities, curriculum, housing and food — initially on the Michigan campus. In 2009, the program moved to the Texas campus. Dr. Fegan indicated the first year's involvement in Peace Through Business



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emphasized awareness. "Last year, we shifted toward acceptance through getting the community involved. This year, we are moving toward greater accountability and considering potential opportunities for progress. We are asking, where will we take it from here?" Dr. Fegan explained.

Local involvement included several Cedar Hill businesswomen paring up as mentors. Luanne Alcaraz, owner of Chick-fil-A, and D'Lana Motta, owner of Virginia's Boutique, participated as mentors. Luanne felt she learned as much from Joanne, her mentee from Rwanda, as she was able to give. "These women are so eager to learn, so inquisitive and ready to share their culture with you. It was an eye-opener," Luanne remarked. D'Lana echoed Luanne adding she still e-mails Farqhana in Afghanistan, who is also in retail work. Farqhana also teaches business and English classes to other women and is working with the Afghan women who will be here this summer.

This year, the Cedar Hill Chamber is focusing the July 14 Chamber Night Out on giving people of the community an



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We thank the Duncanville Fire Department and are grateful for the tremendous outpouring of support and concern from this wonderful community of friends.

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
And when you pass through the rivers, They will not sweep over you.  
When you walk through the fire, You will not be burned;  
The flames will not set you ablaze. Isaiah 43:2*



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opportunity to meet the Rwandan and Afghan women. "I am hoping this will build a deeper relationship of awareness and partnership between the people of the community, the women, mentors and potential mentors," Dr. Neese remarked.

The program provides business training for 30 women from Rwanda and Afghanistan. Each of the women must have been in business for themselves in their country for at least one year. They receive about eight weeks of training in their country and then come to the States, where they receive one week of intensive courses in business and marketing skills and entrepreneurial training at Northwood. Each woman is then paired with a local, mentor businesswoman who works in the same industry as theirs, working together for one week, side-by-side.

Such issues as access to capital and presenting a unified voice are addressed, along with business strategies. Rwandan participant, Natacha Kabandana listed ideas and methods she would be applying immediately: contracting, budgeting, evaluating her suppliers, marketing, communication and human resource management skills. Natacha's mentor remarked she was like a sponge, soaking in all the knowledge, experience and suggestions that she, as a mentor, could provide.

Their time in the States concludes with a wrap-up summit and graduation. Randall Stephenson, CEO and president of AT&T, who has sponsored the program since its beginning in 2007, met with all of the women in 2010. They discussed business plans, financing, marketing and leadership. At last year's graduation, he said he would happily hire any one of them to his management team, but he knew their goals were to return to their countries to work at solidifying and improving their nation's economy through work, education and training others.

As part of the program, each woman mentors at least 10 other women in the year following participation in Peace Through Business. These women return to their countries as leaders, who have met their ambassadors at the summit and are ready to "pay it forward" by effecting an economic change in their country. **NOW**



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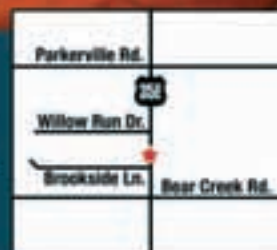
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# Starting the Game Young

— By Sydni Thomas

*By request of her high school basketball coach, Renee Johnson began refereeing youth league basketball games when she was not busy with practice or a game. Little did she know that she would never leave the parks and recreation field, and that it would bring her all the way to Texas, where she would help thousands of children discover sports as DeSoto's managing director of Parks and Leisure Services.*





Renee came to basketball later in life, at the age of 12. The typical age for girls to start basketball at DeSoto's recreation center is 7, with many starting out as young as 4. Up until high school, Renee attended a private school, where she played basketball in junior high. When she started her freshman year at public school, she had no intention of joining the basketball team. All she wanted to do was be a cheerleader. When rumor got to the basketball coach that a 6-foot, lanky girl was trying out for cheerleading, he headed straight to the tryouts. "He dragged me all the way over to the basketball court," Renee said. "I'm sure it was a sight, a 6-foot-tall girl trying to be a cheerleader. I never stood a chance being a cheerleader as soon as the coach heard about me."

Going to college to play basketball on a full scholarship was not typical for women when Renee went to college. Some did, but most played for the fun of it. Playing basketball in college did not even cross her mind. Instead, she continued working more with parks and recreation departments. After graduating from the University of Arkansas, she moved back home to Buena Vista, Michigan, a small township just outside Saginaw. The township hired her to be their first parks and recreation director. "During the five years I worked in Buena Vista, we were able to accomplish so much," Renee said. "It was exciting to bring new things to the township. I left after helping secure a bond for their first recreation center."

From Buena Vista, Renee moved to Flint, Michigan, where she became the parks superintendent. She stayed there for six years before realizing her life needed a change of scenery. A few years later when the economy took a turn, Renee sensed that something big was coming, and it was time to move. After leading two different successful parks and recreation departments in Michigan, Renee began searching outside of her home state for a new challenge. She applied to the city of Dallas' parks and recreation department and began planning her daughter, Jasmyn Otote's, future in Texas before she even got the job. Renee became the district manager

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## DeSoto **NOW**

for parks and recreation for the city of Dallas and stayed there for six years before coming to the Southwest area in August 2007. "If you want your kids to be successful in basketball, move to the southwest Dallas area," Renee said. "I started researching schools and knew that Duncanville was the city for us. Their basketball team was a powerhouse. I told a friend in Addison we were going to move there, and he tried to deter us by saying Jasmyn would never play. Jasmyn played on varsity all four years."

After high school, Jasmyn went to play for the University of Missouri, and just finished her last season. Renee began coaching Jasmyn in a youth league when she was 7 years old and only stopped because by the time she was 10, Jasmyn was already better than she was. "After



March, it was the first time that we didn't have games to go to since Jasmyn was 7," Renee said. "I put her in basketball and dance when she was little, so that she would stay fit. Eventually, she made the decision to focus on basketball, and that is what we did. College basketball is no joke, and you have to be very dedicated to make it."

Many students have gone on from the southwest Dallas area to play for some of the nation's greatest college teams. Renee calls this area a recruiting "hot" zone, and colleges know some of the nation's best players get their start here. A current youth league success story is 16-year-old Moriah Jefferson. She is ranked No. 2 in the nation, according to ESPN's ranking system, and already has a list of college teams interested in her. Moriah started playing basketball at the DeSoto Recreation Center when she was 7 years old. Now she plays there almost every





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## Budget Savings So Far

DeSoto ISD has been trimming costs for the past three years. Here are some of the latest savings to trim \$2.9M this year.

Utility Costs	\$250,000
5% Less All Budgets	\$96,500
Decrease Insurance \$41	\$419,676
Eliminate Clothing Vouchers	\$15,000
Summer School Changes	\$87,346
Secondary Ratios 27:1	\$1,100,000
Eliminate COO position	\$120,000
Eliminate 2 FTE's - TME	\$112,496
Eliminate Convocation Costs	\$10,000
Eliminate Employee Banquet	\$6,000
Eliminate Signing Bonuses	\$53,500
Eliminate 11 Paraprofessionals	\$183,011
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## Alum Football Game

The 2nd  
Annual DHS  
Football  
Alumni  
Game and



Benefit Auction, hosted by Ellis Hobbs, is scheduled for **Friday, May 6** at Eagle Stadium. Former football players, band members, cheerleaders and Eaglettes can all join in the fun! Players can contact the athletics office, and others the school, to join in the fun!

DHS alumni and Aggies Sydney Carter, of the NCAA Championship Basketball Team, and Von Miller, who won the Dick Butkus award, will be honored at the game for their accomplishments.

Family fun activities start about 3:30 p.m. with a 2011 Lamborghini photo opportunity and then the middle school Dance-Off at 4:30 p.m. The silent auction will be open from 4 p.m. until half time of the game. Proceeds will go to Eagle Olympics and the Corey Bomer Trust Fund.

Finally, the DHS Alumni Football Game will start around 6:30 p.m. Players last year included Ellis Hobbs, Patrick Crayton, Patrick Williams, Mike Thomas, Mark Simmons, Casey Printers and Bryon Hanspard.

## Budget reductions and revenues

As with most Texas public schools, DeSoto ISD is preparing for funding reductions from the state. After balancing the budget by trimming \$2.9 million from current spending for 2011-12 (see list online for these cost savings), DeSoto ISD is planning for a mid-range scenario of an additional \$3-5 million less in funding. We have been extremely transparent of the possible cuts to programs and positions with the listing available on the Web site since January. In addition, the district would like your input on suggested reductions and revenue sources.

One revenue source to consider is a Tax Ratification Election (TRE) to ask our taxpayers to give back some of the savings they have been enjoying since 2006 when the tax rate dropped. Homeowners have also seen tax reductions as property values have decreased over the past several years. If the district were to call for an election in the fall, the values for a .06 cent or .10 cent tax increase based on a \$100,000 home value are listed below. Individuals over 65 or disabled have their taxes frozen and would not incur the increase.

### DeSoto ISD Taxes based on \$100,000 home

	Current Rate	.06 Increase	.10 Increase
Home Value	100,000	100,000	100,000
Less Homestead Exemption	-15,000	-15,000	-15,000
Taxable Value	85,000	85,000	85,000
M&O	1.04	1.10	1.14
I&S	.45	.45	.45
Total Tax Rate (per \$100 value)*	1.49	1.55	1.59
<b>Total Tax Levy</b>	<b>\$1,266.50</b>	<b>\$1,317.50</b>	<b>\$1,351.50</b>
Change per Year/Month	----	\$51/\$4.25	\$85/\$7.08
<b>District Increase</b>	<b>----</b>	<b>\$2.86M</b>	<b>\$4.29M</b>

\* All individuals over age 65 or disabled would have no change as their taxes are frozen.

Thus a .06 cent voter approved tax increase would add \$2.86 million dollars to the district budget and have a minimal impact on a home owner at just \$51 a year (\$4.25 a month). That would save the jobs of elementary art and music teachers plus certified librarians and gifted and talented teachers. Combined with a concession by all staff to work less days or accept a salary reduction (both need legislative approval), the district would have minimal impact to the classroom.

## calendar of events

- May 2-13 - District Transfer Request Period (intra-district requests for 2011-12)
- May 6 - DHS Alumni Football Game at Eagle Stadium
- May 9, 23 - Board Meetings, DeSoto ISD Board Room
- May 11 - Regular School Day (no longer an early release day due to weather days)
- May 14 - Board Elections and 2nd Annual Elementary/Middle Math Olympiad
- May 20 - Best Southwest Relay for Life Event at West Middle School
- May 30 - Memorial Day Holiday
- June 3 - NEW Last Day of School (June 2 will be a full day, June 3 early release)
- June 3 - DHS Graduation at Dallas Convention Center
- June 6-August 19 - Summer Break (Summer Programs at [www.desotoisd.org](http://www.desotoisd.org))

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\* - Sunday Performances Pending – Call Ahead

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day against a group of guys. "Playing the guys helps me because they are a lot bigger and stronger," Moriah said. "It makes me a better player. When I wake up in the morning, I do my schoolwork and then play basketball. July is my busiest month, and I am rarely at home. I'll take about two weeks off in the year."

"Moriah gets antsy if she goes too long without playing basketball," Robin Jefferson, Moriah's mom, said.

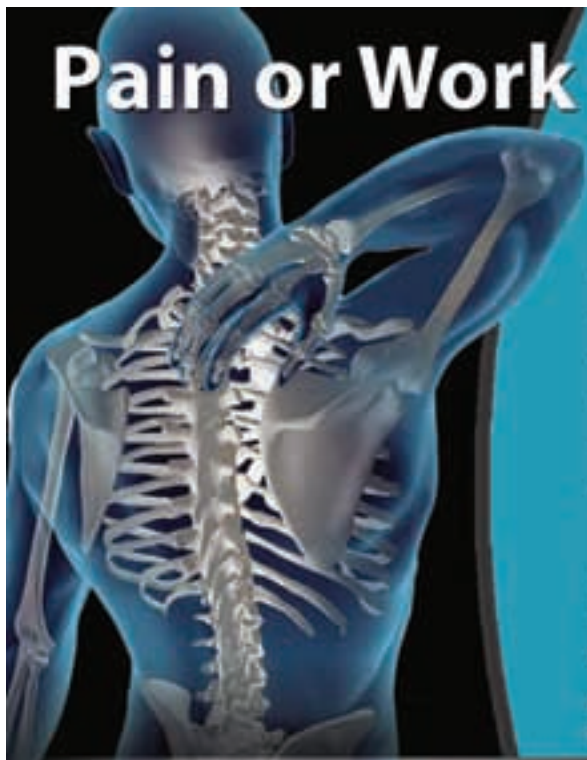
While basketball is a popular youth league sport in DeSoto, it is not the largest. The football and cheerleading program brings in over 1,100 children. There are close to 300 volunteers who make the program successful. The Parks and Leisure Services staff organizes the schedules and teams, but it is the work of volunteers in all of the sports who make the program possible.

Desoto Independent School District also lets the Parks and Leisure Services use its facilities for their summer enrichment programs. The Youth Career Program is one of the summer programs. It brings former students from the area who have excelled in collegiate sports back to share what college is really like for athletes. "It's important for these kids to see what college life is like before they get there," Renee said. "We've had former football players and basketball players come back and talk with the students. They need to realize they need more than skills to succeed. They have to possess a strong academic background in order to become a successful student athlete."

Renee and the other members of the Parks and Leisure Services team have spent years developing programs to keep students learning and active. They also developed the Youth Advisory Community, so students in DeSoto have an input on the programs that are offered. "We are blessed to have a city council that gives us the funding for our youth leagues, enrichment and summer programs," Renee said. "We need to keep our kids' time structured and busy. Not over-booked busy, but enough to keep them interested and learning new things so they don't have enough down time to get into trouble. The programs we offer help with that." **NOW**



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# Hope in the Form of Dresses

— By Sydni Thomas

*The pillowcase is a common household item that does not gain much attention until the moments just before sleep. A frugal family can easily turn these items into Halloween candy sacks, ghost costumes, laundry bags, curtains and rags. Students at Duncanville's Byrd Middle School are using their newfound sewing skills to convert this overlooked household good into a message of hope for orphaned girls in Africa.*

Each summer, seventh grade Texas history teacher, Shirley Chambers, spends her break learning something new. Last summer, she enrolled in sewing classes held at the JoAnn's Fabric and Craft Store in Cedar Hill. She had not sewn anything since her seventh grade sewing project. Family members learned of Shirley's new endeavor, which led to a discussion with her husband's aunt, who told





## Duncanville **NOW**

her about the sewing club at her church. They were making dresses for orphans in Africa through a group called Little Dresses for Africa, and then delivering them.

In 2007, after a mission trip to Malawi, Africa, Rachel O'Neill and a group of ladies began sewing dresses out of new and gently used pillowcases for girls orphaned by AIDS. They formed Little Dresses for Africa (LDFA), a nonprofit Christian organization. Shortly, groups all across the country started popping up in support of the organization's ideas and beliefs. Word of the group spread like wildfire, and today they have delivered over 130,000 dresses from all 50 states. "Their mission is to plant a sense of worth in these young orphaned girls," Shirley stated. "To them, it is more than just sending a dress. It is sending hope."

While the main purpose of this nonprofit organization is to deliver dresses to orphans in Malawi, they have delivered them to a total of 22 countries in Africa, as well as other places in need around the globe, such as: Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Cambodia, South Dakota and the Appalachian Mountain regions. The organization also leads Britches for Boys to send handmade and store-bought shorts for orphaned boys, and Buckets of Hope, which delivers brightly colored buckets filled with nonperishable foods, towels, hygiene items and a dress or school uniform to the homes of those suffering with AIDS, who have children.

Shirley could not shake the LDFA story from her mind, and so the idea for a sewing club at Byrd Middle School was birthed. She had been asked to form some kind of club to be held during her last period study hall. Through the sewing club she would be teaching the students a life skill, which is no longer an education requirement, while at the same time showing them how to be global humanitarians. She researched the program, determined what it would take to make it a success and presented it to Principal Gabe Trujillo, who quickly authorized the program. "The school had originally discussed me running a chess club during my last period study hall," Shirley said. "I knew nothing about chess,



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## Duncanville **NOW**

and suggested the sewing club instead.”

At the beginning of the school year, Shirley advertised the sewing club to all of her classes and hung up signs in the hallway. The response was so overwhelming in her classes alone that very few students outside of the seventh grade were able to take part. Once her class was full, Shirley's sewing teacher from JoAnn's and her aunt came to the school to teach the basics of sewing. Shirley shared the story of the orphans and their need for dresses. The students were eager to help. “There is only one pattern for the dresses,” Shirley said. “The armhole on each dress is a little different depending on the size of the girl. It took me almost two hours to make my first one, but I have a 3-year-old running around. With the time constraints at school, it takes the kids about one week to finish a dress.”



Most of the 26 students in the club had no experience with sewing. The boys in the study hall prove that sewing is not just for girls. They work right alongside their female classmates pinning, cutting and sewing the dresses. To expand their knowledge of sewing and so that they do not get bored with just making dresses, Shirley comes up with other projects for the class to work on, like backpacks, throw pillows and sewing and stuffing teddy bears.

Armed with two sewing machines and a stack of fabric, the students started



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making dresses. They have already finished several dresses, but hope to complete a lot more to mail before summer. "In the beginning, I had to help get the dresses started, which took up a lot of time," Shirley said. "Now they can all do it on their own. They cut, pin and sew the dresses themselves from start to end."

After the sewing club was featured by WFAA in their "After the Bell" segment, the group received more donations of pillowcases, fabric and accents. However, they are still operating on only two machines. One of the machines is Shirley's personal sewing machine, and the other was donated by her cousin. Since the club meets only 30 minutes a day, students have learned to patiently wait and share with their classmates. They busy themselves with prepping other dresses, until their turn to sew. Having only two machines limits the number of dresses they can make in the 30-minute time slot. "We have been very blessed by our administration's and community's support," Shirley said. "I started the program by purchasing the supplies and fabric, but now we have people sending boxes of it."

Not everyone has the time, patience or ability to help the LDFA by sewing dresses and shorts. Other ways to participate in the program or help the Byrd Middle School Sewing Club include contributions: it costs a little over \$100 for the organization to ship a 14 x 14 x 14 box filled with the handcrafted dresses and shorts to Africa. Hand-delivering the clothing to Malawi costs volunteers around \$30 to pack them in their suitcases. Small, medium and large vacuum-sealed bags for shipping are also needed.

This month, the students at Byrd Middle School will be mailing the dresses from their first year as a sewing club, if Shirley's aunt cannot deliver them on her church's mission trip to Africa. Shirley hopes to continue this project and club next year. She hopes her students will be able to change lives and give hope, one dress at a time. **NOW**

More information about Little Dresses for Africa can be found on their Web site at [www.littledressesforafrica.org](http://www.littledressesforafrica.org).



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# One Day at a Time

— By Beverly Shay

*For 17 years, Madelon and Robert Qualls have made this DeSoto house their home. This gracious home with its modern decor is their third house in DeSoto. "When we lived off of Young St. and I would drive by this division, I would say, 'I'm going to live in there someday.' When we put that home on the market, it sold right away, and we needed a home quick! The Realtor brought the kids and me here. The kids walked in and said they wanted this*







*house. Three days later, we moved in," Madelon recalled, a shy smile tugging at her mouth.*

"We have redone the master bath, built a significant deck in the back and replaced the kitchen, living room and dining room floors, as well as those in the four bedrooms with laminate, which I love," Madelon admitted. They had the walls repainted in earth-toned colors. The den, with its comfy brown leather furniture and large throw rug with circles on it, exudes ease and relaxation. The flat-screen TV and brick fireplace with narrow wavy accent mirrors above it dominate the room across from the very spacious kitchen.

Their modern aqua glass kitchen table across from the granite-topped island is matched by the aqua glass inset of the square, dark walnut dining room table, which can seat eight. "We can get everyone around this table, if they are all here," Madelon remarked, her satisfaction obvious. Contemporary vases and African-flavored artwork and chests add to the easy ambience.

Across from the dining room is the music room with a black-lacquered grand piano, which Madelon plays. The area rug and abstract treble clef wall hanging incorporate the music theme to such an extent you can almost hear the echoes. Ivory and black leather chairs provide comfort for the audience. "I like gospel music best," Madelon remarked, trailing

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her long-fingered hands tranquilly across the back of the chair. The corner cabinet holds black angel figurines strewn between a zebra, a beautiful square box and an oval pillbox of amethyst hue. "They're mostly gifts. Roy Williams brought them," she stated casually.

An African animal theme dominates the guest room, with its high king-sized bed and its plump damask comforter of gold and black zebras and giraffes. A row of giraffes mingled with tiger vases gaze from a shelf above, creating a quiet savannah atmosphere — minus the roar of lions.

"We used to fit all six boys (grandsons) in that bed, but now we have to use the kids' room for sleeping them, too," Madelon said. The grandkids' room is decorated with toys and shelves of books and stuffed animals, a small

version of a leather couch and lots of photos. Reflected in her smiling face are squeals and laughter and all the things that bring delight to her.

Madelon lived the first 18 years of her life in Teague, near Fairfield. She attended Navarro College for one year, intending to become a nurse. A lobectomy (removal of a lobe of her lung) at age 19, due to severe asthma and a long history of lung complications, resulted in her moving to the Metroplex to be with her mom. "I've been here ever since," Madelon remarked easily. Once again, she started classes, this time in accounting, but her health issues preempted school.

Meanwhile, a handsome young man, named Robert Qualls, grew up in Dallas. He was friends with a young man named Rickie Rush, then a school teacher, who had started a communitywide choir. Robert's

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sister, Anita, served the choir as a deaf interpreter. One day, as Robert chatted with his sister, Anita introduced him to the lovely Madelon, who was the choir's pianist. After dating for six months, they knew all the right character traits were present to make the kind of marriage they both wanted, so they tied the knot on



June 5, 1985. Robert and Madelon became founding members of Pastor Rush's church, The Inspiring Body of Christ Church (IBOC), where Robert has worked since 1990.

Madelon looks way too young to have eight grandchildren ranging in age from 2 to 13. "They're our hobby," Madelon willingly admitted.

"They're that all right," Robert seconded with a laugh.

Plagued by childhood asthma and lung issues, it wasn't surprising Madelon sought education in the medical field. She was stymied by the fact the nursing program at El Centro was full with a two-year waiting list. "What else do you have?" she asked the counselor. Given a few choices, she picked the respiratory course and received a scholarship from Presbyterian Hospital. Her entire career has been spent at Presbyterian treating those suffering with respiratory ailments. She has been especially touched by children who suffer from cystic fibrosis, a terminal disease.

At work one night in 1997, Madelon's eyes began itching and her throat burned. She remembers wanting to go outside for some fresh air, but realizing she wouldn't make it, she headed for the breathing treatment room thinking to give herself a treatment. She woke up three weeks later. Fortunately, a co-worker, who noticed Madelon wasn't responding to a page,

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went searching for her. She had stopped breathing and went through some touch-and-go moments. "I know prayer played a vital part in my recovery," Madelon stated. Robert remembers being told he might have to decide to unplug the life support. He is so grateful for the company of his dear friend, Pastor Rush, at that time.

Although she had no further asthma-related attacks, due to lifelong lung damage, in 2002, she was told she had maybe five years to live. "But God said 70 years, so I figure I have at least 17 more years," Madelon confidently stated. Then in 2010, she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, cancer of the white plasma cells in the bone marrow. MGUS, as her condition is monikered, can be treated with stem cell transplants

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"Through each of these experiences, we have never really experienced fear," Robert recalled. "We knew healing was there, and it was just a matter of walking through this. Don't get me wrong, it was hard to watch, especially during times when she was in pain."

Sitting with this calm, beautiful, unruffled woman, you would never know Madelon had ever been in a battle for her life. Her home, like her spirit, exudes peace and contentment and wholeness. "I live each day like it might be my last, because we never know. But I plan on living each day that way for a really long time," she smiled. **NOW**



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Saturday by appointment only



### From left:

Angela Witcher, Dr. Parul Patel and  
Veronica Morales.

# Happy Feet

*This laid-back podiatrist believes feet are the foundation of life. — By Beverly Shay*

Dr. Parul K. Patel, DPM, went into podiatry because she believes feet are the foundation of life. “Originally, I thought I would go into research, but I realized I am too much of a people person to work in a lab. I switched to clinical medicine and specialized in podiatry,” Dr. Patel related. “When people’s feet hurt, everything hurts, including their moods. I want to give people happy feet. Besides,” she grinned, “I am a huge shoe person and believe everyone should be able to wear beautiful shoes. So, I make it my goal to put women back in their heels, once they have healthy feet.”

Dr. Patel grew up in Sherman and did her undergrad degree in biology at Baylor University. She completed her grad work

and residency at Temple University in Philadelphia. Seven of her eight years in practice as a board-certified podiatrist have been here. “I love the friendly, laid-back feel of DeSoto. It’s almost a small-town feel. And I have two really wonderful employees who are like family,” Dr. Patel confided. Both Veronica Morales, her receptionist and insurance pro, and Angela Witcher, her nurse, have been with her for three years. Even Sophie, Dr. Patel’s Yorkie, comes to the office occasionally.

“We treat children to 90-year-olds,” remarked Dr. Patel. Most patients come in because of pain, such things as: heel pain, bunions, hammertoes, ingrown toenails, fractures, flat feet and diabetic foot care. Some issues are more seasonal — heel pain



and spurs in the summer, which are often caused by flip-flops. "Flip-flops are the worst shoes ever made and cause the most foot injuries, outside of sports. If you have to wear flip-flops, get some with arch support," she advised. In the winter, they see more ingrown toenails and bunion pain. Spring can bring on a rash of "weekend warrior" injuries due to a sudden — and overdone — zeal for exercise, resulting in fractures, sprains and strains.

"I'm most passionate about caring for diabetics," Dr. Patel admitted. She advises diabetics to check their feet daily and have their family doctor or podiatrist check their feet annually. "Diabetes is the No. 1 cause for foot amputation, other than trauma. Look for calluses, change in skin coloration and any lesions, which aren't healing in a reasonable amount of time. Numbness or tingling should not be ignored." Because Dr. Patel wants to avoid amputation at all costs, she recommends special shoes for diabetics. "They are different because special inserts off-load pressure from calluses and pre-ulcerative lesions. They are also deeper to allow for deformities and swelling."

Another reason diabetics need more frequent specialized foot care is due to decreased circulation, which makes common foot ailments inoperable. "A good diet and exercise in proper footwear is proactive care for diabetics. Nerve damage (neuropathy) can be reversed or stabilized, if caught early, through controlling blood sugar," Dr. Patel explained. "We work closely with endocrinologists, like Dr. William Fears."

Dr. Patel enjoys traveling and participates in mission work in such places as Honduras and India, where she joins a team of doctors who correct club feet. She also enjoys reading, "especially Best Sellers of all genres," trying new restaurants, Pilates and, of course, shoes. "I think you can wear heels, if your shoe has good support. Higher heels are better if the sole has a wedge or a good base. Stilettos aren't as good," Dr. Patel cautioned. "If it isn't comfortable the moment you put a shoe on, don't buy it; it won't get better." **NOW**



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*Amanda Chavez and Devon Sullivan enjoy lunch at UNT Dallas.*



*Kim Bynum, Gayle Melton, Tamara Grubert and Marcia Munyon at the Smooches for Pooches fundraiser benefitting the Tri-City Animal Shelter.*



*John Stossel speaks to an audience at Northwood University about "The Route to Prosperity."*



*Chamber ambassador Amber Hatley presents a welcome basket to Missi Armstrong, owner of And Everything Nice.*

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Board trustees and Superintendent Lloyd Treadwell pose with their ground breaking shovels at DHS.



The newest four TCU Community Scholars pose with their certificates.



Canterbury students who participated in the TAPPS 2A district arts competition pose.



DeSoto Mayor Carl Sherman and DeSoto Chamber President Cammy Jackson welcome general manager Charles Scott and Executive Chef Keith "Buttons" Hicks of Button's Jazz Café as the newest member of the Chamber.



Seattle Seahawks receiver Patrick Williams talks with the Cockrell Hill Elementary basketball team after a pep rally at the school.



DeSoto Communication Director Beth Trimble receives three awards from Superintendent Lloyd Treadwell and Board President Dee Trimble (no relation) for her state TSPRA (Texas School Public Relations Association) awards.





*The Duncanville Spikers defeated the Flyers in the North Texas Senior Volleyball Association tournament.*



*Yet the Duncanville Flyers had a better over record at the North Texas Senior Volleyball Association playoffs.*



*DHS counselor, Renee McNeely wears a "Jeans for Janet" t-shirt during a school fundraiser, which collected more than \$4,500 for a beloved co-worker battling cancer.*



*DHS student, Peter Eaton, teaches board member, Tom Kennedy, the basics of animation during the recent "DHS Apprentice" event with the career and technology programs.*



*DHS junior and Children's Medical Center intern, Octavia Cosby (center), was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the hospital for her "can do" spirit and outstanding customer service skills.*

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# Plantar Fasciitis

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Waking in the morning, just like most of the populace, you are ready to bounce out of bed and welcome a new day. However, as soon as your foot touches the floor, the similarity ends, and a sharp, stabbing pain shoots through your foot. You may be afflicted with plantar fasciitis — a condition that occurs with inflammation of the plantar fascia ligament. Located in the bottom of the foot, it attaches your toes to your heel bone.

The cause of this condition is not very clear, but if the plantar fascia ligament suffers tears in its structure, or becomes irritated and inflamed, then plantar fasciitis can develop. When it becomes inflamed, walking can become a painful ordeal. The pain may be intense with the first few steps in the morning, but as the foot limbers and warms up, it usually decreases. During the day, if you have long periods of standing or sitting, the pain can return.

Many risk factors may increase your chance of developing this condition. Most common during middle age, this condition can develop from faulty foot mechanics, such as having an abnormal way of walking, which puts extra stress on the foot. It can also

be caused by being flatfooted or having high arches. Physical activities, such as running and occupations that require you to be on your feet for long periods, can cause difficulties. Those high heels may look beautiful, but they are not the best equipment for your feet. Shoes that do not protect or support the feet well can cause tears in the ligament.

If you are having pain in your foot, consult with your health care provider. Usually, the first line of treatments recommended are palliative ones you can do at home. Rest your foot; use ice; and with your doctor's advice, take nonsteroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs for pain, such as Advil or Aleve. Identify what is causing the stress to your foot and change it. Make sure your shoes fit correctly and support your feet properly. Avoid allowing the condition to become prolonged. If it becomes advanced, more invasive or time-consuming treatments will become necessary. In addition, plantar fasciitis can lead to back, hip and leg complications. A physical therapist can teach you exercises to increase muscular strength in your legs and to stretch out that ligament. Using an orthotic device in your shoe and a night splint can help alleviate pain. Treatment may take as long as a year, but with diligence and correct therapy, you do not have to suffer with foot pain. **NOW**

*This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.*



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Mother's Day will soon be here. If you're a mother, you will (hopefully) receive thoughtful cards and gifts. But there's one present you may eventually want to give yourself, and it's a gift that truly does keep on giving: a strategy for your retirement. Of course, it's important for everyone to build adequate financial resources for retirement — but the challenge is even greater for women. Largely due to family responsibilities, women spend, on average, 12 years less in the workforce than men, according to the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement. Less time in the workforce equates to lost earnings, missed promotions, smaller and fewer raises and reduced retirement plan benefits. In fact, men have, on average, about \$91,000 in Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), including all IRA types and the amounts rolled over from other retirement accounts into IRAs, compared to just \$51,000 for women, according to a recent report issued by the Employee Benefit Research Institute.

Whether you're married, divorced, widowed or single, you'll want to build financial resources of your own and be prepared to manage your finances during your retirement years. You'll be helping yourself, and, by becoming financially independent, you'll also avoid the possibility of depending on your grown children for support.

To help ensure a financially secure retirement, consider these ideas:

- **Fully fund your IRA each year.**

As the numbers above show, women are way behind men when it comes to funding their IRAs. And IRAs, with their tax advantages, are great retirement-savings vehicles. A traditional IRA has the potential to grow on a tax-deferred basis, while Roth IRAs have the potential to grow tax-free, provided you've had your

account at least five years and you don't start taking withdrawals until you're 59 1/2. So make it a priority to "max out" on your IRA each year. In 2011, you can put up to \$5,000 in a traditional or Roth IRA, or \$6,000 if you're 50 or older.

- **Boost your 401(k) contributions.**

Put in as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. At the very least, contribute enough to earn your employer's match, if one is offered. (In 2011, you can put in up to \$16,500 or \$22,000 if you're 50 or older.) Your earnings have the opportunity to grow tax-deferred, and you have a range of investment options, so your 401(k) or other retirement plan can be an effective, flexible way to put money away for the future.

- **Invest in an annuity.** If you've reached the contribution limits of your IRA and 401(k), you may want to consider purchasing an annuity, which can be structured to provide you with regular payments for the rest of your life. And this lifetime income source is especially important to women, who, at age 65, can expect to live, on average, almost 20 more years, compared to slightly over 17 for men of the same age, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As a mother, you willingly spend a great deal of time and effort on your children. But it's important to also think about yourself and your future, so review your strategy for retirement with your financial advisor, and take the actions needed to help make sure you can enjoy all the Mother's Days of your life in the comfort you deserve. **NOW**

*Contributed by the Edward Jones representatives in Cedar Hill.*



# Calendar

MAY 2011

## May 2-8

Cedar Hill Rec. Center's Mother's Day special: \$10 off three-month membership. (972) 293-5288.

## May 2-10

Early voting ([www.dalcoelections.org](http://www.dalcoelections.org)).

## May 5

DeSoto Eagle Olympics for special needs students: 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at Eagle Stadium.

Cinco de Mayo celebration: 6:00 p.m. at the Cedar Hill library.

## May 6

The Eagles' Landing – Auction benefiting Eagle Olympics and Corey Borner Trust Fund: 4:00-10:00 p.m.; DHS Alumni football game: 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Eagle Stadium.

## May 7

Cedar Hill Recreation Center presents Mother/Son Dance: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 310 E. Parkerville Rd. Cost: \$30/couple or \$15/person includes light lunch, door prizes and souvenir photo. Register: [cedarhilltx.com](http://cedarhilltx.com) or at Rec. Center. (972) 293-5288.

Cedar Hill library presents story time with NFL players Ellis Hobbs and Mark Simmons: 2:00 p.m. (Call CH library for other May events.)

5th Annual Mother & Son Dance: 7:00-9:00 p.m.,

DeSoto Civic Center. Call (972) 230-9655 or (972) 230-9651 for advance tickets: \$15/person (no tickets sold at door).

## May 12-14, 19-21

Duncanville Community Theater presents *The Topa, Texas Chili Cook-off*, written and directed by Kevin Paris: 8:00 p.m. Rivalry and competition collide with friendship and kindness as chili and winning ways take center stage.

## May 14

Election Day: 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. ([www.dalcoelections.org](http://www.dalcoelections.org)).

Senior Center Garage Sale: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at Community Park, 1740 Mansfield Rd. Great bargains! Venders: [cedarhilltx.com](http://cedarhilltx.com) or call (972) 291-5353.

## May 15

The Canterbury Episcopal School invites you to attend an Enrollment Open House: 2:00-4:00 p.m. Tour the campus at 1708 N. Westmoreland Rd. \$50.00 application fee offered to all guests in attendance. Contact Libby Tadlock (972) 572-7200, ext. 106 or [TadlockL@TheCanterburySchool.org](mailto:TadlockL@TheCanterburySchool.org).

## May 20

American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Best Southwest Cities: 6:00 p.m.-6:00 a.m. at West Middle School ([www.RelayForLife.org/](http://www.RelayForLife.org/)

[BestSouthwestCitiesTX](http://BestSouthwestCitiesTX)).

Canterbury Performing Arts Department presents *Godspell*: 7:00 p.m. in the Bishops Hall. No cost. (972) 572-7200, ext. 145 or [www.TheCanterburySchool.org](http://www.TheCanterburySchool.org).

## May 23

Southwest Dallas County Parkinson's Group support meeting: 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1302 S. Clark Road, Duncanville. (972) 298-4556.

## May 28-August 7 (Closed May 31-June 3 and July 5)

Crawford Park Pool opens for daily swimming: 1:00-5:45 p.m. at 530 Krantz Rd. Cost: \$2/person; \$50/individual season pass; \$100/family (up to 4) season pass. Pool rental and lessons: call (972) 291-5130 or [cedarhilltx.com](http://cedarhilltx.com).

## June 4

Cedar Hill Parks and Recreation and Dallas Bass Hookers Club present Kid Fish: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at valley Ridge Park Pond, 2850 Park Ridge Drive for ages 5-16. No cost. Register on site and receive T-shirt while supplies last. Trophies based on total weight caught. Hot dog luncheon and prize drawings.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to [bshay.nowmag@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bshay.nowmag@sbcglobal.net).*

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## In The Kitchen With Karel Anne Tieszen

— By Beverly Shay

Reared in Denison, Texas, Karel Anne Tieszen, now known as ChefKAT, remembers childhood dinner preparations entwined with stories. Although a computer programmer/teacher by day, she worked back kitchen for many local chefs during philanthropic events. Encouraged by Chef Stephan Pyles to teach cooking, she pursued a whirlwind apprenticeship with Chef Michel Troisgros in France, which led to the founding of Kitchen Friends Cooking School in 1999. “But I emphasize realistic food preparation for ‘regular’ people who appreciate a good meal,” she admitted. Karel Anne’s first cookbook, *In Your Own Kitchen: Reality Cooking at Home*, was published in 2008. “It provides a culinary adventure, where the question mark in ‘I can do that?’ is turned into an exclamation point.” **NOW**

### Norwegian Pancakes

**1 cup whole wheat flour**  
**1 cup all-purpose flour**  
**1 Tbsp. sugar**  
**2 tsp. baking soda**  
**1/8 tsp. salt**  
**1 egg**  
**3 cups buttermilk**  
**1/4 tsp. vanilla extract**  
**Apple butter or jam, if desired**

1. In a large bowl, combine flours, sugar, baking soda and salt. Mix well using a fork.
2. In a medium bowl, beat egg lightly with a fork. Add buttermilk and vanilla; stir.
3. Lightly coat a nonstick griddle with cooking spray. Heat over medium heat (until a drop of water dances on it).
4. Make a well in center of dry ingredients. Pour in buttermilk mixture; stir together just enough to moisten dry ingredients.
5. Pour sufficient batter to make thin 4-inch

pancakes. Cook until you see bubbles in the batter; flip gently and cook until you see the steam rising; remove to a plate.

6. Spread with apple butter or jam. Roll up to eat with your hands. May also be served traditionally with butter and syrup.

### Etreinde Tomate (to hug a tomato)

**1 8-to 10-oz. jar of prepared pesto**  
**8 crescent rolls (1 can)**  
**2 Roma tomatoes**  
**16 basil leaves**

1. Pesto should be at room temperature. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Lay out crescents flat; cut each triangle in half. Spread slight teaspoon of pesto on each piece, not quite to the edge of dough.
3. Slice each tomato into 4 wedges. Cut each wedge in half.
4. Wrap the tomato slice in a basil leaf,

covering inside portion of tomato with widest part of leaf. Place in the center of the dough; wrap corners over tomato. Pinch to seal, if necessary. Place gently on baking sheet.

5. Bake for 11-15 minutes. Best when served warm, but can also be served at room temperature.

### Oh My Gosh Ganache

**1 1/2 cups heavy cream**  
**1/3 cup light corn syrup**  
**24 oz. bittersweet chocolate (65 percent or higher)**  
**5 Tbsp. unsalted butter, softened**  
**1 Tbsp. brandy (optional)**

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the cream and corn syrup; bring to a boil.

2. Remove from heat; add chocolate and butter. Allow to stand 3-4 minutes; then whisk smooth. Add liqueur and whisk.

3. Scrape frosting from pan to a bowl to chill and thicken. (If using immediately, stir over a bowl of ice until cooled and of spreading consistency.) Alternately, refrigerate and bring back to room temperature to spread (freezing not recommended). Stir to lighten before using. Thoroughly chill cake to set frosting before serving.

### Cantaloupe-Ricotta Soup

**1 large cantaloupe**  
**1 1/2 cups low fat cottage cheese**  
**1/2 cup part skim milk ricotta cheese**  
**2 Tbsp. honey**  
**1 large lime, zested and juiced**

1. Slice open cantaloupe; remove seeds. Using a melon baller, scoop 8 pretty pieces from the flesh of cantaloupe; set aside in refrigerator. Peel and slice remaining cantaloupe. Puree in blender; pour through medium strainer to yield approximately 3 cups. Discard remaining pulp. Rinse blender.

2. Pour cottage cheese in a medium strainer. Gently turn cottage cheese over in strainer several times to remove obvious liquid. Place 1 1/2 cups of cottage cheese solids into the blender; add ricotta; blend until very smooth.

3. Add honey, 1 Tbsp. lime juice and cantaloupe juice to blender; process until smooth. Chill at least 2 hours.

4. Serve with garnish of cantaloupe ball and lime zest.

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