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JUNE 2015

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Kennedy Hutchins shows why leading fans from the sidelines has become a national sport

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EAGLE EXPRESS



Choose to BE in DeSoto ISD!

SUMMER 2015 BRAIN GAIN

DeSoto ISD offers a plethora of summer school, enrichment programs and camps for students of all ages.

Grades 9-12 June 10-July 1 - AM/PM Summer School - Credit Recovery and Acceleration; EOC Preparation \$125 per session; breakfast & lunch included

Grades 7-10 June 9-19 - UTD Coding Camp at DHS, \$65

Grades 6-8 June 10-25 - SWAG - Fine Arts Camp, \$100
June 10-July 2 - Summer School Courses; \$125 or 2 for \$200
June 10-July 2 - STAAR SSI 8th Gr. Reading, Free
June 10-July 1 - GREAT: Gang Resistance Education and Training, Free

Grades K-5 June 15-July 3 - Camp Explore, \$50 per week; \$75 for full day (after-camp care)
June 10-July 3 - Elementary Summer School, Free

Sports Camps - Lacrosse, tennis, boys basketball, football and volleyball camps!

Summer Feeding - June 10-July 2 - 7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast; 12-1 p.m. Lunch

Locations: The Meadows, McCowan MS, DeSoto HS, West MS (also July 20-31, Aug. 2-3)



DeSoto ISD - Employee of the Year - Dr. Tawana Grover, Secondary Teacher of the Year - Ciji Buchanan, Elementary Teacher of the Year - Hermalinda Williams, and Bold Eagle Award winner Angela Batiste with Supt. David Harris and Board President Warren Seay, Jr.

Calendar

Thursday, June 4, 7 p.m. - DHS Graduation, Eagle Stadium, 700 Eagle Dr.

Monday, June 8 - Last Day of School, Early Release

Monday, June 15 - Board Meeting, Board Room

July 3-July 17 - Administration Closed

Saturday, August 8 - Back to School Fair at DHS

Monday, August 25 - First Day of 2015-16 School Year

NEWS TO KNOW

END OF YEAR MAKE UP DAYS

DeSoto ISD was closed February 23-24 and March 5 due to dangerous weather conditions. The new end of year schedule will be:

- Thursday, June 4 - regular full day of school
- Friday, June 5 - regular full day of school
- Monday, June 8 - last day of school; student early release / teacher workday
- Tuesday, June 9 - teacher workday

NOW REGISTERING FOR THE FALL

New students are able to register online now for the fall! Students interested in Selective Enrollment can complete the application form online. Notification will be sent after test scores are submitted. Transfer information is also online at www.desotoisd.org.

ART STUDENT WINS STATE

Congratulations to DHS senior Vicky Yeung for earning a State Medallion at the Texas VASE UIL Competition. Vicky, who plans to attend Stanford in the fall, is also the Class of 2015 Valedictorian.

DESOTO ISD IS HIRING

Are you interested in changing the future? Want to 'light a fire' in today's students to learn more than ever before? Consider a career in DeSoto ISD! Teaching is a reward! Visit the website at www.desotoisd.org.

IMMUNIZATIONS & PHYSICALS

Parents: Please check your child's immunization record this summer and update as needed. Incoming 7th graders have several new required shots before starting school in the fall. Also, UIL athletes (Gr. 7-12) must have an updated physical every year.

SUMMER ADMIN. HOURS

Administration offices will be open 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays-Thursday in the summer; closed July 3-17.

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Fourth of July



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ON THE COVER



Being a competitive cheerleader has taught Kennedy Hutchins to develop real-life skills, both as a team member and as an individual.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, my faithful SouthwestNOW friends!

Summer always makes me think of family, as I plan or remember vacations and time together. Families are an interesting commodity, so much maintenance is involved. We don't choose the one we are born into, but we choose the one we make, even though we don't often get to choose the children we have. Amazingly, there was only one day, one set of people, one chance occasion for each of us to have been conceived and given life. Apart from that occurrence, we wouldn't be here. Families ebb and flow with the changes of life. Those dynamics can change so instantly. Take some time this summer to enjoy family.

While you are not exactly my family, I do so appreciate the love and acceptance I continually receive from you. Thank you for allowing me to belong to the best Southwest!

Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
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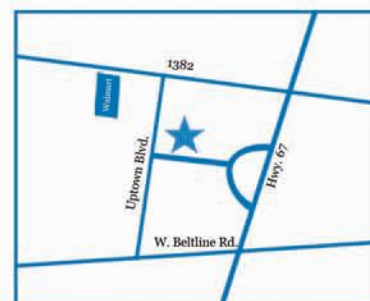


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*Dr. DeGironemo has been selected as a **TOP DOCTOR IN DALLAS, TX** by the International Association of Internists (IAI) and will be featured in The Leading Physicians of the World publication in 2015.*



NECK PAIN



JOINT PAIN



BACK PAIN

NO FEAR, All Cheer

— By Dianne Reaux



In many ways, Kennedy Hutchins is a typical 17-year-old teenager. She's a high school student who enjoys shopping, movie nights, hanging out with friends, snap chatting and tweeting with her friends. But Kennedy, super competitive as an athlete, is also full of enthusiasm and dedication for her sport and has the medals and honors to prove it.

Kennedy has been involved in athletics for as long as she can remember, starting in competitive gymnastics when she was 5

years old. "I competed in all of the events, the vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercise," she remembered.

In 2006, her competitive skills were on display when she and her teammates traveled to Moscow, Russia. The team was hosted by the Dynamo Sports Club, the training facility where many world-class and Olympic athletes live and train. When Kennedy "retired" from gymnastics at the age of 10, she was competing as a level 8 gymnast, only three levels from the Elite division.

In fifth grade, Kennedy was introduced to competitive cheerleading. "My sister, Lauren, was a competitive cheerleader with Cheer Athletics. My mom took me to tryouts, and I loved it," Kennedy admitted. "I was really drawn to cheerleading,



**“Competitive
cheerleading
taught me how to not
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because people involved in the program were really supportive," she shared. "Everyone there is always encouraging you."

For Kennedy, the transition from gymnastics to cheerleading was seamless. "When I first started Cheer Athletics, I was put on a level four team, so we were doing things like layouts, basic stunts and body position lifts," she explained. "The coaches concentrated on the basics, because they knew how important it was to have a strong foundation. The fundamentals of gymnastics helped with my cheerleading techniques, so my movements were technically precise and accurate." When Kennedy started middle school, she decided to try out for cheerleading in seventh grade. "I made the squad, and I've been cheering ever since."

As a member of Cheer Athletics, Kennedy is part of a nationally competitive All-Star cheerleading organization. Located in Plano, it is one of the largest and most successful programs in the country. "It's a really well-known gym," Kennedy shared proudly. "We're known worldwide." For the past two years, Kennedy has been a Panther, a nationally ranked cheerleading team. In 2014, the Panthers were National Cheerleading Association (NCA) champions, and they were

“Setting goals is a good lesson in determination because you learn how to push yourself past your limits.”



bronze medalists at the World's Championship. So far this year, the Panthers have won both the NCA and the American Cheerleading Association (ACA) national competitions.

The Panthers will also compete in the The MAJORS next year. “The MAJORS is an invitation-only competition held every January in Indianapolis, Indiana,” Kennedy explained. “It’s an event where only the best teams compete, and it’s an honor just to be invited.” Social media has made it easy for the team to share their accomplishments — they have a Facebook page, and YouTube videos capture the Panthers athleticism and precision. And many of the major cheerleading competitions are broadcast on ESPN.

“The Panthers are also part of the Champions League,” Kennedy shared.

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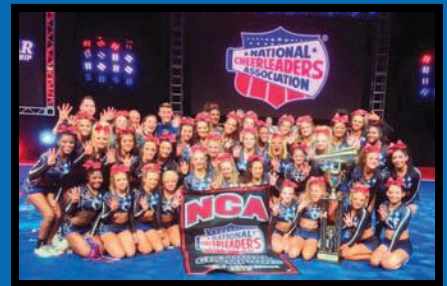
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"It's a selective event, and teams are invited from across the country." The Champions League is so nationally renowned and competitive that the 2014 national competition, held in Atlanta, Georgia, was filmed. The events were documented as 30 of the most successful teams in the country squared off to be named Grand Champion. Last April, it was shown in select cities nationwide.

Just as any other competitive athlete, Kennedy understands the importance of being healthy. "I try to eat healthy," Kennedy shared, "but there aren't any foods that I avoid, I just try to eat in moderation." And the training schedule for competitive cheerleading is rigorous, which helps her maintain her athletic conditioning, especially when preparing for national competitions. "At the beginning of the season, practice starts in April, and practices are held twice a week," Kennedy explained. But as the season continues, practices become more frequent. "It's pretty much every day," she said, "and on Saturdays and Sundays, we practice twice a day." Kennedy and her teammates will practice for three hours, break for lunch and then practice again for another three hours.

Although Kennedy is extremely busy with her athletic schedule, she takes the *student* in student-athlete very seriously. "I travel a lot," Kennedy admitted, "but I take my homework and assignments with me." Her dedication to her education is evident. She is in the top 7 percent of her class, and she takes all AP and honors classes. "I also take dual credit classes," she shared. Kennedy, now a junior at Cedar Hill High School, also cheers for her school. "I'm currently co-captain of the varsity cheerleading squad, and next year I will be team captain." The Cedar Hill Longhorns have a tremendously successful varsity football team, and Kennedy is looking forward to cheering in another 6A Division II state championship game.

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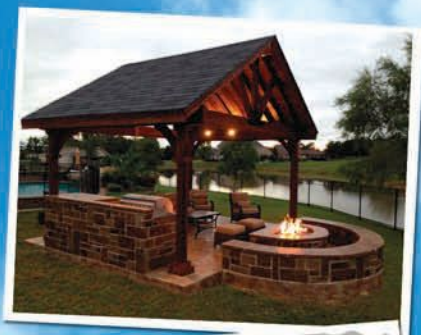
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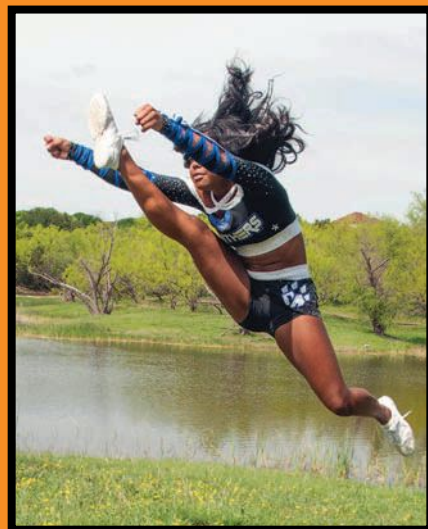


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A glimpse into Kennedy's near future reveals her professional ambitions.

"I've narrowed down my top college choices — TCU is my first choice, then the University of Oklahoma, Baylor University, Texas Tech University and The University of Alabama. "I want to major in biology and minor in child development. I want to be a pediatric nurse and work in the neonatal intensive care unit." And with her impressive credentials, any of the schools on her list would be lucky to have her.



For anyone who has considered becoming involved in competitive cheerleading, but hesitated to take on the commitment, Kennedy shared her insight. "I would tell anyone to do it," she shared enthusiastically. "It's so much fun! It changes you for the better, because you learn so much. It helps you grow, because you learn real-life skills like working together as a team." Kennedy also learned a lot about setting goals. "Setting goals is a good lesson in determination," she shared, "because you learn how to push yourself past your limits."

Kennedy credits her coaches with their approach to the sport. "They're always there to encourage you. They never ask you to do anything they don't believe you can do. And they always support you, and help you believe you can be better than you think you can be." Kennedy has a very mature outlook on the sport she loves. "Competitive cheerleading taught me how to not hold myself back, and to believe in myself. It helps you move beyond the mental limits that you set for yourself." **NOW**

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A Touch of MUSIC

— By Beverly Shay

“While at a Texas Ranger’s ball game, I heard this amazing, clear voice singing the National Anthem. Man, she’s nailing it!” recalled Josh Dack, whose first love is sports. His family has seldom missed the Ranger’s spring training camp in either Arizona or Port Charlotte. Not only does this broadcast journalism major know sports, he knows singing, and the voice on the field commanded his attention.

Monica Saldivar has sung at many a sporting event, but was debuting at her first Texas Rangers game. "I think he was surprised to recognize me," Monica smiled. They had met at the hospital bedside of Josh's roommate from Dallas Baptist University a few weeks before. But not long after, Monica, also a DBU



"Monica and Josh are wonderfully **talented** and **incredibly passionate** about music."

student, asked Josh to come to First United Methodist Church Duncanville, where she was auditioning for an intern position on scholarship. Josh found Monica's voice just as intriguing up close as he had at the ball field. When the worship leader heard Josh sing, he asked him to join the team, also. And so began their journey in harmony.

Although Josh had sporadically filled in on the worship team at his home church of First Baptist in Arlington, this internship has opened a whole new opportunity. Growing up in Arlington, Josh was deathly shy and got into music beginning in the sixth grade and through junior high school for the social aspect. "I only got involved in the vocal part of music, mostly because my friend's mom was the teacher," Josh recalled. "They told me I was good, so I continued. Now



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music is such a crucial part of who I am, I couldn't imagine life without it!"

Attending Martin High School in Arlington further underscored his musical talents and ambition. "Martin High School's music program was considered the top one in America," Josh stated proudly. During his sophomore year, Martin was named the National



GRAMMY Signature School, the top award of 14 given out in 2009 recognizing the commitment of public high schools nationwide for offering high-quality music programs. Josh was at the right school at the right time to excel in his musical training.

Meanwhile, Monica spent her freshman year at South Grand Prairie High School. Monica received an opportunity to audition for a place at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. "I transferred there for my sophomore year," Monica exclaimed, eyes alight. "Their community of choir opened my eyes and forced me out of my comfort zone. I loved choir and also had the chance to be in Latin American Ensemble with 20-25 people. I learned to dance and sing and relate with the audience. I began to believe I could even be like Erykah Badu and Norah Jones, who also attended Booker T."

Doors opened for Monica to sing at different events. In her senior year, she began looking for scholarships. She wanted to attend either SMU or DBU. "I was asked to sing on *Good Morning Texas*, something I have done four times now.

Following my first appearance, I received a scholarship to attend DBU, where I first sang the National Anthem at a baseball game," Monica said. She also met Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings at WFAA and met him again while performing at the Eastfield College health fair. Highly recommended by Mayor Rawlings, Monica was chosen as the singer of the

National Anthem at the 50th anniversary-commemoration of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. "It was cold and rainy. They were expecting 5,000 people to attend, and who knows how many would be watching the nationally and internationally



televised event," she recalled. "But I felt God take over, and I was able to believe in myself. That was the best experience!"

Monica has performed at Lone Star Park, multiple sports events, including eight times at Dallas Maverick games

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and even opened for the Radio City Christmas Spectacular Show at Verizon Theater featuring the Rockettes. "I believe I am being given exposure," said the second soprano whose family is very involved in her journey. "My dad is my manager. My brother runs audio/video for me and helps me decide what to sing, and my mom is so supportive. This has been such a positive experience for my whole family." Recently, Monica sang for the first time in the Tejano Music Awards Fan Fair festival in San Antonio. Over 100 bands performed during the four-day event. "My family likes all kinds of music,



but my father especially likes old-school, alternative rock. My brother and I like rhythm and blues, pop and Spanish music," Monica added.

Critics have described her voice as strong and vibrant yet warm with good pitch. Her clear, articulate natural talent, along with her poise and ability to present the heart and soul of what she's singing with such musical accuracy reveals not only a promising voice, but a promising artist. As Monica and Josh sing at church, their voices blend and entwine with a desire to honor God and lead others into a sincere worship experience. Alex Williams, a worship leader for 10 years, is the associate pastor at FUMC Duncanville. "Monica and Josh are wonderfully talented and incredibly

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passionate about music. They are great with the band and relate well with the congregation — and they are fun to be around,” Alex remarked easily.

Josh and Monica also teach children’s choir on Wednesday evenings, something they both enjoy. They have brought a different approach by teaching the children adult worship songs. And the children have responded. “Monica has obviously had more experience performing,” Josh admitted, “but neither of us feel we are performing on Sundays. Leading worship is different than giving a choral performance. We get to see people touched. This is a responsibility, and we feel called to be here.”

Music will continue to play a leading role in both of their lives, but they also have other dreams. Josh wants to be a sports broadcaster. “I love sports. I want to talk about sports, and I still feel there’s a mystique, a knowledge, a passion conveyed



through the radio. I love how people create an image from the voices they hear broadcast,” said Josh, whose deep bass voice will certainly draw fans.

Monica, presently majoring in music business, wants to continue with a master’s in music therapy. “My cousin was seriously injured in a car accident, in an induced coma for two weeks and remained in ICU for two months,” Monica shared. “The only thing she responded to was music, and when I sang to her, she grabbed my hand. This led me to decide I want to study music therapy.” Both of these young people are and will continue using music to touch others’ lives. **NOW**

Editor’s Note: To hear Monica Saldivar, visit: MonicaSaldivar.com / [FB.com/MonicaSaldivarMusic](https://www.facebook.com/MonicaSaldivarMusic).

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Enjoying^{the} View

— By Sydni Massey



In 1972, teacher-turned-interior designer, Carole Deffebach, worked with an architect to design the Duncanville home she shares with her husband, Don. They hired a contractor and created their dream home, which has grown and evolved over the last four decades with Carole as the mastermind behind each transformation.

Don and Carole met while attending The University of Texas at Austin. Don's cousin and Carole's friend thought they would make a great couple. After one blind date, they thought so, too, and married right before their last year at the university. Don worked as an electrical engineer and Carole as a teacher, although she stayed home to raise the kids until they were in junior high school. Once their two sons, Mark and

At Home With *Don and Carole*



Scott, left for college, Carole went back to school to pursue interior design.

"Carole is a great teacher," Don said. "She loves teaching adults and led Bible studies at church for years, but teaching at schools was not something she loved. That's when she decided to go back to college. I had three members of my family in college at the same time, so I became the cook, took care of the laundry and house cleaning."

In 1990, Don and Carole added on to their three-bedroom home. They enclosed the back patio to create a sunroom. Carole designed and drew the plans. The floor-to-ceiling windows allow the natural light to flood in, easily making this their favorite room. Since

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both are now retired, they spend a majority of their day in the sunroom, watching television, reading books and visiting with one another. The sunroom has a small nook for Don's office and a spa room off to the side. Collections from their worldwide travels and hobbies provide decoration.

"Much of what we brought back from our trips are things Carole thought were



beautiful," Don said. "She found tiles in Spain she loved. When we got home, we framed them into a tray."

The couple took their first overseas vacation to England on their 25th wedding anniversary. Since then, they have been to so many countries they have lost count. They have also visited well over 44 states. Their world journeys were limited to a trip every few years while they were still working, but once they retired, they hit the road. Sometimes just the two of them traveled, but other times their closest friends joined them

for the journey. "Our favorite and most memorable trip was the one we took with friends to Botswana, Africa," Don said. "It was so unique. We flew from place to place in a single engine plane and stayed in tents and reed huts. Our trip was a pictorial safari. We saw lions kill a buffalo and watched over the next three days as nature took its course."

After they became empty nesters, Carole redecorated both of her sons' bedrooms to accommodate guests. In one of the rooms, the antique furniture and floral patterns she used give it a charming bed-and-breakfast aesthetic. Acquiring antique furniture for their home was a pastime Don and Carole used to enjoy. They frequented places around Texas in search of treasures.

Finding pieces for their home during their national and international trips was also one of Don and Carole's favorite things to do. They learned that finding the right tour guide during their travels enabled them to find the best pieces. A plate from India with blue flowers and vines made from semiprecious stones is on display in the formal dining room.

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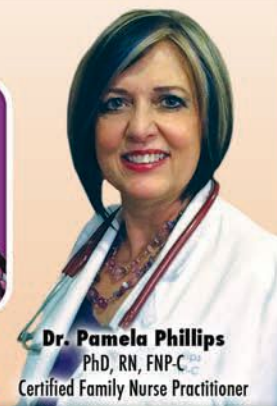
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Descendants from the same family that decorated the Taj Mahal created this plate. Also in the same room is a formal tea set from Russia. This tea set was on their "must purchase" list during their trip. They also tried to collect a plate from each of the countries they visited.

"We came across a floral painting in Santa Fe we liked," Don said. "The artist had just hung it in the shop. There wasn't even a price for it yet, but we knew we had to have it. We negotiated a price and purchased it before the paint had dried."

Don and Carole are both artists, and their creations are displayed throughout the home. After retiring from his engineering career, Don enrolled in a pottery course at Mountain View College. He stayed in the program for four years, so he could continue firing his creations. Several of his figurines, pots and bowls are found in the home. His largest pottery challenge was creating a 127-piece dish set for Carole, which filled up the entire kiln at the college.

Carole is a painter, weaver and quilter. In the master bedroom, a wedding ring quilt she designed and stitched serves as the couple's bedspread. Several others can be found throughout the house on the walls or hanging on quilt racks. One of Carole's paintings hangs in almost every room. Don's favorite painting of hers, autumn trees overlooking waves crashing the shore, hangs in the dining room. Several years ago, Carole was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. As part of her therapy, they tried to see if Carole could



go back to her painting, but sadly she was not able to paint anymore.

When Carole's disease progressed past the early stages, Don began searching for new hobbies he could do from home. He took up landscaping and created several raised beds in the backyard. Don set his mind to studying and has a talent for growing beautiful plants. Two years ago, he mentioned the idea of building a pond in the backyard to Carole. "When I mentioned building a pond to Carole she told me I had to do it," Don said. "That was all I needed to hear."

Don designed the pond and pump system, and his vision came to life in the form of a 4,400-gallon pond. Upstream is a smaller bog pond, only 1-foot deep where water lilies and two types of cannas reach several feet high in the summer, as well as other water plants. The larger pond is 4-feet deep in places and is home to 23 koi fish, each with a unique name. A small stream connects both ponds, and Don built a bridge over it so they could enjoy the pond from all sides. Building the pond took nearly a month, but it was well worth the wait. The laying of flagstone walkways and construction of the redwood pergola completed the Deffebachs' outdoor oasis. "Leaving the house is not an option for us anymore," Don said. "We loved traveling, and now that we can't, we needed to make our home the vacation spot. Carole and I sit out here for hours enjoying the view and listening to the water flow." **NOW**



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Working like a **DOG**

— By Callie Revell

During the day, Jerry Seevers works as a barber. He and his wife, Linda, have three children and four grandchildren and have lived in DeSoto since 1986. Never knowing when a “critical missing call” will come in, day or night, Jerry and his dog, Gypsy, lead another life. They become first responders — helping with search and rescue efforts for missing people, including the criminally missing.

Jerry has served with the Army, National Guard and Reserves, which gave him valuable experience with search and rescue operations. “I was a helicopter pilot in the Army,” Jerry explained. “I worked with Special Forces to locate missing troops.” After becoming a civilian again, Jerry spent many years away from search and rescue until a special dog came along in 1996. “I bought my son a Siberian Husky,” Jerry said. “When we brought her home, it didn’t take me long to realize that this dog needed something to do to keep her out of trouble.” Soon, a co-worker mentioned MARK-9 (Metro Area Response K-9) and invited Jerry to observe a training session. “The first day I was out there, I was hooked,” Jerry remembered.

MARK-9 is an all-volunteer organization based in Mesquite. Since its establishment in 1995, they have expanded from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex to serve the rest of the state and New Mexico, Oklahoma and Louisiana, as well. MARK-9 trains dogs and their handlers to find missing persons, alive or deceased. Both the dogs and the humans take the job very seriously. “When we go out there, we are going for a specific purpose,” Jerry said. “We’re going to find someone and bring them home. Sometimes we do, and sometimes we don’t. Sometimes we spend hours, and sometimes we spend days, but I can go out there with my dog and tell you whether someone is there or not. I can tell you whether they left the area and how they left.”

Jerry’s Husky, Shadow, was a natural at search and rescue work. “Everyone said I was wasting my time with that dog,” Jerry remembered. “But what she accomplished in her life was just phenomenal.” Shadow was awarded a place in the Oklahoma Pet Hall of Fame for her search and rescue work. “When Shadow





got to be 11 or 12, I had to retire her, because she had a heart condition,” Jerry said. “That’s when I got my current dog, Gypsy.”

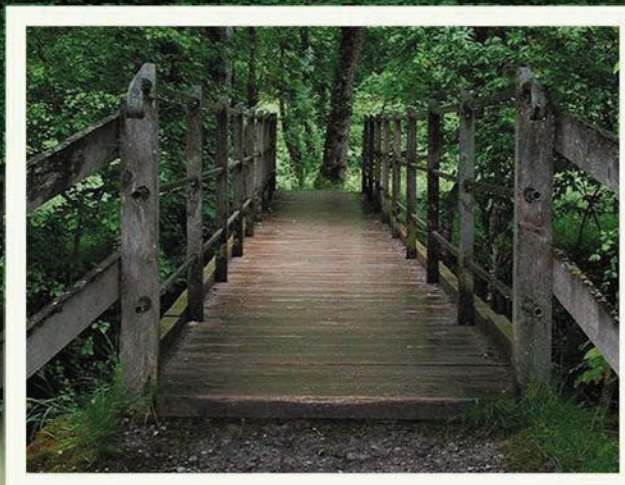
Gypsy is a hardworking Australian Shepherd with intelligence and speed to spare. “She’s about half the size of the other dogs, but she’s extremely smart,” Jerry said. “She will figure things out in no time.” Gypsy has been very successful with MARK-9 and even received a Certificate of Merit from the Dallas Police Department for helping with a case involving a 10-year-old boy. “He’d been missing for 8 months, and she located the area where the remains were found,” Jerry said.

Gypsy loves children and adores the attention she receives when MARK-9 visits schools to educate children on the right procedures when they get lost. She’s also sweet-natured and protective, which



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makes her a great partner for Jerry. "She's snake trained to avoid venomous snakes. If she knows one is around, she'll get out in front of me to stop me," Jerry said. "That's her nature to do that." Gypsy is highly trained in search and rescue work and knows exactly what to do when a person goes missing. "With Gypsy, I hardly have to do anything," Jerry said. "I'll let her run off, and when she finds someone, she'll run back to me and bark. I tell her, 'Show me,' and she'll lead me right to them."

MARK-9 search dogs are owned by the handlers who work with them. "You bond with that dog," Jerry said. "You learn what their behavior is and understand what they are trying to tell you." The dogs work in search and rescue up to a decade before retiring. The most common search dogs are German Shepherds, Golden Retrievers and Labrador Retrievers. "We use herding



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Don Reynolds F.A.S. (no dog), Corrine Kuzma-Perez and Piper, Jerry Seevers and Gypsy, Matt Welsh and Lila, Mike Holmberg and Faith, Chris Holmberg and Hope.



dogs, hunting dogs and any working dogs we can find, because they're genetically predisposed to do the work, and they're looking for something to do," Jerry said. High-energy dogs who are easily bored excel at search and rescue work because of their stamina and determination.

The intense training process for the MARK-9 dogs takes between 12 and 18 months. The screening process starts with the owners first. "When we interview people, we tell them this is not a club," Jerry said. "When the phone rings, you have to go. Your family and your employer have to understand

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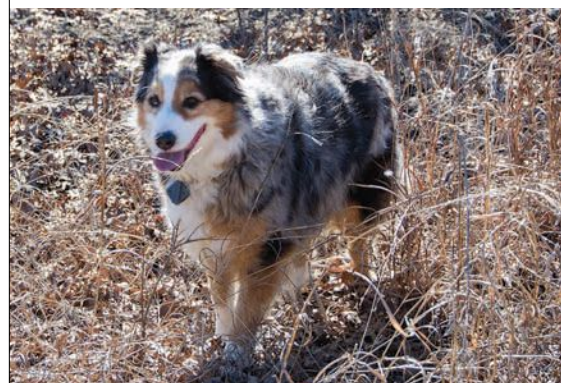
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that.” All handlers receive training in dog psychology, dog health and canine emergency paramedic services. “We’ve never had a dog injured, but these dogs are out there running around, and anything could happen,” Jerry said. “You’ve got to be able to take care of them and get them to a vet.”

The handler is taught to train the dog, but the dogs do their fair share of teaching, too. “We joke that the dog gets it in about six months, and the rest of the time is spent getting the owner/handler up to speed,” Jerry said. The training process is a building block system with each level adding new techniques and getting increasingly more difficult. The dogs begin by searching for their owner, a familiar scent in an easy-to-find location. By the time their training is complete, they have two extremely challenging tests to pass before they can get certified.

The first test takes place in a 3,000-square-foot building with about a dozen rooms. The dog and the handler have three minutes to clear the building and determine how many people are inside. “People will miss that test by one second, but we are very strict about our





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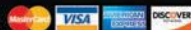
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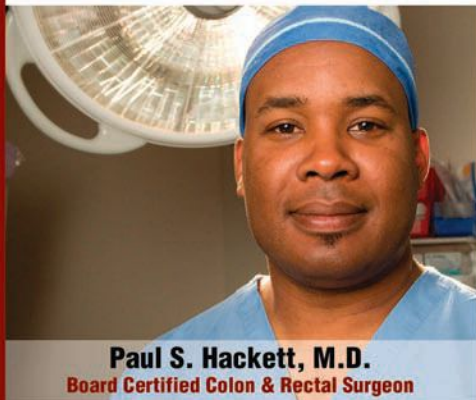
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training," Jerry said. Knowing how many people are in a building means firefighters or police officers can avoid unnecessary danger and know exactly how many people need help. During the second test, the team has 45 minutes to search and clear 40 acres of urban/wilderness area. "At the end," Jerry said, "they report back and say how many they found in the area."

Once the new team receives its certification, they are overwhelmed and relieved to have reached the goal they have been training so hard for. "Not to dampen their accomplishment," Jerry added, "but we are quick to remind them to enjoy the moment but remember, now is when the real work begins."

Jerry's work with search and rescue dogs focuses on accuracy above all else. "Missing someone is not acceptable," he said. "We can't do that." Through his work with Shadow and Gypsy, some of his proudest moments have included his work with the Columbia shuttle crash recovery team and Shadow's induction into the 2003 Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association Pet Hall of Fame for her work in tornado victim recovery. However, the work has been anything but easy. "Not everybody can do this kind of work," Jerry said. "It's emotionally draining at times."

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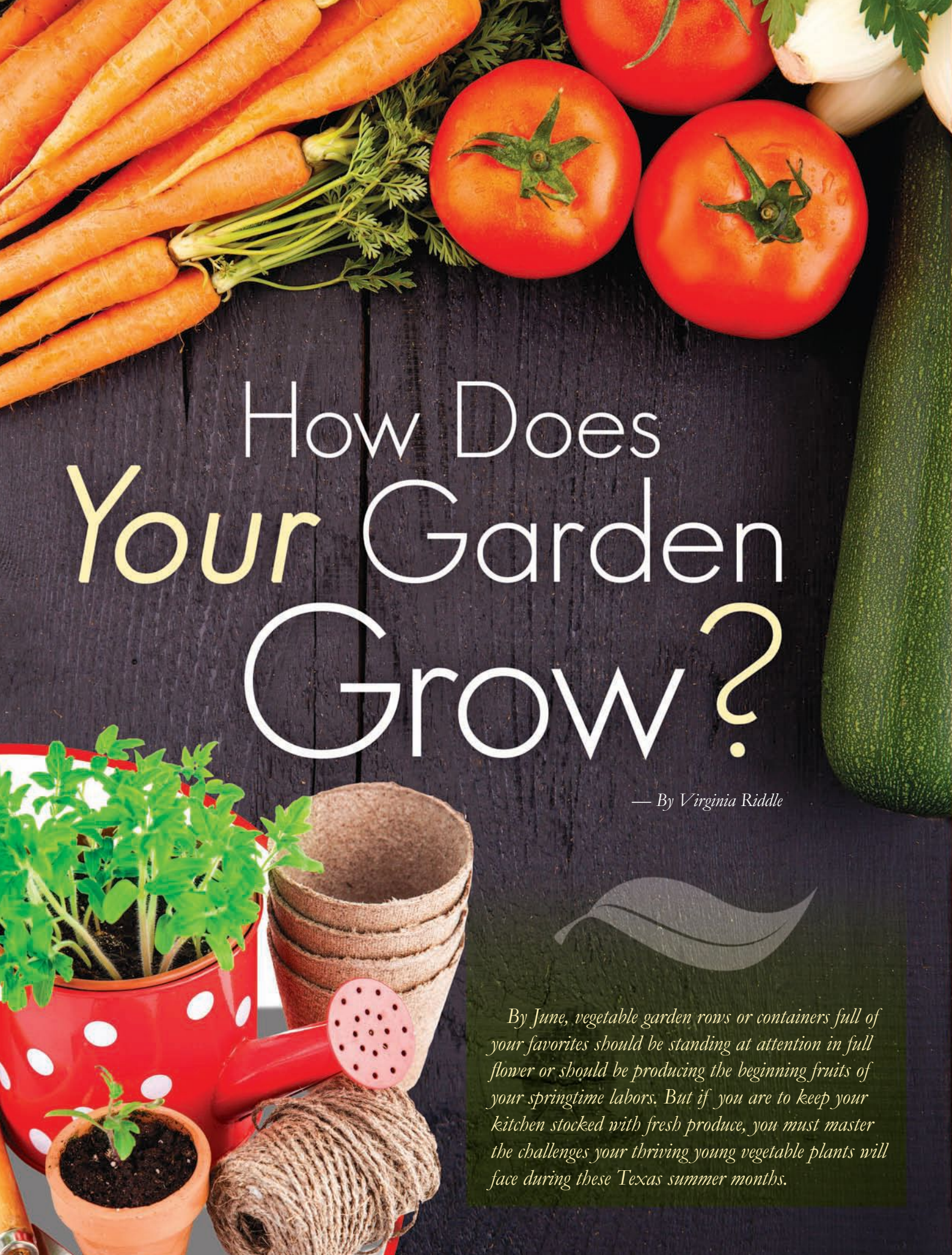
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How Does *Your* Garden Grow?

— By Virginia Riddle



By June, vegetable garden rows or containers full of your favorites should be standing at attention in full flower or should be producing the beginning fruits of your springtime labors. But if you are to keep your kitchen stocked with fresh produce, you must master the challenges your thriving young vegetable plants will face during these Texas summer months.

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summer watering needs.

Some helpful watering hints include:

1. Watering too much or too little is a problem. When soil is dry to the touch, water to a depth of 1-2 inches at least once a week. Remember, leaves can wilt from being too wet or too dry.

2. Use drip or trickle irrigation to avoid waste. Run hoses slowly in furrows so every costly drop soaks in, and use overhead irrigation only as a last resort,



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since watering in this fashion allows water to evaporate rather than soak in and promotes disease on leaves and rot of fruit. Use wicking or refillable watering bottles available at your garden center for container plants.

3. Water early in the morning or early evening to avoid greater evaporation during the heat of the day.

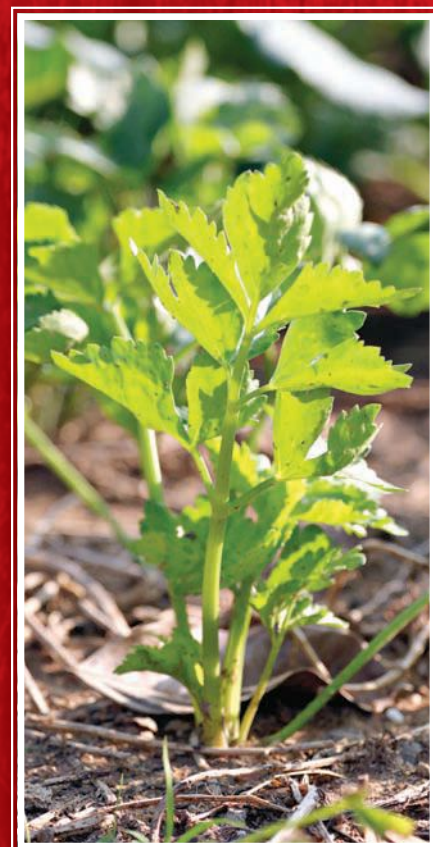
4. Keep your garden weeded since weeds drink precious and expensive water. Use a Cape Cod weeder, swan hoe and/or collinear hoe for weeding.

5. When plants are at least 4-6 inches tall, add more mulch around the stems. The best types of mulches are organic — bark, compost, pine needles or shredded leaves. However, if you use a black plastic liner, cover it with a thick layer of organic mulch, since it will soak up the summer sun's heat if left bare. Organic mulches lower or moderate soil temperatures.

6. Keep plastic buckets handy and use them to cover your smaller plants before occasional hailstorms occur.

Insects

By including cilantro and mint in your garden plantings, you will attract beneficial insects, which include: bees,



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lady bugs and green garden spiders. For grasshoppers, spider mites and other problem insects that eat what you love, purchase horticultural oils and soaps that are sold at garden centers and use them as directed. If you use heavily based chemical sprays, be sure to scrub your veggies well before eating them!

Animals

Bambi is cute until he consumes your nearly ready-to-eat corn. Deer, raccoons, skunks, wild hogs and/or rabbits can be discouraged by installing small-charge electric fencing that can be turned off and on. Additionally, a live animal trap can be used to capture, relocate and release small animal poachers into a more suitable habitat. Finally, mesh netting can be laid on the ground for about 10-15 feet surrounding the garden. Secure netting with ground staples. Deer and other four-footed hooved animals don't like poor footing. They are less likely to walk on something that might entangle them. Old CDs can be hung to scare away animals and birds.

Beneficial animals include: nonvenomous snakes, toads, frogs and earthworms. Be sure to know your snakes, and always stick your long-handled hoe under or into plants to check for their presence before you risk a snake or spider bite!

Fertilizing and Feeding

Feeding vegetables during this growth spurt season is important, especially if your plants are growing in containers. Choose an organic or nonorganic, soluble complete-and-balanced plant food or high nitrogen fertilizer that is the right complement for your soil, based on its previous test. Your garden center expert or county extension agent can advise you. Follow the package directions for application and frequency. It's best to spray early in the morning, keeping the fertilizer off leaves, and water thoroughly right after feeding to avoid fertilizer burn from the hot sun. Organic compost tea or manure tea can be made by mixing a bushel of either

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with 20 gallons of water in a plastic garbage can. Let the tea brew for at least four days, agitating it once a day. Apply at plant roots with a spray bottle used only for this tea, then water thoroughly.

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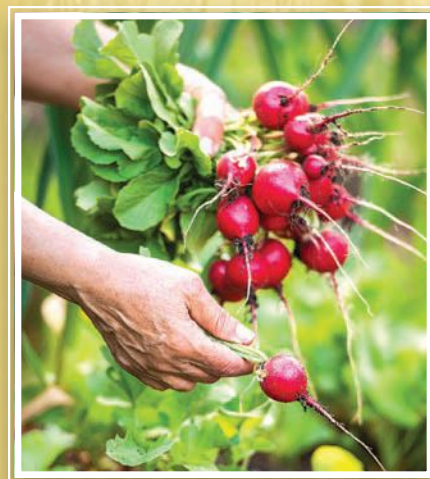
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pots have been used previously, be sure to clean them with a 10-percent solution of laundry bleach to kill any organisms or insect eggs before you refill the pot with new potting soil.

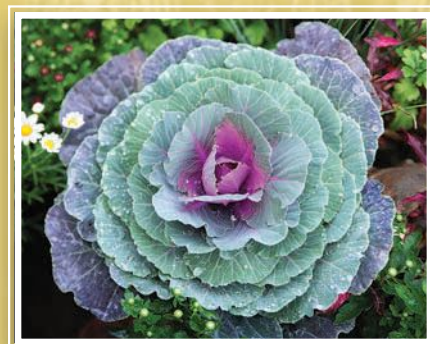
Harvesting

Pick your mature vegetables during mid-morning hours, just after dew has dried but before the sun causes the wilting of leaves or saps the flavors. Harvest herbs before the plants have gone to seed.



Plan Your Fall Garden

Our first freeze is normally about November 15. Count back the days from that date to establish a second summer planting early enough for the crops to mature before the first freeze.



Favorite fall starters that go into the winter months include: lettuces, spinach, leeks, kale and collards. Start these from seeds and plant them in the garden or containers in October. **NOW**

Water Changes Everything ...

Remember the story in our March 2015 issue of *SouthwestNOW Magazine* called "Water Changes Everything"? The students of Brandenburg Intermediate School in Duncanville were raising funds (and giving their own nickels and dimes) to build a water well for Go Standard Nursery and Primary School in the Kumi District of Uganda. Well, they raised the money, and the well has been built! We are so proud of Debi Scott and Courtney Crowe and the children at Brandenburg! To read the article in its entirety, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



Dr. Nathan V. Nguyen and Dr. Christy Pinkham

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Bringing Healthcare Home

No matter what level of home care you may need, Home Care Network will assist you to recover in the comfort of your own home.

— By Beverly Shay

Belinda May, owner and chief executive officer of Home Care Network, acquired several years of experience as a consultant in the home health care industry. She was a vital employee of a company that opened 30-40 agencies over a two-year period. By 1996, she was inspired to open her own agency in East Texas, which later changed its name to Home Care Network. The company provides professional services to over 36 counties and now has three locations: Palestine, DeSoto and Rockwall. Belinda has over 140 employees, including office staff, LVNs, RNs, aides and therapists, and they contract with 13 insurance companies.

“We have several specialized programs,” Belinda explained. “Our pulmonary program is for respiratory care with therapists on staff, treating COPD, chronic bronchitis, emphysema and asthma. Our orthopedic program provides therapy for those with recent hip and/or knee replacements. And we have a cardiac program offering diagnosis and health services.” They

offer physician-directed care, diabetic/insulin, medicine, pain and catheter management, wound and ostomy care.

“We believe recovery is best facilitated in a patient’s home setting where they are most comfortable,” states their brochure. Patients and family members or caregivers should be involved in the patient’s care plan, and Home Care Network honors the choices a patient makes. Some of the top 10 services for which they provide care are: joint problems, hypertension, diabetes, congestive heart failure, cancer (chemo and radiation), COPD, amputees, as well as occupational speech and physical therapy.

“Not only do our RNs assess the needs and provide a specialized care plan for each individual, they also help train family members in how to care for their loved one’s specific needs,” Belinda remarked. “Everything that can be done in a rehab facility, we can provide for our clients in the comfort of their home. Our skilled nurses teach the patient and those

Business **NOW**

caring for them about diet and nutritional guidelines, how to self-monitor for signs and symptoms that need to be reported and how to provide surgical aftercare. We also make certain they can get any equipment they will need in recovery, such as beds, wheelchairs, walkers or shower bars.”

Therapists show patients proper breathing techniques, home exercise programs to build strength and endurance and regain mobility, while learning to conserve their energy. Social workers help with long-term planning, community assistance, coping mechanisms and financial assistance.

“Our goal is to make each patient’s quality of life better and keep them as

“Everything that can be done in a rehab facility, we can provide for our clients in the comfort of their home.”

independent for as long as possible in their own homes,” Belinda said. “We believe that by bringing health care home, we enable and foster a desire in patients to heal quicker, because they are surrounded by familiarity and in an environment where they are motivated to get back to what they love doing.” Clients are referred by doctors, hospitals, assisted living centers, churches, rehab facilities and sick/shut in ministries or family members. “Our intake department and phones are open 24/7, and you will always speak with an HCN employee, not an answering service,” Belinda said. If hospice, sitter services or private duty nursing are needed, HCN will provide referrals. They accept Medicare and Medicaid and work with insurance providers to verify benefits, provide reports and process claims. Their brochure adds, “No patient is refused care regardless of their ability to pay, if financial and clinical resources are available to provide adequate and appropriate care.” Home Care Network is in the business of aiding recovery. Your home. Your health. Your choice. **NOW**

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DeSoto Police Cpl. Nick Bristow (seen on Channel 8 DayBreak) spends time with the girls at the annual Kid Fishing in DeSoto.



Bilbartz Elementary students plant a tree they received as a gift for being "most improved" on energy conservation in Duncanville ISD.



TCU admissions counselor Timeka Gordon (right) and director of intercultural services Victoria Herrera (left) pose with the newest TCU Community Scholars recipients from DeSoto High School.



Dr. Tiffany Hunter and Elijah Hunter enjoy the Mardi Gras in May Mother and Son Dance.



INSPIRE school program hosted the MVP Boy's Breakfast with almost 700 boys from five Cedar Hill campuses (Permenter, Bessie Coleman, Ninth Grade Center, High School, Trinity Christian School) and over 100 professional men, who hosted tables.



Here are some of the approximately 60 children who have participated in the Zula B. Wylie Public Library Youth Storytellers programs.



Duncanville ISD 4-6 graders work it out during City Track and Field Day!



Students, parents and staff share smiles at the Kindergarten Circus at First Methodist School in Duncanville.



City Manager Greg Porter enjoys a moment with students during a mock city council meeting at Cedar Hill's Government Center.

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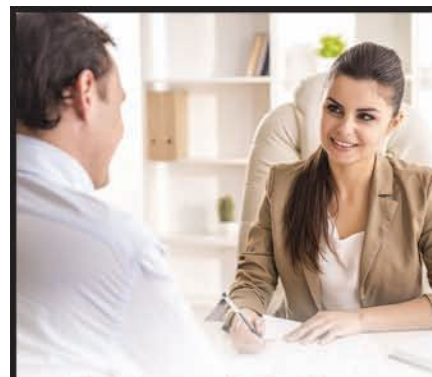
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Start Saving Early – Put Time to Work in Your Retirement Corner

Here's a valuable tip parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts can convey to a young college graduate who has just landed an exciting new job: first, express your congratulations, then whisper "save early for retirement." Now, this is unlikely to fit into any young person's definition of "exciting," but years from now, when it is time to enter a comfortable retirement, you'll occupy an honored position in his or her mind.

That is simply because it makes supremely good sense to start saving for retirement during the early years. How much sense?

Consider the case of a 25-year-old who puts \$5,000 into a tax-sheltered IRA or 401(k) every year for 10 years (\$50,000), then stops. Left untouched, and assuming a 10-percent annual return, this portfolio will grow to \$1.755 million by the time he or she reaches 65.

Later – Good, but Not Better

Now imagine someone at 35 who saves \$5,000 a year for 30 years (\$150,000). At the same rate of return, he or she will have \$904,717 at 65. Good, but only 53 percent of the total for the saver who started at 25. What's at work in favor of the early contributor is compound interest.

The real trick here is to interest young wage earners in retirement savings. Try hitting these themes:

1. Establish a savings habit before getting married, acquiring a mortgage, having a family and supporting a gas-guzzling sports utility vehicle.
2. Save in a 401(k) or individual retirement account to take advantage of the tax shelter.

Consider the Roth versions – you'll receive no tax benefit now, but you'll pay no taxes when you withdraw the funds.

3. Start small if need be. Of course, pay off your student loans and other lingering debt, but when those expenses decrease, add that freed money to your retirement savings.

4. Set up an automatic payroll deduction, savings or transfer plan if possible. It's far easier to save money you've never seen.

To be sure, retirement may seem as remote as the moon to someone in their early- to mid-20s who has just landed a dream job. And perhaps saving \$416.66 every month (to reach the \$5,000 example quoted above) isn't possible. What's important is to start saving early, to contribute regularly to a tax-sheltered investment and to take the long-range view that every step you take influences the structure of the rest of your life. If you'd like to discuss more pivotal points to make to that younger relative, contact your financial advisor. **NOW**

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Todd Simmons is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.

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Painful Crystals

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Your big toe feels as if it is spouting red-hot flames. Red and swollen, it seems to be holding on to the cauldron of fire. You may have gout. A veteran at a VA hospital said this about gout, "I've been shot, beat up, stabbed and thrown out of a helicopter, but none of that compared to the gout."¹ The good news is it's very treatable and even possible to lessen the risk of a recurrence of an outbreak, or at least to minimize the flare-ups.

Gout is the buildup of too much uric acid in the body, which causes it to solidify in joints. Uric acid deposits are crystals in a needle like formation, and they are very painful. Many times the big toe is the initial point of attack of the uric acid, but other joints can be affected, in addition to or even without involvement of the big toe. Feet, heels, ankles, knees, fingers, wrists and elbows are some, not all, of the joints that can be targeted. All of the joints affected are subject to swelling, inflammation and pain.

You can be predisposed to develop gout by some things you do and by who you are. Eating red meat, particularly large quantities of organ meats, such as liver, heart and kidneys, can raise the level of uric acid. Some seafood, such as anchovies, sardines and herring, can also raise the level of uric acid. Another consumption that can predispose one to gout is alcohol. Drinking more than two beers a day can raise your uric acid level. Men are more likely to develop

gout than women. However, after menopause, a woman's risk increases. Obesity poses a greater risk, because a greater amount of uric acid is produced, and people who are very overweight have the added burden of it developing at an earlier age. If you have a family history of gout, the chances are greater for you.


Treating gout is something your physician will discuss with you in order to prepare a plan that addresses your specific needs. Some of the medications used are nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Some of these, such as Aleve and Advil, may be conveniently purchased over the counter. Stronger ones are available by prescription. Colchicine is sometimes prescribed to help with the pain. Corticosteroids may be prescribed to help with the pain and inflammation.

If you experience any of the symptoms of gout, seek the care of a physician with the first flare-up. Ignoring it can lead to joint damage. There is help out there to lessen the symptoms and the recurrence of this condition. **NOW**

Source:




1. <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/144827.php>

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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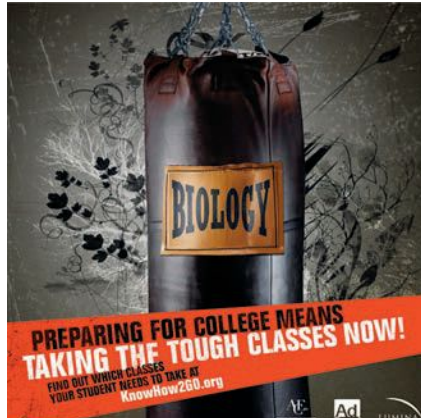


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DeSoto library's summer activities (teens 13-18): registration begins **June 1**; activities start **June 10**: cupcake wars, project runway, open mic, makey makey projects, financial workshops. Must register: (972) 230-9661.

June 2

Seeds of Truth: 7:00 p.m., First Christian Church, 203 S. Main St. DV. (972) 298-2166. fccduncanville.org

June 4

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast: 7:30 a.m., Alan E. Sims Recreation Center. Join Mayor Franke to pray for the community, country and world. alhatley@yahoo.com.

June 5 — 7

CHAT Celebration Carnival: 6:00-11:00 p.m., CH HS: rides, games and fun. cedarhillchat@gmail.com.

June 5, 12, 26

Music in the Park: 7:00 p.m., 2850 Park Ridge Dr., CH. Bring chair/blanket. **5**: Don't Tell Mama Band; **12**: Chris Watson Band; **26**: OneVoice Community Choir.

June 6

Creekfest: 4:00-10:00 p.m., DS Town Center Amphitheater, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. Black & Blue Band and Top Band. Bring chair/blanket. (972) 230-2650.

Kid Fish Tournament: 8:00-11:30 a.m., Valley Ridge Park Pond, CH. Bring poles, rods and reels. Bait and tackle provided free.

June 8 — 12

Sky Ranch Camp 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. K-6th Grade \$269: thecanterburyschool.org.

June 10 — July 31

Be Your Own Super Hero (summer reading club): kickoff party **June 10**: 1:00-3:00 p.m., DS library. Must register beginning June 11. **Mondays**: crafts (3-6); **Tuesdays**: Tech Titans (7-12); **Wednesdays**: Super Hero training, Spy Academy and Become an Olympian (7-12); **Thursdays**: Comic Book Club (8-14); **July 28, 29**: Makey Makey (7-12).

June 15 — 19

Lego Camps: Pre-engineering (5-7): 9:00 a.m.-noon: \$135; Lego Bash'em Bots (8-12): 1:00-4:00 p.m.: \$135. thecanterburyschool.org

June 18

World's Largest Swimming Lesson: 10:00 a.m. Crawford Park Pool, CH. Free lesson/certificate. (972) 291-5230.

Congestive Heart Failure Workshop: 3:00 p.m., Methodist Charlton: (214) 947-9694.

American Red Cross Blood Drive: 3:00-7:00 p.m., DV library.

June 20

Best Southwest Juneteenth Arts & Music Festival: 5:00-10:00 p.m., Valley Ridge Park, CH. For complete details: cedarhillpard.wix.com/Juneteenth (972) 291-5130.

June 27

Community ReMarket: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., old lumber yard, 106 Broad St., CH. Fresh produce, art, craft and vintage flea market items. www.chartstx.org.

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

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In the Kitchen With RaShaun Owens and Floyd Carter

— *By Beverly Shay*

Floyd Carter and RaShaun Owens have known each other since second grade in Oak Cliff. “Our friendship continued as we attended David W. Carter High School, where I won a football state championship, and Floyd was the drum major,” RaShaun recalled. Their paths diverged during college. While planning their 20th class reunion, they renewed their friendship and discovered their mutual love for cooking. “We spent the summer of 2009 hosting get-togethers in our homes and cooking for friends,” shared RaShaun, who finds cooking relaxing.

Now they host “The Crew,” a group of close friends privileged to sample recipes they create or recreate. “We really try to impress our wives. When we cook, the wives wash up,” remarked Floyd, who cooks because he likes to be creative. **NOW**

Braised Oxtails With Polenta

RaShaun's favorite recipe.

Oxtails:

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 10 lbs. oxtails, each cut cross section into 2 pieces
- 2 Tbsp. kosher salt, or to taste
- 2 Tbsp. ground black pepper, or to taste
- 2 yellow onions, diced
- 4 carrots, diced
- 4 stalks celery, diced
- 1/4 cup tomato puree
- 4 cups dry red wine
- 4 cups beef stock
- 3-4 parsley stems
- 1 sprig thyme
- 1 bay leaf

Polenta:

- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 tsp. salt

1 cup Golden Pheasant Polenta

- 1/2 cup whole milk (optional)
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 oz. Parmesan cheese

1. *For oxtails:* Preheat oven to 350 F. Heat oil in braiser or deep cast-iron pot over medium-high heat to simmering.
2. Season oxtails with salt and pepper; brown oxtails on all sides in oil in batches. Set aside.
3. Reduce heat to medium; add onions, carrots and celery, stirring until golden brown. Add tomato puree and cook until color deepens, about 1 minute.
4. Increase heat to medium-high and add wine, stirring until drippings are reduced by half. Return oxtails to pan; add beef broth to cover the oxtails by two-thirds. Add parsley stems, thyme and bay leaf. Cover and braise in oven for 2 hours. Remove bay leaf.
5. *For polenta:* Bring stock and salt to a boil;

gradually add polenta. Reduce heat to low. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened and polenta is tender, about 25 minutes.

6. Blend in milk, if desired; cook for 2-3 minutes. Blend in butter and remove from heat. Blend in Parmesan. Serve oxtails over polenta.

Drunken Creole Chicken

Floyd's favorite recipe!

Uncle's Creole Season Blend:

- 1/4 cup kosher salt (reduce if limiting sodium)
- 6 Tbsp. paprika
- 1 Tbsp. each: thyme and cayenne
- 2 Tbsp. each: ground black pepper, ground white pepper, onion powder and garlic powder
- 1 tsp. yellow curry powder

Chicken:

- 6-8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil (or enough to coat chicken)

Uncle's Creole Season Blend

- 1 large white onion, diced
- 2 heaping Tbsp. minced garlic
- 4 poblano peppers, seeded and hand-torn into small pieces
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 can beer
- 1/2 cup cooking sherry
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 2 shots Crown Royal whiskey
- 1 capful liquid shrimp/crab broil
- 1 Tbsp. mesquite liquid smoke

1. *For season blend:* Mix all ingredients until well-blended.
2. *For chicken:* In a mixing bowl, coat chicken with oil. Generously season chicken with Uncle's Creole Season Blend.
3. Heat oil in a large pan and brown chicken. Remove chicken and set aside.
4. Add onion and garlic to remaining oil and seasoning in pan, sauté for a few minutes; add pepper pieces and cook over medium-low heat until onion is translucent and peppers are tender. Add 1/2 of all liquids and lightly simmer, making sure nothing is sticking to the pan.
5. Return chicken to pan, increase the heat to medium-high and allow liquid to simmer down. Add remaining liquids and simmer until chicken falls apart, about 30-40 minutes.
6. Serve over white rice with garlic bread and a simple arugula salad.

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