

Southwest

Cedar Hill | DeSoto | Duncanville
MAGAZINE

JULY 2015

NOW

A Garden of Quiet Grace

At Home With
Terry and Susan Clark

Dining
Deals
Inside!

On Land or Sea

David Spivey is a
farmer's son turned
world traveler

Embracing Life and Lives

An Old Man's Soul

Revamping the Kid's Room

A Place to Heal

In the Kitchen With
Jami McCain





Summer Glow

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EAGLE EXPRESS



Choose to BE in DeSoto ISD!

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2015
9 A.M. TO NOON
DESOTO HIGH SCHOOL**

EVENT INCLUDES:

- FREE supplies & backpack for DeSoto ISD students!
- Free shots for all students
- Games, prizes & fun

PRE-REGISTER:

- DeSoto ISD students ONLY
- July 1-19 online at www.desotoisd.org
- August 3-4, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Belt Line Conference Center, 200 E. Belt Line Rd.



Did you know DeSoto ISD encourages reading and academic activities all summer long?

This year we have a special **Summer Edition of DeSoto ISD Read NOW!** with amazing prizes for students in all grades including ice cream parties, gift cards, movie passes, tablets, laptops and much more! If you missed the launch event June 15, you can still participate! Simply visit the web-site and click on summer reading! Complete the registration form to be in the program and begin logging your reading through *Achieve 3000* or *Accelerated Reader*.

desotoisd **read now**
SUMMER EDITION

Eagles Football 2015 - Wearing the Brand

With a #5 national ranking and top pre-season state ranking, the DeSoto Eagles are poised for a fantastic season. Here how the season will play out:

August 29, 4 p.m.	Arlington Martin @ Newsome Stadium, Mansfield (ESPN)
Sept. 5, 2 p.m.	IMG Academy (FL) @ Eagle Stadium
Sept. 12, 7:30 p.m.	South Oak Cliff @ Eagle Stadium
Sept. 17, 7 p.m.	Cibola Steele @ Mary Hardin Baylor, Belton
Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m.	Grand Prairie* @ Eagle Stadium
Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m.	Mansfield* @ Newsome Stadium, Mansfield
Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m.	South Grand Prairie* @ Eagle Stadium
Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m.	Cedar Hill* @ Longhorn Stadium, Cedar Hill
Oct. 30, 7:30 p.m.	Midlothian* @ Eagle Stadium
Nov. 5, 7 p.m.	Duncanville* @ Panther Stadium, Duncanville

* District Games; Bold = Home Games

Calendar

July 3-July 17 - Administration Closed
Monday, July 27, 6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting, Board Room
Saturday, August 8 - Back to School Fair, DeSoto HS, 600 Eagle Drive
Monday, August 10, 6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting, Board Room
Monday, August 24 - First Day of 2015-16 School Year

NEWS TO KNOW

DHS Class of 2015

With about 525 graduates on June 4, the Class of 2015 earned \$7.5M in scholarships including 25 full academic and 34 full athletic signees. Students will be attending Stanford, TCU, Wisconsin, Morehouse, Texas, UNT, SMU, Texas Tech, BYU, Nevada, San Diego State, Kansas, and more plus Navy and Marine commitments. Among them are state art winners, thespians, athletic trainers, UIL debate and robotics competitors, journalists, athletes, entrepreneurs, agricultural scientists and more.

Did you know?

DeSoto ISD offers both state qualifying and tuition-based Pre-K programs for our students? This summer renovations will be completed on the **Amber Terrace Discovery & Design Early Childhood Academy** with a staff day care, PPCD and Pre-K programs in one location to maximize best practices and resources for early childhood education for all students. We will start with a quality foundation for every child to be prepared for kindergarten and beyond.

New Leadership



Homer Webb, III
Principal, Alternative Education Campus and WINGS Dropout Prevention and Recovery

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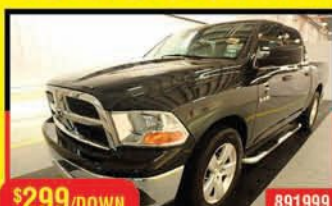


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890848

11 NISSAN TITAN

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891999

09 DODGE RAM 1500

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14 CHEVY SILVERADO

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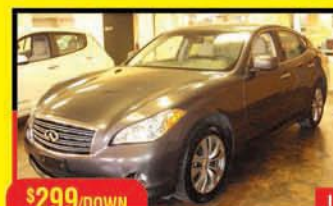


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10 CHEVY SILVERADO 1500 LT

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I

12 INFINITI M37

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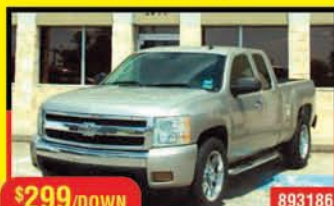


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ON THE COVER



Terry and Susan Clark love the home they feel God helped them find.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note


Greetings, my faithful SouthwestNOW friends!

This month, I'd like to do something a little different. I'd like to talk about jobs. So many of you work jobs I could never do. So I would like to give a shout out to workers who do amazing things, but maybe aren't as recognized as they should be.

How about the people who pick up our trash and haul it away for us? Or what about hospice and home health providers? What gifts they are when needed. How about asphalt layers and roofers who work in all types of weather with things less than aromatic? What about those who service all the public bathrooms? And then there are judges, defense attorneys, cross guards, accountants, school bus drivers — and my two amazing ad reps, Linda Dean-Miley and John Powell. My deep gratitude to all of you!

Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
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2015-16 Standardized Dress Code

Please read entire dress code at www.chisd.net

Pre-K through 12th grade Daily Dress Code

COLLARED SHIRT (POLO OR OXFORD)

Solid color red, black or white

PANTS/SHORTS/CAPRIS/SKIRTS/JUMPERS

black or khaki

SHOES MUST HAVE CLOSED TOE AND HEEL

SWEATERS, CARDIGANS, HOODIES AND SWEATSHIRTS

Solid color red, black or white

School issued or purchased at Longhorn Central

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CEDAR HILL ISD SPIRIT SHIRT MUST BE WORN WITH JEANS
SINGLE COLOR DARK BLUE OR BLACK DENIM JEANS

New for 2015-16

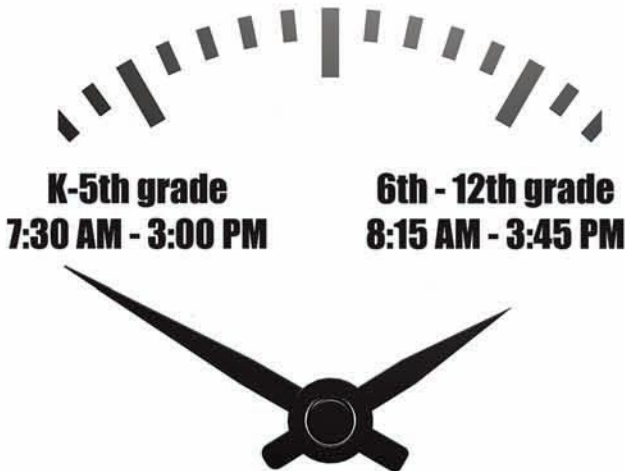
- Button-up, oxford style shirts are permitted
- Solid Color red, black or white shirt with collar must be worn under sweater, cardigan, hoodie, sweatshirt, jacket or coat
- No knit pants, wind pants, yoga pants, athletic pants/shorts or sweat pants

Reminders

- All shorts must be at least fingertip length
- Skirts must be knee length all the way around
- A belt must be worn if needed to prevent pants from sagging



2015-16 School Start Times



CONGRATULATIONS CHHS & CHCHS CLASS OF 2015



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98% graduation rate

\$3.5 million in accepted scholarships

6,500 hours of community service




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\$7.3 million offered in scholarships

3,500 college credit hours

92% graduated with associate degree



"When we get back from one trip we start saving for the next. We are always thinking about traveling. It's a lot easier for us to do so now."

On Land or Sea

— By Sydni Massey

As a sharecropper's son in Lakeview, Texas, David Spivey did not have much experience traveling. When he joined the Air Force in 1954, the world of traveling opened up to David. He and his wife, Della, have been to all 50 states, driven over 90,000 miles in a motor home they once owned and have camped across Europe.

David was not keen on becoming a farmer. His father, Claude, farmed wheat, cotton and sorghum and put David to work riding their Ford-Ferguson tractor when he was 6 years old. Farming did keep David, his two brothers and sister out of trouble. During his senior year at Goodnight High School, David worked on a local farm for room and board. And that was when he figured out his future was not in farming. After high school, he worked at a funeral home and attended college in Clarendon, Texas, where he met Della.

"Della had a friend who knew me," David said. They have been married for 61 years.

Shortly after getting married, David joined the United States Air Force. After basic training in San Antonio, Texas, he was sent to Okinawa, Japan. Della had to stay behind in Texas, since David's rank was not high enough to bring her along. After a year-and-a-half apart, he returned to the States and was stationed at England Air Force Base in Alexandria, Louisiana, and reunited with Della.

"They would move us back to the States just to send us back out of the country again," David said. "But we liked that. I learned of an opportunity to go to Italy while we were in Alexandria. I called Della to see what she thought about it."

"I told him to go sign the papers!" Della said.

The move to Italy was just the beginning of their European adventure. Since gas was expensive, the couple had to camp around Europe on their days off in order to see everything. They learned Europe had some of the best parks to camp in, as well as hot water for showers.

"We could stay at a camp ground for \$10 to \$15 per night," Della said. "We'd travel by ferry when we could and carried our tents with us."

"In Amsterdam, we saw our first motorhome," David said. "It was a converted box truck!"

David's military career ended up taking them to Norway, Taiwan, Washington, D.C. and Washington State before it brought them back to Texas in the 1970s. He retired in 1977 and began working for Southwestern Bell. While working for the telephone company, he and Della lived in Grand Prairie, Texas. "I worked for Southwestern Bell for 20 years before retiring for good," David said.

"I started out entering contracts into the computer system for Yellow Pages. Later, I transferred to residential installation and then the paid telephone section."

The travel bug was still with David when he left the Air Force for the corporate world. He and Della traveled every chance they got. One of their goals was to visit every Texas State Park. They



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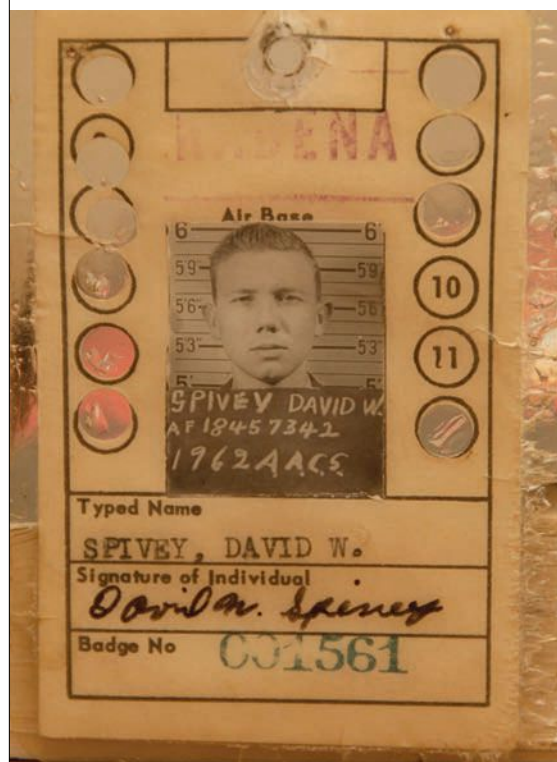


PHCS

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have seen over 50, but with more and more parks popping up around the state, the Spiveys couldn't keep up. They tent camped until they purchased a pop-up travel trailer. After using it for several years, they upgraded to a fifth-wheel travel trailer. During their fifth-wheel



days, David and Della made the long drive to Alaska. They drove to Canada and joined a caravan of other trailers, stopping each night at a new campsite. The group was good at finding the best places to shop and sightsee. "We were gone for two-three months during the Alaska drive," David said. "We went to Fairbanks, Denali, Anchorage and Juneau. A while after that trip, we drove to Maine



and then to Canada. We put a lot of miles on the trailer."

Eventually, David sold the fifth-wheel and bought a motorhome. They put over 90,000 miles on it driving around the country. They've been to all 50 states and collected a spoon from each. David and



Della each have a few hats covered in pins from all of their travels across the world. Now that the couple is retired and have downsized their living space, they gave up their trailer for a more luxurious form of traveling. They discovered the world of cruises a few years ago.

Both were concerned they wouldn't enjoy cruises, because they loved to get out and discover things. But their



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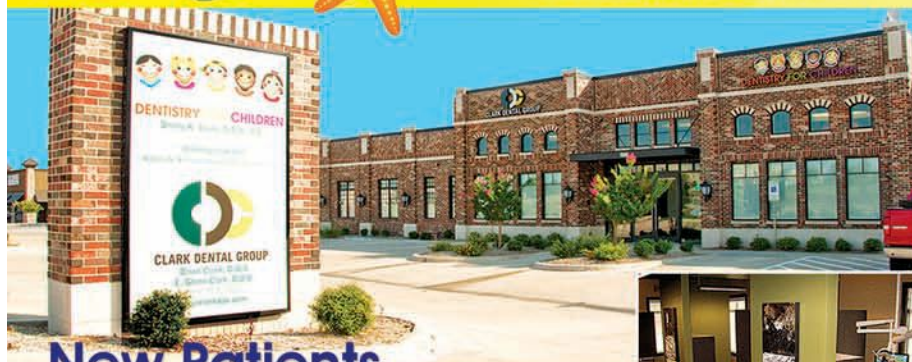
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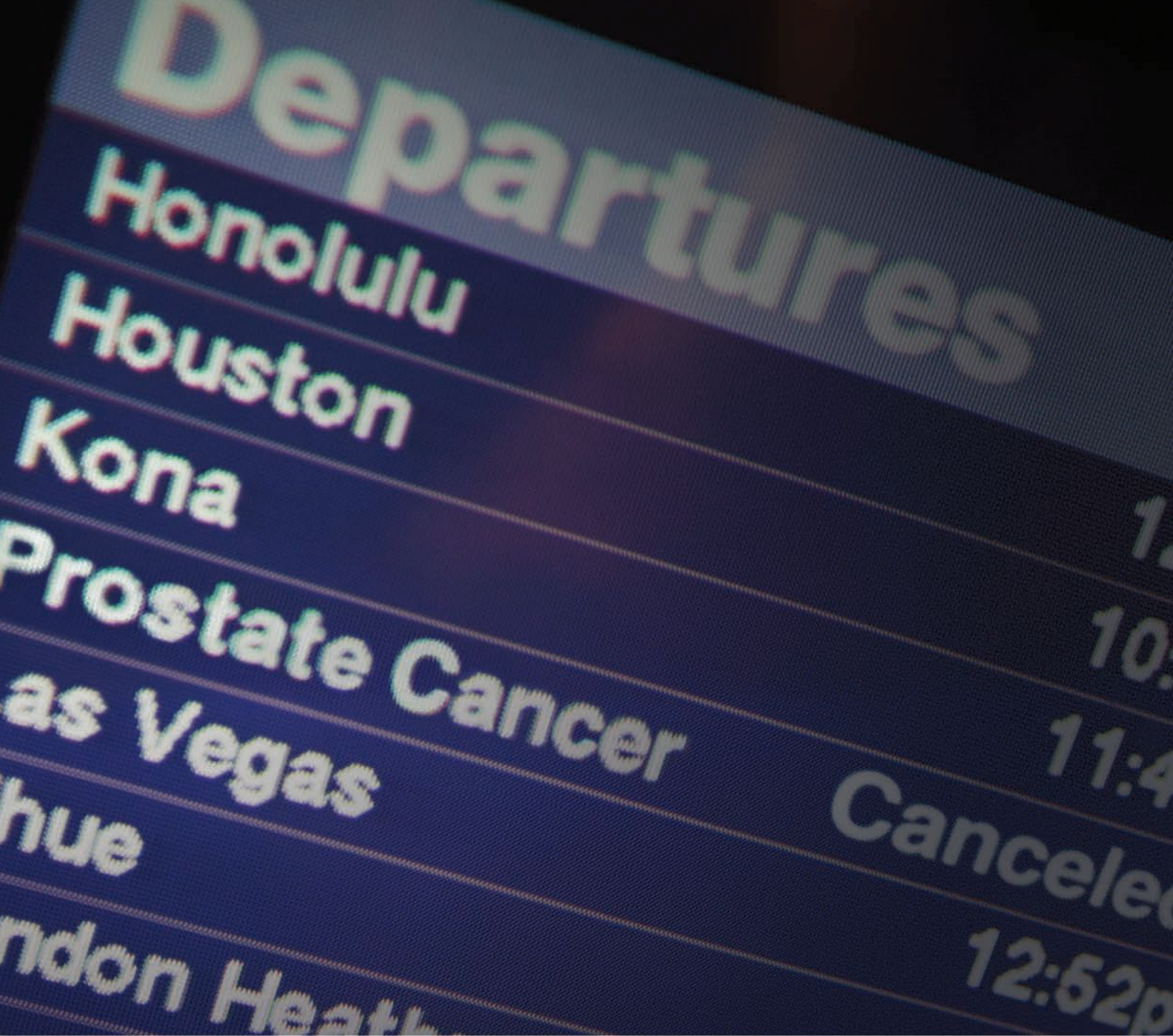
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excursions have proven to still offer them a sense of adventure. They have traveled to Cozumel, Belize, Honduras and the Bahamas on different cruises. Last year, on their 60th wedding anniversary, the couple cruised around Hawaii. "I don't have to cook, clean or make the bed when we're on a cruise," Della said. "It is so nice."

"All we have to do is eat," David said. "When we get back from one trip we start saving for the next. We are always thinking about traveling. It's a lot easier for us to do so now."

While David spends as much time traveling as possible, it can't fill all his days. After he retired, he spent his time reading all the books he could get his hands on. Della would clean around him every day, but shortly she told him he needed to find something to keep him busy. David went to the VA Hospital in Dallas to see if he could find a place to volunteer. He began volunteering in the radiation and oncology unit. When the welcome desk opened, he found the perfect fit for his skills. He works two days a week for six hours each day,



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helping people navigate their way around the campus. Della even volunteers at the VA Hospital as well in the long-term care unit. Her pumpkin bread brings smiles to everyone's faces on bingo night.

"Over the last 17 years, I have volunteered 6,250 hours at the VA," David said. "We see a lot of people each day. It's a stressful place for some of the people there, and they are looking for someone to help them find their way. Occasionally, we will come across someone with a chip on their shoulder, but it doesn't last for long."

With traveling and his volunteer duties, David keeps busy. He makes sure he finds time to go to all of the parties at Champions Cove in Duncanville, where he and Della reside. There is always a fun social gathering taking place, whether it's a pot-luck in their gathering room or a bus trip to the Choctaw Casino. "You never know what they're going to come up with for us to do here," David said. "That's what makes it fun. We have lived here for nine years, but it doesn't seem that long." Like the rest of their life together, this is just another adventure. **NOW**

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Embracing Life and

— By Beverly Shay

Other than climbing Mt. Everest, there isn't a whole lot the Rev. James W. Harris Jr., D. Min., rector of Saint Anne Episcopal Church in DeSoto and life-professed member of the Dominican Order of the Episcopal Church, hasn't or wouldn't try. All right, that may be a slight exaggeration, but Fr. Jim (as he is fondly called) and his wife, Laural, have been on a continuous adventure they call life ever since they met. Their fondness for one another is matched by their heart for all those they serve.

Jim proudly shared his membership in the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. His ancestor, Terrence Connor, came to the Colonies in 1761 and served in Washington's army as a private in Col. Morgan's Regiment of the Virginia line. Jim grew up in Tennessee until his dad got a job with American Airlines, and they settled in Collinsville just outside Tulsa. He attended Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant for two-and-a-half years. As fate, or better, would have it, on Jim's very first night on campus, he met the beautiful and intriguing Laural, a local resident only 16 at the time. A lifetime of friendship and love hung in the balance as he awaited her answer to one and only one question: "Do you rodeo?"

Passing the litmus test with ease and a smile, Laural didn't take long to decide this young man excelled all others she had heretofore dated. The others really couldn't compete. After all, how many other first dates were already in college *and* knew how to rodeo? Besides, she was a cheerleader, and he had played football.

Jim's college intent to play baseball lasted only two weeks. "That just

Lives

wasn't working for me," he recalled. For a while he considered becoming a veterinarian. Instead, he studied English and political science. Meanwhile, Laural was in premed, on her way to becoming a dentist. After three years of dating, they married. Their deep affection for one another has never wavered.

"I really enjoy taking time to get to know people and encourage them toward confidence."

Initially, their commonality was equestrian. Jim rode broncos and bulls. Laural showed horses, taught equestrian skills and coached Oral Roberts University students. Then she began entering hunter and jumper events. After two-and-a-half years, he left school to make money, and in 1989, they moved to St. Louis, where Jim, at the age of 26, became the youngest branch manager for a Torchmark subsidiary dealing in securities and insurance.

One night in 1992 when Jim came home, he saw uniforms on the table, and Laural informed him the whole



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family was starting Tae Kwon Do classes with Bok Man Kim, a pioneer in the international development of this form of martial arts and dubbed the father of Tae Kwon Do by *Black Belt* magazine. Retiring from the Korean army in 1962, Bok Man devoted the rest of his life to instructing Tae Kwon Do. "He was a gentle soul," Laural recalled. The girls were 3 1/2 and 5 1/2 when they started, both learning to break boards. Laural was a recommended black belt when she gave up martial arts in '97 to keep her hands safe for dentistry. Jim earned his black belt.

Laural had taken about eight years away from her education to be with their two daughters, Whitney and Erin, until they were both in school. And Jim, who had known since he was a child he had a vocational calling to ordained ministry, had spoken with his priest at age 21 about entering the process of becoming an Episcopal priest. His priest advised him to live some life first. About eight years later, he went back to college and finished his degree in English at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Laural attended the same school studying dentistry.

And then came the move toward priesthood. Jim attended Aquinas Institute of Theology, a Roman Catholic graduate school founded by

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the Dominican Order. "I studied for my master's there so I could remain with my family," Jim explained. Following his ordination, he then earned his doctorate of ministry at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in Evanston, Illinois, in 1998.

One of the aspects Jim loves best and considers most important about being a rector is walking day-to-day in community with the members of the parish. He also enjoys reaching out to individuals who are on the fringe. "I get to be their advocate," Jim mused. "I really



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enjoy taking time to get to know people and encourage them toward confidence.” As an Episcopalian, Jim most appreciates the concept of community. “The church should be a family where individuals develop a personal theology rather than being told what to think. We are all on respective spiritual journeys,” Jim stated.

Perhaps it was the concept of journey that led Jim to give up 22 years of martial arts in 2012 in favor of running. “You can’t really do both side-to-side movement as in martial arts and front-to-back movement as in running,” Laural explained. “It’s too hard on the knees.” Jim’s first run was the Bix 7, a Davenport, Iowa, event since 1975. But it was Laural’s sister, who egged Jim into joining in her passion for running marathons. He has run several marathons, two of which were in Boston, including the one in 2013. Most recently, he ran the Irving Marathon in April and his first sprint triathlon in May.

“We started on Herbalife products about the time I started running. My progress stunned most people. We love it,” Jim remarked. One of their favorite events is the 30-hour, 195-mile relay run called Hood to Coast Portland, where

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Laural, who is a certified yoga instructor, still maintains her dentist license even though she has retired. Several months ago, they came to DeSoto, where Jim answered the call to be the new rector for Saint Anne Episcopal Church. They were delighted to find an exquisite home just down the street from the parish. There's plenty of room for Laural to work with her dogs. That's right, Laural has added training and showing Dobermans to her repertoire.

"We've had Dobermans ever since we got married," Laural revealed. "They're intelligent, versatile and loyal." Laural has trained dogs in search and rescue for live and cadaver, as well as one who has been explosive detection certified six times. All of her dogs are national/international champions in conformation. Her current four Dobermans are from Eastern Europe.

Jim and Laural are soul mates and best friends. They love the life they've lived. They love their grown girls and their spouses. They love their three grandchildren. "I wanted my girls to be able to do their best to find what they loved and flourish in life," Jim attested. "I think that is also how God looks on us: God is open to us, understanding we are human and loving us because of it." **NOW**



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A Garden of Quiet Grace

— By Callie Revell

At Home With Terry & Susan Clark

After 17 years of marriage, Terry and Susan Clark are relieved to finally be in a home they love and can call their own. They moved into their home in 2004 after spending the initial years of their marriage in a crowded city apartment. This is the first home either of them have owned. They might've kept their apartment lifestyle, if it hadn't been for their Dachshund, Jazzy. "I always said we bought a house so we could get a dog," Susan said. "A month after we moved in, we got her. She's been with us since the beginning."

Searching for the right house to buy was a challenge. "We were looking at a lot of different places," Susan said. "We sort of stumbled upon this one by mistake." Susan spotted the house on the way to look at a different property. The house was empty and had been on the market for a long time. "We saw it on a Saturday. It was raining, and we looked through the windows," Susan remembered. "We came back Sunday, and I walked in the door and said, 'Wow!' We put a contract on it that day." Terry and Susan had wanted a house close to their church with big rooms, but not *too* much space. They wanted a big yard, but nothing too difficult to manage. They wanted to be close to the city, but still have a country atmosphere. "We really feel like God helped us find this place," Susan said. "It had so many things on our list."





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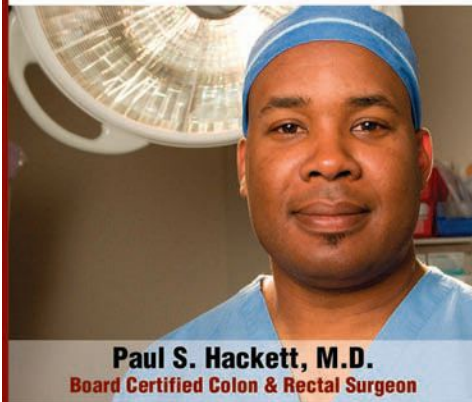


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One of the main factors in their decision was the size of the rooms in the house.

“Our master bedroom is big and has a sitting area,” Susan said. “The kitchen is a good size, which gives me a lot of space to cook. I bring the outside in with the garden, and I grow a lot of herbs.” Planters hang above the kitchen windows to bring more life into the space. “It’s an older house, but it’s not really dated,” she said, pointing out the large bay windows, which make the bedroom and kitchen feel very spacious. “Even though it was 20 years old when we bought it, it was still in great condition, and we felt it was a beautiful home — just our style.” Terry and Susan have updated the house some and plan

to do more in the future. However, there are some features they will never change, like the ornate crown molding. “Every room has an interesting ceiling,” Susan added. “All the details were a big deal to us.”

Terry and Susan like that their home doesn’t require much maintenance, because it makes it easier to travel. Together, they have been to Europe several times, and Terry goes to Asia often for work. Souvenirs and keepsakes from around the world can be found throughout their home, like a plate from Mexico, a bowl from Tuscany and candlesticks from Paris. “We want things that mean something to us, not just stuff,” Susan said. They prefer items with a story, including their furniture. “We



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like to take things people have loved and 're-love' them. Most of our things were found at estate sales or antique stores," she said, pointing to their chaise lounge and dining set. When they do decide to make something new, they still want to preserve memories in the design, as evidenced by their recently remodeled bathroom with its Tuscan style, reminiscent of their trip to Italy.

Susan is the president of the Ellis County Master Gardeners, and her garden clearly demonstrates why. The spacious yard has herbs, vegetables, fruits and flowers growing in every corner. Susan and Terry have transformed what was once a flat lawn into a green oasis. "The yard was all grass when we started," Susan remembered. "It's really developed over the years. The space has provided room for a lot of creativity to try new things." They are currently trying a new concept in the front corner of their lot called a zero-scape garden, which features all native plants allowed to grow and thrive without intervention. The Clarks are also planting several fruit trees in the hopes of having an orchard. Strawberries and blackberries have already been growing. "When I lived in an apartment, I had blackberry bushes in a pot for eight years just waiting to get a house," Susan said. "They're out there in the garden now."

Susan has loved gardening since childhood. "My mom gardened, and my grandfather had a vegetable garden," she

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remembered. "We would pick vegetables and eat things fresh off the vine. It was amazing." Since then, Susan has harbored a passion for nature and the outdoors, which is why she couldn't resist a yard with so much potential. "Gardening has always been with me, but this has given me the opportunity to do all kinds of neat stuff," she said. They give extra effort to conserving water and making their yard more naturally beautiful. "That's a big deal to us," Susan said. "We have over 1,700 gallons of rain water we have collected. We just want to take the grass away and bring beauty in." Of course, Susan can't keep up the garden alone. "Terry never used to garden before, but now he's my hole-digger, and he carries stuff," she laughed.

"I get to eat all the produce, so that makes it worth it," Terry responded. "She always has some project going on, and she's always experimenting." Terry is as invested in the garden as Susan, and he has big plans for the yard, too. Although most of the trees they plant start out only 2-feet tall, he can imagine what they will be like full-grown. "We've planted a lot of trees we may never see full-grown," Terry said. Even as a work in progress, the yard is still Terry's sanctuary. "My favorite thing to do is sit out on the patio," he said. "You can hear the birds and see the garden and all the things that are blooming. I like sitting outside and enjoying nature and the quiet. It's such a contrast from the normal life of work in the city. That's our respite."

Terry and Susan's beautiful garden started out with just a couple of small rose bushes. "It's come quite a long way," Susan admitted. There is a parallel between their lives and the garden, the transformation from bleak to beautiful. "We both came from nothing," she said. "We just feel so blessed God has brought this into our lives. We're proud of it. We love it." **NOW**

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An Old Man's Soul

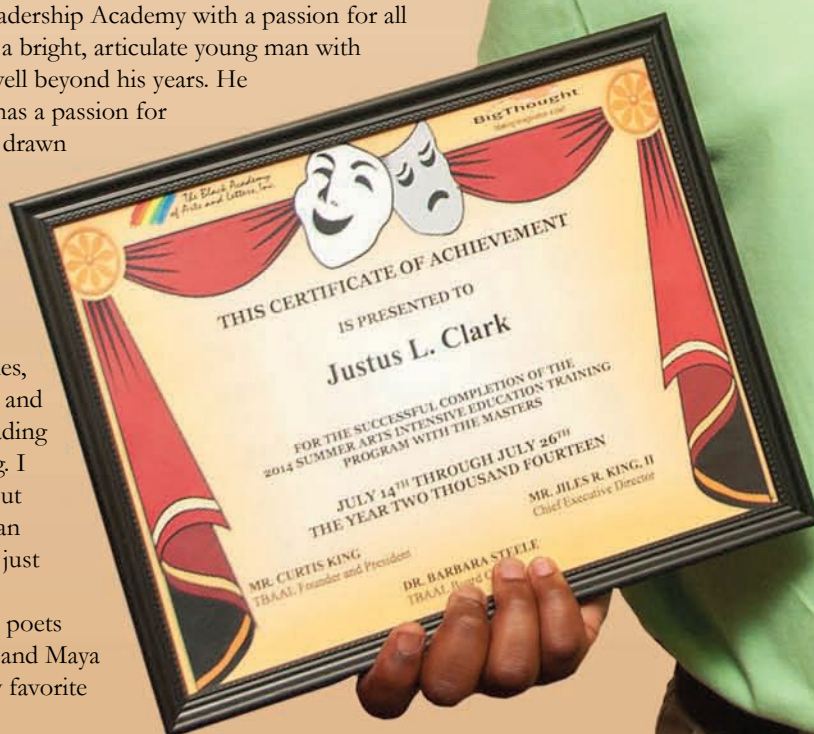
— By Dianne Reaux

When Justus Clark was a toddler, he and his father spent a lot of time in Barnes & Noble. His father, Derrick Clark, would peruse books and magazines, and Justus would read children's books. Curious customers assumed Justus was simply looking at the pictures. Some even politely challenged him to read a few of the words. "They told my father if I could actually read some of the words, they would buy the book for me," Justus shared.

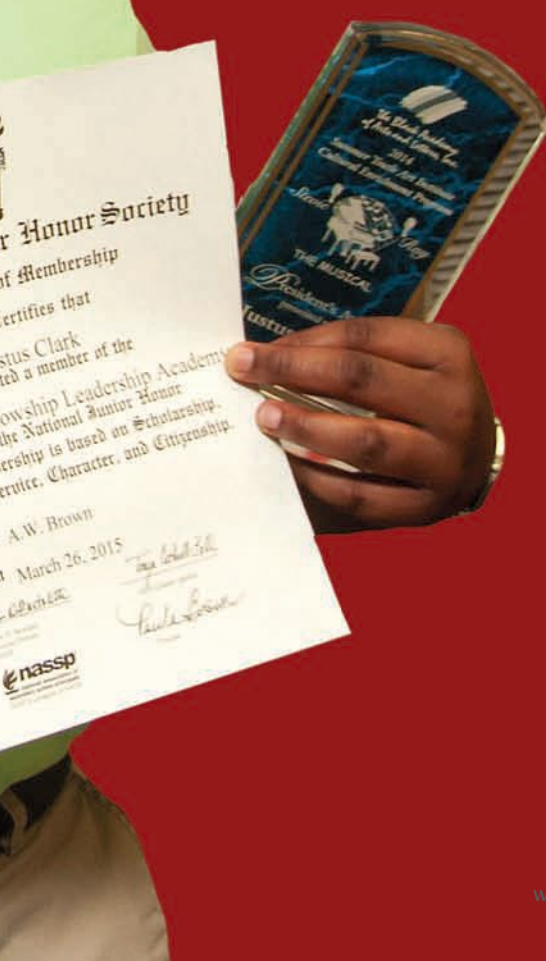
"Justus has several children's books purchased by doubtful Barnes & Noble customers," his father shared proudly.

Today, Justus Clark is an eighth-grade honor student at A.W. Brown-Fellowship Leadership Academy with a passion for all things academic. He's a bright, articulate young man with maturity and insight well beyond his years. He loves to read, and he has a passion for writing poetry. "I was drawn to poetry at an early age," Justus stated. "I like everything about poetry — the words, the rhymes and the figurative language. I think similes, metaphors, paradoxes and euphemisms make reading and writing interesting. I like the way you can put words together to mean something other than just their literal meaning."

Two of his favorite poets are Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou. "One of my favorite



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poems by Maya Angelou is called, 'Life Doesn't Frighten Me.' And I love it, not only because of the way she wrote it, I also love the meaning that it has," he explained. "Throughout the poem, she repeated the single phrase, 'Life doesn't frighten me.' To me, she was saying she could live and enjoy her life. She was independent and powerful — her lack of fear made her powerful."

As Justus speaks, his mother, Dr. Tracy Anderson-Clark, smiles and seems to marvel at her young son's ability to interpret the figurative meanings present in Maya Angelou's work. "When Justus was a toddler, he would tell me he could read," she stated. "But I didn't believe him. We'd ride on the highway, and I'd ask him to read something on a billboard, and he'd read it." At the time, Dr. Clark was a doctoral student pursuing her degree in psychology, and she assumed since they were constantly traveling on familiar roads, Justus had learned to associate the pictures on the billboard with the correct word.



With a background in research, Dr. Clark decided to challenge Justus in an unfamiliar area. "As we were driving down a different highway, I pointed to a billboard and asked Justus to read it, and he did. At that point, Justus didn't have to convince me anymore," she stated. "When he speaks, people always say he seems so much older than he really is. We've always said Justus has an old man's soul."

Dr. Clark is convinced her son's passion for learning began in the womb. "I was a doctoral student taking courses that addressed perception, and as I studied, I would read books and academic journal articles aloud," she recalled. "And when he was born, we'd play lots of classical music, so Justus has always been in an academically stimulating environment."

As new parents, they did something else very interesting with their young son. "When Justus was born, we never engaged in baby talk. To help strengthen his verbal skills, we spoke to him in a normal voice and tone. When he began learning to speak, we helped him build his vocabulary by using picture flash



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cards,” Dr. Clark explained. As Justus grew older, his parents continued to encourage him and engage him with new experiences. As a result of his parent’s guidance, Justus has excelled academically and artistically — he’s even a published author.

“When I was 11, my mother submitted some of my poems to a publishing company,” Justus said. “They told us it would take a month or two for a response. But they contacted us in less than a week, because they wanted to publish a book of my poems in their children’s division. They offered me a contract, and I was 12 when the book was released.” Justus wanted to learn about marketing and selling his book, so his parents helped him set up his own DBA (doing business as) to properly manage his book sales.

Justus’ poetry has been featured on radio stations K104 and KHVN, and his book signings have been announced in *The Dallas Morning News*. As a spoken-word artist, Justus participated in the spoken-word event, Poets N Jazz at the Clarence Muse Cafe Theatre in the Dallas Convention Center Theatre Complex. He also participated in the Black Academy of Arts and Letters 37th Annual Summer Youth Program musical *Stevie Meets Ray*, and his poetry was incorporated into the production. Justus was recently acknowledged as the Youngest Published Poet of USA.

Justus enjoys speaking publicly to young students to help them understand the importance of reading and learning.



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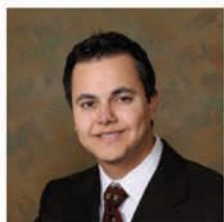
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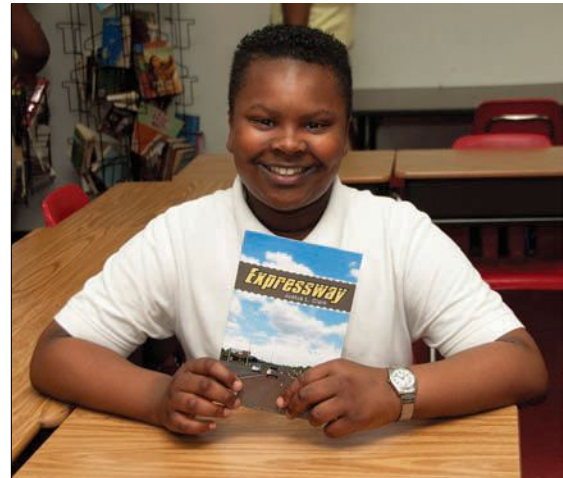
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"I give motivational talks to kids at churches and schools to let them know it's important to keep learning. You don't want to be in the back of the class just getting by. You want to have an academic challenge, because learning is a process," Justus explained. "When you aren't learning new things, your brain doesn't hold onto information. So, constantly challenge yourself with new information, because it will help you have a strong foundation. And the information you learn now will help you as a college student. The things I am learning now are a foundation for growth."

Many people have made an impression on Justus including his parents; his late uncle, Homer Butler; and even Bill Gates. But Justus also credits his English teacher, Alex Kurian, as having a major influence on his academic perspective. Mr. Kurian became seriously ill and had to leave his students while he recovered. "But the fact Mr. Alex came back to teach us means a lot," Justus admitted. "He loves teaching, and he wants to help us to succeed. He taught me that even when the going gets tough, you don't stop. You continue doing what you need to do to move forward. No matter how hard it is or how long it takes, continue to move forward."

Although Justus has not yet started high school, he is already thinking about college and beyond. "I would like to attend the United States Naval Academy or the United States Air Force Academy. I want to become an air traffic controller or a marine biologist." Justus has certainly been given a strong emotional and academic foundation to help ensure his success at whatever profession he chooses to pursue. **NOW**



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Revamping the Kid's Room

— By Sara Edgell

The decor of a house is a direct reflection of the family that resides within, and the same is true of a child's bedroom. As children grow, their interests, hobbies and tastes change. What they find appealing from ages 4 to 7 will very likely be different from an 8- to 12-year-old and definitely different from a teen. Luckily, remodeling, redesigning and redecorating their personal space to encompass the things they love doesn't have to be an expensive undertaking.



Getting Started

Use the experience as an opportunity to work on the project together and bond. The very first thing to do is talk about the things your child would like to see in the space. Discuss current likes and dislikes, favorite colors, interests, hobbies and needs.

A wonderful place to start is with a theme, as this can determine color palette, accessories, bedding and even furniture. For example, if a 12-year-old girl is dreaming of a shabby-chic, vintage cottage bedroom, the colors will likely be soft pastels. The decor will include lots of floral fabrics and refurbished furniture pieces, such as a whitewashed, vintage vanity and nightstand. Repurposed picket fence planks could also be used to build a headboard and/or shelving units, or they



could be used to line the walls, starting at the baseboard and coming half way up the wall.

Assessing the project and what it will entail before developing a plan is important. Make a list of items to be purchased, as well as those that can be repurposed, determine "do it yourself" projects versus those requiring the expertise of professionals and, lastly, decide a budget and stick to it. Then, you are ready to begin.

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of hours. Because color can greatly influence mood, and since children are typically drawn to bright, bold colors, compromising on paint selections is crucial.

Take into consideration the size of the room. Lighter shades of blue, teal, purple and green can open up a smaller space, whereas darker, richer tones like plum, magenta, burnt orange and ruby can be overpowering, making the space feel even smaller and cramped. Lighting is another factor to consider. Natural light will show the truest color, whereas incandescent and florescent lighting will cast hues on the color, altering its appearance. Give your child the freedom to pick their paint color, with a bit of compromise considering these factors.

Personal Touches

Decorative painting techniques are also an option. Many craft stores carry a variety of stencils that could be used to create a slew of personalized wall graphics. You can also make your own stencil using a piece of cardboard, pencil and box cutter. Simply draw the design on the cardboard and carefully cut it out. From the popular chevron pattern to more specific designs like sailboats and anchors, cheetah print or a favorite quote, stencils — whether store-bought or homemade — make the job a breeze.

While stencils are helpful, they will not enable you to create the whimsical ambience only a custom-painted mural can deliver. From magical fairytale forests to vibrant cityscapes, nothing can top the work of a local artist or painter. These individuals are easy to find and can bring your child's vision to life like no one else can do.

Furniture, Storage and Lighting

Storage and functionality are two areas to consider. Understanding the activities the space will accommodate is key. For

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example, is a desk needed for homework? Will a television and gaming system be kept in the room? Are there lots of toys or books requiring storage? All of these factors must be determined in order to decide the specific types of furniture the room will need.

You may be able to carry over large pieces of furniture, such as a bed or dresser, into the new room or update them with paint to fit the theme your child has chosen. However, in some cases, purchasing new furniture may be necessary. If your child wants a super-cool and highly functional loft bed complete with a shelving unit and desk underneath, or maybe they desire their own hidey-hole built into the window frame, hiring a carpenter is in order. These professionals can build custom pieces of furniture, shelving and closet organization, or even change the layout of a room by removing or building new walls.

For new lighting fixture installation or construction, master electricians are needed. Not only can they effortlessly install anything from a ceiling fan to recess or track lighting, they can also add extra outlets. No matter the job, when




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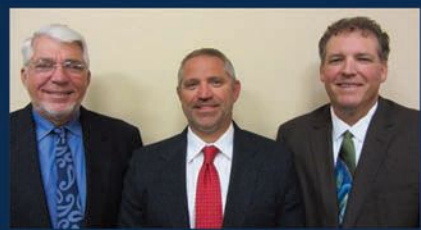
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Accessories

Additional personal touches can be added to the space with specialized accessories. These specialty items can be found anywhere and can be anything. For instance, a 7-year-old boy may want a sports-themed bedroom, complete with a basketball goal and scoreboard, a football field floor and custom-painted stadium wall.



To complement these major room components, posters can be framed and hung on the wall. Sports cards could be used to decoupage the surface of a desk or the back of a shelf. Old baseball bats could be repurposed into a bed frame

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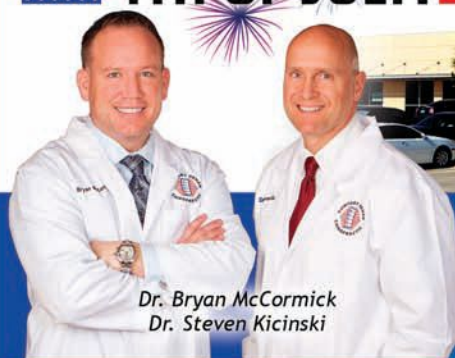
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or curtain rods. Jerseys could easily be transformed into curtain panels or bedding. The trick is to be creative and allow your child the power of choice when picking accessories for their new space.

In the end, a room redo is all about updating the space to be a true reflection of the child who occupies it. By revamping your child's room to fit their



current interests and personality, you are not only acknowledging them as an individual but also providing them with a space all their own. **NOW**

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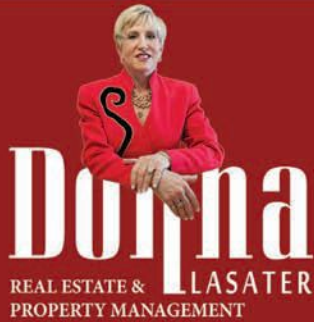
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The caring staff at Hickory Trail Hospital are both capable and pleased to assist people to overcome mental health challenges or substance abuse in a safe, comfortable environment.



A Place to Heal

Hickory Trail Hospital provides tools for people to get back to life. — By Beverly Shay

Hickory Trail Hospital provides behavioral health services, and in doing so, they are offering the single most valuable resource to the community. Like a hospital emergency room, Hickory Trail is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so they can provide a no-cost mental health assessment at any time for anyone, with or without a referral.

Lance Folske, CEO of Hickory Trail, has been at this facility for three years, but he has long been involved with assisting people to get their lives back when they find themselves overcome with mental health issues or substance abuse. “I always tell people that I didn’t really choose this field — it chose me,” Lance remarked with a smile. Born and raised in Wisconsin, even before he attended the University of Wisconsin to study

psychology, Lance was always interested in the dispositions and behaviors of humans. “I wanted to know why people were the way they were.”

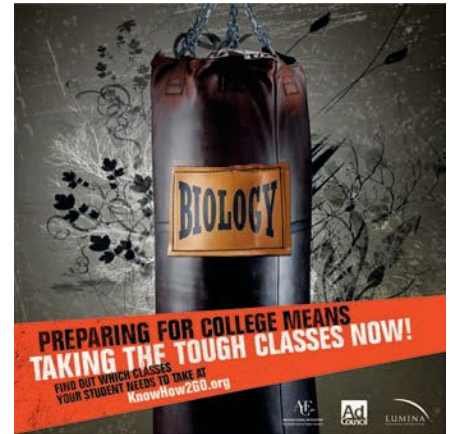
While working on his master’s in marriage and family therapy at Western Kentucky University, Lance worked in a psychiatric hospital. “I wanted to become Dr. Phil,” Lance admitted with an even bigger grin. “Initially, I was a mental health technician, but was promoted and put into the CEO training program with our parent company eight-and-a-half years ago. I found it to be the perfect job for me!” Lance melded his clinical experience and training, which allowed him to interact with patients while being a business administrator, who can speak with the staff with an experiential understanding of what their jobs entail.

“This field provides the opportunity of helping people to get their lives back, thus contributing to the community and impacting the world,” Lance added. “I want to create a space where anyone would feel comfortable and confident sending a family member knowing they will get better.” Lance is aided in this quest by Angela Rayson, interim business development director and community education specialist. She’s been with Hickory Trails for eight years now. Previously, Angela worked with the Department of Defense in health care provider relations in hospice services.

“I want people to know we are here, right in the community to provide quality health services for children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Anyone can come here any time they need to, and we will provide a free level-of-care assessment. They will meet with a licensed therapist to determine what level of care will be appropriate,” Angela emphasized. “We can also provide a mobile assessment at a hospital, nursing home or doctor’s office, but not in someone’s home or at a school, if a person is unable to come here.”

Everyone who comes into the hospital will be cared for at the facility or given a recommendation for treatment. They offer inpatient and outpatient care. Inpatient care includes four hours of therapy a day, both in group sessions and individual time with a psychiatrist or nurse practitioner. Patients are assisted in setting and actively working toward fulfilling treatment goals. “We give them tools for re-achieving stability,” Lance remarked. “By providing a safe environment and a challenge, we hope they will see the potential of achieving and maintaining sobriety and/or mental stability.”

To that end, they offer multiple programs for a continuum of care from crisis stabilization to medication management and outpatient referrals. “We also have a Better Days outpatient program available in Rowlett for adults 18 and up,” noted Lance. The Rowlett facility is open between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. “Mental health care no longer has the stigma it once did.” **NOW**



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Ramona Ross-Bacon and Troy Bacon are very proud of their son, Thaddaeus, as he receives a Southwest Partners Scholarship to attend Texas A&M University.



DeSoto High School seniors, Allegra Mastin and Isaiah Madrigal, sign letters of commitment to join the U.S. Navy.



What a thrill for Duncanville High School's class of 2015 to be congratulated by 1976 graduate and Texas State Governor Gregg Abbott!



The Cedar Hill Chamber of Commerce and the Cedar Hill Young Professionals host the Let's Be Social Luncheon at the Alan E. Sims Recreation Center.



2015 DeSoto High School valedictorian Vicky Yeung, who received a full-tuition scholarship to Stanford, cuts cake for friends and family.



DeSoto ISD Supt. David Harris (L) and Board Pres. Warren Seay Jr. (R) award Dr. Tawna Grover, employee of the year; Ciji Buchanan and Hermalinda Williams, secondary and elementary teachers of the year, and Angela Batiste, Bold Eagle Award winner.



Duncanville High School junior Adrian Mayberry assists police after repairing the department's robot in his engineering class.



Don Culbertson, Sam Owens, Don Anthony and Levoris Harmon are four of the Vietnam Vets honored at Champion Cove's Flag Day celebration.

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Family Values: When Your Parents Need Help in Their Retirement Years

The signs may be difficult to spot, because aging parents are seldom forthright about their forgetfulness or declining abilities to take care of their affairs, but when you see telltale signs — bills accumulating on the dining room table or confusion about when to take what medicines — you may realize it's time to repay in kind the assistance they once gave you.

On the assumption that you can diplomatically come to an agreement to help out — a delicate task because parents may not at first agree they need help, or may be embarrassed to be losing independence — here are some concerns you might address, especially if they are merely slowing down and are not yet plagued with major health problems:

Money Management

First, find out the facts about their expenses, income and savings. Then listen to their fears and their wishes. Use what you find out as a guideline on how best to help them. You'll want them to realize you're trying to assist on their terms, not take over their lives.

If they have more or less ignored the Internet, you might try explaining the advantages of having online financial accounts. Direct deposit of dividend payments, pension checks and Social Security will make frequent trips to the bank unnecessary. A joint online checking account, with you as an approved signatory, can prove useful. You can easily check whether bills have been paid, or pay them yourself. And you can show them or provide a printout of the account activity anytime they want to know what's going on.

If they can be persuaded to accept the fact that online payments are less likely to lead to identity theft than their paper counterparts — a fact, but one older generations tend to resist — set up automatic payment of utility, insurance and credit card bills.

Do they have investments with various institutions? You might suggest consolidation to reduce paperwork and make it easier to keep track of the entire portfolio and look for ways for their assets to work harder for them. Savings earning little interest can become more valuable if switched into a money market fund or short-term bond fund.

If your parents need financial assistance, arrange a family meeting to find out what costs may be shared with siblings or other relatives. Whatever the decisions, they should seem fair to everyone involved.

Vital Paperwork

Finally, ensure that your parents have their paperwork in order — wills, powers of attorney and other documents vital to the family. If they don't, urge them to have these documents drawn up. Then make sure you know where they're kept.

Family matters of this kind can be difficult to handle. If you have questions on what vital matters should be discussed, please don't hesitate to contact your financial advisor. **NOW**

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Jonathan Pope is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.

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In the Kitchen With Jami McCain

— *By Beverly Shay*

“I love cooking, but could do without the cleaning,” remarked Jami McCain, who serves as a councilwoman for Cedar Hill. As a result, she keeps cooking simple. “Being a pastor’s wife with three kids, life is always throwing us curve balls, so I do my best to have the fridge and freezer stocked with something that can be thrown together at a moment’s notice.”

Jami earned a full scholarship, but hoped to turn it down. She only wanted to be a *wife*. “When my parents said I had to accept it, I majored in home economics! Now, I like to google three words and add *recipe* to figure out what to cook,” Jami laughed. “Growing up in South Louisiana meant every dish popped with flavor. I try to do that, while keeping it simple and cheap.” **NOW**

Crawfish Pie

Makes two pies.

- 4 Tbsp. butter**
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped**
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped**
- 2 Tbsp. garlic, minced**
- 1 heaping Tbsp. white flour**
- 1 lb. fresh crawfish, precooked, peeled and deveined (or 1 12-oz. pkg. frozen Bernard’s Brand Crawfish Tails, thawed)**
- 1/2 cup green onion, chopped**
- Tony Chachere’s Original Creole Seasoning, to taste**
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs**
- 2 ready-made pie crusts, cooked according to directions**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375 F. Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add onion, celery and garlic; sauté until onions are clear. Add flour; stir until flour starts to darken.
- 2.** Add crawfish, green onion and seasoning

Cover and cook for about 20 minutes. Add more seasoning if needed. Stir in cream thoroughly; add breadcrumbs. Pour into pie crusts and bake for about 30 minutes. Check for firmness; bake up to 15 minutes more, if needed.

Parmesan-crust Tilapia

- 2 Tbsp. butter**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 1/2 cup flour**
- 1/2 cup Parmesan**
- 1 pkg. (5-7) Tilapia fillets, thawed**
- Tony Chachere’s Original Creole Seasoning, to taste**

- 1.** Melt butter in a nonstick or cast-iron skillet over low heat. Prepare assembly line with a shallow bowl of milk and a plate with combined flour and Parmesan.
- 2.** Lay fillets in shallow baking pan; sprinkle with seasoning to taste. Dip fillets in milk and coat with flour mixture; set into skillet. Turn heat to medium. Brown for 7-10 minutes, or

until crust begins to turn a nice peanut butter color. Be careful not to burn. Turn fillets and cook for 10 minutes more. (Fish is done when it flakes easily.)

Creamy Spinach Dip

Serve with crackers or as a side dish.

- 1 pkg. frozen chopped spinach**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/2 cup sour cream**
- 1/2 cup feta cheese (plain or Mediterranean)**
- Tony Chachere’s Original Creole Seasoning, to taste**

- 1.** Warm spinach on stove top over medium heat. Reduce heat to low; add remaining ingredients. Stir frequently until thoroughly heated and well-blended. Add additional seasoning if needed.

Italian Casserole

Great served with garlic bread.

- 2 cups pasta, uncooked (We like shells.)**
- 2 lbs. ground beef or turkey**
- 1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning**
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder**
- 1 44-oz. jar spaghetti sauce of choice**
- 1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes**
- 1 8-oz. jar sliced mushrooms, drained**
- 8 oz. sour cream**
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella, or more to taste**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F. Prepare pasta according to pkg. directions. Drain and set aside.
- 2.** Brown meat over medium heat, stirring in seasonings. Drain off grease. Add spaghetti sauce, tomatoes and mushrooms. Reduce heat, stir and cover. When mixture boils, add pasta. Remove from heat and stir well.
- 3.** Spread 1/2 mixture evenly in 2.5-qt. baking dish. Drop 1/2 sour cream by dollops over mixture; spread evenly. Top with 1 cup cheese. Repeat with remaining ingredients.
- 4.** Bake covered for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 more minutes, or until cheese is bubbly.

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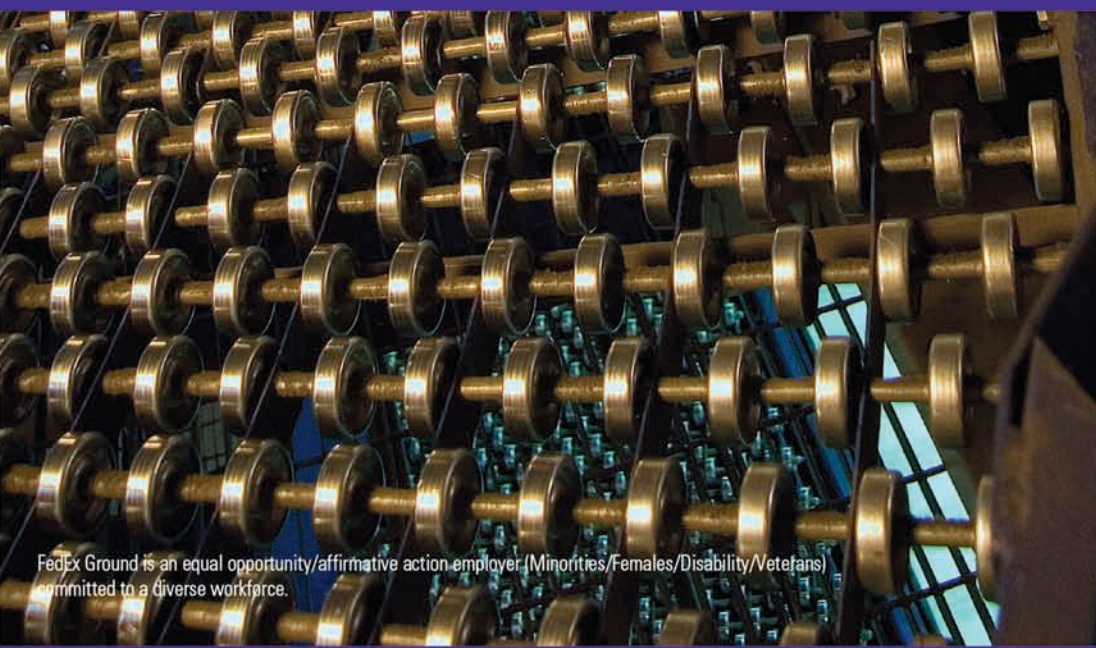
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