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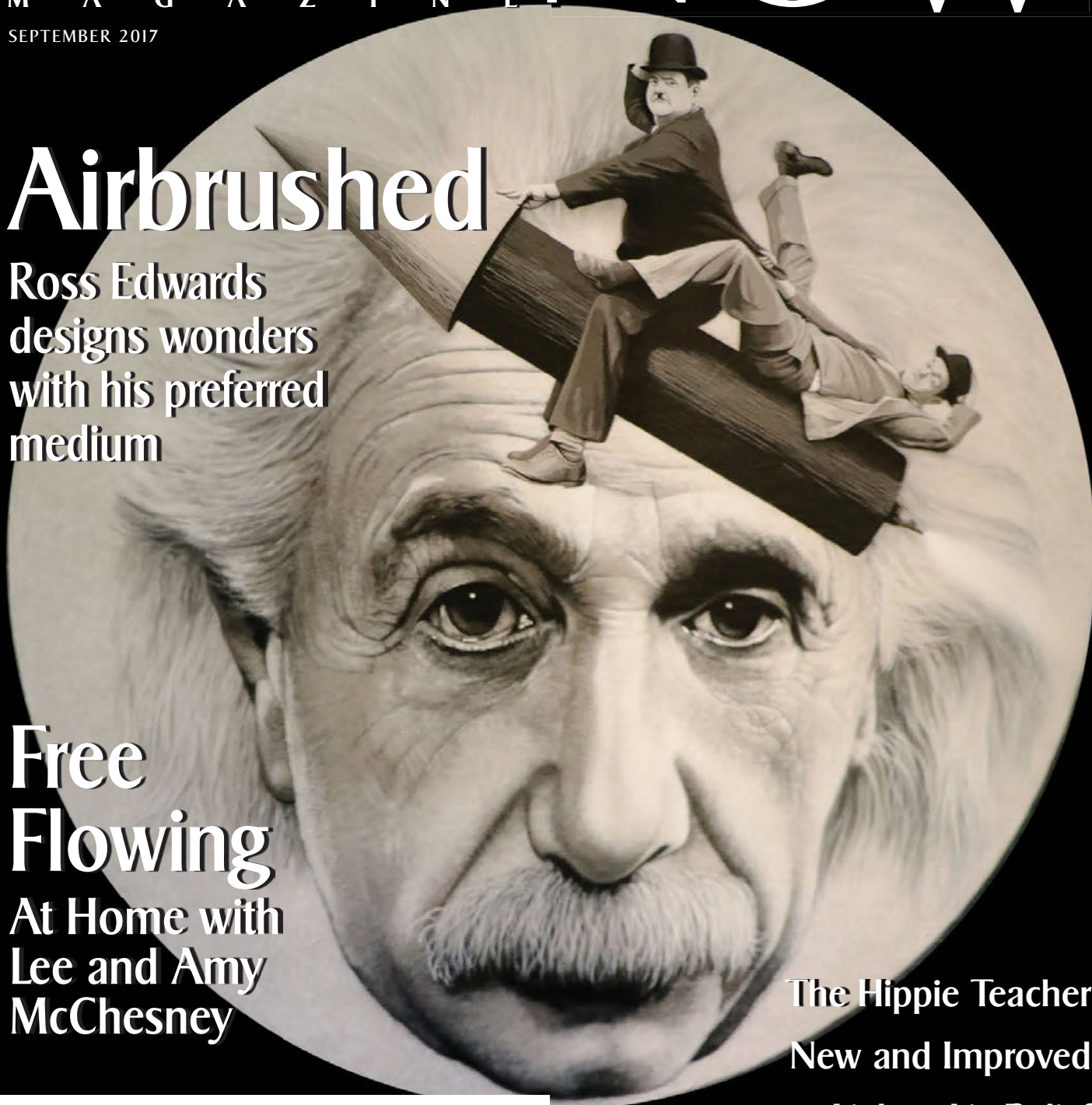
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ON THE COVER



Ross Edwards translates his impressions of the world into art.

Photo by Hannah Chartrand.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Dear Friends!

I just can't believe it! Gazing down at my tiny new granddaughter, I'm amazed I even have her. Even before meeting my husband, I always wanted to be a grandmother. I figured they were the ones who had all the fun. I was right! Breathing in her sweet innocence and caressing her creamy soft skin is the equivalent of heaven on earth.

Thanks to my son, Philip, and his wife, Joanna, I get to experience these exquisite gifts for the third time in a new grandbaby. She is, of course, beautiful and perfect in every way. As she made her entrance into the world, I spent hours loving her brother and letting him soak up all the attention in the room. He didn't know it, but his life was going to be very different. All went well with his introduction to his baby sister, as he said her name over and over with a big smile.

Please celebrate with me as Howard and I, along with Gary and Cindy Mueller, announce the birth of our new granddaughter, Anna Beatrice Tryon.

Betty

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In Breast Cancer Care, Communication Is Key

A breast cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming. Suddenly, there are appointments to schedule, terms to learn and unfamiliar treatments to consider, all added to a flurry of emotions.

This is why communication is critical to delivering quality care for breast cancer patients. It's also why Texas Oncology puts communication at the very center of its Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinics.



In this approach, personalized cancer care incorporates the patient — making sure she or he is comfortable with the treatment every step of the way. The treatment itself results from a plan that a full team of physicians customizes to meet the patient's specific needs.

"All of the physicians involved in the care of that patient will evaluate the patient up front," breast surgeon Martin Koonsman says. "We present the patients with a well-thought-out multidisciplinary treatment plan."

One of the Clinics' essential resources is a "one-stop shop" appointment. A nurse navigator guides the patient throughout the cancer journey for moral support, starting with meeting the full team of care providers. In a casual, face-to-face discussion, the patient can ask the medical oncologist, breast surgeon and radiation oncologist any questions and discuss next steps for treatment.

The new approach is tailored to give patients a better understanding of what to expect. "It's not like the doctor says, 'I'm going to refer you to another doctor,' and you call — and wait — and try to make another appointment," explains Linda Gage, a Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinic patient. "They're talking, they're working together, and they coordinate things and get you through the process."

Texas Oncology's Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinics give patients access to complete breast health services, including high-risk screenings, hormone therapy, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and surgery. Patients can also benefit from full-service pharmacies on location, genetic testing, survivor support groups and much more. Patients also have access to social workers, therapists, dietitians and other specialists to help them — and their families.

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A breast cancer diagnosis can bring trying times, so Texas Oncology's Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinics approach it with expertise and attention to each patient's needs. Texas Oncology wants patients to feel comfortable talking about their needs and encourages them to get involved in their care.

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Airbrush

— By Betty Tryon

Unknown to the casual observer, the family portrait of five smiling children in a row held an exceptional perspective. Two of the wide-eyed youngsters pictured at about 6 years of age were the mom and dad. Artist Ross Edwards explains the uniqueness of the painting. "I wanted to paint what I thought everyone in my family would look like in the first grade. Back when my wife and I had our school photos taken, the pictures were in black and white, so I painted the kids the same to make us all alike." In the painting, Ross and his wife, Pamela, are flanked by their children, and he named the portrait, Family as Kids.

Ross possesses a flair for presenting something unique and different in his paintings. He does this with a method of painting called open spray airbrush. His introduction to airbrush painting began when he served four years in the Air Force as a graphic illustrator. "I took this class and painted using an airbrush for one day, and from then on, I continued to use it," he shared. "It's self-taught. God just blessed me with a talent to paint that way, and the further along I went, the better quality the paintings became."

Ross' first memories of being aware that he had a gift for drawing were about age 8. "I just remember always being able to draw," he recalled. "In elementary school, I remember having to draw pictures of certain things, such as a map, and being able to recreate it." Ross' only formal training in art occurred in art classes at high school and in junior college in San Antonio.

The incredible talent he exhibits today exists due to his continued practice in using the sprayer. "It has been just a progression of getting better. Some of the things to consider



ed



“There’s so much chaos and craziness in the world, that it’s nice to just paint places or tell a parable through the artwork.”



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when airbrush painting are the air pressure, the distance from the canvas and the volume of paint you're allowing through. Once you get the mechanics down, you don't even think about adjusting the distance anymore," he explained. Ross can paint in such exquisite detail because he places the airbrush tip a quarter- to an eighth-inch away from the surface. The more you pull back on the lever, the more paint is released. You can also control the width of the paint when it comes out by moving the airbrush closer to the surface of what you're painting. Another nuance of painting using this method is you can only use one color at a time, which makes the project more challenging. "When you're using a palette, you're mixing your paint on the palette, and all your colors are right there. With an airbrush, you have to change your colors and clean it out each time. With one color in the airbrush, such as red, you have to paint everything that calls for the red color. When you change colors, you have to paint everything that color, clean it out and start all over."

When Ross began painting murals in the '70s and tried to paint by hand using a brush, he wasn't satisfied with the result. "It wasn't working for me," he admitted,



“so I rented a compressor, bought an airbrush and about two minutes into it I thought, *This is it!* I’ve painted with it ever since. I’ve only been able to achieve the correct shading and highlighting with the airbrush.” When he first started painting murals, Ross remembers going to a fabric store and getting some type of fabric to paint on, such as blue jean material. He would take it and stretch it like a stretch canvas. Today there is no need for such substitutions for canvas, as his talent is well-known.

Ross worked in a Dallas museum company for about 15 years, and while there, he learned the museum business and has designed many of them. His favorite museum design was completed in Corsicana at Navarro College and is titled *Hunters and Gatherers of the Blackland Prairie*. “I teamed up with an archaeologist for accuracy because it was his information I was interpreting. We

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focused on Navarro County, and it was a collection of thousands of arrowheads and stone tools from the people who first came to the Americas and to this area 2,500-5,000 years ago,” he described. “When I designed the exhibits, I wanted it to be first person, where the hunters were telling their own stories of where they hunted, what they hunted and how they hunted. That project took three years of my life to complete.”

Another person interested in Ross’ work happened to be quite famous — Michael Jackson! Ross met him through a friend who knew the singer and took Ross, along with some of his paintings, to the green room after a concert. “He stood off to the side with his mother, Katherine Jackson,” Ross recalled. “Michael called her Kat and consulted with her about the paintings. Michael did end up purchasing one,” Ross smiled.

Ross doesn’t always work on commission and is currently painting a series he dreamed up, literally. His series is called *Dreaming of Places and Parables*. The names of the paintings in his series are *Dreaming of Monument Valley*, *Dreaming of Malibu Beach*, *Dreaming of the Way Out* and *Dreaming of the River of Life*. When he is considering what topic or what would be a good reference for his next



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idea, he looks at photographs of rivers or whatever catches his interest. "I enjoy the social history, political, theological variety of things. I draw my design on the canvas," Ross mused. "Then I block it in with the airbrush and put in more and more detail. There's so much chaos and craziness in the world, that it's nice to just paint places or tell a parable through the artwork."

One of the paintings he did that is displayed in his home was painted from a photo of Pamela and her little brother when they were both children. Pamela clearly didn't want her picture taken, and it definitely showed in her face in the painting. There is great detail in the very realistic painting. "Pamela and I have been married 38 years. She's been an inspiration for me," he said with a smile.

As Ross works on his latest series, he carefully considers each day, and that makes a big difference in the detail, the quality and the subject matter. "What's unique about the *Dreaming of Places and Parables* series is I focus each paint day on being an empty vessel and praying that God would, with His power, strength and ability, shine through and make a better painting than I could ever think about doing." His paintings definitely prove that. **NOW**



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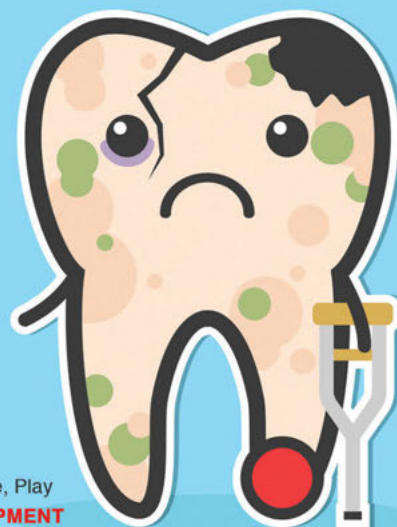
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as a platform
to teach them
how to get through
their other classes."*

Once upon a time, a group of happy kids, who thought they were done with school for the summer, looked forward to carefree fun. Too bad they were in for a surprise awakening! A young girl, not much older than them, gathered the kids and didn't let go. "Those poor kids," Darlene Dodd, resource English language arts teacher and dyslexia coordinator at Frank Seale Middle School chuckled. "My grandmother owned a daycare, and I would force them to sit down and have school with me. My grandfather made little wooden blocks with shapes and colors, and I taught them through the summer." Her mother always thought she would grow up to work with children. However, Darlene became a hair stylist for 28 years. Hers was a career that was far away from the educational field, until she started working at a hair salon on the campus of The University of Texas at Austin.



"I had started doing some of the professors' hair, and in listening to them talk, I decided one day to go back to college because I had never finished it," she acknowledged. Darlene had tried Tyler Junior College after she graduated from high school, but admitted to not being a good student. "By the end of the first semester, the only classes I'd passed were choir and cheerleading. I knew right off the bat that wasn't for me."

Years later, when she made up her mind to go back to college, Darlene completed the Fresh Start program. "If you've been out of college for more than 10 years, and your transcript, like mine, wasn't one to be proud of, this program lets you start over fresh as if that transcript never existed,"



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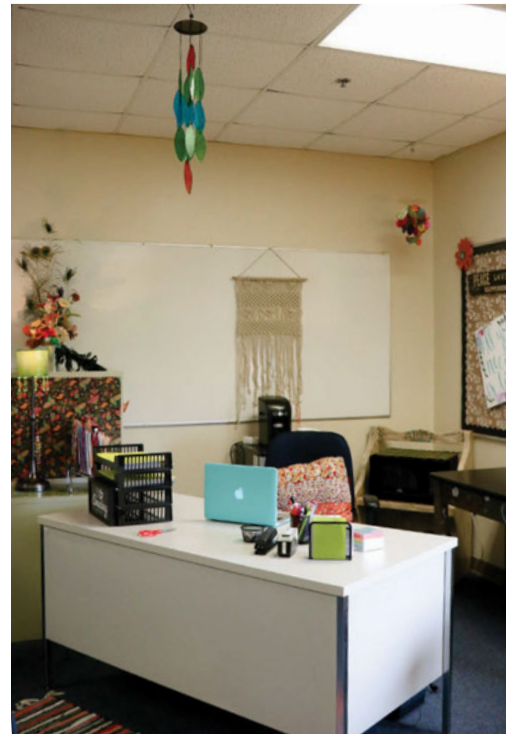
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she explained. After she successfully completed the program, Darlene applied and was accepted to UT, where she majored in communication sciences and disorders/audiology. She studied sign language as her foreign language at school and became very fluent.

While in Austin, Darlene remarried, and after graduation, the couple moved to Midlothian. It seemed to be a natural fit, since it is her husband, Greg's, hometown. She started teaching at FSMS, and nine years later, she continues her mission of teaching and mentoring her students. Darlene's life story is motivational for her students. "I'm a late bloomer because I changed careers and went to college at age 31," she shared. "I tell my students all the time that it's OK if you're not sure about what you want to do right now. I'm always encouraging them and telling them about people I know who are successful. Sometimes, the dyslexic students get very discouraged and irritated with themselves because they know they are smart and can't understand why they don't get it. But I tell them they are going to find their path and be fine."

Darlene understands the struggle her dyslexic students face. She knew she was an intelligent person, but it took everything she had just to make a C in her classes. "I was never tested for

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dyslexia,” she recalled, “but I probably would’ve qualified.” While learning about the disorder through her training, she remembered having the same difficulties as a child. When she was in college, she confided to her professors about her struggles. They allowed her to take the exams orally, with the professor reading the question, and Darlene answering out loud.

The dyslexia program that Darlene uses at FSMS is a multisensory approach. The students are diagnosed in the elementary program, and when they reach middle school, Darlene assesses how far they have progressed. “Once a day I work with them on study skills, focusing on things that help them overcome their dyslexia,” she said. “This is something they’ll have all their life. These kids are generally very smart. They just learn differently, so I help them come up with some strategies they can use the rest of their lives.”



One of the strategies she teaches the students is the concept of decoding. The students learn to break the words down, so they can decode them or figure it out. “It’s amazing to watch them once they’ve gone through the program,” Darlene said. “I can see them using those skills as they are reading. When they have to take a test, I ask their teachers to give them part of the test at



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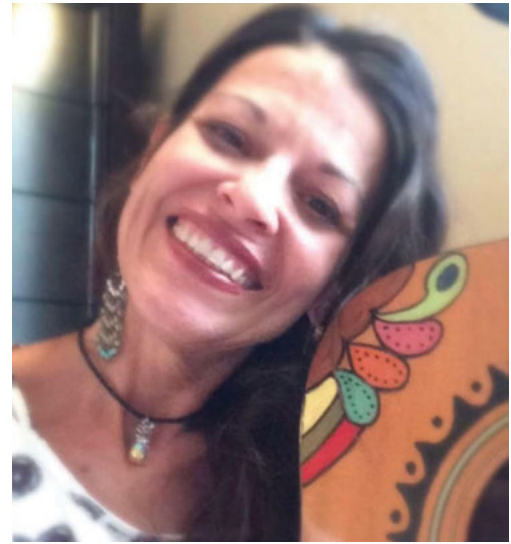
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a time, and when they've answered five questions, to give them five more. That way, they won't become overwhelmed by the questions. We also do a lot of reading and comprehension strategies to increase their short-term memory skills."

Darlene teaches students from sixth grade through eighth. Some of her resource students improve to the point of being placed in an inclusion class. "It's a big confidence booster for them because they feel they have accomplished something," she informed. Darlene pushes her kids hard to be successful because she knows what they have to face in high school. "I do more than teach them English, I use my classroom as a platform to teach them how to get through their other classes. If I don't push them, I'm not helping them. I tell them all the time that if I don't push them now, I'm not doing them any favors later!"

The middle school teacher incorporates a very unique atmosphere in the classroom. It is filled with bean bags, overstuffed chairs and stools. "I had flexible seating before flexible seating was cool," she smiled. "My policy has always been, 'I don't care where you sit as long as you're learning.' When you come into my classroom, kids will be everywhere."

Darlene's personal style has earned her the reputation of being the "hippie teacher." She describes her decor in the classroom as "bohemian and very eclectic with wind chimes. I've always been a gypsy spirit," she shared. "I've had parents come up to me and say, 'Oh, yeah, my son said you were a hippie!'"

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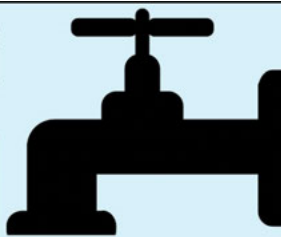
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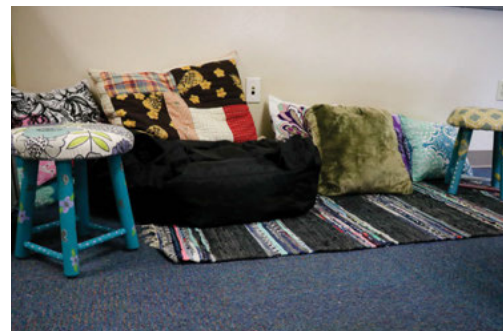
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One of Darlene's favorite things to do is to surprise her students by bringing her guitar and playing and singing with them. Last school year, one of her eighth-graders chose to learn to play the guitar as her passion project, and Darlene gave her lessons. "During her presentation, she played and sang 'You Are My Sunshine' for the rest of the class. It was such a beautiful thing to see!"

In teaching her students, Darlene has found her niche in life. "When I was doing hair, I just naturally had a talent for it. It was never anything I intentionally set out to do. It just fell into my lap. It was a great career and provided me with some unbelievable opportunities, but I never felt complete. My gut told me it wasn't what God has for me to do. I love my job now. It is truly my calling." **NOW**



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Lee grew up here, graduating from Midlothian High School before attending The University of Texas at Arlington for his undergrad and earning an MBA from Texas Woman's University a few years later. He works in information technology as the director of network and telecommunications for Parkland Hospital in Dallas, before which he was a network administrator for MISD. "Having grown up here, I always knew I wanted to raise my family here," he explained. "The schools are great and served me very well, and I wanted my children to have the same great education and quality of life."



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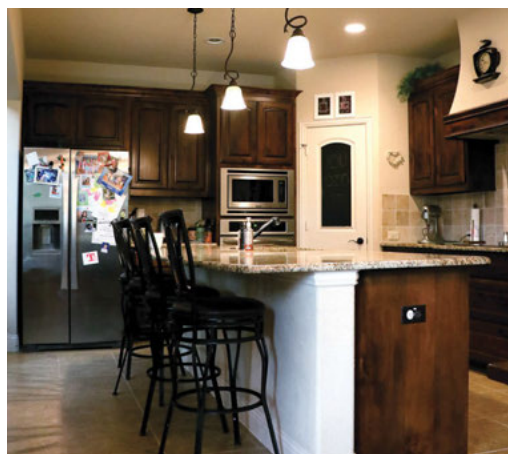
Amy started off in Arlington, but moved to Midlothian as a teen, also graduating from Midlothian High School before majoring in elementary education at UTA. "I taught second grade at Vitovsky and first grade at Miller," she detailed. After several years in the classroom, Amy took a few years off after she and Lee started having children, but she has worked at a local Mother's Day Out program, and is ready to be back in the classroom full time now that the kids are older.

Lee and Amy met as sophomores, when they were both in the MHS band.

But it was during a trip to England that spring break when their friendship started to blossom into something more. "She had a boyfriend back home, so I knew I had a week to convince her that I was the one she needed," Lee grinned. "We started dating when we got back. We dated for five years to the day before we married on March 20, 2004." They lived in Arlington, but with three kids, they were outgrowing their house, and they knew they wanted to come back to Midlothian. Eli is an 8-year-old adventurer who loves *Star Wars* and video games. Ian and Lia are 4, and share the undeniable

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room, as well as a play room, a guest room and the bathrooms we felt we needed for our larger family,” Amy recalled. The result is a beautiful home backing up to a row of cedar trees that has the familiarity of today’s style blended with a layout and decor pieces to give it a feel all its own.

The front foyer leads to a gently winding staircase leading to the kids’ rooms, with a formal dining room on one side, and a view through the living room into the picturesque backyard on the other. “My favorite room is the open kitchen and living room,” Lee detailed. “When we were building, we wanted to use our home to host family gatherings, church fellowships and small groups.” The kitchen flows more freely than typical open layouts, as the elegant marble island and counters almost seem like an extension of the den more than a room to themselves.

While she also loves hosting large gatherings, Amy’s favorite part of the house is probably the master suite, which is adorned with purples and cream to go along with rich wood furnishings. “In my room, I can completely disconnect and rest my mind, body and spirit,” she admitted, which gives insight into her wanting her kids to have their own spaces, as well. “Growing up, I never really had my own room, so I wanted that for the kids. And putting them upstairs ensured they would have privacy as they got older.”

The upstairs is a vibrant blend of sports, video games, girly decor and *Star Wars*, with three kids’ rooms each decked out with their own theme, and a play room perfect for games, playing with action figures or watching television. Eli and Ian’s rooms split a bathroom, while Lia’s princess room comes complete with her own facilities. The landing that divides the upstairs is great for getting someone’s attention downstairs, or for serving as a sniper hideout when the kids are engaged in a tense Nerf battle.



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If they had to agree on a favorite part of the house, Lee and Amy both look to the idyllic pool and patio, perfect for a relaxing afternoon of swimming with a backdrop straight from nature. They had a pool, large slide and diving rock put in, and Lee landscaped with large river rocks, sage bushes and a stone pathway. "The kids are out here all the time, year-round," Lee described. "And having friends swim is great because we really wanted a home that we could use to bless people around us."

That desire to help others has ended up being the biggest hallmark of the home that Lee and Amy built. A few years ago, Amy's sister and her family were caught between houses needing a place to stay. Lee and Amy made use of the extra space in their home, and a big, happy family became a bigger, happier family for a while. Then, when Amy's parents sold their house before they could build a new dwelling place, Lee and Amy opened their doors to help out once again. But the biggest blessing is the journey they have just started — opening their doors as a foster home for children in need. "Lee and I always figured we would adopt one day after our biological kids were grown," Amy said. "Early in our marriage, I worked for Head Start, and my eyes were open to children in foster care and the back stories of these precious babies."

Lee expounded on the idea that their plans were replaced with something greater. "It was through the testimony of foster families in our church and much prayer that we gave in to the call and took the plunge to become licensed as a foster family."

Now, the guest room that has offered a place to stay for the extended family is a cute silver- and gold-starred kids' room that can adapt to welcome boys or girls, with the option of having two young siblings at once. With hearts and a house that are open for those who need a loving, safe place to call home, Lee and Amy have shown that they are always ready to answer a call. **NOW**



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— By Zachary R. Urquhart

While spring may be the time for a deep cleaning of your house, autumn is a natural time to give things around the house a facelift. School, television shows and fiscal years are all starting anew, and the end of the extreme heat is perfect for starting those labor-intensive projects you have been putting off all summer. Here are some ideas for home improvement projects, big and small, you could do this fall.



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Change Simple Things

• *Keep with the times.* Trends and styles change frequently, so think about swapping light fixtures and faucets. Chrome and oil-rubbed bronze are popular now, and changing fixtures can be a simple way to update your look. If you are working with electricity, be sure to turn off your power and test to ensure your breakers were labeled correctly before working with what could be live wires. If you are changing pipes, consider swapping your old connections for push-to-connect fittings that will make future plumbing work easier. And if cost is an issue, there are lots of metallic spray paints that will allow you to alter the look of your existing fixtures.

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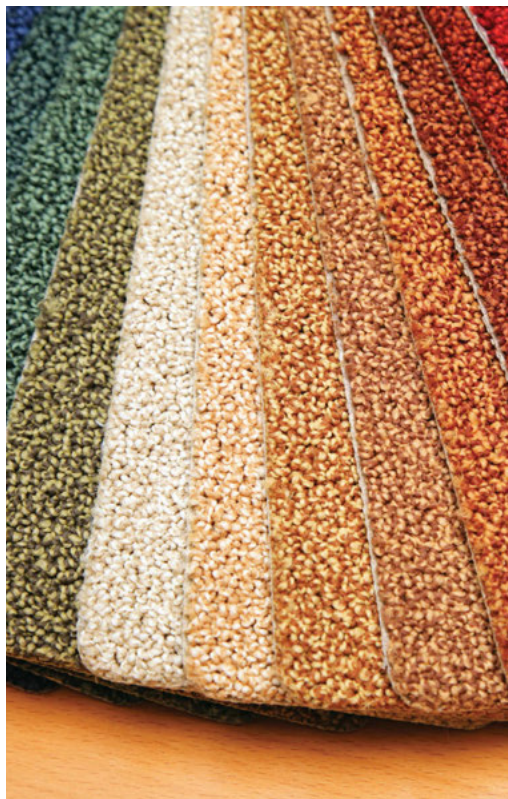
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- *Look above for a simple fix.* A step above just replacing light fixtures and lamps, swapping out your ceiling fan can alter the entire look of your room. If you are changing the color or style of the lighting in a room, it is probably a good idea to get a new ceiling fan to match. While you could technically take the fan apart to paint it to match, there are so many working parts that buying a new matching one is usually a better idea. When deciding on your new fan, you can keep it simple or get fancy when picking from the dozens of styles available at any local hardware store. Changing fans can be a two-person job, so think about getting a helper, and be careful to make all the hardware and electric connections to manufacturer's specifications.

- *Make a statement.* Painting the entire house can be an exhausting, time-intensive task. But painting a room, or even just adding an accent color on one wall, is a relatively easy way to achieve a drastically different look. You can even let each child choose a color to make their room their own. The key to any good interior paint job is the preparation. Tape off the trim, get plenty of drop cloths and give yourself enough time for the paint to dry before moving furniture back against the wall.



Know Your DIY Limits

• *Carpet has a shelf life.* If your carpet is hard to clean, fraying around the edges or just getting out of date, it may be time to call the professionals. Though you can install new carpet yourself, you need to weigh the cost of materials, including the tools you will undoubtedly need if you want to tackle the project on your own. If the space requires hiding a carpet seam in the middle of the room, it is likely that you will want an experienced company to do the work. Call around and get several quotes before you settle on someone, and be sure to look for reviews online to get a good idea of the quality of each company's work.

• *Hardwood does not have to be hard.* Decades ago, your choices were essentially carpet, sheets of slick laminate or real wood. Nowadays, though, you can find a variety of manufactured, wood-like floors that offer the refined look of wood without as much expense or difficulty in installation. Any home improvement store will have a selection of vinyl planks that look nearly identical to real wood, as well as ceramic and porcelain tiles offering a wood look. With



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any of these options, you should know your ability before deciding whether to do the work yourself or hire a company for the project. The flooring is easy enough to install in open spaces, but there is some finesse required for corners and transitioning to another type of flooring in another room.

- *Home needs a range.* While you are updating fixtures, it might be time to add a new cooking range to match the new style. If you have a combination oven and stovetop, it is easy enough to take out the old one and replace it with a new model. But, if you have a drop-in range, you need to be sure you know the steps involved before you end up with a hole in your kitchen counters.

Work Smarter

- *Take advantage of empty rooms.* If you have had any inkling to move or change your furniture around, try new ideas while your floors are bare. Once you have taken up the old flooring, test different layouts before you put the new carpet or hardwood down. This will prevent

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you from scratching or tearing your new floors. This is also the perfect time to paint, as any spillage will be covered once you install the new flooring.

- *Have a plan.* If you are planning to overhaul your whole house, make a list of jobs you want to get done, and devise a plan to maximize your work time. If you are paying professionals, you will probably need to do all major work at once. If you are doing the work yourself, figure out if you need to tackle one room at a time, or if you can knock out several rooms in one fell swoop.

Whatever your home improvement plans are for the fall, planning a timeframe and detailed budget will help ensure your project stays on track. Don't rule out professionals who can achieve the look you want to do harder tasks. Updates can really give the home a new and improved feel. Plus, should you decide to sell in this hot housing market, they can dramatically increase the value of your investment. **NOW**

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— By Betty Tryon

Electricity and air conditioning — in Texas, both are considered necessities of modern-day living. When one of them stops working, all you want is to get them up and going again. Brian and Jennifer Schoonover, owners of Speedy Electric & A/C, specialize in all aspects of service and repair for electrical systems and HVAC units.

Brian, a longtime Midlothian resident, graduated from Midlothian High School in 1992. After graduation, he worked for several years learning the skills of an electrician. He holds a master electrician license and a state electrical contractor license. Brian and Jennifer started their own business in 1999. “We do residential, some commercial and new construction,”

he informed. “We also do emergency service repairs. Nothing is too small or too large.” The company can perform electrical services inside and outside of the home, whether it’s wiring new construction homes, wiring for security lights or pool circuits or wiring for remodels.

While Brian heads up the electrical department, Jennifer oversees the air conditioning. Being third generation in the HVAC industry, she earned her class A air conditioning contractor’s license at the age of 22. “I worked for my parents all through school,” she shared. “One of my uncles took me out on job sites and spent a lot of time teaching me.” Some of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning services offered by

the company include equipment sales and installation of not only air conditioners, but heat pumps, gas furnaces, duct systems and thermostats.

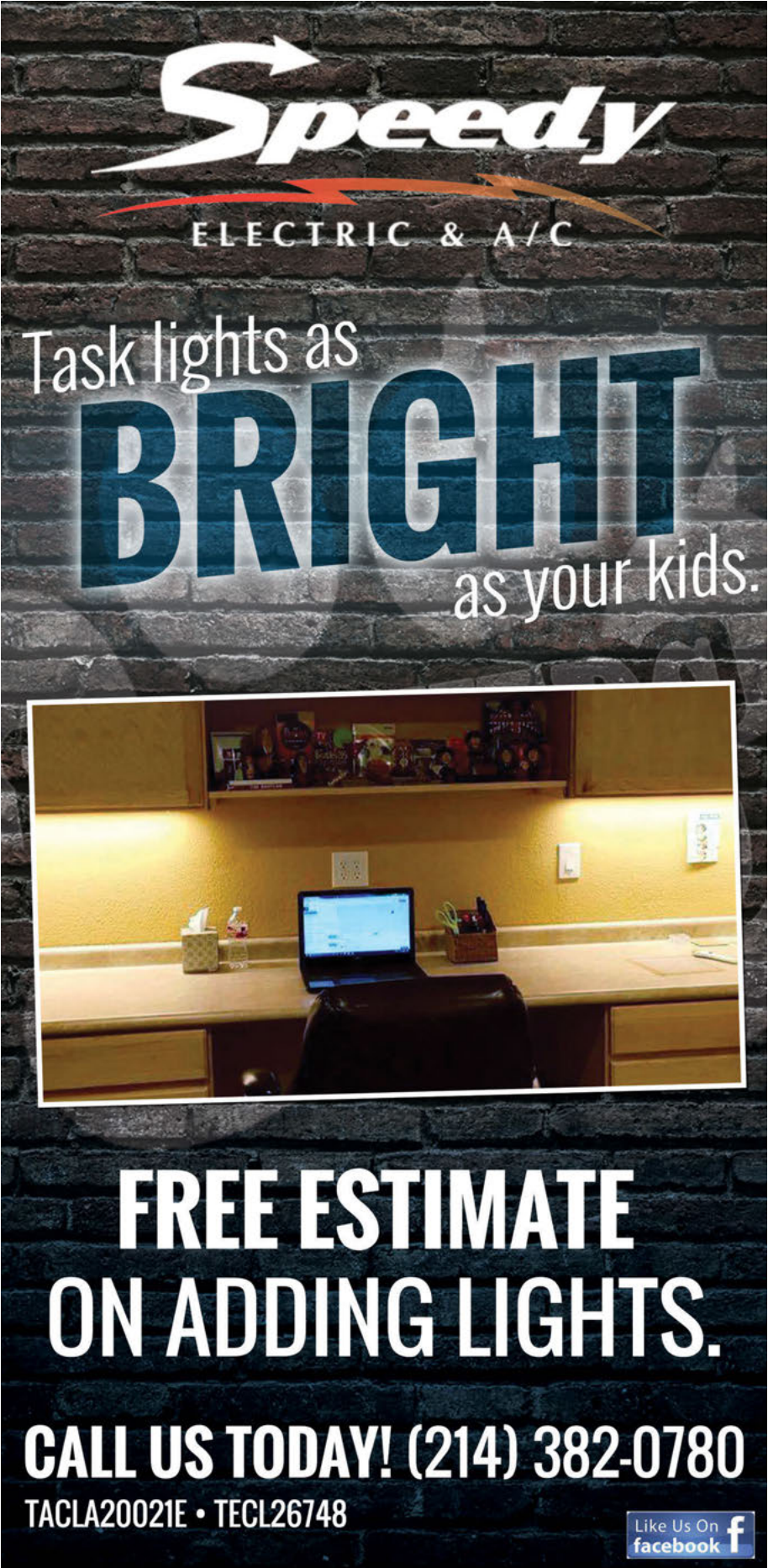
"We try to be fair and honest with every customer and do the job right."

By combining their skills, the couple built a growing business in Midlothian and the DFW Metroplex. Jennifer's mom, Pam, and stepsister, Jenni, work in the office. Whether employees are family members or not, they are treated as if they are family. "We are the kind of owners who get out there," Jennifer stated. "There have been times where we've had to go out at night to answer emergency calls. We've always said we'll never ask one of our technicians to do something we're not willing to do ourselves. Brian tells them to treat the customer like they would treat their mom, or the way he would want them to treat his mom. We try to be fair and honest with every customer and do the job right."

Jennifer makes an effort to hire young technicians to train them in what could be a viable career for them. "We teach them and help them get their licenses and develop their skills," she stated. "College is not for everyone, and these jobs — air conditioning, electrical — are going to be in demand."


Every HVAC technician for Speedy Electric & A/C, including Brian and Jennifer, are EPA certified. Every technician is background checked and registered. "The state requires us to have the proper licensing. In order to get the proper license, you have to have insurance," Jennifer explained. "Every technician and trainee has a card they carry, which has their name and information on it, saying they are registered with the state of Texas."

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September 4

Crescent Yoga Studio Free Day of Yoga: 8:00 a.m., Beginner/Basic Yoga; 9:30 a.m., Gentle Yoga; 10:45 a.m., Belly Dance, 812 Alex Ln. Contact Dawn Harris at (469) 285-3559 or at CrescentYogaStudio.com for more information.

September 7, 14, 21, 28

Ellis County Bible Study Fellowship Satellite Class: 6:30 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 N. Grand Ave., Waxahachie. This is a nondenominational Bible study class. For more information, call Lou Archibald at (214) 850-5303.

September 9

Quester's Group: 7:00 p.m., CNB Community Room 310 N. 9th St. Introductory meeting for people who love to learn about history and antiques, Contact Susan Hanson at (817) 691-7909 for more information.

September 12

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Chapter 1191: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., covering Ellis, Navarro and surrounding counties, Email rjcarey1@gmail.com or call (972) 775-2463 for more info.

September 14

Meals-on-Wheels Golf Benefit: 1:30 p.m., Cleburne Golf Links, 2501 Country Club Rd., Cleburne. To sponsor or register to play, contact Lisa Deese at (817) 558-2840, (972) 351-9943 or visit www.mowjec.org.

September 18

The Writers' Circle: 6:00 p.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. Group is open to the public to provide support, motivation and writing tips. For more information, contact Ashley at meadowswriterscircle@gmail.com.

Ellis County Veterans Networking Group: 6:00 p.m., Ryan's Steakhouse, Waxahachie. Come join the group for dinner and listen to what the guest speaker for the evening has to share. For more information, call Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378.

September 20

The Women's Connection of Ellis County meeting: 11:30a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club. Cost is \$13. Vouchers for mothers requiring childcare are available. Reservations are due the Sunday before the meeting. For reservations, women can contact Barb Jacobs at (214) 463-5064 and at barbjacobs19@yahoo.com.

September 21

Ellis County Amateur Radio Club: 7:00 p.m., The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club Waxahachie, 620 Farley St., Waxahachie. Talk-in on the 145.410 machines. All are welcome. For more information, go to www.wd5ddh.org.

October 14

Take Charge of Your Life Health and Wellness Day: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., The Lighthouse, 1404 N. 9th St.

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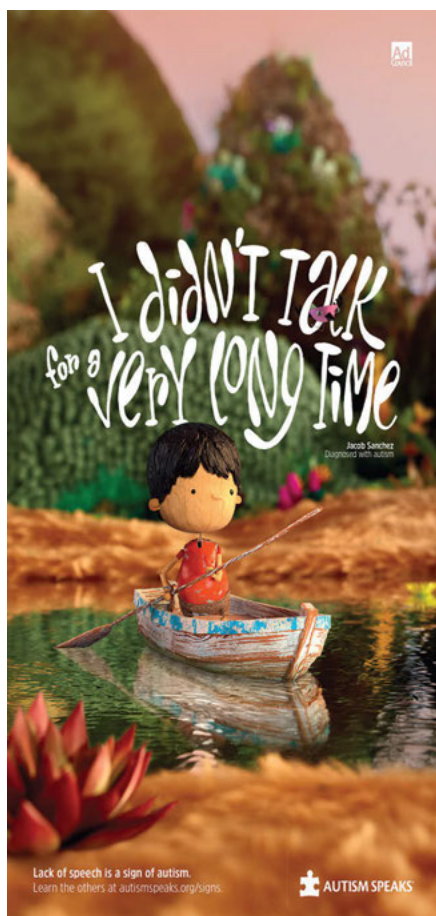


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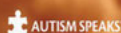
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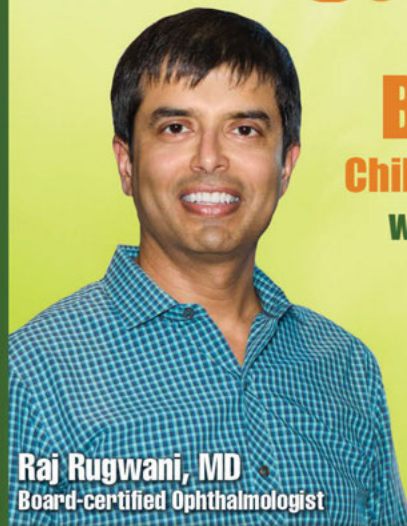


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In the Kitchen With Christy Thorman

— *By Betty Tryon*

As the child of missionaries in Argentina, Christy Thorman learned early on about the social impact of food. “Food does not need a language, and it opens doors to get to know people,” she shared. Christy gained a varied taste in ethnic cooking from the many different countries in which she’s lived. “The culture of Argentina provides different ethnic cooking with the influence of Europe and Russia.”

Nowadays, she’s busy as assistant principal at Venus Primary School and caring for her husband and enjoying their three children and daughter-in-law. She also enjoys feeding her husband’s classmates, as he pursues a law degree. One of her favorite desserts is her grandmother’s Fudge Pie recipe. **NOW**

Frito Chicken Casserole

- 2 chicken breasts, boneless, skinless**
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup**
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of mushroom soup**
- 1 15-oz. jar salsa con queso**
- 1 9.25-oz. bag Fritos**
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, grated**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F.
- 2.** Dice chicken; cook on the stovetop until done.
- 3.** In a bowl, mix soups, salsa con queso and the cooked chicken.
- 4.** Crush the Fritos into smaller pieces. Spray a 13x9-inch casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray. Pour half of the Fritos on the

bottom of the pan. Pour chicken mixture over the Fritos; add another layer of Fritos. Cover with grated cheese; bake for 20 minutes.

Ro-Tel Breakfast Casserole

- 2 lbs. sausage**
- 1 can Ro-Tel**
- 12 large eggs**
- 1 lb. Mexican cheese**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F. In a skillet, cook the sausage; add the Ro-Tel.
- 2.** Beat the eggs; add to the sausage and Ro-Tel mix. Pour the mixture into a casserole dish; cover with cheese. Bake for 30 minutes.

Fudge Pie

- 1 stick butter**
- 4 Tbsp. baking cocoa**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla**
- 1/2 cup flour**
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder**
- 2 large eggs**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F.
- 2.** Melt butter over the stovetop; add the cocoa, sugar, vanilla, flour and baking powder; mix well. Add the eggs; combine.
- 3.** Pour mixture into a pie plate; bake for 15 to 20 minutes. The middle should be fudgy, not solid.

Napoleon Steak

- 6 cubed steaks**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- Italian seasoning**
- 1 14.5-oz. can Italian tomatoes, diced**
- 1/2 lb. or more mozzarella or provolone cheese, grated**

- 1.** Pan fry the cubed steak, adding salt, pepper and Italian seasoning as it cooks.
- 2.** Put the steak on a cookie sheet. Top each steak with 2 Tbsp. of Italian tomatoes; cover with cheese.
- 3.** Bake in the oven at 350 F for about 10 minutes or until the cheese is nice and bubbly.

Russian Potato Salad

- 4-5 potatoes, diced**
- 1 12-oz. bag petite carrots**
- 1 15-oz. can green peas (optional)**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**

- 1.** Boil the potatoes and carrots until soft; drain.
- 2.** Put the potatoes, carrots and peas in a large bowl; add mayonnaise, salt and pepper. Mix well and serve.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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