

All in the family

Veal Station Cemetery board secretary follows in her father's footsteps

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
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Dena Wright Hall's father died on her 40th birthday. As she processed the loss, Wright Hall tried to find meaning for why she had to lose him on her birthday. She remembered something her father used to say about turning 40 years old. "He said you were never truly grown or matured until you were 40," Wright Hall said. "He passed away on my 40th birthday after having had a stroke." With her father's logic in mind, Wright Hall said she thought he died when she was 40 years old for a reason, as if he had waited until she was ready. On the other hand, she said, "You're never ready to lose a parent." Wright Hall's connection to

her father, Waymon Wright, led her to join the Veal Station Cemetery Association board in 1998, about eight years before her father died. Currently, she's the board secretary. "He wanted me to be involved," she said. Veal Station Cemetery has been around since the 1860s. It's a family cemetery and those who can be buried there have to be related to others buried in the cemetery. Wright Hall and her family have a long history in the Azle and Springtown area, and she has multiple family members buried in the cemetery. Her father - who was also a Parker County commissioner for 20 years - got involved in the cemetery association



PHOTO BY MADELYN EDWARDS
Dena Wright Hall leans on the headstone in Veal Station Cemetery marking where her parents are buried. Wright Hall and her family have a long history in the Azle and Springtown area, and she has multiple family members buried in the cemetery.

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Springtown Square gets Christmas makeover



PHOTO BY MADELYN EDWARDS
Parks maintenance worker Joshua Crager and streets department worker Rick Smith work on putting the upper pieces of the Christmas tree skeleton together.

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
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It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas on the Springtown Square. Garlands are wrapped around the Tabernacle gate as on light posts, and wreaths are hung up in

multiple places. Christmas lights are in the Tabernacle, and pairs of light-up life-size candy canes are in the lawn out front. Of course, the centerpiece to all these decorations is the square's Christmas tree, which will soon shine bright at the upcoming Christmas

parade. A Christmas tree doesn't assemble itself. Instead, Springtown public works employees were called to do this festive work. Last week, a handful of these workers got together to work on the tree, which consists of 20 pieces of metal tubing

that make the cone-shaped Christmas tree skeleton. Rick Smith, who has been working with the city for about 11 years, has helped assemble many of the Springtown Christmas trees over the years. He said the

SEE SQUARE, PAGE 10A.

Local residents encouraged to adopt angels, buy Christmas gifts

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
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The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays often compel people to want to help those who are less fortunate, and the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce is providing one of those opportunities to give back. Angels, both local children and older adults in need, are available to be adopted starting this week at the Chamber of Commerce. People in the community are encouraged to adopt an angel and buy Christmas gifts for them. Gifts for the senior angels - ages 65 and older - are due to the chamber by Dec. 9, and the presents will be delivered to them during the following week, Chamber Executive Director Amy Walker said. "That just helps people in our community who need a little extra at Christmas," Walker said. Chamber Board of Directors President Jennifer Conway, who organizes efforts for the children angels with her mother Cindy, also

said gifts are due by Dec. 9, and the gifts will be picked up by parents the following week. The number of senior angels and children angels up for adoption is expected to be similar to last year, Walker and Conway said. For the children angels specifically, Conway said there was a significant increase in angels last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. "There were several families who have two working parents, and both lost jobs due to the pandemic, due to changes in employment, all of that mess," Conway said. "Last year was the biggest change. So far this year, I'm kind of seeing about the same as it was last year. It's still, I think, a greater need than it was two to three years ago." Conway utilizes her garage for sorting the donated gifts, and while this process has worked in the past, she said it was tight last year when managing gifts for about 136 kids, she said. "Ideally, I would love to

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Springtown Public Library's book sale Dec. 3

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
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The Springtown Public Library is planning to host its 2022 Fall Book Sale - which benefits the library's children's programming - next month.

The book sale will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 3 at the Courthouse Annex building, which is next

to Springtown City Hall, at 200 N. Main St.

Books, audiobooks and DVDs will be sold at the event, and prices range from 50 cents to \$1 for each item or \$5 for a bag of items, Library Director Andie D'Avignon said. Only payments by cash or check will be accepted; credit or debit payments won't be accepted. D'Avignon said the pro-

ceeds from the book sale will support the library's programs for children, including summer events and the summer reading challenge. About \$500 was raised from last year's book sale, and the library director hopes to make \$800 to \$1,000 from this year's sale.

This year's book sale is scheduled for the weekend in between two other city events

- the Christmas parade and tree lighting on Nov. 27 and the Old-Fashioned Christmas festival on Dec. 10.

This is a change from last year's book sale, which was scheduled on the same day as Old-Fashioned Christmas in an effort to garner more interest in the sale, D'Avignon said. Last year's book sale occurred while part of Farm-to-Market Road 51 was still

closed for construction, and it was the first book sale the library had since the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown.

"Normally we don't have them on the same day; we don't want anyone to have to split their focus from one or the other," D'Avignon said. "Now that people can drive on 51 again, we are hoping to have a much bigger turnout

this year."

The library is also hosting its "Food for Fines" canned food drive until the end of November. Library patrons can bring in canned food to pay off up to \$20 in library fines. Every can of food donated pays for \$1 of fines. The cans must be labeled and in good condition.

CEMETERY

FROM PAGE 1A

when Wright Hall's grandparents died and was on the board starting in the 1960s.

"He was always one to want to help and take care of things," Wright Hall said. "Knowing it was part of his heritage, he wanted to continue taking care of the family cemetery."

Her father took a stand against vandalism at the cemetery and served as its protector. On Halloween night, he would guard the cemetery and turn people away, Wright Hall said, particularly those who came to see the so-called glowing headstone at the cemetery. She insists there is not a glowing headstone at Veal Station Cemetery, only a reflection of light.

The cemetery association board addresses situations of vandalism and theft as well as making sure the cemetery is mowed and trash is picked up, Wright Hall said. She recalled an incident from 20 years ago when vandals pushed over the taller monuments.

"Some of the old tombstones cannot be repaired," she said. "That's what's disheartening is when they're so old, and we can't fix them."

A few years ago, she said

copper was stolen from a veteran's tombstone. Wright Hall remembered having to respond to the family's call when they realized the theft.

"Well, it makes you angry. But you want to do what you can to help," she said. "I'm one of those people that wants to fix things and make everybody happy. And so, you just work with the family and the sheriff's department and in this case, the (Veterans Affairs department)."

Wright Hall added, "I will never understand how people can be so disrespectful."

Because her family is buried in the cemetery, she said she feels compelled to protect and maintain the cemetery. Her role with the cemetery can also be therapeutic.

"I think it helps me heal because now he's deceased and so is my mom," Wright Hall said. "You never get over the loss, but knowing I'm carrying on what they've left behind makes me feel good."

Wright described her father as a man of integrity, who loved his community and wanted to help however he could.

"He was well thought of in the community, a good man, mentor and friend to all," Wright Hall said. "Proud to be his daughter."



PHOTO BY MADELYN EDWARDS

Dena Wright Hall stands by the gate of the Veal Station Cemetery. Wright Hall, as well as her father before her, serves on the Veal Station Cemetery Association board.

ANGELS

FROM PAGE 1A

find a building somewhere (that) somebody could donate for the two weeks in December to house, store and allow us room to sort gifts," Conway said.

The children angels tend to be adopted quickly because churches and businesses will ask to adopt groups of angels ahead of time, Conway said. In a situation where all angels have been adopted, people in the community can still help by donating toys, especially for teenage boys.

"We will go and buy footballs and basketballs and headphones and earbuds and that kind of stuff because the older boys, 13 and up, tend to get missed in the toy items, and I'm pretty sure it's because most people have no clue what to get them," she said. "That's the biggest thing I can say is buy a couple of toys. They don't have to be expensive. Just a couple of

small toys or balls or games or something like that. That would be huge."

Walker said the senior angels tend to ask for the basics - things that others may take for granted - on their Christmas wish lists.

"It does tug at your heart a little bit," she said.

The same can be said about gifts for child angels, Conway said. She recalled a time when a mother picked up a bicycle for her child, and the mother was overwhelmed by what the gift would mean to her child.

"She's just bawling. She goes, 'You don't know what that's going to mean to him,'" Conway said. "Remember, it's the little things that a lot of us take for granted that people are truly struggling and just to be able to provide them some hope and some encouragement. An outfit and a toy, that is huge to a parent."

But the children angels' effort is meant to be much more impactful than just

providing Christmas gifts. Conway said the program can help connect families to local resources, like food pantries, and show people that the Springtown community is looking out for them.

"It's just showing kids - not even just kids, but the parents - that there's a community here to support you," she said. "I've had some parents who've adopted kids in the past, and then they come in after COVID, and they're sitting at the desk, and they're just crying because they've lost jobs, they have no income, they don't know where food is going to come from. And it's been really good because we've been able to tell them about the food pantry services. We've been able to tell them about Center of Hope for Parker County to give them some resources to help them get back on their feet."

For more information about adopting seniors or children angels, call the chamber at 817-220-7828.



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Help people stay warm this winter

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
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Angels Care Home Health in Weatherford will hold its first-ever cold weather clothing drive to help people stay warm during the winter.

In response to community needs, the Warming Hearts for Angels Drive calls for donations of new blankets, hats, scarves, gloves and socks.

The drive won't just impact Angels Care Home Health patients but other local people in need as well, said Mandy Bryant, Angels

Care administrator. While Angels Care nurses identify patients who could benefit from the drive, people in the community are welcome to point out people they know who are in need of the donated items.

"(They) don't have to be a patient," Bryant said. "We want to serve the community."

Angels Care Home Health in Weatherford serves 17 North Texas counties, including Parker County.

Bryant said Angels Care staff has noticed that some

Home health agency calls for donations

patients - the majority of whom are older adults - struggle to access basic necessities. This drive aims to show people in need that their community is thinking of them, she said.

"We're here as a community to help build each other up," she said.

Bryant said she hopes the drive's impact is to bring out kindness in people and

good stewardship of their communities.

So far, Bryant said the drive has received a good response since beginning on Nov. 1, and people have called to request that their neighbors be put on the list to benefit from the drive.

The deadline to donate is Dec. 16. Donations can be dropped off at the Springtown Area Chamber

of Commerce at 112 S. Main St. in Springtown, the Azle Area Chamber of Commerce at 404 W. Main St. in Azle or at the Servolution Network's Dream Center at 11698 Farm-to-Market Road 730 South in Azle.

Donations can also be taken to Angels Care Home Health in Weatherford at 1508 Santa Fe Drive. People who need help turning in

their donations can call the Weatherford office at 817-807-0224.

"We're going to try to make it as easy and seamless for them as possible," Bryant said. "People are busy; I know that so we want to make sure that it's convenient and easy for them to donate so we can get those out there to the people in need."

Turnout drops in recent election

TURNOUT DROPS IN RECENT ELECTION

Voter turnout in the mid-term elections again dropped statewide, with just over 45% of registered voters either casting ballots early or at the polls on Nov. 8. Republican candidates continued to hold a hammerlock on statewide positions, with incumbent Gov. Greg Abbott handily winning a third term over challenger Beto O'Rourke.

The Texas Standard reported turnout in the state's largest counties was well below 50% and lower than the record 2018 midterm turnout. Brandon Rottinghaus, a political science professor at the University of Houston, said he wasn't surprised at the relatively low turnout.

"Usually, it's hard to get Texans to vote in midterm elections. We saw a sizable increase in 2018 and then a big bump in 2020, but it's starting to look like the 2018 and 2020 numbers were basically an aberration," he said.

In Harris County, turnout dropped from 52% in 2018 to 43% this year. Dallas County saw turnout plunge from 57% in 2018 to 44% this year, while in Tarrant County turnout was 47%, down from 57%



CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders
Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. gborders@texaspress.com.

in the last midterm.

"The turnout in this election was abysmal. It was way too low. And so, voters need to understand that if they don't participate in the process, then their ability to control what happens in Austin is limited," Rottinghaus told the Texas Standard.

LAWMAKERS: GET TOUGHER ON POLLUTERS

The Texas Sunset Advisory Commission, which periodically reviews state agencies, has concluded the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality needs to make frequent polluters more accountable and increase the possible fines companies can face.

The commission consists of 10 legislators and two members of the public. The Texas Tribune reported the sunset commission called for state lawmakers to pass legislation next session that

would increase the penalty levels for industrial polluters from \$25,000 per day to \$40,000.

"I think people wanted to send a message that we were cognizant of the burden upon industry while also recognizing the importance of increasing the penalty after this period of time so that the TCEQ has the power and the tools to actually enforce compliance with its rules," said Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, and a member of the commission.

The sunset commission's recommendations will be considered during the next legislative session, which begins in January.

DRY OCTOBER LEADS TO DROUGHT LEVEL INCREASE

A fairly dry October, except in West Texas, led to an increase in drought levels to 75% of the state, up 14 percentage points from the end

of September.

Dr. Mark Wentzel, hydrologist with the Texas Water Development Board, wrote that months of drought have adversely affected surface water resources and are now beginning to affect ground water resources as well.

For example, the Edwards Aquifer's water level has dropped 35 feet to its lowest level since the 2011 drought. Storage levels in the state's water supply reservoirs are at 68% of capacity - 13 percentage points below normal for this time of year.

"It's too far out to say with certainty, but spring 2023 may be our next best chance for drought relief," Wentzel wrote.

HOUSTON BUSINESS CONVICTED OF WORKERS' COMP FRAUD

A Houston-area business has been convicted of a first-degree felony in a worker's compensation scheme.

Sehgal & Sons Enterprises was convicted of concealing payrolls by having two separate payroll accounts but only reporting the smaller account to Texas Mutual Insurance Company. The company was fined \$300,000, according to the Texas Department of Insurance.

"Concealing payroll is a scheme companies use to get lower workers' compensation insurance rates, and that's fraud," said Debra Knight with the Department of Workers' Compensation.

More than \$355 million in public safety grants

Gov. Greg Abbott last week announced more than \$355 million in public safety grants, covering a variety of programs, including victims' services, anti-human trafficking efforts, and law enforcement support. The funding is a combination of state and federal dollars.

The money will go to provide bullet-resistant vests, homeland security, to combat human trafficking, border security and about a dozen other programs.

"This crucial grant funding will further bolster organizations and agencies as they work around the clock to ensure justice for victims of crime, protect against threats, prevent human trafficking, and support statewide emergency infrastructure, among other critical public safety initiatives," Abbott said.

WHOOPING CRANES SPOTTED ON TEXAS COAST

First sightings of the endangered whooping crane have been reported along the Texas coast, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department reported.

Janes Vartanian, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, says that on Oct. 21 a pair of whooping cranes were the first to arrive this season on Matagorda Island. Most will arrive in and around the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in December.

Whooping birds, according to TPWD, are the tallest, rarest birds in North America. The current population is estimated at about 543 birds. They migrate this time of year 2,500 miles from northern Alberta, Canada, to the Texas coast.

COVID-19 CASES DROP BELOW 10,000

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University in Texas dropped to 8,955, along with 32 deaths. The number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations stayed steady, with 998 reported across the state as of Sunday.

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SEALED PROPOSALS addressed to the City Council of the City of Springtown, Texas will be received at the Springtown City Hall, 102 E. Second Street, Springtown, Texas 76082, until 9:30 AM on Thursday, December 1, 2022, for the purpose of furnishing all plant, labor, materials and equipment and the performing of all work required in the Bonnie Bell & Roy Lane - Paving & Drainage Improvements and other improvements incidental thereto, at which time and place the proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud in City Council Chamber, Springtown City Hall and retained by the City for tabulation, checking and evaluation. BIDS shall be submitted in sealed envelopes upon the blank Bid Form in the Contract Documents booklet. The entire Contract Documents' booklet must be returned in a sealed envelope with the following forms filled out and signed; Bid Form, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Form, Conflict of Interest Questionnaire, Local Government Officer Conflicts Disclosure Statement, Vendor Compliance to State Law form, Contractor Compliance to Texas Sales Tax Code form. The Bid Bond for five (5%) percent of the total bid must be included in the sealed envelope with the bid. The sealed envelope shall be marked BONNIE BELL & ROY LANE - PAVING & DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS - DO NOT OPEN UNTIL 9:30 AM on Thursday, December 1, 2022. A non-mandatory pre-bid conference will be held at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, November 23, 2022 at the Springtown City Hall, 102 E. Second Street. Representatives of the Owner and Engineer will be present to discuss the project and answer any questions. The Engineer will distribute to prospective bidders of record such Addenda, as the Engineer considers necessary in response to discussions or inquiries arising at the conference. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS and contract documents may be examined and obtained without charge at the Springtown City Hall, 102 E. Second Street, Springtown, TX 76082. No hard copies of the Bidding Documents will be made available at City Hall. It is the responsibility of the interested party to print the Bidding Documents. Neither the Owner nor the Engineer will be responsible for full or partial sets of Bidding Documents, including any addenda, obtained from other sources. Each Bid must be submitted on the prescribed Bid Form and accompanied by Bid security as prescribed in the Instructions to Bidders. The Successful Bidder will be required to furnish the additional bond(s) prescribed in the Bidding Documents. In case of ambiguity or lack of clearness in stating proposal prices, the Owner reserves the right to adopt the most advantageous construction thereof, or to reject any or all bids. No bid may be withdrawn within forty-five (45) days after date on which bids are opened.

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Districtwide Cub Scouts racing event coming to Springtown

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

Cub Scouts, mark your calendars - The Brazos Valley District Pinewood Derby is coming to Springtown.

The Pinewood Derby is a racing contest that involves Cub Scouts - who are kids in kindergarten through fifth grade - building handheld, wooden racecars with the help of a parent or adult mentor.

The district Pinewood Derby is expected to occur on Feb. 18 at the gymnasium The GEM of the Lone Star State, located on East State Highway 199 in Springtown. Shane Gross of Springtown Cub Scout Pack 22 is co-

ordinating the district's Pinewood Derby.

Brazos Valley - which includes five counties extending from Decatur through Parker County and from Mineral Wells to Aledo - is a district in the Boy Scouts of America's Longhorn Council in North and Central Texas.

Most Cub Scout units in the district will hold individual derbies for their packs before the district derby. Any Cub Scout in the district is welcome to race a car in the district's Pinewood Derby, Gross said, even if they didn't win at their pack's derby.

Gross said the kids can use the same racecar they entered in their pack's

Pinewood Derby for the district derby or build a new one, as long as the car was built in the same year as the derby.

Previously, Brazos Valley's Pinewood Derby was held in Granbury, but a change in direction is being taken for the event in February.

Brazos Valley District Chairperson Keith O'Donnell said the Pinewood Derby event in Granbury wasn't receiving a lot of participation from the district's units. Because some of the district's units are much farther north of Granbury, a more centralized location was sought so that the event would have more involvement from units.

"Springtown kind of makes sense because we have units in Aledo, Weatherford, Springtown, Boyd, Bridgeport, Decatur, Mineral Wells, so Springtown is kind of more of a centralized area," O'Donnell said.

Gross wants the event to attract local kids, not just from Springtown but Decatur, Bridgeport, Mineral Wells, Aledo and Weatherford as well.

"If we reach a couple of kids, that's what it's all about," he said.

Time will tell what the turnout will be, but O'Donnell is hoping for the best.

"I'd love to have every unit participate in it, and we're

going to be pushing for that, but a lot of it depends on, of course, weather that time of year (and) travel distances, but our anticipation is we're going to have a good turnout for it," O'Donnell said.

Gross is looking for people and businesses to help sponsor the event so the kids won't have to pay to enter the race.

"Our whole thought here is this is (for) kids and let's give them a good event and let's make it as painless as we can for the parents and everybody," he said.

O'Donnell spoke highly of the Scouting programs and what they offer to kids, and he encouraged community support of those programs.

"I think anytime the community can really do something that supports the children of the community and the youth of the community is always a very good thing," he said.

O'Donnell called Gross a natural fit for the Pinewood Derby coordinator role, particularly because of the enthusiasm and excitement he brings and shares with others working on the event with him.

"I think they're going to pull off a really good event," O'Donnell said.

To get more information about sponsorships, contact Gross at 512-965-8183 or shanegross34@yahoo.com.

UTGCD announces new annual rainwater harvesting grant program

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District recently announced a new annual rainwater harvesting grant program for Parker, Wise, Montague and Hood counties.

UTGCD encourages organizations within the district area to consider the addition of rainwater harvesting systems to structures and organizational buildings. Maintained systems significantly reduce groundwater usage, utility costs, erosion and weathering of vegetative surfaces. Rainwater harvesting efforts are supported by the state, and exemplary systems are recognized each year via the Texas Water Development Board.

There is no cost to apply to the program, and multiple systems may be granted within an application year. Up to 100% of funding is available to grantees with multiple cost sharing options available as well.

UTGCD will accept applications through Feb. 28. To access application documents, video guides and resources

on rainwater harvesting, visit uppertrinitygcd.com and navigate to the grant resource hub via the "News" tab.

Organizations and entities that are eligible for the grant include cities, counties, independent school districts, municipal utility districts, special utility districts, emergency service districts, volunteer fire departments, non-profit organizations, other entities that provide public service consistent with the purposes of or that otherwise benefit UTGCD and other private entities to which the public has access. Interested parties can contact UTGCD to verify their eligibility.

Administratively complete applications will be graded via a numerical scoring rubric, available to applicants as part of program transparency. Applicants will be able to track the status of their application via the district website.

For questions regarding the application process, application materials and status updates, contact Jill Garcia at 817-523-5200 or jill@uppertrinitygcd.com.



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured is the rainwater harvesting system used on the Wise County Fairgrounds. Maintained systems significantly reduce groundwater usage, utility costs, erosion and weathering of vegetative surfaces.

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BOOK REVIEW

Comfort and hope for people and pets with cancer

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Just a little more time. Two months, six months, a year, two. When your furbaby is ailing, all you ask for is for time together - not to do all those things you didn't do, but to do things again. Whatever it takes, you'll pay what you can afford and step on the imaginary brakes.

In the new book, "Sit. Stay. Heal." by Dr. Renee Alsarraf, the doctor completely understands what you're feeling.

You almost need to ask how she does it.

You wouldn't be alone: every day at her clinic, veterinary oncologist Renee Alsarraf treats pets with cancer. She sees the effects the disease has on dogs and cats, and she knows there can be good outcomes because pets don't handle chemotherapy or radiation like people do.

She knows that because Alsarraf survived a bout with cancer herself.

There was supposed to have been an Independence Day celebration the day after Alsarraf learned of her diagnosis but the party was canceled and she regrets that now. She fretted about losing her hair, not wanting to "look like a C-word patient." She learned that there was no shame in leaning on her husband, their son or friends.

Dogs, especially, don't worry about any of those things. They bounce back in amaz-

ing ways from chemotherapy; in some cases, they respond with puppy-like vigor. They often don't lose their hair or get mouth-sores or endure the annoyances that humans get from cancer treatments. Sometimes, the only treatment required for a dog is a pill to stave off the disease for a little more time.

Radiation has its risks, but dogs don't care, as long as they're loved as much as was the chubby cocker spaniel service dog, as much as the K-9 hound, as much as the beagle whose owner was dying, as much as the retriever, or the 'doodle with a painful shoulder.

As long as they are loved as much as Alsarraf's own boxer, who was diagnosed with cancer in the middle of her treatment for "the C-word."

Here's the big surprise: "Sit, Stay, Heal" is not a book filled with sadness and pain. It's not going to make you cry (much), and it's not full of pink T-shirts.

This is a story filled with hope.

That's an odd thing to say about a book in which outcomes are often exactly what you think they'll be, but it's true: author Renee Alsarraf lends grace and optimism to the agony that her pet-parent clients feel, and that comes early and strong. It's not misplaced; because it's very relieving to read how animals

respond to cancer treatment, there's great comfort here for dog lovers whose pups have recently received a diagnosis.

The comfort extends somewhat to humans with the disease, too, although Alsarraf makes her "C-word" a secondary character, with the focus on four legs.

Bring a few tissues when you read this book but be prepared not to use them. Instead, be ready to see the hope inside "Sit. Stay. Heal." Absolutely, this book is worth the time.



PHOTO BY JOSEPH FRAZZ
Dr. Renee Alsarraf

"Sit. Stay. Heal: What Dogs Can Teach Us about Living Well" by Dr. Renee Alsarraf

c.2022, HarperOne, \$27.99, 256 pages



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OBITUARIES

Gary Andrews 1942 - 2022

Gary Lee Andrews, 80, passed away Wednesday, November 9, 2022 in Azle. He was born May 5, 1942 in Santa Monica, California to Rose Jones-Benedetto.

Gary was a well-respected numismatic antique coin dealer and show promoter. He enjoyed motor sports and spending time with his family.

Gary is survived by his wife of 60 years, Claudia Andrews; son, Scott Andrews; daughter Wendi Short and her husband Barry; sisters, Stevie Belle and Sheri Shull and her husband Gary; grandchildren, Bailee and Sarah; and numerous extended family and friends.



He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather who will be dearly missed.

The Springtown Epigraph, Nov. 17, 2022 Edition

Nowanah Corley 1947 - 2022

Nowanah (Leatherwood) Corley, 74, passed away, Wednesday, November 9, 2022 in Springtown.

Visitation was Tuesday, November 15 from 6-8 p.m. at Alexander's Midway Funeral Home.

Service will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, November 16 at Springtown Baptist Temple.

Nowanah was born November 29, 1947 to Zack and Levia (Howard) Leatherwood in Springtown. She worked for Tri County Electric for 29 years and was a longtime member of Springtown Baptist Temple. She enjoyed cooking and spending time with her family. She had a witty loving personality.

She was preceded in death by her parents, along with her husband of 47 years, Lonnie Corley, and sisters, Freda Lowe and Zackuline Tomlin.

Nowanah is survived by her son, Richard Corley; daughter, Charlotte Sisk



and husband, Junior and Carla Sisk; brother, Maynard Leatherwood and his wife Beverly; sister, Carolyn Hulsey and husband Larry; seven grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren; numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family and friends.

Nowanah was a loving wife, mother, grandmother who will be dearly missed by all who knew her.

The Springtown Epigraph, Nov. 17, 2022 Edition

Cody Casey 1986 - 2022

Cody Edward Casey, 36, loving husband, father, son, brother, and friend to many, left us suddenly and unexpectedly on Wednesday, November 9, 2022. Our world is upside down and sideways and now there is a huge hole in all of our hearts.

Funeral service is 1 p.m. Friday, November 18, 2022 at Springtown Church of Christ, 316 Church St., Springtown.

Interment will be at Boonsville Cemetery in Boonsville in Wise County. Visitation is 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, November 17, 2022 at White's Funeral Home, 130 Houston Ave., Weatherford.

Casual attire including camo is welcome.

Cody was born in Fort Worth on March 21, 1986 to Robert and Julie Casey. He was the oldest of two sons and big brother to Justin. Cody attended Azle High School and was a bull rider for the rodeo team. His life was forever changed when he met his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, Katy Johnson. They were married June 29, 2003 and spent their lives together raising three wonderful sons, working hard, playing hard, and living life to the fullest. Theirs was a love story for the ages.

Cody was a GREAT deer hunter, hog hunter, and fisherman. His trophies line the walls of their home and he was forever in search of an even bigger buck. Cody and Katy shared their love of all things outdoors with their sons who all have trophies of their own. If you wanted to actually shoot a deer, he would help you find one. If you like to catch fish, go with Cody because he could find and catch fish when no one else could. Cody learned his outdoor skills from his dad, and passed the legacy forward to all who were interested. Many cookouts and parties resulted from all of that hunting and fishing.

Cody spent many years as a lineman working alongside his father, brother, and oldest son, restoring light in our darkness. He spent several weeks away from his family, along with the Casey linemen and Bobcat linemen family, during Hurricane Ian in Florida helping restore power in several of the cities that were devastated in the storm. His kindness, along with that of all the crews, during their time of need was warmly welcomed and deeply appreciated by all, including some



extended family that was affected by the storm.

Cody loved fiercely and unconditionally. He would protect and defend all those that he loved without regard for his own safety.

Cody loved and lived more fully than most of us can even imagine. He loved his family most of all and he had so many best friends that they can't all be counted. The love was returned by all of us - a full circle.

Cody was the person you called to help you that you knew would quickly and faithfully show up, every time, no matter what.

Our hearts are shattered, but we will meet again one day.

The family would like to thank everyone for surrounding us all with love and care during this most difficult time.

He was preceded in death by his grandmother, Maxine "Nanny" Casey; grandfather, Robert "Papa Bob" Casey, Sr.; uncle, Danny Kane; and best friend, Coby "Slappy" Whitaker.

Survivors include his wife of almost 20 years, Katy Casey; sons, Cody Lane Casey, Landyn Nolan Casey, and Corbyn Luke Casey; parents, Robert and Julie Casey; brother, Justin Casey and Bre; sister, Crystal McGhee; grandparents, Tom and Rosemary Puckett; parents-in-law, Jack and Cathy Johnson; niece, Braylee Casey; nephew, Tate Casey; brothers-in-law, Jacob Johnson and wife, Glorianna, Matt "Beau" Johnson, and Jeremy Johnson; aunts and uncles, Randy and Robin Casey, Bill and Erin Kane, Ricky "Uncle Monkey" Jennings, Sherry Prater, and Karen and Scott Kircher; and many cousins, extended family and many friends.

We are now ready to focus on how Cody lived - not how he left. He would want us to live and love well, as he did.

The Springtown Epigraph, Nov. 17, 2022 Edition

Charles Wood Jr. 1954 - 2022

Charles "Bud" Newton Wood Jr., of Fort Worth, Texas, passed away on November 01, 2022, at 68 years old.

He was born on March 4, 1954, in Fort Worth to Charles and Margie Wood, and he grew up in nearby Springtown and Azle. He worked at General Dynamics/Lockheed as a tube bender for many years, and later drove buses at DFW Airport, before retiring.

Charles was a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a grandfather, an uncle, a friend, and a dog dad. He positively impacted the lives of so many, and we are forever grateful to have shared his life, and our lives, with him. He is remembered by his family and friends as someone who loved big and was loved big back.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Carol "Kay" Wood; his father and mother; his daughter, Brandi Wood;



and his grandson, King Pennington.

Charles is survived by his children, Chris Pennington, Mark Pennington, Kathryn Breaker, John Awbrey, Matt Awbrey, and Sarah Cooper; brothers, Warren Wood and Wendall Wood; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Springtown Epigraph, Nov. 17, 2022 Edition

Jerry McBeath-Watson 1952 - 2022

Jerry Deene McBeath-Watson, 70, passed away unexpectedly, while on the road, November 8, 2022 in Montague County.

A private memorial will be planned. Please contact the family for more information.

Jerry was born April 2, 1952 in Weatherford to William McBeath and "Babe" Nellie May (Brawley) Watson. He never met a stranger. He was an over the road truck driver for 15 years and prior to that he was a building maintenance supervisor for a high-rise condominium complex. Jerry enjoyed traveling and spending time near the ocean in Port Aransas and Florida. He was a computer buff and loved spending time with family. He was a loving brother and uncle and friend to all who knew him.

His parents preceded him



in death along with his son, Lewis Watson

Jerry is survived by his sisters, Cynthia Watson and her husband Arly, Carla Rippin, and Sarah Bishop and husband Shane; numerous nieces, nephews and extended family and friends.

The Springtown Epigraph, Nov. 17, 2022 Edition

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I'd like to teach the world to sing

"I'd like to build a world a home and furnish it with love

Grow apple trees and honey bees and snow white turtle doves

I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony

I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand

And hear them echo through the hills for peace throughout the land"

If you remember that 1971 song from The New Seekers — or the Coca Cola commercial that adapted it — you're old. (For everyone else, YouTube is your friend).

Even if you weren't around



BE AMAZING

By Gerry Lewis

Azle resident Dr. Gerry Lewis guides explorers to discover their AMAZING. He is an author, musician, and speaker, and a coach-sultant for individuals, churches, and organizations. More at www.discoveryouramazing.com.

(or paying attention) in 1971, you can do a little review of history and imagine the circumstances in the world that inspired the song.

Songwriters often serve as the poet-prophets that speak into current events, calling attention to cultural challenges. Sometimes they offer solutions, sometimes critiques, and sometimes simply laments.

And — as much as pundits and preachers would like to

think otherwise — the singers and songwriters have a leg up because of the way the human brain processes information.

That's why I'm more likely to have "Honky Cat" from Elton John stuck in my head than the Gettysburg Address.

I'm actually going somewhere with this, so stick with me a little longer.

Last Sunday, I had the privilege of singing at the 150th

anniversary of the First Baptist Church in Kyle, TX where my good friend, David Kelly, is interim pastor.

David asked me to sing some songs from across the years so I selected one hymn from each decade of the church's existence — from the 1870s through the 2020s. (We only sang one verse of each song)

When I was researching and selecting songs, I didn't give much thought to what was going on in the world. I was going for songs that would likely be familiar to the congregation.

It was only in the midst of the service that it occurred to me that hymn writers also live within a cultural context.

They are often inspired to speak into current events and call attention to a cultural challenge from a perspective guided by their faith.

I love hymn stories and have several books that tell the backgrounds of familiar hymns.

But even if we don't know the story behind a particular song, we may use inspired imagination to consider world events at the time of the writing to see a song — or its author — in a new way.

Here's what I'm getting at: when we are a few years down the road from where we are right now, what songs will be on our internal playlist? How will we remember the poet-prophets of the

2020s?

It's really hard to imagine when we're living IN history that history is being recorded, but I want you to know this:

How you use whatever voice you have — within your circles of influence — matters to God and matters within those circles.

As for me, I want to use my voice to encourage, bless, and point people to amazing eternal realities that consider the current events but transcend them at the same time.

That's how I want to teach my corner of the world to sing.

Be amazing today, my friend.

A demonstration of leadership as great as Texas

With our most recent election behind us, I have heard some say we can now put politics on the backburner and not pay much attention until the next election. Talk like that always concerns me.

What is politics but another way of describing our joint existence as a society and how we are going to manage our collective business? How can we simply turn our backs to what goes on and declare we will deal with issues in a couple of years? We must be more engaged and stay aware of what is happening so we can voice our opinions and work to ensure our politicians make decisions in the best interests of their constituency.

Wyndi Veigel, who is an editor at a neighboring newspaper, has spent a portion of her career in Marshall, Texas. She recently reached out to me with a story about General Sam Houston speak-



FROM MY FRONT PORCH

By Sam Houston

Sam Houston is a syndicated columnist and newspaper executive. He is also an author, actor, playwright and entertainment producer/promoter.

ing in Marshall when he was running for governor of Texas during the election cycle of 1857. Sam went to Marshall to speak in the hometown of two of his most outspoken critics, Robert Loughery and Louis T. Wigfall. During the visit, a debate was scheduled between the Texas icon and his opponent for governor, Hardin Runnels.

Under the cover provided by a huge live oak, in an overwhelmingly secessionist area, the Unionist Houston spoke so eloquently that Runnels, who was scheduled to follow, declined to speak. Though Houston lost the election, Houston's electrifying oratory brought him

48% of the Harrison County vote. During the speech, Sam wore his famous leopard skin waistcoat and proudly announced to all those in attendance he had always been in favor of the Union and like a leopard, he would not change his "spots."

The tree of which Sam spoke eventually died and was cut down, but a large cross section of the famous tree has been maintained. A Texas State Historical marker now has been placed near where the tree once stood.

Not sure many folks today can appreciate the sheer courage and character it took for General Sam to speak to a crowd that held such contrary views. To him,

the size of the crowd nor the unbending nature of their viewpoints was a deterrent. He spoke what he believed was the truth and what he felt from deep within him, was right for Texas. Unfortunately, Texans ultimately ignored his pleas and seceded from the Union. The resulting Civil War emptied the Texas State treasury and saw the destruction of the flower of Texas youth. History has proved General Sam knew what he was talking about.

Keep an eye on what is happening in our political realm. See which men and woman have the courage to stand up and be heard and which politicians blindly follow an agenda set forth by some group of politicians and lobbyists whose interest are merely self-serving. The time has come to be vigilant and prevent those who would mislead, lie and deceive the people of Texas,



PHOTO COURTESY OF WYNDI VEIGEL

This is a cross section of the live oak tree closely connected with the Texas legend of General Sam Houston. Houston had used the huge tree to provide shade while giving an eloquent speech in the city of Marshall as a candidate for governor of Texas while campaigning during the 1857 election cycle. The cross section of the famous tree, which was cut down after it died, was maintained. A state historical marker has been placed near where the tree once stood.

from causing her damage. The right course of action is not always the most popular.

Thought for the day: Society has gotten to the

point where everyone has a right, but no one seems to have responsibility.

Until next time.



THANKSGIVING

The idea of Thanksgiving originated in 1621 in New England. Following the first harvest by our pilgrim's fathers at Plymouth, Governor Bradford made provisions for a day of Thanksgiving prayer. Such a day was observed several times during the ensuing century. Several presidents appointed similar days which the people joyously observed. However, it was not until 1861 that President Abraham Lincoln appointed such a day, and every president since that time has followed suit.

To me Thanksgiving is a special time. I remember those special days when my grandfather, George Kelley, had all his family gather at his home. The entire family would always come together at my grandad's home. He had a huge round table and it was loaded with foods of all kinds. All of us kids would be playing together waiting for dinner to be done. Then we would all gather in the kitchen where a prayer was made before we ate. There were testimonies given by the family as to the blessings God had given during the year. It was such a great time. This was long before the time of t.v.'s and the adults sat and talked and visited together. It was like the Kelley family reunion. I am fearful that today Thanksgiving has become just another day and holds no special meaning. It's observed by many the wrong way. It should still be a day of Thanksgiving, thanking God for his blessings and a time of prayers and recalling the goodness of God.

Personally, I am a blessed man. God has given me good health and he has let me Pastor his churches, for the last 65 years. God has blessed me with a good wife, 5 children, I have great son in laws and daughter in laws, 15

grandchildren and 12 great-great grandchildren. God has given me whole church houses full of great men and women. Some of the men God has given me to Pastor has gone to heaven and are awaiting me there. So, as you read this you can well see that I am a blessed man.

Let me just give you a few things for which we can be thankful for this year.

I. Thank God that He loved me (John 3:16 and I John 4:8-9 kjv)

So, this Thanksgiving I am very thankful that God loved me. We need to take our Bible concordance and look up the times that God's love is expressed toward us.

II. I am thankful that Jesus, God's son, died for me that I might live (Rom 5:5-8 kjv) This Thanksgiving I am thankful for Christ taking my place at calvary, and dying for me. That I might be saved and become a child of God.

III. I am thankful for the promise of a heavenly home. This promise is made to us in John's Gospel chapters 14:1-3 kjv. Jesus has prepared a special place for His children, made by his own hands. The beauty is past our describing. I am thankful when this life is over that I have an eternal home waiting for me. The Apostle Paul assured us that when this earthly tabernacle (this body) be dissolved we have a building in heaven, not made by hands. What a blessed promise which to be thankful for.

IV. I am thankful He is coming again

After Jesus died and was buried and on the 3rd day He rose from the grave. Then for 40 days he ministered to his disciples and the Saints of God. It has been interesting to me, that during those 40 days not one unsaved soul saw him. Then when those 40 days were finished, the great commission was given. In

(Acts 1:8) and again in (Acts 1:9) that after He had spoken those words, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight. (Acts 1:10-11) these are precious promises for the child of God.

In verse 10 the disciples are watching Jesus ascend into heaven, and as he goes up two men appear and stands by them. Note in verse 11, these men say to the disciples "why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Here is the blessed promise, this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Note, how Jesus went away in the cloud. When he comes again, it will be in a cloud. Alos, he went away in the presence of His people. When the rapture occurs, He will return in the presence of His people. Please take time to read (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), not another precious promise. This same Jesus is coming for His children. The same Jesus that died for us on the cross, is the same Jesus that rose from the dead for our justification on the third day. This same Jesus that ascended back to heaven to sit next to His Father's right hand to make intercession for us. This same Jesus who will judge this world. I am so thankful for these promises. When you consider these mentioned promises, it brings Joy and Peace to the hearts of the children of God. It is my prayer that you also are looking to God and are thankful to God for these blessed promises. I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a blessed Thanksgiving. Please remember to keep God in your Thanksgiving.

Because of Calvary
George White
Isa 54:10

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ON FISHING

It's trout stocking time in Texas

This is the time of the year that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department starts stocking trout in many locations throughout the state. Many of these locations are called "neighborhood fishing ponds," some of which are likely close to you.

Consult the TPWD website for all locations and scheduled stocking dates. Scheduled stocking dates may change.

Stocking will occur several times during the winter season. I'm including herein a few local areas relatively close with the scheduled stocking dates. Put it on your



ON FISHING
By Michael Acosta

As a licensed professional fishing guide, Michael Acosta shows you how to find them. He has been a licensed guide since 1998. michael.acosta@att.net

calendar!

There are no minimum length limits for these trout and you are allowed to keep five trout per day, per person. An angler fishing in a Community Fishing Lake or from a dock, pier or jetty within a state park can use no more than two poles. Trout

anglers will need a valid fishing license with the freshwater fishing endorsement. Youth under age 17 do not require a license.

These trout are typically taken on salmon eggs, corn and a variety of small spinner baits and flies. I would recommend light line.



FISHING REPORT

Lake Granbury water temperatures are in the upper 60s, and the action has picked up for striped bass and blue catfish. Striped bass are good on Alabama rigs and live shad on the lower ends. Blue cats are good on cut bait fished on shallow flats adjacent to channels. Crappie fishing continues to be good to excellent on small jigs/minnows. Largemouth bass are good to excellent on soft plastics fished near main lake points with submerged brush. White bass are fair on slabs on humps and ridges. Some birds have returned to our reservoirs and they can point out active fish. Keep your binoculars handy.

Comanche Creek reservoir continues to be excellent for tilapia, channel catfish and largemouth bass. Anglers continue to catch numerous fish. Largemouth catches are good on most any kind of presentation of soft plastics, crankbaits and topwater at times. Channel cats are good on prepared/cut bait. Tilapia are abundant and many are using cast nets to fill their ice chests. Tilapia are an invasive species and there is no limit.

On other area reservoirs, limits of striped bass continue to be taken on Possum Kingdom Lake, and Lake Whitney on live shad or trolled Alabama rigs. Look for bird action.

NAME	LOCATION	AMOUNT	SCHEDULED DATES
Joshua City Park Pond	Joshua	1,900	12/7/2022, 1/15/2023
Glen Rose Town Lake	Glen Rose	2,000	11/29/2022, 1/4/2023
Hurst Chisholm Park	Hurst	1,896	11/23/2022, 12/22/2022, 1/20/2023, 2/17/2023
Meridian State Park	Meridian	1,500	1/12/2023
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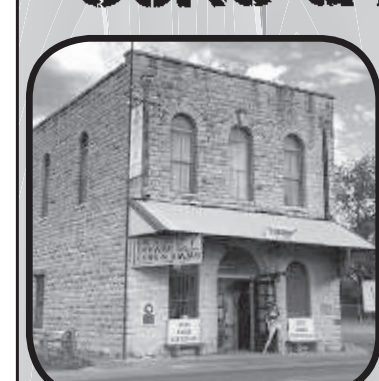
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LEGACY COMES TO LIFE

Pierre Francois Pingenot

French soldier, farmer, Texas pioneer

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The story of Pierre Francois Pingenot is told by his great-grandson Duwain Pingenot. Duwain is a member of the Thomas Rusk Chapter of The Sons of the Republic of Texas in Dallas, Texas. He is past Vice President of the William B. Travis Chapter in San Antonio. Duwain is a member of the Frontier Brigade Band and plays for the "Buffalo Bill Wild West Cowboy Band."

Pierre Francois Pingenot is my name. I was one of the early settlers of the town of Castroville, Texas. I was born on October 1, 1810, in Bretten, Haut-Rhin, France. My father and grandfather were farmers in the small village where our family had lived for several generations. Farming is what I knew best and gladly continued our family tradition until I joined the French Army.

Jean Remis and Jeanne Marie Cordonnier Pingenot are my parents. The translation of my birth record in French to English is as follows: "The 1st of October 1810 at 4 in the afternoon in Bretten, Jean Remis Pingenot, 34-year-old from Bretten, presented a male child born at 11 this morning, of him and Jeanne Marie Cordonnier, his wife living in Bretten, and declared wanting to give him the names of Pierre Francois. Declaration made in front of witnesses Jacques Vernet, 77-year-old farmer from Bretten, and Francois Vernet, 34-year-old farmer from Bretten." I was the fourth of five children.

In January 1833, I enrolled in the French Army. My Honorable Discharge papers described me as having brown hair and eyebrows, gray eyes, low forehead, long nose, medium mouth and

pointed chin, 5 feet 4 inches tall, and a farmer by profession. The papers indicate that I enrolled in the army as a substitute (replacement) for a young man of class. I received a Certificate of Good Conduct, and was discharged on December 31, 1840. I brought with me these papers to the new country.

Henry Castro came to Alsace, France in the early 1840s; he was an Empresario who was recruiting colonists for Texas. Going to Texas sounded exciting to me. Several families were excited, too, and decided to come to Texas. Among them was my cousin, Jean Nicholas Pingenot, and his small children Justine, Celestin and August. We made our preparations, and on October 6, 1844, we sailed from Anvers, France on the ship "Probus." The original passenger list is in the State Archives in Austin along with papers showing the arrival of the ship in Galveston, Texas in February, 1845. We made our way very slowly by oxen and wagons to San Antonio, and then on to Castroville. Since its founding in September 1844 progress had been made in the community but the work was only a beginning.

On November 22, 1846 I married lovely Alexis Pichot.



PHOTO COURTESY
Pierre Francois Pingenot built this home in Castroville in 1850.

She had come to Texas with her father, Jean Nicholas Pichot, and her brother Jean Nicholas and her sister, Marie Jeanne, before my arrival in Texas. Her father died not long after arriving in Castroville from complications of a rattlesnake bite.

On April 16, 1850 I received the land grant of 640 acres because of the Colonization Contract. I also

had a town lot in Castroville on the corner of Lorenzo and Petersburg Streets. We built a house which is described as being an example of Colonial Alsatian architecture. Our house is plain and simple, without any needless decorative details. It has two rooms with a lean-to in back. It is constructed with thick walls of native rock and wooden beams and has a thatched

roof. We raised our family in the house and it served us well. I served as Medina County Commissioner from 1854 to 1856. Our children are Celest, who married Emily Gast; he was postmaster from 1898 until his death in 1901. Mary Adele married August Tondre. Edward married Annie Batot and they have prospered in Eagle Pass. Louis married Regina

Rudinger and they live in Del Rio, where he works for the Southern Pacific Railroad. Mary Elizabeth married Jacob Bendele.

Footnote: Unfortunately, Pierre did not live to see all of these happy events. He died on June 28, 1881, at the age of 70 years 8 months. Pierre is buried in the Saint Louis Cemetery in Castroville.

WHO ARE THE SONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS? The Sons of the Republic of Texas (SRT) consists of members who are direct lineal descendants of those who settled the Republic of Texas from 1836 to February 19, 1846. The purpose of the SRT is to perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who won Texas' independence. They set the course for Texas to become a nation and eventually the 28th state. LEGACY COMES TO LIFE personifies our ancestors with true stories about real people who changed the course of history! For membership information please visit our website; srttexas.org or email; old300.srt@gmail.com.

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SQUARE

FROM PAGE 1

job is fun because it's different from his normal work. "It is because it's different, way different than doing what we normally do (such as) fixing roads and water leaks and cleaning in the park and mowing in the park,"

said Smith, who works in the streets department. Smith and some of his other colleagues climbed up the tree skeleton - which rivals the buildings around the square in height - to secure the top parts of the structure. The workers at the top of the tree did not seem to be afraid of heights. "I'm not, for sure," Smith said.



PHOTOS BY MADELYN EDWARDS
Parks maintenance worker Joshua Crager smiles as he works on the top part of the Christmas tree skeleton.



Parks maintenance worker Carlos Cervantes lines up Christmas lights and staples them to the ceiling inside the Tabernacle.



The Tabernacle on the Springtown Square has been adorned with Christmas lights, wreaths and decorations ahead of the Christmas parade and tree lighting on Nov. 27.

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

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THANK YOU, CHARLES M. SCHULZ!

COMIC STRIP GETS STAMPED: The United States Postal Service has created the **Charles M. Schulz Forever** stamps to celebrate the fact that the creator of the **Peanuts** comic strip would have been 100 years old on November 26, 2022. Find out more about this legendary cartoonist on today's *Kid Scoop* page!

WHO WAS CHARLES SCHULZ?

When Charles Schulz was a child, people called the newspaper comic pages "the funnies." And Charles was a boy who really *loved* the funnies.

Schulz read his local newspaper every day and wanted to make his own funnies one day. He started drawing as a youngster and kept drawing cartoons every day.

PEANUTS CHARACTER MATCH

Do you know the names of these famous Peanuts characters featured on U.S. postage stamps? Do the math to label each character.

7 + 7 = Charlie Brown
8 - 2 = Schroeder
11 + 7 = Peppermint Patty
13 + 3 = Lucy
18 - 6 = Franklin
9 - 4 = Linus
8 + 5 = Pig-Pen
4 + 4 = Sally

ARMY TO ART SCHOOL

During World War II, Charles was drafted into the United States Army. He brought a sketch pad and kept on drawing.

When he came home to Minnesota, he got a job teaching at the art school where he had studied. It was there he met a man who would become a friend for life. The letters on the correct path reveal his name.

PEANUTS BY THE NUMBERS

Charles drew 17,897 Peanuts comic strips.	There have been 5 feature-length Peanuts movies.	There have been 45 Peanuts television specials.
---	--	---

PEANUTS BEGINS

In 1947, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* bought his comic strip, which was called *Li'l Folks*. In 1950, the strip's name was _____ to Peanuts because another comic strip had a name that was too _____.

From that small start, Peanuts became very _____. It was eventually _____ in more than 2,600 newspapers and 75 countries!

Charles Schulz wrote and _____ every single Peanuts comic strip for the next 50 years, inspiring generations of _____ cartoonists.

SNOOPY

The Peanuts character **Snoopy** is based on a pet dog that Charles had as a child. Use the code to find out the name of this pet.

● = A
● = C
● = E
● = H
● = I
● = L
● = K
● = P
● = S

S _ _ _ _

Kid Scoop Puzzler

BEYOND COMIC STRIPS

The Peanuts characters were so popular that they were made into books, TV shows, a musical stage show, greeting cards, toys and even movies! Circle every other letter to find out the name of the first Peanuts television special, which aired on CBS in 1965.

A V O D H N A S R
T L W I K E J B U R
I O Z W X N Q C
B H P R D I V S
R T L M U A I S Y

CH A

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

NEWSPAPER
CHARLES
SCHULZ
PEANUTS
SNOOPY
DRAW
COMIC
SKETCH
DOG
BOOKS
LUCY
LINUS
SALLY
PET
TEACHING

D	J	B	V	W	S	U	N	I	L
N	O	Q	O	S	A	L	L	Y	P
E	G	G	W	O	P	H	J	E	Y
W	N	R	P	S	K	E	T	C	H
S	I	L	A	E	C	S	U	O	Y
P	H	T	H	L	A	L	D	M	P
A	C	S	P	R	W	N	S	I	O
P	A	K	H	A	L	W	U	C	O
E	E	C	R	H	D	B	V	T	N
R	T	D	S	C	H	U	L	Z	S

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

COMIC STRIP REWRITE!

Erase or white out the words in the bubbles in a comic strip in today's newspaper. Write in new words for the characters to be "saying."

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

Write On!

Happy Birthday, Charles M. Schulz

Write a short "Happy Birthday" note to Charles M. Schulz who would be 100 this year.

Kid Scoop Together

Charles' Favorite Sport: Hockey

Because Charles Schulz made so many comics featuring hockey, he was admitted into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame.

Growing up in St. Paul, MN, Charles used a hockey stick to hit tennis balls in his grandmother's basement. His mother helped him make goalie pads out of gunny sacks with rolled-up newspaper sewn inside. His father made an ice rink in their backyard where Charles and his friends played hockey whenever they could - even by streetlight at night.

Charles's love of hockey lasted his entire life. His five children all learned to skate.

In 1969, when a local ice arena closed, Charles bought it and opened the Redwood Empire Arena near his studio in Santa Rosa, CA.

Today, the ice arena is called Snoopy's Home Ice and is located next to the Charles M. Schulz Museum.

How many differences can you find between these two hockey players?

To learn more about Charles M. Schulz, visit www.schulzmuseum.org

Sound of Springtown shines at state



BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

The state's best high school marching bands met at the Alamodome in San Antonio Nov. 9 to play and strut their hearts out to see who was best. Judges deemed Springtown the 15th best 4A marching band in Texas. The finish didn't land Springtown in the

finals, but band director Scot McPhetridge was pleased with the band's performance.

Being among the top 15 4A bands in the state is a "great place to be," he said.

"You always want to earn a spot in finals, but sometimes the judges don't go with you, and sometimes they do," he said. "That is what is always so difficult about being in an

activity that, at the end of the day, comes down to subjective opinions. We have to trust the judges are doing their best, and the students did their best."

The band finished its performance without regrets, McPhetridge said.

"We marched early in the day, which is always a difficult position to be in," he said. "The students really had a great

performance, and we are super proud of that last run of the show."

On Nov. 12, the band's drumline competed at its final contest of the season and earned third place at the Lone Star Classic in Flower Mound.

"Two great finishes from our drumline this season and back-to-back area wins for the marching band - this year and

last year - have really rounded out a great season with another trip for the Sound of Springtown to the UIL state marching band championships," McPhetridge said.

With the marching season over, the band will begin preparing for end-of-the-semester activities, such as its Christmas concert and region band auditions.

PHOTO BY ROBIN HIDROGO
The Sound of Springtown performs a song.

Springtown's busy cheerleaders to skip state, national contests

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Few athletic squads have stayed busier than the Springtown cheer team in the past three years.

During that time, the squad has cheered week in and week out for the Porcupine football teams that went deep into the playoffs, along with volleyball, basketball and other programs.

"When everybody goes to playoffs, we follow and cheer," said Chrissy Mayo, cheer director.

Springtown cheer has not only fulfilled its roles at sporting events but spent additional time preparing for state and national cheerleading competitions. In January 2022, Springtown cheerleaders finished in the top 20 among high schools competing at the state contest. Later that month, they traveled to Florida for the national championship and placed in the top 20.

Previously, the team had competed at state in 2020



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE

From right, K'Dee Dowdy, Krystal Gonzalez and Faith Styles jazz up the crowd at a football game.

SEE **CHEER**, PAGE 2A.



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE

Matthew Carroll tosses the first pitch at the Springtown Lions Club tournament to honor military veterans.

Springtown Lions Club asks hometown hero to toss first pitch

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Baseball wasn't Matthew Carroll's best sport while growing up in Springtown.

He played baseball with the Springtown Lions Club but dropped the sport in high school to focus on his favorite pastime — football.

Nowadays, Carroll remains built like a football jock or an Army sergeant.

Or, in his case, both.

After graduating from Springtown High School in 2003, Carroll served in the Army, reaching the rank of sergeant before retiring.

Twenty years had passed since Carroll handled a baseball, but he accepted an invitation from Lions Club baseball commissioner Cody Bryant to throw out the ceremonial first pitch for the Nov. 12-13 Veterans Day baseball-

softball tournament. A portion of the proceeds helped support veterans.

At 9 a.m. on Nov. 12, Carroll stood on the mound on a chilly, windy day and waited for his signal to throw the baseball to fellow veteran Logan Tidwell, a retired Army staff sergeant who was crouched behind home plate. Carroll hadn't warmed up much prior to the pitch and wondered how his arm would respond.

"It's a lot different — a lot of clicks and pops in that shoulder," he said with a laugh.

He volunteered to throw the pitch because he appreciates the attention given to his comrades on Veterans Day.

"Everybody comes out to recognize us for everything that we've done, which is nice," he said. "It's a small town, and everybody supports everybody out here."

Springtown football season ends in Snyder



PHOTO BY STEVEN MARTER

The Porcupines run onto the field at the beginning of the Randall game on Nov. 11.

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

The Springtown Porcupines saw their football season end, losing their bi-district playoff game Nov. 11.

But the loss doesn't mean the season wasn't a success.

The Porcupines began the season much younger and less experienced than previous teams that had gone deep into the playoffs in recent years. Head coach Brian Hulett was proud of the way this year's team practiced and played with intensity.

"We had a group of great kids who went to work every single day and did their very best without complaint and with maximum effort," he said. "We have never had a more enjoyable group to work with than this year's crew."

The Porcupines displayed passion at every game, including the final loss to Canyon Randall, 31-7, in the bi-district clash in Snyder.

The game remained close in the first half, with Randall leading just 10-7 at halftime.

"Despite what the score says, we played relatively well," Hulett said. "In the end, we just couldn't quite make enough plays."

Randall returned to the

field in the second half and scored 21 unanswered points.

After the game, Hulett told his players that they had proved themselves this season, not only in football but in life. Springtown finished 3-8.

"To everyone who isn't in the locker room with us, the scores and our wins and losses are about the only measuring stick they have to go by," the coach said. "But what we get to see and know is that despite the wins not being what we wanted, they showed up every day with a great attitude and did their best. This will take them way farther in life than any win on a football field can."

He thanked his senior players for "everything they did for our school."

As for the future, Hulett anticipates much work ahead to prepare his team to return to the playoffs next year.

"We have a long way to go to get back to where we were, where we want to be," Hulett said. "We have some kids returning, but that doesn't mean we will be any better. The kids have to make a choice to get better, and that's a long, day-to-day process."

CHEER

FROM PAGE 1B

and 2021 and at the national contest in 2020.

This year, however, Springtown cheer is taking a break from contests.

"We have been going pretty hard the last three years through everything and deep into playoffs and competing twice at nationals and all three years at state, so this might be our off year to take a rest and come back strong next year," Mayo said.

She consulted with her team to gauge their opinions before making the call.

"It was a decision that was made by everyone," she said. "If it was going to be any year, it would definitely be this year."

Cheer captain Madison Meeks and co-captain Amie White helped lead discussions and described the decision as difficult but the right thing to do.

"It was definitely a decision that we had to think about for a while and really talk to the team about and see who was interested," White said. "We've had an amazing run with competitive cheer at Springtown recently."

White, a senior, is in her fourth year of cheerleading

and described her previous trips to state and national contests as amazing.

"It was great for everybody on the team, but it also took a lot of hard work, multiple practices and hours every weekend to get to that point," she said.

Many cheerleaders stay busy in other areas, including participating on sports teams or playing an instrument in the band.

"We have girls who do tons of stuff with their families and other extracurriculars in school, so it was really just a thing of interest and who wanted to go for that state year," White said.

Preparing for contests requires hours of additional practice. The juniors and seniors on the squad have already made trips to state and national contests and didn't mind missing a year. The freshmen and sophomores will have opportunities to go in future years.

So, 2022 seemed like an appropriate time for a respite.

"It was definitely a lot of hard work and time that went into (preparing for contests) and coach pushing us constantly and us trying to get the team together and engaged," White said. "A lot of us have too much going on right now to where we've

... kind of decided it would be best to take a break this year. We consulted the other grades as well, not just the seniors."

The team includes plenty of freshmen on the squad. They can look forward to trips in the future. Cheerleader tryouts are held in March.

"I've got a lot of new freshmen this year who have not done (contests) before," Mayo said. "Hopefully next year, I'll get a lot more freshmen coming in, and we will have two groups to start something new that they've not done yet."

Until then, the cheerleaders will stay busy doing what they do best - supporting other sports teams.

"We obviously will cheer at the (football) playoff games," she said. "When volleyball goes to playoffs, we will go with them."

They plan to spend time in the offseason practicing routines and stunts for the 2024 contest season and holding fundraisers to help pay for the trips.

"We are going to try to start earlier on that next year and get that kicked off sooner," Mayo said. "This year, we just needed that break to come back stronger for the next year."



PHOTOS BY JEFF PRINCE

Macy Chavez, Ashley Bailey and Megan Mills are ready for rah-rah.



From left, Ava Guerra, Paige Winstead and Danijae Fishgrab stand tall with help from their teammates.



From top, K'Dee Dowdy and Amie White flex their muscles.

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Friday-Sunday, 8-4.

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ACROSS

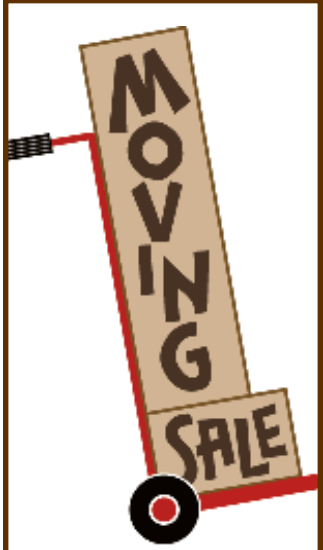
- professional cowboy assoc. (abbr.)
- Granbury's county
- TXism: "pay ___ never mind"
- this k.d. & TX Roy Orbison won a "Crying" Grammy
- Texans might have this retirement acct.
- TX George W. to Laura
- San Antonio street: "Gomer ___"
- TXism: "if it ain't true, there ain't ___ in Texas"
- this Liam starred with TX Martin in "Leap of Faith" (init.)
- Dallas public transportation co. (abbr.)
- TX Wiley Post airplane: Winnie ___
- in Collin County on highway 289
- TXism: "fast enough to catch ___"
- he danced with TX Ginger (init.)
- where Texas kids don't get to play much (2 wds.)
- lion sound
- DeNiro action thriller film (1998)
- TXism: "cautious as a ___ a big bone"
- cattle fat
- 5/3/91 was the date of the final one for "Dallas"

DOWN

- TXism: "___ two-steps to his own beat"
- Gov. ___ Lanham (1902-06)
- TXism: "got ___" (inclined)
- to make excited
- TXism: "___ his hide"
- TX Debbie Reynolds 1952 musical: "Singin' ___ the Rain"
- milk farm
- TX George H.W. chose this Justice Thomas
- TX Kenny sang "Through the ___"
- bro's sib
- "bear," in Mexico
- TXism: "___ pusher" (writer)
- Dimmit County namesake
- TX Howard Hughes, Sr. invented drilling ___ cone bit
- 39th governor, John
- TXism: "if he's ___ he'll bark"
- TX Willis: "Ah ___ take it away Leon"
- TXism: "a hard dog to keep ___ porch"
- fly high
- LBJ & "Lady ___"
- religious tables
- dir. to Mineola from Buna (abbr.)
- LBJ's party (abbr.)
- TXism: "he's a frisky fiddler"
- famous Galveston pirate Jean
- Mc___, TX
- TX Roddenberry genre: sci-___
- hospital nurses (abbr.)
- "oh, woe ___"
- what the grumpy dog might do to the pesky kid? (2 wds.)
- TX Wraylon's "Are ___ Hank Done It This Way"
- full of information
- TX Joe ___ Baker
- unusual
- Rusk Co. seat
- TX Roy Orbison's "___ the Lonely"
- converts hides into leather
- with "cup," an inhalation spasm
- Greek fable teller
- TXism: "___ a little cane"

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Holiday Gift Guide 2022



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Experiential gifts for kids

The popularity of experiential gifts is undeniable. In its 2021 Winter Holiday Shopping Report, the market research firm Mintel revealed that nearly half of individuals surveyed for the report felt that experiential gifts are superior to tangible items. Such preferences are something holiday shoppers can keep in mind as they pursue the perfect gift for their loved ones.

Experiential gifts are often associated with adults and their bucket lists, but kids have much to gain from being gifted experiences as well. In addition to the lasting memories inspired by experiential gifts, such offerings also get kids up and out of the house. Parents recognize that's not always so easy in the digital age.

Though children likely don't have a bucket list that can make it easy for holiday shoppers to find the perfect experiential gift, the following are a number of experiences that kids of all ages can enjoy.

- A day at the zoo
- A trip to a trampoline park or bouncy house facility
- Tickets to a sporting event, concert or live show
- Music lessons
- A paint and sip (juice) event with one or both parents
- Cooking lessons
- A day at a nearby national park
- A camping trip
- Horseback riding lessons
- A day at a nearby amusement park
- A day at a local arcade

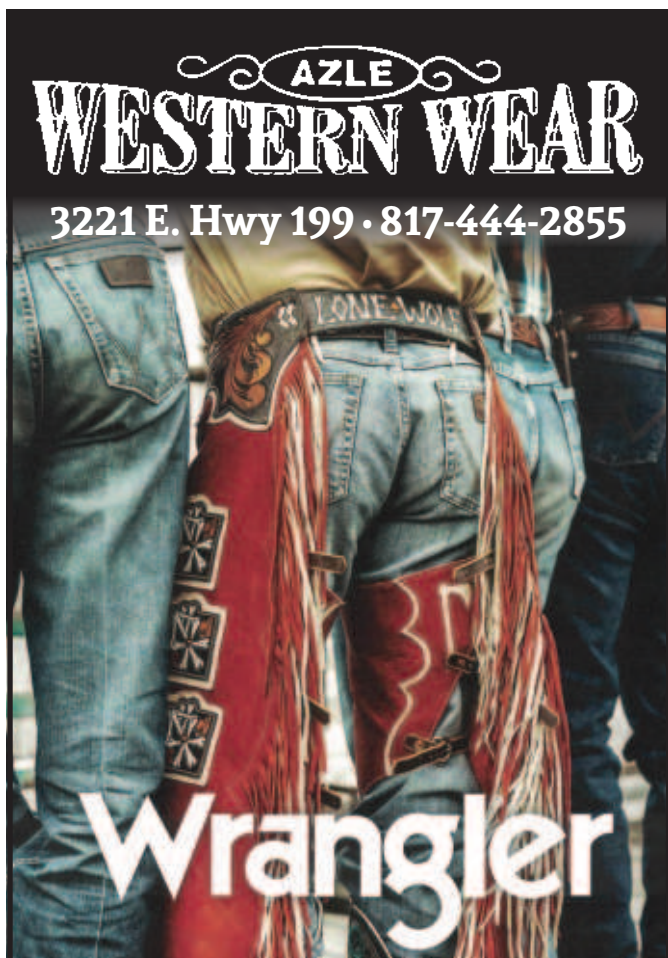
- A day at a local museum with interactive exhibits
- A helicopter ride
- Art lessons
- A day on the ski slopes
- A day on the beach
- Gymnastics lessons/classes
- A day at the local bowling alley with friends
- Ice skating lessons
- A round of mini golf
- Jewelry-making lessons/classes
- A fishing trip on a nearby body of water

There's no shortage of experiences that can benefit children's lives. That's something holiday shoppers can keep in mind as they shop for the perfect gifts for youngsters on their shopping list this December.



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Instead of material gifts, try tickets to the zoo.



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Holiday cookies the whole family will love

STAFF WRITER

Many people enjoy baking come the holiday season, and perhaps no dish is more synonymous with holiday baking than cookies. Children leave cookies out for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve, while adults may indulge and enjoy an extra cookie or two at family gatherings or holiday office parties.

Cookies come in all shapes and sizes, so bakers have an array of options at their disposal when planning their holiday menus. Chocolate chip cookies may be among the most popular types of cookies, and bakers who want to capitalize on that popularity while giving loved ones something a little different may want to try the following recipe for 'Double Chocolate Chip Cookies' from Maxine Clark's 'Chocolate: Deliciously Indulgent Recipes for Chocolate Lovers' (Ryland, Peters & Small).

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Using an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugars together until pale and fluffy. Beat in the egg and vanilla essence.

Sift the flour with the cocoa

and salt in a small bowl. Fold into the egg mixture with the chocolate chips.

Place 4 heaping table-spoonsfuls of the mixture on the prepared baking sheet, spacing them well apart. Press down and spread out to about ¼-inch thick with the back of a wet spoon or with

dampened fingers (you may like to scatter some more chocolate chips over the top). Bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheet for 1 minute, then transfer to a wire rack. When cool, store in an airtight container. Repeat with the remaining mixture.

DOUBLE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Makes about 12 large cookies

5 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

5 tablespoons granulated sugar

5 tablespoons light brown sugar, sifted

1 large egg, beaten

½ teaspoon pure vanilla essence or chocolate extract (see note)

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons self-rising flour

3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa

¼ teaspoon salt

2/3 cup (or more) dark and white (or milk) chocolate chips (or roughly chopped chocolate)

A heavy, nonstick baking sheet

Tips to prepare to host holiday guests

They're back! Family, friends and acquaintances are once again taking up residence on cots and fold-out sofas across the country as loved ones gather to celebrate the holiday season. That's welcome news nearly three years after a pandemic first restricted such gatherings. But hosts must ask themselves: Am I ready to host house guests?

Travel is a big component of the holiday season. According to a 2021 survey by The Vacationer, a travel tip and vacation guide, nearly 63 percent of Americans age 18 or older planned to travel for at least one holiday in 2021, with most traveling in December. That marked a 37 percent increase in travel from a year prior. Holiday travel for 2022 may be even higher as families adapt to life during the pandemic.

As individuals get ready to host holiday guests, here are some strategies to maximize space and make guests feel comfortable.

- Discuss plans in advance.

Every traveler is different. Some people thrive on making lists and following itineraries. Others fly by the seat of their pants. It's reasonable to ask potential house guests how they envision their visit, including if they plan to stay long and if it will include sleeping over. This way you can make accommodations accordingly, particularly if guests request to borrow a vehicle or want to see the sights.

- Create some extra privacy. While some homes are equipped to handle guests comfortably, smaller homes may not be equipped with such luxuries. Folding screens can be used to create a barrier and add some privacy in open spaces where guests will be staying.

- Stash away travel samples. Travel-sized soaps, shampoos and lotions can make guests feel more welcome. Stock up at the grocery store or pharmacy and leave them in the room where guests will be staying.
- Stock up on new linens.

Treat guests to fresh fluffy towels and new bed linens, especially if it's been awhile since you have restocked these items.

- Ask about food preferences. Your guests may not want to munch on kale chips and tofu hot dogs apart from the holiday meal. Don't push your food restrictions on others. Ask guests what they typically eat and then fill the pantry and refrigerator with some of the items they mention. When guests need snacks, they'll have familiar foods on hand.

- Be mindful of bedtimes. Consider guests' preferences about bedtimes. While you may be a night owl, some guests may hit the hay much earlier, particularly older relatives or those with young children. If need be, make an effort to be quiet when kids or early birds are staying over.

Hosting for the holidays requires a little creativity and flexibility. All that effort is well worth it when loved ones have a good time during their stay.



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Gifts for people who love the great outdoors

Certain people feel right at home in the great outdoors. With the sun on their faces and the wind in their hair, rock scramblers and kayaking buffs simply can't get enough of being outside in the elements.

Outdoor enthusiasts need reliable gear to make their experiences that much more enjoyable. Brandon Gaille Small Business & Marketing Advice reports that \$230.6 billion was spent worldwide on sportswear and outdoor apparel in 2021. However, there's always room to improve on adventures large and small, and holiday shoppers can keep these items in mind as they look for items for their favorite nature lover this season.

- Plasma lighter: A plasma lighter can start fires in conditions that aren't conducive to other fire-starting measures. Plasma lighters are water- and wind-resistant and work in nearly all weather conditions. Saberlight even makes a rechargeable option with USB charging cable.

- Lantern: Outside magazine recently named the BioLite AlpenGlow 250 as its new favorite road trip item. It can be used in a variety of settings, including inside a tent or at a hunting cabin, and produces customizable illumination.

- Backpack cooler: Yeti is known as a leader in coolers, and the Yeti Hopper Backflip Soft Cooler makes carrying food and beverages



even more convenient. This product is a backpack and a cooler, so it's a hands-free and portable option when out in nature.

- Hiking socks: Keeping feet cool and comfortable is essential on hiking trips. Injinji socks are made from CoolMax fibers that help provide a blister-free wilderness experience designed to minimize friction.

- Waterproof backpack: Whether a loved one spends time in or near the water or just wants to safeguard his or her belongings in inclement weather, a waterproof backpack is the ideal outdoor gift. It's easy to clean and keeps items inside dry. IDRYBAG Waterproof Backpack is one to consider.

- Lightweight sleeping bag: Maybe someone's sleep-

ing gear needs an overhaul? Enlightened Equipment offers an 850-fill, zero-degree sleeping bag that is warm, but only weighs 1.5 pounds. That helps free up space and lessens hikers' loads when carrying gear on the trail.

- Power bank/solar charger: Many people can't live without their devices, even when out in the great outdoors. Since you can't plug a phone into a tree, a portable solar charger and power bank is key. The BioLite SolarPanel 5+ comes with its own built-in battery, so a person can capture the sun's rays during the day and save some power reserves for charging after sunset.

These are just a few of the innovative items that can appeal to outdoor enthusiasts on your holiday shopping list.

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Holiday gift ideas from Woodcraft for work areas, project skills and family fun

Give family and friends who are makers holiday gifts to bring comfort and efficiency to their work areas, provide new project challenges and add some family fun for good measure. Visit your local Woodcraft store, check the Woodcraft catalog or go online at woodcraft.com to learn more about the products described here plus thousands more.

WORK IN COMFORT AND SAFETY

Bring light to any work area with the NEBO Bright 6000 Lumen LED Light. No batteries, rewiring or charging required for this powerful, energy efficient light that fits into any standard household light socket. Adjustable LED panels can be tilted 90° for light direction.

The Kreg Mobile Project Center KWS 1000 is a workbench, sawhorse, assembly table, and clamping station all in one - a versatile work space for DIY, repair and woodworking projects. It is easy to set up and folds to 6½" thick for storage.

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WOODBURN A GIFT AND MORE

Woodburning, also called pyrography, involves burning a pattern into wood or other material such as leather.

Patterns may then be colored or otherwise embellished. Woodburning is an easy way to add your personal touch to gifts and ornaments. Learn how to make ornaments in this Woodcraft blog: <https://bit.ly/woodburnornaments>.

The Wall Lenk 10-in-1 30 Watt Woodburning Tool and Accessories make it easy to begin woodburning and can also be used for soldering, leather craft, stencil, and Styrofoam cutting.

Learn the basic woodburning concepts and tips and techniques to inspire your creativity in Learn to Burn by award-winning artist and pyrographer Simon Easton.

HANDY HELPERS FOR FINE FINISHING

Gift your favorite finisher with the Earlex Super Finish Max Sprayer that has its 450-watt motor built into the sprayer to create a self-contained HVLP system. It is ideal for custom-made furniture, cabinets, trim, spindles, craft projects, and even fences and walls. It works with oil- and water-based finishes. To learn more about this sprayer, read the blog or watch this video: <https://bit.ly/SuperFinishMax>.

To help reduce overspray, Wagner Spraytech Spray Shelters are ideal. Small shelter (2½' x 3' x 3¼') and medium shelter (4'7" x 4'7" x 5'6") each have a built-in floor. Large shelter (6' x 9' x 5.5') has no floor so use of a drop cloth underneath is recommended.

The lightweight Elipse Respirator OV/P100, available in two sizes, has an active carbon filter that makes it the perfect respirator for

finishers. It is approved for paint vapors up to 5,000 parts per million, solvents, and Cyclohexene. It also offers protection against other dangerous fumes.

For finishing by hand, Redtree Onyx White China Bristle Brushes work for solvent-based coatings, including enamels, varnishes, urethanes, lacquers, and shellac. Redtree Brush Matey Synthetic Bristle Brushes work for water-based coatings.

Author Teri Masaschi shows how to choose, use and apply the perfect finish in Foolproof Wood Finishing, Revised Edition. Readers learn step-by-step as they work their way through 51 proven and easy-to-follow finishing exercises.

FUN FAMILY ASSEMBLY PROJECTS

SawDust Bros. Bird Feeder and Birdhouse Kits are perfect family projects to encourage birds to move into the neighborhood. Kits include precut pieces, Cedar shakes for the roof, window trim, detailed instructions, fasteners needed to complete the birdhouse or feeder, and in some cases, Plexiglas. Paint or decorate to suit any style.

PlaySTEAM Rubberband Aeroplane Science Planes Biplane and the High Wing Plane, Low Wing Plane and Seaplanes are educational kits that provide the perfect outdoor family project. Children age 14 and older will learn about aeronautics and physics as they assemble and fly a plane using the included booklet.

For those who like knives, the Camillus Titanium Fulgur



Liner Lock Folder Blade Kit is easy to make. Blade is made of cutlery grade stainless steel. Choose wood or man-made knife scales (sold separately) to shape, mount and finish a custom handle.

Visit your local Woodcraft store or woodcraft.com for more gift ideas and products.

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Jennifer Hudman M.D., P.A.

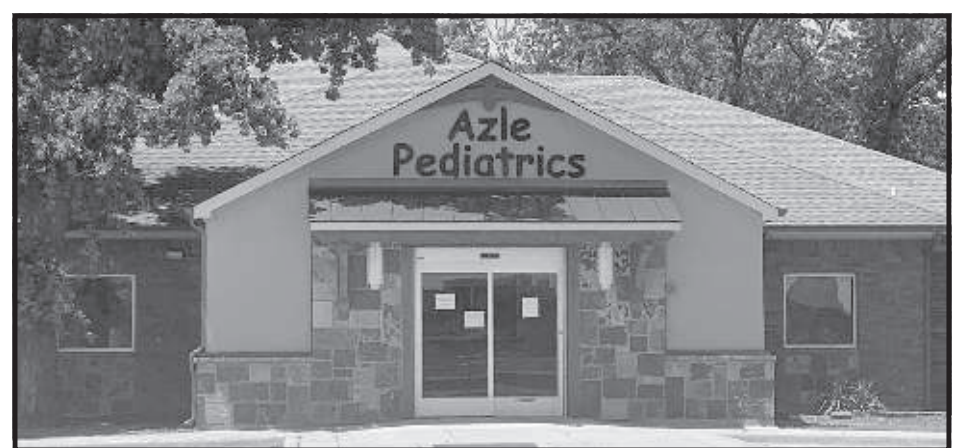
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Picture it merry and then fill it in - do a great job and you could win!

CONTEST RULES

1. Contest open to children ages 2-11.
2. 1st - 3rd prize winners will be awarded in three age groups, 2-4 yrs., 5-7 yrs. and 8-11 yrs.
3. Only newspaper coloring sheet will be eligible for judging. No color copies.
4. All entries must be postmarked or delivered by noon to Azle Pediatrics, 604 S.E. Parkway, Azle, Texas 76020 on Friday, Dec. 14, 2022
5. All entries become property of Azle Pediatrics.
6. Entries will be judged on neatness, use of color, creativity and overall appearance.

Entries must be received by Friday, Dec. 14, 2022

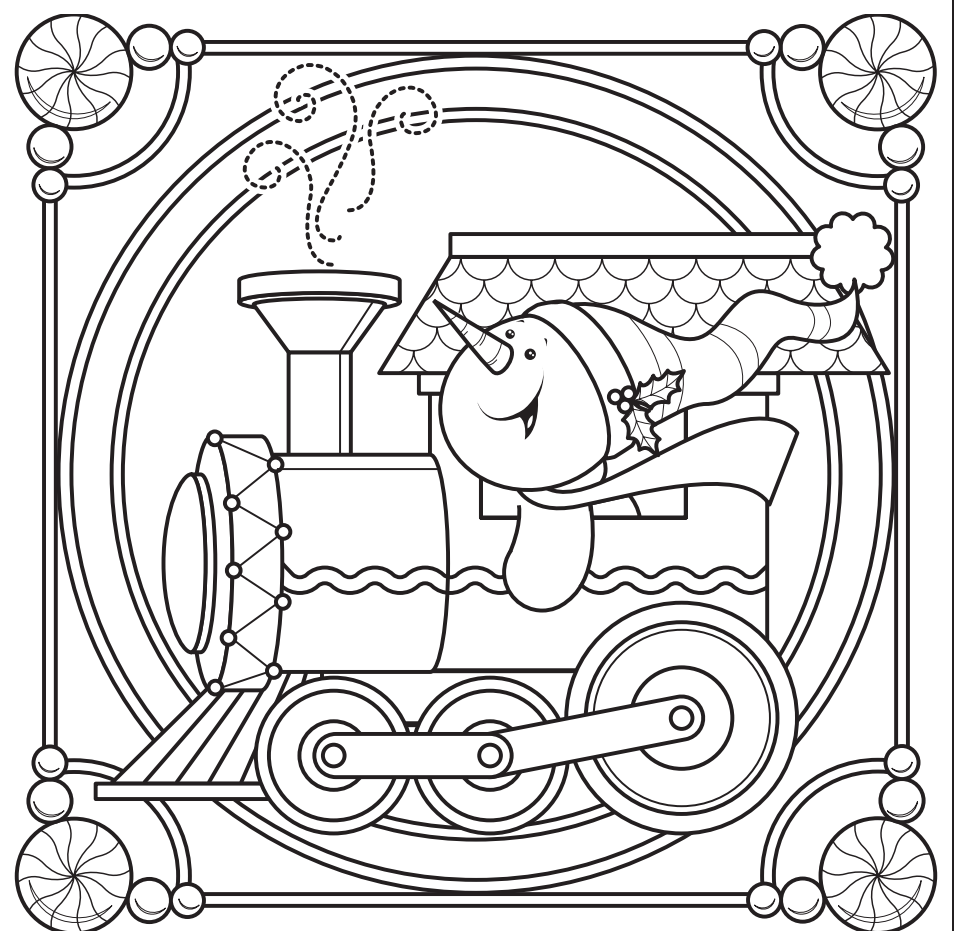
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How to navigate potential supply shortages this holiday season

The COVID-19 pandemic might not be over, but for much of the world, its darkest days are well in the rear-view mirror. Despite that progress, a few lingering non-medical issues remain, including supply shortages.

Consumers across the globe have been forced to contend with supply shortages since the early days of the pandemic, and that same issue could cause problems this holiday season. Holiday shoppers can consider these tips as they try to navigate their way through another holiday season that could be affected by global supply chain issues.

- **Shop local.** By mid-spring 2022, the National Retail Federation indicated that congestion at ports on the west coast of the United States had lessened significantly. But the NRF noted that the same could not be said for ports on the east coast. Many big box retailers rely on imports to fill their shelves, and that could make it hard for such sellers to deliver

items in time for the holiday season. Shopping local and buying items directly off the shelf can ensure no one is given an IOU this holiday season.

- **Give gift cards.** If shipping estimates make it unlikely that gifts will arrive on time for the holiday season, pivot to gift cards. Put the amount of money you would have spent on the item on the card instead. For example, if an e-reader costs \$150, give a \$150 gift card in its place.

- **Ship directly to recipients.** It might not offer the same heartwarming charm as handing a loved one a gift in person, but shipping gifts directly to their recipients increases the likelihood that the person will receive the gift by Chanukah or Christmas morning. Many online retailers now offer wrapping at additional cost, and shoppers can splurge and have directly shipped gifts wrapped to add a more traditional feel to gift-giving.

- **Give homemade gifts.** Homemade gifts, whether it's



Not only are goods being held up by labor shortages, but increased bad weather means a container ship can capsize before it reaches its destination, ruining shipments for millions of customers.

baked goods or crafts, don't need to be shipped, so there's no way such items will spend the holiday season sitting on a ship in a congested port. If

you choose to make crafts, decide early what you want create so you can secure all of the necessary supplies in plenty of time to deliver the

items during Chanukah or on Christmas morning.

Supply shortages could make for a tricky holiday season again this year. Planning

ahead for such shortages can ensure gifts make it into the hands of loved ones without delay.

REINDEER FOOD

Servings: 24

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (20 ounce) package miniature pretzels
- 1 (17.5 ounce) package crispy corn cereal squares (such as Corn Chex®)
- 1 (16 ounce) jar salted dry-roasted peanuts
- 1 (14 ounce) package candy-coated milk chocolate pieces (such as M&M's®)
- 24 ounces white chocolate, chopped

DIRECTIONS

- Cover a large area of counter space with waxed paper and tape it down.
- Mix pretzels, corn cereal, peanuts, and candy-coated milk chocolate pieces together in a large bowl.
- Melt white chocolate in the top of a double boiler over simmering water, stirring frequently and scraping down the sides with a rubber spatula to avoid scorching.
- Pour melted white chocolate over pretzel mixture; stir to evenly coat. Quickly transfer mixture to the prepared waxed paper and spread in a thin layer; let cool completely, at least 30 minutes.
- Break into pieces and store in an airtight container.



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Gift ideas for the family do-it-yourselfer

Home improvement projects enable homeowners to transform their homes into their ideal living spaces. According to iProperty Management, most homeowners in the United States spent between \$5,000 and \$10,000 improving their homes in 2018. And it doesn't stop there, as home improvement sales are projected to reach \$465 billion in 2022.

Various renovation projects are best left to the professionals. However, many homeowners are eager to get their own hands dirty with various projects, large and small. Having the right tools and gear on hand can make projects go all the more smoothly. Holiday shoppers can consider these ideas as they seek to ensure DIYers have all they need to get the job done.

Painting time-savers: Painting requires some basic essentials, from paint trays to rollers to brushes. Projects can be made more efficient with innovative products that help save time and reduce mess. One such item is a paint brush cover, which snaps over wet paintbrushes between coats so they won't dry out or require rinsing. Brushes that cut in easily and others with flexible handles for getting in tight places also make painting projects that much easier.

Cordless drill: A mechanical drill makes easy work of assembly projects and general renovations that require screws as fasteners. A cordless rechargeable drill will be easy to maneuver when handling projects away from outlets. Going cord-free also reduces the risk of trips and

falls on errant cords.

- Lawn care subscription service:** Home improvements extend to the exterior. In addition to mowers, trimmers and garden shears, DIYers may benefit from subscription products that improve on property care. These formulations are customized to the specific needs of homeowners' lawn or landscaping greenery and are shipped right to their door.

- Rotary tool kit:** This is one of the most versatile tools homeowners can have on hand. A rotary tool can engrave, grind, sharpen, polish, cut, carve, and more depending on the accessory attachment.

- Multi-use ladder:** A ladder is a necessity for various projects inside and outside the home. One that can transform into an A-frame, scaffold system, staircase ladder and other configurations helps ensure maximum safe reach for the job at hand.

- Composter:** Whether you use an indoor kitchen composter or one designed for outdoor use, being able to generate one's own compost is great for avid gardeners. Compost, often called "black gold," is made from kitchen scraps, leaves and other items that break down into a rich fertilizer.

- Tool box/tool organizer:** Tool storage is a market all its own. It runs the gamut from rolling metal storage containers to plastic or metal boxes to canvas bags to plastic molded curated kits. Tool organizer kits also come at various price points, so it's easy for shoppers to choose one that fits their budgets.


- Organizing units:**





Home improvement projects enable homeowners to transform their homes into their ideal living spaces.

Organizing units are available in prefabricated kits that are easily assembled when needed, as well as custom-made products that are installed by a professional. They may be an option for a handy person looking to organize tools and other items for home repairs. Do-it-yourselfers can be even more handy with tools geared toward their interests and repair needs.

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Great gifts for school-aged children



These gift ideas can appeal to school-aged youngsters at a time in their lives when their curiosity is always piqued.

Successful shopping for adults on a holiday list often involves identifying a loved one's favorite hobby and then finding something that makes that hobby even more enjoyable. For example, a new e-reader can be just what the family bookworm needs to make reading even more immersive.

School-aged children may not be so simple to shop for, as their interests are always evolving and they tend to outgrow toys as quickly as their growing bodies outgrow their clothes. No two kids are the same, but these gift ideas can appeal to school-aged youngsters at a time in their lives when their curiosity is always piqued.

STEM gifts: Parents know that the term ÖSTEMÓ is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. These academic disciplines have gained heightened importance over the last couple of decades, and many toy manufacturers now make products that reinforce STEM lessons kids learn in the classroom in a fun way.

STEM-based toys are available for kids of all ages, including children who are still in diapers.

Nature-based gifts: Many parents do everything they can to reduce the amount of time their kids spend looking at screens, which is a tall order in the digital era. But various manufacturers produce toys designed to help kids be more physically active in the great outdoors. From age-appropriate binoculars that encourage kids to explore natural settings to birdhouses and fairy gardens kids can build and paint in their favorite colors, shoppers can choose from a host of nature-based gifts that encourage kids to get away from their screens and enjoy the great outdoors.

Board games: Board games remain a wonderful way for kids to learn and have fun doing it. Board games are made for kids of all ages, and they're not just fun, but also beneficial to early childhood development. For example, clinical psychologist Beatrice Tauber Prior, Psy.D. noted to the children's book publisher

and distributor Scholastic that board games requiring strategy help the frontal lobes of the brain develop. Those lobes are responsible for planning, organizing and decision-making. Board games also provide opportunities for families to spend quality time together free from distractions.

Cookbooks: Cookbooks are another great gift for school-aged youngsters, who can learn a lot from pitching in at dinnertime. Children who cook with their parents can learn valuable lessons about nutrition and measuring ingredients can reinforce lessons learned in the classroom. Shoppers can choose from any number of cookbooks designed for kids, and even children as young as two can pitch in when baking cookies or preparing family meals.

Shopping for school-aged children during the holiday season can be made easier with some suggestions that can reinforce classroom lessons while keeping the focus on fun.



Safety first when buying toys for children this holiday season

December is a special time of year for children, millions of whom await the arrival of Santa Claus and the bounty of toys he delivers each year. When buying holiday gifts for youngsters, adults must consider safety. According to the Alliance for Children and Families, approximately 217,000 children are treated at hospital emergency rooms for toy-related injuries each year. Holiday shoppers are urged to stick to age-related recommendations on product packaging and avoid toys that do not contain the ATSM (American Society for Testing and Materials) label.



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Avoid these 4 charity scams

Charitable giving grew in 2021. According to Blackbaud Institute, a social good innovator, giving not only increased after COVID-19, but actually rebounded more than it had in a decade – increasing in the United States by 9 percent overall.

Annual private philanthropy as a percentage of GDP is about 1.44 percent in the United States. Philanthropy Roundtable reports that rate in Canada is 0.77 percent.

People tend to give the most to charity at the end of the year. While legitimate organizations may step up their solicitation of donations at this time, scammers also realize the months of November and December is prime giving season. So many scammers increase their deceptive tactics to cheat unsuspecting individuals at this time of year. Here are four common charity scams that every prospective donor should be

aware of.

1. Impersonating another charity

Most philanthropic groups have an online presence in some shape or form. Scammers will replicate the look of the charitable group's website or social media account, or may contact you through email or text to solicit funds. Thinking it is a legitimate charity, you may follow a link to enter donation information.

To avoid this scam, do not click on any links. Rather, enter the exact email address of a charity, if you know it, or use a trusted resource like Charity Navigator for contact information. If you're still leery about online transactions, call the charity and ask to be sent a donation statement in the mail, which you should be able to mail back postage-paid.

2. The hard sell

A legitimate charity is happy to welcome a donation any

time you're able to give it. A scam operation may employ a hard sell or a deadline by which the donation must be made. In addition, a fraudulent 'charity' might ask for payment only by cash, gift card or wire transfer (because it is difficult to trace), and this should raise a red flag that something is amiss.

3. A thank-you for your donation

AARP warns that some scammers will send you a thank-you for a donation that you supposedly already made to entice you to give again. This is designed to lower your inhibitions about a soliciting charity. It's always a good idea to keep records of charitable giving, especially for tax-related reporting, so you can easily verify if you gave to a group in the past.

4. Cryptocurrency wallet
As methods of making payments change, scam groups often ride the wave. The Federal Trade Commission



learned that when the government of Ukraine announced it would be accepting donations to support their efforts via a cryptocurrency wallet, scammers started getting in on the action. But instead of

the funds getting sent to the government's wallet, the donations headed to a private wallet.

Always conduct an online search of the wallet address to confirm that money is be-

ing sent to the right place. Typically you can't reverse cryptocurrency payments, so due diligence is required.

Individuals need to be extra cautious with charitable giving to avoid common scams.



Gifts to rev auto lovers' engines

Since they first became widely available in the early 20th century, cars have inspired no small number of passionate devotees. Some people simply can't resist the thrills of the open road, while others love driving because of the sense of independence it provides. Regardless of what inspires their passions, come the holiday season, auto enthusiasts undoubtedly would be excited to unwrap these auto-related gifts.

· Car wash kit: It's one thing to drive, and another thing entirely to drive a car that looks like it's fresh off the dealership lot. Car wash kits come in various sizes,

so they're ideal for holiday shoppers working with various budgets. Kits may include wet wax, wheel gel, glass cleaner, a short handle brush, and microfiber towels, among other supplies. Each accessory within the kit can make cars or trucks shine and look as good as new.

· Mechanics' tool kit: Many car lovers enjoy working on their vehicles almost as much as they love driving them. That makes a mechanic's tool kit a must-have for auto enthusiasts. Like car wash kits, mechanics' kits are ideal gifts because they can suit shoppers working with various budgets. Extensive

kits include all the tools car lovers need, from ratchets to extension bars to sockets and more, to spend a fun day working in the garage.

· Tire inflator: All those miles on the open road is bound to catch up with tires over time, and a portable tire inflator can ensure tires are always properly inflated. Cordless varieties are popular, but so are options that can be plugged into vehicle lighters. Either way, this is a must-have item for anyone who puts a lot of miles on their vehicle.

· Autocross lesson: Of course, gifts for auto lovers needn't be restricted to help-

ing them take care of their own cars. Autocross lessons can teach drivers the finer points of timed competitions while enabling them to get behind the wheel of an exotic car they've dreamed of driving. Autocross schools typically have classes for drivers with experience as well as novices, making this a fun gift for anyone who wants to take the thrill of driving to the next level.

There's no shortage of gift ideas to please the auto enthusiast on your holiday shopping list this year. There's something for everyone who loves being behind the wheel.



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