

# HOMEFRONT

A Fort Hood Herald  
publication  
December 27, 2017



**Santa visits Fort Hood** P8-9 | **National Night Out awards** P10

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NEWS

[ INSIDE THIS ISSUE ]

<b>On the Homefront:</b> A funny Christmas pickle	Page 3
<b>On the Homefront:</b> The importance of traditions	Page 4
<b>Financial Fitness:</b> How to get a credit card	Page 5
<b>On the Homefront:</b> Toy fundraiser	Page 7
<b>On the Homefront:</b> Santa visits Fort Hood	Page 8-9
<b>On the Homefront:</b> National Night Out awards	Page 10
<b>What's Happening:</b> Upcoming area events	Page 11
<b>What to Watch:</b> 'Phantom Thread' a masterpiece	Page 12
<b>Dining In:</b> Koshary with melted butter	Page 14
<b>Dining In:</b> Tender, 4-minute steak	Page 15

**Vol. 10, Issue 12 | December 27, 2017**

**Homefront is a Fort Hood Herald publication.**

**On the cover:** Santa Claus waves from a Bradley Fighting Vehicle after travelling from the North Pole to visit with soldiers and families of the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment at the Ironhorse Dining Facility on Fort Hood on Dec. 16. | Photo by David A. Bryant.

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# A Christmas pickle (ornament)

BY KAYLA BOUCHARD  
FORT HOOD HERALD

My spouse, stepson and I just celebrated our first Christmas together at last. Four years ago, it felt like I'd never be able to see that dream come true. Now it has come and gone in a whirlwind of hugs, kisses, cooking, baking, board games, last-minute shopping trips and giving. Our favorite place to commune and relax after a long day was right under the Christmas tree, inhaling the sweet, peppery scent of its pine needles and admiring the convergence of our lives upon each branch.

It was a sight I'd often get lost in: to see our own special ornaments twirling slowly next to one another, surrounded by the traditional round baubles that bedazzled the stout ever-green limbs. My husband unearthed boxes of his old ornaments: vintage Mickeys and Minnies, a couple of tiny John Deere tractors, and, my personal favorite, stacks of little framed baby photos. My stepson has been showing off his origami skills, making paper swans, ninja stars and flowers in addition to his prized set of mini Santas.

As for me, I took from the pocket of my suitcase that I had brought down back in the summer a glass pickle dusted in coarse green glitter. After hanging it on the most well-lit branch I could find, I was met with a couple pairs of raised eyebrows.

"I didn't know you were such a fan of pickles," my husband had chuckled.

Well, yes, I am fond of pickles, but the ornament had a much deeper history.

Every year when I was young, my family drove to my aunt and uncle's house for Christmas Eve. No matter how much hot chocolate I gulped, no matter how many Christmas songs were looping around my little mind, it wasn't Christmas until we set foot into my aunt and uncle's house. If anyone knew how to Christmas, it was them. They had three fully-decked



**A WAY  
WITH WORDS**  
Kayla Bouchard

out Christmas trees (that I knew of), a large open living room to catch up with relatives while Bing Crosby crooned "Happy Holidays," and endless crystal

bowls of holiday snacks, conveniently placed next to matching bowls of potpourri which my dad mistakenly crunched on instead of the innocent handful of popcorn he was going for. My aunt and uncle had mischief and merry-making down to a science. On the Christmas tree in the living room, there hung an ornament I was always fascinated with: a bright green, lacquered pickle. It always looked so out of place amongst the nutcrackers, reindeer and snowmen up on the tree, but it had a special job. When all the guests had arrived, my aunt sent the children into the kitchen to cover their eyes. Then, she would call us back in and the pickle had disappeared. The lucky kid that found the pickle would get to open their first and biggest present of the night and would be promised a year of good fortune.

Last Christmas marked an end for me since I was moving, so I had some bittersweet feelings about Christmas. After answering my Christmas trivia question correctly, my aunt placed a small square box in my hands and smiled her warm smile.

I lifted the lid and nestled inside a bed of wrapping paper was a new pickle.

"It's yours," my aunt said. "So you can carry the tradition."

It was such a beautiful thing, that they had known all these years how special the pickle made Christmas, and now to be able to share that bit of Christmas with my husband and stepson was truly magical. May you relish a dill-ightful holiday and new year with your family and loved ones!

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# Holiday traditions help the family grow together

The last year 23 years in December, I rounded up my baking supplies of flour, sugar, brown sugar, powered sugar and butter and other ingredients, dusted off my baking recipes books — including my binder full of magazine and newspaper cutouts of random recipes — pulled out my Kitchen Aid mixer and heat up the oven. For four days, three hours each day, I created delicious concoctions to be decorated, placed in individual liners and put into tins, gift boxes, trays and bags and give them as gifts to friends, family and co workers.

I bake the same five types of the cookies and one new recipe each year. The same cookies always tasted better than the year before. Perhaps, I'm evolving into more experience and the purpose has become more meaningful.

This tradition started with my grandmother in 1994. Before the tradition inadvertently began, I was in college as a lost 20 year old, with no direction in life. I hit a tough spot with my parents and a serious boyfriend at that time. My grandmother suggested that I stay with her for a few weeks to get away from it all. She said she would love the company. My grandmother was widowed, living alone in a large, old farmhouse. That few weeks turned into one year, then three years, to eight years and ended up staying 13 years!

It wasn't just the baking that started this tradition. Those years that I stayed with my grandmother formed an unpredictable, yet incredible, bond between us. We worked so well with each other with little direction. Towards the end of the 13 years of our adventures together, I spent more time with her than my friends!

Our garden: Every spring, summer and fall, we had our usual process of planting, fertilizing, weeding, tilling and winterizing our garden. After we tended the garden, we catered to our lilies, hostas, hydrangeas, holly



**SAVE A LOT  
MOM**

Jennise Colin-Ventura

hawks and daisies around our home. After we spent hours in the sun hovering over our growing handiwork, we celebrated with an ice cold sun tea on the L-shaped porch, relaxing on the antique metal rocking chairs, complimenting our lush landscaping and gardening abilities and how we should be in the "Better Homes & Garden" magazine. Before I moved in with my grandmother, I did not have an ounce of a green thumb in my body.

Doctors' appointments: My grandmother would write her appointments on this calendar in the kitchen. I would look at it and start worrying about her driving, so I offer to drive her to her appointments. Then it led to me working my schedule around her appointments so I would have the day off or work a different shift to accommodate her. Eventually, we started running errands afterwards, gradually adding lunch dates after them.

Friends: My grandmother had a lot of friends. She was known within the community; from church, social clubs such as Friendship Circle and Club 47 and also at the hospital, where she volunteered. She would connect with a quick phone call, prepare meals for the shut-ins (even cookies) and visit when they were lonely. I got to be part of those conversations when they say, "When I was your age...." I learned a lot about the value of friendships. Some of her friends had their stories on the repeat button. Like the time Sally was walking down her steps to catch her ride that was waiting in her driveway and her way-to-big underwear slipped off down to her ankles and three ladies in the car saw what was happening and they sat there

frozen because they were laughing so hard. Poor Sally was trying to be graceful about it. Instead, she kicked them off and they flew into her flower beds and she headed into the car and acted like nothing happened. Yep, that granny went to the club with no underwear on!

Before I moved in with my grandmother, I thought old people were boring and quiet.

In 2007, I got married. My husband and I bought a house five miles from my grandmother. The hardest moment was leaving my grandmother to be alone again. Even though I wasn't living with her, a lot of things we did together never changed.

The toughest time was when my husband, who was in the military, got orders to Fort Hood. Even though I was excited about moving out of a small town, I panicked that I wasn't going to be able to see her at all. I

spent my last night in town at her home instead of my house. That was in 2012.

Fast forward six years later, my grandmother is 93 years old and doing well, now living in a nursing home. My older sister has taken over her care. My grandmother and I chat over the phone or by Skype and we bring up memories of what we did together and we talk about other people; who died, has cancer, sick with a flu or if they haven't had a bowel movement in a week. There's always a story about each person that we interacted with.

These traditions are more defined since my daughter is now a part of it and she has formed her own bond with her great grandma.

Traditions create who you are without realizing it; you become enriched more each year, just like baking.

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# Do I need a job to get a credit card?

BY MAURIE BACKMAN  
USAA

Whether you're a new college graduate or the victim of a recent layoff, you may be struggling to find a job. It happens to the best of us. But if you also happen to need a credit card, your lack of employment could pose a challenge.

Of course, technically speaking, you don't necessarily need a job in order to get approval for a credit card. There are other factors, such as your credit report and score, that go into the decision, and if you're strong in other areas, you may be able to overcome the fact that you're unemployed. On the other hand, having a job makes it easier to qualify for a credit card because it shows potential issuers that you have an actual income. In the absence of a job, you'll need to prove that you have the ability to make your credit card payments in other ways, and that could prove difficult.

## APPLYING FOR A CREDIT CARD WITHOUT A JOB

Why might your credit card issuers want you to have a job before approving you? It's simple: Those companies want to be reasonably assured that if you charge up a storm,

you'll have the means to pay off your balance eventually. Now if you have a job, it's pretty clear that you have money coming in on a regular basis. But if you're unemployed, the question of where your income will come from could become an issue.

Thankfully, your employment status isn't the only thing credit card companies look at when deciding whether you're approved. They also consider other potential sources of income, such as:

- Savings
- Investments
- Retirement plans
- Social Security benefits
- Pensions
- Alimony payments

In other words, if you don't have an actual job, but you have other clear ways of gaining access to money, then you stand a decent chance of getting approved for a credit card in your own name. Furthermore, if you're 21 or older, you're allowed to list income from your spouse or partner on your application, provided you have access to it, so even if you're not employed, that counts in your favor.

Another thing to keep in mind is that having a job does not in any way guarantee that you'll be approved for a credit card. Even if you

bring home a healthy paycheck, if your credit score is poor, you may be denied a credit card.

## GETTING A CREDIT CARD IF YOU'RE UNEMPLOYED

If you're currently without a job and in need of a credit card, there are several avenues you might explore. For one thing, you can ask a family member to cosign your application. If that person has excellent credit, it could be enough to get you approved. Just keep in mind that by cosigning your application, that person is also taking responsibility for paying your bills should you lack the ability to do so yourself, and that's not the sort of burden you want to place on a loved one.

Another option for gaining access to a credit card is to become an authorized user on somebody else's card. Under this type of arrangement, the original cardholder is still responsible for payments on the card, but it's a good way to build some credit for yourself and get a card in your name.

Finally, if you don't have a job but have some money in savings, you might look into getting a secured credit card. With a secured credit card, you'll need to come up with a certain sum of

money in order to get approved. That sum will then serve as your credit limit so that your lender is guaranteed repayment on whatever you charge. For example, if you get a secured credit card with a \$500 limit, you'll need to fork over \$500 up front. That way, if you charge \$500 but can't pay it off with incoming cash, your lender can simply tap your deposit to be made whole. While secured credit cards don't give you the same purchasing power as regular cards, they do offer a chance to build credit, which can also help you



COURTESY OF  
USAA  
A person applies for a job online.

get approved for cards in the future.

Though having a job isn't necessarily a prerequisite to getting a credit card, it certainly helps. Unless you have another income source, you may find that it's

best to wait until you're gainfully employed to start filling out credit card applications. This way, you'll be in a good position not only to get approved, but also to use your card responsibly.

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**DIGITAL AGENCY**

# This year, be a goal-digger: How to set financial goals for the new year

BY ALI GOLDSTEIN

USAA

The end of the year is a time to reflect — to listen to your most-played songs on Spotify, watch your Facebook year-in-review and purge the list of people you follow on Instagram — but it's also an ideal time to set financial goals for the year ahead.

While many New Year's goals involve money (for example, a "healthy eating" resolution can include eating out less, cooking more and spending less money overall on food), other kinds of goals are solely focused on financial readiness. These are the kinds of goals that will get you on the path to financial wellness and can lead to building wealth!

Matthew Angel, Advice Director of Personal Finance at USAA, reminds us that achieving goals starts by "breaking your goal down into its smallest components — like playing a video game. With a game, you don't start with the hardest puzzle. You start with the easiest, celebrate your win, and then move on to the next level."

Ready to set financial goals for the new year, but not sure where to start? In this two-part series, we'll first help you figure out how to create financial goals that hit the sweet spot between "pie in the sky" dreaming versus the kind of task you might find on a daily checklist. In part two, we'll explore how to set financial goals tailored to your age or stage in life.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD GOAL?

The best goals are SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based. It's a simple acronym to turn what might otherwise be vague goal-setting into an actionable plan with real results.

Here's a little more info on getting SMART:

Specific goals should be well-defined and focused so they not only address the what, but also the why. This is one of the most important

ways to set financial goals that can be broken down into clear next steps. For example, "Start a college tuition account for my eldest child" is more specific than "send my kids to college," because it's easier to see how the first goal can trigger a clear next step (visit a financial institution to start a college savings account) than the second.

When it comes to setting specific financial goals, don't just use your words: get visual! As Angel suggests, "Print out a picture of where you want to go or what you want to do, and put it on the refrigerator as a visual reminder of the goal you want to achieve." Plus, a high-traffic spot like the fridge will issue a constant reminder, keeping your goal top of mind and boosting motivation to help you stick to it.

Measurable goals are trackable goals, meaning they include metrics that will indicate how you will measure progress. And tracking your progress helps you feel more in control, which is especially important when you set financial goals, which can often feel intimidating. When setting financial goals, think about how you might measure progress, like: exactly how much money are you going to set aside each week, or month, to save for a future college fund, new home, or retirement? Think about it — achieving a goal without a measurable outcome is like tracking weight loss without a scale. The numbers simply won't add up!

Attainable goals are achievable. Set yourself up for success by creating motivation momentum through pinpointing small (but regular) milestones along the way toward a larger change. Modest successes can have a big impact on confidence, which can be the fuel you need to keep going, especially if your financial goals are long-term in nature. One example of an attainable goal? Eliminate or reduce one spending habit in January, then start contributing that amount to your 401k in February. Even if the

amount is not huge, the impact this has on developing new behavioral habits is definitely big and may help you challenge yourself to find another spending category to cut down in March to increase contributions in April.

Another way to set financial goals that are attainable is through accountability: communicate your goal to someone else. "If you have a spouse or significant other, it's so important that you share your goal with that person," says Angel. "And even if you're single, and it can be helpful to tell someone. Because one, it helps you stay honest; and two, it's someone you share financial responsibilities with, you're going to have to work together to achieve whatever your goal might be."

Relevant goals are based on the current conditions and realities of your life: the right here and right now. Goals that don't take into account the

factors that directly and indirectly impact your life today (like your current job, family situation and financial status) might require major lifestyle changes to even get started, which can impede your momentum and seriously derail your confidence.

Time-based goals have deadlines. If your goals are too open-ended, it's likely they can drag on indefinitely, especially if you're prone to procrastination. Of course, it's important to have flexibility (because life happens), but make sure when you set financial goals that you're giving yourself a specific period of time. That way, you can break up a time range into beginning, middle and end stages so you can schedule milestones to accomplish certain tasks, check in to make sure you're still on track, or if life throws you a serious curveball, deciding whether your goals should be revised or reworked altogether.

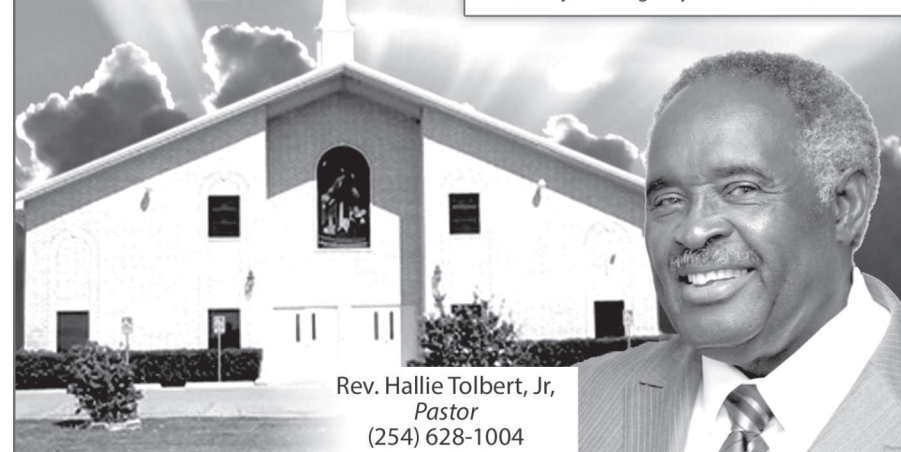
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TODD MARTIN | KISD

Members of the Craft Club at Patterson Middle School celebrate the Dec. 15 culmination of a large donation of toys to contribute to Camo Santa, benefiting military children. The club members made crafts, sold goods during lunch periods and purchased \$800 worth of toys for the effort.

## Students raise money to buy toys for military children

BY TODD MARTIN  
SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

**KILLEEN** — With a little creativity and a lot of compassion, a club at Patterson Middle School came up with a large collection of donated toys to make Christmas brighter for military children.

The Craft Club made handiworks like frames, lanyards and candy jars and sold the items to peers during lunch to raise money.

On Dec. 14, club members and parents and teachers went shopping with \$800 raised from the craft sale and donations to purchase toys for Camo Santa, which benefits Santa's Workshop on Fort Hood.

The craft sale and toy drive goes back to Fairway Middle School, which closed in 2009 when Patterson Middle School opened.

Teacher Ann Fitzgerald brought the project from one school to the other and continues to help organize it.

"It's going to a good cause," said sixth-grader Trinity Cutbirth, treasurer for the club. "It's for kids in the military."

She said her dad is an active-duty soldier and she appreciates the difficulty of having family members away at important times.

"It was fun," said sixth-grader Victoria Negrete, president of the craft club. "It was a good time for us to be together and to have bonding time."

She said the group members enjoy making crafts like flower pens and lapel pins and they like that their peers purchase the items for a charitable cause.

"It's important for us to raise money for toys for kids who don't have as much as we have," Victoria said. "It feels good to give back."

Fitzgerald figures that the craft club has conducted the toy drive for 15 years between two different schools. It used to benefit Toys for Tots, but recently moved to Camo Santa, which is more locally based.

"They met every week to make crafts. They get enthusiastic about the project," Fitzgerald said. "They are excited they can sell what they make and serve others."

She said the school and parents get into the act, adding donations and helping with the shopping.

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# Santa goes 'Garryowen' for cavalry scout troopers and families

BY DAVID A. BRYANT  
FORT HOOD HERALD

"Twas just a week before Christmas, and Santa Claus took a detour from the North Pole to load up on a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and visit troopers and their families on Fort Hood.

On Dec. 16, cavalry scouts from 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment picked up the jolly 'ol saint from his long trip and loaded him and his bag of toys into a Bradley before dropping him off at the Ironhorse Dining Facility, where children of all ages eagerly awaited his arrival. Hundreds of troopers and their families packed the dining facility for breakfast and pictures with Santa.

The unit, part of 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, recently returned from a training rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. The soldiers expect to receive orders for an overseas rotation after the first of the year.

"See? I told you I was bringing Santa!" exclaimed Cpl. Aaron Hansberry to his sons, 6-year-old Judah and 4-year-old Cohen.

Hansberry, the gunner for Apache Troop's commander, rode next to Santa on the Bradley.

"I promised to bring him, and I



think I did it," he said. "(The boys) were definitely excited."

Judah just wanted to know how Santa got all the way to Fort Hood from the North Pole. The explanation?

"Well, he had his own private jet he

used to travel all the way here," Hansberry said. "We picked him up and drove him over here in our Bradley."

A surprised Judah exclaimed, "Wait! He went all from Nor' Pole here? Wow!"

Hansberry's wife, Caitlyn, said she

loved seeing the show and knowing "Daddy" was a hero for bringing Santa.

"They were so excited," she said. "It made their day."

DAVID A. BRYANT |  
HERALD

Santa Claus waves from a Bradley Fighting Vehicle after travelling from the North Pole to visit with soldiers and families of the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment at the Ironhorse Dining Facility on Fort Hood on Dec. 16.

PLEASE SEE **SANTA, 9**

# SANTA: Children received gifts of teddy bears at event

FROM PAGE 8

The storied unit, which still bears the guidon colors adopted by George Armstrong Custer, was made famous by the Mel Gibson movie “We Were Soldiers.” The movie documents the dramatic battle of Ia Drang, Vietnam in November 1965, when the unit was led by retired Lt. Gen. Hal Moore, then a lieutenant colonel.

With such a deep history, ensuring a family event lives up to the “Garryowen” standards can be tough, according to Lt. Col. Kevin Bradley, the unit’s commander.

“We do have great support for our families here and I’m really excited to see how many kids came out,” Bradley said. “And Santa coming out on a Bradley Fighting Vehicle? It can’t get any better than this to start Christmas off.”

The commander said it was great to see all the families participating.

“It’s no secret that it’s hard to be a military child, it’s hard to be the spouse of a soldier,” he said. “So any opportunity we have to give back to them and have an event like this

together and start the holiday season is tremendous.”

Santa gave out teddy bears to all the children after they told him what they wanted for Christmas, all of which were donated by community businesses, Bradley said.

“The amount of support we receive from the community — the toys that were donated, the games and Santa’s time — we appreciate all that support we get here in Killeen,” he said.

The event was great, especially for the kids, said Capt. Sam Taylor, an operational planner with the squadron’s Headquarters and Headquarters Troop.

“When Santa came in, he was on my shoulders and he just got the biggest smile,” Taylor said of his son Samson, 4. “He started jumping up and down on my shoulders.”

Taylor’s wife, Tasha, holding 1 1/2-year-old son Abram, said the party was great and that she had never seen Santa on a Bradley before.

“It was very nice — very fun!” she said.

[dbryant@kdhnews.com](mailto:dbryant@kdhnews.com) | 254-501-7554

Santa exits a Bradley Fighting Vehicle after travelling from the North Pole to visit with soldiers and families of the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment at the Iron-horse Dining Facility on Fort Hood on Dec. 16.



PHOTOS BY DAVID A. BRYANT | HERALD

Soldiers and family members of 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment greet Santa at the Iron-horse Dining Facility on Fort Hood during the unit’s Christmas party Dec. 16.



## WEEKLY TAX PAGE

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**DAILY HERALD**  
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# Fort Hood Family Housing receives 2017 National Night Out awards

BY STACI BURTON  
FORT HOOD FAMILY HOUSING

Fort Hood Family Housing, Lendlease's privatized housing community located on post, is proud to announce that it has received a coveted National Night Out award for the eighth consecutive year. The winning categories include Military and Neighborhood/Community.

"Providing our residents with the opportunity to get to know those who work to keep them safe day in and day out here at Fort Hood is important to us," said Mack Quinney, project director for family housing. "We have a close relationship with the Fort Hood Directorate of Emergency Services, and we all have one common goal — to ensure our neighborhoods and local communities are safe and our residents can depend on us."

National Night Out is a nationwide celebration geared toward heighten-

ing crime prevention awareness and strengthening the neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. This year's event included live entertainment, free food, a rock climbing wall, K-9 demonstrations, a fire truck display and more.

Quinney added, "I am extremely proud of our team for this recognition, and we want to share this award with the Fort Hood Directorate of Emergency Services as well as our local community law enforcement and other military/family support organizations who helped make this year's event a great success."

Fort Hood Family Housing is one of four Lendlease housing communities to have received an award. Others include Island Palm Communities located on Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Campbell Crossing on Fort Campbell, Kentucky; and Fort Drum Mountain Community Homes on Fort Drum, New York. More information on National Night Out can be found online at natw.org.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Fort Hood Fire Department came out with Sparky to help celebrate taking a stand against crime during Fort Hood Family Housing's National Night Out event in September.

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## Local Music

Dirty Harry's presents live music at 9 p.m. Wednesdays. For ages 21 and older, no cover. Dirty Harry's is at 206 W. Veterans Memorial Blvd., Harker Heights (next to King Pin Tattoos). Call 254-680-6557.

## Farmers Markets

All-Year Pioneer Farmers Market will be open in front of Tractor Supply Co. on Central Texas Expressway in Killeen from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday, weather permitting. Call Heike at 254-458-8223 or go to [www.facebook.com/pioneer-farmersmarket](http://www.facebook.com/pioneer-farmersmarket).

## Arts & Theater

The Mayborn Museum Complex presents "Waco Creek Static/Dynamic Urban Wilderness" by Erika Huddleston. The exhibit features seven of her paintings of points of interest along the creek, as well as a collection of custom-made maps and photos from the Texas Collection. "Find a Way, Not an Excuse: Women in STEM" is showing through March 25. The exhibit presents the lives of 19 women and their contributions to the science, technology, engineering and math fields, including five from Baylor University. The exhibit focuses on pioneering innovations in STEM with the hope of inspiring a fierce desire to learn continuously and encourage curiosity to lead to discovery. The museum offers free admission from 1 to 5 p.m. the first Sunday of each month. The museum is at 1300 S. University Parks Drive in Waco. For information, call 254-710-1104.

The Lampasas County Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and admission is free. The museum is at 303 S. Western Ave., Lampasas. For information, call 512-556-2224.

## Dancing

Bo's Barn Dancehall at 4984 W. Farm-to-Market 93 in Temple offers free dance lessons every first Thursday of the month from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

## Bars, Clubs

Main Street Tejano Club, 201 S. Main St.,



HERALD FILE PHOTO

Emily Dossman, Bell County Museum curator, left, talks to Kathi Dossman about an exhibit at the Bell County Museum.

Temple, has a DJ/live music from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

Pan American Club, 575 Pan American Drive, Harker Heights, features Tejano, Norteno and Cumbia music. Call 254-690-2882.

Rutland at 512-556-5302, during regular business hours.

## Clubs, Meetings

The Copperas Cove Bass Club meetings are

held at the Lil Tex Restaurant in Copperas Cove on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. Call 254-661-9274. The Mystery Book Club meets every first Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at Barnes and Noble in Harker Heights. The club is free and open to all mystery lovers. Contact Marcene at 830-357-8314 for more information.

## Planetarium

Several films are now showing at the Mayborn Science Theater at Central Texas College. There are no weekend shows between Dec. 18 and Jan. 4 because of the holidays, but matinee shows are scheduled every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday until normal hours resume. Matinee shows are \$5 per person and the Saturday evening shows are \$7 for adults and \$6 for children younger than the age of 12. Discounts are offered to active-duty military, senior citizens and members. For show descriptions, full schedule and ticket prices, go to [www.starsatnight.org](http://www.starsatnight.org) or call 254-526-1800.

## Family Fun

The Bell County Museum is open to the public from noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. Call 254-933-5243 or go to [www.bellcountymuseum.org](http://www.bellcountymuseum.org).

Temple's Railroad and Heritage Museum's winter exhibit, "Sign of the Times: The Great American Political Poster 1844-2012" is on display through Jan. 19. The museum, at 315 W. Avenue B, in downtown Temple, is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Go to [www.templerrhm.org](http://www.templerrhm.org) or call 254-298-5172.

Free guided tours of the Lampasas County Courthouse are offered each Saturday. Tours start at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., except for major holiday weekends. Tour attendees will see the water level mark of the 1957 Mother's Day flood, as well as the stately second floor courtroom and clock tower works on the third floor. The courthouse is on the downtown square, 501 E. Fourth St. Take the Loop 257 exit off of U.S. Highway 190. Contact Linda Moore-Lanning at 512-564-5122 or Jim



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# 'Phantom Thread' is mysterious art

BY KATIE WALSH  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paul Thomas Anderson's enigmatic romance "Phantom Thread" is a mystery. Not of the murder kind, but of the heart, posing questions of love, power and submission. The mystery? Who's in control? It's a question that almost can't ever be answered. The film is the kind of puzzle that's both frustrating and joyful to put together — the full picture isn't revealed until the very end, in a revelation that reveals the poignant truth to be found in vulnerability.

Star Daniel Day-Lewis claims to be retiring after this (though that always remains to be seen). Working once again with Anderson, he gives a transformed performance as a genius dressmaker in 1950 London. "Dressmaker" is too pedestrian a term for what Reynolds Woodcock does, who crafts hand-sewn couture creations for the rich and the royal.

He lives and works among women, shepherding a flock of seamstresses in his home. His business partner and closest confidant is his sister, Cyril, a steely, perfectly coiffed and simply perfect Lesley Manville. We come to suspect that despite appearances, she wears the pants in this duo. No one tells Reynolds to



LAURIE SPARHAM/FOCUS  
FEATURES VIA AP

In this image released by Focus Features, Lesley Manville appears in a scene from "Phantom Thread."

shut up as chicly as she does.

We find him searching for a new companion, his next live-in model and muse. He finds her in an unrefined waitress in a seaside resort restaurant, where he delivers the coyest, most decadent breakfast order of all time, which is in itself a seduction. Alma (Vicky Krieps) is a naive, coltish girl, but like a sheath of fine silk, Reynolds sees potential in what he might shape her into, snipping, cutting and sewing her into the perfect woman. He just never suspected that underneath that seemingly pliant surface, there might be more strength to her than meets the eye.

Simply describing the facts of the story flattens it, and doesn't come close to communicating what a heady, mysterious and sensual spell Anderson casts with "Phantom Thread." Like Reynolds, the film holds you at arm's length, keeps you remote, unsure and unsettled. But soon Alma's force is too strong, and we happily submit to her will. If you go in expecting a Daniel

Day-Lewis movie, you'll walk away with a Vicky Krieps movie, and we're all the better for it. The Luxembourgian actress will sweep you off your feet.

"Phantom Thread" is even better upon second viewing, when you know where it's going. It becomes easier to plunge into this sumptuous world, to laugh at its small, arch moments of humor. Rather than feeling unsettled, you can marvel at the swirl of psychological control and chaos, which is mirrored in Jonny Greenwood's score, blending classical pieces with his own original compositions, creating a sense of pleasant agita.

It's a tale of narcissism and ego, both artistic and romantic, and how to conquer it. As an artist, as a lover, Reynolds Woodcock has gotten away with incorrigible fastidiousness, emotional abuse and fussy entitlement. Witnessing Alma's resistance to this male narcissism is simply a joy. "Phantom Thread" is the kind of film you'll mull over and discuss, a masterpiece that doesn't even let on that it is until it's over:

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# Review: 'Bright' is when Harry Potter vomits on a cop flick

BY MARK KENNEDY

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

That old Hollywood standby, the venerable buddy cop movie, may have met its anguished demise this holiday season. Will Smith just killed it.

Virtually every permutation of the genre has been done — we've seen black cops teamed up with white cops, black cops with black cops, white cops and other white cops, a white cop and a Latino cop, an Irish cop with a Yank cop, two women cops, and human cops with dog cops.

Alas, the category will likely not survive the latest: a human cop teamed up with an Orc. Yes, that's right — an Orc, along with Elves, Fairies and at least one Centaur. Even with Smith being his most charming singular Smith, "Bright" is a total mess.

To prepare for writing "Bright," it seems Max Landis decided to throw every cop film cliché into a Cuisineart, put it on the high setting and leave the top off. This film is what happens when Harry Potter throws up on "Training Day," "16 Blocks," "The Wire," "48 Hours" and "Police Academy."

It opens in an alternate reality of South Central Los Angeles — a gritty, graffiti-covered, gang-infested patrol area that includes Orcs in thick gold chains and sweatsuits drinking liquor in front of burning barrels and listening to rap. Elves, on the other hand, seem to be prissy, elitist and vapid. They live in — wait for it — Elftown.

Smith's Officer Ward has just returned to the job after being shot and is assigned to reunite with his rookie partner, Nick Jakoby, the first Orc to serve with the LAPD. Jakoby is played by Joel Edgerton and he is made to look like a hunk of Roquefort cheese rotting on an August afternoon.

Because Orcs have in the past been horrible to humans, Jakoby faces bitter resentment from fellow offi-



MATT KENNEDY/NETFLIX VIA AP

This image released by Netflix shows Will Smith, right, and Joel Edgerton in a scene from, "Bright."

cers, who call him a "diversity hire." He also is hated by his own kind, who consider him a turncoat. So we are left to wonder if he's a cop first or an Orc first. (And what his ears might taste like on a nice multigrain cracker.)

It's a tough spot to be in, made worse because nobody likes the police. (As Ward's daughter points out: "Why do you have to be a policeman? Everybody hates policemen.") Why does Ward stay on the job? You guessed it — he's five years from his pension (Many thanks, "Lethal Weapon.")

At this point, the film might have explored racism and systemic profiling by having different otherworldly species represent whites, black, Latinos and Asians. But that's not "Bright." Instead, the film doubles down on the fantasy, embarking on a city-wide nonsensical search for a rare magic wand. Cue the car chases, over-the-top gang members, throat slitting, martial arts moves, torture and gas station explosions. (Warning: Many, many Orcs were harmed making this film. Logic was also badly injured.)

Wait, hold up. Did we really just say "wand"? Yes indeed, this alternate L.A. reality may have Uber; former "Fear Factor" host Joe Rogan, Toyota

Corollas and topless bars, but it also has a dark prophecy, renegade Elves, a Magic Task Force and a wand that has enormous power. "This is like a nuclear weapon that grants wishes," we are told by someone in a straight face. Only a Bright — a person with supernatural abilities — can use it correctly. They might not even know they are a Bright. You can see where this film is going even without being very bright.

David Ayer is the director and he's had a role in other buddy cop films, helming "End of Watch" and writing "Training Day." This, though, is a labored affair with little stylistic coherence. The scenes fit poorly together and the humor is forced. Though it's supposed to span a day and night, it rains whenever the film needs that "Blade Runner" brooding wet darkness, a manipulative touch.

Actually, there's not an original thing in the film, with the possible

exception of a foosball table being used to try to kill an Elf. But the soundtrack seems nice, with songs by Logic, Meek Mill, alt-J, Machine Gun Kelly, X Ambassadors, Camila Cabello, Portugal. The Man and A\$AP Rocky. (There's an idea: Stream the movie but turn off the screen).

Things go seriously off the rails as the film lurches to its conclusion. Smith seems to know how bad the film is so he agrees to have his face hit repeatedly, leaving it puffy and bloody. Perhaps he hopes no one can recognize him anymore. But there's no escaping the truth. This film makes his misfire "Wild Wild West" looks like "The Godfather." Plus, he knows he just buried the buddy cop film genre. You'll never see two cops swapping snide comments in the front seat of a cruiser again — and not laugh.

"Bright," a Netflix Studios release, is rated TV-MA. Running time: 117 minutes. No stars out of four.

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# Comfort food you can make in 20 minutes? We're in, with melted butter

**BONNIE S. BENWICK**  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Here's a heartwarming plate full of familiar food with an unfamiliar name: koshary. It can be spelled and pronounced different ways and have other things mixed in, but the basics include rice, lentils and pasta. What sets this version apart from the rest, to my mind, is the last-minute drizzle of melted butter with crushed red pepper flakes. When that hits the fresh mint, the humble dish sings.

It's a cinch to make with leftover rice and lentils. But if you don't have those around, canned or boxed, cooked lentils and frozen cooked rice work just as well and are easily obtained. (You may be able to score those two ingredients on a super-market salad bar.)

A second batch created for purposes of the accompanying photo disappeared into my colleagues' lunch bowls with lightning speed, which is just the kind of affirmation I like.

## Koshary

3 to 4 servings

Adapted from "Onions Etcetera: The Essential Allium Cookbook," by Kate Winslow and Guy Ambrosino (Burgess Lea Press, 2017).

## Kosher salt

**1/2 cup dried ditalini pasta or macaroni (may substitute 1 cup-ish leftover cooked pasta)**

**1 large yellow onion**

**2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**

**Leaves from 2 stems fresh mint**

**1 1/4 cups cooked lentils (from one 14-ounce can)**

**1 1/4 cups tomato sauce**

**1 1/4 cups cooked brown rice (may substitute white rice)**

**Freshly ground black pepper**

**3 tablespoons unsalted butter**

**Pinch crushed red pepper flakes**

Bring a medium pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add a generous pinch of salt and then the dried pasta. Cook according to the package directions,



DEB LINDSEY | THE  
WASHINGTON POST

Koshary includes rice, lentils and pasta.

then drain.

Meanwhile, cut the onion into 1/2-inch dice. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Once the oil shimmers, stir in the onion and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden and browned in spots. Chop the mint leaves while the onion is cooking.

Drain and rinse the lentils.

Stir the tomato sauce into the skillet; as soon as it has heated through, add the rice and lentils. Cook for a few minutes until heated through, then stir in the pasta. Taste and season lightly with salt and pepper. Remove from the heat and stir in the mint, then divide the koshary among bowls you are keeping warm on the stove top. Add butter to the now-empty skillet, over medium heat. Once it foams, add the pinch of crushed red pepper flakes, swirling to incorporate. Immediately drizzle some of the hot, spiced melted butter over each portion of koshary. Serve right away.

**NUTRITION | PER SERVING** (based on 4): 360 calories, 9 g protein, 44 g carbohydrates, 16 g fat, 7 g saturated fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 560 mg sodium, 9 g dietary fiber, 7 g sugar

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# How to cook steak in 4 minutes — and keep it tender

BONNIE S. BENWICK

THE WASHINGTON POST

Go shopping for a recipe's main ingredient and come home with something else — we've all been there. On the spot, you can figure out a suitable substitute on your own or consult with a grocery-department manager. For this recipe, flank steak became flat-iron, because the flank steak was sold out. But the switch proved beneficial.

Both beef cuts are flat, quick-cooking and not especially tender. They come from different muscles of the animal (flank/belly vs. flat-iron/shoulder). Typically, a rectangular piece of flat-iron steak will weigh less than packaged flank steak and be easier to slice raw.

Slicing is what happens here as part of the prep, against the grain. Why that way? To shorten the meat's long fibers and create a more tender chew. With a flat-iron steak, the process is simple: You only have to cut crosswise, with a long side parallel to the edge of your cutting board, and you will achieve success. The strips will be about an inch wide and not too long — just right for threading onto skewers.

Treated to a fast and piquant marinade (for flavor), they go under the broiler or on a gas grill for just a few minutes.

## Skewered Southwest Steak

4 servings

Flat-iron beef steak, cut from the shoulder muscle of the animal, provides a nice alternative to flank steak in this quick- marinade recipe (see the NOTE, below).

You'll need 8 to 10 mid-length metal skewers or you'll need to soak that same number of wooden skewers in water for 10 minutes; it's easy to do while the meat marinates. We tested this under the broiler but feel free to cook the skewers on a gas grill, if you'd like.

Serve with a mix of smashed/roasted small potatoes and roasted red pep-



Skewered southwest steak.

pers, or with baked sweet potato fries. Adapted from the Cattlemen's Beef Board and National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

**3 large cloves garlic**

**1 lime**

**Kosher salt**

**8 stems cilantro**

**1 tablespoon hot pepper sauce (regular or jalapeño-flavored)**

**2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**

**3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce**

**1 1/4 teaspoons ground cumin**

**1 1/4 pounds flat-iron steaks (may substitute flank steak; see head-note and NOTE)**

Position an oven rack 4 to 6 inches from

the broiler element; preheat the broiler. Peel the cloves and put them in a mini (or regular-size) food processor; pulse until finely chopped, then cut the lime into 8 wedges and squeeze half of them into the food processor bowl. Add a two-fingered pinch of the salt, leaves from 6 of the cilantro stems, the hot sauce, oil, soy sauce and cumin. Puree to form a smooth marinade. Starting at one of the short ends of the rectangular pieces of steak, cut crosswise (against the long grain) into 1/4-inch-thick strips. Lay them in a baking dish or place them in a gallon-size zip-top bag. Pour the marinade over the meat and toss to coat. Let sit for 10 minutes, then thread the strips, weaving them in a wavy in-and-out style

to fill each skewer. (Think: Loch Ness Monster humps.) Place on a broiler pan or grill pan; broil (top rack) for about 4 minutes for medium-rare, or longer for the degree of doneness you like. Divide the skewers among individual plates; season lightly with salt. Garnish with sprigs from the remaining cilantro stems and serve with the remaining lime wedges.

**NOTE:** If you use flank steak instead, trim any excess fat and cut it on the diagonal, against the grain, into long strips.

**NUTRITION PER SERVING:** 280 calories, 32 g protein, 3 g carbohydrates, 15 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 90 mg cholesterol, 730 mg sodium, 0 g dietary fiber, 0 g sugar

DEB LINDSEY | THE WASHINGTON POST

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