

Facing Trials & Finding Blessings

By Betsy Monaco



I was getting ready for an early Christmas party and running late as I usually do, when I remembered I needed a serving dish.

I began frantically searching for a dish for my dessert.

I gave my hutch full of Fiesta Ware and Hadley Pottery a quick glance, but decided it was all too precious to use and too much work to get down and wash.

I settled for an unbreakable, safe tray that was in my

kitchen cabinet.

Just when I was about to dust the last brownie with powdered sugar, I saw my last year's Christmas gift to myself perched over on the top shelf.

It is a large turkey platter made with the handprints of our four children.

I transferred my brownies to the beautiful Thanksgiving platter adorned with the four little Monaco turkeys, threw the other tray in my sink full of dirty dishes, and scurried

out the door.

I asked myself a question in the middle of the decision process over what to carry the brownies on that seems to have turned into my theme for the 2008 holidays.

What use is my special tray if it sits on the shelf this holiday season?

Simply said, I need to use it!

My theme this year is not going to be snowmen or nutcrackers; it is going to be

something like: "Use it or lose it!"

I plan on bringing out my colorful dishes, using my Mom's silver, and finding all of the cookie cutters in the bottom drawer when we cut out Santa's goodies.

What good is "stuff" on a shelf? What good is "stuff" stuffed away in a bottom drawer?

My mind began to explore this idea more over the week-end.

I can't help but wonder too if we leave more up on the top shelf of the closet or in the back corner of the attic than just old family games, Christmas decorations, and festive dishes.

All too often we have "issues" that we try to put away and forget.

There are feelings we hope can be forgotten if we just box them up and hide them.

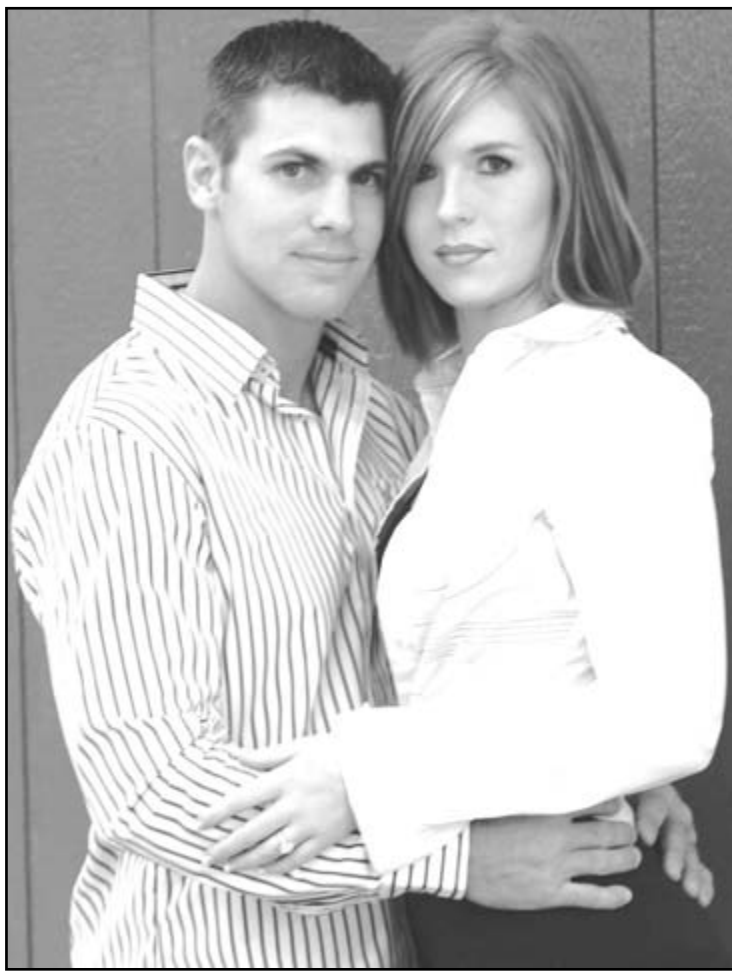
Psalms 139 lets me know too that even if we trick ourselves into believing that things can be hidden, nothing can be concealed from God.

The psalmist David wrote these words. "O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in - behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me."

What is in that buried box tucked away on that top shelf in your own life?

We all have had feelings of bitterness, resentment, disappointment, and even extreme grief that may need to be dealt with.

Why go another year without restoration and healing if the Lord is telling you the time is NOW?



JILL SHULTZ AND RONNIE HENNESEY

Couple announces upcoming nuptials

Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Shultz of Fairfield announce the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter Jill, to Ronnie Hennessee of Buffalo, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Hennessee of Buffalo.

The couple will wed Saturday, March 21, at the First United Methodist Church of Fairfield.

Miss Shultz is a 2005 graduate of Fairfield high school and is attending Texas A&M Commerce where she will graduate in December with a degree in interdisciplinary studies.

Hennessee is a 2000 graduate of Buffalo high school and served eight years in the United States Air Force.

He is employed with XTO Energy as a meter technician.

Camp of the Rising Sun . . . Holiday tour of homes

Begin the holiday season with Camp of the Rising Sun's Christmas Gala and Historic Tour of Homes in Corsicana Friday, Dec. 5.

The nonprofit organization which benefits special needs children in Freestone, Limestone and Navarro counties will host a Christmas Gala at the refurbished historic Halbert House from 7 to 10

Tickets are \$50 per person and also includes a ticket to the tour of historic homes held Saturday, Dec. 5, from noon to 5 p.m.

The tour will feature the West Third Avenue Historic Homes of: Mr. Jimmy Hale, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Steely, Mr. and Mrs. Sandy Jenkins, Ms. Lana Johnson as well as the Halbert House.

Tickets for the tour are \$12 in advance or \$15 at the door.

For more information on how to purchase tickets or to make a donation, please contact Lynda Green at (903) 874-8062 of Jamie Kitchens at (903) 875-9729.

Directions and ticket information are also available on the Camp of the Rising Sun website at www.campoftherisingsun.org.

Relay for Life sets meeting for next week

Freestone County Relay for Life will hold a committee meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 2, at the Fairfield Conference Center.

For more information, contact co-chairs Frances Collier and Bettye Trask at (903) 389-3917.

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04 Pacifica 75,414, Green.....\$12,950

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Fight the Flu!

Children's Flu Shot Clinic on November 26

Flu Shot Clinic For Children Only
Ages 6 months to 18 years

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Wednesday, November 26
ETMC First Physicians Clinic
764 W. Commerce St., Fairfield

A \$10 donation for each child's flu shot is requested. However, no child will be turned away if their parent is unable to pay.

ETMC FAIRFIELD
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