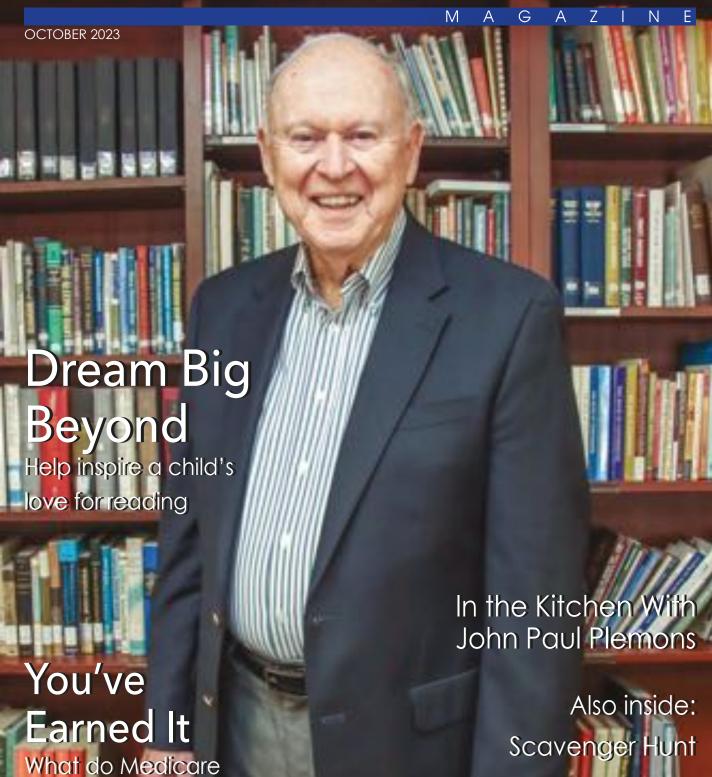
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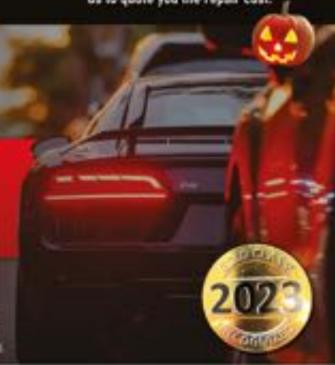








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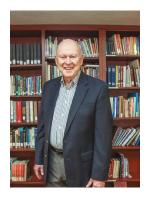






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ON THE COVER



Joe Hill believes reading readiness is a critical skill.

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Publisher, Connie Poirier General Manager, Rick Hensley

EDITORIAL

Managing Editor, Becky Walker Corsicana Editor, Virginia Riddle Office As Ksristins Brazont, Editors/Proofreaders, Rachel Rich Virginia Riddle

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla Art iKrisstin Sato. Martha Macias London O'Connell . Anthony Sarmienta

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Chris McCalla Photographer, Memories by Melissa

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representat Linda Moffett . Linda Roberson Bryan Frye . Cherise Burnett Dustin Dauenhauer . Kelsea Locke Karen Schaefer. Jeremy Young

Billing Manager, Angela Mixon

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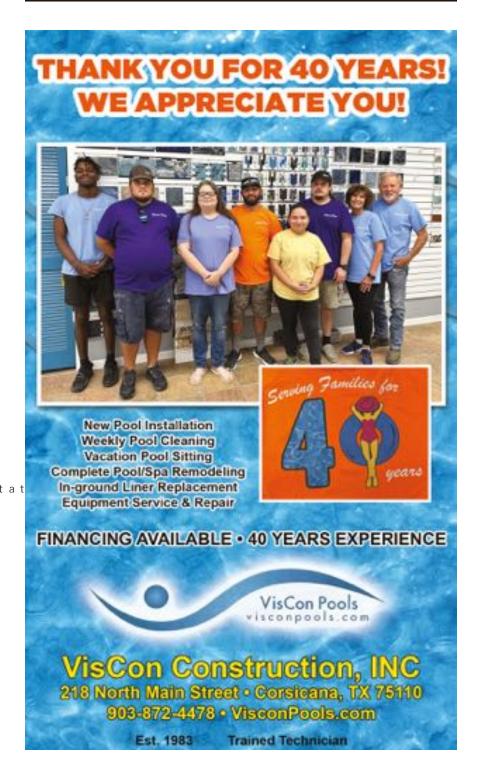
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Virginia Riddle CorsicanaNOW Editor virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com (903) 875-0187

EDITOR'S NOTE

It's pumpkin pickin' time!

Well, we don't usually pick our pumpkins out of the field in Central Texas, but we do pick our fall decorative orange or green cucurbit fruit in area grocery stores, fruit stands or pumpkin patches. I enjoy buying my pumpkins in Corrales, New Mexico, annually at a farm that hosts folks on hayrides through their pumpkin patch and apple orchard. My granddaughters get to view the pistons pumping in the ancient tractor that ably pulls the hayride trailer. What a memory for me, since I grew up on our family farm learning to drive that kind of tractor, starting about age 8 when I could reach the pedals with my feet. I learned to work the gears with one hand while steering with the other hand. Staff cut the strong pumpkin stems and load our choices for weighing out, while we go onward to the orchard and gather as many apples as we can. The surrounding cottonwoods' leaves have turned golden and offer a melodic musical rustling. It's a beautiful time to make memories.

Back home, our pumpkins and other seasonal decorations become painted jack-o'-lanterns; carved wonders, some friendly and some not so friendly; and doorway decorations complete with hay bales and child-size stuffed figures. From the youngest grandchild who works with paints and a vivid imagination to the oldest who is now adept with a carving knife and templates, it's a messy fun, creative time. The kids' chickens, ducks and occasional wildlife visitors don't mind helping clean up by feasting on pumpkin seeds and meat.

While the carved smiles start sagging after Halloween, we turn the painted pumpkins to the other side preserved for Thanksgiving decor. Pumpkins don't last forever, but memories do.

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Snuggled in for the night under warm quilts with their mom or dad's voice quietly reading from the dogeared pages of their favorite picture books before lights out is a childhood memory many who grow up to be great readers have. Joe Hill is one of those lucky adult readers. "I can remember Mom reading The Poky Little Puppy. My dad was a welder during WWII, so we went from military post to military post. Mom picked up post exchange books and read them to me. She would point from the word to the picture and discuss the meanings of stories. I have great memories that I believe made for a stronger family unit."



When Joe heard about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program, this busy community volunteer knew he had to find time and a sponsor, so the program could be available to children in Navarro County. He took the idea to Rev. Jen Mitchell and April Grant. April has fond memories of growing up in Garland, Texas, where her mother took her and her siblings to the public library. "During the summers, we had school with Mom. She always had multiple things planned for us to do," recalled April, who is the office administrator at Westminster Presbyterian Church of Corsicana, where Rev. Jen is pastor.

"The sound of my mom's voice fills me with warmth and nostalgia," Rev. Jen recalled. "Reading was our one-on-one time for bonding. I was interested when told about DPIL, and we started brainstorming possibilities." Westminster Presbyterian made application to sponsor the countywide program, which is funded locally through the church's budget and by individuals and other churches' donations.

April is the administrator for the program, and all adults working with the program are volunteers. "Our first welcome books were mailed to children in March 2023," April said. "We have 585 kids currently enrolled in the program. They receive a book each month in the mail free of charge." The Little Engine That Could, a longtime favorite, is the first book.

"Dolly Parton's life story is rags to riches, but reading has always been her passion along with songwriting," Joe stated. Beginning in 1995, the first books were made available to children in Dolly's native Sevier County, Tennessee. The program was replicated nationally by 2000 and has gone international to Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and Ireland. Over 200 million books have been mailed to young children.

April trained to run the program and does all the computer and phone work. Registration of children, ages birth to 5 years, by an adult family member can be done online or through Westminster





Presbyterian. Each month, an ageappropriate book is mailed to the child at no cost to the family.

"The way to empower oneself is through education, so my part in this program now is to motivate parents to be interested and to speak to groups, schools and businesses about the program," Joe said. "People want to get involved in this program."

Westminster Presbyterian also uses the program in its on-site day care program and encourages other day care providers and public and private preschools to do so, too, "DPIL is wonderful in its mission," Rev. len remarked. "Reading helps develop a child's imagination and requires using and developing different parts of the child's brain. I'm dyslexic and had a hard time learning to read. My mom reading to me and working with me made a big difference. I hope this program is helpful to children with all different kinds of disabilities and increases school readiness for children. We've had all positive and exciting feedback about DPIL to date."

loe, a native of "a little bit of everywhere" has lived in Navarro County for the past six years after a





career of traveling with the U.S. Navy. As retirement approached, he and his wife, Janis, spent a year evaluating possible locations near family. "Our first impression of Corsicana was that people were nice, and that impression has proved true," Joe said. "Westminster has been great, too." Joe is active in the Coyote Squadron and stays busy helping with its annual Airsho.

Rev. Ien hails from The Woodlands/ Houston area and was called to be Westminster's pastor. "This is a friendly, generous atmosphere, and it reminds me of my suburban life growing up." she stated. "It's peaceful, but there's enough to do." She enjoys time with her dog, photography, getting out in nature and cross-stitching. "Everything just melts aways when I'm in nature," she added.

Having a life with family in Chatfield, Texas, April, a city girl, enjoys hunting and fishing with husband, Jason, and son, Jot. "I also like to exercise, run, travel and shop," she added. "Everyone helps everyone else when needed. There's unity here. I run to the city, but then I like to get back to the country."

Dolly's purpose in founding Imagination Library is best stated in her words on the program's website, "... there are children in communities around the world with big dreams and the seeds of these dreams are often found in books." As a parent reads to a tucked in child at bedtime or one cuddled in his/her arms in an easy chair, such big dreams can be hatched from the words which often mark the beginning of a story, "Once upon a time..." NOW

Editor's Note: For details or to register, visit www.imaginationlibrary.com or call the church at (903) 874-3781.



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With 65 birthdays and more years of work behind them than in front, Baby Boomers and Gen Xers look forward to successful retirement years. An important ingredient is maintaining their health as economically as possible on fixed incomes. Whether shopping for a friend, relative or yourself, learning about Medicare and Medicare Advantage is critical to choosing the right plan.

Within six months of one's 65th birthday, and within annual open enrollment periods, it's advisable to shop and compare plans. Basic Medicare with supplemental gap insurance policies (A, B, C, D, F, G, K, L, M, N) was instituted in 1965. It pays for most hospitalization charges and other medical costs, but not all. Medicare recipients have the choice of gap insurance — some with high or low deductible choices — to help pay for charges Medicare doesn't cover.

Understanding the basic "Medicare Maze" might seem daunting, but it's only a start in making wise choices,

depending on personal health needs. Medicare Advantage plans offer an alternative to basic Medicare and fill needs much as the medigap plans do, but the "Advantage" plans are different. If choosing a Medicare Advantage plan, an enrollee doesn't deal directly with Medicare, except for paying monthly premiums for Part B and perhaps Part D, that pay some of what basic Medicare doesn't cover.

Medicare Advantage plans offered in most geographic areas take two forms: managed care plans and fee-for-service plans. Managed care plans charge a low or no monthly premium and small copays, but the plans limit enrollees' choices of doctors and other providers. These plans limit treatments and length of hospital stays. With fee-for-service plans, any doctor or provider can be used if they accept Medicare and the Medicare Advantage plan's restrictions and amount of payment. The enrollee can choose to pay the difference or select another provider.

Since Medicare Advantage plans are provided by private health insurance companies, enrollees must also evaluate the stability of possible choices and the geographic areas that each company chooses to cover. Whether the premiums and copays rise in price is another question to research. One's local State Insurance Assistance Program, Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program or the www.medicare.gov site can be accessed for these answers and comparative charts.

Some Medicare Advantage plans include the Medicare Part D prescription program, while other plans require enrollees to choose a separate standalone Part D plan. Compare the plans' approved drugs, copays and premium costs.

Is the Medicare Advantage managed plan a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) or a **Provider Sponsored Organization** (PSO)? HMOs maintain a network of physicians and providers who must be used unless there's an emergency. Premium prices are usually the least expensive, but enrollees must make sure their hospitals, doctors and providers are "in network." A negative to these plans occurs when the innetwork listings change, and enrollees must travel to in-network doctors close to their area.

PPOs work much like HMOs, but these plans offer a point-of-service option, which lessens the cost to enrollees if they use an in-network provider. PPOs tend to have higher premium costs, but many enrollees like the flexibility of choosing doctors.

Private fee-for-service Medicare Advantage plans often have a cap on the amount of out-of-pocket payments an enrollee must pay each year. However, these plans have strict rules for providers, aren't always accepted by providers and may charge for extra services and other costs.

Whatever the choice, remember it's sometimes difficult to change from basic Medicare with gap insurance to a Medicare Advantage plan and vice versa. It's best to make a wise choice, and review that choice annually. NOW

Sources:

I. www.medicare.gov. 2. Social Security, Medicare & Government Pensions. Matthews, Joseph L., NOLO, 2021.

Editor's Note:

Most cities in our market areas have professional insurance agents who are trained to help you determine which Medicare plan is best for you. Give one a call to get the process started!



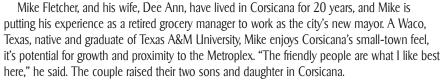


Around Town





By Virginia Riddle



The family's home is approximately 120 years old. "We love to travel and have been to all 50 states and 15-16 countries," Mike shared.

Always a volunteer, Mike said, "I've served on several boards and with many organizations. I encourage our citizens to do something positive to make a difference. Positivity is contagious!"



James L. Collins Catholic School's students successfully compete in District 4-H and State PSIA arts and scholastic contests.



Raquel Lindemann-Nguyen entertains shoppers during Mimosas at the Market.



Thomas Cozart helps keep Coyote Squadron's two planes flying safely.



It's ribbon-cutting time at the Corsicana Creamery.



The Navarro College band serves up some entertainment during Cicis Pizza's 30th anniversary celebration.



Chelsley Smith presents his "Expressions in Paper and Glue" creations at the Warehouse Living Arts Gallery.



Dick Flatt emcees the Cindy Walker Days hymn sing at First Presbyterian Church, Mexia, where the famed composer served as choir director.



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By Virginia Riddle

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With more than 18 years' experience, Home Helpers' Corsicana franchise owners, Mark and Lori Thommarson, and their employees live by the business' mission statement, "Giving Care the Way You Want to Be Cared For." Mark shared the couple's personal mission statement, "We're family when family can't be there, and we follow 1 Peter 4:10."

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After a family contacts Mark or Lori, they start building what they hope to be a long-term, personal relationship during an initial consultation in which needs and wants are discussed. The family sets the schedule of care and what the caregiver will provide. The customizable, comprehensive plans created can cover caregivers as companions, personal care, Alzheimer's and dementia care, Parkinson's and/or stroke care, respite care, disabilities care and recuperative care from injury or surgery. Staff can run errands, do light housekeeping and drive clients to appointments. "Everyone has the right to live independently, and that's what we help people do," Mark stated.

"Making connections with our clients is very important," Mark continued. "Supervisors come with the caregivers to make introductions, which is so important."

"Our employees become family, too," Lori added. "We have backup caregivers and supervisors, so no one goes without the help needed. All our employees have on-going training, so they can service a wide range of client needs. All are insured and bonded and undergo random drug testing and background checks." Home Helpers serves clients in the North Central Texas area, including Navarro, Henderson, Hill, Kaufman, Limestone, Ellis and Freestone counties. When possible, caregivers and supervisors live in the area they serve. "We accept long-term care insurance, VA pay, checks and automatic bank drafts as payment," Lori stated.

This local franchise is a member of Home Care Association of America and the Navarro County Health Care Alliance. It's regulated as a VA contract provider and through Texas Health and Human Services, Mark and Lori were trained as franchise owners and had cared for Mark's parents. Mark has retail management experience and is a U.S. military veteran. "We've received the Veterans Care Coordination Veteran Advocate Award, have been the Home Helpers Provider of Choice and Employer of Choice for five years based on surveys," Mark stated. "Four of our caregivers have been recognized at Home Helpers headquarters." Home Helpers participates in area health fairs, which provide helpful information to communities served.

A former minister of a church congregation, Mark sees his Home Helpers work as a personal ministry, since they are ministering to the needs of people. Lori added, "This is very satisfying work. As with many businesses post-Covid, challenges must be met, however, Meeting all a client wants/needs as quickly as she/he wants/needs, sometimes like tomorrow morning, and still maintaining a safe staff/client ratio, can be difficult. Inflationary costs affect us, too."

Mark and Lori, married for 48 years, have lived in Corsicana since 1987 and bought the franchise in 2005. "This business was our son's dream." Mark said. "He studied to go into the home health care industry but passed away in 2011, so we're carrying on his dream. At the end of each day, we know we're making a difference in people's lives, doing the work that allows families to have peace of mind and those with disabilities and the elderly to stay at home safely. That's always a joy." NOW







Even though John Paul Plemons' grandfather, Maurice Wheat, died before John Paul was born, his influence shines through in John Paul's food truck, Tastytown Cafe. "My grandfather owned a Mabank grocery store and was locally famous for the food he served on butcher paper," John Paul explained. "However, watching my mother cook is my biggest culinary influence." Southern and soul food are favorites, but he's also a fan of his wife, Lora's, Cajun food, which has added more fish and spices into his recipes.

John Paul enjoys raising beef cattle and cooking on the grill, griddle, smoker or in an iron skillet. He added, "I enjoy cooking because I like happy gatherings of friends and family. There's nothing better than the people I love most enjoying one another's company over a meal." Now

Claire's Mexican Breakfast

This is John Paul's oldest daughter's favorite breakfast dish. It can be refrigerated and reheated.

1/2 lb. hot breakfast sausage, crumbled (Reserve the drippings.)

- 4 slices bacon
- 8 corn tortillas, halved and then sliced into thin strips
- 1-2 tsp. oil (optional)
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 green bell pepper, chopped

6 eggs Splash of milk Dash of salt

1/2 tsp. granulated garlic

1/4 tsp. cumin

1/4 tsp. paprika

Pepper, to taste

- 2 jalapeños, sliced (Seeds can be removed if less heat is desired.)
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cheddar cheese, grated 8 flour tortillas, warmed
- 1/2 cup picante sauce
- **1.** In a large skillet, cook the sausage; drain and reserve the drippings. Set the sausage aside.
- **2.** Fry the bacon; drain the drippings into the sausage drippings. Tear the bacon into small pieces; set aside.
- **3.** Fry the corn tortillas in the drippings until just before they get crisp. They should still be flexible. More oil can be added, if needed.
- **4.** Remove the strips; drain on a paper towel. Leave the drippings/oil in the skillet.

- **5.** Sauté the onions and bell peppers; set aside. In a bowl, beat the eggs with the milk, salt, garlic, cumin, paprika and pepper. Pour the egg mixture into the hot skillet for scrambling.
- **6.** Add the tortilla strips, onions, peppers, bacon, sausage and jalapeños; mix well. Cover with a lid; cook about 2-3 minutes on medium heat until the eggs are done.
- **7.** Add the cheddar cheese; melt and blend well. Serve in warmed flour tortillas with picante sauce.

Grandma Marcelle Plemons' Apple Goodie

6 apples

2 sticks butter

3/4 cup sugar

3/4 cup brown sugar, firmly packed

1 1/2 cups old-fashioned oats (not quick oatmeal)

3/4 tsp. cinnamon Vanilla ice cream

- **1.** Thinly slice the apples into a foil-lined, 9x13-inch pan.
- **2.** In a saucepan, melt the butter; stir in the two sugars, oats and cinnamon. Pour this mixture over the apples.
- **3.** Bake at 350 F for about 35 minutes or until the apples are browned and fork tender. Serve hot with ice cream.

Pa's Stew

This is John Paul's grandfather's recipe.

- 3 lbs. boneless lean beef, cubed into l-inch squares
- I lb. boneless lean pork, cubed into I-inch squares
- I large onion, sliced
- I large bell pepper, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. vinegar
- 1 4-oz. can pimentos
- 1 14.5-oz. can tomatoes
- 4 medium potatoes, cubed
- Red pepper, to taste
- 1 15.25-oz. can corn
- **I.** In a large pot, add the meats, onion and bell pepper; cover with water and vinegar. Cover; cook until the meats are tender.
- **2.** Add the pimentos, tomatoes, potatoes and red pepper; cook until the potatoes are tender. Add the corn; remove from heat.

Poor Man's Burnt Fnds

3-4 lbs. chuck roast, uniform in thickness (1 1/2 to 2 inches)

1/4 cup yellow mustard

1/3 cup coarse brisket rub

1/2 cup barbecue sauce

1/4 cup honey



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- **1.** Pat the roast dry with paper towels; trim away any big fat chunks. If the roast has an end that tapers to less than 1 inch in thickness, trim it back so the minimum is more than 1 inch thick. Trim away any rough edges or small chunks of meat hanging off the main roast.
- **2.** Smear a thin layer of mustard over the entire roast. The mustard taste won't remain, but it binds the seasonings. Liberally sprinkle the entire roast with the brisket rub. Firmly press the rub into the meat with the palm of your hand. Do not rub the seasonings in; press them in.
- **3.** Put the seasoned roast into a pan; refrigerate for 1-4 hours.
- **4.** Remove the roast from the refrigerator; place it on a smoker or pellet smoker heated to 200 F. Smoke the meat for 1 1/2 hours: then increase the heat to 250 F.
- **5.** When the roast reaches an internal temperature of about 165 F, remove it from the smoker. Lay it on heavy duty foil; fold the foil's edges upward to make a "boat" reaching as high as the meat's edges. Do not wrap the edges around the roast. The boat's job is to hold the juices in.
- **6.** Return the meat to the smoker; keep the

temperature at 250 F until the meat reaches an internal temperature of about 200 F. The roast should be temperature probe tender; when the probe slides out like it's in soft butter, the meat is done.

- **7.** Remove the roast; keep the smoker hot. Let the roast rest, uncovered, for about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Cut it into 1 1/2-inch cubes. If the roast has a bone, it should pull away easily.
- **8.** In a bowl, combine the barbecue sauce and honey; lightly toss the meat cubes in the mixture.
- **9.** Place a pan on the smoker; add the meat cubes. Smoke the meat for about 30 minutes, or until the honey mixture caramelizes. Enjoy!











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Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9
10	T	T		11	T	T		12	T	†
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Across

- 1 Where Eagles and Falcons co-exist
- 4 A girl's best friend
- 7 Aunt, to Mom
- 10 Period of history
- 11 Turn-down in Toulouse?
- 12 Catch
- 13 Bog
- 15 Some
- 16 Flaunts
- 18 Elected
- 19 Frog unlucky at the racetrack
- 22 Animal fur
- 23 Wander aimlessly

- 24 Labor leader's cry
 - 26 1965 civil rights march site
 - 27 He sought the Seven Cities of Gold
 - 29 Snow runner
 - 31 Characterized by strong feelings
 - 33 Greetings
 - 34 Elevator chamber
 - 35 Zip
- 36 Orange veggie 37 A-bomb vardstick
- 38 Take shape

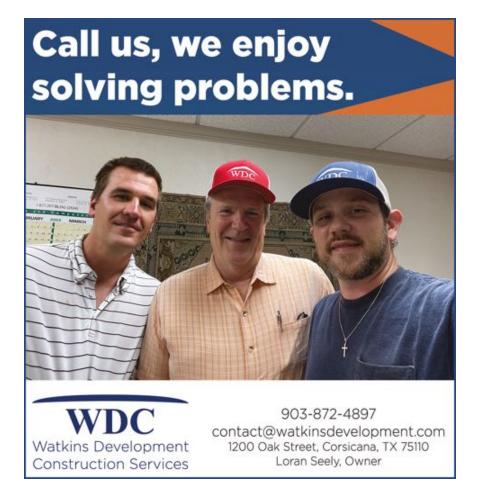
Down

- 1 "So, what else
- 2 Rejuvenate
- 3 Faith! Islam? Chic to convert?
- 4 Amazed
- 5 Arguments against
- 6 "The --- the beginning" (Churchill)
- 7 Construction site temporary framework
- 8 An atom, plus or minus an electron or two
- 9 One under cover

- 14 --- the world (Out of it)
- 17 Shoot
- 18 Apple core?
- 20 Flick made for the boob tube
- 21 Affirmative reply
- 25 Put up
- 26 Nasal grunt
- 28 Toe of the Arabian Peninsula
- 29 Bashful
- 30 Hyundai rival
- 32 Annex, maybe

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Online versions and solutions available at www.nowmagazines.com. From our Homepage, click on the Crossword-Sudoku tab. Click on a puzzle. Click on the See All button to view solutions.



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each month, but the most fun part

is looking for the scavenger hunt

objects!"









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10/1-10/6

Western Artist Roundup Show:

Monday-Friday: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Saturday: noon-4:00 p.m., Pearce Museum, 3100 W. Collin St. www.pearcemuseum.com.

10/2-10/27

42nd Annual Piecemaker's Quilt Show:

Days/hours vary. Warehouse Living Arts Center Gallery, 119 W. 6th Ave. www.visitcorsicana.com.

10/4, 10/11 & 10/18

Kinsloe House Luncheon:

Noon, Kinsloe House, 618 W. 3rd Ave. Membership information or reservations. (903) 654-0620.

10/7

I Love the '80s C&B Seen Gala:

6:00-11:00 p.m., The Cook Center, 3100 W. Collin St. cef@cisd.org.

10/12

175th Time Capsule Ceremony:

5:30-9:00 p.m., Corsicana Government Center, 200 N. 12th Street. (903) 654-4851.

10/17-10/22

The Miracle Worker:

Days/hours vary. Warehouse Living Arts Center, 119 W. 6th Ave. www.thewlac.com.

10/19

Witches' Night Out:

5:00-8:00 p.m., Downtown Corsicana. (903) 654-485I.

100W Meet the Artists:

Sculptors, Eugene Macki and Sabrina Basten, and author, Jameson Rich, will be featured. 6:00-7:30 p.m., MLK Center, 1114 E. 6th Ave. (408) 824-3015.

A Pair of lokers:

7:00 p.m., The Palace Theatre, 112 W. 6th Ave. www.corsicanapalace.com.

10/21

Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival:

Activities for all ages.
7:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.,
Downtown Kerens.
www.kerenscottonharvestfestival.com.

10/28

27th Annual Texas Country Reporter Festival:

Join Kelli and Bob Phillips, hosts of the weekly TV show, for this one-day arts and music festival, including a free concert with Neal McCoy. More than 350 booths and three food courts. Free. 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Downtown Waxahachie.

10/30

Boo on the Block:

3:30-5:30 p.m., Downtown Corsicana. (903) 654-485I.

Tuesdays

GriefShare:

All are welcome to attend this free grief recovery group designed for those who have lost a spouse, child, family member or friend. 10:00 a.m.-noon, Highpoint Church, 1700 N. 45th Street. (903) 875-6548.

Fourth Thursdays

Corsicana Newcomers Club Luncheon:

\$20. 11:00 a.m., Kinsloe House. Make reservations by **previous Monday**. Annie Avery, (714) 345-6707.

Second Fridays

Navarro County Retired Teachers Association:

9:45 a.m., Northwest Apartments Community Center. glyn84@hotmail.com.

Third Fridays

Better Garden Club:

9:00 a.m., Corsicana First Methodist Church, 320 N. 15th St. Facebook: Better Garden Club.

First Saturdays

Rainbow Girls & Pledges Masonic Youth Meeting:

New members welcome. 10:00 a.m., Corsicana Masonic Lodge, 201 N. 15th Street. ddean45@hotmail.com.

Second Saturdays

Coyote Squadron Meeting:

10:30 a.m., Corsicana Municipal Airport. Facebook: Coyote Squadron.

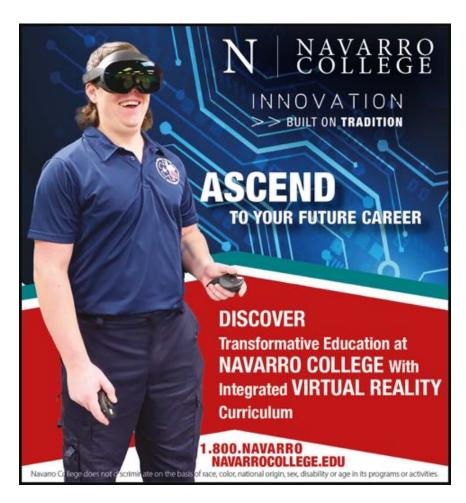
Third Saturdays

Navarro Fiber Friends:

11:00 a.m., Corsicana Senior Citizens Center, 919 W. Park Ave. (903) 654-4980.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com.







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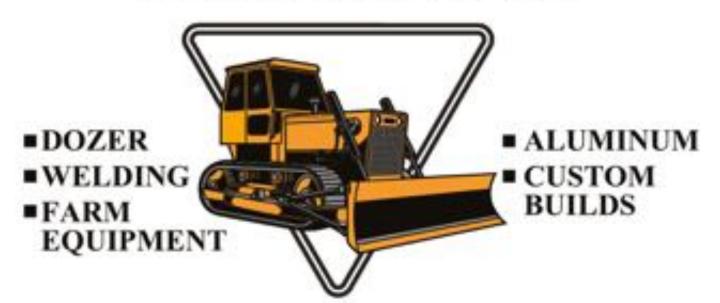
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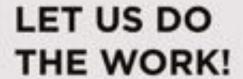
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