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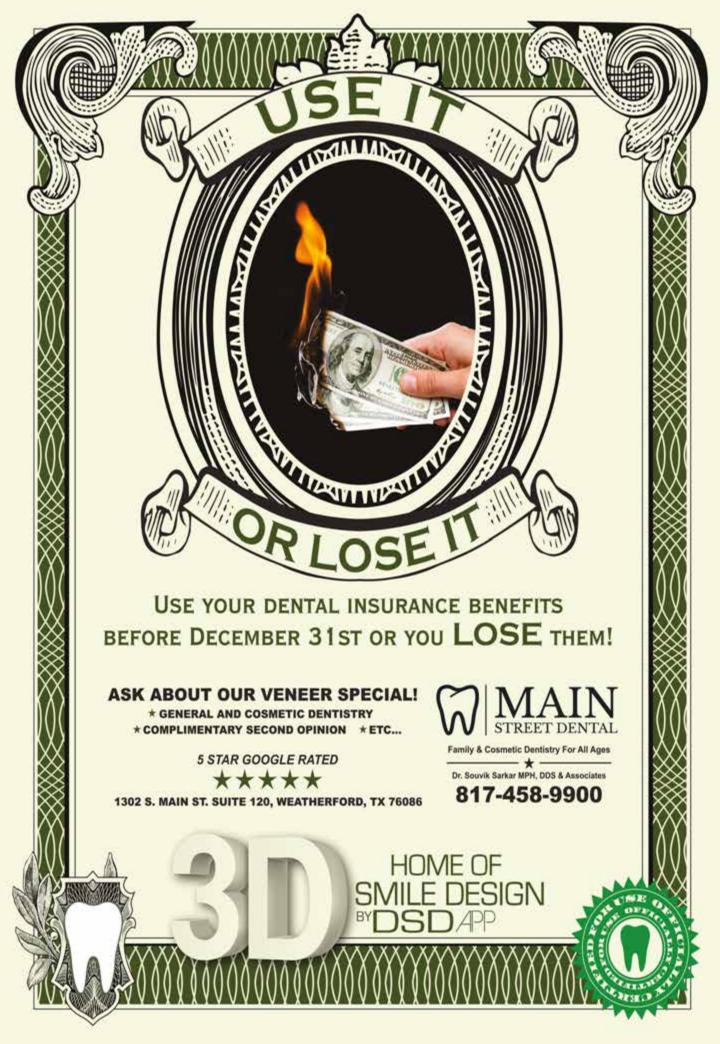
Located 6.5 miles north of Mineral Wells and east of US 281 on paved county road. Gently rolling to level terrain with scattered post oak, elm, live oak, & mesquite. Excellent improved grasses. Timbered game cover with trails. A 5.279+/- SF 6-5-3 sandstone two story, executive, luxury home with outstanding views. New pool, hot tub and deck. Three water wells, three ponds (one is an 8+ acre stocked small lake) and a dry creek. Deer and turkey.



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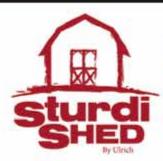


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ON THE COVER



After 30 years of marriage, Dr. Carolyn Troupe and John Pfiefer enjoy raptors in their backyard.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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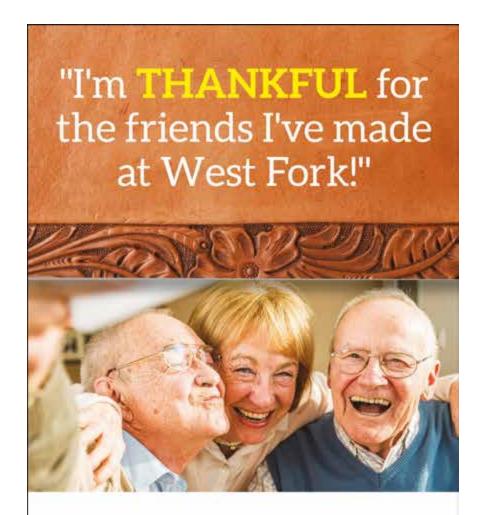
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Happy November!

Some people have a difficult time feeling happy around the holiday season for various reasons. Life doesn't always look pretty or come easily. Some of you may look in your pantry and think, "My Thanksgiving feast may consist of red beans and combread." What if it does? Can you find gratitude for a simple meal? I remember my childhood. My grandmother lived with us, and she somehow stretched a single chicken into dinner for three girls, one preteen boy and three adults.

Over the years, my sisters and I pondered the miracle of one chicken, cut and fried for so many people. We consumed a lot of mashed potatoes, bread slices and gravy with that meat. Red beans and cornbread often joined fried potatoes, pickle relish and fresh green onions. Mine and my grandmother's optional mayonnaise turned it into a gourmet meal. It's still one of my favorites on the comfort foods list. More dumplings than chicken, or rice laced with butter, milk and sugar accompanied by raisin-bread toast assured we never went hungry.

Perspective? We didn't have much. I could reflect on growing up poor. Instead, I thank God for teaching me how to live on less, to share the little in my pantry with those who have almost nothing and to thank Him for blessings. Regardless of circumstances, I never go hungry unless by choice. When I consider that many have far less, I don't feel so poor. In fact, I am rich and most thankful I can share what I have with those I love.

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"We have many interesting bird stories."

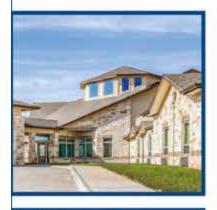
SCINATINE SCINAT

After retirement, many people enjoy relaxing on the patio and watching birds in the yard. Others long for the day when they have enough time to learn about feathered friends. John Pfeifer didn't wait for retirement. He started bird-watching in the late 1960s as a young man. Over the course of a 30-year marriage to Dr. Carolyn Troupe, he converted her to birding, although she admits being far less adventurous than her husband.

While Carolyn primarily enjoyed backyard birds, John preferred hiking trips, seeking rare birds. His love affair with fowl originated at 10 years old. Living in California as a child, northern flickers, from the woodpecker family, captured his attention. As the flickers dug for food, they mesmerized him by their unique actions compared to other birds. Later, he joined the Sierra Club and sighted birds during backpacking and even rock-climbing trips.

A travel agent when they lived in California, John planned to bring his business with him when they moved to Texas in 1997. But changes in the industry led him to attend education classes and earn a teaching certificate. He taught mostly high school and middle school from 2000 until 2017. Although retired, he sometimes substitutes. "I'm less adventurous now," he admitted. "Possibly because of age and her concerns."





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"I'm still a good sport," Dr. Troupe chimed in. A nurse educator who retired from Tarleton, she now spends most of her days quilting in a studio that provides ample windows to view a magnificent backyard.

Their love of nature led to a recent discovery. As they enjoyed their morning, a great deal of fussing arose in one of their trees. Used to squirrels and a variety of birds, John realized they had something different.

"I knew it wasn't a hawk," John shared. But larger than most birds, he believed a pair of raptors created a nest in their backyard. With the patience of an avid birder, he identified their guests as Mississippi Kites, complete with a fledgling in the nest.

Since Mississippi Kites normally prefer building nests near water in open woodlands and prairies with trees, discovering one in a backyard doesn't happen often. A social raptor, the kite tends to breed and travel with flocks. Known for wandering, an individual may turn up in odd places.

Carnivorous birds, they love insects, especially the larger ones like grasshoppers, cicadas, beetles and dragonflies. But they also go after bats, lizards and mice. Not the largest among raptors, the Mississippi Kite doesn't normally hunt for fish or larger prey.

As John and Carolyn employed patience during the weeks after the discovery, they marveled at the way the parents cared for their offspring. Instead of the father hunting while the mother sat on the nest, they took turns flying off to find food while the other stayed with the egg, which hatched into their beautiful baby.

"They've been interesting to observe," John stated. "The fledgling comes back to the family spot, so the parents can find and feed it. The baby calls to them. With smaller birds, they get out faster. After a couple of days, they fledge and are gone. This one has taken much longer."

Carolyn interjected, "The raptors seem less attentive. As the baby grew, they spent less time in the nest."

As with most birds, the babies approach adult size quickly. John said, "It's odd. The babies often appear bigger than the adults because they're fluffier." He agreed the behavior of the raptors differed from other birds they've enjoyed over the years.

"We have many interesting bird stories," Carolyn said.

When they lived in Grand Prairie, they put out a birdhouse with two openings. As they watched, two blue birds chattered, flitting from one opening to the other. "We decided they argued over which side to enter and build their nest, and we made up stories for them," Carolyn shared.

John shared a story about a trip to the Laredo Birding Festival. "A group of eight went in search of a rare bird near the Rio Grande. With our binoculars searching the area, we found ourselves surrounded by Border Patrol, Highway Patrol and the sheriff, while a helicopter hovered above us. They thought we were there to help people coming across the border," John related, laughing.

They also remembered a snake climbing a myrtle tree going after cardinal eggs. The entire bird neighborhood went bananas until John showed up to save the future babies.

The art of birding gives this couple wonderful memories and stories to regale anyone who wants to listen. "It's something I enjoy, although it takes patience and sometimes involves luck. And it trains your eye," John conveyed. "In the distance, you see movement, something unusual. Interesting and challenging. Birds are beautiful — all different."

Carolyn admitted, "Patience is one of John's virtues."

For those interested in birding, John encourages the hobby. He said, "Something new, it gets people out in nature. Take your time. Wander around, slowly and quietly. Birds don't appear if you're stomping in bushes."

While most birders hit the trails far earlier than hikers, anyone can spot birds even at home. Birds are most active in the early morning or just before sundown. Taking time to observe birds for more than a minute can bring a lifetime of pleasure, just as it has for John and Carolyn.

When not birding, he spends time reading while she quilts. They love traveling and visiting historical spots, and, of course, seeing what the closest feathered creatures might do next. NOW





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— By Lisa Bell

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At Rancher's Fed Beef, full sides of beef hang in an enclosed room, where butchers cut the meat to order. Visiting the shop provides a unique experience for customers, but the best part comes from quality meat at reasonable prices.

Truly a family business, Mike Palmer owns the store, but his wife, Lisa, helps run it. His son, Brandon, and

daughter, Kelly, join their parents in cutting beef and welcoming customers. "We're an old-fashioned butcher shop, selling Texas-swinging beef," Mike shared. "We're a unique company — a blast from the past. Straight from the slaughterhouse to us, you can watch us cut the beef."

Whether buying one steak, a bundle or an entire cow, Rancher's Fed Beef takes pride in remaining customerfocused and the cleanest food establishment around. And they carry other types of meat, such as pork, poultry, wild game, exotic beef, seafood, lamb and veal. During the holidays, they also specialize in turkeys, hams, prime rib and tenderloins. They carry some vegetables, too.

Mike grew up around cattle on the 14,000-acre Bar C Cattle Ranch in Decatur. His grandmother taught school, while his grandfather worked the ranch. His father owned meat markets in Burleson and Fort Worth, but never in Granbury. "My family's been in the meat business for almost 100 years," he said. "It's something I've done my whole life, and I really enjoy doing it."

When Mike and Lisa married in 1973, his father gifted him a jalopy and a job at a butcher shop in Phoenix, Arizona. Eventually, Mike retired, but after a couple of years, he got bored. His brother, David, lives in Parker County and had businesses there. He wanted Mike and his family to come home to Texas, so he returned and opened Rancher's Fed Beef.

In the business personally for over 50 years, Mike and his family treasure the interaction with their customers. "We have all types of people come in, meet a lot of people and make a lot of friends," he explained. "We have many repeat customers. Although we get people from other states, many drive from surrounding areas and the Metroplex."

"We're a unique company - a blast from the past. Straight from the slaughterhouse to us, you can watch us cut the beef."

Offering high-quality Texas beef with no hormones or antibiotics and no added MSG, Mike stated it comes to them fresh, and they cut it fresh. They also sell the bones and fat to those who want them.

While they custom cut meat the way you want it, they also guarantee tenderness and flavor. With custom sausage, jerky and even elk and venison, Rancher's Fed Beef provides options for all consumers. They support local organizations, such as women's shelters, and offer discounts to the VFW and always to first responders who shop with them.

Mike welcomes those who want to take the grand tour. They explain the different meats and ways to buy. "Everyone here is a cutter," Mike divulged. "Pick out your beef, and we can cut it while you wait. We always have fun."

Every Thursday through Saturday, they fire up the grill and make Texas barbecue, which they sell by the sandwich, by the pound or by the plate. Weekends get busy at the butcher's shop. Even then, they welcome everyone. Check their advertisement for specials and call or stop by. NOW



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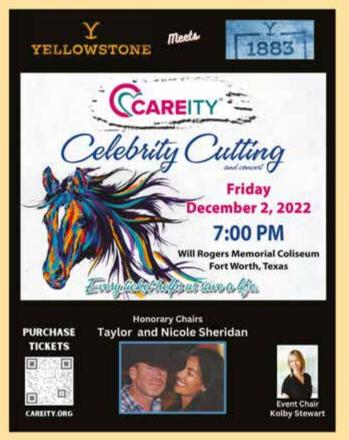
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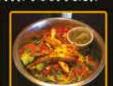


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Around Town



Winning artist of the month, Marti Bailey, shares her blue ribbon and

Violet Waters oil on canvas.

By Lisa Bell



Daughter and mother, Laura Gainous and Darlene Mayberry, volunteer at the annual Central Christian Church pumpkin patch.



Debbie Beauchamp enjoys shopping at HAPS, owned by her longtime friend, Flizabeth Louvat.

Zoomed In: Nancy Thurmon

A member of Parker County Heritage Society for more than a decade, Nancy Thurmon awaits the return of the beloved Candlelight Tour of Homes on the second Saturday in December. Nancy enjoys serving as a docent each year during the event. Like many, she's excited about the 39th annual tour. "It starts the season beautifully," she said. "I love the historic nature and architectural design of the homes. The immigrants who built these old Victorian homes added their craftsmanship throughout."

As a part of the Heritage Society, Nancy always has fun, and with so much history in Parker County, she constantly learns new things. "I meet so many interesting people through the society and the tour," she added. "And we can always use more docents."



The city of Weatherford wins six awards at the International Festivals and Events Conference for the Peach Festival and Parade of Lights.



NOW editors meet in person again and love the interaction.



AgriLife Extension's Kathy Smith always enjoys cooking demonstrations.

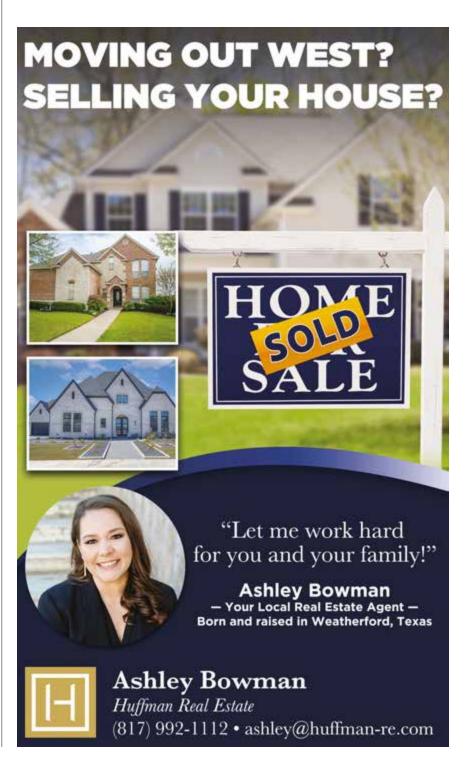


Bob Stuckey and Louie Lu enjoy an outdoors working lunch.



On her first birthday, Aela Strawn shops with her mother, Micayle.







"I was born and raised in Weatherford, Texas. In fact, I am the fifth generation to live in Parker County. I can't say I was always a good cook, but I improved over time. Fortunately, my nanny, Maxine Towles, and granny, Lena Jones, were some of the best cooks in the county," Kristi Brantley acknowledged.

She describes how she learned to make big, hearty meals by observing family members. Her daughter teases her by saying, "You put butter on butter." She went on to explain how her style of cooking has presented opportunities to win various awards at the Peach Festival and State Fair of Texas. Kristi concluded, "I don't mind sharing, but my recipe for award-winning Strawberry Jam will stay a secret!" NOW

Creamy Mushroom Soup

1 lb. mushrooms, sliced

1/2 medium onion, coarsely chopped

3 Tbsp. butter

1 Tbsp. bacon grease

2-3 carrots, chopped

2 grilled chicken breasts, chopped

6-8 cups chicken broth

I tsp. seasoned salt

1/2 tsp. thyme

Pepper, to taste

I cup heavy cream

1 1/2 cups instant rice (optional)

1. In a large Dutch oven, sauté the mushrooms and onions in the butter and bacon grease for 15-20 minutes until tender.

- **2.** Add in the carrots, chicken, chicken broth and seasonings. Bring to a boil; simmer 15-20 minutes.
- **3.** Add the cream; stir well. Let simmer 10 minutes.
- **4.** Add the rice; cook for 4-5 minutes. Add more broth, if desired; simmer 5 minutes. Serve hot!

30-minute Yeast Rolls

1 cup, plus 2 Tbsp. warm water

1/3 cup vegetable oil

2 Tbsp. active dry yeast

1/4 cup sugar

1 1/2 tsp. salt

1 egg

3 1/2 cups bread flour

- **I.** Heat the oven to 400 F.
- **2.** In a mixer, combine the water, oil, yeast and sugar. Allow it to rest 15 minutes.
- **3.** Using a dough hook, mix in the salt, egg and flour. Knead with the dough hook until well blended and the dough is soft and smooth. Add more flour if it becomes sticky.
- **4.** Form 2-inch balls; place them in a greased 9x13-inch pan. Allow to rest 10 minutes. Bake for 10 minutes, or until golden brown on top. Eat within 24 hours.

Mommas Best Ever Meatloaf

Sauce:

1/2 cup ketchup

1/3 cup brown sugar, packed

1/2 tsp. nutmeg

1 1/2 Tbsp. brown mustard

2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar

Meatloaf:

2 lbs. ground beef

2 tsp. pepper

2 eggs

1 sleeve crushed RITZ crackers

2 Tbsp. Italian Seasoning

I medium onion, chopped

- **1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F; grease 2 loaf pans.
- **2.** For sauce: In a small bowl, mix all the sauce ingredients; set aside.
- 3. For meatloaf: Combine the meatloaf

ingredients by hand in a large bowl. Mix in half the sauce mixture.

4. Split the meat mix into 2 loaves; place in the loaf pans. Spread the remaining sauce over the top. Bake 1 hour, or until done through.

Chicken on the Ritz

- 2 sleeves RITZ crackers
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of celery soup
- 4 cups chicken breast, cooked and shredded
- 2-3 cups cooked butter noodles (optional)

Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

1/2 cup heavy cream

- 1 Tbsp. poppy seeds (divided use) (optional)
- I stick butter, or more to taste
- 1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Line a greased 9x13-inch dish with one layer of crackers. Crush the remaining crackers; set aside.
- 2. In a large bowl, combine the soups, chicken, pasta and seasonings. Add in the heavy cream and 1/2 Tbsp. poppy seeds.
- 3. Pour the mixture over the layer of crackers. Pour the crushed crackers over the top of the mixture; sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 Tbsp. of poppy seeds.
- **4.** Melt the butter; pour over the cracker topping. Bake 40 minutes, or until hot through.

Granny's Peanut Butter Fudge

2 1/4 cups sugar

2/3 cup evaporated milk

1/2 cup peanut butter

1 tsp. vanilla

2 Tbsp. butter

- 1. Combine the sugar and milk in a buttered 2-qt. saucepan. Heat to 236 F over medium heat, stirring often and using a candy thermometer to reach the soft ball stage.
- 2. Remove from heat: cool at room temperature, without stirring, until lukewarm.
- 3. Stir in the peanut butter, vanilla and butter. Pour into an 8x8-inch greased dish. Cool; cut into squares.

Pumpkin Bread

1/3 cup non-fat dry milk

 $1 \frac{2}{3}$ cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

1/2 tsp. nutmeg

1/2 tsp. ginger

1/2 tsp. vanilla

3 eggs

1 Tbsp. orange peel, grated





- 1 1/3 cups brown sugar, packed 1 cup fresh pumpkin 1/3 cup milk 1/2 cup nuts, chopped
- **1.** Sift together the first 7 ingredients. **2.**In a separate bowl, mix the remaining ingredients. Blend in the dry mixture; pour into greased loaf pans.
- 3. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour.

Kembers Sweet Potato Casserole

Casserole:

- 4 cups sweet potatoes, cooked, peeled and mashed
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- Salt, to taste

Topping:

- I cup brown sugar
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- **1.** For casserole: Mix the casserole ingredients; place the mixture in a greased casserole dish.



2. For toppings: Mix the topping ingredients until crumbly. Sprinkle over the top of the potato mixture. Bake at 350 F for 30-40 minutes, or until the topping is candied.

The Best Mac and Cheese

- 1 lb. elbow macaroni
- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 6 Tbsp. flour
- l qt. milk
- I tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1 lb. Velveeta cheese, cubed (divided use) Crumbled, cooked bacon (optional)

- **1.** Place the macaroni in salted water; boil until tender, according to package directions. Drain; set aside.
- **2.** In a large pot, melt the butter; blend in the flour. Add the milk. Cook and stir over low heat until thick. Season with salt and pepper. Add 1/2 lb. of the cheese; stir until melted.
- **3.** Place the cooked macaroni in a greased 9x13-inch dish; pour the cheese sauce over the noodles.
- **4.** Top with the remaining cubed cheese; bake at 350 F for 30 minutes, or until hot and bubbly. For added flavor, sprinkle the top with bacon; heat for 5 more minutes.











Creating a border between Texas and Louisiana, Caddo Lake contains history, legends and amazing swamplands. Throughout the area, visitors find unexpected beauty and interesting features. According to the Caddo tribe, a massive earthquake formed the lake. However, geologists claim a 100-mile log jam in Louisiana flooded the low-lying basin, creating the lake. For many years, riverboats used the swollen waters, making nearby Jefferson a port city. Eventually, they cleared logs, and the lake level fell more than 10 feet, changing the shape and ending the riverboat industry. But the 26,810-acre lake thrived. In 1911, Gulf Refining Company drilled for oil, creating the first over-water platform, which produced 450 barrels of oil per day.

With a rich history, people still enjoy fishing on beautiful Caddo Lake. Known for massive bass and dozens of other fish species, the lake draws anglers. The Caddo Lake State Park, nearby Daingerfield State Park, and multiple RV parks provide spots for those who enjoy camping. For the less adventurous, numerous cabins on the lake offer a front-row view of wondrous nature.

From small fishing boats to kayaks and canoes, opportunities abound for visitors to get on the water. You might consider taking a boat tour with one of the local guides. Besides pointing out the best fishing spots, they share stories about the unexpected beauty of Caddo Lake. In many spots, lily pads dot the surface. During summer months, the water lilies bloom, showing their best colors while dancing in the lake breezes.

Land lovers might prefer a hike or a day of geocaching. While at Caddo Lake, look for multiple types of birds and fossils of paddlefish, or maybe spot a live alligator while hiking the many trails. As a precaution, swim only in designated areas. Don't feed or harass the creatures, and inform a park ranger or employee if you see the reptiles near swimming areas. Follow the rules for a worry-free adventure.

Bald cypress trees, abundant at Caddo Lake, have knees and beards, a fascinating phenomenon not possessed by other trees. The name comes from their appearance after shedding leaves. On land, the above-ground extensions of the root system grow straight, guarding the trees like tiny sentinels. When the trees grow in the water, though, the knees bend toward the parent tree. A straight knee near a watersurrounded cypress indicates a wayward root that belongs to a different tree.

Spanish moss hangs from the bald cypress trees, creating the mystical appearance we think of when picturing swamplands. Historic tribes used the moss for clothing, huts and bedding. A living organism, not truly moss, the plant absorbs nutrients from rainwater and air.

Near the state park, the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge offers horseback and hiking trails, plus wildlife observation areas. Rare or threatened species, such as the peregrine falcon, alligator snapping turtles and Rafinesque's bigeared bat, inhabit the area.

For those who believe, or want to, Caddo Lake remains an alleged home for the legendary Big Foot. Many people visit the lake with cameras and video recorders, searching for a glimpse of the elusive creatures. Do they exist? With enough bravery to search, perhaps you might see one when visiting Caddo Lake. Otherwise, enjoy the unexpected beauty. And if you get bored, take the short drive into Jefferson and enjoy all it offers. NOW

Editor's Note: For more information, visit https://tpwd.texas.gov/stateparks/park-information/alligatorsafety/alligator-safety and www.fws. gov/refuge/caddo-lake.

Photos by Lisa Bell.





Crossword Puzzle

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Across

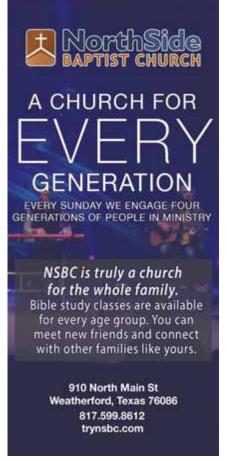
- 1 Sets owned by almost everyone
- 4 Archeological discoveries
- 9 "Nessun dorma" for example
- 10 To pray in Rome
- 11 Cheese coating
- 12 Caitiff
- 14 IRS expert
- 15 Outlaw
- 16 Wheeling was its first capital
- 17 Space-saving staircase
- 19 "--- o'clock scholar"
- 20 Like a young lady
- 22 Rounded thickly curled hairdo
- 24 Inputs data
- 27 100 square meters
- 28 Wolf Blitzer's channel
- 29 Sheltered side
- 30 Ball-park fare
- 32 Flimsy piece
- 33 Double's job
- 34 Doing the job now
- 35 Cogs
- 36 Skin lump

Down

- 1 Lewinsky's confidante
- 2 Vintage rite spread dressing on salad
- 3 Blue
- 4 Lens property
- 5 Soldering tool
- 6 Negative in the sticks
- 7 Set a limit
- 8 Start a game on court
- 9 Electric discharges
- 13 "Dangerous" McGrew of rhyme
- 15 Blockade
- 18 City Michael Caine blamed it on
- 19 Virgin Islands hours
- 21 Travelers' accommodation
- 22 Exclamation of surprise
- 23 Coldness of manner
- 20 Coldiness of mai
- 25 Tree exudate
- 26 Part of a clan
- 28 There's more to come
- 31 Owing
- 32 Impressive kind of factor

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11/1

Artistic Expressions Fabric Pumpkin Sachets:

Adult craft time at the library. 6:00 p.m., Weatherford Public Library. For more information, visit www.weatherfordtx. gov/142/Library.

11/7

Surf N Turf Shotgun and Fishing Raffle/Silent **Auction:**

All proceeds benefit the **Abandoned Cemetery** Association of Parker County. Join us for dinner. 5:00-8:00 p.m., Mesquite Pit, 1201 Fort Worth Hwy.

www.facebook.com/aca. parkertx/ or Chuck Dolbee, (817) 366-3308.

11/8

Election Day:

For site maps and candidate listings applicable to the November 2022 election, visit www.parkercountytx. com/118/Elections. 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

11/12

Coyote Chase Race:

Children and adults support the Weatherford College Foundation during the annual 5K and 1-mile run. Details and registration online. Races begin: 9:00 a.m., Weatherford College, 225 College Park Dr. For more information, visit www.wc.edu.

Veterans Day Parade:

Sponsored by Parker County American Legion Post 163 members. Line up: 8:30 a.m.; ceremonies: 9:30 a.m.; parade: 10:00 a.m., starts at Main St. via Roo Dr. For more details, visit www.weatherford-chamber.com.

Vendor/yard sale:

Hosted by Brock United Methodist Church. 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Brock UMC, 127 Lazy Bend Rd., Brock 76087.

For more information, visit www.brockumc.com/events.

11/15

Home for the Holidays:

Speakers, holiday tips, country store, lunch and more. Purchase \$12 tickets at the door or in advance. 10:00 a.m., Couts Methodist Church. 802 N. Elm. Contact Parker County Extension Office. (817) 598-6168.

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











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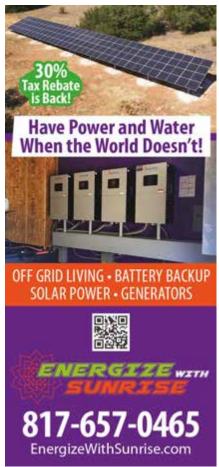
















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