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M A G A Z I N E

JANUARY 2026

Diving In!

Jaiden Barrett competes
in swim, while managing
her diabetes

In the Kitchen With
Paulett Cole

Also inside:
Scavenger Hunt

Featured Business:
NBI & Associates

Postal Customer

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Dr. Alan M Taylor II

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Martha B., Mansfield, TX

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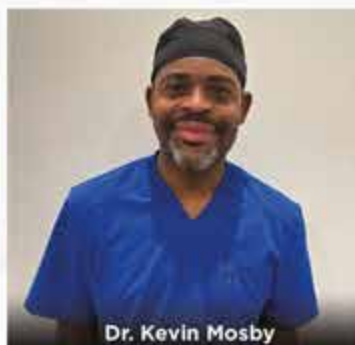




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ON THE COVER



In the pool, Jaiden Barrett finds joy and support.

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General Manager, Rick Hensley*

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*Managing Editor, Becky Walker
Burleson Editor, Emma McKay
Office Assistant, Kristin Bato
Editors/Proofreaders, Rachel Rich
Virginia Riddle*

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

*Creative Director, Chris McCalla
Artists, Kristin Bato . Beth Davis
Martha Macias . Anthony Sarmienta*

PHOTOGRAPHY

*Photography Director, Chris McCalla
Photographer, Lori Baur*

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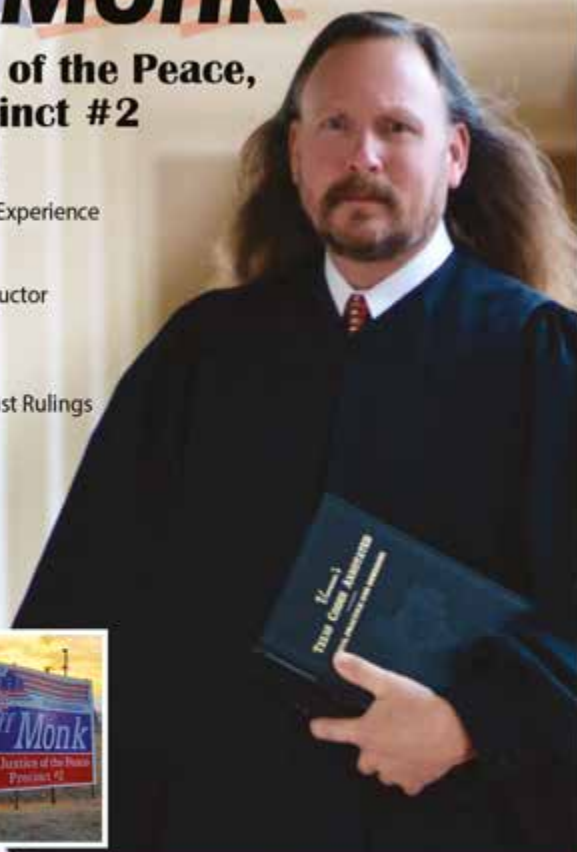
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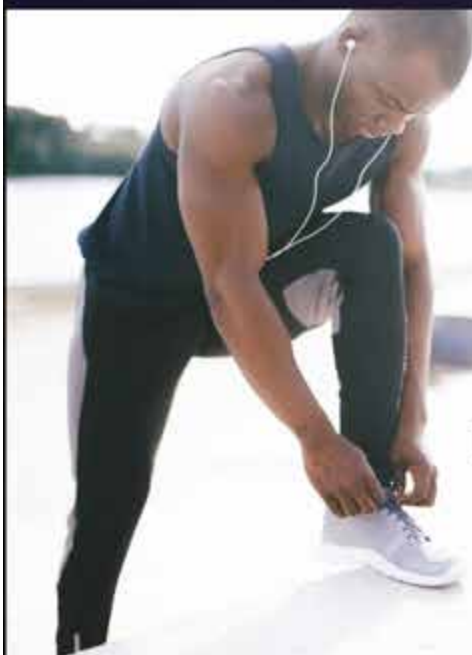
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“It’s so rewarding to get to do a sport,” Centennial High School freshman, Jaiden Barrett, expressed. At age 11, Jaiden received a diabetes diagnosis. “It affects every aspect of my life,” she continued. “I’m out here working every day, trying my best. Every day, my best might look different. It’s definitely still a learning process, and it’s still very frustrating, but I feel like we’ve come a long way.”

Over the past four years, Jaiden and her family have had to learn how to monitor her blood sugar and carb intake, so she can feel healthy. “If I eat carbs, then I have to take insulin for it. And if I don’t, then my blood sugar will spike. So, I have to take the right amount of insulin for the right amount of carbs, and calculate all the things together. I have to time everything right, so everything kicks in right. Exercise drops my blood sugar really easily. My blood will start in range at about 120, and within 15 minutes, it’ll be in the 70s or 60s. It’s hard to keep it in that perfect range.”

Despite the struggle that exercise caused, a couple of summers ago, Jaiden took up swimming. “My mom’s friend, who had formerly been on the swim team with Coach Martin, was teaching me how to swim and how to do all the different strokes.” When summer ended, Jaiden got too busy with school, and no longer had time to swim. She did not think about starting swimming again, until she attended an orientation event for rising freshmen.

At the event, Jaiden met Jeremy Martin, the CHS Swim Head Coach, who told her all about the team. “I was like, *Perfect. That is the thing I’ve been looking for.*” Despite practices having already started, Coach Martin invited her to the next one. “I had to wake up at 6:00 in the morning to go to practice at the BRiCK. I was like, *Oh my gosh, this better be worth it.* And it was.”

In order to practice and compete, Jaiden must pay hyper close attention to her blood sugar levels, so she can be safe in the water. While pushing herself during a difficult stroke at one practice, she suddenly felt light headed and struggled to breathe. “I got to the end of the pool, tried to do a flip turn, and I just couldn’t. I was freaking out. I couldn’t tell which direction I was

DIVING IN!

— By Emma McKay

going. My mind was not in the right place, so I had to get out. Coach [Mark] Kwast was like, 'Are you good? Where are your numbers at?'" After doing a manual finger prick test, Jaiden found her blood sugar level was at 37. "It does terrify me sometimes, being in the pool and being like, *Oh my gosh, I don't know if I'm gonna make it to the other side,*" she admitted.

When joining the swim team, Jaiden thought it would be an easy sport. However, it proved to be much more difficult, especially while juggling diabetes. "When I'm really putting in effort and trying to improve, it holds me back. I'll start getting into it, pushing myself, trying to get better, then my blood sugar will drop. And when it drops, I have to eat a fast-acting carb, but it still takes 15 to 20 minutes [to work]."

Through swim, Jaiden found support and belonging. She adores Coach Martin, Assistant Coach Kwast and all of her teammates. "Through the years of having diabetes, I have gotten so much judgment and bullying. I don't care what people think of me. Like, OK,

you're bullying a girl with diabetes? That's embarrassing for you," she expressed. "None of the swim team is like that. Every time they see me sitting out, everyone asks, 'Are you OK? You good? What's going on? What's your blood sugar? Is it high or low?' At the beginning of the year, basically, none of them knew anything [about diabetes]. Now, they're all starting to learn. It makes me feel like these people genuinely care, and I'm loved."

Although she feels like she should manage her health on her own, she greatly appreciates all the aid she receives from her peers and the adults around her. "Coach Martin and Coach Kwast keep me on top of it." Coach Martin keeps a kit filled with her diabetes supplies for when she forgets to bring her own, and he helps her do manual tests during swim meets.

"The biggest support that I've had is *my Nala,*" she exclaimed. "She's my grandma. She is my favorite person in the world." In addition to keeping supplies on hand for her when she visits, Nala reminds Jaiden to be kind to her mom whenever she gets on her

case about her diabetes. "My goal in life is to make my Nala proud of me. But she is 100 percent my biggest supporter. My mom is, too, but my Nala is my Nala."

After graduation, Jaiden hopes to pursue pediatric endocrinology. "I've always wanted to help people, and I've always wanted to work with kids." Inspired by the help, care and understanding of her own endocrinologist, Jaiden realized she could use her own experience with diabetes to help other kids and make them feel seen. "Maybe God gave me diabetes 'cause He wanted me to go down that path. Maybe this is my purpose in life."

Despite the struggle she's faced competing on the swim team with diabetes, Jaiden wants to keep doing it for as long as she can. "I look at the team, the coaches and the memories and how far I've come, and I say, 'How much further could I get?'" she admitted. "It's definitely hard work, and managing it with diabetes is a pain. But it has been something worth doing. I wouldn't change where I am." **NOW**



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— By Emma McKay



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In 1985, Nathan Beach, founder and owner of NBI & Associates, began his insurance career, working as a financial planning and investment consultant for a national mutual life insurance company. The following year, he started NBI & Associates to aid business owners in navigating financial planning and retirement plans. NBI's mission eventually settled into corporate benefit planning.

As the company grew, Nathan's wife, Jeannine Beach, and his son, Chief Operating Officer and Group Production

Director David Beach, joined as partners. After the recent merge of their own companies with NBI, Becky Tenseth and Darren Hooker also joined the board of partners. "All of our combined industry experience makes NBI what it is today," Becky said.

In 2021, NBI moved from its longtime residence in Downtown Fort Worth to Burleson, where many of its staff lived. In caring for their employees by this change in location, NBI exemplifies the care and consideration they possess for their clients, no matter the size of the business.

While they provide benefits to a diverse range of employers, NBI specializes in aiding the "main street" employers. "The businesses you see up and down main street that have 10-100 employees. That's who we take care of very well," Darren explained.

They have seen the frustrations smaller employers face when dealing with large benefit brokers, such as pushing extra charges on them compared to bigger employers or struggling to talk to a human representative on the phone. "We are big enough to compete with big brokers, but we're

still small enough to care,” Nathan stressed. “We care about saving people money. We look for relationships with people. We want them to trust us.”

NBI provides all of the same benefits, resources and supplemental assistance larger insurance brokers provide but with the personalized consideration only smaller operations can provide. “The first thing is figuring out what a company needs,” Nathan continued. “We try to explain what’s important to employers their size, and what they should be offering in a package of benefits. Once you have a decision on the type of insurance, you turn around and quote multiple different carriers’ best deal in the package.”

“All of our combined industry experience makes NBI what it is today.”

After employers choose their benefits package, the partners supply comprehensive education tools, so employees can fully and easily understand their coverage. As their slogan states: “Employee benefits just got easier!” During open enrollment, NBI offers on-location enrollment meetings to aid employees in signing up for their benefits and answering any questions they have. Through their interactive online portal, BerniePortal, employees can access and enroll in benefits plans, find care providers and manage their Health Savings Accounts or Flexible Spending Accounts.

“We have a support team ready to start taking on and fixing problems,” Nathan said. Should employees need help from their insurance carriers, they can circumvent the long hold times by calling NBI directly. “We help people at point of service, right when they call in.”

Although 95 percent of their business is conducted in the DFW area, NBI services employers all over Texas and in eight additional states. The partners at NBI & Associates are proud of the relationships they’ve maintained with the clients over the years, some of which they’ve worked with for decades. “We’re big enough to handle just about anybody’s needs,” Darren stated. “We’ve got some staying power. We’re committed to doing this.” **NOW**



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For Bakery



Zoomed In: Jimmy Papai

By Emma McKay

After his grandfather passed away, Jimmy Papai inherited decades' worth of storage boxes filled with antiques that had been bought at garage sales. As his collection grew, Jimmy started selling his findings at the Burleson Antique Mall. "Going through tubs full of all kinds of things is fun because you don't know what you're gonna get. It's like Christmas every day."

In his downtime, Jimmy, who also inherited his playful spirit from his grandfather, enjoys spending time at the batting cages, the golf course and arcades with classic games when he can find them. "I just like to play games," he said. "There's a lot of things to do [in Burleson]. It's a nice place to be."



Aaron and George Stacy practice for the upcoming flag football season.



Ian Moxley wins first place at the Esports Fall Invitational Smash Ultimate.



The Barrientos family decorates pine cones at Christmas at the Library.



The CHS Baseball team spreads holiday cheer at BTX-MAS.



BISD student-athletes Mardie Frye, Carly Reed and Fischer Stalberger sign letters of intent for their choice universities.



Bonnie and Alden Cummings brave the cold to play at Centennial Park.



Rebecca C. checks out her next winter read.

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CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH PAULETT COLE

— By Emma McKay



“At age 11, mother started working. I would call grandmother, and she taught me to cook over the telephone,” Paulett Cole said. “I’ve been loving it ever since.” From there, she continued to teach herself how to cook and bake. “Grandmother and mother were wonderful cooks. Mother made everything look good. She said, ‘If it looks good, it will taste good.’ When I was a teenager, if my baked good didn’t look right, it would go straight in the garbage without me even tasting it!”

These days, Paulett finds her inspiration in baking things for her children and grandchildren. “I used to make wedding cakes and petit fours when I was younger. I even made my daughter’s and my son’s wedding cakes!” **NOW**

Strawberry Cake

- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup flour
- White cake mix
- 1 3-oz. pkg. strawberry Jell-O
- 1 1/2 sticks butter
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 23.2-oz. tub frozen sliced strawberries in sugar (divided use)

Icing:
 1 lb. box powdered sugar
 1 stick butter, melted
 1 tsp. vanilla

1. For the cake: Mix the dry ingredients; add

the wet ingredients, reserving 2/3 cup of the frozen strawberries.

2. Place in a well-greased 12x18-inch pan. Bake at 350 F for 45-50 minutes, or until a tooth pick comes out clean.

3. For the icing: Mix the reserved 2/3 cup frozen strawberries, powdered sugar, butter and vanilla together; pour on the cake after it has cooled. The icing will be thin.

Breakfast Pies

- 1 lb. mild breakfast sausage, cooked and drained
- 1 8-count pkg. small frozen pie shells (I use Dutch Ann brand.)
- 6 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- Salt, to taste

- Pepper, to taste
- 1 cup cheese, finely shredded
- 4 strips bacon, cooked and cut up into small pieces

1. Divide the breakfast sausage into 8 even portions; place it in the bottom of the pie shells.
2. Mix together the eggs, heavy cream, salt, pepper and cheese. Evenly pour the mixture into each pie shell. Top with the crumbled bacon.
3. Cook at 350 F for 30-40 minutes, or a little longer if you like them more browned.

Chocolate Chip Banana Bread

- 4 large eggs, beaten
- 2 cups mashed ripe bananas
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2/3 cup buttermilk
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 cups mini chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans (optional)

Icing:
 1 1-lb. box powdered sugar
 2/3 stick butter, melted
 1/3 cup water
 1 tsp. vanilla
 1/2 cup mini chocolate chips, for garnish

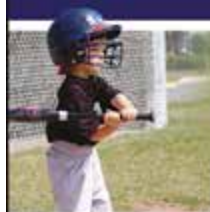
1. For the cake: Grease 4 8.5x4.5-inch loaf pans well.
2. Mix the eggs, bananas, oil and buttermilk together.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, sugar, baking soda and salt.
4. Gently stir the flour mixture into the banana mixture until combined.
5. Fold in the chocolate chips and pecans, if using.
6. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour and 20 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.
7. For the icing: Mix all the ingredients together. If it's too thick, add 1 tsp. more of water. Pour over warm bread. You can even poke holes in the bread for the icing to run into if you like. Top with the rest of the icing and sprinkle with chocolate chips.



Registration is OPEN for the Following Sports:

- **Baseball** - Closes January 14th
HS division closes January 31st
- **Softball** - Closes January 14th
- **Buddy Ball** - Closes January 14th
- **Volleyball** - Closes February 8th

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Emily Luke, winner of the \$50 cash prize from NOW Magazines, said, "My kids, Nathan and Christina, and I look forward to the *BurlesonNOW* Magazine each month. We love to play the scavenger hunt game and have so much fun looking over the magazine."



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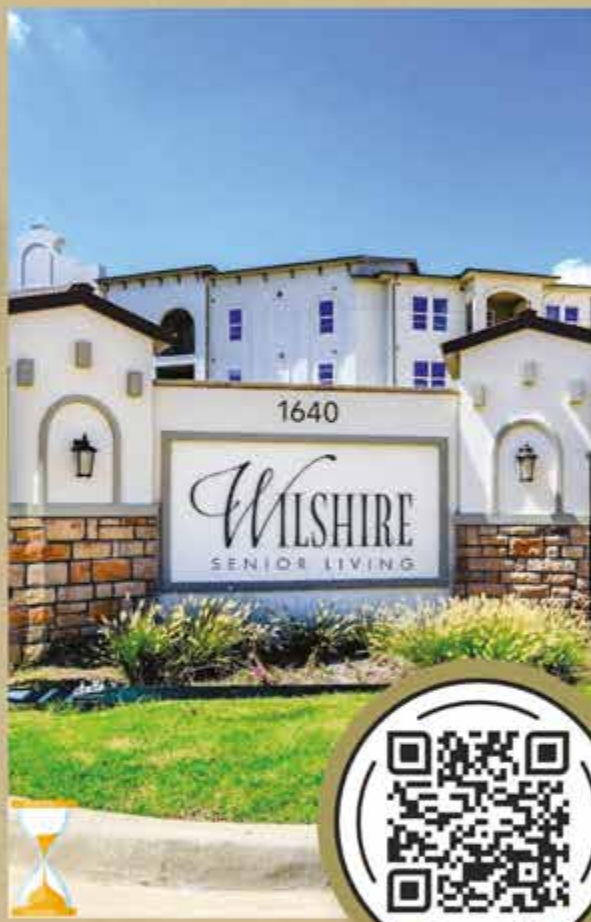
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