# WeatherfordNOW

FEBRUARY 2022

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# Rattled

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Jason Hill, thins
snake populations

In the Kitchen With Aldred and Nina D'Souza

Also inside: Crossword/Sudoku

Featured Business: Bevis Family Pest Services

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Rattlesnakes get hearts pumping, exhilarating those who search for their dens.

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#### ON THE COVER

Unrattled, Jason Hill takes pride in finding rattlesnakes.

#### Photo by Constance O'Bryan.

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## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

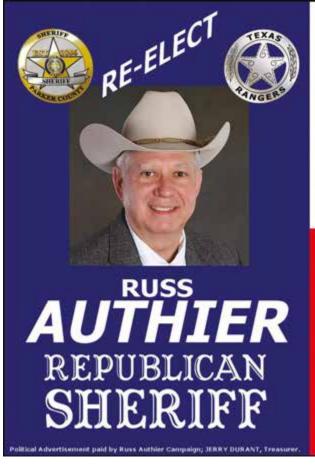
Remember last year?

How dare I bring up 2021's snowmageddon? Short-lived for sure, but oh so fierce. While we pray never to see sub-zero temperatures in our area again, hopefully, we learned from the experience. When we gain insight from circumstances, we always benefit, no matter how awful the situation seems. The trick — seeing with a new perspective and our hearts when our minds only see catastrophe. In all I learned during the past few years, none ring truer than two resounding truths — take nothing for granted and learn contentment where you are.

We have no promises for tomorrow. No guarantee of toilet paper on shelves, water coming from our faucets or electricity streaming from outlets with accompanying heat pouring from furnaces. Can we survive those things? We did, although in the throes of near panic, we wondered. I became extra grateful for a wood-burning fireplace, gas stove and oil-burning lamps. Mostly, I realized none of those things mean much without family and friends to share trials.

In a world of striving for more, I need contentment in my reality. With dwindling rolls of tissue, less does the trick. In the absence of heat and light, who cares about wall-to-wall television? We reacquaint ourselves with games, stories and imagination during those times, left wondering why we don't do that more often. I don't have all the answers, but as I face a cold winter (although not arctic), I pray to keep the experiential memories that taught me residual lessons I never want to forget.

Happy February!



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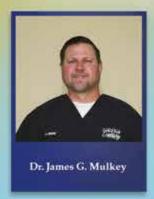
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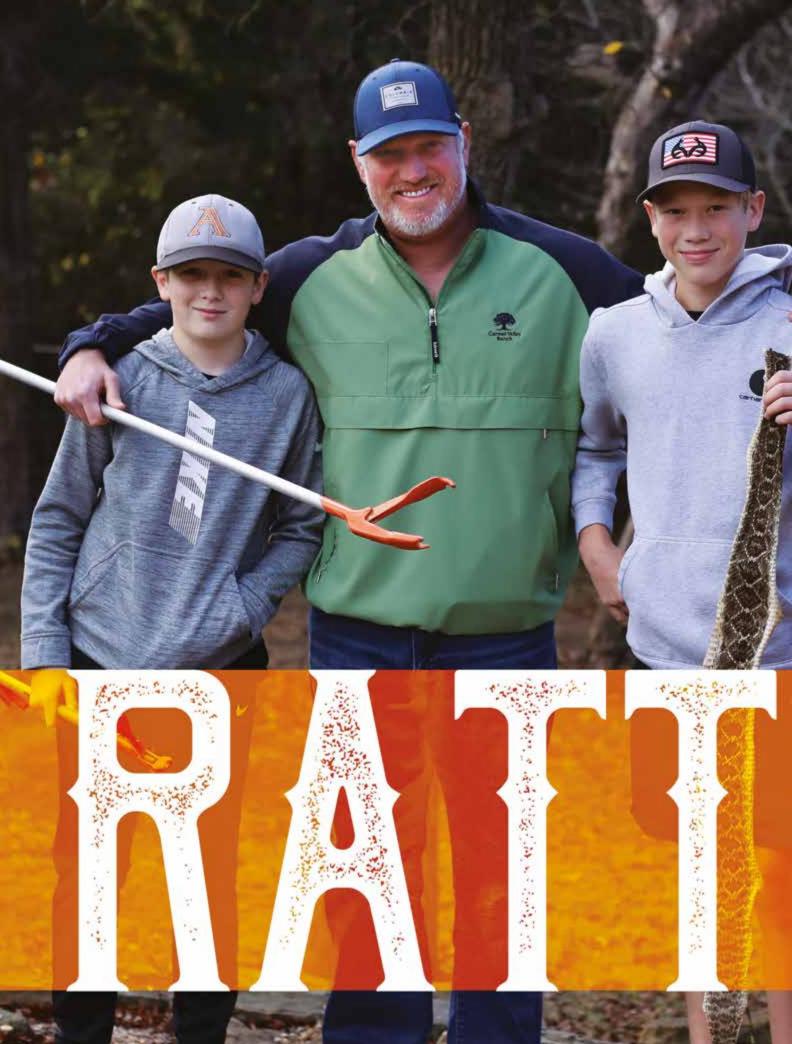


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One March weekend, during the infamous Rattlesnake Roundup, Jason Hill joined a guided hunt. On an arid ranch near Sweetwater, Texas, the group of hunters gathered around a rock formation. As the unmistakable sound of rattling intensified, they collectively held their breaths while he thrust in a specially designed grabber known as snake tongs. Moments later, in the claws of the retracted equipment, a rattlesnake writhed, trying in vain to free itself. Plopping the reptile into a 30-gallon trash can, Jason exhaled and became hooked on hunting rattlesnakes.

An eighth-generation Texan and longtime hunter, Jason enjoys the thrill of any hunt. "I have even caught alligators," he shared. Like anyone who spends time in nature, Jason developed a respectful fear of venomous snakes early in life. His uncle had pet rattlers, and they always fascinated Jason. The distinctive sound still captures his attention, but not for the reason most people take notice. Of all the prey he ever pursued, Jason chooses the feared Texas serpent as his favorite. "Hunting rattlesnakes is the most exciting rush you can get," he said.

Three or four years ago, the trip to West Texas solidified his desire to hunt rattlesnakes, which also reside in Parker County. He admits helping Aledo neighbors rid themselves of rattlesnakes and other nonvenomous reptiles. Although he doesn't have to venture far to find his prey, Jason does most of his hunts in Brownwood and Grayson County. He still enjoys attending Sweetwater's Rattlesnake Roundup, and because of his skills, he can now serve as a guide.

Contrary to popular beliefs, rattlesnakes prefer not to bite people. They'd rather expend their venom on small animals they intend to consume. Like any wild creature, they will defend themselves when threatened.







Over the years of catching snakes, none of them have bitten Jason, although he admitted his uncle received three bites. The first one happened when he demonstrated milking one of his pets, which is probably why Jason leaves the milking to experts. "I've met men in their 70s who hunted snakes all their lives and have never got bitten," he said.

When Jason goes on a hunt, he normally catches five to 10 rattlesnakes. They release the smaller ones and keep the larger reptiles, bringing them back to Aledo. About three or four times a year, his return from a trip brings out neighbors for a celebratory party. "We don't waste anything," he explained. "We tan the hides and eat the meat. Our sons have jars of heads preserved in alcohol. In other parts of the world, they swear cobra blood heals all kinds of diseases."

When tanned, a rattlesnake skin feels soft and smooth to the touch. The hunters can display them, but more often they make hatbands, belts or some other accessory. Jason also has a stuffed rattlesnake, coiled as if ready to strike. "A rattlesnake wriggles for hours, days, even weeks after beheading them," he stated. "I had one without a head or guts that moved into a strike position."

Now 14 and 11, Jason's sons, Miller and Grayson, started helping their dad early in life. In training his sons, he used nonpoisonous varieties for their protection, and he also taught them to recognize different snakes. Learning the skills of capturing snakes, they maintain a healthy fear, but rattlesnakes don't terrify them. He recalled one morning when they went to a neighbor's house,





caught a rattler, put him in a trash can and still made it to school and work on time.

Dens usually face south down holes that lead to deep places. Most often found under rocks, snakes tend to hibernate in the winter. Spotting a rattlesnake during November to early March indicates the probability of a nearby den. Jason will thin out a den for anyone who contacts him. "As long as you don't blow up the den, rattlesnakes return to the same one for decades, maybe hundreds or thousands of years," he shared. "They eat rats and rodents, so they have a good purpose. We've also seen hog droppings and remains where the hogs ate the snakes."

Of course, only those who hunt the vipers want to encounter them, and if you do, try to avoid a bite. "Antivenom is very expensive," Jason said. Unless hunting them, if you come across a rattlesnake, slowly back away. No fast, jerky movements. Find a snake person, like Jason, to come get it. Although rattlesnakes exist in the area, 90 percent of the calls he gets involve nonvenomous snakes. But he doesn't mind ridding a home of those either.

For those interested in hunting rattlesnakes, you need little equipment to start. He recommends Whitco Snake Tongs (manufactured in Weatherford). "They're the best snake grabbers in the world, made from aerospace metals," Jason touted. "You don't want cheap ones from Amazon when messing around with rattlesnakes." Other than that, boots, gloves and a big trash can will suffice — along with a mountain of nerves made of steel. NOW

Editor's Note: To contact Jason about removing a snake, email elvisp\_bucks@yahoo.com. Learn more about the Sweetwater Rattlesnake Roundup, March 11-13, 2022, at www.rattlesnakeroundup.net.





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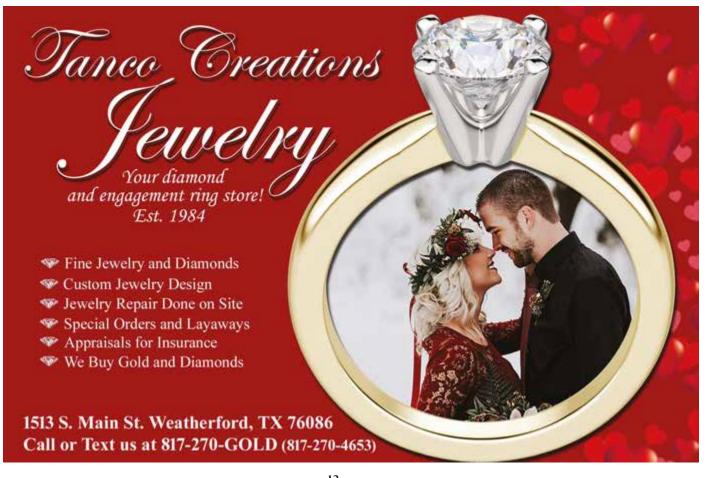
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# **Around Town**



#### Zoomed In: By Lisa Bell Julie and Alfred Casaccia

Alfred and Julie Casaccia spent an afternoon downtown, enjoying food from one of the restaurants. Three months ago, they made a choice to leave the West Coast and head east. After checking out several communities, they settled on Weatherford as their family's new home. "We chose Weatherford for several reasons," Julie conveyed. "We liked the schools, and it's an easier commute for Alfred." He works in Fort Worth for Trader Joe's. Loving the community and Texas, they look forward to a bright future, different from out west. "You don't leave what you knew all your life by choice and bring it with you," Julie said, smiling, and Alfred agreed.



The Silvas family spends an afternoon at Holland Lake Park.



Kaeden Novikoff stops playing for a photo at Cherry Park on an unseasonably warm winter day.



Weatherford College opens the new Nan and Bob Kingsley Building.



Busy working at Friends by Choice, Elizabeth Ellis pauses for a photo.



Congratulations to Deborah Jogie-Cregger, Weatherford College Staff Member of the Year 2021.



Easier on knees and joints, James and Michele Gano take a bike ride for exercise.



The Hunter family visits the park despite chilly weather.







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James R. Plowman jamesplowman@gpfcnet.com

Misty Engel mistyengel.gpfc@gmail.com

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**BusinessNOW** 

# **Bevis Family** Pest Services

- By Lisa Bell

**Bevis Family Pest Services** Aledo, TX 76008 (817) 441-2847 (BUGS) Facebook: @bevisfamilypestservices

Hours: Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

For more than three generations, since 1978, Chris Bevis' family has served Parker County as pest management specialists. Previously, his father, Randy Bevis, ran the business as Fort Worth Tree and Pests Specialists. In 2018, Chris purchased the pest service side of the company, and Bevis Family Pest Services began a new journey.

Although the named changed, Chris continued his father's legacy of professionalism, honesty and community-focused principles. They provide general pest control services for both



residential customers and businesses. Besides rodent and other pest protection inside buildings, the company offers protection for lawns against mosquitoes and fire ants.

Serving west Fort Worth up to Azle and out to Brock, Aledo and everything in between, they cover most of Parker County. While winter months require assistance with rodents and other pests seeking shelter from cold weather, spring redirects the need to controlling outdoor pests.

"In April, we get rolling for fire ants," Chris said. "You may want to get on a program early." Fire ants in the area multiply right after spring rains and again when the summer temperatures start cooling. By having a regular maintenance program in place, home and business owners can take control of fire ants before they become a major issue.

"The people who work for me set us apart in the industry," Chris shared. "I can teach anyone with a bit of guts and intelligence how to do the job. Building trust and consistency isn't as easy. It means sifting through a lot to find those who

are personable and trustworthy. The office manager, Emily, and lead technician, Andrew, make the difference."

Chris wants to make sure customers feel comfortable with his employees, getting the same person whenever they call. When a technician goes into a home or business, he understands the need to have a dependable person. "People love interacting with our team."

By having a regular maintenance program in place, home and business owners can take control of fire ants before they become a major issue.

Chris attributes much of his success to the communities in Parker County and the people who continually support local businesses. "There's something special about the people in this community," he said. As a local resident and business owner, he supports both Weatherford and East Parker County Chambers. He also contributes to the Center of Hope. When he learned of Born Again Sports Equipment, it seemed like a good fit for the company. The organization provides used sports equipment to kids who otherwise might not be able to play.

To adequately prevent issues with pests, Chris recommends maintaining a regular plan. Seal all entry points. Check caulking once a year. These two preventive measures not only help keep pests out of the building, they also help with moisture and efficient air conditioning or heating. Airflow and sunshine in flowerbeds and at the foundation also help prevent infestations. Keep eight inches beneath shrubs and 16 inches between the wall and shrubs.

In addition, Bevis Family Pest Services offers quarterly pest control treatments. Using a regularly scheduled program assists home and business owners with making sure personal efforts reach a higher level. As spring approaches, prepare by calling early. NOW





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Newlyweds Aldred and Nina D'Souza enjoy partaking in delicious dishes offered at area restaurants, but they prefer cooking together at home. Aldred is originally from India, so many of their dishes are inspired by spices such as red chili powder, turmeric and cinnamon. Seafood is abundant in Aldred's childhood home on the west coast of India, but he adapted his cooking style to include foods readily available in Texas.

Nina, who grew up in Stephenville, became more interested in cooking as their relationship blossomed after meeting at church and ballroom dancing. Many of Nina's dishes are inspired by her cookbook collection of regional recipes created by women from area churches and mothers of childhood friends. Aldred and Nina use fresh herbs from their garden to flavor favorite dishes. Now

#### **Baked Lamb**

- 4-5 Tbsp. cold-pressed olive oil
- 2-2.5 lbs. lamb shoulder, chops or combination
- 1 tsp. turmeric
- I tsp. red chili powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- Juice from 1 lime
- **I.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Cover the bottom of a glass pan or roasting pan with foil. Add the olive oil to cover the bottom of the pan; add the meat.

- **2.** In a small bowl, combine the turmeric, chili powder and salt. Pour lime juice over the meat.
- **3.** Note: It is recommended to wear rinsed disposable kitchen gloves for the next process. Rub the spice mixture onto the meat. Marinate 10-15 minutes.
- **4.** Cover the pan with foil; bake at 350 F for I hour, or until the meat is thoroughly cooked.

#### **Baked Potatoes and Yams**

2 yams or organic yams

- 2 Irish potatoes or organic Irish potatoes 1 Tbsp. olive oil Salt, to taste Pepper, to taste Sour cream (optional)
- **1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Wash the yams and potatoes; cut out eyes and bruises. If using non-organic yams or potatoes, peel them. Dry the yams and potatoes; stab each one 3-4 times with a sharp knife. Rub each with olive oil.
- **2.** Line a baking sheet with foil. Place the yams and potatoes on the baking sheet; bake at 350 F for about 45 minutes to 1 hour until soft depending on the size of the yams and potatoes. Season with salt and pepper; add sour cream if desired.

#### Cabbage

- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 Tbsp. coconut oil
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- I serrano pepper, cut into 2 slices lengthwise
- 1/2 green cabbage, shredded
- 1/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

- **1.** In a pot, boil the water. Add the coconut oil, salt and serrano pepper halves; stir. Add the shredded cabbage.
- 2. Cook for a few minutes: decrease the heat to medium: cover with a lid. Cook for another 5-7 minutes. Sprinkle with shredded coconut before serving.
- 3. Note: you may use this same method on fresh or frozen green beans, peas or radishes.

#### Yam Casserole

#### Filling:

PAM or other cooking spray 4-5 medium-size sweet potatoes, peeled, chopped and boiled I large egg, beaten

1/4 cup brown sugar, packed

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. cinnamon

1 14-oz. can Eagle Brand Milk

1/2 stick butter, softened

#### Topping:

I cup walnuts or pecans, chopped 1/4 cup brown sugar, packed 1/4 cup flour

1/2 stick butter

- **1.** For filling: Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray a 9x13-inch glass baking dish with cooking spray.
- 2. In a large bowl, mash sweet potatoes; add the egg and remaining ingredients. Mix well; spread the mixture evenly into the bottom of the prepared baking dish.
- **3.** For topping: In a bowl, mix together the nuts, brown sugar and flour. Sprinkle on top of the sweet potato filling. Cut the butter into small bits; sprinkle across the topping. Bake at 350 F for about 30 minutes, or until bubbly.

#### **Cornbread Dressing**

Turkey giblets from thawed turkey 2 8.5-oz. boxes combread or Lamb's Yellow Cornmeal (Bake 1 pan according to pkg. directions.)

1 32-oz. box chicken broth

1/2 cup bacon grease or turkey drippings

- 3-4 Tbsp. fresh rubbed sage, chopped
- 2-3 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. black pepper
- 1-2 tsp. salt
- 3-4 boiled eggs, chopped into large pieces
- 3-4 celery sticks, chopped
- I large onion, chopped
- **I.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. In a pot, boil the turkey giblets, including the heart, gizzard







and liver. You can save 1/4 cup of the boiled giblets for the Giblet Gravy recipe.

- **2.** Add the baked cornbread to a large bowl. Pour in the chicken broth; mix well until combined. Add the bacon grease or turkey drippings; combine.
- **3.** Add the sage and the next 3 ingredients; mix well. Add the eggs and remaining ingredients; mix well. The dressing should be very soupy.
- **4.** Pour into a greased, 9x13-inch glass baking dish; bake for 1 hour, or until welldone and browned.



#### **Giblet Gravy**

I-2 Tbsp. bacon grease
I-2 Tbsp. flour
I to I I/2 cups milk
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
I-2 boiled eggs, chopped
I/4 cup turkey giblets, cooked and chopped

- **1.** Add the bacon grease to a skillet on medium heat; add the flour. Mix well using a wooden spatula until combined.
- **2.** Slowly add the milk, stirring constantly until it begins to thicken. Add the salt, pepper, eggs and giblets. Mix well; serve.

#### **Cream Cheese Pound Cake**

Oil cooking spray with flour

- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1 1/2 cups butter
- 3 cups sugar
- 6 eggs
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla
- 3 cups all-purpose or cake flour
- **I.** Preheat oven to 325 F. Spray a heavy Bundt pan with oil and flour combination cooking spray or grease and flour the pan.

- **2.** In a large bowl, mix together the cream cheese and butter. Mix in the sugar gradually.
- **3.** In a small bowl, break the eggs. Add the eggs to the cream cheese mixture; combine. Add the vanilla; combine well. Add the flour; combine.
- **4.** Using a scraper, pour the batter into the greased and floured Bundt pan. Bake at 325 F for 1 hour and 20 minutes.
- **5.** To check for doneness, insert a sharp knife about 3-4 inches in the middle. Do not mistake moistness of the cream cheese for being raw. The knife will clearly show batter if it is underbaked.
- **6.** Once baked thoroughly, remove from oven. Using a plastic knife, gently loosen the cake edges.
- **7.** Put a serving cake plate on top of the Bundt pan; using potholders, grab the Bundt pan and cake plate and flip upside down. Remove the Bundt pan from the cake; serve.



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# **Crossword Puzzle**

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		34	+	+		35	+		+	

Solutions on page 28

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#### Across

- 1 Form
- 6 Most of the US Army holds this rank
- 9 "Stick close to your desks and never go —, ..." (Gilbert and Sullivan, HMS Pinafore)
- 10 His 'n ---
- 12 Murder
- 15 That's ridiculous!
- 16 Reward for waiting
- 17 Reproduced without correction
- 18 Sushi wrap
- 19 What breadwinners bring home
- 22 Little ones are allegedly made of sugar and spice
- 23 Smoother
- 24 It sucks, in short
- 25 Recyclables container
- 26 Connecting
- 30 Classic jazz song Amy Winehouse's last recording, with Tony Bennett
- 32 Contemptible individual
- 33 Julia Roberts has been one since 2010
- 34 Welkin

Medium

35 Extra map section

#### Down

- 1 Male only
- 2 Render useless
- 3 Admin. aide
- 4 She played Snoop in "The Wire"
- 5 Start gently
- 6 Bilko's --- Silvers
- 7 Marshland
- 8 Meteorite pockmark
- 11 Hooch producer
- 13 Sort of fly
- 14 He played Dr. Foreman in "House"
- 18 Starts being effective
- 19 Crisp lettuce
- 20 Very funny
- 21 Buyable apartments
- 22 Female Indian Prime Minister
- 24 Rouge, rosé or blanc, on some meous
- 26 "The --- is a Tramp"
- 27 They are always charged
- 28 Au naturel
- 29 Surfeit
- 31 Jabber

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# Sudoku Puzzle

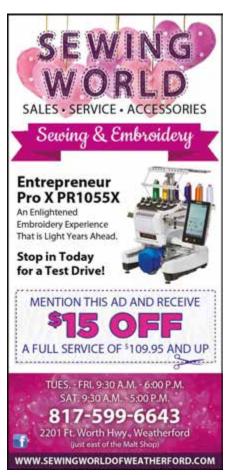
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Solutions on page 28









#### 1/28-2/13

#### **Tuna Does Vegas:**

Live stage play presented by TOTS. **Fridays and Saturdays: 8:00 p.m.; Sundays: 2:00 p.m.,** Theatre Off the Square, 114 N. Denton St. (817) 341-8687, www.theatreoffthesquare.org.

#### 2/3-2/5

#### **Spongebob Musical:**

Presented by WHS Theatre.
The stakes are higher than ever in this dynamic stage musical.
General admission: \$10.7:00-9:30 p.m., Weatherford High School, 2121 Bethel Rd.
www.experienceweatherford.com.

#### 2/9

# **EPCCC Luncheon, Candidates Forum:**

#### **Candidates Forum:**

Hosted by EPCCC for State Board of Education, House of Representatives, Senate District 10, County Judge and Parker County Republican Chair. Cousins Maine Lobster and Miguel's Place food trucks onsite to purchase food. Meet & Greet: 5:00-6:00 p.m.; Forum: 6:00 p.m., Springhill Suites, 500 Shops Blvd., Willow Park. (817) 441-7844, ext. 2.

# 2/10, 2/17 and 2/24

# Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure:

Designed for those concerned about high blood pressure and heart health. Three interactive classes with lots of recipes, tastings, helpful hints and giveaways. \$15/series or \$5/class. 10:00 a.m.-noon, Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St. Register at (817) 598-6168 or kl-smith@tamu.edu.

#### 2/11

#### **Sweet on Business:**

Networking and luncheon event of the year. Limited seating. 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Parker County Sheriff's Posse. Make reservations at (817) 596-3801 or www.weatherford-chamber.com.

#### 2/12

#### **WISD Job Fair:**

Interviewing for all WISD open positions. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Hall Middle School, 823 Bowie Drive. For details, visit www.weatherfordisd.com or www.experienceweatherford.com.

# Golden Reward Sanctuary Valentine's Party:

Celebrating horses' birthdays with kisses and love. 1:00-3:00 p.m., 1201 Friendship Rd. www.goldenrewardsanctuary.com.

#### 2/22

#### **Rotary Pancake Supper:**

66th annual event funds scholarships through local Rotarians. Purchase tickets from any Weatherford Rotary Club member. \$5/advance; \$8/at event. 5:00-7:30 p.m., Weatherford High School Cafeteria, 2121 Bethel Rd. www.experienceweatherford.com.

#### 2/26

## Pancake Breakfast With Flames:

Proceeds from breakfast go to support the horses and dogs at Golden Reward Sanctuary. 8:00-10:00 a.m., Flames Restaurant, 1917 Martin Dr. www.goldenrewardsanctuary.com.

#### 2/28-4/18

#### **Matter of Balance:**

Eight-week course for older adults on how to overcome fear of falling, increase strength and balance and improve home environment. Free. 1:00-3:00 p.m., Couts United Methodist Church, 802 N. Elm St. For details and registration, contact Kathy Smith at (817) 598-6168 or kl-smith@tamu.edu.

# Weekend Prior to First Mondays

# Weatherford First Monday Trade Days:

Event held on the Friday-Sunday prior to the first Monday. One of the oldest open-aired markets in Texas steeped in tradition and located in the heart of the historical district. 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., 200 Santa Fe Dr. rhamilton@weatherfordtx.gov or (817) 598-4359.

#### **Mondays**

#### **Aledo Farmers Market:**

Now open all year long (weather permitting). Farm fresh items and homemade novelties available for purchase. 3:00-7:00 p.m., Aledo Community Center Parking Lot, 104 Robinson Ct., Aledo. www.aledo-texas.com.

#### Second Thursdays

# Gardeners' Club of Parker County:

Each meeting includes a speaker with information relative to gardening in Parker County. 10:00 a.m., St. Francis Church, 117 Ranch House Rd., Willow Park. (817) 919-6280.

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





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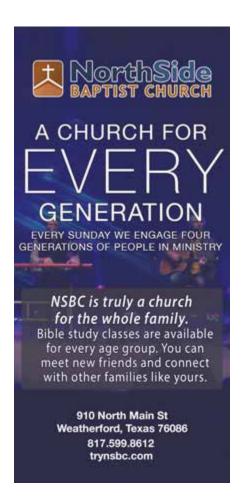
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# Crossword Sudoku Solutions



Easy

_	_				_			
9								5
6	2	3	9	8	5	4	7	1
7	1	5	4	3	2	6	8	9
1	5	7	8	2	3	9	6	4
2	9	4	7	6	1	5	3	8
8	3	6	5	4	9	7	1	2
								7
3	7	9	1	5	8	2	4	6
5	6	1	2	7	4	8	9	3

Medium

8	4	7	6	5	9	1	3	2
5	3	2	4	8	1	7	9	6
9	6	1	7	3	2	4	8	5
							1	
1	8	4	2	7	5	3	6	9
3	5	6	9	1	4	8	2	7
2	9	5	1	4	8	6	7	3
6	1	3	5	2	7	9	4	8
	7							



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# Weatherford walk-in vaccine hours:

Thursday & Friday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.



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