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M A G A Z I N E

FEBRUARY 2023

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Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

Featured Business:  
Mayweather Boxing  
& Fitness

## Puppy Love

Diana D'Amari captures  
her furry friends on paper

In the Kitchen With  
Victoria Ayo-Olusanya

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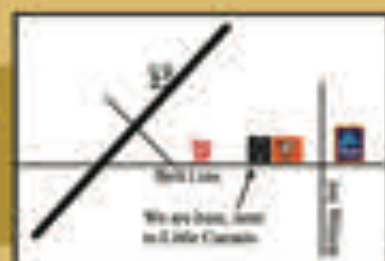
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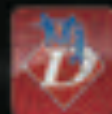
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Dogs are immortalized by Diana D'Amari's pencil.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

*It's that short month again!*

February is a short month, but there's a lot going on. It's Black History Month. If you are Black, you probably already know a lot of Black history, but there's always more. If you aren't Black, take some time to learn a little more about the many ways that Black Americans have contributed to life in this country. Black Americans have done amazing things in every area of life, from aviation to chemistry to the space program to economics and government. And they continue to enrich American life every day, so learn some about the Black present, too.

This is also Heart Health month. Heart disease is still the cause of death for one in every five Americans. There are plenty of things you can do to reduce your risk and live a longer, healthier life. Eating healthy food is important for more than just a New Year's resolution. Physical activity, whether that's joining a gym, taking walks or using the stairs instead of an elevator, helps. And reducing the amount of alcohol, eliminating cigarettes and illegal drugs are all important steps to keeping your heart healthy. But so is just getting enough sleep at night.

And, of course, Valentine's Day is coming up. Whether you celebrate by having a special dinner with your significant other, or by bashing a heart piñata to smithereens at an anti-Valentine party, it's difficult to ignore. And the day after means fantastic sales on chocolates — which helps to make up for what those flowers cost! Oh, and if you stick to the dark chocolates, they may actually *help* with the heart health.

*Have a fabulous February!*



*Adam*

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# Puppy Love

— By Adam Walker



**"I'm still in shock. I couldn't draw, and now people pay me to display my art in their homes."**

*There really are people who don't like dogs. They do exist. But Diana D'Amari is most definitely not one of them.*

Growing up, Diana learned that she had no talent for drawing. She was attending catechism classes when she learned of her deficiency. "We had a nun who was substituting in our class. She gave us papers to color. She looked at mine and told me, 'You can't even color inside the lines!' She punished me and sent me to the back of the room. It hurt and embarrassed me. That stayed with me for life."

Though Diana admired art and those who produced it, she was quite convinced that she had no ability whatsoever. "I used to get upset with people like my spouse, Darrel, who can do art, but don't. He told me I could learn to draw, but I told him it was a God-given talent. It can't be learned. I doodled like a 5-year-old."

A shopping trip changed that forever. "I saw a display of

books at Five Below. They had the book *Anyone Can Draw*. I rolled my eyes. 'OK, sure.' But I bought a copy." She took that book home and started working through the lessons. To her amazement, not only could she color inside the lines, she could produce drawings that looked like the examples in the book! "I looked at the picture, and I was in shock. I couldn't believe what was coming out!" She was so excited that she tracked the author down and wrote to him in England. He sent her a couple of original pieces, as a thank-you for reaching out.

Like all artists, Diana has tried a lot of subjects, but she quickly latched onto her favorite subject matter — dogs. "I ran into a local art teacher and started taking private lessons. One of the first pictures I drew was of a Chocolate Lab. I wasn't happy with it, so I showed it to him. He told me, 'Oh, you need to fix this, this and this.' I started over. He came and looked at my new drawing and said, 'Wow!' He didn't give a lot of compliments, so when he did give them, they really meant something. He told me I had to enter that drawing in



the DeSoto Art League show. It was fun to see my art displayed, and I won third place! I almost fainted. I *did* cry. I couldn't believe it."

That drawing, titled *Permission to Land* features a butterfly attempting to alight on the dog's nose. It was the first of many dog portraits, but in nowise her last. She's done drawings of all her own dogs. She's drawn Magnum and Hanalei, her Chocolate and Yellow Labradors, respectively. DeSoto and Dudley, both Golden Retrievers, sat like good boys to have their beauty struck. "Dudley was my first Golden. He was a brilliant dog. I still can't talk about it. I *will* cry." Even Daisy, who is part Husky, has been immortalized. Diana has taken commissions from friends to draw their dogs and from strangers who saw her work at art shows. "I'm still in shock. I couldn't draw, and now people pay me to display my art in their homes."

"I love dogs. I've rescued over 130. When I take Tootsie, my Australian Kelpie, for a walk, I take two or three extra leashes, just in case we meet any stray dogs along the way. I can't watch dog movies at all, because something always happens to the dog, and I just can't bear to watch that."

Sometimes, art gets you into interesting situations, like when you have a doctor who takes revenge on patients who make too much fuss about getting on the scales, by pressing down with his own foot to add a few dozen extra pounds. "Dr. Saldivar has a great sense of humor. He saw one of my dog drawings on my phone and asked, 'You drew that? Could you draw me?'" Of course, no artist worth her salt would pass up a gift-wrapped opportunity for revenge like that. "I agreed. I went home to find a picture of a chimpanzee to work from. You should have seen his face when he opened that. Of course, the real portrait was right behind that one. It was crazy but fun!"

Fun is important to Diana. It's a lesson her Italian grandfather taught her. "We used to dance together, all over the floor, at all the weddings. He always said, 'If you're not having fun, it's nobody's fault but your own.' Happiness is the ultimate goal. Drawing makes me happy, because I could never color inside the lines. I still don't." **NOW**

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## Zoomed In: Lorena Ramirez

By Adam Walker

Lorena Ramirez has been a Cedar Hill employee for more than 10 years in the Building Maintenance Department. “I’m the coordinator in charge of the night crew. There are five people who are outside employees that make up the night crew. They are a company hired by the city, so I’m the go-between for the city and the company to keep everything running smooth. We service all the city buildings: the government center, the senior activity center, the Zula B. Wylie Public Library, the Alan E. Sims Recreation Center — to keep everything nice and clean.”

Serving with a smile is Lorena’s way. “I really like working for the city. There are really nice people here. It’s easy to get along with everyone,” Lorena declared.



“Service with a smile,” say Otis Kendall, Rhonda Reed and Nikki Pendergrass of Royal Fried Seafood & Grill in Cedar Hill.



Anna, Cash and Chris McCalla enjoy a night at Dallas Zoo Lights.



Korri Bennett (left) and Amanda Winslett (right) showcase their goals for 2023 at DorothyAnne Dauenhauer’s Vision Board Workshop!



Myla, Ivy, Lauren and Juliette Parker check out some new reads at the DeSoto Library.





Chelsey Randel helps teen librarian Emily Villafranco redo the teen room at the Zula B. Wylie Public Library.



Michael Jones, LaTreshia Weaver and Ralph Burns enjoy a game of dominoes, while Ryan Henry looks on at Friend's Place ADS.



Alexander Alvarez visits his grandmother, Georgia State Representative Rhonda Burnough, at the Georgia capitol.



Kay and Rod Taylor hang out at Sly Cat Gallery.

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BusinessNOW

# Mayweather Boxing and Fitness

— By Adam Walker

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Saturday-Sunday: 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

4:45 and 5:45 a.m. classes scheduled through the app.

Mayweather Boxing and Fitness is a local franchise of the company owned by boxing legend Floyd Mayweather Jr. The local franchise is owned by boxing promoter Cedric L. Brown and managed by Jessica Salinas, who is also well known



in boxing circles. She's in charge of registration for USA Boxing. "I register all the athletes, coaches and officials. I've been a referee and a judge. Anyone who wants to compete on the amateur side needs to see me. I also release the athletes' pass books after they've had a concussion or other injury, clearing them to return to the ring. I approve all the tournaments in the Metroplex."

The head trainer at Mayweather Boxing and Fitness is Shuretta Metcalf. She's no stranger to the boxing world either. I've won titles in both the National Boxing Association and the International Boxing Council. I'm ranked No. 2 in the country in the welterweight class."

Together with the other trainers and coaches at Mayweather Boxing and Fitness, they offer classes in fitness and self-defense, focusing on cardio and strength training. "Undefeated meets on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It's a 45-minute quick burn, focused on speed. We do five rounds of boxing and three rounds of fitness. It's circuit-boxing training," Shuretta explained. "On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we focus on strength training and do more core work."



Champ is the level that meets on Saturdays and Sundays. "It's a one-hour class that works on both strength and speed. We do 16 rounds, which is two full circuits," Shuretta continued.


Once or twice a month, they offer the Champ 90 class, always on a weekend. "That one's an hour-and-a-half class. It's super intense, and we mostly offer it when we're doing special events," Shuretta confessed.

Special events at Mayweather Boxing and Fitness can include anything from free outdoor classes in the summer on the Hillside Village green, to the grand opening which included a visit from Floyd Mayweather Jr., himself. He's already visited a few times. "You never know when he's going to drop in. We're the biggest Mayweather gym, so he comes every now and then," Jessica confessed. They are also expecting a visit from Muhammad Ali Jr. sometime this month. "A lot of big names drop in," she explained. "And since our owner is a promoter, he sometimes offers free tickets to members to see pro fights in the area."

**Together with the other trainers and coaches at Mayweather Boxing and Fitness, they offer classes in fitness and self-defense, focusing on cardio and strength training.**

Mayweather Boxing and Fitness offers training for all levels. "We offer fitness and self-defense, but we also offer training for amateur competition," Jessica emphasized. "We even offer private training sessions for pros. We're also incorporating youth classes. Boxing is a good way to stay out of trouble. It promotes health. And it is good for those who are being bullied. We offer four classes a month for \$89, or unlimited classes for \$149. If you just want to drop in to try it out, or want an extra class this month, you can drop in for \$30."

With all the fitness options available, Mayweather Boxing and Fitness offers a lot of unique opportunities. If you're already lagging on your New Year's resolution, check out what they have going on. **NOW**



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CookingNOW

## *In the Kitchen With* VICTORIA AYO-OLUSANYA

— By Adam Walker



Victoria Ayo-Olusanya celebrates family and culture through her food. “I started cooking when I was 8 years old,” she remembered. “My inspiration comes from my family. I learned from my mother and my elder sister. Now cooking brings my family together and lets us eat healthier. I grew up in Nigeria, so I cook mostly African foods. I cooked with my sister on my 50th birthday. We made a lot of food and saved a lot of money, so it was a great success.”

She also enjoys baking, but her favorite seasoning to use in savory dishes is Maggi cubes. She finds new recipes from friends and on Facebook, and she enjoys sharing her foods with her family, friends and her fellow caregivers at work. **NOW**

### Efo Riro

**2 red bell peppers**  
**1-2 habaneros**  
**1 medium-size onion**  
**2 big smoked fish**  
**1 1/2 cups cooking oil**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**3 Maggi cubes**  
**1 tsp. curry powder**  
**1 tsp. thyme leaves**

**1 tsp. white pepper**  
**2 12-oz. pkgs. frozen spinach**

**1.** Blend the peppers and onions, coarsely on low speed.  
**2.** Put the smoked fish in boiling water; leave it until softened.  
**3.** In a pot on the stove, add the cooking oil; let it heat up. Add the blended mixture and the spices; fry, checking occasionally.  
**4.** While the peppers are frying, wash the

spinach; squeeze the water out.

**5.** Remove the smoked fish from the water. Put it in cold water; remove the bones.

**6.** When the peppers have fried, add the smoked fish and stir. Leave it for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the spinach and mix properly. Allow it to simmer for 2 minutes. Turn the heat off and serve.

### Porridge

**African yam tuber (not sweet potato)**  
**3 cups water**  
**2 medium red bell peppers**  
**1/2 medium onion**  
**1 tsp. thyme**  
**1 tsp. curry powder**  
**2 Maggi cubes, or to taste**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**1/2 cup cooking oil**  
**1 big or 2 small smoked or boiled fish (optional)**

**1.** Slice the yam; remove the skin. Cut the yam into small pieces. Don't forget to wash the pieces very well.



2. Prepare a pot with 3 cups of water; put the yam pieces in.
3. Cover the pot with the lid; boil until the yam is soft.
4. Blend the bell peppers and onions; add to the boiled soft yams.
5. Add the spices, salt and cooking oil. Cover; leave on the heat for 10 minutes.
6. Put the smoked fish in the boiling water; soak until softened. (Boil the fish if you are using boiled fish.) Remove the bones; add to the pot.
7. Mash the yams; mix very well. Turn off the heat and serve.

## FuFu

**4 cups water**

**1 16-oz. bag fufu powder (Yam flour or pounded yam powder. Get this from an African store.)**

1. Pour the water into a small pot; allow it to boil. With a ladle, take 1/2 cup of water from the pot; put it aside. Add enough fufu powder into the pot to cover the top of the water with some dry powder on top. While adding the powder, add the 1/2 cup of water, bit by bit, in order to keep the powder from burning.
2. Beat the mixture together until it reaches a smooth paste form.
3. Turn the heat off. Place on a plate to serve. *Serve with Efo Riro to enjoy it.*

## Puff Puff

**2 cups water**

**2 tsp. yeast**

**1 cup sugar**

**2 lbs. flour**

**1 qt. cooking oil**

**Salt, to taste**

1. Heat the water; add it to a big, 12- to 15-quart bowl. Add the yeast and sugar; mix until fully dissolved. Add the flour, bit by bit, until it thickens. Check for the right consistency by using your hand to pick it up. If it draws, then the dough is ready.
2. Leave the dough to double in size (about 15 minutes).
3. In a pot for deep frying, heat the oil.
4. Using your hand, create a ball of the dough; drop it into the oil. Fry till golden brown on both sides. Remove the puff puff from the oil; allow it to drain on a plate and then serve.

## Moin Moin

**16 oz. black-eyed peas**

**Water**

**1 medium onion**

**2 red bell peppers**

**1-2 habaneros**

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2 boiled eggs (optional)  
Shrimp, to taste (optional)  
Boiled fish, to taste (optional)  
2 cups cooking oil  
3 Maggi cubes  
1 tsp. curry powder  
1 tsp. thyme leaves  
Salt, to taste  
Moin Moin pouch (available on Amazon)

1. Soak the black-eyed peas in water for about 3 minutes. Wash and remove the skin completely; set aside.
2. Chop the onions and peppers.
3. Cut the eggs into small pieces like cubes. Wash the shrimp. Boil the fish; put it in a separate bowl.
4. Blend together the peas, peppers and onions. Add the mixture to a bowl.
5. Heat the cooking oil to a frying temperature; pour the oil over the mixture inside the bowl and stir. Add the fish, eggs and shrimp. Add Maggi, curry, thyme and salt.
6. Fill a large pot with water; let it boil.
7. Put the mixture inside of the Moin Moin pouch; seal it completely. Put the bag in the boiling water. Cover the pot; allow it to boil for about 25 minutes.
8. Turn the heat off; let the Moin Moin cool off inside the pot. When it finishes cooling, the Moin Moin will be ready. Squeeze the



Moin Moin out of the pouch, onto a plate and enjoy.

### Yam and Stew

African yam tuber (not sweet potato)  
4 cups water  
2 red bell peppers  
1-2 habaneros  
1 small onion  
1 big or 2 small smoked fish  
1 cup cooking oil  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. thyme leaves

1 tsp. curry powder  
2 Maggi cubes, or to taste

1. Slice the yam; peel the skin off. Wash with clean water. Put about 4 cups of water in a pot. Add the yam; allow to boil. Check with a fork. Yams are done when they're soft.
2. Coarsely blend the peppers and onion on a low speed.
3. Put the fish in hot water to soften. Remove and place in cold water; remove the bones.
4. Add oil to a frying pan and heat. Add the blended peppers and the spices; stir. Add the fish. Mix thoroughly; allow it to fry for 5 minutes.
5. Place the soft yams on a plate; cover them with the stew.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

5

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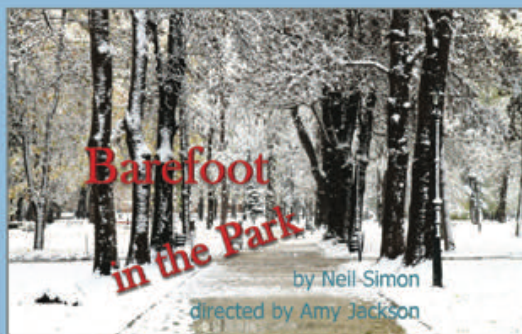


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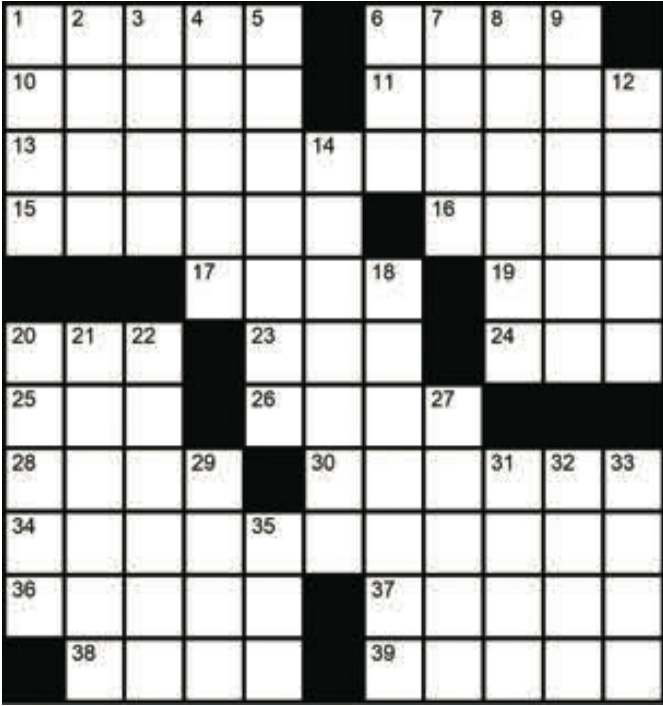
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# Crossword Puzzle



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- Across**
- 1 Robert Downey Jr's father's original surname
  - 6 Javanese tree, a source of arrow poison
  - 10 Cavalry weapon
  - 11 Get --- (banish)
  - 13 Failed to keep cool
  - 15 Behind, at sea
  - 16 Dictator of former Yugoslavia
  - 17 Consider
  - 19 "But of course!"
  - 20 Front part of an apron
  - 23 Half a South American dance
  - 24 After costs and taxes
  - 25 "Messenger" molecule
  - 26 Bright, positive Chinese principle
  - 28 Man-eating giant
  - 30 Angolan capital
  - 34 Globally renowned
  - 36 Hullabaloo
  - 37 Often "done" in the middle of the day
- Down**
- 1 Scat artist Fitzgerald
  - 2 "Land of a million elephants"
  - 3 "Meet Me --- Louis"
  - 4 Behaved
  - 5 Requirement for a surprise party
  - 6 Vase
  - 7 "Seven Years in Tibet" actor
  - 8 --- Monk, TV "tec"
  - 9 Alleviate
  - 12 Fishing bob
  - 14 Sine of 30°
  - 18 Instruction books, as Mulan reinterpreted
  - 20 Chesterton's sleuthing cleric
  - 21 Close, Don and I go off
  - 22 Pan inventor
  - 27 Full range
  - 29 "Born Free" character
  - 31 Forbidden act
  - 32 Down source
- 33 "But, --- was ambitious, I slew him" (Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar")
- 35 Key to oblivion?

Online versions and solutions available at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://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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## FEBRUARY

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

2/4

### Daddy and Daughter Dance:

Treat your daughter like a princess. See link at [ci.desoto.tx.us/calendar.aspx](http://ci.desoto.tx.us/calendar.aspx) for fees and times. DeSoto Civic Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

2/11

### Bowling Day in the USA:

Bring you kids for a fun day. Free. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Red Bird Lanes, 1114 S. Main St., Duncanville. Reserve on Eventbrite.

### Bowties and Tiaras — Daddy/Daughter Dance:

Take your princess for a whirl around the floor. \$50 first

couple, \$15 each additional daughter. 6:00-9:00 p.m., Sims Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd., Cedar Hill.

2/14

### Love Stinks

#### Anti-Valentine Party:

Teens, come express your displeasure with the day. Free. 5:00-6:00 p.m., Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill.

2/16-2/18 &  
2/24-2/25

### Legally Blonde: The Musical:

Village Tech presents various casts. \$15. **Thursday** and **Friday:** 7:00-10:00 p.m.; **Saturday:** 2:00-5:00 p.m.,

Village Tech School, 402 W. Danieldale Rd., Duncanville. Tickets available on Eventbrite.

2/18

### In Their Shoes: An Interactive Experience:

Lunch, snacks and prizes will be provided at this walk-through event about teen dating violence. Free. 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Corner Theatre, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

2/24

### A Night in Monte Carlo:

Cedar Hill Shares Food Pantry hosts dining, dancing, casino fun and a silent auction to benefit the pantry. \$125 per person. 6:00 p.m., Blaine Stone

Lodge, 5331 Weatherford Rd., Midlothian. See [cedarhillshares.org](http://cedarhillshares.org), or contact Patricia Deeds at [pjdeeds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pjdeeds@sbcglobal.net).

2/1-4/12

### AARP Tax-Aide at the Library:

Bring your forms and documents, on **Wednesdays** only, to get your questions answered. Free. 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., by appointment only. DeSoto Library, Multipurpose Room, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [adam.walker@nowmagazines.com](mailto:adam.walker@nowmagazines.com).*

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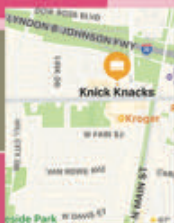
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