

BurlesonNOW

M A G A Z I N E

FEBRUARY 2024

From Page to Screen

How retired veteran
Douglas Spallito
became a filmmaker

In the Kitchen With
Heidi Vose

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

Featured Business:
Texas Coalition for
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Douglas Spaltro pens his love into his screenplays.

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Emma

Emma McKay
BurlesonNOW Editor
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EDITOR’S NOTE

Hello, Burleson!

I don’t know if you have experienced this, but there are certain quotes from different forms of media which have ingrained themselves into the fabric of my mind. These quotes will re-emerge during different seasons of my life and will almost assume the role of a mantra. As this season of love takes shape, I am reminded of a line said by Isaac in season one of Netflix’s *Heartstopper*: “I wanna believe in romance.”

Unfortunately, for something so prevalent in everyday life, many people seem to hold negative feelings toward the idea of romantic love. Whether it be Hallmark movies, mass-market paperbacks or a certain blonde billionaire popstar, things that focus on romance tend to get a lot of flak. We could spend hours delving into the reasons for this, but I’ll skip to the end to say that regardless of what may set us apart, we, as humans, love romance.

One of my favorite fun facts is that the romance literary genre is the most profitable genre for publishers. According to information gathered by wordrated.com, the romance genre makes \$1.44 billion annually, whereas other genres don’t make it past the millions in profit. This genre’s success proves that even though people talk down on romance, it’s only that: talk.

We, as humans, want to experience connection with each other, especially of the romantic variety. Whether or not you’ve found someone to walk through life with, romantic relationships can be difficult. This beloved genre gives us hope that no matter what challenges our relationships may face, we will get our happily ever after.

Believe in romance this month!

Xoxo Burleson

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FROM PAGE TO SCREEN

— By Emma McKay

The lights and sounds of Hollywood always intrigued Director Douglas Spaltro. “When I was a kid, I wanted to act. I grew up in Maine, and every winter my father would say, ‘Gosh darn it, we’re moving to California.’ Every year when he said it, I thought, I’m going to California. I’m going to be in a Walt Disney movie. I really, truly believed it.”

Douglas did not get to see that childhood dream through until his Air Force days, when he worked as an extra in *Mozart and the Whale* (2005) and *Taking Chance* (2009). “I got the bug.” Although he desired to stay in front of the camera, Douglas began to dabble in screenwriting. “I was living and working in the Middle East when I wrote my first screenplay. I hadn’t had any training, but I read a lot on how to format.”

In 2010, after having retired from the USAF three years prior, Douglas and his family moved to Burleson, so he could work at Lockheed Martin. “My wife asked, ‘Are you going to go back to school to work on aeronautical engineering?’ so I could further my career at Lockheed Martin. But it wasn’t my passion.” Instead, he enrolled in online classes at Full Sail University in Florida. “I got a Bachelor of Fine Arts in screenwriting in three years. I did it while working 70 hours a week. I had major burnout, but I graduated with honors. From there, I started writing screenplays and submitting them to big screenwriting competitions. And I started placing.”

At the 2017 Austin Film Festival, Douglas befriended Sam Baron, the cousin of Sacha Baron Cohen. “I spent the whole weekend talking with him. Sam said, ‘Doug, your screenwriting was great, but you need to produce your own short film. That’ll be your calling card.’” Before speaking with Sam, Douglas had been debating producing a short film, knowing it would be expensive. After their conversation, he decided to take that leap.

“I like films that make people want to talk when they walk out of the theater,” Douglas said, as evidenced by his admiration of directors Quentin Tarantino and Greta Gerwig. Douglas wanted his films to have that same lasting impression. When he sat down to write *Apple*, his first produced short film, he observed the politically divided world around him and wondered what might happen if people can’t get on the same page. To tell the story, he framed it from the perspective of two 10-year-olds — Adom and Eva — all alone at the end of the world. “It’s a grim ending, but I wanted it to be a wake-up call,” he said.



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“When I shot *Apple*, I didn’t know what I was doing,” Douglas confessed. Since *Apple* was his directorial debut, he didn’t know what people expected of him on set. Mark Ragunton, a seasoned cinematographer, brought his crew onto the project and hired assistant directors to do the grunt work for Douglas. “After everything had been set up for me, all I had to do was yell, ‘Action!’ and call, ‘Cut!’ I told Mark that I felt like I wasn’t doing anything. He said, ‘Doug, that’s the way it is on a film set. You’re the director. You shared your vision with me. I know what you want to see on film. I shared it with my crew.’ I thought he was pulling my leg.” Along with a full production crew, Douglas hired his youngest daughter, Alaina, to compose the title theme as well as play the role of Eva.

“Family is at the core of almost everything I write about,” Douglas said. His second and most recently produced short film, *Milly & Milo*, exemplifies this through and through.



This unconventional coming-of-age story follows a Vietnam veteran who meets up with his old army buddy. Upon reuniting, Milo discovers his friend has transitioned genders, and the love he always held for his friend has remained intact after all their years apart. Douglas' eldest daughter and his only son are gay, so he has been aware of the hardships that they and people in their community face. When creating *Milly & Milo*, Douglas hoped to challenge people's negative perception

of the community his children are a part of. "We're all people. We all strive to be happy."

Douglas has always wanted to tell a coming-of-age story. However, the bulk of coming-of-age stories cater to a younger age demographic. "Because I am more than a half a century old, I wanted to tell a coming-of-age story for people in their 60s and beyond." Douglas credits his older sister for the inspiration to write about people in their later years. "My sister has been

divorced, and she's been single for a long time. She's beautiful and has the greatest heart. I know she's lonely and she wants someone to love her like that," Douglas admitted. "This film is for people like my sister to not give up hope of finding a companion."

When producing *Milly & Milo*, the stakes were raised. Not only did it cost more money, but they had a bigger crew, accredited actors and less time to shoot. Despite all the work that was put into the film, Douglas does not expect to see any monetary compensation for his efforts. "Short films are not money makers. They are calling cards." As *Milly & Milo* makes its way through film festivals, Douglas hopes that a production company will take notice of his work and pick it up for a feature film. "I think I have something special with this film."

Douglas never thought he'd find himself behind the camera. Now, with two produced short films, four more written short films, nine feature films and four television pilots under his belt, he doesn't wish to be anywhere else. **NOW**

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Zoomed In:
William and Irene Masters

By Emma McKay

William and Irene Masters celebrated their 90th birthdays January 13th. “On a date, he asked me when my birthday was,” Irene recalled. “I told him, and he said, ‘That’s my birthday, too.’ I didn’t believe him, so I made him take out his driver’s license!”

Over their nearly 65 years of marriage, they have celebrated many life moments together, including the births of their two daughters, the youngest of whom shares their birthday. A while back, Irene and her daughters orchestrated a reunion for William and his Army buddy after 57 years apart. The video of the reunion went viral, and they donated the money they received from it to a veteran’s charity. “I think I’ll keep her,” William grinned at his wife.



Averie Oglesby, Brylee Hendrix and Brenna and Brayden Biggs embark on adventures at Cindy Park.



The Scahill Family plays chess at Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza.



The team at Harvest House Resale Store serves the community with smiling faces.



The team at Roots Garden Center & Landscaping enjoys turning gardens into works of art.



Joyce Ross and Karen Schaefer browse at the Senior Center Craft Fair.



Kaneka Henry, Kaleb and Kendyl Samson and Londyn Walker shoot hoops at Warren Park.



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— By Emma McKay

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“I feel like this is what God put me on Earth to do,” said Stacey Schumacher, founder and executive director of Texas Coalition for Animal Protection. Since opening in 2002, TCAP has provided affordable wellness care for countless pets in the North Texas area by giving families access to low-cost vaccines on a walk-in basis and affordable pet sterilization services. “There aren’t as many homes as there are pets in the world. Regardless of how many adoptive events you have, we cannot adopt our way out of pet overpopulation,” Stacey explained. “TCAP was designed to provide families access to basic care, so pets don’t end up in an animal shelter.”

Over the past 21 years, this Denton-based nonprofit has expanded to eight different locations across North Texas. In 2009, their Burleson clinic opened, marking their third location. “Burleson’s got a lot of people in the community who care about animals,” Stacy admitted. “You don’t have that in most places.

“We recognize there are times when people’s finances are limited. The last thing we ever want people to do is to decide

between feeding their family and caring properly for their pet.” That’s why TCAP prices rabies vaccines at \$5 and full vaccine sets at \$25. In addition to their already low-cost services, they hold multiple promotional events throughout the year, which people can be notified about through subscribing to their newsletter or following them on social media.

“Low-cost spay and neuter is step one in ending pet overpopulation,” Stacey said. Due to the high intake at Fort Worth animal shelters, TCAP created a program that gives free pet sterilization for those who live in Fort Worth’s 14 different ZIP codes. “It’s been successful,” she reported. This service also helps TCAP reach their yearly goal of 70,000 animal sterilizations.

TCAP’s mission doesn’t end with pets. Through their Feral Fix program, TCAP provides free spay and neutering services for the first 12 feral cats brought into each of their clinics every day. “When we say feral, we mean they cannot be touched and must be brought in using live traps,” Stacey explained. “The program was designed to help manage those unmanageable colonies and to limit the number of cats coming into the animal shelter.” Across its eight locations, TCAP provides this service to over 1,000 feral cats every month.

TCAP employs 70 staff members across their organization to keep their clinics running. Depending on the day, they will have six to 10 contracted veterinarians working across their eight locations. “Many of the surgeons are doing operations all day, every day, and they’re doing an amazing job.” Wellness veterinarians work with owners and their pets one-on-one during walk-in vaccine hours, ensuring that pets receive the best care and referring them to full-service clinics, should the pet need it.

“We can’t solve all the world’s problems, but we can create a great place for people to work, for people to visit and provide affordable care for pets.” To aid TCAP’s mission, you can donate on their website or purchase essential items for them from their Amazon gift list. You can also aid their mission by bringing in feral cats to be fixed and giving them post-operation care. Your contribution can help prevent overcrowded animal shelters and keep people’s pets at home. **NOW**



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BurlesonNOW Scavenger Hunt



Find 5 hidden
Cupcakes

in 5 different ads in this issue
(not counting the one above).

Email the page numbers and
specific ads where they are
found, plus your phone
number, by February 15th.
To ensure your Scavenger Hunt
answers go in the drawing,
you must use the

Scavenger Hunt Email

scavenger.bur@nowmagazines.com

One entry per person.

WIN!

\$50 Cash Prize

Courtesy of:

NOW Magazines

scavenger.bur@nowmagazines.com

Winner must pick up their prize
within 30 days of drawing.

Penguins were found on
pages 1, 2, 6, 7, & 11.



January winner is:
Dr. Deborah Moore -
\$50 Cash from NOW Magazines

scavenger.bur@nowmagazines.com



"We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister." 1 John 4:19-21 NIV

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CookingNOW *In the Kitchen With* HEIDI VOSE

— By Emma McKay

“I’m inspired by how much people love to eat,” Heidi Vose said. At 4 years old, she began cooking with her mom and her grandmother. “The smell of food cooking takes me back to my time spent with them.”

Over the years, Heidi has expanded her recipe book by taking cooking classes in New Orleans, England and Mexico. She also enjoys gathering recipes from her friends, the internet and *BurlesonNOW*. “I love to try new recipes,” she said.

During lockdown, Heidi began posting cooking videos to her Facebook page, *Hanging with Heidi*. “I felt like I was cooking for myself and others,” she explained. In her videos, she experiments with new recipes and teaches her viewers how to cook, all while spending time with her grandkids who act as sous-chefs. **NOW**

Taco Chicken Soup Made Easy

- 2-3 12.5-oz. cans chicken
- 2 15-oz. cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of onion soup
- 1 15-oz. can yellow corn
- 2 10-oz. cans Ro-Tel tomatoes

- 1 4-oz. can green chilis
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- Mexican cheese, shredded, to taste (optional)
- Tortilla chips, to taste (optional)
- Sour cream, to taste (optional)

1. Combine the chicken, black beans, cream

of chicken soup, cream of onion soup, corn, Ro-Tel, chilis, taco seasoning and cream cheese. Boil for 1-2 hours on the stovetop, or cook in a Crock-Pot on low heat for 2-4 hours.

2. Serve with shredded Mexican cheese, crumbled tortilla chips and sour cream, if desired.

Carrots

- 2 lbs. carrots, cut diagonally in 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1 cup sugar

1. Place the carrots in a pot; cover with 1/2 inch of water. Add the margarine. Place over heat until the margarine melts.

2. Simmer until almost soft.

3. Stir in the sugar; set aside until ready to eat. Reheat, if needed, and then serve.

Corned Beef

- 4 lbs. corned beef brisket

1 Tbsp. mixed pickling spice
1 celery stalk, chopped in half
1 carrot, chopped in half
1 onion, chopped into fourths
1/3 cup brown sugar, packed
1 Tbsp. prepared mustard
1/2 cup sweet pickle juice or fruit juice

- 1. Wash the corned beef; put it in a large kettle. Cover it with boiling water. Add the pickling spice, celery, carrot and onion. Cover; simmer for 1 hour per pound of beef, or until tender.
- 2. Cool the beef in the broth; put it in a shallow pan. Score the fat layer. Mix the brown sugar and the mustard; pat the mixture on the beef. Pour the pickle juice into the pan.
- 3. Bake at 300 F for 1 hour, basting from time to time with some of the drippings in the pan. Slice and serve hot or cold.

Macaroons

3 egg whites, room temperature
Pinch of salt
1 14-oz. bag coconut shavings
1 can condensed milk
1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup chocolate

- 1. Whip the egg whites and the salt to peaks in a mixer; set aside.
- 2. In a separate bowl, mix the coconut shavings, milk and vanilla. Fold the mixture into the egg whites. Do not overmix.
- 3. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Using a cookie scoop, scoop the mixture into ball shapes. Place the balls on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bake for 20-25 minutes.
- 4. Melt the chocolate; coat the bottoms of the macaroons with it. Place the macaroons back on the parchment paper you baked them on to dry. Once the chocolate dries, serve and enjoy!

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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- Virginia Woolf

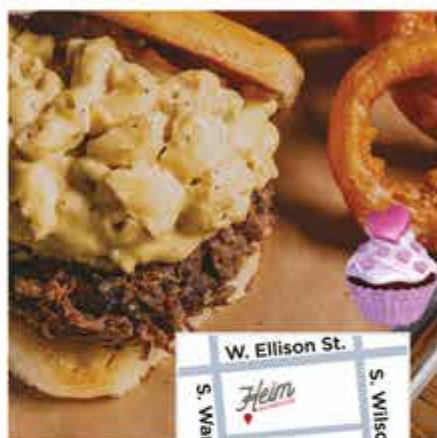
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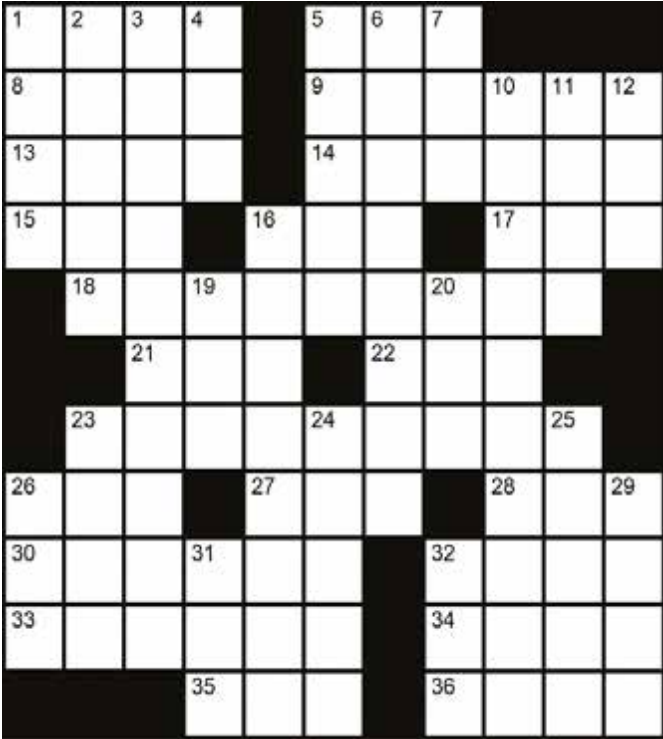
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For Bakery

Crossword Puzzle



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Across

- 1 Boston's Faneuil ---
- 5 Inlet
- 8 --- Lackawanna Railway
- 9 Blood poisoning
- 13 Day of jubilation
- 14 Some of the "Bounty" mutineers were found here
- 15 Feature film channel
- 16 Artillery angular measurement
- 17 Tennis call
- 18 Problem-solving code
- 21 Unagi, at a sushi bar
- 22 Guide letters for "Homeland" channel
- 23 Very important
- 26 "Gentle" bear
- 27 Long-leaved lettuce
- 28 Heart chart
- 30 Handy
- 32 And others
- 33 Solidified lava
- 34 "A Bug's Life" Princess
- 35 Social competition
- 36 Every clarinet has one

Down

- 1 Heave
- 2 Circus Maximus, for example
- 3 Tots smashed stolen tile
- 4 Shelter
- 5 Up and about
- 6 A-listers, not regular down to earth types
- 7 Dash info
- 10 Dark outline named after a French Minister
- 11 Separate article
- 12 Be in session
- 16 Atomic cluster
- 19 Special someone
- 20 Bardic "however"
- 23 High plateau
- 24 "Angel Has Fallen" actor Nick ---
- 25 Edible flatfish
- 26 Familiar address to a fella
- 29 More than willing
- 31 "Awesome!"
- 32 Vase handle

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

SCAVENGER HUNT WINNER!



Clayton Mercer, winner of the \$50 Cash Prize from NOW Magazines, said, "We love the *BurlesonNOW* to see what's going on in town and enjoy the coupons."

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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.

FEBRUARY

2/6-4/9

AARP Tax Aid:

The AARP Foundation will be offering free income tax assistance on **Tuesdays and Thursdays**. Assistance by appointment only. **Tuesdays** at the Burleson Public Library, 248 SW Johnson Ave. **Thursdays** at BRiCK, 550 NW Summercrest Blvd. Sign up for appointments at the respective locations.

2/8

CityFest:

Join us for an opportunity to engage with city officials and city departments. Learn what the city has accomplished in the past year and

the city's plans for the upcoming year. Enjoy kids' activities including bounce houses, face painting, games and more. Free. 4:30-7:00 p.m., BRiCK, 550 NW Summercrest Blvd.

2/13

Mardi-Craw:

Let the good times roll! Join us for a Mardi Craw celebration featuring a crawfish boil, live music and more! Bring your own chairs, blankets and beverages. 6:00-8:00 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St.

2/16

Date Night Experience:

Bring your sweetheart and come kick up your heels with Country Western Dancing. There will be a dance instructor there to guide you through different steps. Enjoy dinner catered by Sammy's Italian Bistro! \$50 per couple. 6:00-8:00 p.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. CR 714. Register at burlesontx.com/2628/Date-Night-Experience.

2/17

Celebrate Black History Month With Opal Lee:

Come listen to author, activist and Fort Worth native Opal Lee in a one-on-one moderated discussion, and get signed copies of her children's book afterward. Copies of her children's book, *Juneteenth: A*

Children's Story, will be available for purchase — \$25 for paperback or \$45 for hardcover. 10:00 a.m.-noon, Burleson City Hall, 141 W. Renfro St.

2/24

2024 Burleson Business Showcase:

Join the Burleson Chamber of Commerce in celebrating Burleson businesses. Admission is free. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Pathway Church, 325 NW Renfro St.

For more information, visit business.burlesonchamber.com/events.

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

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- 6 - 1 lb. Packs, Ground Chuck (85/15)
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- 1 - 7 lb. Pork Shoulder (for Pulled Pork)
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