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FEBRUARY 2026

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Angela Swann

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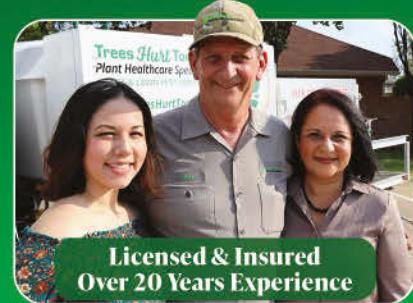
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MAR 28 **COMMUNITY EGG HUNT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 10 A.M.

APR 11 **PLAY DAY!**
COMMUNITY PARK, 6-10 P.M.

APR 22 **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION**
HERITAGE PARK, 4-7 P.M.

MAY 9 **8TH STREET DANCE**
DOWNTOWN MIDLOTHIAN, 7:30 P.M.

MAY 30 **KIDS FISHING DERBY**
COMMUNITY PARK, 8 A.M. - 2 P.M.

JUN 6 **MOVIES IN THE PARK**
COMMUNITY PARK, 8 P.M.

JUN 13 **SUMMER BEATS CONCERT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

JUL 3 **INDEPENDENCE DAY FIREWORKS**
MISD MULTI-PURPOSE STADIUM, 9:15 P.M.

JUL 4 **INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE**
DOWNTOWN N. 8TH ST., 10 A.M.

JUL 11 **MOVIES IN THE PARK**
COMMUNITY PARK, 8 P.M.

JUL 17 **PARKTOPIA**
COMMUNITY PARK, 6-9 P.M.

JUL 25 **SUMMER BEATS CONCERT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

SEP 12 **AUTUMN BEATS CONCERT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

OCT 3 **AUTUMN BEATS CONCERT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

OCT 30 **DOWNTOWN TRICK OR TREAT**
DOWNTOWN MIDLOTHIAN, 4-6 P.M.

NOV 7 **TEXAS ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION**
COMMUNITY PARK, 5-7 P.M.

NOV 7 **AUTUMN BEATS CONCERT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

NOV 11 **VETERANS TRIBUTE DINNER**
CONFERENCE CENTER, 6:30 P.M.

DEC 1 **TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY**
DOWNTOWN MIDLOTHIAN, 6 P.M.

DEC 5 **CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION & PARADE**
DOWNTOWN N. 8TH ST., 1-5 P.M. | 6 P.M.

DEC 11 **MERRY MOVIE NIGHT**
COMMUNITY PARK, 6:30 P.M.



[MIDLOTHIAN.TX.US/SPECIALEVENTS](http://Midlothian.TX.US/SPECIALEVENTS)



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SATURDAY

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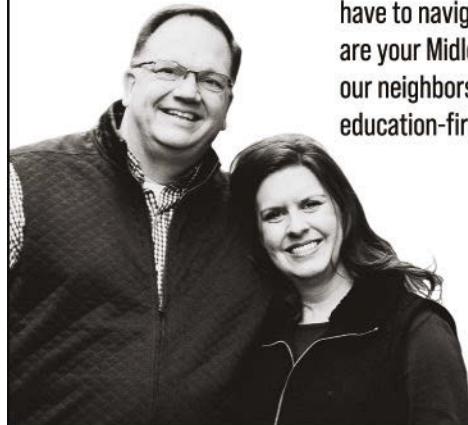
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February 2026
Volume 22, Issue 2



Angel Morris
MidlothianNOW Editor
angel.morris@nowmagazines.com
(972) 533-7216

ON THE COVER

MISD Director of Health Services Wendy Hein has taken student care to the next level.



Photo by
Anthony Sarmienta.

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General Manager, Rick Hensley

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Managing Editor, Becky Walker
Midlothian Editor, Angel Morris
Office Assistant, Kristin Bato
Writers, Amber D. Browne . Emma McKay
Editors/Proofreaders, Rachel Rich
Virginia Riddle

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla
Artists, Kristin Bato . Martha Macias
Anthony Sarmienta . Jennifer Spence

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Chris McCalla
Photographer, Anthony Sarmienta

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HEALTH HERO

— By Angel Morris

With six children of her own, caring for kids comes naturally to Wendy Hein. School nursing took that skill to the next level. “From helping students learn healthy habits to teaching a diabetic child how to carb count, supporting a student with asthma to connecting families with the Midlothian Lions Club for glasses, I realized how much of a difference a school nurse can make,” said Wendy, who serves as the MISD director of health services. “I truly love this work.”

After a long career in hospital nursing, Wendy paused to raise her children. In 2018, she returned as a nurse at Longbranch Elementary, where she said the school felt like family. “After the height of COVID, the lead nurse coordinator position opened, and with encouragement from colleagues, I applied,” she recalled.

Wendy transitioned to director of health services, aligning MISD with other Texas schools. “I’ve collaborated with city partners, health care leaders and neighboring districts to strengthen MISD’s health services. I’ve streamlined clinic processes, improved documentation and forms, expanded training opportunities and supported a team of highly skilled nurses.”

The COVID-19 pandemic put Wendy’s team to the test. “The uncertainty, the constant changes in state and local regulations and the sheer volume of cases created a level of stress none of us expected,” Wendy shared. “What got us through was teamwork, sharing accurate information, teaching families how the virus spread, implementing safety measures and staying patient with one another. It was a hard season, but it made us stronger.”

This affirmed Wendy’s belief that “quiet, consistent, compassionate work matters,” leading to her being named MISD Professional Employee of the Year in 2023. “Because school nursing happens so much ‘behind the scenes,’ it was incredibly meaningful to be recognized by peers and district leadership. I even received a congratulatory letter from Congressman Jake Ellzey, which was such a special surprise,” she said.

Another of Wendy’s proudest achievements came in 2025, when the American Lung Association invited her to present on the strategies she helped implement to improve student respiratory health. “It was an opportunity to showcase how proactive health strategies can make a measurable difference in students’ lives.”

Wendy knows that some may picture school nurses handing out ice packs and Band-Aids, “but today’s school health picture is much more complex. As Midlothian grows, so do the medical needs we see. Our nurses manage feeding tubes, tracheostomies, seizure care, insulin pumps and complex chronic illnesses. Many students come to school with multiple conditions requiring daily medical oversight.” Wendy also noted situations one might not expect such as a high rate of vision problems; chronic anxiety; dehydration; housing instability; sleep deprivation; and a statewide rise in functional neurological symptoms, which can mimic medical emergencies.



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"There's a common misconception that anyone can serve as a school nurse without professional credentials. In reality, every nurse in MISD holds a professional nursing license, and many bring critical care experience to their roles," Wendy explained.

Wendy also emphasized the ways clinics are a safe haven for students beyond clinical judgment, including connecting families to resources, normalizing health challenges so kids feel less alone and listening deeply, so kids know they have a safe adult to talk to.

Wendy highlighted several ways parents can help support healthy students: completing annual health paperwork; openly communicating with campus nurses; keeping up with routine medical and dental care; teaching basic self-care skills like hygiene and menstrual care; building routines around sleep, hydration and meals; and keeping students home when they're sick (even on party days, field trips and programs).

She also encouraged parents to stay informed of fast-changing social media trends, including monitoring backpacks or accessories that may be used to conceal items, as seen with brands like Sprayground that include hidden pockets, often used to hide drug products.

Wendy recognizes the importance of the partnership between families, the community and school nurses. "We see your kids on their best days and their hardest ones, and it's an honor. I'll never forget the moment a student who had been struggling academically slipped on a new pair of glasses in my clinic. Her face lit up with pure joy as she looked around and whispered, 'I





didn't know the world looked like this. Her grades improved, her confidence soared and her teachers saw a child who was finally able to learn without barriers," she shared.

"Moments like that are only possible because our district chooses to invest in strong health services, because we believe that healthy students are better learners. Thank you for trusting us, partnering with us, and standing with us as we care for the safety, dignity and well-being of every child and staff member who walks through our doors."

A member of multiple nursing associations, Wendy also serves on the leadership team at Midway Church, a new church plant that has adopted Dieterich Middle School. They support the school's staff on workdays and stock the student food pantry.

Wendy and her husband, David, and their children (ages 8 to 23), spend a lot of time at games, performances and volunteering. "We've even traveled to Pelican, Alaska, on mission trips, an experience I highly recommend. We also love volunteering with Sleep in Heavenly Peace, building and donating beds for children who don't have one."

Caring for children is in Wendy's DNA, and such work allows her — and Midlothian students — to thrive. "I'm so grateful for the amazing team of nurses I work with. They each have different strengths and bring something powerful to the table," she credited. "Our district is an incredible place, thanks to the dedicated people who make it what it is and the exceptionally talented leadership team at MISD. It has been a privilege to help shape the future of student health in our growing community." **NOW**

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WINTER 2026

FASHION TRENDS

FOR WOMEN

— By Amber D. Browne

As seasons change, so do fashion styles. New trends emerge to incorporate with favorites of the past, and popular color choices combine with classics. The winter 2026 season allows all generations of women to integrate current fashion front-runners into their wardrobes.

The new year brings bold styles featuring silhouettes of volume and elongated lines. Puffy bomber jackets, which can be worn for warmth or as a top according to Dallas fashion blogger, Heather Anderson, are all the rage this winter. “I love this trend because it feels modern, confident and very fashion-forward, but it’s also incredibly flattering,” Heather shared in an article, *8 Fashion Trends That Look Expensive But Aren’t* (2026 Style Guide). She suggests zipping up the jacket and slightly tucking it under for a more streamlined silhouette.

Another trend this winter is popping the collar of the jacket. Some designs include their own stand collar for a sophisticated look. Basic black leather jackets are a must-have. Utility jackets paired with wide-leg cargo pants popped up throughout winter 2026 collections, according to the *Marie Claire* article, *The Best Winter 2026 Fashion Trends Are Both Weatherproof and Party-Proof*.

Although wide-leg pants are trending, the skinny jeans look continues to hold space in the fashion world providing a slim-fitting silhouette. In 2026, high-waisted wide-leg pants, leggings and ankle-length pants in black or dark neutral colors pair well with tucked in or waist-length tops. Maxi dresses are also must-haves and can be layered with neutral jackets. Dress up the look with knee-high boots or wear ballet flats or skinny sneakers for a more casual feel.

Scarves are making a comeback this winter, according to the *Marie Claire* article. “It’s not just a winter add-on or afterthought,” the article stated. “Just as a great coat can be the whole look, the right scarf can offer enough drama and intrigue to be the grounding factor of an outfit.” Ivory faux fur stoles, skinny scarves and tops with built-in shawls are some examples of this winter’s women fashion accessories.

Trending shoes include slimmer boot silhouettes. According to the article *Winter 2026 Fashion Trends: Simple, Stylish Updates for Your Wardrobe* on jolynnesheane.com, boots are a foundation to most winter wardrobes. The article suggests this winter, the style shifts from a chunkier, heavier boot to boots with “cleaner lines, sleeker profiles and a more refined overall shape.” Almond-shaped or softly rounded toes and low or block heels are popular in ankle boots and knee-high styles. The article continued, “Decorative buckles, cutouts, and other extra details aren’t as prominent this year; the most modern boots feel streamlined and minimal.” Ballet flats, pointed-toe heels, leather lace-up shoes and skinny sneakers are also in style this winter.

Sherpa is a popular texture this season for vests and accents in shoes and boots. “It adds warmth and texture without overwhelming your outfit, which makes it an easy trend to incorporate even if you prefer a more understated vibe,” according to the jolynnesheane.com article. Additional trending textures include organic cotton, velvet and faux fur.

Now onto color. The Pantone Color of the Year 2026 is PANTONE 11-4201 Cloud Dancer. According to pantone.com, this shade of white “serves as a symbol of calming influence in a society rediscovering the value of quiet reflection. A billowy white imbued with serenity, PANTONE 11-4201 Cloud Dancer encourages true relaxation and focus, allowing the mind to wander and creativity to breathe, making room for innovation.” This light, neutral shade allows





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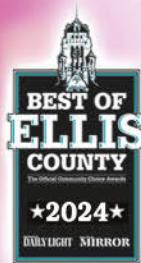
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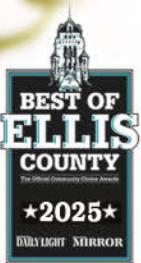


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other colors of pastels and deeper hues to hold the spotlight. Other color trends this winter are deep navy blue as an alternative to black, camel brown, teal, powder pink, pale pistachio and winter citrus, according to the *Marie Claire* article.

As fashion trends come and go, tried and true styles can last a lifetime. Essentials to incorporate into any woman's wardrobe this winter include a puffy bomber jacket, black leather jacket, scarves, ballet flats and sleek, almond-shaped ankle boots. Think about incorporating neutral colors when shopping for winter clothing this year. Incorporating some newer favorites into the closet this season can create a fresh and sophisticated wardrobe. **NOW**

Sources:

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2. [marieclaire.com/fashion/winter-fashion/winter-fashion-color-trends-2026](https://www.marieclaire.com/fashion/winter-fashion/winter-fashion-color-trends-2026).
3. [soheather.com/8-fashion-trends-that-look-expensive-but-arent-2026-style-guide](https://www.sohether.com/8-fashion-trends-that-look-expensive-but-arent-2026-style-guide).
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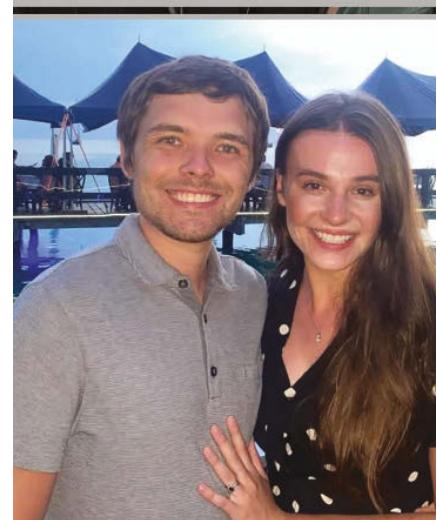


Zoomed In: Zoe Neystel

By Angel Morris

Love is in the air, not only in February, but year-round for Zoe Neystel, who loves working with flowers. "Flowers have always made me smile. They're the 'root' of my happiness," she quipped. "When I felt lost in my career, I knew I wanted to do something that would bring me joy every day and allow me to bloom with purpose."

A lifelong Midlothian resident, Zoe most enjoys working with peonies and poppies, but she will make bouquets to anyone's preference. "I like creating more modern floral designs," she admitted. "Working with God's creation and sharing those with others is my way of putting a smile on people's faces. When I'm not busy with flowers, you can find me camping and hiking with my fiancé, exploring new and exciting places!"



High school sweethearts, Cameron and Candace Stephens, celebrate their 10th anniversary.



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GATHERING SUPPLIES

Choosing your unroasted green beans can be overwhelming, especially if you don't have a real preference for the country of origin. Unfortunately, unless you know someone who grows their own coffee, chances are you are going to have to buy green coffee beans online. When sourcing your beans, buy smaller quantities or find a roasting group to trade or split your beans with. This allows you to try a larger variety of beans, so you can find your favorite.

The most common appliances to use when roasting beans are ovens, skillets, popcorn makers or specialty coffee roasters. Although most people have ovens and skillets readily available, they are not recommended for beginners. Roasting beans this way requires a level of skill that someone new to the hobby won't possess. Instead, use a popcorn maker. Not only do they automatically stir the beans, allowing for an even roast, but they are a budget-friendly alternative to specialty roasters.

FINDING YOUR WORKSPACE

Roasting beans emits large quantities of smoke, so don't do it in a confined space. Before you set up your workstation, locate a well-ventilated area on your property such as an open garage, a back porch or a room with an exterior fan. If you are planning on using a stovetop or oven, open the kitchen windows, and don't be afraid to use your ventilator fan.

ROASTING THE BEAN

Bean roasting occurs in stages. The first stage has been coined as the yellowing stage, after the shade the green beans turn as moisture begins to leave them. During this stage, the beans will steam and emit a grassy smell. When the beans start to brown and the smell of the steam becomes more fragrant, you'll know that the second stage is fast approaching.

A sharp cracking noise three to five minutes after you began roasting marks the transition into the second stage, aptly called "the first crack." When a bean cracks, the sugars inside it will caramelize and the moisture that has been trapped inside of it starts to escape. Once the beans have cracked, you can stop roasting and enjoy your batch of

The PERFECT Cup

— By Emma McKay

With the hustle and bustle of American work culture, it's no wonder coffee is the choice drink of many professionals. Despite the rush to begin their mornings, some people enjoy turning coffee brewing into a relaxing ritual. One way people uniquely craft their cups is through roasting their own coffee beans. While roasting beans isn't a hobby for the faint of heart, it can be a fun and excellent way to learn more about your drink.

light roast beans, or you can allow the beans to continue caramelizing. After this stage, the roasting all depends on your taste preferences.

A second and even louder round of cracking occurs at the third stage. During this "second crack," shards of the beans may go flying about. This minor explosion occurs when all the water in the bean has finally evaporated. As the sugars in the bean continue to break down, you'll get a bitter, medium roast coffee. If you prefer a bolder taste, let the beans continue to darken and the sugars burn away, to create a dark roast. As soon as you've reached the roast level you like, immediately remove the beans from the heat source, or they will continue to cook.

STORING

Unfortunately, you can't throw the beans into a grinder and then use them to make coffee as soon as they are roasted. Once your beans have cooled to room temperature, remove the chaff (coffee bean husk) and seal them in an airtight container. Store the container in a cool, dark place for at least three days before grinding them to use in your favorite brewing method.

If the roast doesn't turn out the way you wanted the first time, don't be discouraged. Finding your favorite flavor takes trial and error. Through experimentation, you will learn to make your perfect cup of coffee. **NOW**

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Mom's Banana Blueberry Pie

CookingNOW IN THE KITCHEN WITH ANGELA SWANN

— By Angel Morris



Angela Swann's favorite cooking memory is at the kitchen table in her grandmother's house, "watching her cut up and fry chicken. She let me sneak over and pick the krispies off the plate. My sister and I would fight over who got the wishbone," she recalled. "I also enjoyed sitting outside under a big tree in the hot summer helping her snap beans. She kept a brown paper sack in her lap to put the snaps in."

Angela and her husband, Darryl, moved from the Austin area to Ellis County about four years ago. They have four children — Chris, Josh, Becky and Caleb — and six grandchildren — Kyla, Noah, Lizzy, Damon, Duke and Ava, who enjoy Angela's recipes. "In addition to baking," she shared, "I enjoy doing embroidery." **NOW**

Granny Clark's Chicken and Dumplings

I whole chicken, rinsed
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
1 16-oz. carton half-and-half
1 box, plus 1 14-oz. can chicken stock (divided use)
2 eggs
2 Tbsp. cooking oil
1 can evaporated milk (divided use)
3-5 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. Accent flavoring

1. Place the chicken into a large pot; fully cover the chicken with water. Salt and pepper the water to taste. Boil until tender (45 minutes-1 hour).

- 2.** Remove the chicken from the water; set aside to cool while making the broth and dumplings.
- 3.** Reduce the heat to simmer. To the pot of water, add the half-and-half and the box of chicken stock. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- 4.** In a large bowl, combine the eggs, the can of chicken stock, cooking oil and 1/2 can of evaporated milk. (Add the rest of the evaporated milk to the simmering broth pot.) Add 3 cups of flour to the bowl; stir until it forms a dough ball. Add additional flour, a little at a time, until the dough ball is not sticky.
- 5.** Lightly flour a work surface; roll out the dough very thin, about 1/8-inch. Use a sharp knife or pizza cutter to cut the dough into 1.5x3-inch strips. Drop each piece into the pot of broth gravy, and stir to keep the dumplings from sticking together. Simmer

until cooked through. Again, salt and pepper to taste and add Accent.

6. While the dumplings are simmering, remove the skin and bones from the cooked chicken, and roughly cut it into bite-size pieces. When the dumplings are cooked, drop the chicken into the pot to warm.

Mom's Banana Blueberry Pie

Makes 2 pies.

2 envelopes powdered Dream Whip mix

1 cup cold milk

1 tsp. vanilla extract

8 oz. softened cream cheese

1 cup sugar

2 piecrusts, baked and cooled

4-5 bananas, sliced

1 21-oz. can blueberry pie filling

1. In a bowl, prepare the Dream Whip according to the package directions, adding extra milk and vanilla extract; set aside.

2. In a separate bowl, mix the cream cheese and sugar with an electric mixer until well combined and fluffy. Fold in the Dream Whip mixture. Spread onto the bottom of cooled piecrusts.

3. Add the bananas; mix them into the Dream Whip and cream cheese mixture. Gently cover the tops of the pies with blueberry filling to the edges.

4. Refrigerate for a few hours before serving to set up.

Fudgy Brownie Crinkle Bites

Makes about 16 cookies.

3/4 cup sugar

2 large eggs, room temperature

1/2 stick, plus 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter

6 oz. Ghirardelli bittersweet 55-100% baker's chocolate, cut into small pieces/shavings

1/3 cup Dutch processed cocoa powder

1/4 tsp. salt

3/4 cup Ghirardelli dark chocolate chips

1. Heat the oven to 350 F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

2. In a large mixing bowl, add the sugar and eggs. Beat on high until the mixture triples in volume (3-5 minutes).

3. In a small pot, melt together the butter and baker's chocolate. Let it cool to lukewarm. Wisk into the sugar and egg mixture until well combined.

4. Add the cocoa powder and salt; whisk until glossy.

5. Stir in the chocolate chips. Chill in the refrigerator for 10-15 minutes.

6. Use a cookie scoop to portion out onto lined cookie sheets.

7. Bake for 9 minutes; cool on a rack.



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Like Texas, Arkansas is one of 26 U.S. states that include a town named for the capital of France. Located in the northwest of the state, Paris, Arkansas, is situated at the base of Mount Magazine. The rural town in Logan County is home to about 3,700 residents who enjoy its lush landscapes and assorted industries.

Logan County's coal mining history began in the 1800s, and Paris pays tribute to that with its Coal Miners Memorial. Along with photos and tributes dedicated to local miners, the museum features a functioning blacksmith shop, which provides tours upon request.

Mount Magazine is the highest point in the state and is home to Mount Magazine State Park, where visitors can horseback ride and hike trails or cycle paved bike lanes including the Huckleberry Mountain Horse Trail and the Will Apple's Road Trail. Several lakes offer free fishing and swimming.

Backpacking, rock climbing, hang gliding and ATV riding are among other park activities. When deciding on a visit date, consider the month of June, when the park hosts the annual Mount Magazine International Butterfly Festival.

The state's official butterfly, the Diana fritillary, is almost exclusively found in the region. Park goers can also be on the lookout for bobcat, black bear, coyote and whitetail deer, among other wildlife.

Consider booking a stay at the multimillion-dollar Lodge at Mount Magazine, built in 2006. Besides its business and conference centers, the lodge offers a fitness center, gift shop, pool and Southern cuisine from its eatery, the Skycrest Restaurant. Sixty guest rooms are available in this rustic facility, featuring panoramic views overseeing Blue Mountain Lake in the distance and the Petit Jean River Valley nearby.

For more quaint lodging, visitors might consider the Paris Bed & Bath, a two-bedroom cottage housing four guests. From the centrally located home, one can visit the Love Lock Fence outside Eiffel Tower Park, where you can place a lock featuring your name and the name of your loved one, then throw away the key in the Eiffel Tower fountain.

To experience deeper waters, visitors can explore the Petit Jean River, the largest river flowing entirely within Arkansas River Valley's natural division. Rising in the western Arkansas Ouachita Mountains, it flows about 113 miles eastward into the Arkansas River at Petit Jean State Park. The river is a well-known attraction in the state, particularly among canoeists.

While antique shops, boutiques and restaurants attract visitors year-round, in spring and summer, Paris' historic downtown features a farmers market on the square Tuesdays and Thursdays. The first Saturday in May brings the Spring Time in Paris Festival, while the first Saturday in October features the Frontier Day Festival. Many amateur and professional bicycling and motorcycling events are scheduled throughout the year, too.

If traveling at Christmastime, the state's Trail of Holiday Lights is a delightful way to ring in the season. An official tree lighting kicks off the event, when some 100,000



twinkling lights shine over more than two dozen themed trees decorated by local organizations. A parade initiates the festivities, where Santa remains on hand for photo ops weekdays throughout Trail dates.

No visit to Paris, Arkansas, is complete without a stop at the family-owned and -operated Prestonrose Farm and Brewing Co. A small batch artisan brewery located on a certified organic farm opens on select evenings to provide guests with a locally sourced, unique farm menu.

Last but not least, you'll want to snap photos at the city's 25-foot-tall Eiffel Tower before calling your trip complete. From outdoor adventures to downhome events, Paris, Arkansas, offers a lot to love without having to cross the Atlantic. NOW

Sources:

1. arkansas.com/paris.
2. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Magazine_State_Park.
3. encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/petit-jean-river-6252/.

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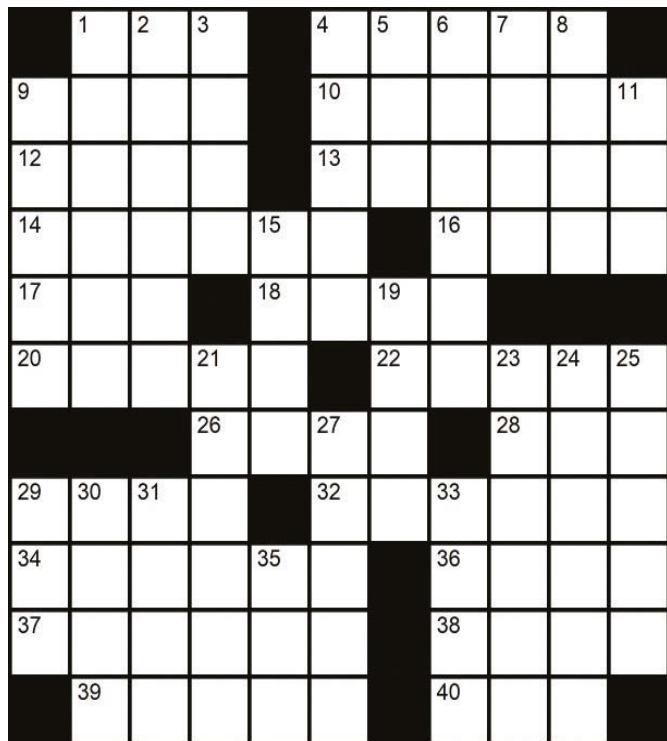
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Across

- 1 Subject of "Take Me Home, Country Roads" (John Denver)
- 4 Mature
- 9 Yoko Ono's son
- 10 Dry up
- 12 Saber handle
- 13 Third sign of the zodiac
- 14 Instead
- 16 "... and make it snappy!"
- 17 Sum charged
- 18 Peruse
- 20 "..." Remember" (Song from "The Fantasticks")
- 21
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- 25
- 26
- 27
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Down

- 22 Hat he tweaked for a British Prime Minister
- 26 "Got it!"
- 28 Auto club, up north
- 29 Bridge, in Bordeaux
- 32 Fishing vessels
- 34 Schools
- 36 "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" reporter --- Lane
- 37 Uncivilized
- 38 Enticement to a trout
- 39 China brand
- 40 "Count me in!"
- 1 "Mad Men" creator Matthew ---
- 2 Depression between hills
- 3 Against
- 4 Dispute
- 5 Owing
- 6 Like a teenager's bed?
- 7 "Daily Planet" reporter --- Lane
- 8 Albacore, for example
- 9 Loose dress
- 11 Apex
- 15 Greek love god
- 19 "Attention please ..."
- 21 Venetian art master
- 23 Gather
- 24 Skater all over the place for willing participants
- 25 Careless speed
- 27 Hudson automobile replaced by the Terraplane
- 29 Points
- 30 Spoken
- 31 Congregational part of a church
- 33 With skill
- 35 Save the Children, for example

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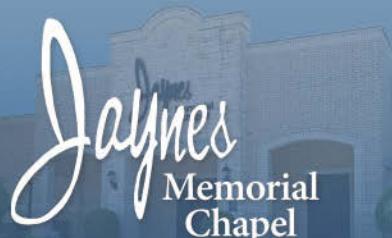
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	4			2	6			
9		1						
		8	9	3				
3	5		1		6			
		7			4			
	4				1			
5	1			3				
6				8	7			

Medium

8			2					
			6	7		1		
5			1		6		3	
9	5		3			2		
		8		1	7			
1					5			
		8		1		4		
			6		5			
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newest techniques and technology. I'm also a native Spanish speaker. I grew up speaking both languages. Our YouTube videos explaining procedures are available in both English and Spanish."

Dr. Allala is proud of the service they provide at Serenity Advanced Dentistry. "I think we give five-star service. And I know my staff is five-star. We know what works and what doesn't. I know it sounds corny, but this is my life's work. Most of my staff have been with me for years, at different locations around DFW, before I came to Cedar Hill. I met Mariela seven years ago, in Pleasant Grove. It was my first job out of school. Racine has been with me four years, and Jazmine three years, both in Red Oak. Our newest team member is Jessica. She found us three months ago when she emailed me looking for an opportunity to shadow a dentist."

Serenity Advanced Dentistry

If you are an adult who is afraid of going to the dentist, or even just a little extra anxious, Serenity Advanced Dentistry may be just what you are looking for. "We do a lot of sedation dentistry, mostly for adults," Dr. Allala explained. "It's kind of my niche. Many adults may have some pretty serious anxiety about going to the dentist. They may not even seek care. They'd rather be in pain. I provide a place to take care of these people. When patients elect to get treatment, we lower the statistics of people living in pain. I like being able to contribute to improving people's lives."

"Coincidentally, a lot of people who are anxious about going to the dentist are also people who don't have good insurance. That's a bad combination. I have membership plans for patients without insurance, and really good discounts on implants and dentures. A membership might not be necessary if you only need one simple procedure, but if you need sedation and a lot of work, it really pays for itself."

Dr. Allala is a graduate of the Texas A&M School of Dentistry. "When I started there, it was still Baylor. My diploma has both names on it," she recalled. "I specialize in oral surgery, and we're really good at it. I'm nothing without my team. We do everything in dentistry. I like being well rounded. I enjoy being an overachiever, so I'm constantly taking continuing education, keeping up with all the

"I LIKE BEING WELL ROUNDED. I ENJOY BEING AN OVERACHIEVER, SO I'M CONSTANTLY TAKING CONTINUING EDUCATION, KEEPING UP WITH ALL THE NEWEST TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGY."

Serenity Advanced Dentistry has all the newest technology to make your experience convenient. "We have hospital-grade blood pressure machines, so we can do sedation. We also have intraoral scanners, so I can see inside your mouth, from every angle, before I ever go in for your procedure. We print dentures and place implants right here in the office. With our skills and strategies, most patients don't even feel our injections. We have TVs in every room to keep you entertained while we work. It's all about efficiency — working smarter, not harder. That's why I designed the floor plan of the office myself. And we're really big on sanitation and sterilization. It's important to maintain a sterile environment, which is why we're closed every Friday for deep cleaning the office and training."

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Texas
trivia:

FUN FACTS ABOUT TEXAS

— By Emma McKay



1 **No drink is as Texan as Dr Pepper.** The Dr Pepper Museum credits pharmacist Charles Alderton for creating it in the late 19th century while working at Morrison's Old Corner Drug Store in Waco. In between filling prescriptions, Alderton spent his time creating carbonated concoctions at the soda fountain, filling the air with a sweet syrupy scent. The recipe for this beloved beverage was inspired by the pharmacy's fragrance. The soda, which had been dubbed a "Waco" by Morrison's regulars, debuted to the nation under the name "Dr. Pepper" at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.



2 **Everything is bigger in Texas!** Not only is Texas the second largest state, but when driving across it, you'll see some world record holders, such as the 40-foot-tall cowboy boots in San Antonio or the 26-foot-tall cedar rocking chair in Lipan. The World's Largest Working Fire Hydrant was donated to the city of Beaumont by the Walt Disney Company in 1999 to promote the re-release of *101 Dalmatians*, and sports those captivating spots. Even our gas stations are bigger! The Buc-ee's in Luling holds a world record for the largest convenience store at 75,593 square feet, and the Katy Buc-ee's boasts the longest car wash at 255 feet.



3 **The National Holiday of Juneteenth originated in Texas.** According to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, African Americans all over gathered to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation taking effect on January 1, 1863. Despite them being free in the eyes of the country, many African Americans in Confederate states still lived in slavery. To spread the news of their emancipation, thousands of Union soldiers, including many Black soldiers, marched through plantations, freeing enslaved people. On June 19, 1865, Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, freeing 250,000 people, which marked the day as our great nation's second independence day.



4 **Our name means friend.** Before six flags flew over Texas, Native American tribes presided over the land, and we have them to thank for our great state's name. According to the Texas State Historical Association, the word "texas" comes from a Caddoan word, meaning "friend." Many other East Texas tribes used variations of "texas" in similar ways, including the Hasinai nation, who used it as a greeting. In 1689, Spanish explorers met members of the Nabedache tribe, who described themselves as *thecas*. The explorers thought this was the tribe's name, and incorrectly referred to them as *Thecas*. The explorers left missionary Francisco de Jesús María with the group. He later reported the translation error, stating that the word referred to tribes allied against the Apaches.



5 **TxDOT is responsible for a popular slogan.** The state's unofficial slogan, "Don't Mess with Texas," originated in an anti-littering campaign led by the Texas Department of Transportation. In the 1980s, \$20 million was being spent annually on trash pick up. In order to combat the steady rise of littering, Austin-based advertising agent Tim McClure created the slogan, using the word "mess" to mean litter. After the campaign's launch during the 50th Annual Cotton Bowl on January 1, 1986, TxDOT saw a significant decrease in trash. By 1990, littering had decreased by 72 percent, showing that Texans have pride in keeping their state clean.

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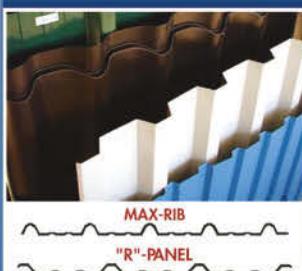
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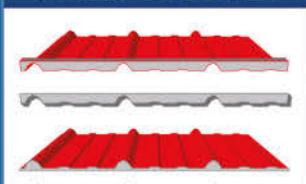


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