SouthwestNOW

uring

M A G A Z I N E

MARCH 2023

The Littlest Superhero

Cristiano Frigoli conquers all challenges

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

Featured Business: Cu'Noma Cigar Lounge

Pallets of Living Color

Get creative with plants, discarded wood and a few tools

In the Kitchen With Deborah Plimmer

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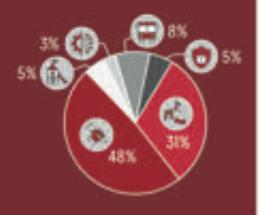
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CHISD WILL HAVE A BOND ELECTION ON THE MAY 6, 2023 BALLOT.

Through a voter-approved Bond Election, Cadar Hill ISO expects to generate additional funding to renovate and update schools. The proposed projects include:



Safety & Security Updates at All Schools in CHISD

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Campus Renovations for Fine Arts, STEM and CTE

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Capital Improvements at 13 Facilities

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includes repliveplacements.

WMC system updates, flacing replacements, reside school track surfaces, playing improvements, etc. Stat have reached the end of their useful life.

A comotolis list of capital improvements are posted all riferal net (Bend2003).



New, Accessible Playgrounds at 6 Elementary Schools \$10,100,000



Technology Infrastructure Updates at All Schools in CHISO

\$5,800,000



New Transportation Center and New Buses

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ON THE COVER



Cristiano Frigoli is loving his new freedom.

Photo by

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Celebrate March ...

March is filled with ethnic and religious celebrations this year. If your own culture isn't among these, maybe you have a friend or neighbor who is celebrating and can join in, or just find a way to show respect for days of importance to others in your community.

Texas Independence Day is on the 2nd. Remember the Alamo, and have some barbecue or a bowl of chili.

Jewish people will celebrate Purim on the 6th, remembering the events in the Book of Esther, when God delivered them from a genocidal plot. And they have cookies.

Ghana's Independence Day is also on the 6th. Celebrate with some jollof rice and some fufu. We just ran a Nigerian recipe for fufu in the January issue, but the Ghanaian version might be a bit different.

The Hindu festival of Holi is on the 8th. Celebrate with lots of color and fantastic Indian desserts. St. Patrick's Day is on the 17th. It's the perfect excuse to make Mulligan stew or soda bread or consume anything green.

The 21st is Nowruz, the Persian New Year. Sabzi polo (herbed rice) and fish should be on your menu.

If you have Muslim friends, neighbors or co-workers, they won't be eating during the day for Ramadan, which begins on the 22nd, but plenty of feasting happens after dark. It's hard to recommend specific foods, since Muslims come from so many different cultures, just leave off all the pork.

Greek Independence Day is on the 25th, so there's your excuse for grape leaf rolls, moussaka and all the baklava you can get your hands on. Now I've planned your menu for the month ...

... with food, fun and fellowship.

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THE LITTLEST SUPPLIED AND A STATE OF THE LITTLEST SUPPLIED AND A STA

— By Adam Walker

Cristiano Frigoli looks like any other 5-year-old, a rambunctious ball of energy, but there was a secret lurking in his genes. "I like to garden," his mother, Tiffany, revealed. "I would take Cristiano out with me, to get his hands in the dirt, to let him play and build his immune system. I didn't realize he didn't have one."

It didn't take long for his parents to realize something was not quite right. Cristiano had a series of illnesses. "There were a lot of little things that wouldn't go away," Tiffany explained.

"He got hand-foot-and-mouth disease," his father, Giancarlo, added. "The antibiotics should have gotten rid of it in four-seven days. It lasted for months. We kept asking, 'Why is this taking weeks?""

Cristiano was 2 years old when he was in the kitchen playing. "He got a knot on his head, and I noticed that his pupils weren't the same size," his mother remembered. The doctor sent them to an ophthalmologist who diagnosed Cristiano with possible juvenile idiopathic arthritis and referred them to the rheumatology department at Scottish Rite Hospital. "They started treating Cristiano for the inflammation in his eyes, but they couldn't find an answer for the cause. I kept saying, 'There's something more going on.' The doctor asked if she could do some genetic testing." The test results gave them an answer — chronic granulomatous disease, CGD. "It's X-linked," Tiffany explained, "but I tested not a carrier, so his is a spontaneous mutation, not passed down. It's a very rare disease."

It's rare enough that only three doctors in North Texas treat it. One of them is Dr. Wysocki at Children's Medical Center. "Cristiano was diagnosed in September, and while we were waiting for his first appointment, he came down with a rhinovirus that put him in the hospital. Dr. Wysocki found out he was there, and he hadn't seen him yet, so he came by and immediately started him on prophylactic medications. It's been a crazy ride the last two years."

Cristiano has a team of doctors — an immunologist, a gastroenterologist, a dermatologist, a rheumatologist, an ophthalmologist and an infectious diseases specialist — and a list of prohibitions — no preschool, no playing outside, no fishing, no aquariums, no leaves. "No mulch is another one,"











Myth: I only need to take my allergy medication when I'm feeling really bad.

Fact: Most allergy medications work best if taken daily, beginning about 1-2 weeks. before your allergy season starts.

Myth: Moving to a drier climate - the U.S. Southwest, for example - will cure my spring allergies.

Fact: There really is no allergy-free zone. Pollen allergies can occur anywhere. Deserts have plenty of plants that produce pollen, such as sagebrush, cottonwood, and olive trees.

Myth: Allergy medications make me sleepy, so I just tolerate my symptoms because there's nothing I can do to stop them.

Fact: Non-sedating allergy medications are available and effective for relieving symptoms. These include some anthistamines and corticosteroid nasal sprays.

Myth: All I need to control my allergies indoors is an air cleaner. Fact: An air cleaner or purifier will only remove allergers floating in the air. They do nothing for pollen and mold spores on your clothes; shoes, or hair that you bring in from outside.

Myth: I've never had allergies before, so this runny nose must be a

Fact: You can develop new allergies at any time, even as an adult. Are your eyes, nose, and throat are itchy? Do you have a stuffy nose, inflamed nasal passages, or a runny nose with clear and thin nasal drip? Have your symptoms lasted more than two weeks? These are signs of seasonal allergies or allergic rhinitis.

https://wilergyauthmenetwork.org/news/myths-about-spring-allergies



his gardener mother added. "It's all gravel out there now. CGD affects every aspect of life. It changes the way you see things. The things you thought mattered, don't. The things you didn't, do."

"When we found out what Cristiano had, we looked up the different treatments," Giancarlo explained. "There were some clinical trials, but corona had shut everything down. A bone marrow transplant is a big thing, and the first doctor we talked to didn't really seem to be answering our questions. I looked at doctors in Canada and Europe. Thank God we found Dr. Martinez in Houston."

Tiffany agreed. "She's the head of bone marrow transplants at Texas Children's Hospital. She's a mother herself. She understands. I can't say enough good things about her. She didn't sugarcoat. She was honest about the risks and rewards."

None of the family were a good match for Cristiano. "Gabby was only an eight out of 10. You want a 10 out of 10," Tiffany reported. Tiffany and Giancarlo are very grateful to Be the Match for raising awareness of the need to register as a bone marrow donor. A good match was found, and Cristiano headed to Houston for the lengthy treatment — eight days of chemo, followed by the actual transplant. "That was followed by six weeks in the hospital and 100 days in Houston, staying close to the hospital, in case there was a need for readmission."

In the hospital, Cristiano had plenty of adventures. A big Sonic the Hedgehog fan, his door proclaimed him "CriSonic." So his mother got an idea to get him a treat before the procedure. "I reached out to the actors' agents. Then I heard that Ben Schwartz, who voices Sonic, was active on Twitter. so I signed up and tweeted him a half





dozen times! I didn't know I needed to turn DM's on! I got a Facebook message saying Ben was trying to reach me. The next day, Cristiano got a voicemail from Sonic himself — the night before the transplant! He played that message over and over. I get teary eyed even now. Then, the next day, he called back to see how it went! You think a bone marrow transplant is this big surgery, but it's a bag of cells through an IV line."

"I called my IV machine 'Dr. Eggy.' He's the bad guy in the movie," Cristiano informed. "Nurse Alia was my favorite nurse. We made dinosaur noises together. And Rodrigo and me, we played, because we're friends." Cristiano said about his favorite fellow patient. "We played with the toys in the room that was locked. When I woke up, it was open, and we played with the toys. Now that I'm home, I like playing with Gabby."

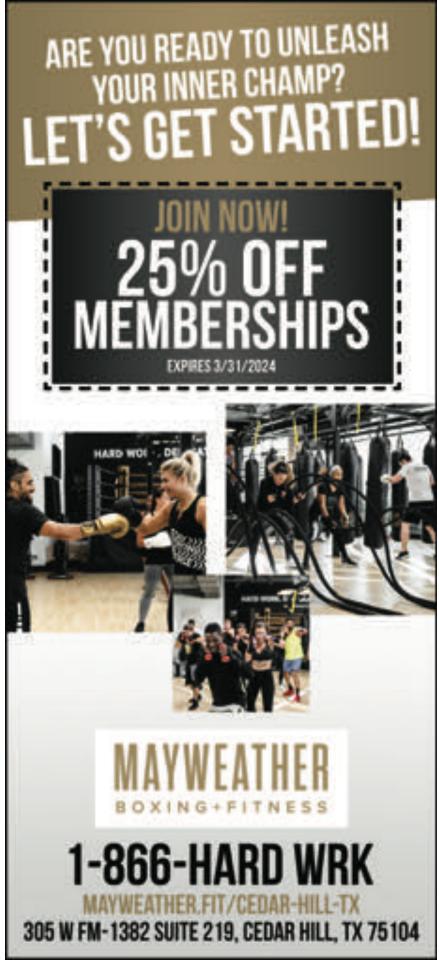
"We play Goat Simulator," Gabby added. "That's our favorite video game. And Throw, Throw Burrito. I love tacos and quesadillas. I want to go see LEGOLAND."

"Yeah, me too!" Cristiano agreed. "I love going to the beach."

Mom tilted her head. "You've never been to the beach."

Cristiano just shrugged. He is continuing to improve. All his numbers are looking good, and he has seen a drastic decrease in the amount and kinds of medication he has to take. "When he got his line out, he shouted, 'I'm free!' There have been no ER trips since he came home. Every two weeks, we see Dr. Wysocki, and once a month we go back to Houston," Tiffany informed.

"When we go out, I wear my Darth Vader mask," Cristiano explained about his HEPA filter. This is one little superhero who is flying full speed on into the future. NOW







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— By Lisa Bell

For years, do-it-yourself enthusiasts have searched for ways to turn discarded wooden pallets into furniture, signs or even backsplashes for kitchens. Available for free or at a low cost, they are ideal to use as the base for a backyard garden.

After acquiring your wooden pallets, remove nails and any broken boards. Clean and sand the pallets, and then varnish or paint them to protect the wood from rotting. For a more colorful option, consider a rainbow of colors as a fantastic way to use leftover paint from other projects.

Of course, you can always deconstruct the pallet and simply use the boards to create a standard planter. But if you want to employ creativity, here are a few ideas to wow your friends.

Wall Pallet Plant Holders

Prepare your pallet as instructed above, and carefully remove the back and side slats. If desired, use a jigsaw to cut the boards into a shape. Paint the pallet to match or contrast a wall or fence. Add eye hooks or S-hooks to the bottom for small hanging plants. If hanging the pallet on wood, be sure to locate the studs and screw it in place. For brick walls, use a mortar drill bit and an all-in-one screw and anchor (Walldog) with a metal washer to secure the pallet. Drill a hole in the mortar, not the brick. Repeat for additional Walldogs to secure the hanging. Then measure, mark and drill holes in the pallet. Thread the screw through the washer, drill through the pallet, and attach to the brick wall using pre-drilled holes.

After attaching the hanger to the wall, add lightweight planters and decorations using S-hooks. If desired, purchase decorative S-hooks to give the hanging garden more character. Fill the planters with soil and plants as desired.

Free-standing Vertical Wall With Attachments

After preparing your pallet, turn it so the slats run horizontally. If desired, secure the pallet to an external wall, fence or other stable object. You can build an A-frame to hold the wall vertically or use stabilizers.

Drill holes and screw hose clips into the boards. Add as many or as few as desired. Fill recycled jars, cans or small traditional pots with gravel, soil and plants. Place the jars inside the clips and tighten them to hold the jars securely in place. For an added touch of flair, paint, stencil or burn the names of the plants on the wood, or you can use chalkboard paint that allows you to write names.

Raised Pallet Garden

Prepare your pallets as previously instructed, and then turn them over so the bottom side faces up. Lay out and cut a sheet of garden fabric to cover the bottom and sides with a few inches to overlap

the top. Using a staple gun, secure the fabric to the pallet's bottom. Turn the pallet over, and staple the overlapping fabric to the top. Place the pallet in its preferred location, add topsoil and add your plants or seeds.

The boards separate the plants, allowing for a variety of flowers or vegetables. Identify the plants with a brightly painted word or picture — or add a purchased bright stake identifier. Stacking various sized pallets at angles creates a tiered garden. With the sturdiness of the base material, stacking works well.

Vertical Wall Garden

Prepare your pallet and stand it up with the boards in a horizontal position. The front and back create the sides of your "planters." Remove some boards for a deeper planter and nail them in place as the "bottom" of each planter. Pre-drill holes to avoid splitting the wood. Add garden fabric to the back to avoid soil from spilling.

Position the garden wall and secure it in place to a wall or fence, or stabilize the bottom with A-frames, wedges or other stabilizers. For free-standing wall gardens, make sure to secure it well, so it remains upright. Pea gravel or drainage rocks in the planter's bottom increases drainage, or you can drill small holes in the bottom before adding soil. Add topsoil and place plants in each planter box. Plants with trailing flowers or herbs work best in the vertical wall garden.

Get creative and enjoy your pallet gardens for years. With a variety of styles, adding color to your yard won't take much effort or a ton of money. NOW

Sources:

I. J. L. (2016, April). 17 Creative DIY Pallet Planter Ideas for Spring. Retrieved from DIY Projects: www.diyprojects.com/ pallet-planter-ideas/?msclkid=791f93ffcf e011eca2254d07b86fba36#raised. 2. Wallender, L. (2021, September 13). How to Make a Simple Pallet Planter. Retrieved from The Spruce: www. thespruce.com/how-to-make-asimple-pallet-planter-5186994. 3. Leah (2013, August 1). How to Attach Almost Anything to a Brick Wall. Retrieved from See Jane Drill: www. YouTube.com/watch?v=58BvyxFbt3Y.

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Around Town



Gabriel Lance and his son, Emilio, get in some play time at Hillside Village.



First Methodist School families donated nonperishable food items to Duncanville Outreach Ministry representative Martin Alonzo.

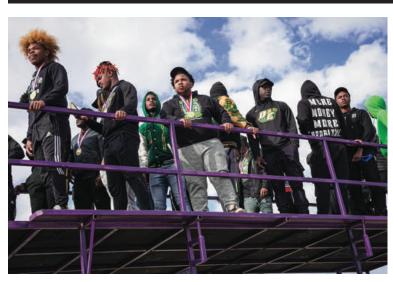
Zoomed In: Ryann Campbell

By Adam Walker

Ryann Campbell is a school counselor at Waterford Oaks Elementary School in Cedar Hill ISD. "I've been a school counselor in CHISD for five years, and before that, I taught English at DeSoto High School for 10 years. The best part of being a school counselor is being able to connect with the students."

Much of her work with elementary students has to do with helping them learn to deal constructively with their emotions, especially anger. "I'm here to help them through the difficult times in their lives. I'm helping kids to dream big by advocating for them throughout our communities."

National School Counselors Week is always the second week of February. It focuses attention on the important work they do helping students navigate life.



DeSoto High School football players celebrate their state championship.



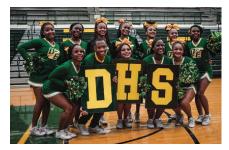
Young DeSotans practice cup stacking during the Who-bilation at the library, while their parents look on.



Duncanville's Larry Balagna is the Irish Person of the Year.



Josh Thibodeaux's State Farm Office celebrates their grand re-opening after their expansion.



DeSoto cheerleaders hype the crowd at the pep rally.



Diana Florenzano awaits people needing help at the Teach Yourself Tech class at the Zula B. Wylie Library.







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Cu'Noma Cigar Lounge

— By Adam Walker

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Instagram: @cunomacigarlounge Twitter: @CunomaCL

Hours: Monday-Thursday: 3:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Friday: 3:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. Sunday: 4:00 p.m.-midnight

Cu'Noma Cigar Lounge is CEO Tommie Black's dream. "I provide a traditional cigar lounge environment. When you walk in, you're greeted by dark leather furniture and wood paneled walls. It feels like a library or a study in a millionaire's house, not a nightclub." Cu'Noma sells cigars and accessories like cutters, lighters, ashtrays, cases and

holders. "When people see the name, Cu'Noma, they may think it's a fancy French or Spanish word, but the Cu is from Cuban cigars, and the Noma is from the Sonoma wine country. I put them together with a cigar for the apostrophe. It reminds me of the two things I love and I'm passionate about."

It's a sophisticated spot for mature smokers to listen to jazz and lounge music. The tables evoke card games from the Gilded Age. The bar is brown marble with a glass tile backsplash. The floors are tile. There are also multiple big-screen TVs to follow your favorite team on game days. "A lot of our customers are 40-plus, but we have all ages. Men and women both like it here. Women feel safe and sexy here. We have a strong contingency of female patrons. This is a BYOB establishment, but we supply glasses and ice for your favorite libation. We're the place if you're looking for a high end, upscale cigar lounge. We have white-glove service. You don't ever need to get up from your table until you need to go to the bathroom!"

Cu'Noma is a winner of the National Cigar Lounge of the Year Award for 2022 from Black Smoke Miami, where Tommie just presented this year and debuted his new line of casual apparel to declare the wearer's love of cigars. That's an accomplishment for a lounge that only opened four years ago.

"WHEN YOU WALK IN, YOU'RE GREETED BY **DARK LEATHER FURNITURE AND WOOD** PANELED WALLS. IT **FEELS LIKE A LIBRARY** OR A STUDY IN A MILLIONAIRE'S HOUSE, **NOT A NIGHTCLUB.**"

Tommie spent eight years as a military contractor in Iraq and Afghanistan. "To ease tension in various war zones. I smoked about 12 cigars a day. I'd been on the project for eight years on a C4ISR program, and my time was up. Our liaison officer asked me if I'd like to go to Kuwait and take over the office there. Kuwait City would be quite a step up, with no one throwing bombs at you! But I told him I'd already started shipping my stuff back home. I wanted to come home and build my cigar lounge.

"He couldn't believe I was really doing it. But I wanted to test the old adage, 'Do what you love, and you'll never work a day in your life.' I spent a year planning and building before I opened Cu'Noma. It's worked out pretty well."

Tommie enjoys introducing patrons to new cigars from among the quality boutique brands he stocks. He is also working on a series of informational videos about cigar culture.

"Tradition is what makes the difference at Cu'Noma. This isn't a tobacco shop. It's also not a nightclub. This is a place with class, where you can come enjoy a cigar." NOW







Deborah Plimmer grew up in Chicago. "In 1963, a new chef came on TV called Julia Child. My mother loved her cooking and bought all of Julia's cookbooks. My mom and I would prepare Julia's recipes. That was my introduction to cooking." In her 20s, she loved cooking with her friends. "We would do weekend brunches, all cooking at one another's homes."

She and her husband, Richard, also from Chicago, met in Cleburne and started a restaurant, before moving to Duncanville in 1992, where they now run The Tamale Company Bodega. "Cooking is sometimes like chemistry. I started to experiment with cooking more vegetarian and really embraced it. I started with dishes that had meat or chicken and converted them to more of a plant-based recipe." Now

Zucchini Lasagna Rolls With Ricotta

- 2 lbs. zucchini
- 1/4 tsp. salt, plus more to taste (divided use)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- I cup ricotta
- 2/3 cup, plus 4 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese, grated (divided use)
- 1/3 cup mozzarella cheese

- 1/3 cup, plus 2 Tbsp. parsley 1 egg yolk Pinch ground nutmeg Pepper, to taste 1 1/2 to 2 cups marinara sauce
- **I.** Using a mandolin, slice the zucchini into 1/8-inch-thick ribbons. Place the slices in a bowl; sprinkle with 1/4 tsp. salt. Toss together; place in a colander over a bowl to drain for 15-30 minutes.
- 2. Place the ribbons on a tea towel; pat dry.

Transfer to a large bowl; toss with 1 Tbsp. olive oil. Preheat a grill to medium; grill the zucchini 3-4 minutes per side, until grill marks appear.

- **3.** In a small bowl, combine the ricotta, 2/3 cup Parmesan, the next 5 ingredients and salt, to taste.
- **4.** Preheat the oven, with the rack in the center, to 400 F.
- **5.** In a small oval or round baking dish, spread 1/3 cup marinara sauce.
- **6.** Spread 1 tsp. of cheese mixture on each zucchini ribbon. Carefully roll up and place, standing up, in the baking dish, pressing them together. Divide any remaining cheese into the tops of the rolls. Dollop 2-3 Tbsp. of marinara sauce over the tops of the rolls; spread thinly. Sprinkle with 1-2 Tbsp. Parmesan.
- **7.** Bake, uncovered 20-25 minutes, until the sauce is bubbly and the zucchini is tender. Let stand 10-15 minutes.
- **8.** Heat the remaining marinara. Spread 1-2 Tbsp. on each dinner plate. Place the zucchini rolls on top; sprinkle with parsley and grated Parmesan.

Vegan Lasagna Soup

1/2 Tbsp. oil

I small onion, diced

4 garlic cloves, minced

1 1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning

I tsp. onion powder

1/2 tsp. paprika

 $1 \ 1/4$ tsp. sea salt, or to taste

Black pepper, to taste

1 15-oz. can cannellini beans

1/2 cup tomato sauce

1 Tbsp. tomato paste

5 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

6 lasagna noodles, broken into smaller pieces

1/2 cup dairy-free milk or cream

1/4 cup lemon juice

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

I. In a large pot, heat the oil over medium heat; sauté the onions for 3-4 minutes. Add the garlic; sauté 1 more minute. Add the next 9 ingredients. Whisk; bring to a boil.

2. Once the soup boils, add the noodles. Cook 9-10 minutes, until the noodles are al dente.

3. Add the dairy-free milk, lemon juice and yeast. Turn off the heat. Taste; adjust seasonings as needed.

Vegan Queso

2 Tbsp. avocado oil or extra-virgin olive oil

I medium yellow onion, chopped

1/2 tsp., plus pinch salt (divided use)

4 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 tsp. smoked paprika

1/2 tsp. chili powder

1/2 tsp. ground cumin

1/2 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp. onion powder

I Russet potato, baked

1 butternut squash, baked

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

2 tsp. chipotle hot sauce

1/2 tsp. vinegar

1 1/2 cups water (as needed)

1. In a large saucepan, warm the oil over medium heat. Add the onions and a pinch of salt. Stir frequently, until the onions are tender and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the spices and remaining salt; stir to combine. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes, to enhance the flavors: let cool. 2. Carefully pour the mixture into a blender. Peel and chop the potato and butternut squash: add to the blender. Add the nutritional yeast, hot sauce and vinegar. Blend until completely smooth, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape down the sides, as needed. If it won't blend easily, or you prefer a thinner consistency, add water in 1/4-cup increments, blending after each

addition. Adjust salt as needed.



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March 14th and March 28th

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Raw Brownie Truffles

1/4 cup raw, shelled pistachios I cup raw, unsalted walnuts I4 large Medjool dates I/2 cup cocoa powder 2 tsp. vanilla extract I/8 tsp. salt

1. In a food processor, grind the pistachios to a very fine powder, about 1 minute. Pour onto a plate; set aside.

- **2.** Wipe out the food processor bowl. Add the walnuts; process a few seconds, until finely chopped. Remove the date pits. Add the dates, cocoa powder, vanilla extract and salt. Process until fully combined and crumbly, a few seconds. Turn out into a medium bowl.
- **3.** Squeeze a small handful of the mixture together; roll it between your hands to form a ball about 3/4-inch in diameter. Repeat to make about 30 truffles. Roll each in the pistachio dust. Store in the refrigerator.

Eggplant Bacon

- I small globe eggplant, quartered lengthwise
- 3 Tbsp. any neutral oil
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp. garlic
- 1/2 tsp. liquid smoke
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- **1.** Take one quarter section of the eggplant, reserving the rest for another meal. Cut the piece of eggplant into slices 1/4-inch thick, using a knife or mandolin. This makes 7-8 slices.

- **2.** Double line a microwave-safe tray with paper towels. Place the slices on the tray. Cover with two more layers of paper towels; place a heavy plate on top. Heat on high for 5-7 minutes.
- **3.** Add remaining ingredients to a small jar; shake until emulsified. Add half the marinade to the bottom of an oven-safe casserole dish, in an even layer. Add the slices of eggplant. Brush or pour the remaining marinade on top of the slices, coating well.
- **4.** Air fry at 370 F for 10 minutes, flipping halfway through. Carefully, transfer the slices to foil; fry for 5 more minutes, until crisp at the ends.



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2023

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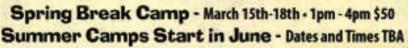
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Fridays @ 1pm - 4pm Classes starting March 3rd will be 3/3,3/24, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21

Saturdays @ 1pm - 4pm Classes starting March 4th will be 3/4, 3/25, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22 Fridays @ 1pm - 4pm Apr 28th - May 26th

Saturdays @ 1pm - 4pm Apr 29th - May 27th



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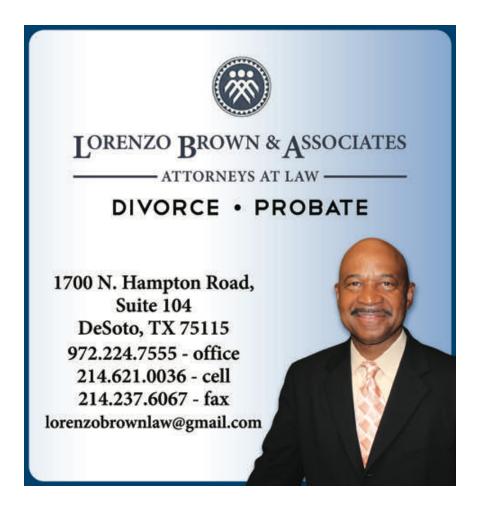
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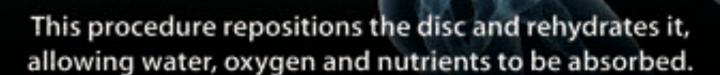
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Crossword Puzzle

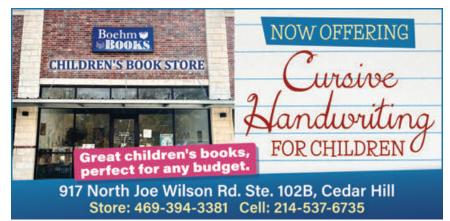
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25 31 33			26	27	24		32 34	28	29	30	16 — Harburg, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" lyricist 17 Maxim 18 Enjoy with relish 21 Consumers 23 "Halt! — fire!"	35 Sailor 36 Shareable computer file	9 Discontinue 10 "Harold & go to White Castle" (2004 movie) 11 Ejects forcefully 15 Respectful form of address	 27 Kind of lamp 28 Sour 29 "A good walk spoiled" (Mar Twain) 30 Conclusion

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FinanceNOW

Evade the Evolving Threat of Financial Fraud

For years, the public has been warned about the dangers of identity theft and financial fraud. By now, you probably know to be wary of opening unsolicited email attachments or sharing account details with strangers. But make no mistake — the fight against fraud is never over. Criminals are always inventing new scams to steal money, and today's fraudsters are more organized, technologically advanced and convincing than ever. Safeguarding your finances requires constant vigilance.

While scams come in many forms, here are four increasingly common cons to keep on your radar:

- **Spear phishing.** With phishing, perpetrators send an attempted scam to the masses through email, phone or text, hoping someone will bite. Spear phishing is more sophisticated and may target you specifically, using personal details (often found online) to impersonate a trusted party like your banker or broker. Think twice before complying with any urgent requests to supply your account information or move money around.
- Electronic payment scams. As more people use services

- such as Zelle, PayPal or Venmo to transfer money, scammers have devised countless tricks to get you to pay them. As a rule of thumb, only send money to people/businesses you know and trust to be legitimate.
- · Package delivery fraud. If you shop online often, you're used to seeing emails/texts about your pending delivery. But if the message asks you to verify information such as your address or credit card number, it's likely a scam. When in doubt, ignore the request and visit the merchant's or shipping company's website to contact customer service.
- Mobile malware. Many phone users unwittingly install malicious apps that can capture data from their screen or skim information from other programs (including banking apps). Only download apps from your phone's official app store, and close all other apps before using your banking app.

What else can you do?

While it's not always possible to prevent fraud all together, catching it early and acting quickly can minimize the damage. Get in the habit of monitoring your credit card and bank accounts for any suspicious transactions. You can also set up fraud alerts to have your bank contact you regarding abnormal activity. Finally, make sure to bank at an FDIC-insured institution, which limits your liability to just \$50 if you're a victim of fraud.

Member FDIC. Monica Kenney is senior vice president of Frost Bank in Duncanville. (214) 515-4796.















3/2

Mayor's Quarterly 360 Meeting:

Learn about what is happening in DeSoto. Free. 6:30-7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

3/4

Citywide Block Party:

Come out and meet your neighbors with games and activities. Free. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Sims Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd., Cedar Hill.

City of DeSoto 74th **Birthday Celebration:**

Come join the party. Council Chambers, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

How to Win Contracts:

Give your business a leg up with this workshop. Free, but register on Eventbrite. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill.

3/4-3/5

Phenomenal Woman:

Grab your girlfriends and celebrate the evolution and elevation of Black women. \$40. Saturday: 8:30 a.m.; Sunday: 11:00 a.m., DeSoto Corner Theatre, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. See Eventbrite for tickets.

3/11

Women-owned **Business Panel:**

Come see what other business women are thinking and doing. Free. 2:30-4:00 p.m., Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill.

3/14-3/17

Tween Spring Break Camp — Wacky **Experiments Camp:**

Try different cool STEM experiments each day. Free, but must sign up on the library website. 2:30-3:30 p.m., Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill.

3/18

BOSI Unfiltered Teen Workshop:

Girls and parents, come learn about facials and selfperception. Free. Noon-2:00 p.m., DeSoto Library. 211 E. Pleasant Run, Rd.

Through 4/18

AARP Tax-Aide:

Bring your forms and documents. By appointment only. Free. Tuesdays: 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., Cedar Hill. Wednesdays: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., DeSoto Library, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

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





Urgent Health Warnina:

An Important HEALTH WARNING for Men and Women Age 55 or Older!

Do You Suffer from Pain, Burning, Numbness, or Tingling from Nerve Damage Caused by Diabetes, Infection, or ANY of the Other Conditions Listed in this Urgent Special Report?

If so, now you can virtually end your discomfort, protect your health, and help you live a more active life.

Dear Suffering Friend

Tens of millions Americans have nerve damage --- a condition known as "neuropathy."

The most common symptoms of nerve damage are pain, burning. tingling, and loss of feeling in your feet, legs, and fingers — with the pain ranging from mild to almost unbearable.

If you are diabetic, and especially if you are also age 60 or older, odds are that your nerve damage has been caused directly by your diabetes — although many younger diabetics also have nerve damage from this potentially deadly disease

But many OTHER people with these symptoms — pain, burning, and tingling — are NOT diabetic, yet also suffer from nerve damage.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the many diseases and conditions that can destroy the nerves in your extremities and limbs include:

- √ Alcoholism
- √ Autoimmune diseases
- √ Vitamin deficiencies
- √ Liver disease
- ✓ Underactive thyroid
- √ Repetitive motions such as typing
- √ Bone marrow disorders
- √ Certain prescription medications
- √ Falls, sports injuries, and other trauma
- √ Wearing a cast or using crutches

- √ Chemotherapy
- √ Tumors
- √ Infections
- √ Kidney disease

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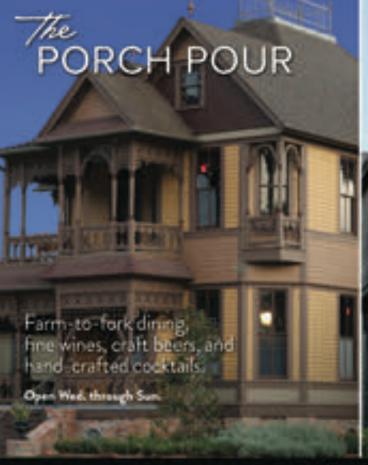
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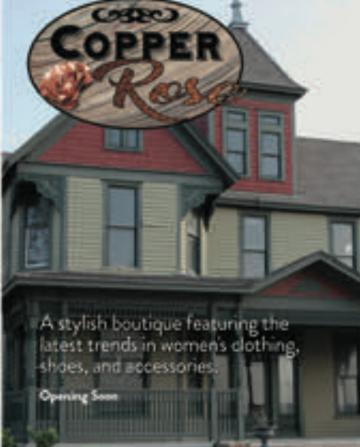
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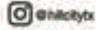
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