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MARCH 2025

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ON THE COVER



Kids of all abilities can now slide into springtime with ease.

Photo by
Anthony Sarmienta.

*Publisher, Connie Poirier
General Manager, Rick Hensley*

EDITORIAL

*Managing Editor, Becky Walker
Corsicana Editor, Virginia Riddle
Office Assistant, Kristin Bato
Writer, Sandra Walters
Editors/Proofreaders, Rachel Rich
Virginia Riddle*

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

*Creative Director, Chris McCalla
Artists, Kristin Bato . Martha Macias
London O'Connell . Anthony Sarmienta*

PHOTOGRAPHY

*Photography Director, Chris McCalla
Photographer, Anthony Sarmienta*

ADVERTISING

*Advertising Representatives,
Linda Moffett . Linda Roberson
Bryan Frye . Cherise Burnett
Dustin Dauenhauer . Kelsea Locke
Karen Schaefer . Jeremy Young*

Billing Manager, Angela Mixon

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Virginia

Virginia Riddle
CorsicanaNOW Editor
virginia.riddle@nowmagazines.com
(903) 875-0187

Marching Into Spring!

As our fields, roadsides and gardens begin to turn green, my thoughts go back to my family's Christmas vacation this past year. It was the second time my kids and grandchildren have traveled together during the winter break and the first time I went along. The idea was hatched three years ago by my youngest granddaughter, who was then 3 years old. When asked what she wanted for Christmas, she wanted to be with family and travel.

The first trip included the countries of England, Turkey, Greece, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan. We are asked often why these countries and why celebrate Christmas in primarily Muslim countries? The answers: We want to understand more about different cultures in B.C. into A.D. times. Christian church bells ring antiphonally, often intermingled with the mosques' calls to prayers. Jesus' birth story is told in the Quran, and Muslims revere both Jesus, as a prophet, and His mother, Mary. My kids are all multilingual with some who speak Arabic and Turkish. We were wonderfully welcomed everywhere.

This year's trip was to England, Bosnia and Turkey. We never encountered any other Americans. It seems most Americans only relate to Bosnia through its capital, Sarajevo, site of the 1984 Winter Olympics. Our goal was to learn more about the Bosnian War (1992-1995) and pay our respects to those massacred at Srebrenica. We accomplished our goal at the Srebrenica Memorial Center and had lunch with a teacher, a massacre survivor, in her home.

When I see our red roses blooming this spring in gardens everywhere, I'll remember the Sarajevo roses lining the memorial walkways and the roses painted across the once again, beautifully rebuilt city of Sarajevo.

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☆☆ A PLACE FOR ALL ☆☆

— By Virginia Riddle

Hear the drums pounding, wheels spinning and children's laughter. Smell and touch the brightly colored flowers. The latest addition to Community Park is ready for children of all abilities. "We have wonderful parks and playgrounds, but there's been no place for children with disabilities to play," Curran Oakley said. "God put this project on my heart to do, and I had no idea how to fulfill this tremendous task, but He did."

Not knowing enough was Curran's greatest challenge, but, as part of her Impact Communities work as coalition coordinator, she started reaching out to people within the community who did and soon formed a subcommittee of



talented individuals. "I've relied heavily on those who work with differently abled children and with Sharla Allen, director of Corsicana's Parks and Recreation Department, who was on board from the beginning," Curran shared. "Sharla had contacts with park developers, and she brought a wealth of knowledge to the project. During our first meeting with the city, they not only agreed to the addition of the sensory playground in Community Park, but they also agreed to name the playground, the Impact Communities Sensory Playground, which our organization is very proud of.

"Dr. John Updegrave reached out to me to tell me about his daughter, Elizabeth Updegrave. She is a speech pathologist in Waco and was instrumental in bringing signage to Waco school playgrounds, to assist differently abled children with communication using communication boards. We are currently working with Ms. Updegrave to bring communication signage to our playground," Curran said. "A little free library will also be installed so that children can take free books home with them. The Moran Foundation gave a donation, which we have used in several areas of the park, including the communication signage, a bench and some concrete work. We are hoping to add some additional trees with funding from their donation. Ashlee Acosta with Cunningham Recreation assisted us with the design of the playground. We told her that we wanted bright colors, sensory objects, solid surfacing, a shade structure and transfers for children in wheelchairs. We wanted to have equipment which met the most needs and provided children access to everything," Curran added.

Monies for the project have come from Impact Communities, the city of Corsicana, the Moran Foundation donation and a grant from Cunningham Recreation. "We didn't have unlimited funds, but the right people have helped this project become a reality," Curran explained. "Everything just fell into place. It's challenging that we didn't have all the funding to do everything we wanted, but I am very excited to see the playground open for the children." There's plenty of land for the sensory park to expand if additional funds become available, "in a phase two if that



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is God's will," Curran added. "This is an investment in the community for the future, and I feel it's what God wanted."

Benefits of sensory parks include helping young children, especially those who are mentally, physically or emotionally challenged, to experience the world around them. The park aids in brain, motor skills and language development as well as mood regulation and developing self-esteem. Sensory parks are fully accessible to all, so everyone can come together to play.

Curran's most memorable moments have come during the groundbreaking when the little children held the shovels, the ribbon cutting and official opening of the playground and the relationships made with those on the subcommittee who worked alongside her to bring this project to our community. Members of the Better Garden Club in Corsicana will volunteer their gardening expertise and time while working with the Parks and Recreation Department to plan the future gardens and tree varieties. Plants, such as lambs ears, can provide soft touches. Lavender and chives give off wonderful odors.

Breezes flow through ornamental grasses, and strawberries and mint are tasty edibles. The list of bright flowers for inclusion seems endless, and trees will grow to shade watchful adults sitting on benches or playing and filling their own senses while being with their children and grandchildren. The most suitable plants for Corsicana's soil and weather conditions will be chosen. A butterfly garden is a possibility as well.

Reanna Liversage-Gerky, Impact Communities' chief program officer, quoted pastor Charles Swindoll who once said, "Each day of our lives, we make deposits in the memory bank of our children.' When I see all the children coming to the Impact Communities Park to play, I will hear cha-ching cha-ching, in my mind as I witness the memories those children will have begun to fill up," Reanna said. "What a blessing this park will be, and what a blessing to have all the hands and feet that went into making this park a reality."

A native of nearby Tupelo, Texas, Curran's family still lives there. She attended Rice and Blooming Grove

schools, Navarro College and East Texas A&M University. "My husband, Heath, and I grew up together," she said. "Together, we have five children and two grandsons." Curran serves on the Salvation Army-Corsicana board, Friends of the Rice Library board and as a Corsicana & Navarro County Chamber of Commerce Ambassador. When not working or volunteering, she enjoys reading, relaxing, attending church, swimming and spending quality time with family.

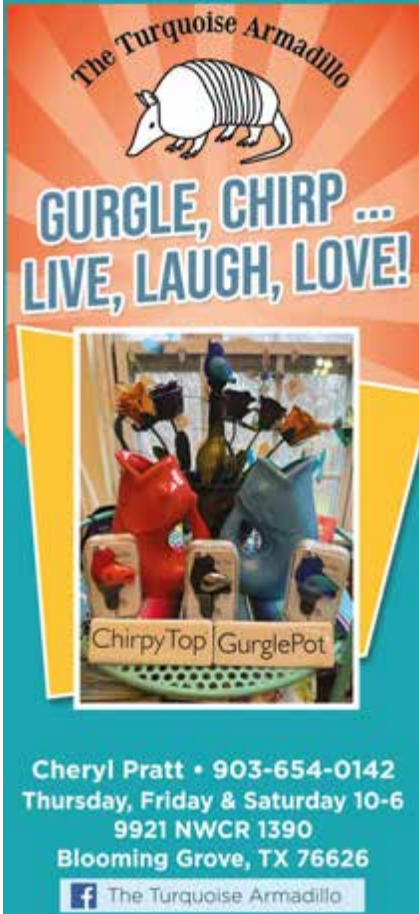
"I will continue to give back to the Navarro County community that has given me and my family so much over the years," Curran added. Everything about creating this sensory playground has been a joy. Together, we've created a place where every child can play and enjoy the playground." I want to thank all those who had a hand in this project. Quoting E.E. Cummings, Curran said, "The most wasted of all days is one without laughter." She added, "It is my hope and my prayer that this playground provides an abundance of joy and laughter to every child who plays here." **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Terisa Zuniga

By Virginia Riddle

A Corsicana native, Terisa Zuniga serves her community as the Salvation Army's Corsicana Center director and her volunteer work as a Corsicana Lions Club member. She attended Corsicana High School and Navarro College. "I like the small-town feel of Corsicana," Terisa shared. "Everyone knows everyone, and when there's a cry for help, everyone steps up."

Date nights with her husband and movies, sports and shopping with her daughters fill her spare time. "We love animals and family vacations," she added. "My dad and siblings live in Corsicana, too."

The Salvation Army's thrift store, programs and "an amazing work family" help many people. Terisa concluded, "I love the Salvation Army and open my heart to all those who need our help."



Tamia Terry visits with Corsicana Newcomers members about her role at House of Refuge.



Navarro Regional Hospital CEO John Manolakis shares the latest hospital updates with Navarro County Health Alliance professionals.



Neighbors, city and Chamber officials gather to celebrate the installation of Carriage District signage.



George Burns lives on through Ken Frechill's portrayal of the comedic duo of Burns and Gracie Allen.



Members of the CHS drum corps are a resounding hit at local functions.



Col. Dan Summerall receives the Coyote Squadron's Silver Eagle Award from Col. Frank DeArmon.



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A young child with short brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped long-sleeved shirt, is standing in a kitchen. The child is reaching out with their right hand towards a white plastic bottle on the counter. In the background, there are white kitchen cabinets and a sink area with a white pitcher and other items. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor kitchen environment.

TIPS TO PREVENT DEADLY POISONING MISTAKES

— By Sandra Walters

National Poison Prevention Week is observed annually during the third full week of March. The dates for this year are March 16-22. This observance serves as a vital reminder of the importance of poison safety and prevention, aiming to raise awareness about the dangers of poisoning, particularly for young children, who are most at risk. The Aspirus Health website states, “According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, 92 percent of poisonings happen at home, and 43 percent of poisonings involve children under the age of 6. Poisoning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury death among children ages 1 to 19 years.” Fortunately, many of these emergencies are preventable with a few simple safety measures.

One of the most effective ways to prevent poison exposure is by keeping hazardous substances out of children’s reach. Common household items such as cleaning supplies, medications, pesticides and cosmetics can pose significant risks. Keep items in their original containers. Never transfer chemicals or medications into unlabeled containers that could confuse children. Use child-resistant packaging. While not entirely childproof, these containers add an extra layer of protection. Store all toxic substances in high cabinets or locked drawers, and ensure that access is physically restricted.

Medications are one of the leading causes of unintentional poisoning in children. Even small doses of adult medications can be extremely harmful to young ones. Count every pill. Keep track of all medications to ensure none are missing. Avoid calling medicine “candy.” This might encourage children to seek out pills when unsupervised. Dispose of unused medicine properly by using drug take-back programs or follow FDA guidelines for safe disposal.

Cleaning products often contain harsh chemicals that can cause severe injuries if ingested, inhaled or spilled on skin. Read the labels and always follow instructions and warnings on cleaning product labels. Clean up immediately. After cleaning, ensure you securely store products, even during short breaks. Choose safer options by looking for non-toxic, eco-friendly alternatives to harsh cleaners when possible.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless gas that can cause poisoning and death. CO poisoning is a silent killer and a significant safety risk in homes. Install CO detectors. Place them near sleeping areas and fuel-burning appliances. Service appliances regularly, and ensure gas furnaces, water heaters and fireplaces are inspected annually by professionals. Never use generators or grills indoors. These devices produce CO and must be operated in well-ventilated outdoor areas.

Some household and garden plants are toxic to children if ingested. Popular plants such as lilies, philodendrons and poinsettias can pose risks. Know your plants by identifying all plants in your home and yard, and remove any that are poisonous. Educate older children. Teach kids not to eat any part of a plant unless an adult has confirmed it’s safe.

Food poisoning can occur when perishable items are not stored or handled correctly. Follow expiration dates. Discard expired food items, even if they appear fine. Refrigerate food promptly. Store perishable food items in the refrigerator within two hours of cooking. Separate raw and cooked food. Prevent cross-contamination by keeping raw meat away from ready-to-eat food.

Empowering children with knowledge can go a long way in preventing poisoning accidents. Explain what's off-limits, while teaching children not to eat or drink anything without permission. Use visual aids. Show them labels or symbols on hazardous products to recognize danger. Role-play safety scenarios to help kids understand what to do if they come across something suspicious.

Despite taking precautions, accidents can still happen. Acting quickly in the event of poisoning is critical. Save the number for The Poison Control Hotline, 1-800-222-1222. This is a 24/7 free resource for poisoning emergencies and prevention advice. The signs of poisoning include nausea, vomiting, confusion, difficulty breathing and burns or stains around the mouth. Call, don't guess! If you suspect poisoning, call the hotline immediately instead of trying home remedies or waiting for symptoms to worsen.

During National Poison Prevention Week, take the time to inspect your home for potential poisoning hazards, and implement these safety tips. By doing so, you can create a safer environment for your children and significantly reduce the risk of accidental poisoning. Remember, prevention is always better than cure, and your vigilance could save a life.

Constant adult supervision is one of the simplest ways to prevent poisoning accidents. Young children are naturally curious and may explore potentially dangerous substances when left alone, even for a few moments. Let's use this week as a reminder to make poison prevention a priority — not just for seven days but all year round. Your actions today could make all the difference in protecting your loved ones. **NOW**

Sources:

1. <https://www.aspirus.org/poisoning-prevention-substance-misuse#:text=According%20to%20the%20American%20Association,ages%201%20to%2019%20years>.

2. <https://www.poison.org/>.

3. <https://www.texaschildrens.org/content/wellness/national-poison-prevention-week-keeping-our-children-out-harms-way>.

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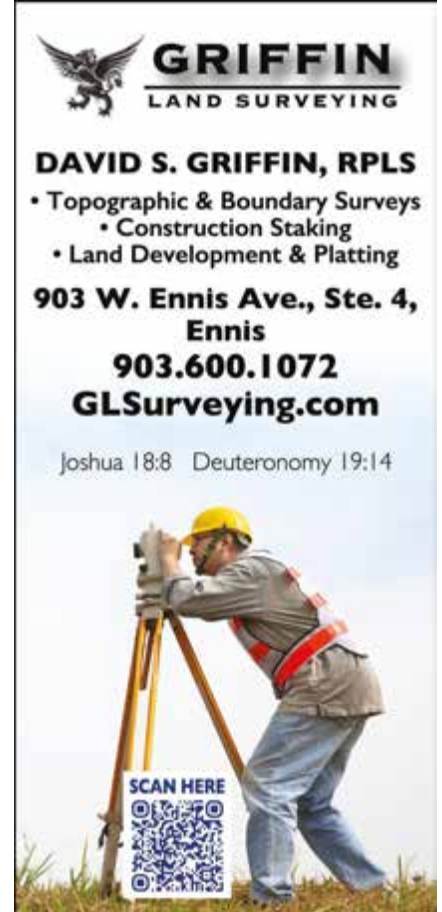
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Scampi

Scampi

1/2 stick butter
2 Tbsp. olive oil
Garlic, to taste
1 tsp. red pepper flakes
1 lb. (16-20 count) shrimp
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1 bunch Italian parsley
1 8-oz. pkg. spaghetti or angel hair pasta, cooked according to pkg. instructions

1. In a skillet, melt the butter over medium heat; add the olive oil, garlic and red pepper flakes.
2. Add the shrimp one by one. Cook for 45 seconds; flip each shrimp.
3. Turn the heat to high; add the lemon juice, parsley and cooked pasta. More butter can be added, if desired. Serve immediately.

Ultimate Mashed Potatoes

Salt, to taste (divided use)
5 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes, unpeeled
1 lb. butter
8-oz. cream cheese
Pepper, to taste

1. In salted water, boil the potatoes; drain.
2. Return the potatoes to the pan with the burner still on.
3. Mash the potatoes while adding the butter and cream cheese. This allows the steam to escape and will prevent gummy potatoes. Add salt and pepper.

Reverse Seared Tenderloin

1 tenderloin or rib eye roast
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
Butter, to taste
Herbes de Provence, to taste
Au jus or horseradish cream sauce, to taste

1. Trim the roast; season with salt and pepper. Dry the roast overnight in the refrigerator. There should be a nice crust on all sides of the roast.
2. Bring the roast to room temperature; cook it in the oven at 220 F until the internal temperature has reached 120 F. Remove the roast from the oven; set aside.
3. In a large pan, melt the butter with the herbes de Provence. Add the roast; sear it on all sides until desired doneness. *Note: The roast will have continued cooking while resting.*
4. Remove the roast from the pan; cover it with foil so the steam can escape and the crust doesn't get soggy. After the roast has rested for 5-10 minutes, slice it. Serve with the au jus or horseradish sauce.

CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SUSAN HALE MELTON

— By Virginia Riddle

Susan Hale Melton has advanced her skills in the kitchen through a cooking class and a subscription her mother gave her to *Cook's Life*. She describes the class as a “game changer.” “If the prep work is easy, then you get to the fun stuff faster,” Susan explained. Through the subscription, she learned the science behind why a recipe works.

Her days spent cooking at Corsicana's Bistro have evolved into catering and cooking for her family. “My biggest inspiration,” Susan said, “is when my daughter, Sophie, comes to me and says, ‘Will you make this?’”

Susan's favorite ingredients are butter, olive oil and cream cheese. She added, “I grew up moving around the country, so I'm influenced by South Texas, Louisiana and California [cuisine].” **NOW**

Overnight Refrigerator Focaccia

4 cups flour
 2 tsp. kosher salt
 2 tsp. instant yeast
 2 cups lukewarm water
 Drizzle, plus 2 Tbsp. olive oil
 (divided use)
 Butter
 Sea salt, to taste

1. In a large bowl, stir together the flour, kosher salt and yeast. Add the water; stir to create a doughy ball.
2. Drizzle enough olive oil onto the dough ball to prevent the dough from drying out during refrigeration.
3. With hands, mix in the olive oil. Cover the bowl with a clean dishcloth; transfer the bowl of dough to the refrigerator. Refrigerate for 12-18 hours.
4. At the end of the time, add 2 Tbsp. of olive oil to a baking pan that has been greased with butter to prevent sticking.
5. Remove the bowl of dough from refrigeration; uncover. Coat hands with olive oil and knead the bread.
6. Move the dough ball to a 9x13-inch baking pan; coat all sides of the ball with the olive oil. Set aside, uncovered, for 2-4 hours or until the dough has spread out across the pan. The time needed depends on the kitchen's temperature and the time of year.
7. Top with another olive oil drizzle; with your fingers, dimple the dough.
8. Sprinkle a generous amount of sea salt over the dough. Bake at 425 F for 25 minutes, or until the top is golden brown.
9. Remove from the oven; set the pan on a cooling rack. When cooled, move the bread to a cutting board; cut slices for serving.



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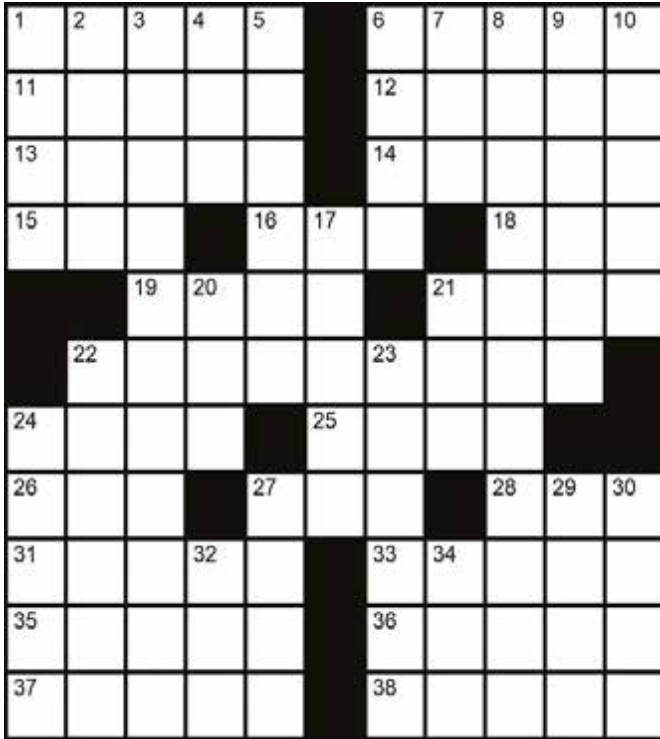
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Across

- 1 Serengeti equine
- 6 Reduces
- 11 Sewing machine inventor --- Howe
- 12 Slender boat
- 13 Manhattan Project product
- 14 Violinist and conductor --- Rieu
- 15 Fall behind
- 16 Flow away
- 18 Doctrine
- 19 "The --- of Tralee"
- 21 "Dead man's hand" pair
- 22 Kind of infection

- 24 Retained
- 25 Civil wrong
- 26 Mathematical degree?
- 27 "Monday Night Raw" channel
- 28 Comcast, for example
- 31 Spheres of interest
- 33 Mollycoddle
- 35 Political house-cleaning
- 36 Character originally played by Jay Silverheels
- 37 Kale South of the Border
- 38 Showing attitude

Down

- 1 Ardor
- 2 Boney's exile isle
- 3 "Life" writers
- 4 Plow into
- 5 "We did it --- we could"
- 6 Strikebreaker
- 7 PC linkup
- 8 Signs idiot can sin badly
- 9 Tasty bit
- 10 Appears
- 17 Borscht base
- 20 National Popcorn Poppin' mo.
- 21 Ventilate
- 22 "To thine own self ---" (Shakespeare, "Hamlet")
- 23 Friars Club events
- 24 The --- Commission on alleged N Y P D corruption
- 27 Plays for a idiot
- 29 Takes a breather
- 30 Ruse
- 32 Gone by
- 34 "You must ask us how much it costs"

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MARCH

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.

3/1-3/27

Texas Artists

Invitational Show:

Closing Reception: **Thursday, March 27** at 5:30 p.m., Pearce Museum, Cook Education Center, 3100 W. Collin Street.
www.navarrocollege.edu/calendar.html

3/4

Mardi Gras Sip & Stroll:

5:30-7:30 p.m., Campbell Arts Plaza, Downtown Corsicana. (903) 654-4851.

3/5, 3/12, 3/19

Kinsloe House Luncheons and Programs:

Noon, Kinsloe House, 618 W. 3rd Ave. Reservations required. \$20. (903) 874-5791.

3/6-3/8

Wish I May, Wish I Might:

A comedy by Dr. Shelle O'Neal. Free admission. Times vary. Dawson Auditorium, Navarro College, 3200 W. 7th Ave. www.navarrocollege.edu.

3/8

Hull Creative Arts Foundation Casino Night:

Light refreshments, cash bar, raffle and prizes. 6:30 p.m., Corsicana Country Club, 4100 Country Club Dr. Facebook: Hull Creative Arts Foundation.

3/10-3/13

Spring Break at the Library:

Crafts, LEGOs, puppets and movie provide four days of fun. Corsicana Public Library, 100 N. 12th St. Facebook: Corsicana Public Library.

3/16-4/11

Student Art Show:

Warehouse Living Art Center Gallery, 119 W. 6th Ave. www.thewlac.com.

3/20

Montgomery Gentry:

Ft. Eddie Montgomery: 7:30 p.m., The Palace Theatre, 112 W. 6th Ave. (903) 874-7792.

Mondays

Caregiver Support Group:

4:00-5:00 p.m., Corsicana Senior Center, 919 W. Park Ave. For information, call (828) 228-3579.

Tuesdays

Corsicana Lions Club Meeting:

Noon, Navarro College Dining Hall. Facebook: Corsicana Lions Club.

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

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