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MARCH 2026

## Blooming Bright

The 8th Annual Tulipalooza brings color to town

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

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Jennifer Reed

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March 2026  
 Volume 23, Issue 3



**Adam Walker**  
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**ON THE COVER**

*Living rainbows cover the ground at Tulipalooza.*



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# BLOOMING

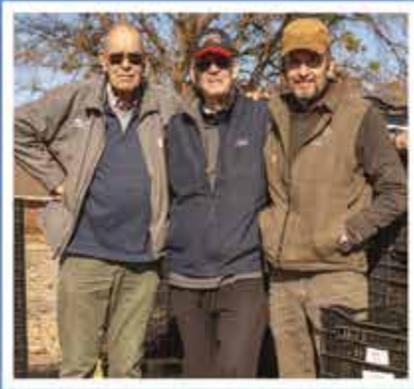
— By Adam Walker

# BRIGHT



For the last seven years, Tulipalooza has announced the arrival of spring in Waxahachie with a riot of vibrant color only nature can don. In its brief history, the celebration of this beautiful bulb has had several homes, but it currently resides at Getzendaner Park. The cold weather this year actually promises to make this year's blooms even more brilliant.

Bill Van Houten, a native of the Netherlands, celebrates his Dutch heritage by bringing the flower for which his country is world famous to our town each year. "Tulips aren't originally from the Netherlands, like most people think," Bill explained. "They're originally from the mountains of Turkey. In the mid-1600s, the flowers came to Holland and grew well in our fertile soil. There was a 'tulip mania' in Europe, and one tulip bulb could cost as much as a house! During WWII, Dutch people ate the tulip bulbs to survive during the war. They pretended they were onions. Today, 95 percent of the world's tulips are grown in the Netherlands, about 2.5 billion every year. Tulips became very popular as cut flowers during COVID, especially in China and Japan. So many tulips were sold by exporters that the price of tulips has gone sky-high again."



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Tulipalooza started out in a field alongside I-35. "John Poston heard that there was money to be made in tulips, so he wanted to plant a million tulips in the field at 35 and Hwy. 66. He worked from the motto, 'Everything's bigger in Texas.' He didn't know about tulips. Many varieties can't grow in a climate as warm as Texas. Darwin hybrid tulips and single late tulips grow best here. That year was big, but not very successful," Bill said. It wasn't long before John decided he wanted out of tulips. He sold the



Photo by Lauren Zoucha Photography.



planting. “Luke actually plants everything these days. Kars supervises.” Kars’ wife, Grace, and their granddaughters, dress in traditional Dutch costumes, including *klompen*, the famous wooden shoes, to show guests around the fields. “Kim Holman makes sure everything runs smoothly at the event.” It takes quite a team to make sure Waxahachie explodes with color every time Tulipalooza rolls around.

festival name to Bill, and it was up to Bill and his Dutch friends Kars and Luke Tamminga to keep the festival going. It moved first to the field behind the Civic Center and then to Getzendaner Park, where it now paints the field at the entrance with all the splendor of the Dutch love affair with this flower.

The festival supports a number of local charities. This year, the proceeds will benefit the YMCA-Waxahachie, Runnin’ Free Ranch, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Impact Communities and Special Olympics-Dallas. “We’re supporting fewer organizations this year, so we can give more to each of them. Last year, the hailstorm completely wiped us out. Every flower was gone. We lost \$40,000 of tulips. We had sold a lot of

advanced tickets for Senior Weekend and had to refund all of those. Mother Nature was not our friend, but we kept our commitments to all of the charities we supported. The Civic Center, the mayor and the Economic Development Council have all supported our efforts to keep Tulipalooza alive. Even after the pandemic and the hailstorm,” Bill explained. “Our sponsors, like Calloway’s Nursery, help a lot. Abbott-Ipco stores all of our bulbs for us and keeps them cold. They also help with the water bill.”

Kars and Luke take care of the

This year, the plantings feature a section of 20,000 daffodils alongside the tulip varieties. “We planted World Friendship, Purple Eye and Pink Majesty. All those varieties do well in the South,” Bill said. The field will feature 24 different varieties in all the many shades tulips can boast. “We’re going to have a lot of red, orange, yellow, white and purple this year. Each row will be a single variety.”

The festival runs for three weekends, from February 27 to March 15 this year. They’re open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., every day, rain or shine. It’s a great place to pick some beautiful flowers, and an even better place to take pictures, all while helping local charities improve life in our community. **NOW**

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# GEICO DeSoto — Jennifer Reed

Jennifer Reed's GEICO office in DeSoto is celebrating its five-year anniversary. This marks five years of being privileged to serve southern Dallas County and all of Ellis County.

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## GEICO DeSoto — Jennifer Reed

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Jennifer said the office's success over the past five years has been rooted in its family-focused approach to service. "This is a family business, and that is how you will be treated. Our staff is close-knit, and it shows through our service and the care you receive. We value relationships and referrals. We take care of you, along with your friends and family."

Giving back has always been a big part of the office's mission. Jennifer is very involved in the community, with many organizations, and she is committed to giving back locally.



Community involvement has been a priority for GEICO DeSoto since it opened. You will find Jennifer and her staff at local high schools, supporting sports, giving out scholarships to JROTC, participating in holiday parades, handing out school supplies or at the local libraries hosting events for families. "Giving back to our community and investing in the next generation is extremely important. As a local small business owner, we want to help make a difference," she stated.

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As the DeSoto office marks its five-year milestone, Jennifer and her team remain focused on providing trusted professional insurance guidance, personalized service and strong community connection for years to come. She expressed gratitude for all their clients, "We wouldn't be here without our clients. I'm so grateful they trust us to take care of what matters most to them." If you happen to see Jennifer and her staff around town, often with the beloved GEICO Gecko, don't be shy. Stop and say hello. **NOW**

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## Zoomed In: Mary Rabien

By Adam Walker

Mary Rabien showed off one of her paintings of bluebirds after a recent meeting of the Ellis County Art Association. "I love bluebirds," she said. "Their numbers have gone down in recent years. We don't see as many of them, or really any birds, as we used to. I'm part of the Bluebird Society. About five years ago, we put up five houses for them at our house. A few years ago, when we had the really cold weather, I found dead bluebirds seven days in a row. They had eaten everything — stripped all the berries. I taught them to eat dried meal worms. Now they're waiting for me whenever I go outside!" Her painting won first prize in the ECAA's monthly mini show.



Jessica Moore and Brittany Gage enjoy Getzender Park with Charlie Boy and Cody Cooper.



Johnny Campbell, III poses with his grandma Carolyn at a YMCA basketball game.



Lea Sandoz and Tannis Lambert of the Indian Trails Master Naturalists talk to shoppers at the Farmers Market about enjoying our environment.



Abigail Long and Emerie and Stephanie Rogers of Girl Scout Troop 1986 have many boxes of the good stuff.



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## Zoomed In: Kay Dunn

By Adam Walker

Kay Dunn was spending some of her time helping out one Saturday afternoon at Love Your Neighbor Thrift Store. The thrift store sells cheap treasures to benefit Ellis County Love Your Neighbor Community Projects to improve life in the whole county. Kay was manning the register while she was busy untangling donated necklaces. “These aren’t very easy to untangle,” she confided. “I’m a volunteer here, just helping out.”

Love Your Neighbor has provided over 12,000 jars of peanut butter and jelly to local food pantries, raised over \$60,000 to equip churches and nonprofits with AEDs and raised over \$15,000 for scholarships to send kids to church camps. They also have a food truck, providing free hot lunches.



Sledding is serious business for Currie Morgan, age 4.



The Cherokee Charmers show off before a competition.



Matthew Campbell skates in his driveway. Who needs a rink?



Caidance Manuso and Jessie Parker sell baked goods to raise money for the Blue Ducks baseball team.



Kennedy Wilson and her mom, Loren, hang out and bond over some pizza.

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## IRISH-INSPIRED COMFORT FOOD

When St. Patrick's Day rolls around each March, most Americans reach for food coloring and dye everything emerald green. But Ireland's culinary traditions offer something far more satisfying: honest, hearty dishes built on simple ingredients that warm you from the inside out. These recipes celebrate straightforward comfort that feels especially welcome as winter gives way to spring. **NOW**

### Traditional Irish Soda Bread

**4 cups all-purpose flour**  
**1 tsp. baking soda**  
**1 tsp. salt**  
**1 Tbsp. sugar**  
**1 3/4 cups buttermilk**

1. Combine the flour, baking soda, salt and sugar in a large bowl.
2. Make a well in the center; pour in the buttermilk.
3. Stir with a wooden spoon until the dough just comes together. It should be shaggy and slightly sticky.
4. Turn onto a floured surface; knead gently for 30 seconds, then shape into a round loaf.
5. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet; cut a deep cross into the top.
6. Bake at 425 F for 35-40 minutes, until golden and hollow-sounding when tapped.

### Colcannon (Mashed Potatoes With Cabbage)

**2 lbs. potatoes, peeled and chopped**  
**4 Tbsp. butter, plus extra for serving**  
**4 cups cabbage or kale, shredded or chopped**  
**3 scallions, sliced**  
**1/2 cup warm milk or cream**

**Salt, to taste**  
**Pepper, to taste**

1. Boil the potatoes until tender.
2. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large skillet; sauté the cabbage and scallions until softened, about 8 minutes.
3. Drain the potatoes; mash them with the warm milk or cream.
4. Fold in the cabbage mixture; season generously with salt and pepper.
5. Make a well in the center of each serving; add a pat of butter.

### Guinness Beef Stew

**Oil for browning**  
**2 lbs. beef chuck, cubed**  
**2 onions, diced**  
**3 carrots, sliced**  
**3 garlic cloves, minced**  
**1 1/2 cups Guinness beer**  
**2 cups beef stock**  
**2 Tbsp. tomato paste**  
**1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce**  
**2 bay leaves**  
**Fresh thyme sprigs**  
**1 lb. baby potatoes, halved**

1. Heat the oil in a Dutch oven; brown the beef in batches. Set aside.

2. Sauté the onions, carrots and garlic until softened.
3. Return the beef to the pot; add the Guinness, scraping up the browned bits.
4. Add the beef stock, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, bay leaves and thyme.
5. Bring to a simmer. Cover; cook in a 325 F oven for 2 hours.
6. Add the potatoes; cook another 45 minutes until everything is tender.

### Boxty (Irish Potato Pancakes)

**1 lb. raw potatoes**  
**1 cup mashed potatoes**  
**1 cup flour**  
**1 tsp. baking powder**  
**1 tsp. salt**  
**3/4 cup buttermilk**  
**Butter for cooking**

1. Grate the raw potatoes; squeeze out the excess moisture through a clean kitchen towel.
2. Mix the grated potatoes with the mashed potatoes, flour, baking powder, salt and buttermilk to form a thick batter.
3. Heat the butter in a skillet; drop spoonfuls of batter into the skillet, flattening slightly.
4. Cook 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown.
5. Serve hot with butter or sour cream.



## WaxahachieNOW Scavenger Hunt



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Valentine Cookies were found on pages 7, 10, 11, 12 & 18.



February winner is: Donna Sobottka - \$50 Cash from NOW Magazines

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# 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

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.”

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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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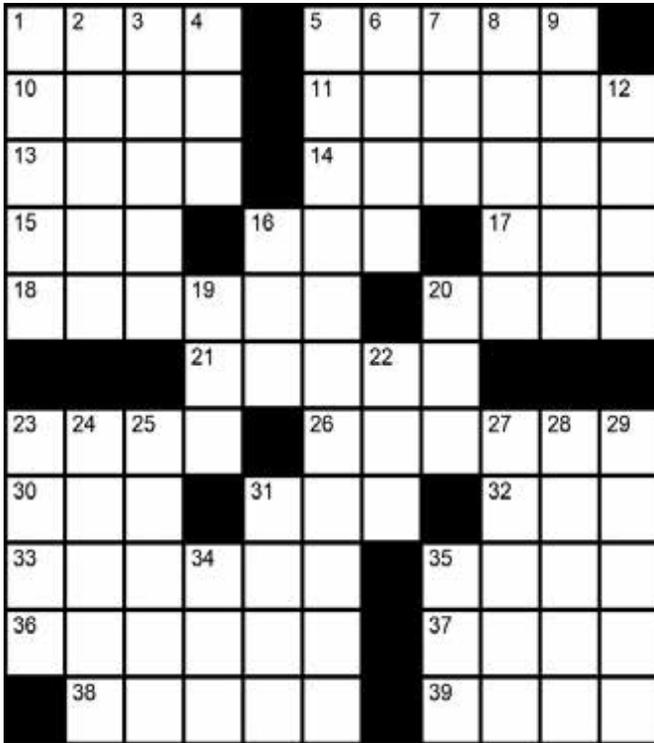


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# Crossword Puzzle



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## Across

- 1 Book sheet
- 5 Future fungus
- 10 Playwright Novello
- 11 Space shuttle commander --- Collins
- 13 --- a one: zip
- 14 Hang in there
- 15 "Silent Spring" killer
- 16 Fastener
- 17 "'em!"
- 18 Per annum
- 20 Quick look
- 21 Mopes about rhyming stuff
- 23 Unwelcome messages
- 26 Joined together
- 30 --- Turner, rebellious slave
- 31 Bon --- (clever remark)
- 32 "Bobby Hockey"
- 33 False
- 35 "Battle Hymn of the Republic" author
- 36 Merrymaking
- 37 "It depends on what the meaning of the word ---" (Bill Clinton)
- 38 "Me and Bobby ---" (Kris Kristofferson)
- 39 "... two --- for a twenty?"

## Down

- 1 Hop variety
- 2 Dodge
- 3 Big artery
- 4 Prepare scrapple, for example
- 5 Be on the same wavelength
- 6 Light ringing sound
- 7 --- Ironsides (the USS Constitution)
- 8 Put back into service
- 9 Strange and mysterious
- 12 Dracula's target
- 16 Group once led by Yasser Arafat
- 19 Rotational speed
- 20 Not-for-profit TV spot
- 22 Encountered
- 23 Cosy
- 24 Airline that flew Clippers
- 25 Overturned tacit old Greek dialect
- 27 Bullwinkle J, for example
- 28 General --- Rommel
- 29 Apparel
- 31 Silent
- 34 "Andy Capp" cartoonist --- Smythe
- 35 Strike

Find puzzle answers within this magazine. Online versions and solutions are also available at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



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13	N	A	R	Y	14	E	N	D	U	R	E
15	D	D	T	16	P	E	G	17	S	I	C
18	Y	E	A	R	L	Y	20	P	E	E	K
21	P	O	E	M	S						
23	S	P	A	M	26	T	E	A	M	E	D
30	N	A	T	31	M	O	T	32	O	R	R
33	U	N	T	R	U	E	35	H	O	W	E
36	G	A	I	E	T	Y	37	I	S	I	S
38	M	C	G	E	E	39	T	E	N	S	

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