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Dr. Mike Goddard leads Red Oak ISD.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Jill

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Did you know your taxes are due on April 17?

This is no April Fool's joke! As we know, our taxes are due each year in April. This year, since the 15th falls on a weekend, we get a couple of more days to submit our forms. Some of us cringe at the thought of tax preparation, while others hope for a refund check to come in the mail soon after the filing is done. I'm not much of a number cruncher myself, so I like leaving that to the professionals.

If you find yourself with a little extra cash in your pocket as a result of a nice refund, you might consider doing some good with it. This month is National Autism Awareness month. As a former teacher, I encountered sweet souls living on this spectrum. Perhaps you know a few, as well. My husband is contributing a piece of puzzle art to one fundraiser. It's a worthy cause, and so are many others. Find something that touches your heart strings and make a difference!

I'm hoping that your April days are filled with blessings — both the ones you give and the ones you receive.

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PRESENTING

HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY

— By Virginia Riddle

Kids' smiling faces make Dr. Mike Goddard feel like a champion, while he's helping each of them become the best they can be. Now completing his first year as Red Oak ISD's superintendent, Dr. Goddard has lived up to his mantra, Dreams Don't Work Unless You Do, by making connections with the students, fellow educators and the community. "Connections and a 'why' are needed ingredients for success. Kids need to get excited about what we are doing in Red Oak ISD," Dr. Goddard said. "The kids are awesome. They gravitate to school."

He "gravitated" to school following a career in business. Born in Silver City, New Mexico, Dr. Goddard and his family moved to Prosper, Texas, when he was in the fifth grade. A graduate of Allen High School, where he's in the Sports Hall of Fame for multiple athletic contributions, Dr. Goddard went on to play football and graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University, with a bachelor's degree in marketing and public relations. He was director of a resort in New Braunfels and then a Dallas area representative for Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"I fell into teaching speech and debate," Dr. Goddard recalled. "I was at a friend's wedding and another groomsman, who was an administrator in McKinney ISD, had the opening. I went the alternative certification route, loved teaching, and I'm still in contact with the kids I taught in McKinney." He earned a doctorate in education from the University of North Texas and has served as an administrator in McKinney, Lovejoy and Prosper ISDs before coming to ROISD in 2017.

"Each position has had a part in what I do today," he explained. "Even when I was a camp counselor, while still in school, I knew kids had to be engaged in great

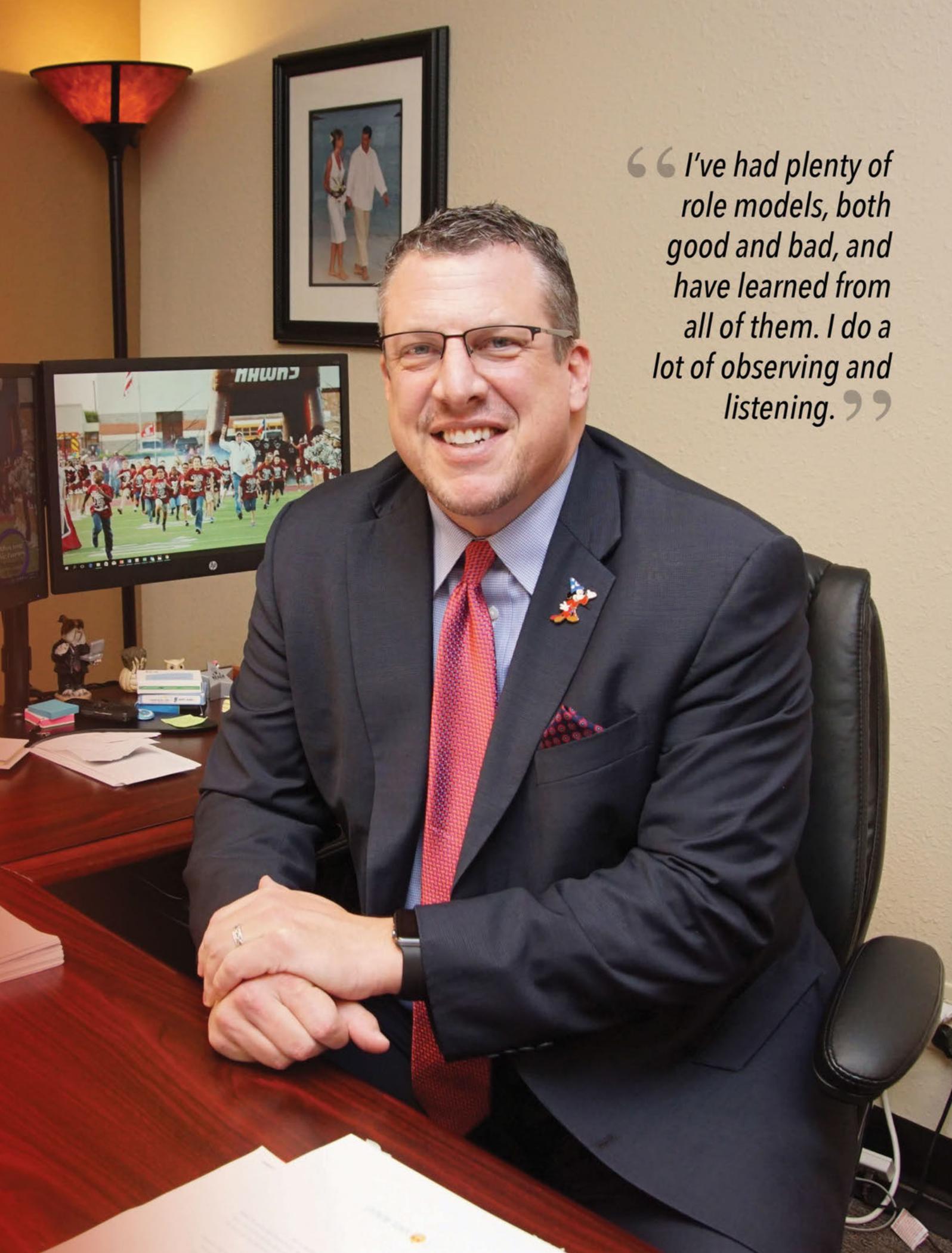
activities." Dr. Goddard has had plenty of mentors along the way. "I've had plenty of role models, both good and bad, and have learned from all of them. I do a lot of observing and listening."

He credits his dad as his greatest mentor. "My dad, Dan Goddard, has been a teacher and coach, and he was very pivotal for me. Everything I've done has created building blocks toward changing the culture. God has directed my path," Dr. Goddard reflected.

Each district decision is made with the students in



“ I’ve had plenty of role models, both good and bad, and have learned from all of them. I do a lot of observing and listening. ”





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mind. "I now have approximately 5,800 kids in grades pre-K through 12, along with the Little Hawks, which provides child care for employees' kids, ages birth to 4 years," he said. "I make a decision on what's best for the kids. We must put ourselves in the kids' world and meet them where they are. We teach them to get 1 percent better every day and not be satisfied with average. We love tough, and we don't give up on kids. Instead, we push them forward."

A self-described different model of a superintendent, Dr. Goddard believes in getting up close and personal with the kids. Campus visits, volunteer opportunities in connecting with the board and community fill his days, along with attending "nearly everything." He wears kid-oriented conversation starters. "I'm a huge Disney fan, so I coordinate each day's crazy socks and lapel pin with something Disney," he said.

Having experience as the "new kid," he also makes sure that new ROISD students and teachers feel welcome and supported. "We're experiencing huge growth, as many as 200 more students each year," Dr. Goddard said. "We make sure each student has an ambassador to help them fit in quickly. With teachers, we 'walk the deck with them' for the first year. We're also finding ways to engage new community and family members in school activities. It's all about finding ways to make Red Oak keep the small-town feel."

ROISD's rich history and traditions are honored, while new traditions are being added. "We make positive phone calls to families, not just negative ones, throughout the year, and every



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kid gets a welcoming call from his or her teacher before school starts,” Dr. Goddard explained. However, changes are necessary with the times. “Our teachers are open to challenges and learning. They are great models for the kids, as each of them gives back to this community,” he said. “We want everyone to be on the same page and be involved in our schools.” Incentive awards are offered to teachers and kids each month, based on the Four Talons of the Hawk — Academically Prepared; Open to Challenges of Learning; Fair, Respectful and Well-Rounded; and Leave a Legacy.



Family is near to Dr. Goddard’s heart. His wife, Dena, is an ROISD teacher. The couple have one son who attends University of Oklahoma. When he has free time, Dr. Goddard is “obsessed” with reading, mostly nonfiction. Another interest is Special Olympics. “I take a gym, support a team and its fans, engage volunteers and officiate,” he stated. “Here in Red Oak, we have hosted a track meet for the last six years.”

Teachers are encouraged to have “one word” on which to center their instruction for the year. Dr. Goddard’s word for last year was “renew,” and this year’s word is “rise.” “ROISD is a sleeping giant with lots of strengths and potential,” he shared. “We’re very progressive and are truly identifying what ROISD is. We have lots to be proud of and are competitive, while on the cusp of being dominant and achieving excellence.” In his role as superintendent, Dr. Goddard is still a teacher. He conceded, “My classroom is just much larger now!” **NOW**



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A PLACE AT THE TABLE

— By Virginia Riddle

At Home With Phil and Deniese Geery



Folks feel right at home when they enter Phil and Deniese Geery's two-story Ovilla home, which bears a sign that says The Geery Glory Resort on the second story balcony, which overlooks the backyard, the forest and creek beyond. The balcony, with its vintage dining table, is Deniese's favorite spot to start her busy days off right. "I have my coffee and breakfast here in the mornings. It's peaceful, even though we live in the city," she said.

In the past year, since taking residency, they have focused on the yard and have created a play space for their grandchildren. "We plan some interior improvements, but we've been so busy, so far, just melding two households into one," Deniese said. "We've gone through and given away so much that we had

The couple's tree-covered lot first attracted them to the property, but the floor plan works well for entertaining visitors and for Phil's mother and dad, Jayne and Phil Sr., who moved into the home, too. "During the holidays, it's nice to have enough room for everyone to stay with us," Phil remarked. "We enjoy hosting our church family in our home, whether it's for home groups or a party, and it's very special that we can be there for our parents. It's our way of honoring them."

"We had always wanted to live in the country and had talked about it for years," Deniese added. They had a home in Waxahachie where their company, Geery Contractors, is located when a real estate agent friend called and then showed them this Ovilla-area home. "We loved it from the start," Deniese said. "Unless God says something else, this is our last house. It's perfect for all of us, and we love the wildlife and the drive through the farmland to work. It's a slower-paced life."



accumulated in 30 years of marriage and Phil's parents had accumulated in 50 years together."

Phil, a McAllen, Texas, native, and Deniese, who hails from Houston, met at Southwestern Assemblies of God University. "Phil graduated, and I got my MRS degree," Deniese quipped. Deniese not only helps Phil in the contracting business — she also runs a commercial cleaning company and is a Young Living distributor.

"We're very active in our church, Freedom Fellowship International," Phil stated. "We volunteer for our community through our church and Mission 75165, but we're hoping to travel more on mission trips and vacations.

"We tend to be the resident mom and dad at church, and Phil's parents are the resident 'bonus' grandparents," Deniese explained. "We have enough room for 'bonus' kids, like the one who made the balcony's sign after he'd stayed during a college break with us."

The couple's daughter, Mallorie, and her family live in New Braunfels, while their oldest son, Zach, who is serving in the U.S. Army, lives in Washington State with his family. The couple's youngest son, Taylor, lives nearby in Denton. "I like spending Facetime with the grandbabies, going on mission trips and visiting friends who live in other states, reading and having coffee and tea chats with

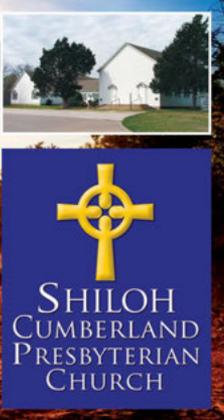


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of room for our grandbabies to play outside,” Phil added.

Upon entering the home, one can take in the beautiful backyard through the sunken living room’s panoramic windows. “We’ve incorporated mom and dad’s furnishings into this room and the formal dining room,” Deniese said. Phil Sr.’s collection of vintage film reels and cameras are arranged in a beautiful display.

friends,” Deniese said. Jayne and Phil, Sr. enjoy cheering on their “bonus grandchildren” from the Waxahachie Preparatory Academy in their scholastic and sporting endeavors.

Phil enjoys working in the yard. “One of the perks about our house that we weren’t looking for is the pool and beautifully landscaped backyard,” he said. Phil has extended the playground space that overlooks

the creek. The family has fun roasting marshmallows in the play area’s fire pit. A meandering stone walkway leads to a pond area with a gazebo and onward to the pool and hot tub, which are shaded by a palm tree, reminiscent of Phil Sr. and Jayne’s days in the Texas Valley. “We have plenty



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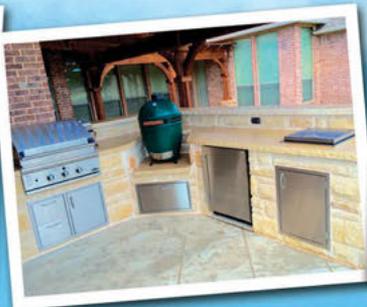
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Goodies baking in the kitchen’s oven send wonderful smells wafting throughout the home. “I’m always cooking or baking something for some occasion,” Deniese said. An informal dining and sitting area with a warming fireplace opens to the patio, and the couple’s home office is handily located nearby. Completing the downstairs is Phil Sr. and Jayne’s master bedroom suite. “They have their own private doorway to the patio and pool,” Deniese explained, “and they enjoy sitting there.”

When overnight guests aren’t in residence, Phil and Deniese enjoy their own private quarters upstairs, complete with another living room that opens to the entryway below on one side and to the backyard and balcony, as well. Built-ins abound, and a walk-in closet holds lots of board games and toys the family enjoys with guests and grandkids.

A guest bedroom for their grown children, or the occasional “bonus” college kids from church, and another guest bedroom, the “grandbaby room,” are located on the second story, along with Phil and Deniese’s master bedroom suite. “We have two grandgirls, five grandboys and another grandbaby on the way, so we can really have a crowd at times,”

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Deniese said. “We have so much fun when they visit.”

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A Sweet Spot

— By Jill Martinez

Kevin Crain began playing disc golf several years ago, while a student at Texas A&M, when a few buddies asked him to join them for a round. He enjoyed the game and has been hooked ever since. When he relocated to the DFW area, he began traveling around finding courses on which to play. “At my peak, I played four or five times per week and was somewhat competitive,” Kevin admitted modestly. “When my wife and I settled in Red Oak, there was no course here, and driving to Dallas all the time was not an option.”

Consequently, Kevin decided to draft a proposal to the Red Oak Parks and Recreation Board requesting that a disc golf course be established. “I saw the Cherry Creek Nature Preserve close to Watkins Park and thought it would be a great spot. I attended a Parks and Rec council meeting and proposed that a nine-hole

course be developed,” Kevin explained. The council was intrigued with the idea, and a few months later, plans were underway.

Ray Silva-Reyes, Public Works director for the city of Red Oak, said Kevin was instrumental in helping the city design the disc golf course. “He is the pioneer who brought this course to life,” Ray said. “His passion for the game can be seen throughout the entire course.”

Kevin and a few of his disc golfing friends used their personal experience as players along with some research to develop the best layout for the course. They tested their design in various weather conditions to see how play would be impacted until they were happy with the outcome.

“Disc golf is low-impact on the land, making it nature-friendly. Right now, we have dirt tee pads. Later on, we hope to be able to upgrade to concrete pads,” Kevin added.

The Cherry Creek Disc Golf Course is located at the end of Pecan Creek Street in Red Oak. The parking area is equipped with street lights and a sign to welcome

visitors. The nearly 20-acre course is open every day from dawn to dusk. Playing all nine holes takes participants on approximately a one-mile walk.

“This area was designed to be very family-friendly. There is a pavilion with a couple of disc baskets for people who might not be ready for the full course. Families can picnic in this area, as well,” Kevin said.

To play a round, all participants need to have is a set of flying discs. The course is already equipped with baskets at each of the nine holes. Discs look like frisbees but are smaller and come in various weights. Three main types of discs are drivers, designed to travel long distances; mid-range discs, which are fast, yet stable; and putters, which are great for short, controlled shots. “Sporting goods stores usually carry discs. They can be purchased for approximately \$8 to \$20,” Kevin said.

Kevin is the administrator of the Red Oak Disc Golf Facebook page, which has more than 100 members. “Last fall, after the course’s grand opening, we hosted a few random doubles games,” Kevin said. “People paid a \$10 entry fee, and winners collected a cash prize.” More games will likely be scheduled in the upcoming months.

Going through the process of pitching the proposal and seeing the course through to completion got Kevin well-acquainted with the Red Oak Parks and Recreation board. “There was an open spot on the board, and I was able to fill it. I’ve been serving my two-year commitment for some time now and really enjoy it,” Kevin said.

With the time change bringing longer daylight hours and spring offering more moderate temperatures, it is a perfect time to get out to the course with friends and family and enjoy a game or two. You might find Kevin out there. **NOW**

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CookingNOW

In the Kitchen With

VIKI PITMAN

— By Rachel Smith



Simple is a word Viki Pitman knows well regarding cooking. However, simple can still taste exquisite, which is the exact picture she paints in the kitchen. Being an art teacher, she knows how to transform something ordinary into an extraordinary masterpiece. “I enjoy experimenting with new recipes and adjusting them to our tastes,” she said.

Viki likes to cook using down-to-earth methods, with different spices and herbs. “I also chop with knives — no food processor here,” she said. Her ability to transform tastes from typical to amazing has brought great success in her cooking life. “I created several recipes myself, like a meatloaf and easy guacamole,” she explained. “Both are super simple to make and very popular at potlucks!” **NOW**

4. Shape into two loaves; place side by side in a glass baking dish. Make an indentation lengthwise on top of the loaf and fill it with ketchup. Bake at 420 F for 20 minutes to brown. Cover and lower oven temperature to 350 F, baking for an additional 20 minutes, or until cooked to desired doneness.
5. Let loaves sit for 10 minutes before cutting. This tastes great the next day, too!

Mandarin Orange Whip

Make this recipe low-calorie by using sugar-free and low-fat ingredients.

- 1 6-oz. box orange Jell-O
- 1 8-oz. container sour cream
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 1 12-oz. container Cool Whip, or other whipped topping
- 1 15-oz. can mandarin oranges, drained

1. In a large bowl, mix dry Jell-O and sour cream until thoroughly blended. Add pecans and whipped topping; mix until well blended. Gently stir in oranges.
2. Refrigerate at least an hour before serving.

Easy Guacamole

- 2-3 ripe avocados
- 2 Tbsp. El Fenix Hot Sauce, or to taste
- 1/2 fresh lime, juiced

1. Peel and mash avocados in a bowl. Add hot sauce and lime juice; mix well and enjoy.

Easy Meatloaf

- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1/4 cup onions, chopped
- 1/4 cup green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 to 1 cup breadcrumbs, from a dry French baguette, if possible
- Ketchup, to taste
- 1 lb. extra-lean ground beef

1. Preheat oven to 425 F. In a large bowl, beat egg until blended. Add spices, onion and bell pepper.
2. Grate the baguette with a coarse cheese grater (frozen bread grates easier). Add breadcrumbs to egg mixture; mix thoroughly. Add enough ketchup to make the mixture into a thick sauce; mix in more breadcrumbs, if necessary.
3. Remove about 1/2 cup of the sauce; set aside. Add meat; mix well. Add any remaining sauce, if needed, but make sure mixture is not too wet.

Jalapeño Black-eyed Pea Dip

From Dining with David Wade.

- 1 4.5-oz. can green chilies, chopped
- 2-3 oz. or one small jar sliced jalapeños
- 1-2 tsp. jalapeño juice
- 1 tsp. onion powder, or 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1 tsp. garlic powder, or 2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 tsp. each kosher salt and black pepper, or to taste
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 1 5-oz. jar Kraft Old English cheese spread (Do not substitute!)
- 3 cups black-eyed peas, cooked and drained (I use canned Trappey's with jalapeños.)

1. Mix chilies, jalapeños, juice and spices with a blender or hand mixer until pureed. Place mixture into a large, heavy saucepan or Dutch oven.
2. In a separate pan, melt butter; add cheese spread over low heat and blend thoroughly. Add mixture to the pan of peppers.

3. Puree black-eyed peas in a blender or mix in a sturdy bowl with a hand mixer until mashed. Add peas to jalapeño and cheese spread mixture. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until well blended; remove from heat.

4. Let cool; cover and refrigerate overnight, then reheat before serving. Serve with chips (toasted flour tortilla chips recommended). Note: The dip tastes better the next day, but it can be eaten right after removal from stove. Also keeps warm in a Crock-Pot.

Pineapple Icebox Pie (aka Millionaire Pie)

From David Wade's Favorite Recipes.

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1 8-oz. can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1/2 cup pecan pieces
- 1 12-oz. container Cool Whip, softened
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 9-inch baked pie shell

1. Blend sugar and cream cheese together in a mixing bowl. Add pineapple and pecans, mixing thoroughly.

2. Add whipped topping and vanilla; mix again until smooth.

3. Turn into a cooled pie shell. Chill for 4 hours or freeze 2 hours before serving.

Note: This recipe is so simple, you may be tempted to change or add ingredients, but I recommend you keep as is, because it's perfect!

N-M Spiced Tea

- 3 cinnamon sticks or 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 3 whole cloves or 1/2 tsp. ground cloves
- 6 1/2 cups water
- 4 bags English Breakfast tea
- 1/4 cup Tang (powdered orange drink mix)
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract

1. Place cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves in a large saucepan. Pour water over spices and bring to a boil. Reduce to low heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from stove; add tea bags. Steep for 5 minutes. Strain mixture into a clean saucepan. Stir in Tang and extract.

2. Cool to room temperature, cover and refrigerate. Serve over ice. Note: the whole process can be done in a microwave.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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— By Virginia Riddle

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Brightly painted murals and posters line the hallways of Ferris Christian Academy. An ABC circle rests at the hallway intersection. Smiling kids' faces and voices full of joy tell visitors and parents that there's a lot of learning happening every day within these school walls. "I love opening the eyes of little ones to a world of learning," Ms. T.R. Hodges, the school's director, said.

The academy was founded 17 years ago as an outreach ministry of First Baptist Ferris. It has expanded in grades served, moved to its own building and now serves 159 children from 6 weeks through third grade. The 2018 fall semester will add a fourth-grade class. Abeka curriculum is followed.

Children 6 weeks to 12 years of age are welcomed in day care and an after-school program. Transportation is provided to and from all Ferris and Palmer elementary schools. Breakfast and afternoon snacks are provided to all, along with lunch for academy students and day care kids. Full-time day care is offered during the summer and school holidays, as well. "Supporting families in preparing their children to be effective and productive citizens through Bible-based academics is our mission," Peggy Chadwick, otherwise known as Miss Peggy, said.

Miss Peggy has served as the kindergarten teacher since the academy's beginning, starting first as the K2 teacher.

The first- through third-grade teacher is Diane Kirschner. The two teachers share an aide, Stephanie Simpson. "I get to teach in my own crazy style and make learning really fun for the seven students I have this year," Miss Peggy said. "We go on field trips, *show* the students and let them *experience* first-hand whatever we're studying." During the Native American unit, students "camp" in a teepee and examine bows and arrows. "Kids remember these kinds of experiences," Miss Peggy explained.

"I love opening the eyes of little ones to a world of learning."

Studies about the Chinese New Year bring out the dragon, fans, lanterns and dragon dancing. "I'm a history buff, so I love the Six Flags Over Texas unit. We take a field trip to the Fort Worth Stockyards," Peggy added. "For Thanksgiving, I dress up as a pilgrim."

All 28 staff members are CPR and first aid certified and have undergone background checks and fingerprinting. "We attend 20 hours of in-service training annually," Miss Peggy said. FCA's board members are very actively involved.

Cafeteria staff meet all kids' nutritional needs, and on Fridays there's a popcorn treat, even for family members. The orange Spirit Room is an earned reward for older kids. "They play games such as chess and watch television," Ms. Hodges said. She monitors all classes and common areas from her office through closed-circuit TV.

A teacher for 30 years, Miss Peggy lives in Hutchins with her husband, Scott, senior pastor of Hutchins' First Baptist Church. The couple, married for 35 years, has two grown sons and two grandchildren.

Miss Peggy concluded, "I love teaching and seeing the students' faces when they realize they just read for the first time. God chose me to teach in this Christian atmosphere. It's my calling." **NOW**

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TravelNOW Hidden Gems

— By Allison Burdick

What do gold, Bruce Lee, and strawberries have in common? They're all part of Seattle's heritage shared through not one, not two, but three National Park Service sites that explore the area's history, culture and community.

History: Pioneer Square

All hail to the Klondike!

Situated within historic Pioneer Square (Seattle's original neighborhood) is a restored building known as the Cadillac Hotel. Constructed in 1889, it is now the home of Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, which shares stories from the 1897-98 gold rush in the Yukon Territory of Canada that swept gold-seekers through Seattle and up toward the Klondike gold fields. History buffs are exposed to Seattle and the Pacific Northwest's past through the eyes of stampedeers looking to strike it rich, including John Nordstrom and how

he managed to start a shoe empire. Kids can earn Junior Ranger badges by completing activities, while they explore the park. Short films and rotating exhibits are also part of the experience and help visitors delve deeper into the impact of the gold rush on Seattle.

Culture: Chinatown-International District

Enter the Dragon!

A short walk from Pioneer Square is the Chinatown-International District, a neighborhood rich in restaurants, shops and public art. The Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience, an affiliated area of the National Park System, celebrates the art, history and culture of Asian-Pacific Americans through vivid storytelling and inspiring experiences. Learn how the neighborhood shaped Seattle's most famous martial artist and world icon, Bruce Lee. Take a historic building tour and catch preserved scenes of the everyday lives of the

hundreds of Chinese, Japanese and Filipino immigrants who once made this building their home. A menu of other guided tours takes you through the neighborhood — including one led by your stomach — with different seasonal dishes that may include dumplings, noodles, rice and barbecue.

Community: Bainbridge Island

Nidoto Nai Yoni — "Let it Not Happen Again."

A short, and extremely scenic, ferry ride from Pioneer Square takes visitors to Bainbridge Island, a community that encourages us all to learn from a dark chapter in our nation's history. Japanese immigrants first began arriving on the island in the 1880s, and strawberry farming was introduced in 1908. Many Japanese Americans went on to own and operate farms on the island and became integral to the community. However, immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States government began arresting and facilitating the mass removal of all individuals of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast. The Bainbridge Island community was the first to have its members of Japanese ancestry forcibly removed from their homes. The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, a unit of Minidoka National Historic Site, is an old-growth red cedar, granite and basalt memorial that honors all 276 Japanese and Japanese Americans who were exiled from the Bainbridge Island community. These were the first of what would become 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry — two-thirds of whom were United States citizens — forcibly removed from their homes and incarcerated during World War II. Visitors can check regularly for tour schedules.

Whether you are looking for stories, activities or new cuisine, the Seattle area is your destination with three National Park Service sites to visit, all easily accessible through public transit. For maps and other planning tools, visit www.nps.gov/state/wa/index.htm. **NOW**

Photos courtesy of the National Park Service.

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Better Safe Than Sorry

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

If it has not happened yet, you can expect to get the first tornado scare of the year any day now. Late spring to early summer is the height of storm season in North Texas, and you will want to be sure you are prepared for an emergency situation. Here are some ideas for what to stock up on and how to be as ready as possible if severe weather comes your way.

Have a Plan

- *Know your home's safest spot.* Depending on your house, this could be a simple one. You want to stay away from windows, ideally staying close to interior walls without much that could fall on you. Most importantly, make sure everyone in your home knows where to go in case of danger, so you do not have children panicking and missing if storms are happening.

- *Know how to leave.* One of the saddest sights when major storms hit are the thousands of cars along the freeways trying to find refuge. Be sure you know the major evacuation routes, so if you have to evacuate, you can get somewhere to stay for a while.

- *Know if you can bunk with a friend.* If your house does not offer a good safe spot, plan ahead to have a place you can go when severe weather is expected. You might have friends who have a bunker, or at least a better safe spot than you do. Storm shelters are not the norm in this part of the country, but more and more contractors are offering to build or install them.

Have Supplies

- *Get food and water now.* If you want to avoid the price gouging that sometimes happens in a storm's aftermath, go ahead and stock up on bottled water and canned foods. One easy plan is to always have a surplus of those items,

and every few months, consume what you have and buy replenishment. Be sure to include food for your pets when you are making your grocery list. And remember that your pets will increase the amount of water you need.

- *There are other useful items.* If you lose power, you may not be able to do much about your refrigerator and cold food, but you can be ready to stay warm with plenty of blankets. And just like you should have a stock of sustenance, be sure you have a supply of the batteries you will need for flashlights and any items that are essential for your family.

Have Information

- *Use the radio in the mornings.* Each morning, before you press play on your favorite CD or turn to your satellite music station of choice, tune into a station that includes regular news and regular updates. Forecasters never know exactly when storms might sprout up, but they usually have an idea at least a few hours in advance. In the same vein, keep a television turned on and tuned to a major network. You don't have to do anything more than watch for a break from regularly scheduled programming to bring a breaking weather update.

- *Download a Weather App.* There are many options, so many in fact that the only bad choice is not having one at all. Apps like WeatherBug or AccuWeather will not only warn you of tornadoes and extreme conditions, they also track lightning, so you know whether it is smart to be outside in less severe conditions.

Hopefully, you will never need any of these tips. But, if the worst does happen, your best plan is to be prepared. **NOW**

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Zoomed In:

Mayor Alan Hugley and Dr. Mark Stanfill By Jill Martinez

Mayor Hugley is preparing to pass the torch of city leadership on to Dr. Mark Stanfill after completing his second term in office. After concluding his final State of the City address at the Red Oak Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon, he allowed Dr. Stanfill a few minutes to address the attendees.

Of his upcoming role as mayor, Dr. Stanfill said, "I believe that my experience on the Red Oak ISD school board over the past 14 years will enable us to continue moving the city forward. I understand the need to nurture relationships with developers (housing, retail and industrial). I desire more sit-down restaurants and local shopping developments as I don't want our residents to have to leave the community to work, shop, dine or find entertainment."



Ovilla Christian School fourth-graders dress up as their favorite book character.



Natali Balderas wins the Ferris Public Library Black History Month reading award.



TXLS facilitator Michelle Stimpson and Ferris ISD teachers smile for the camera.



Ovilla Methodist Church's line dancing class kicks up their heels.



Red Oak Cub Scout Pack 228 and Boy Scout Troop 652 collect food door-to-door in support of North Ellis County Outreach.



Life School science fair winners Mercy Garcia, Joey Speck, Annalise Sanchez and Christian Shedd smile proudly with their school administrators.



Beverly and Mike Miller enjoy dinner at Amaya's in Red Oak with their son, Dillon, and grandson, Remmington.



Nancy Simpson (right) joins Melanie Killain and her grandchildren for an afternoon out in Red Oak.

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Calendar

April:

1

Easter Egg Hunt: 9:00 a.m., Ovilla Road Baptist Church. Free breakfast in the Student Center followed by an Easter egg hunt on the campus. Worship service will begin at 10:30 a.m.

7

Fundraiser for Heritage Jaguar Band: 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Midlothian Stadium, 1800 S. 14th St., Midlothian. A \$20 donation will be made to the Heritage Jaguar Band for every test drive taken at Waxahachie Ford during the car show. Registration for the car show is free when you participate in the Ford Drive. For more information, contact Randy Griffith at (817) 308-7412 or at vpoperations@heritagejaguarband.com.

North Ellis County Market and Business Showcase: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Red Oak Municipal Center. Free admission. Visit www.redoakareachamber.org for more details.

7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29

Scarborough Renaissance Festival: 2511 FM 66, Exit 399A and I-35E. Festival is set back in the time of King Henry VIII with arts, crafts, vendors, food and entertainment. For more information, call (972) 938-3247 or visit www.srfestival.com.



14

Ferris Brick Festival: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., downtown Ferris. Enjoy the day indulging in tasty food vendor fare, games, bounce houses, train rides and a car show.

Help to Heal Sharing God's Love Yard/Bake Sale: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., 670 Primrose, Midlothian. The event needs volunteers, garage sale items and baked goods. For more information, email Linda Miley at ldean@helptohealthx.org or visit www.helptohealthx.org.



21

Red Oak Book Club: 6:30 p.m., Red Oak Public Library. This month's read is *Ten Beach Road* by Wendy Wax. Copies of the book are available at the Red Oak Library. The book club is open to all adults 21 and older living in the Red Oak area.

7th Annual Race for the King: 7:00 a.m. registration and packet pick up, Ferris ISD Yellow Jacket Stadium. This 5K Run/Walk & Kids' Fun Run benefits the Kyle King Scholarship Fund. For additional information contact Traci at (972) 544-2043 or tdrodrig@ferrisisd.org.

30

Festival of the Arts: 5:00-8:00 p.m., Worship Center at ORBC, 3251 Ovilla Rd. Free admission. For more information or for details on submitting artwork, email Jami Navarro at jnavarro@ovillachristianschool.org.

May:

11

Red Oak Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament: 7:00 a.m., Old Brickyard Golf Course, Ferris. \$440/team or \$125/person if registered by April 30. \$150/person afterward. Cash and prizes awarded. For more information, contact Shelley Martinez at (972) 617-0906 or admin@redoakchamber.org.

19

20th Annual Corsicana AirSho: 8:30 a.m., gates open; noon, show begins, Corsicana Municipal Airport. \$10 per person or \$20 per carload. Veterans and military personnel and their families are free.



Ongoing:

Tuesdays
Writing for Enjoyment Group

meeting: 12:30-1:30 p.m. For location of the meeting and more information, call (469) 383-5365 or email joanpomeroy@att.net.

Lariat Bridge Club: 6:30 p.m., Boy Scout Cabin, 1139 Brown St., Waxahachie. For more information or to confirm the meeting, email Shari at weatherscf@yahoo.com or call (505) 270-4017.

Tuesdays and Thursdays
North Ellis Co. Outreach assistance: 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m., 205 S. Main St., Ferris. Assistance is for Red Oak and Ferris residents. For more information, call Denise Butler at (972) 617-7261.

Wednesdays
Red Oak Library Toddler Story Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m. Call the library at

(469) 218-1230 for more information on all library events.

Wednesdays and Thursdays
The Red Oak Senior Citizens Group: 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd., Red Oak. Lunch provided on Thursdays. \$2 per week membership fee. Call (214) 864-9014 for more information.

Thursdays
SYNERGY: 11:30 a.m., Sparacello's Deli, 600 Methodist St., Suite 3120, Red Oak. A time for business people to network. Everyone welcome.

Third Thursdays
Ferris Lions Club meeting: 6:30 p.m., Scout House in Mutz Park, 201 E. 10th St., Ferris.

Second Saturdays
Red Oak Opry: 7:00-9:00 p.m., Lone

Star Cowboy Church, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd., Red Oak. Tickets sold at the door. \$12 for adults; \$5 for children. For more information, visit www.redoakopry.com.

Third Saturdays
Ferris Police Department's Coffee with a Cop: 8:00-10:00 a.m., 145 Donuts, 502 E. 8th St., Ferris. For more information, call (972) 544-2233.

Fourth Sundays
Prayer Shawl Circle: 10:00 a.m.-noon, First United Methodist Church of Red Oak, 600 Daubitz Dr. For more information, call Beth Norris at (214) 392-0732.

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



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HealthNOW For Men Only

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

There was a time when men rarely thought about their prostate. That was before the advent of the seemingly never-ending parade of commercials promoting various drug treatments for prostate illness. With the increased focus on the prostate today, men are more aware of the risks associated with this gland. The prostate is part of the male reproductive system. Located in front of the rectum and below the bladder, it makes a slightly alkaline fluid that is the liquid part of semen. This fluid protects sperm cells in semen and aids in the motility of sperm. Although a gland, the prostate is also a muscular organ, which helps propel semen through the penis.

The anatomy of the prostate lends itself to possible problems as a man ages. Part of the structure of this organ is the urethra, which is the tube that transports urine and semen. The prostate gland grows until a man reaches adulthood, but often the inner part of the organ that surrounds the urethra continues to grow. This can set up the beginning of a condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), which is an enlarged prostate.

In BPH, the surrounding tissue presses on the

urethra, which can cause difficulty in urination. On average, this issue does not occur until after the age of 50 in most men. Other than difficulty in passing urine, some additional problems associated with this condition are frequent urination, sensation of the bladder not being empty after urination, stopping and starting repeatedly during urination, dribbling urine and a frequent need to get up at night to urinate. Anyone with these symptoms should see their doctor.

When visiting the physician for a yearly physical or investigation of a complaint involving the prostate, a digital rectal exam is performed. The physician looks for lumps, tenderness and other abnormalities. Another part of the examination, the Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test, also aids in screening for possible prostate cancer. The PSA is a protein found in the prostate cells. It is normal for all men to have low levels of PSA. A higher number does not automatically lend itself to prostate cancer. It may be cause for concern, in that you may be at higher risk for the disease. Your health care provider can weigh all of the factors and determine what level is normal for you. They can also recommend when screening is appropriate for you and if further tests or treatment are warranted. PSA is a great screening tool, but it is only the beginning. After that comes the rest of the story. **NOW**

This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.

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