

BurlesonNOW

M A G A Z I N E

APRIL 2024



In the Kitchen With
Andrea Kelly

Also inside:
Scavenger Hunt
Crossword

Featured Business:
Lucas Gymnastics

Home on the Reins

Burleson's rodeo team
unites teenagers in
their love for the sport!

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ON THE COVER



Team sponsor Mike Colon and his team recount their experiences with rodeo.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Calling all foodies!

According to Today.com, the month of April celebrates a plethora of food-centric holidays and observances. Along with it being Filipino Food Month, National BLT Sandwich Month and National Garlic Month, April spotlights individual foods like National Banana Day (4/17) and specific dishes like National Chicken Cordon Bleu Day (4/4). One food I'm excited to celebrate this month is the chickpea (4/21).

Over this past decade of being a vegetarian, I've experimented with many new foods to meet my daily nutritional needs. Through this, I've gained an appreciation for chickpeas. Like many legumes, chickpeas are packed with protein. The Mayo Clinic Health System estimates that half a cup of chickpeas contains almost 20 grams of protein and 5 grams of fiber. Chickpeas are also versatile. You can throw them in a soup to give it more sustenance or toss them in olive oil and seasonings and bake them to make a healthy, crunchy snack. You can even use them to make falafel, which can be enjoyed in wraps, salads or even on its own.

My favorite way to use chickpeas is by making hummus. For a simplified recipe, all you need to do is throw one 15-oz. can of chickpeas, about 1/4 cup of the chickpea water (aquafaba), tahini or sunflower seeds, lemon juice and whatever spices you want (I use minced garlic and curry powder) into a food processor and blend until smooth. If you want more exact measurements, there are thousands of different recipes online, but when it comes to utilizing chickpeas, I enjoy following my heart.

This month, try a new food or appreciate a longtime favorite!



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Home ON THE Reins

— By Emma McKay

In 1997, rodeo became Texas' state sport, and for good reason. Nothing is more Texan than rodeo. The sport traces its origin back to the golden age of the cowboy, where the men would compete in early forms of current rodeo events to build camaraderie. Since its founding in the early 1970s, the Burlleson Rodeo Team has allowed high school students to come together and share their love of the sport.

Richard Zunner, a junior at Burlleson High School, grew up watching his older brothers participate in the Burlleson Rodeo Team. "My brother, Landen, rode bulls and did bareback. I didn't really like bulls that much. I liked watching bareback. It seemed fun, and I wanted to try it." When he entered high school, he joined the team and started participating in bareback riding and chute dogging events.

Burlleson High School freshman Allison Seleske spent her childhood around horses. "I started riding when I was 2. I did English dressage and later western dressage." In middle school, she got lassoed into rodeo, and has been barrel racing and pole bending ever since.

Despite performing alone, Allison found a wealth of new friends through rodeo. "You meet people that you know you're going to have a great connection with. I met two of my best friends through rodeo," Allison said of Centennial High School and Burlleson High School sophomores Zoe Seguin and Jewelia Tolerson. Like Allison, Zoe and Jewelia also participate in barrel and pole racing.

For Richard, not only has he made new friends in rodeo, but he has strengthened pre-existing friendships by converting his friend, Burlleson High School junior, Mike Colon Jr., to the team.

"Richard was wearing a Burlleson Rodeo Team shirt, and I asked, 'How do I get into that?'" Mike Jr. explained. "He said, 'We have a Christmas party coming up. You can come, and we can get you to join.'" Mike Jr. and his father, Mike Colon Sr., attended the party, and learned all they could about the team. Not only did Mike Jr. join the team, but Mr. Colon was later elected the team's sponsor.

"I was excited to be elected team sponsor," Mr. Colon said. "Everything is based on them. I just listen to them and help them out whichever way I can." Although Mr. Colon acts as the "coach," the team requires the aid of the students' families and financial



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backers to keep it afloat, as it is not affiliated with Bursen Independent School District.

Even though it takes a lot of work to keep the team going, the payoff is worth it to the parents. "It's about having fun and making sure that the kids are having a good time. If they are busy taking care of the horses or learning how to ride bulls, then they're not doing anything dumb out in the street. My focus is to make sure all the kids are safe and having a good time," Mr. Colon said.

Through practicing for their events, the team has gained respect and appreciation for their four-legged teammates. "You realize how much every horse is different," Zoe explained. "When you start working with a new horse, you learn the mechanics for it. When you get on a different horse, it could be completely different, and you must learn the mechanics again."

Just like people, the team has realized horses can have good days and bad days, too. Despite those bad days, the



teens agree that the animals enjoy the sport. “You can see Jewelia’s horse get ready for it,” Allison said. “Other times, he’s very relaxed, but the moment she gets him lined up with the alleyway, he’s up, he’s ready.”

Dealing with 1,500-pound animals with minds of their own makes rodeo a dangerous sport. People get injured by being thrown from saddles or trampled on by bulls. “Every single time you walk into the ring, you have a risk. Horses are like toddlers that can kill you,” Zoe

said. However, the members of the Burleson Rodeo Team agree the injuries they have received make up some of their favorite moments. “It was a huge accomplishment for me when I split my shin open on the barrels. I’d never done it before. You’re not supposed to hit them, but I was happy I’d gotten close enough to,” Zoe explained.

The thrill of adrenaline outweighs the risk of pain for the teens. “Once you get on your bull and out of those chutes, everything is slow motion until you hear the buzzer,” Mike said. During a bull riding event, Mike’s bull crushed him into the ground. The junior suffered a concussion and bruised ribs, along with cuts and bruises. “I was out for a couple of months. During that time, all I thought about was rodeo. I missed it so much. Once I got back into rodeo, my life was complete again.”

Richard, Allison, Mike, Zoe and Jewelia all wish to pursue rodeo after high school and encourage kids ascending into high school who may be considering joining the Burleson Rodeo Team to do it. “It’s nice to get to be

around people with the same passion as you,” Zoe said.

They do, however, warn that performing in rodeo takes a serious amount of commitment, so kids who aren’t willing to give it their all, should steer away. However, if fear of getting hurt or messing up are the only things causing hesitation in doing rodeo, then those things can be easily conquered. “I was scared my first time chute dogging,” Richard admitted. “But after they opened the chute, I was having fun. It’s a fear you overcome as you ride.”

“It’s a sport where you’re all equal. It doesn’t matter what sex you are, what color you are, or anything. You’re there to do what you’ve got to do, and you have good friends,” Mr. Colon said. Despite attending different schools and being in different grades, the Burleson Rodeo Team brought these five friends together and allowed them to engage in what they all love. **NOW**

Source:
1. <https://wheretexasbecametexas.org/texas-state-sport-rodeo/>.



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The Davis family has fun exploring the booths at CityFest.

Zoomed In: By Emma McKay Opal Lee and Phil Anderson

Activist and “Grandmother of Juneteenth” Opal Lee recently visited Burleson to discuss her book, *Juneteenth: A Children’s Story*. To honor her visit, the city of Burleson named February 17 “Opal Lee Day.”

“We must understand that we’re Burleson citizens, and we need to work for the common good for the city,” said Councilman Phil Anderson, pictured with Opal Lee (middle) and his wife, Teresa (right). “If we can live what’s in her heart, I think we’d all be better people.”

“I’ve never felt more secure in a public building in all our travels,” said Dione Sims, Opal’s granddaughter. The two were pleased by Burleson’s receptiveness to the message of unity and freedom. Phil hopes the city does more to celebrate and understand Black history together.



Austin and Amber Hill spend the day selling baked goods with their dog, Atlas.



BYA Raptors 8U Team clinches first place for the basketball season.



The Genesis Jiu Jitsu Homeschool group throws a party at Centennial Park.



Bonnie and Amber Smith enjoy some specialty drinks at Dwell.



Dakota Hatfield and Kobey Roberts help protect the city through the Burleson Fire Department.



Jeff and Sadie Downs take Milo for a walk through Old Town.



Quena and Michaela Simon play at Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza.



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— By Emma McKay

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“Starting a foundation of being physically active in our youth promotes healthy human beings later in life,” Marti Lucas, founder of Lucas Gymnastics, believes. Marti’s love for gymnastics began when she was a toddler. “I took it at a



private preschool in Dallas. They’d have someone come out once a week and teach us tumbling skills.” Marti’s mother encouraged this interest by signing her up for an after-school gymnastics program.

At age 6, Marti moved to Burleson and began soccer, but that wasn’t where her heart was. Marti laughed, “The soccer coach’s wife would yell, ‘Marti, the ball’s coming! Quit doing cartwheels!’” After that season, Marti’s mother decided to put her back into gymnastics. Although her family moved a lot throughout her youth, gymnastics remained a constant in Marti’s life.

At 15, Marti took up a summer job at a local gym. “This was when I knew what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.” Having now been involved in the gymnastics business for 38 years, she has accomplished her teenage dream and continues improving upon it.

Since opening in 1995, Lucas Gymnastics has seen many changes including expanding locations and lesson goals. “Before COVID-19, when we moved into this building, I

found myself doing more administrative work. I couldn't coach anymore. I missed it," she confessed. Their pandemic-induced, two-month closure gave Marti a chance to rework her programs and the opportunity to step back on the floor.

Lucas Gymnastics boasts an excellent student to teacher ratio, with class sizes not surpassing eight students. "I want kids to be able to learn things in that class," Marti explained. "It means you can't fill your gym up as much, but I don't want to do it any other way."

Lucas Gymnastics offers recreational gymnastics for students who enjoy the sport and competition gymnastics for those who want to dedicate themselves to it. "Once the kids who are interested in the competitive program get to a certain skill level, they get invited to do our pre-competitive team." The pre-competitive team allows students to try it out, before fully committing to the competitive team. "It's amazing to see how much they grow as gymnasts once they get into our competitive program. It's not just the student working, there's also an adult supporting them to make it happen."

Although most of their classes are geared toward girls, Lucas Gymnastics offers a special tumbling class for boys. "Ninjakour is a toned-down parkour fitness and gymnastics class." This expanding program offers boys a chance to develop their physical abilities, such as strength, agility and balance.

Marti has also redesigned her adult gymnastics program. She wanted to create a course that could safely prepare adult bodies for different skills as well as teach adults who may have never taken gymnastics how to do it. "I have enjoyed doing gymnastics since childhood, and it's definitely one of the forms of staying fit that I don't want to give up as I age." The program has gone so well, she began hosting adults' gymnastics meets each year since 2022.

"You can't go wrong with gymnastics. It'll lay a foundation physically and mentally for anything you pursue." Interested in classes, camps or open gym for adults? Visit their website at, lucasygmnastics.com. **NOW**



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 ANDREA KELLY
 — By Emma McKay

For Andrea Kelly, food means family. Growing up, her and her husband's households always ate dinner together. When starting their own family, they decided to carry on that tradition. When her kids were toddlers, she'd let them each choose one food item from the grocery store for her to prepare at home. "Since they were young and impatient (and I shopped in the produce section first), they often chose veggies and fruit to try," she expressed. "Best decision ever."

Andrea pulls culinary inspiration from recipes passed down through generations of family members and through experimentation with new dishes her immediate family discovers while traveling. "The smell of garlic, onion and butter cooking," she exclaimed, "is a sure way to get my family in the kitchen quickly!" **NOW**

Guacamole Salsa

- 1 lb. tomatillos
- 1 jalapeño
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 1 thick slice red onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 limes, juiced

1 ripe avocado
 Salt, to taste

1. Peel and wash the tomatillos, and then quarter them.
2. Layer the ingredients in the blender in this order: tomatillos, jalapeño, cilantro, onion, garlic, lime juice, avocado and salt.

Blend the ingredients. You might have to help it start by shaking it, but once it gets going, the juice from the tomatillos will help it blend smoothly. You can adjust the flavors by adding more lime juice and avocado to your preference.

3. Serve with tortilla chips. It is also great as a salad dressing.

Grilled Flank Steak With Rosemary

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 4 tsp. honey
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp. dried rosemary (or 3 Tbsp. fresh)
- 1 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 1/2 lbs. flank steak

1. Mix the first 7 ingredients together; cover the steak with them. Rest in the refrigerator for 2-4 hours.

2. Bring to room temperature; grill for 4 minutes per side. Serve.

Tomato-Zucchini Tart

- 1 refrigerated piecrust
- 1 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 3 medium plum tomatoes, sliced
- 1/2 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 tsp. pepper, freshly ground

1. Fit the piecrust into a 9-inch pie plate. Prick the bottom and sides of the piecrust with a fork.
2. Bake the piecrust at 450 F for 9-11 minutes, or until lightly browned. Let cool.
3. Sauté the zucchini in hot oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat for 2 minutes, or until tender.
4. Arrange the zucchini at the bottom of the prepared piecrust. Arrange the tomatoes on top of the zucchini.
5. Stir together the basil, cheese and mayonnaise. Drop by the spoonfuls evenly on top of the tomatoes and zucchini. Sprinkle with pepper.
6. Bake at 425 F for 10-15 minutes, or until thoroughly heated and the cheese mixture is slightly melted.

White Sangria

- 3 cups white grape juice
- 3/4 cup apple juice concentrate
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 3/4 cup sparkling water
- 1 small lemon, sliced and seeded
- 1 small orange, sliced and seeded
- 1/2 apple, thinly sliced
- 1 cup vodka (optional)

1. Stir all the ingredients together.
2. Serve over ice.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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Leprechaun Hats were found on pages 11, 15, 19, 24 & 28.

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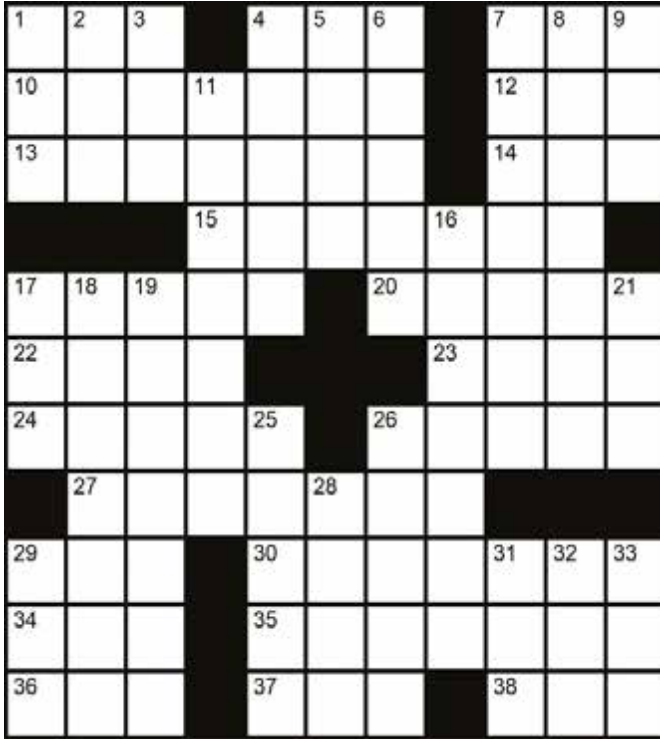


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Across

- 1 Bat wood
- 4 "... Roy" (Sir Walter Scott)
- 7 Prior night
- 10 William Faulkner novelette
- 12 Stat!
- 13 Souvenir
- 14 Be recumbent
- 15 Like the Baal Shem Tov
- 17 Challenger
- 20 "The Stepford Wives" author
- 22 Sch. of higher learning
- 23 Noted car collector
- 24 Art supporter?
- 26 Sudden pains
- 27 Flippant fellow
- 29 Automated performer of computer tasks
- 30 Way in
- 34 Indignation
- 35 Cared to restyle style
- 36 Uneven?
- 37 Scale divs.
- 38 In fourth grade, perhaps

Down

- 1 Now, in textspeak
- 2 Yonder lass
- 3 Drape edge
- 4 Kidney-related
- 5 Mares and does eat them
- 6 Grill
- 7 Animate
- 8 Adjusting an organ
- 9 Animal you heard on the farm
- 11 Conducts oneself
- 16 Depressing word on an arrival board
- 17 Road in Reims
- 18 Briefly
- 19 Called upon
- 21 Figures
- 25 OK with the cops
- 26 Strokes on the green
- 28 Attire
- 29 Short life story
- 31 Moisten
- 32 Very skilled person
- 33 Hither and ---

Online versions and solutions available at www.nowmagazines.com. From our Homepage, click on the Crossword-Sudoku tab. Click on a puzzle. Click on the See All button to view solutions.

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Hello, Spring

APRIL

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.

4/8

Solar Eclipse Watch Party:

Join us in the plaza for our Solar Eclipse Watch Party! There will be educational vendors, yard games, food trucks and music from DJ T-Aye. Solar Eclipse glasses will be handed out while supplies last. Free entry. 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St.

4/13

Johnson County Master Gardeners Plant Sale:

Come shop a variety of plants that are perfect for the area. Proceeds benefit local horticulture scholarships and educational programs for Johnson County. 9:00 a.m.-sell out,

201 W. First Street, Cleburne. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/johnsoncountytexas.

4/14

Vineyard Vibes:

Enjoy amazing local music, delicious food, good wine, exclusive vendors and a whole lot of relaxing with friends, all while supporting your community. Tickets start at \$15. 1:00-6:00 p.m., Lost Oak Winery, 8101 CR 802. To purchase tickets, visit harvesthouse-bloom.kindful.com/e/vineyard-vibes-2.

4/21

Brazos Chamber Orchestra Concert Series:

This is a free event, though donations are accepted. 7:30-9:00 p.m., Pathway Church, 325 NW Renfro St. For more details, visit brazoschamberorchestra.org.

4/22

Earth Day Celebration:

What better way to celebrate Earth Day than by spending time outside enjoying nature? Come explore the outdoors and participate in fun activities, including education about ancient plants and animals, environmentally conscious crafts and live animal showings! Goodie bags will be handed out to the first 50 kiddos. This is a free event. 6:00-8:00 p.m., Bailey Lake Park, 280 W. Hidden Creek Pkwy.

4/27

Household Hazardous Waste Event:

Burleson residents may dispose of household hazardous waste, old electronics, tires and paper for shredding. Proof of residency, including a city solid waste or water bill, is required. This is a free event. 9:00-11:00 a.m., Municipal Service Center, 725 SE John Jones Dr.

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

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