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APRIL 2025



Heather McEntee
Director of Library Services

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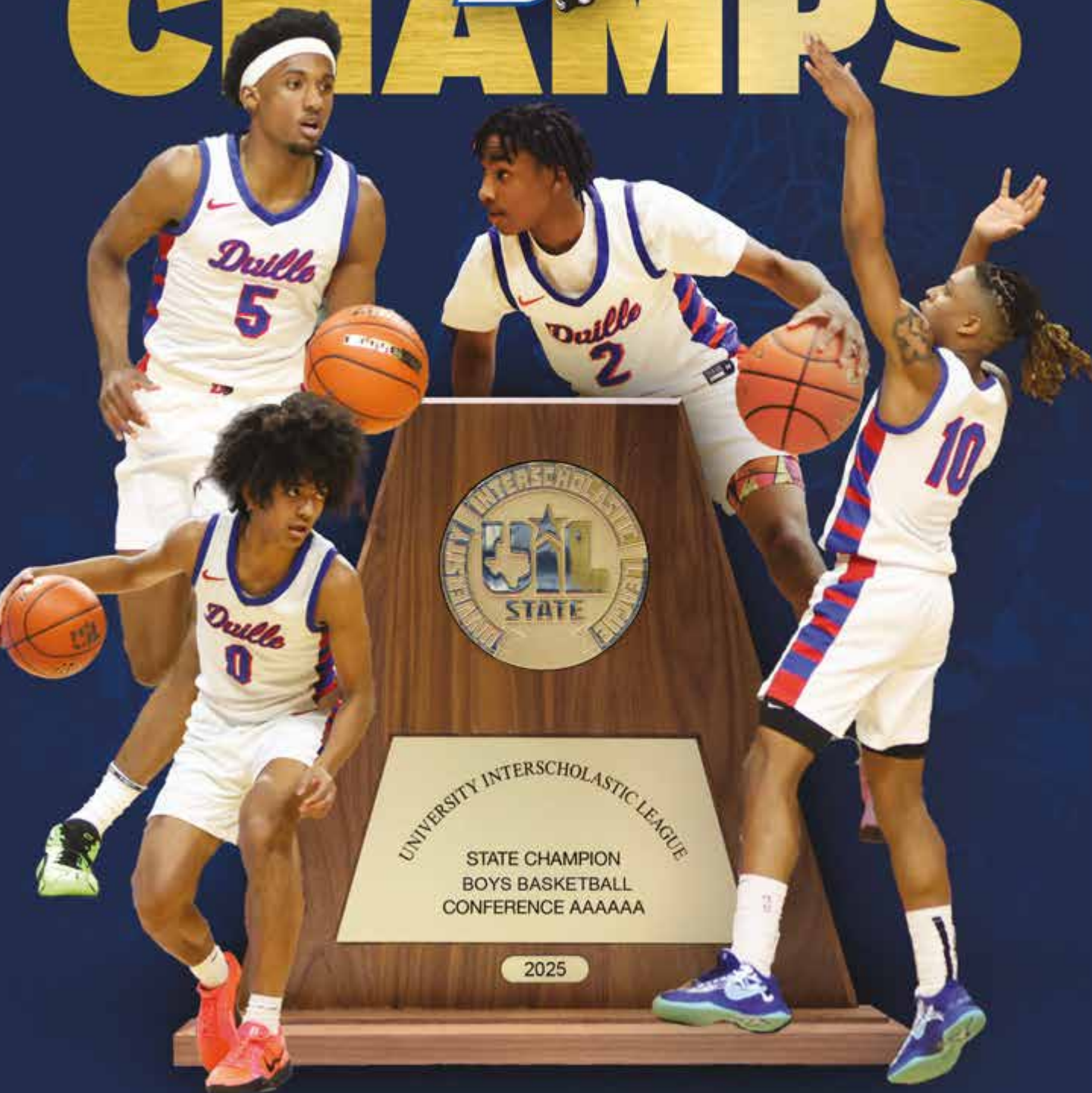
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ON THE COVER



Heather McEntee leads DeSoto's library toward a bright future.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Shoes are good, but ...

When I was a kid, summers were for running barefoot. You had to wear shoes to church, the stores or when visiting relatives. But at home, whether in the house, in the yard or on the blazing hot sidewalks, shoes were optional and to be avoided. My feet got so tough that only the most vicious goat heads could pierce them, and walking on rocks was easy. In the spring, some days were judged warm enough for bare feet, but others Mom declared too cold and required shoes before leaving the house. Inside, bare feet or socks were normal year-round. Mom used to say, "I can't think! Let me take my shoes off."

By my adult years, shoes were on my feet more of the time. Employers usually want your feet hidden away. But when I got home, the shoes came off just inside the door. Being barefoot became an indoor, at-home thing.

When I spent three months in Solomon Islands, the village where I lived didn't hold much with shoes. Most people had them, and wore them sometimes, especially when going into the bush or walking to another village. But around the village, shoes were not seen as necessary. Yards were kept clean and well graveled with broken coral, so kids and adults alike were barefoot most of the time.

My feet were not used to that anymore. They'd gotten quite tender from years of being stuffed in shoes. But I practiced walking on crushed coral until my feet remembered how to do it. The kids barely noticed, but the adults approved. I was doing one more thing the right way.

Give feet a chance!



Adam

Adam Walker
SouthwestNOW Editor
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Heather McEntee
Director of Library Services



DeSoto's library is at the center of what makes DeSoto great. Heather McEntee has been at the helm since November 2022. "To me, a library needs to be a community hub. It's a place where people come for easy access to information, but it's also a place for education and entertainment. Libraries have become community connectors," she explained.

Libraries are what's called a "third place." Your first place is your home, where you live and interact with your family. Your second place is your workplace, where you earn your living and interact with co-workers and customers. A third place is a social place, where you interact with a wide variety of people in informal ways. Third places are cheap or free, convenient

Books and So Much More

— By Adam Walker



to get to and encourage a sense of community. Churches, parks, coffee shops and libraries are all examples of third places. Libraries and other third places are essential to helping communities function and cooperate.

“When I tell people I work in a library, some of them tell me, ‘Oh, I buy all my books,’ or, ‘I don’t read.’ While that makes me sad, I try to tell them about all the other things libraries do. We offer so much more.” The DeSoto Public Library offers programs for everyone from infants to senior citizens. “Baby Story Time is for 0-18 months. The babies come to hear stories and songs and join directed play. It helps with their cognitive development. They stay after, to play with each other, while their caregivers talk.” The babies and their caregivers are building community. “One of the caregivers left us an impact statement about how her baby just blossomed. It’s not just about numbers. It’s about impact. We want to draw the babies in, let them have fun. When they think of the library as a fun place, and feel good about books, they have a head start on literacy. My two youngest sons

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didn't like to read. I told them, 'You just haven't found the books you like, yet.' Then they found *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, the Dog Man books and others. Then they were like, 'Oh, yeah! I like this!' Some kids discover graphic novels and learn that books aren't so bad."

The library has lots of programs for older kids and teens. They partner with local nonprofits to offer a range of mentoring, clubs for special interests and programs for everything from robotics to fashion design, financial literacy and entrepreneurship. The 994 programs and events the DeSoto Public Library offered last year reached over 25,000 people. Some of these programs partner with groups like the Perot Museum and NASA. Teens learn to cook and create podcasts. They can get help with their homework. The library offers after-school meals and snacks, year-round on Tuesdays through Thursdays, through partnership with Kid's Cove Community Outreach and the Department of Agriculture.

The Best Southwest Everything Teen Expo is a yearly event the DeSoto Public Library puts on to connect teens from all over North Texas with resources. It includes everything from a fashion show to a dance party. Workshops and motivational speakers share time with cupcake wars. Teens come from all over. The library makes it possible.

Adults have game nights and book clubs and help with computers. Workforce Solutions comes every other Tuesday to help DeSoto citizens find jobs. AARP comes to help seniors with their taxes. They host workshops on domestic violence and parenting. There's a support group for parents with autistic children. The library partners with She Supply to stock the ladies' room with free feminine hygiene products, and they have free hygiene

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“I first fell in love with libraries when I was a kid. It was just a tiny storefront down the street from my house. Once a week, we would go look at all the books. My mom would have to drag me out! I found Mildred Taylor’s books, like *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* and the *Babysitter’s Club* books and Lois Lowry’s *Number the Stars*. I wanted to know history and understand the world and space and everything. That’s why I became a librarian. Librarians want to help. That’s why I became the person I am today. It’s how I make a positive impact.”

Heather is excited about the future. “Last year, we got feedback from our patrons, staff and advisory board. We rewrote our mission statement and vision statement. We’re setting smart goals. Our facility was built in 1993, and it’s been well loved. There have been a couple of renovations, but nothing since 2020. We’re working with the city manager to find grants for new paint and shelving, updated bilingual signage and more study spaces. Our stakeholders want more functional and flexible space. We’re a diverse community, so we’re working to be an even more inclusive space. You’ll see a whole new look in the next few years. We want to do more community outreach. I’d like the library to visit more businesses, schools, nursing homes and community events. We’re asking the community what they want and need. We’re not staying in these four walls.” **NOW**

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Bunny in a Bag!

— By Angel Morris



A symbol of springtime and new life, the bunny rabbit is thought to align with the meaning of Easter and the celebration of Christ's resurrection in its own, whimsical way. If you're looking for how to partner the biblical story with bunny traditions, these paper craft carriers may be your answer.

As the perfect holder for classroom party treats or a way to distribute goodies to friends and neighbors, paper bag bunnies are simple and inexpensive. The required supplies are few, and younger children have the necessary skills to create them with minimal supervision.

What you'll need: Brown or white paper bags; pencil; scissors; Easter basket grass, crinkle paper or bag filler of your choice; twine or ribbon; Easter candy, treats or trinkets of your choice; pom-pom for bunny tail; and paste or hot glue. (You can also get more creative using crayons, markers or craft paper and a hole puncher and note cards.)

Place your paper bag flat on a table. Starting at the open side/top of the bag, sketch the two curved ears of a bunny (see photo). You can pencil in a 1-inch flat line between where the ears meet at what will be the bunny head, or you can sketch the ears in more of a V, where they come to a point at what will be the bunny head.

Carefully cut along the interior lines of your drawn ears, discarding the excess paper. Now, flatten out the creased sides of the bags so it is not folded inward on either side.

At this point, craftier kids might be interested in drawing a rabbit face on one side of the bag. This adds crayons, markers or craft paper to your supply list. The bunny face can be as simple as some lines to represent whiskers, or an entire face of eyes, nose, mouth and whiskers. (Encourage children to be as creative as they wish, but remind them you'll be adding a bunny tail and ribbon to the bag later, and it will be just as cute if left without a face.)

Now it's time to stand your bag up, opening from the top. Put Easter grass or crinkle paper in the bottom half of the bag, leaving enough room to fill as much as you wish with candy, treats or trinkets. The more grass/crinkle paper you use, the fewer treats you'll need to fill the bag, of course. (Eco-friendly idea: Fill the bottom of your Easter bunny bag with the paper from things you've been shredding all year. It's earth- and budget-conscious.)

Next, consider who the bags will be delivered to when determining what items to put inside. A few pieces of candy and a small toy are good for class parties. For friends and neighbors, you might tailor the items to their interests. Things like packets of flower seeds, earrings, lotions, votive candles, hair accessories, themed socks, art supplies or gift cards are potential paper bag stuffers. The possibilities are endless, as long as they fit in your bag without making it too heavy.

Once you have stuffed your bunny bags, it's time to apply



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the tail. Using paste or hot glue (just a dot to prevent the bag and anything inside from getting burned!) attach the pom-pom tail to the lower portion of your paper bag. Hold it on until the glue has dried.

Gently gather together the sides of your bag until clasped in the center. Secure with twine or ribbon, but before tying the bow, consider attaching a note with an Easter Bible verse, quote about spring or note of encouragement. Hole punching a note card is the simplest way to create and secure your card. Pull one side of your ribbon through the card's hole and tie your bow.

There you have it — a simple, inexpensive bunny paper bag to share the treats and trinkets that remind you of Easter, as well as an opportunity to explain to children how the bunny somewhat symbolizes the meaning behind the holiday. Delivering these to classmates, friends and neighbors is a special way to share something handmade with care while delivering the special message of the day! **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Everett Montgomery

By Adam Walker

Everett Montgomery, better known on social media as King Lion, was at Duncanville Bookstore filming content for his followers. “I have over 831K followers on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Twitch,” he informed. “I’m one of the biggest content creators when it comes to comic books. I debate comic books, correct misinformation and get people to buy from their local shops. I’m all about bringing new readers to comic books. These are great stories.

“I’ve been reading comic books my whole life, but I started collecting as an adult. I loved them when I was a kid, but I was broke! My mom would ask me, ‘Do you want that comic book, or do you want Mickey D’s?’ But now? I get to meet the writers!”



Chantal Walvoord and Pamela Simon, who met while filling out their HR paperwork, celebrate one year of working at the DeSoto Library.



Dr. Kenya Gaskin takes care of Duncanville’s spines.



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Winfred Thompkins tries out the new recording studio at the Traphene Hickman Library.



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Khawonda Crawford and Shandria Russell earn a \$10,000 Cedar Hill ISD Education Foundation (CHEF) grant that will help scholars in both English and computer science.



Ben Natal, assistant manager at Knick Knacks, welcomes customers.



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David is proud of his team's years of experience in the industry. "Together, we

have more than 100 years of experience. My dad and my uncles were all roofers. I worked summers with my dad since I was a teenager, but I got into this full time in 2012. I think we have some of the best communication in the business. We email you our estimate, so you have it to look at. We text you, to let you know when we're on our way to your house or business. We send you pictures and videos of the job in progress, so you know what's happening, and so there's evidence of the work that's being done. We have one of the best workmanship guarantees out there. Most companies guarantee their work for three to five years. We guarantee for 10 years. We have a lot of quality control and check on our crews to be sure the work is done right. When we speak to you, we aren't giving you a sales pitch. We have a conversation about your roofing issues. We don't up-sell. We make recommendations, but then it's up to you. My philosophy is to treat our customers like as if it was my grandmother's roof. We find and diagnose issues and share what we know from our experience. We give you options, and let you make the decisions."

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David looks at his business differently. "We're a small business with Christian values. I set out to always do the right thing. I have given free roofs to people in real need, like an elderly lady who had holes in her roof. She didn't have the money to fix it, so she just wanted us to tarp it. I decided to re-roof her house for free. We're a business, and we're about making money, but we're also here to help. I want to help my family, but also the community."

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Hours: By appointment

With a passion for helping others, Eaujee Francisco moved from the DFW area to Washington, D.C., in 2014 to pursue a master's degree in human resources management. "Before I went into HR, I was a retail manager. In fact, I used to be the service and training manager at the Old Navy here in Cedar Hill!" he said.

Eaujee's work in HR sparked his interest in the analysis and application of employment law. "Becoming an employment law attorney would not only allow me to offer employers greater risk-mitigating counsel but also help me be a stronger advocate on behalf of employees," Eaujee shared.

In 2021, Eaujee earned his Juris Doctor, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Baltimore School of Law. He interned and clerked for two judges on the Circuit Court of Maryland for Baltimore City before becoming an associate attorney practicing employment and family law at two Baltimore-area firms. "I knew that I would eventually return to Cedar Hill to open an employment law practice because there just were not any employment practices in southern Dallas County. Moreover, I wanted to be close to my parents in Cedar Hill," he said.

The Law Office of Eaujee Francisco, PLLC, was founded upon Eaujee's return to the Best Southwest in 2023. "I grew up in New Orleans, but my family has been in Cedar Hill since Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Katrina hit New Orleans the first weekend of my junior year of high school," he noted.

That experience made Eaujee even more compassionate. "Obviously, events impacting your domestic life or your work life can be most disruptive. Being a 'life lawyer' means I'm there for people during what might be catastrophic times," he explained.

Eaujee had both life and work experience under his belt when he founded his own law firm. "My experience as a former HR manager and employer defense attorney helps. It allows me to view a client's matter from employers' perspectives, which makes resolving matters much more efficient."

"Being a 'life lawyer' means I'm there for people during what might be catastrophic times."

The firm regularly represents clients against major employers, such as tech companies, hospitals, insurance providers and school districts. Eaujee said his firm's mission is "to provide high-quality family and employment legal counsel to individuals and small businesses through accessibility and responsiveness, thorough legal and factual analysis, punctuality and efficient and transparent billing."

Eaujee is licensed to practice law in Texas, Maryland and the District of Columbia, but most of his clients are in DFW. Eaujee explained, "I'm selective with my clientele because I like to keep a small caseload in order to ensure an intimate, boutique experience for all my clients. They appreciate that. From start to finish, I keep them informed. The posture of a case is dynamic, so I'm constantly offering candid advice grounded in current case law, statutes and administrative regulations."

Eaujee said he is proud to be the only law firm in southwestern Dallas County (Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville and Lancaster) focused solely on family and employment law. "Most folks in our community prioritize God first, family second, and their professional lives third," he listed. "I'm not a member of the clergy, but I can definitely help you with the other two." **NOW**



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Chicken Pot Pie

CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH ARMANDO MARTINEZ

— By Adam Walker



Armando Martinez loves to cook the Sonoran-style of Mexican food that was popular where he grew up in Tucson. “I remember around 8 years old cooking in the kitchen with my dad, but I really didn’t find my love for cooking until I met my wife,” he said. “She really made it fun to cook. My Mexican background does impact the way I cook. I find it rewarding when I put a dish together and have the table silently eating, when no one is talking and everyone is enjoying the food. Mexican food is colorful, rich and comforting. It’s a fan favorite. Everyone loves Mexican food.”

He describes himself as being a “hurricane in the kitchen” until his wife taught him about working efficiently in the kitchen, and not all of his kitchen adventures went well. He’s a firefighter/paramedic for the Duncanville Fire Department. Everyone knows firefighters like to eat. “I once made crunchy rice for seven hungry firefighters. They will never let me live it down!” **NOW**

Spicy Salsa Verde

- 8-10 tomatillos, chopped**
- 1 white onion, chopped**
- 6 jalapeños, chopped**
- 3 serranos, chopped**
- 2 habaneros, chopped**
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped**
- 3/4 cup olive oil**
- 1 bunch cilantro**
- 4 limes**
- Salt, to taste**
- Pepper, to taste**
- 1 Tbsp. cumin**

- 1.** Add the chopped tomatillos, onions, jalapeños, serranos, habaneros and garlic to a saucepan with the olive oil; sauté until softened, about 5-7 minutes.
- 2.** In a blender, add the cilantro. Squeeze in the lime juice; blend. Add the cooked vegetables and the spices; blend to the desired consistency. Taste the salsa; adjust salt and pepper as needed.

Spanish Rice

- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil**
- 1 cup uncooked long grain white rice**
- 2 Tbsp. Knorr Tomato Bouillon**
- 2 cups hot water**
- 1 tsp. garlic powder**
- 1 tsp. onion powder**
- 1 tsp. black pepper**

- 1.** Heat a large skillet on medium-high heat. Add the oil and rice; toast until the rice is golden in color.
- 2.** Add the tomato bouillon to the hot water; stir until it is mostly dissolved. Carefully add the liquid to the rice, to avoid burning yourself with the steam.
- 3.** Add the spices; reduce the heat to simmer. Cover with a lid; cook, without stirring, until the water is gone and the rice is fluffy, about 15-20 minutes.

Carne Asada Tacos

- 2 lbs. skirt steak**
- 1 white onion (divided use)**
- 2 cloves garlic**
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil**
- Salt, to taste**
- Black pepper, to taste**
- 1 Tbsp. cumin**
- 2 tsp. chili powder**
- 1 bunch cilantro**
- 4 limes**
- Flour tortillas**

- 1.** Place the skirt steak on a cutting board; cover it with a piece of parchment paper. Pound the steak with a meat mallet to an even thickness. Cut the steak into bite-size pieces, about 1/4-inch in size.

2. Halve the onion. Set one half of it aside. Dice the other half; mince the garlic.
3. In a medium to hot pan, add the oil, steak, diced onion and garlic. Cook 3-4 minutes; add the salt, pepper, cumin and chili powder. Mix well. Cook until the meat is evenly done.
4. Chop the cilantro. Cut the remaining onion into a small dice. Quarter the limes. Set these aside as toppings for the tacos.
5. In another pan, warm the tortillas.
6. To assemble the tacos, add some of the meat to a tortilla. Add the toppings you want.


Chicken Pot Pie


- 2 cups rotisserie chicken, shredded
- 1 12-oz. bag frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 10.5-oz. cans Campbell's Cream of Chicken Soup
- 2 deep-dish piecrusts

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F
2. In a mixing bowl, add the chicken, frozen vegetables and both cans of soup; mix well.
3. In one of the frozen piecrusts, add the contents of the mixing bowl, spreading it evenly in the crust.
4. Place the second frozen piecrust upside down, on top of the crust containing the filling. Carefully remove the aluminum pan from the second piecrust to avoid tearing it or breaking it. Press down around the edges of the two crusts to create a good seal between the crusts. With a fork, poke some ventilation holes in the upper crust.
5. Bake for 45-60 minutes, until you have a golden crust, and the filling is cooked thoroughly.
6. Remove the pot pie from the oven; let it set and cool down for a few minutes before serving.

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

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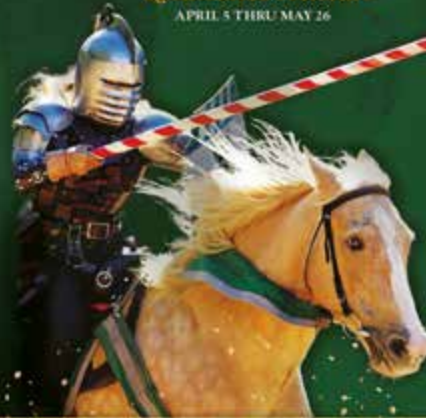
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4/2 and 4/9

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4/11

Adult Reces:

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4/12

Easter Egg-stravaganza:

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DJ, bounce houses and face painting. Free. 8:00-11:00 a.m., Zeiger Park, 405 Eagle Dr., DeSoto.

Spring Health and Wellness Event:

3K walk, health fair and line dancing. Free. 7:00 a.m.-noon, Beckley Saner Recreation Center, 114 W. Hobson Ave., Dallas.

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4/19

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Community Science Workshop:

Collect data for science with your phone. Free. 11:00 a.m.-noon, Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center, 1206 W. FM 1382, Cedar Hill.

4/26

Egg-stravaganza:

Learn how chicks survive inside and much more. Free. 11:00 a.m.-noon, Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center, 1206 W. FM 1382, Cedar Hill.

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Proctor has focused on the city's economy, reputation and infrastructure to create solid conditions for new businesses, shopping, restaurants and other amenities

Pol. Ad Paid for by Rachel Proctor Campaign

**RE-ELECT
RACHEL L.
PROCTOR
FOR
DESOTO, TX
MAYOR**

#1 ON THE BALLOT

SCAN THE QR CODE TO
LEARN MORE
ABOUT OUR PROGRESS OR VISIT:
RachelForDeSoto.com/Progress



Vote Early

April 22nd - April 29th, 2025

**Election Day is
May 03rd, 2025**

Beautiful Your Countertops!
Showers • Bathtubs • Countertops

Before

After

**Want To Save \$1000s?
Don't Replace! 😊
Repair & Refinish**

- **FREE ESTIMATES** •
By Appointment Only
2627 S. Cooper St. Ste. E12
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**We Repair & Refinish Countertops
Tile Showers & Walls • Fiberglass Tubs & Showers**

April Special

10% OFF


Any Refinishing Job
\$695 or more if booked in April

817-633-9100

*We Repair & Refinish
Most Jobs in 2 Days
or Less!*

Offer Expires 4/30/25

Angie's list f www.ftworthrefinishing.com



VOTE

Dinah
MARKS
for
MAYOR OF DESOTO

Make Your Mark
The Choice for
Change

“True progress happens when leaders lead with integrity, not hidden agendas. My commitment to DeSoto is simple: Transparency. Integrity. Accountability.”

Early Voting April 22nd - April 29th
Election Day May 3rd

Paid for by the Dinah Marks for Mayor of DeSoto Campaign, Sheila Howard Treasurer



SouthwestNOW Scavenger Hunt



Find 5 hidden Carrots
in 5 different ads in this issue (not counting the one above).
Email the page numbers and specific ads where they are found, plus your phone number, by April 15th. To ensure your Scavenger Hunt answers go in the drawing, you must use the **Scavenger Hunt Email** scavenger.swn@nowmagazines.com
One entry per person.



\$50 Cash Prize
Courtesy of:
NOW Magazines
scavenger.swn@nowmagazines.com

Winner must pick up prize within 30 days of drawing.

Hats were found on pages 4, 10, 21, 24 and 27.

March winner is:
Michael Osborne - \$50
Cash from NOW Magazines

scavenger.swn@nowmagazines.com



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DeSoto, TX 75115

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- WEIGHT LOSS
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- IV HYDRATION
- VITAMIN SHOTS
- FACIAL
- CHEMICAL PEELS

FREE CONSULTATION




TAMARA WASHINGTON,
DNP, APRN, FNP-C



BLOOMFEST

MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL



FRIDAY  MAY 2  4-10PM

ARMSTRONG PARK, DUNCANVILLE, TX

FEATURING EMERALD CITY BAND

FOOD TRUCKS,
ART MARKET,
MUSIC,
& FUN



SCAN TO APPLY
TO BE A VENDOR
OR ENTER IN
THE SCULPTURE
CONTEST

Easter Weekend

With Hill City Church

Egg Hunt
Maze

Food
Trucks

Bounce
Houses

Easter FUNday!

Saturday April 19th

9am-12pm

Fast Pass!



Easter Sunday Services!

Sunday April 20th

9am | 10:30am | 12pm

 hillcity.us

1375 New Clark rd | Cedar Hill, TX 75104