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#### ON THE COVER



One Weatherford woman makes a difference across the globe.

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SCAN ME







### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Happy spring, WeatherfordNOW readers!

One of my most favorite springtime activities is tending to our backyard garden. My husband is the primary garden caretaker. He tills the dirt, plants the vegetables and clears the weeds. My job? Picking the vegetables and preparing the meals. When we have an overabundance of tomatoes, I use them and some of our homegrown jalapeños to make and can salsa. Delicious! This year, we are planning our annual backyard garden, which will also include zucchini squash, bell peppers, Brussels sprouts, lettuce and more fresh veggies and herbs. We absolutely love incorporating these into our meals at home and gifting the excess to friends.

An improved diet from fresh produce is not the only advantage to gardening. Spending time in nature is a benefit for physical and mental health. According to the Mayo Clinic, the task of getting your hands dirty while gardening is a great source of exercise and stress relief. An article on MayoClinicHealthSystem.org states, "People tend to breathe deeper when outside. This helps to clear out the lungs, improves digestion, improves immune response and increases oxygen levels in the blood." If you have the time and resources, a garden might be a fun addition to your backyard this spring.

If gardening is not at the top of your to-do list, the warmer temperatures will provide an abundance of other fun spring activities. Taking an afternoon walk through the neighborhood, fishing at Lake Weatherford or attending one of the fun outdoor events this month are just a few ideas. Whatever activities your springtime holds, I wish you joy, good health and adventure.

Take care!





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Finding one's purpose is a journey most people strive to complete. Some may never discover their purpose, while others know early on their calling on this planet. For Weatherford resident, Amy Brewer, her dreams of becoming a missionary became reality nearly a decade ago.

Amy graduated from Aledo High School in 2004 with aspirations of pursuing a nursing degree to help women. "My goal has always been to work in a clinic in Africa and make that my life's mission. For me, it was not if I was going to do it, but when." After graduating from Hardin-Simmons University in 2009, she gained experience as a travel nurse in clinics across the U.S. This allowed her the funding and time off to volunteer in women's clinics in Africa.

Early in her missionary work, Amy aided in the opening of a midwifery clinic in Mozambique. "The women who were coming into the clinic, most of their problems could be solved if they had a dignified job. It was nutrition problems, very basic health needs," Amy shared. She began to pray for guidance on how she could provide employment to women in Africa.

While on safari in Uganda in 2016, Amy's prayers were answered. She met a woman named Evelyn Achieng at her hotel. Evelyn employed single mothers and widows, who wove baskets and bracelets to sell. "When we met each other, it was an instant connection. She had been praying for someone like me, and I had been praying for someone like her. From that night, we became business partners," Amy shared. Amy offered to begin selling Evelyn's items in the United States, and the nonprofit Elizabeth's Voice was founded.

As co-founders, Evelyn manages the women in Africa, while Amy heads the nonprofit from a warehouse in Weatherford. "We have the exact same hearts for the women. We want to see their kids go to school. We want to see them have a dignified job," Amy shared. "She knows as a single mom herself how hard it is to raise the children."

There is no public school in Uganda, so parents must pay for each child to attend school. The average salary in Uganda is a mere \$1.25 a day, but it costs around \$500 to send one child to school for the year. Elizabeth's Voice employs more than 50 women, primarily single and widowed mothers. The funds raised by their woven merchandise and donations through Elizabeth's Voice's Bright Futures Fund provide monetary assistance to send employees' children to school. Each year, Elizabeth's Voice sends more than 100 students to school. In the nonprofit's eight years, they have had two students graduate from university and more than a dozen graduate from trade school.



"Some of the women have said they never dreamed their kids would have the opportunity to go to school or university. Just letting them know that cycle of generational poverty is going to break is everything to them," Amy shared. Volunteers teach the children English, and while at work, the women receive breakfast and lunch, which is beneficial for their nutrition. Many of the women have suffered trauma, and the repetitive practice of weaving helps regulate their nervous systems.

Elizabeth's Voice recently built a compound for survivors of domestic violence or children who may be forced into marriage. The entire concept at Elizabeth's Voice is women helping women, which Amy credits to Elizabeth, Mary's cousin, in the Bible. "She always believed Mary, and I feel like we as women need to believe and support each other."

The women who work at Elizabeth's Voice serve vulnerable women in the community by delivering food packages







each Saturday. "It was their idea. They said even if they don't get as much food during the week, they are OK with it because their neighbors are suffering. That is such a big deal to them to give back."

It is admirable what Elizabeth's Voice does for the women and children of Uganda, as well as how these women give back to their own neighborhoods. However, running this successful operation is not always easy. "A few years ago in Uganda, I almost died twice. I got malaria really bad, and I passed out and hit my head," Amy shared. A few months later, she was shocked by an electrified shower head and fell again. "I got severe PTSD. I had a migraine every day for 18 months before they figured out what was going on. So, it's been a lot. Plus, the constant need to raise money."

The African women took care of Amy when she was sick. "They really do love me. What we're doing for them is important, but they value so much the family togetherness."

Amy spent her 30s building Elizabeth's Voice, and although there have been hardships, she has stayed true to her

purpose. "It's been a big sacrifice, but it's all been worth it. I love these ladies like my sisters," she said. "When I met Evelyn, I knew that is what God wanted me to do. There was no doubt in my mind. I would never have made it this far if it wasn't my true calling because it would have been so easy to quit so many times."

The 501(c)(3) benefits from the sales of merchandise and donations. Evelyn's daughter was their first university graduate, and each year, Elizabeth's Voice increases the number of children they send to school. Amy's long-term goals for the nonprofit are for it to be more selfsustaining with the sale of merchandise to cover all school-related expenses and to bring hired help on board.

"When God gives you a calling to a specific group of people, you have to do it. There is no choice but to keep going and keep serving," Amy said. "I'm actually doing something that's helping the world. It all matters." NOW

Editor's Note: For details on Elizabeth's Voice, visit elizabethsvoice.org.





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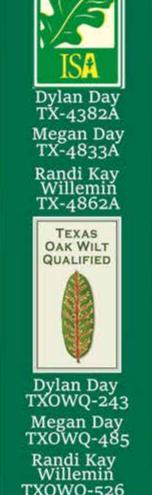


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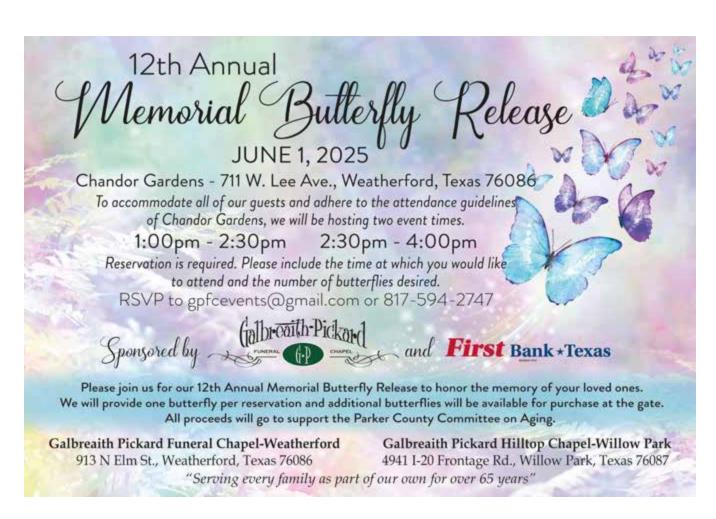
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# Around Town









Ashli Davenport and sons, Brooks, Bear and Briggs, celebrate opening day at Aledo Athletics Inc.



The Aledo High School Calculus team takes first place in the 23rd annual Coyote Area Math Championship at Weatherford College.

desperately looking for homes." The shelter offers the Trap-Neuter-Return program, which allows residents to bring in feral cats to have them spayed or neutered and vaccinated before being returned to their original location. "If they can't be adopted into a home, I want the cats to be out there and have a good life." For more information on how to adopt a pet or barn cat, visit the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter.

As a volunteer with the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter, Gaby Carson is focusing her efforts on cat adoptions. She assists with finding the community's feral cats, which help manage the rodent population, a second chance through the Barn Cat Program. "Unfortunately, the requests for those cats have really dried up in the last couple of months," Gaby shared. "They are



Aledo, Brock, Peaster and Weatherford teachers are among the 49 educators from across the region honored at the Jack Harvey Academy of Exemplary Teachers celebration at Weatherford College.



Legacy Land & Title is honored as Business of the Year (11-20 Employees) at the 2025 Parker County Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.



Aledo High School Boys Varsity Basketball players celebrate after winning a district championship.



Floral students in Ms. Otwell's class at Brock High School create beautiful arrangements.

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**BusinessNOW** 

# **Options** for Senior America

— By Amber D. Browne

**Options for Senior America** 2613 E. U.S. Hwy. 377, Ste. 101 Granbury, TX 76049 (682) 936-2596 facebook.com/OptionsforSeniorAmericaGranbury/ instagram.com/optionsforsenioramerica

Hours: Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. On call 24/7

As the age number of the next birthday continues to increase, so may the need for an increased level of care. Options for Senior America in Granbury focuses on delivering premium in-home care to clients. With two assistance levels available, Options for Senior America can provide customized care to area residents in need of a helping hand.

Care is provided to seniors living at home or at an independent living or assisted living facility. The first level of assistance might include light housekeeping, laundry, medication reminders and meal planning. Care for level two is more involved and includes personal care by a certified nursing assistant. "We will help somebody who is wheelchair bound or bed bound, or if they need help taking a shower or using the bathroom. Things like that," said Michael Routen, president and owner of Options for Senior America in Granbury.

Michael and his wife and company vice president, Kellie Routen, opened the Granbury location for Options for Senior America in June of 2024. They had witnessed the life transitions of their parents and grandparents and wanted to provide the same type of care for others that their family members had received. With experience in customer service and building successful organizations with top employees,

Michael decided to take on the challenge of finding a business to give back to the community. After a two-year search, they discovered Options for Senior America. "When we found Options, it matched up 100 percent to what we were looking for," Michael shared. Two brothers who could not find care for their mother 35 years ago left their jobs and opened Options for Senior America, which is based in Maryland. "We had the advantage to be tied to them, and their background and experience have helped us out tremendously."

The Granbury office serves Parker, Tarrant, Hood, Erath and Somerville counties, and individual care plans are tailored to meet the financial and personal needs of clients. Options for Senior America accepts cash pay and long-term care insurance.

One unique service offered by Options for Senior America is flexible scheduling. "If someone needs us one hour a day or five hours a day, we can work with whatever schedule they provide for us. It helps them to only utilize what they need, and it helps reduce the cost in some cases." Michael said.

Temporary care during surgery recovery, hourly care and full-time live-in help are options. Oftentimes, live-in care is necessary for clients with dementia or Alzheimer's. "It takes a lot of pressure off the family, so they don't have to worry about taking care of mom or dad. They can focus on spending quality time with mom and dad."

After an initial evaluation with a potential client to determine need and level of care, Michael will create a customized care plan to review. Once the agreement is signed, the client can interview the potential caregiver before moving forward. "We've hired very qualified and compassionate caregivers who want to do this and want to provide the very best possible service," Michael said.

Options for Senior America care employees undergo an extensive vetting process that includes references and background checks. "We have so many people who I am proud to have working for us. They are highly qualified with years of experience in the field. A lot of them came from the medical industry," Michael said. "They have the compassion and the care we want." NOW





# THE LOCAL TABLE

One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.

- Virginia Woolf













# CookingNOW

# IN THE KITCHEN WITH EMILY PROWELL

— By Amber D. Browne



Local Realtor Emily Prowell and her husband, David, have been inspired by their adult children to incorporate more healthful ingredients into their diets. Daughter, Sarah Davis, is a registered dietician, and son, Ben Prowell, has an exercise science degree. "Our grown children have both stressed the importance of adding protein to our diets, as protein helps build muscle," Emily shared. "They have encouraged us to eat healthier and watch the ingredients in processed foods."

They have recently been creating dishes that feature cottage cheese. "These easy recipes help with the need for more protein in most all of our diets and less unhealthy carbs."

Emily also enjoys cooking with her grandchildren, who share recipes they like to make. She said, "It is a fun time together being in the kitchen." NOW

# Extra Creamy High-Protein Mac and Cheese

6 oz. Barilla protein pasta or pasta of choice Salt, to taste

1/2 cup whipped whole-milk cottage cheese 2-4 oz. sharp cheddar cheese, freshly grated

- 1. Add the pasta to a pot or skillet on medium heat; add just enough water to cover the pasta. Add a pinch of salt; bring to a boil. Stir occasionally until the pasta is almost al dente. Do not drain the pasta.
- **2.** Add the cottage cheese and sharp cheddar to the pasta. Stir until melted and creamy.

#### **Cottage Cheese Flatbread**

1 cup cottage cheese 2 eggs 1/4 tsp. garlic powder 1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning Nonstick cooking spray, to taste

- **1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Add the cottage cheese, eggs, garlic powder and Italian seasoning to a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth.
- **2.** Line a sheet pan with parchment paper; spritz it with nonstick cooking spray. Pour the cottage cheese batter onto the sheet pan; smooth it into an even layer.
- **3.** Bake at 350 F for about 30 minutes, or until it is cooked in the center. It will be golden brown on the edges. Remove the flatbread from the oven; cool completely before serving.

#### Cottage Cheese Egg Spinach Bake

2 cups cottage cheese
8 eggs
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
Garlic powder, to taste
2 cups spinach, chopped
1-2 Roma tomatoes, diced
1/2 onion, diced
4 oz. skim marble cheese, grated
Everything Bagel Seasoning, to taste

- **I.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, mix together the cottage cheese, eggs and the next 6 ingredients.
- **2.** Pour the mixture into a greased baking dish. Top with the grated cheese and Everything Bagel Seasoning. Bake at 350 F until it is cooked through.

# Low-Carb Chocolate Cottage Cheese Mousse

I cup cottage cheese

2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder

2-3 tsp. Stevia, honey or sweetener of choice

1/4 cup chocolate protein powder

Water, to taste Whipped cream (optional) Berries (optional) Shaved chocolate (optional)

- **1.** Add the cottage cheese and the next 3 ingredients to a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth. Add a small amount of water to help the cottage cheese turn into a smoother texture.
- **2.** Top with whipped cream, berries or shaved chocolate, if desired. Chill for 30 minutes or serve immediately.

# The Best Cottage Cheese Brownies

I cup cottage cheese

1/3 cup honey

2 eggs

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1/2 cup cocoa powder

1/2 cup whole wheat flour or white flour

- **I.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line a baking pan with parchment paper.
- 2. In a bowl, mix together the cottage cheese, honey, eggs and vanilla extract. Add the cocoa powder and flour; mix well until combined.
- **3.** Pour the batter into the parchment paper-lined pan; bake at 350 F for 20-25 minutes or until cooked through.

#### Easy Protein Banana Pudding

I cup cottage cheese 2 ripe bananas (divided use) I-2 Tbsp. maple syrup I/2 tsp. vanilla extract Milk (optional) Graham crackers, to taste

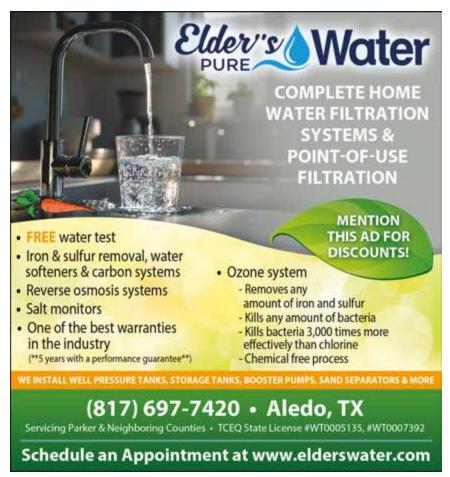
- **I.** Add the cottage cheese, one banana, maple syrup and vanilla extract to a blender. Blend until completely smooth. If the cottage cheese is thick, add a splash of milk; blend until smooth.
- **2.** Spoon 1/4 of the pudding mixture into a jar or container with a lid. Repeat this step in a second jar.
- **3.** Slice the remaining banana and crush the graham crackers. Add the banana slices to each container; add the crushed graham crackers on top. Divide the remaining pudding mixture between each jar; top with more banana slices and graham cracker crumbs.
- 4. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or more. Enjoy!

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# **Crossword Puzzle**

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33 Fleet

34 Grating

35 Mosque

leaders

- 1 "Just the facts. 24 20 Down's temperature
- 5 Window 25 Fish eggs section 26 Alpha wave
- 9 1970s and 80s chart, for short music style 27 It's not ---.
- 10 Charlie ---. according to fictional Tom Jones Honolulu 'tec
- 11 Single things

Acros

- 12 Persian Gulf port
- 14 Deals in unusual disclaimers
- 16 "Cursed" team. informally
- 17 Contend
- 18 Entirely
- 19 Item for future historians

- 1 Battlefield booby trap
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- 9 Turkey Wilcox 13 Wheel shaft 37 Brings home
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- 30 Many Salt Lakers
- 32 "--- Abner" (Comic strip)

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# Sudoku Puzzle

15 Get familiar

19 Ballpark level

Easy Medium

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#### Tai Chi for Arthritis:

loin this free class each Wednesday and Friday. 10:00-11:00 a.m., Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St. Register at (817) 598-6168.

#### 4/3

#### It's All About the Music:

Featuring Shelley Carrol. 7:00-9:00 p.m., Emerging Technologies and Workforce Building, Weatherford College, 225 College Park Dr. For more information, contact Duane Durrett at ddurrett@wc.edu.

#### 4/11

#### The Hoppin' COHO-**Annual Easter Egg Hunt:**

Food trucks, giveaways, a petting zoo and photos with the Easter Bunny. Hunt times vary by age. 5:30-7:30 p.m., Gene L. Voyles Park, 210 Hudson Oaks Dr., Hudson Oaks. hudsonoaks.com/home.

#### **April Pool's Day Parker** County:

Kick off swim season with fun and food trucks. 6:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 317 Santa Fe Dr. theswimlessonpeople.com.

#### 4/11-4/12

#### The 39 Steps:

A film noir/mystery comedy. Free. 7:00 p.m., Weatherford College, Alkek Fine Arts Center,

225 College Park Dr. (817) 598-8922, jbrownlee@wc.edu.

#### 4/12

#### Master Gardener Plant Sale:

Purchase perennials, roses, succulents, houseplants and more. 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Heritage Park Animal Pavilion. 317 Santa Fe Dr. (214) 802-7780 or pcmg-texas.org.

#### **Keep Weatherford Beautiful Trash Off:**

Teams of 10 collect trash. Event offers free lunch and awards to volunteers. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Heritage Park Food Park, 317 Santa Fe Dr. Register at jpond@weatherfordtx.gov.

#### 4/15

#### **Taste of Parker County:**

Enjoy tastings from local businesses to benefit Weatherford College Foundation. Tickets \$40 through 4/14; \$45 on **4/15.** 4:30-7:30 p.m., Heritage Park, 317 Santa Fe Dr. wc.edu/taste or (817) 598-8924.

#### 4/19

#### **Downtown Hop Around:**

Kids can hop from business to business for free candy and enjoy crafts, food trucks, bounce houses and pictures with the Easter Bunny, Noon-3:00 p.m., Downtown Weatherford, d-winc, org/downtown-hop-around.

#### 4/26

#### 760 FEST Music & Arts Festival:

A family-friendly festival featuring live music, art vendors and food trucks, presented by the city of Willow Park. 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m., The District at Willow Park. 460 Shops Blvd., Willow Park. thedistrictatwillowpark.com/events.

#### 4/29

#### Grilling 101:

Learn grilling and enjoy a grilled menu. Cost \$30. 6:00 p.m., Parker County Extension Office. 604 N. Main St., Ste. 200. Register at (817) 598-6168.

#### Weekends Prior to First Mondays

#### Weatherford First Monday **Trade Days:**

Event is held Friday-Sunday prior to the first Monday of the month. Browse vendors offering unique gifts, antiques, pet supplies, tools and more, plus enjoy great festival food. 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., First Monday Trade Days Grounds, 317 Santa Fe Dr. experienceweatherford.com.

#### Tuesdays and **Thursdays**

#### Storytime at the Library:

Toddlers enjoy books and activities on Tuesdays and preschoolers on Thursdays.

10:30 a.m., Weatherford Public Library, 1014 Charles St. weatherfordtx.gov/142/library.

#### Second **Thursdays**

#### Gardeners' Club of Parker **County Monthly Meeting:**

Each meeting includes a speaker with information relative to gardening in Parker County. Refreshments: 9:30 a.m.; meeting: 10:00 a.m., St. Francis Church, 117 Ranch House Rd., Willow Park. (817) 919-6280.

#### Third Thursdays

#### Quilter's Guild of **Parker County:**

Come early to socialize. Socialize: 6:15 p.m.; meeting begins: 6:45 p.m., Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church, 200 S. Lakeshore Drive, Hudson Oaks. quiltersguildofparkercounty.org.

#### Second Fridays

#### Parker County Women's and Newcomers' Club:

Social hour: 9:30 a.m.; meeting: 10:30 a.m.; lunch: noon, Weatherford College **Emerging Technologies and** Workforce Solutions Building, 225 College Park Dr. pcwnc.org/monthly-meeting.

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





















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\*\* Figures based on a survey of vet clinics in Denton County.

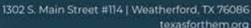




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- ERIK SILVEY





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