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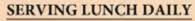
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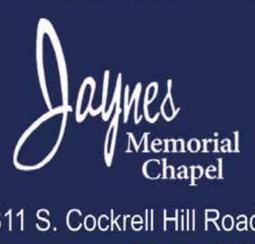






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8 SADDLE YOUR HORSES

Locals find community based on a common interest with the Ovilla Trailriders.

14 AROUND TOWNNOW

16 BUSINESSNOW TKO Stain Solutions

20 COOKINGNOW

Robin Cotton and
Sierra Killpack



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Editors/Proofreaders, Lisa Bell . Rachel Rich . Virginia Riddle

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla | Artists, Kristin Bato Martha Macias . Anthony Sarmienta . Jennifer Spence

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Chris McCalla Photographer, Shane Kirkpatrick

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives, Melody Schmidt . Cherise Burnett Dustin Dauenhauer . Bryan Frye . Kelsea Locke . Linda Moffett Lori O'Connell . William Perron . Linda Roberson

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ON THE COVER

Leslie Everett's lifelong love of horses fueled her interest in living in Ovilla.

Photo byShane Kirkpatrick.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Happy medium is rare ...

There's an unassuming school off a busy Red Oak road that's had a big impact on our family. I worked there for three years, handling communications and advising the yearbook staff. For five years, it's where my only child attended classes. And every morning of that time, my son and I sat out front and said a prayer over students and staff. We gave thanks for the opportunity to be there and asked for the perfect wisdom to be shared and received. We requested health and safety for those within its walls. Most importantly, we prayed for everyone to be kind to each other ... and seek out those who may need extra kindness.

Unlike me, my son wasn't big on school participation. He didn't put much pressure on himself to make the highest grades, although his were good, and he didn't go out for extracurriculars, even though I know from living with him he has some untapped talent. We had a lot of conversations about getting out of one's comfort zone, but ultimately the decision was left to him.

Perhaps he will regret not having pushed himself to do more, while I regret having tried to do too much. Somewhere between laissez-faire and overextension is a happy medium that most of us search for all our lives. As my son and the rest of the Class of 2022 graduate, my hope for them is finding that space ... where life is neither too little nor too much — where opportunities abound and wisdom is found. A place where they are healthy and safe and, most importantly, where people actively pursue being kind to one another.

To life well done!



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According to the Mayo Clinic, the many diseases and conditions that can destroy the nerves in your extremities and limbs include:

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- √ Vitamin deficiencies
- Liver disease
- √ Underactive thyroid
- ✓ Bone marrow disorders
- ✓ Certain prescription medications
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- Repetitive motions such as typing
- √ Falls, sports injuries, and other trauma

- √ Chemotherapy
- √ Tumors
- √ Infections
- √ Kidney disease

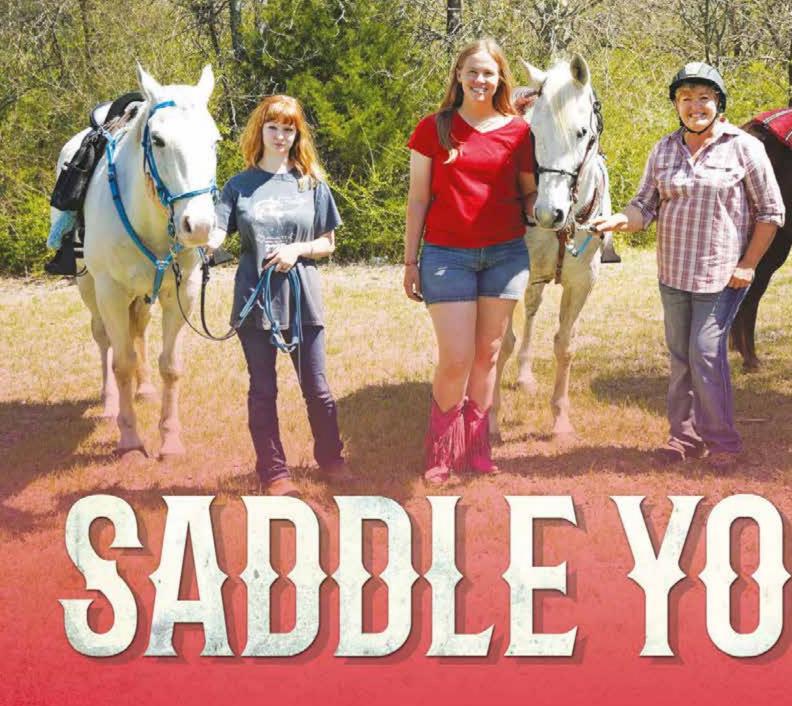
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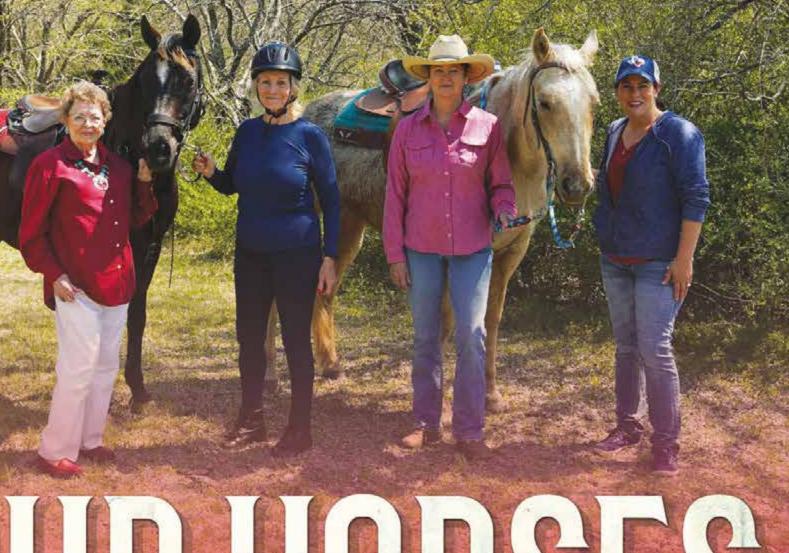


Winston Churchill once stated, "No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle." No one embodies this simple observation better than Leslie Everett, who has developed a lifelong passion for horses. "I began riding around 6 years old at my grandparents' and fell in love with horses and riding," she recalled.

It's not uncommon for children to love horses and the idea of riding them, but Leslie had an added advantage. She explained, "I was fortunate enough at a young age to have access to riding. I just want to find ways for others to pursue their love of riding as well."

It seems Leslie is making good on her commitment as she started a riding group dedicated to those who want to connect with others with the same passion. In September of 2019, she started a Facebook group called, The Ovilla Cowgirls, but due to the success of the group, she quickly changed the name to The Ovilla Trailriders to make the group open to anyone, male or female, who might be interested.

In the first year, they saw an interest in the group grow from just a few riders to having more than 50 people involved. "In the beginning I just wanted a way for people with a common love of riding to be able to connect with one another. It just grew from there," Leslie relayed.



UR HORSES

By Derek Jones







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Amber Parker, one of Leslie's friends who helped get the group started, expressed the importance of such a group. "I bought a house in Ovilla so I could own a horse, and I would ride around the neighborhood. That's when I met Leslie. We both had a love of horses and began riding together. It's no fun to ride alone."

This idea of trail riding as part of a community fueled Leslie to start the trail riders' group. Judging by the number of members on the Facebook page and showing up for trail rides, her vision of a trail riding community is coming to fruition. "Now we have groups meeting at various times in various locations. Those who are part of the Facebook page can simply look where others are riding and join in," Leslie explained.

At any given time, there are trail rides taking place in areas like Lake Bardwell, Lions Park in Waxahachie and Bear Creek Nature Park in Lancaster. Amber added, "It really is amazing how many local places there are to ride, which is one of the things that makes being a part of this group so fun."

Leslie said that riding horses on a trail is alluring and encouraged people to give it a try. "There is nothing like riding a horse out in nature. You can breathe the fresh air and just enjoy your environment."

Leslie's daughter, Carling, who also loves horses and is part of the trail riding group, chimed in, "My mom would go crazy if she could not ride her horse. It is a part of who she is."

This infectious energy contributes to why The Ovilla Trailriders has continually added new riders. The group is open to anyone with a love of horses who wants to learn more about riding safely and caring for the animals. "Our oldest member is almost 90 years old, and she is loving being back on the





horse," Leslie said. "Due to her age, she hadn't been able to ride for a while, but now she can. All she needed was someone to help and encourage her."

Old age is not an obstacle for this group, but neither is being young. "We have a member who is 18 and all ages in-between," Carling noted.

The group consists of men and women of all ages and different backgrounds. "We are now seeing more couples who want to be a part of the group, so they can ride together. What connects us is our love of horses and a desire to meet others with the same passion," Leslie said.

One of the best ways to connect with the group is through one of the group's meet and greet events. "The meet and greet has been very effective as a first step to see if the group is right for you," Leslie promised. These opportunities are usually held once a month at different local restaurants, with the dates and locations listed on the group's Facebook page. "This is a low-key event where we do some planning, let people ask questions and allow people who think they are interested in the group to get to know some of our members."

"It is always a good time for everyone who attends," Amber added.

Leslie reiterated her desire to facilitate folks' understanding of and passion for horses. "If there is a question I can't answer, I can find someone who can. That is the magic of being part of a community."

Those interested in learning more can visit The Ovilla Trailriders Facebook page, where photos depict the group's various activities. "If you see a group of smiling people riding horses in Ellis County, chances are they are part of the group," Leslie admitted. "Wave hello or stop and visit with us. You may find yourself on a horse in the near future if you do." NOW



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Around Town



First United Methodist Church-Red Oak representatives donate toiletry bags for distribution to seniors through North Ellis County Outreach.

Zoomed In: Jade Flores

By Angel Morris

Red Oak native Jade Flores (with fellow contestant Noah Thompson, left) earned a golden ticket to the Hollywood Week competition of TV's American Idol, Season 20. Her first on-stage showing was "How Great Thou Art" during genre performances, and Jade received a standing ovation from celebrity judges Lionel Richie, Katy Perry and Luke Bryan. "They yelled and cheered as Katy Perry blew kisses! It was the most epic performance of my life," Jade noted on social media.

Popular on the local performing circuit, Jade has roots in classic country and calls her sound "a fusion of American, blues and vintage rock." In 2017 and this year, Jade made it through two Hollywood rounds before being eliminated. "I gave it my all, and I really couldn't ask for more from myself," she said. "I sure hope that y'all are proud of me, too."



Regions Bank Representative Oscar Davis presents Life School Red Oak's chief development officer, Eddie Davis, with a \$2,500 check and a large container of school supplies to benefit students.



The city of Red Oak Administration, Human Resources and Tourism employees show off treats from Employee Appreciation Day.

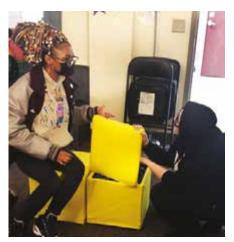


Red Oak Hawk Theatre earns first place in UIL 5A, District 14 One-Act Play.

NOW



Mason Cheek, a member of ROMS Honors Percussion Ensemble, practices in his garage.

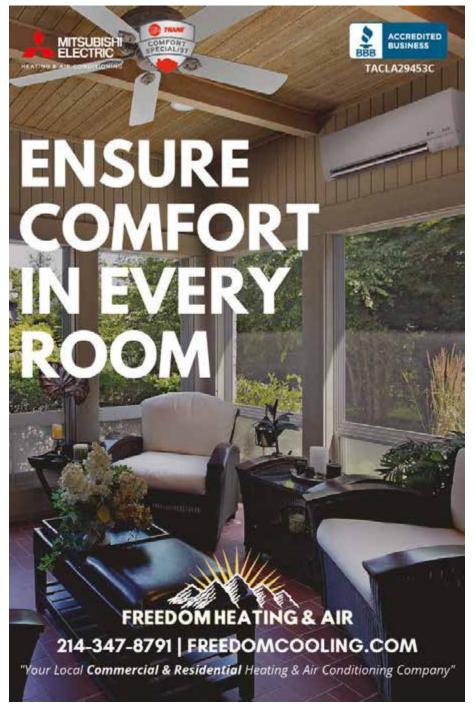


Students Amaya Drapers and Zoe Shaw put together furniture donated by IKEA Grand Prairie for the on-campus offices of the Mentors Care program.



Laura Voltman (City Planning and Development) and Michael Davenport (Parks and Recreation) talk during the Glenn Heights Community Cleanup event.







BusinessNOW

TKO Stain Solutions

– By Angel Morris

TKO Stain Solutions (469) 988-2473 Facebook: TKO Stain Solutions

Hours: By appointment.

It's a good feeling when your job makes other people happy. Tim Barson is building such a business through TKO Stain Solutions, by providing power washing and staining services in Ellis County.

"I have a really good friend who has been in the business for over 15 years and done quite well. He always had good things to say about the work, so I decided to give it a shot," Tim described.

Two years ago, Tim's friend helped him put a spray machine together, and he began power washing fences for friends and neighbors. "I only charged them for the stain. It was just so I could start getting a feel for the business," Tim admitted.

As Tim completed those fences, neighboring homeowners would stop by, asking if he could do theirs. "When you clean one fence, it makes the others around it look worse," Tim noted.

So, mostly by word of mouth, TKO Stain Solutions was born. Tim power washes and stains just about anything, including new and old fences, brick, decks, pergolas, gazebos, sidewalks, patios, vinyl siding and more.

With a background in industrial coatings, Tim knew he wanted to offer the best in stain, so he uses a Texas premiumblend brand. "It is made right next door in Waxahachie with no thinners or solvents mixed in. It is very pure and gives good oil protection," Tim explained. "Stains from big-box stores are blended with half solvent and thinner to make them go further, but then they don't last."

Tim said his stains should last around three to four years before fading. "I know people don't always have money for

things like re-staining a fence, so you want to give them a product that lasts as long as possible," he said.

Saving customers money is one of Tim's top priorities. "I get calls from people in Homeowners Associations who are getting letters that their fence needs improvement. But maybe they don't have the money to do all sides of their fence just now," Tim outlined. "I will just do the front of the fence for them. Then if they want me to come back down the line for the inside of the fence, I can do that. I work with people to figure out what they can afford."

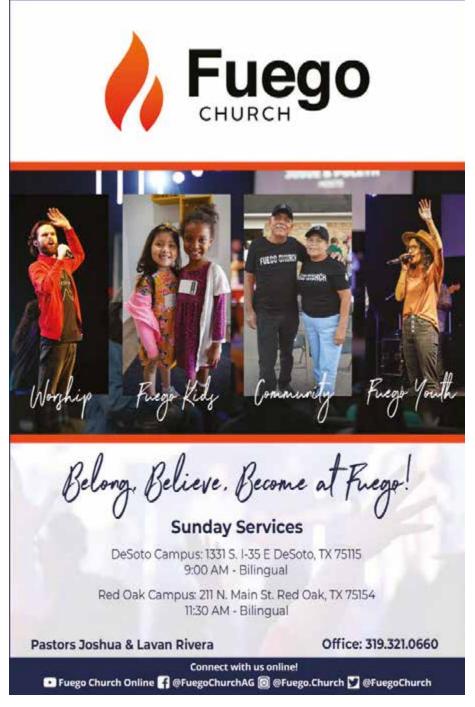
Tim power washes and stains just about anything, including new and old fences. brick, decks, pergolas, gazebos, sidewalks, patios, vinyl siding and more.

That effort is what makes Tim popular with clients. "I meet a lot of nice people doing this job, but one stands out. It was an elderly woman who only had enough money to do her outside fence. She really loved it and said she'd call in six months after she pulled together the money for the rest," Tim recalled. "She actually did just that. She was my very first repeat customer!"

Tim reminds that he also stains new fences, but he favors bringing old fences back to life. "I like the old gray ones when you power wash and get them looking new again," he admitted. "You let it dry, stain it and it's like a brandnew fence."

Serving Red Oak and surrounding cities, Tim said his top goal is simply to make sure everyone is happy. "My favorite part," Tim said, "is when the customer comes out and says, 'This looks beautiful, and who do I write the check out to?" NOW



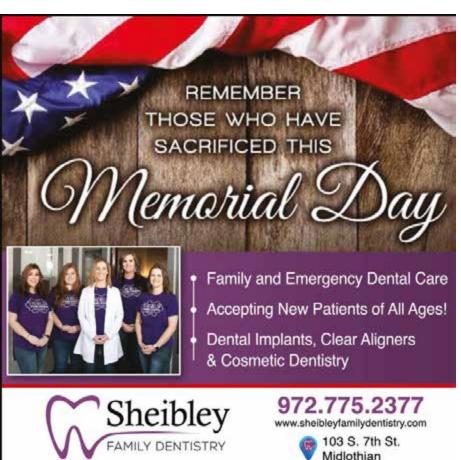












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Robin and Sierra started talking about baking together during a girl's night last summer. Robin has a culinary background, and Sierra has multiple food allergies, so they began brainstorming ways Sierra could enjoy foods she used to love. "We realized there aren't many vegan and gluten-free options in the area, and decided to start an in-home bakery, VGF – Very Good Food — V/GF, to make our creations available to the community," Sierra explained.

Robin's three culinary degrees help them create recipes based on familiar treats, but they don't put a lot of emphasis on making "healthy" recipes. "Recipe testing and baking days are always fun. It's a great chance to catch up and enjoy some company, while, surprisingly, also being very therapeutic," Robin admitted. All the recipes they provided are vegan and gluten-free. Now

Graham Crackers

1 1/4 cups gluten-free flour

1/4 cup almond flour

1/4 cup brown sugar

2 Tbsp. granulated sugar

1/2 tsp. baking soda

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

1/2 tsp. salt

4 Tbsp. vegan butter

2 Tbsp. honey

1-2 Tbsp. water

1. Whisk together the dry ingredients. Cut in the butter until evenly incorporated. Stir in the honey and 1 Tbsp. water. Add additional

water 1/2 Tbsp. at a time, if needed, until the mixture looks like wet sand. Roll 1/2 of the dough on a well-floured parchment paper to 1/8-inch thickness. Cut into roughly 2-inch squares. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet, allowing the edges to touch. Poke holes in the tops of the crackers. Repeat with the remaining dough. Place the tray with the crackers in a freezer or refrigerator; chill until firm.

2. Preheat an oven to 350 F. Bake the crackers for 15 minutes; remove from the oven leaving on the pan to cool. Meanwhile, turn the oven off; leave the door ajar for at least 15 minutes to cool. Turn the oven back on to 250 F. Place the crackers back into the

oven; bake 25-30 minutes. Edges will feel firm to the touch and the center should feel almost as firm. Crackers should crisp up even more as they cool. Allow to cool, then gently break apart along cut lines.

Piecrust

1 1/4 cups oat flour

3 Tbsp. tapioca starch or arrowroot

1/4 tsp. fine sea salt

1/3 cup coconut oil, solid

2 Tbsp. maple syrup

3 Tbsp. ice cold water

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Have a 9-inch ungreased pie dish ready. In the bowl of a food processor with an "S" blade, add oat flour, tapioca starch, salt and coconut oil. Secure the lid; pulse several times until the coconut oil has disappeared into the flour. The mixture should look like crumbly flour.

2. Add the maple syrup and cold water; pulse until the dough comes together to form a ball. Do not overmix; when it looks like pie dough, you're done!

3. Roll the dough out between parchment paper until roughly 11-12 inches in diameter. Once the crust is rolled out, remove the parchment; gently flip over onto a pie pan. Use your fingers to flatten the edges of the crust for a smooth look.

4. For a baked pie, add filling. This crust works very well for pies that need to cook for up to 45 minutes. You might need to cover the pie if your recipe calls for a longer baking time. For cold pie filling, bake the crust on its own for 15 to 20 minutes, until lightly browned. Let cool completely, and then fill.

Pound Cake

Butter or coconut oil, to taste 250 grams gluten-free 1:1 baking flour 1 Tbsp. cornstarch or arrowroot 1/4 tsp. sea salt I tsp. baking powder 180 grams unsalted vegan butter, room temperature 200 grams granulated sugar 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract 150 grams unsweetened applesauce, room temperature 75 grams dairy-free milk, room temperature

- **1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Grease a 9-inch loaf pan with butter or coconut oil: set aside.
- 2. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, sea salt and baking powder; set aside.
- 3. In a large mixing bowl using a hand mixer, or in a stand mixer with a whisk attachment, cream the butter on high speed for 2-3 minutes, or until whipped and creamy. Add the sugar and vanilla extract; cream until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. While mixing on medium-high speed, add the applesauce in 1/4-cup increments until fully integrated.
- 4. Add half the flour mixture; mix on medium-low speed until just integrated. Add the remaining flour mixture, along with the milk; mix again on medium-low speed until the dry ingredients are just integrated. Use a spatula to scrape the bottom and ensure all ingredients are combined.
- **5.** Pour the batter into the prepared pan, baking 45-50 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean. Remove from the oven: allow to cool for 10 minutes in the pan. Carefully flip the cake onto a cooling rack and back right-side-up to cool completely.

Whipped Cream

1 15-oz. can full-fat coconut milk 1-2 Tbsp. pure maple syrup 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

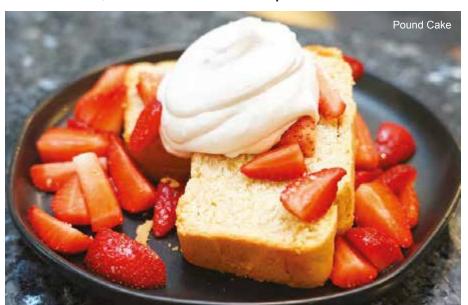




- **I.** Chill the milk in the refrigerator overnight, being careful not to shake the can. Carefully open the can and scoop only the thickened cream into a large bowl. The amount of cream may vary in each can, but you should get roughly 1 cup of coconut cream per 15-oz. can.
- **2.** Add the maple syrup and vanilla extract to the cream. Use a mixer to beat everything together until smooth, about 1-2 minutes. Add more sweetener, to taste.
- **3.** Serve right away, or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week. Cream will thicken more when chilled, but you can rewhip to fluff it, or let sit on the counter for 15 minutes, and stir well.

Lemon Curd

- 4 Tbsp. vegan butter
- 4 Tbsp. cornstarch or arrowroot



- 1/2 cup powdered sugar1 1/2 cups fresh-squeezed lemon juice1 Tbsp. lemon zest
- **1.** In a saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Remove from heat; mix with the cornstarch/arrowroot until a paste is formed.
- **2.** Return the pan to medium heat; add the sugar, juice and zest. Stir until the sugar dissolves and curd thickens, about 5-10 minutes.
- **3.** Remove from heat; let cool. It will thicken as it sits!

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

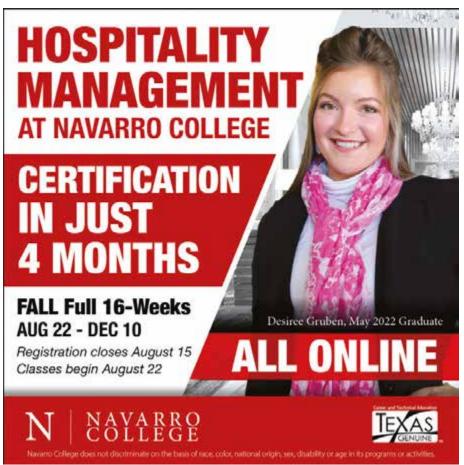














Crossword Puzzle

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| 11 | 10 | 1 | | | 9 | | 8 | t | 1 | 7 |
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| | T | | 34 | | \vdash | \vdash | \vdash | H | | 33 |
| | \vdash | 36 | | | | \vdash | \vdash | 35 | | |

Solutions on page 28

Across

- 1 "--- in 'Sierra"
- 4 Turn in a horizontal plane
- 7 European peaks
- 9 Duelist's assistant
- 12 Suffer from the heat
- 13 Wonder Woman's General, Steven -
- 14 This crowd controller's a real weepie
- 16 First of her kind
- 17 Iroquoian word for "beautiful water"
- 18 Scientific truth
- 19 "I --- be sedated" (Ramones)
- 21 Jayhawk state
- 24 Got agitated
- 28 Lawyers' league
- 29 Merry
- 30 Alamo commander
- 32 Travail
- 33 Cat shy about floaters
- 34 Took --- loan
- 35 Tire inflation measure
- 36 Enunciate

Medium

Down

- 1 Looked after
- 2 Unfamiliar
- 3 Bug's last sound
- 4 Public faces
- 5 Poker bullet
- 6 Original
- 8 No-one wants the short one
- 9 Durable type of steel
- 10 Old Chevy model
- 11 Pulled a gun
- 15 Tagger's art
- 20 "I shall not find myself so die": (Antony, "Julius Caesar")
- 21 Houston suburb
- 22 Start of an incantation
- 23 Civil rights org. since 1909
- 25 Religious
- 26 Short-lived Argentinian First Lady
- 27 Holdup
- 31 Old tape letters

For online versions, visit nowmagazines.com

Sudoku Puzzle

| Easy | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 7 | 9 | | 5 | | | |
| | 1 | | | 2 | | | 4 | 8 |
| | | | | | 1 | 3 | | |
| | | | | | 7 | | | |
| | | 3 | 4 | 9 | | | | |
| 7 | 8 | 4 | | | | | | 2 |
| 9 | , , | | | | | | | 1 |
| | | 8 | | | | | | 7 |
| 1 | 7 | | | | | | 8 | |

 8
 4

 1
 2
 7
 9

 7
 8
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 2
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 1
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 2
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 7
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 1

 8
 7
 1
 1

 9
 6
 9
 9

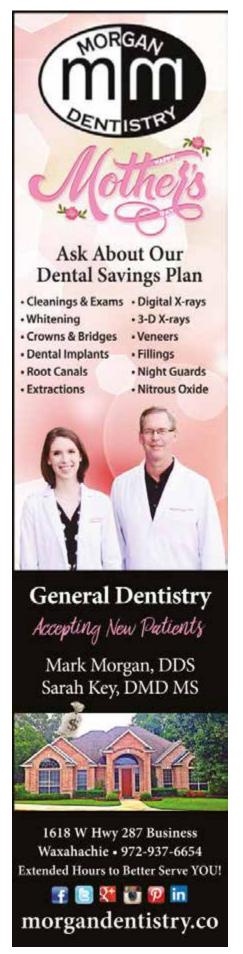
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Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Solutions on page 28







5/7

Vocal Ensemble Auditions:

Red Oak Music hosts open auditions. All ages, ranges and skill levels sought. 101 Austin Blvd., Suite 800. Learn more by emailing RedOakMusicLessons@gmail.com or texting (469) 552-9318.

5/12

ROSE Award Luncheon and Silent Auction:

Ellis Christian Women's Job Corps recognizes women in the community for service and commitment. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Firefly Gardens, 5410 US Hwy. 287, Midlothian. Call (972) 9376620 for more information.

Tickets may
be purchased at
http://www.elliscwjc.life.

Big Hearts on the Road Concert:

Tenille Townes performs benefiting Midlothian's Manna House. 7:00-9:00 p.m., Lone Star Cowboy Church of Ellis County, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd., Red Oak. Tickets are \$40 at https://bit.ly/3LY7mPV.

6/4

Pancake Breakfast & Fly-In:

Classic airplanes and fighters, helicopter and airplanes rides, classic cars and motorcycles, live music, children's activities and more. Breakfast Tickets:
Adults and children 8 and
over: \$6; children under 8:
\$3. Free entrance and parking.
8:00-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way
Regional Airport, 131 Airport Dr.,
Midlothian. (972) 923-0080.

Third Mondays

Book Club:

New members always welcome. 6:30 p.m., Red Oak Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy. For more information, email redoakbookclub@gmail.com.

Second Thursdays

Cocktails and Canvas: Ellis County Art Association's

painting social. Limited enrollment. BYOB but all art supplies provided with nominal fee. ECAA, 113 W. Franklin. For more details, call (972) 937-3414.

Second Saturdays

Red Oak Opry:

Classic country and gospel musicians. \$12 admission. Doors and concessions open: 6:00 p.m.; shows begin: 7:00 p.m., Lone Star Cowboy Church, 1011 E. Ovilla Rd., Red Oak.

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



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Sudoku Solutions

Crossword -



Easy

| _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 7 | | | | | | |
| 6 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| | | 5 | | | | | | |
| 5 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| 7 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| 9 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| 4 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 7 |
| | | 2 | | | | | | |

Medium

| 8 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| | | | | | | | | 2 |
| 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 6 |
| | | | | | | | | 3 |
| 6 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| 2 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| | | | | | | | | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | 9 |

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