

# MidlothianNOW

M A G A Z I N E

MAY 2023

## Essential Educator

Megan Lynch impacts health occupation students

## The Architect's Crown

James Riely Gordon left his mark on Texas

In the Kitchen With Lindsey Prince and Aaron Thrash

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword/Sudoku

Featured Business:  
Soothing Dental

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ON THE COVER



The four-year pathway for health science courses at MISD continues to expand thanks to Megan Lynch.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

*Mom-ming a generation ...*

When my son was born 19 years ago, I looked into his tiny face and knew I'd never do anything more important than be his mom. It's easy to lose sight of this amid the hassles of everyday life, but with each challenge faced and milestone achieved, I've been reminded my chief responsibility is to train up this child in the way he should go. Like most (if not all) moms, some days I do better than others. And like most (if not all) moms, I tend to focus on my failures. Although moms rarely expect accolades, I wanted to remind those of my generation they did many things well. A look at what their offspring are known for says plenty ...

Researchers hail Gen Z for its proactive attitude toward issues like climate change, mental health and social justice. Gen Zers believe companies have an obligation to address their role in environmental issues and are willing to put their money where their mouth is by paying more for sustainable products. Having cut their teeth on technology, they know the pros and cons of the internet. They have an increased awareness of anxiety and depression, often attributed to the pressures of growing up on social media. Fortunately, they aren't afraid to use those same platforms to advance the causes that matter to them. With access to more information than ever before, Zoomers are also on track to be the most educated generation. Surveys suggest Gen Z is thicker skinned, yet wisely cautious — more financially savvy, while embracing an entrepreneurial spirit. Perhaps most impressive of all, Gen Z is credited for its culture of inclusion and equity.

With these attributes in mind, moms, it seems we've done just fine. Celebrate a job well done!

*Happy Mother's Day!*



*Angel*

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*Growing up, Megan Lynch would take her dolls to the doctor to make them feel better. Today, that caring spirit benefits students in Midlothian ISD. “I have wanted to be a nurse since I was a child. As a teenager, I logged over 2,500 hours of community service as a Junior Volunteer at Methodist Charlton Medical Center!” Megan reflected. “Wonderful nurses poured into me their knowledge, and that drove me to be the best nurse I could be.”*

Born in Dallas and raised in Cedar Hill, Megan graduated high school in 2004, then majored in nursing at Tarleton State University. In 2007, she relocated to Arlington, graduating from The University of Texas at Arlington in 2010 with a Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies with a primary focus in Public Health, Women's Studies and Human Sexuality. In 2014, she graduated from Navarro College, obtaining her nursing license and afterward, an alternative teaching certification.

“I became interested in nursing education because of the great professors I had. Carrie Self, Cayla DeMoss and Sharon Thomas were my inspiration,” Megan recalled. “Mrs. Self was kindhearted, tender and had a wonderful disposition about her. Mrs. DeMoss was funny, straightforward and led by example. Mrs. Thomas was the perfect example of tough love and pushed me to be the best version of myself every day.

“Nursing school is very challenging, especially as a single mother to my 2-year-old at the time, Sophia. Because of my professors' influence, I graduated with a 4.0 from nursing school!” Megan continued.

Then, Megan wanted to support other would-be nurses. “I wanted to guide them through skills labs, take them on clinical rotations and see them succeed in their own journey. Mission accomplished!” noted Megan, who worked in Lancaster ISD for three years prior to moving to Midlothian ISD.

Since 2017, she has been employed as a health science teacher with the goal of growing the Health Science Career & Technical Education pathway for students interested in health care. In 2020, she was named Midlothian High School's Teacher of The Year and in spring 2021, she was named Midlothian ISD Secondary District Teacher of The Year.

Currently, Megan oversees the four-year pathway for health science courses at MISD, with MHS and MHHS offering the same courses. Ninth-graders are encouraged to take Principles of Health Science, about career pathways, legal and ethical issues, cultural diversity, infection control and more. Tenth-graders may take Medical Terminology, in which each body system is taught. Students learn medical terms for the body, diseases, procedures, treatment options and so on. Juniors take Health Science Theory — advanced concepts in diseases, the role of the health care professional and how to treat the disease.

“This course gets students prepared for our senior-level class, Practicum in Health Science. In this course, students may obtain an industry-based certification in either Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT),” Megan outlined.

# ESSENTIAL EDUCATOR

— By Angel Morris





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In addition, students spend hours in labs created to simulate real-life experiences within a hospital, doctor’s office or emergency room. Students complete a one-year clinical internship at local facilities in Midlothian, such as Methodist Midlothian Medical Center. They also rotate through MISD school nursing, athletic training, fire stations and other related locations. “When I first started with MISD, the health science pathway did not have clinical contracts with local hospitals or the ability to obtain certifications. Within my first six months at MISD, I was able to obtain both,” Megan explained.

Over the last six years, students became even more equipped to handle real emergencies. “Our students are taught how to critically think through countless situations they may face to make the right decision when the time comes,” Megan stated.

Writing grant proposals has helped Megan bring her ongoing training ideas to life. “A few years ago, I received grant funding through the Midlothian Education Foundation for several pieces of equipment, including a birthing simulator where students ‘deliver’ a baby and assess the situation for complications, while simultaneously caring for the newborn. Another grant provided emergency medical equipment for EMT students.

“I have written several others toward adding new CPR equipment that give audio and visual feedback of compression rate and depth through a digital app and a much larger grant that is a life-size simulator called Body Interact, which is a touch-screen device that has a library of 1,000 types of patient scenarios,” Megan described. “With this, students talk with the patient, determine the nature of their illness or injury and determine what treatment should be.”



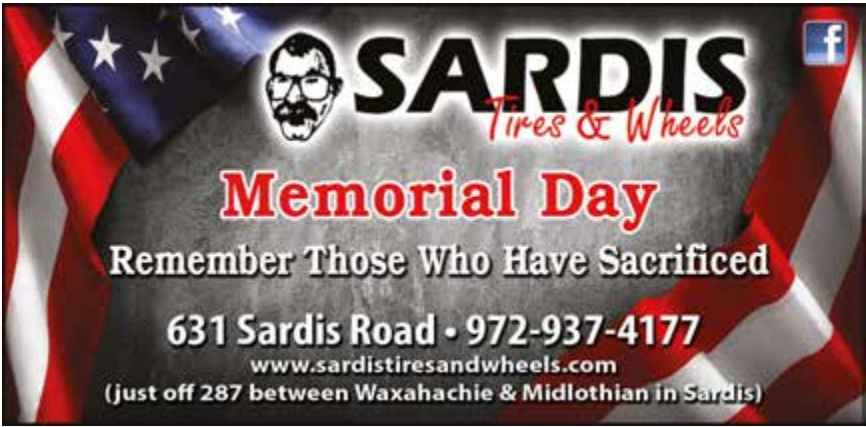
For the past two years, MHS Health Science and Methodist Midlothian Medical Center have hosted a symposium for students to learn from physicians, registered nurses and physician assistants. Yearly, some students compete in medical competitions through HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America). “Last year, our EMT team placed Top 10 in Texas. This year, we competed in various competitions like Clinical Nursing and Forensic Science,” Megan stated.



The majority of Megan’s students use their training and certifications to propel them into nursing school. During a recent health scare, Megan herself was admitted to the hospital by two former students. “They work there because of the training and certifications they received going through the Health Science program at MHS. Most nursing programs require students to have prior training, such as being a Certified Nursing Assistant, so the training and licensure they receive in high school is a game-changer for them to be admitted into programs quicker.” Megan left the hospital just fine, with her sites set not only on getting a master’s in education, but looking forward to the possibility of a career and technical education high school in the district with a dedicated space for health science.

When Megan can find the time, she loves going to Disney World with her daughter, and dreams of someday seeing a Dallas Cowboys game in person. “Win or lose, I’m a fan for life!” she promised.

Until then, Megan will continue to make her mark in MISD. “Seeing students succeed and push themselves to be better each day makes the long training hours worth it. They inspire me to strive for opportunities for them and to continue to be their advocate.” **NOW**



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— TALES OF TEXAS —

# THE ARCHITECT'S

*The well-known Ellis County Courthouse, while unique in many respects, also has similarities with other Texas courthouses. Several Texas county seats can boast of their offices being housed in buildings designed by the nationally recognized architect, James Riely Gordon. Gordon designed as many as 18 Texas courthouses — 12 of them are still standing — plus a number of other government and commercial buildings and private residences throughout the state. However, when researching information on him, the first picture that appears in most articles is of the Ellis County Courthouse, often said to be his crowning achievement.*

In the book, *Texas*, by James Michener, Gordon's Ellis County icon is referred to as "a fairy-tale palace 10 stories high, replete with battlements and turrets and spires and

soaring clock towers and miniature castles high in the air. It was a bejeweled treasure, yet it was also a sturdy, massive court of judgments, one of the finest buildings in Texas." As much acclaim as Gordon has for the edifice, he was never employed as architect by the county. Instead, his plans were sold to the county, and county officials hired Fort Worth architect Marshal Sanguinet as consultant and construction supervisor.

Gordon may have learned at least part of his craft from his civil engineer father, and after moving from his 1863 birthplace in Virginia to San Antonio, Texas, in the early 1870s, he joined the civil engineer corps of the International-Great Northern Railroad at age 14. Gordon never pursued a university degree in architecture, instead he began his career as a draftsman in 1881 for architect William K. Dobson in San Antonio and later J.N. Preston & Son. In 1884, he opened his own San Antonio office with established architect Frederick Shelton.

Being in the right place at the right time has probably influenced a number of great careers, and none is likely to surpass that of Gordon. In 1881, the Texas Legislature passed a bill allowing counties to borrow funds to build public buildings. Primitive courthouses around the state were often constructed of wood (even log structures) and subject to fire and storm damage. The bill passed in 1881 allowed counties to build larger buildings of much more substantial





# CROWN

— By Bill Smith

construction. Many of the buildings were enormous and attractive, contributing to the development of the courthouse squares and growth of the county seats.

From 1889 to 1902, Gordon designed 18 courthouses across the Lone Star State. This was considered the golden age of Texas courthouses, and a nice road trip around the state could include a visit to these magnificent buildings. Besides Ellis County, your trip could include Bexar, Comal, Erath, Fayette, Gonzales, Harrison, Hopkins, Lee, McLennan, Victoria and Wise. Some of the buildings that are still standing have been repurposed. Others have been restored and still serve as the seat of their county government.

The Ellis County Courthouse is of Richardsonian Romanesque style, as was the 1894 Brazoria County Courthouse, which no longer stands. Other courthouses designed by Gordon were Romanesque Revival, Beaux-Arts or a blend of styles.

A beautiful home that Gordon designed in 1892 still stands in San Antonio. The George Kalteyer House is of Romanesque Revival style. According to [sahouseregistry.com](http://sahouseregistry.com), "It is one of the most architecturally significant structures on this noted street. Gordon was best known as a super courthouse designer, but he was an excellent residential designer as well. This house, with its abundance of polychromed arches, reflects the architect's mastery of the Romanesque Revival of the 1880s. The fine interior finishes

have been fully restored. The majority of Gordon's domestic work has unfortunately been long since demolished, making this specimen all the more important."

In 1886, Gordon's first major job was supervising the construction of the Federal Courthouse and Post Office in San Antonio, Texas. In 1892, he won a medal of merit for his design of the Texas Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. His most important work outside of Texas was probably the Arizona Capitol in 1898.

The Texas State Historical Association indicates, "Gordon maintained several offices in Texas, one in Shreveport, Louisiana, and another in Phoenix, Arizona." However, in 1902, he moved to New York. His reputation as a great architect was well established, and he served as president of the New York Society of Architects. His career spanned nearly 60 years, with much of his most noted work still standing in Texas. Ironically, no mention of Texas was recorded in his obituary in *The New York Times* in 1937. NOW

## Sources:

1. [www.sites.Rootsweb.com](http://www.sites.Rootsweb.com).
2. [www.texoso66.com](http://www.texoso66.com).
3. [www.texascooppower.com](http://www.texascooppower.com).
4. [www.sahouseregistry.com](http://www.sahouseregistry.com).
5. <https://alchetron.com>.





McClatchey Elementary fifth-graders, Jonathan White and Jackson Burns, receive first place and the Golden Buzzer Award in Midlothian's Got Talent for their rock medley.

## Zoomed In: Bill Willis

By Angel Morris

When Bill Willis was being recognized at his senior living community for his military service and as a former fire and rescue worker, Midlothian Fire Department wanted to join the tribute. MFD brought firetrucks to Legacy Oaks and escorted Bill inside for his ceremony. "Well, who is all this for?" Bill asked before realizing the celebration was in his honor. "This is one of the most wonderful things that you all could have done."

A member of the Air Force for 22 years, Bill was thanked for his service as a room full of veterans stood to salute him, and family and friends watched. "Bill is a very caring and emotional person," shared Nelly Cabeen, Legacy Oaks of Midlothian community relations director. "It was such a treat to shower this gentleman with love and care."



Jade and Lex Armev visit their grandparents' neighborhood pony, Lil Bit, whom they've been feeding apples to for many years.



Mothers and daughters of the National Charity League Southern Star Chapter clean up the cemetery as part of a Keep Midlothian Beautiful event.



Benjamin Hornburg tries out the Midlothian Community Park fishing pond during Play Day! with his mom, Chelsea.





Residents of the Lake Grove community celebrate a neighbor's retirement at Union 28.



Clay Guest and Reyna Castillo of Southwestern Land and Title pose with the Easter Bunny at a Union 28 holiday event.



2020 MHS graduate, Connor Rury poses with conductor Kirt Mosier after serving as first chair oboe in the orchestra at New York's Carnegie Hall.

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# BusinessNOW

# Soothing Dental

— By Angel Morris

## Soothing Dental

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Friday: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Homegrown dentist, Dr. John Vinton, is proud to have returned to Midlothian not only to live, but also to grow his business, Soothing Dental. The name says it all when it comes to concern for patients and their personal comfort. “I’m happy to be part of the community I grew up in, and to offer almost a hybrid spa experience that’s customized to the patient,” Dr. Vinton noted. “If a patient is dental-phobic, we go very slowly with them. We offer them a complimentary



beverage of their choice. They get to listen to the type of music they prefer, and we even have TVs overhead.”

More important than the pampering is that Soothing Dental is a full-service office, where Dr. Vinton does his own root canals, extractions, same-day permanent crowns, pediatric dentistry and many more services. “We never pressure you into any procedures, however, and we always make sure you are completely on board with our treatment recommendations before moving forward,” Dr. Vinton reiterated. “With our focus on personalized care and building a trusting doctor-patient relationship, we create customized treatment plans to help you reach your oral health goals.”

Dr. Vinton can also assist patients who are unhappy with the look of their teeth. “We offer a range of cosmetic dental solutions that will alter the shape of your teeth — and leave you with a bright smile that looks amazing,” he noted. “The most common methods we use include dental crowns, porcelain veneers and dental bonding. Just schedule an appointment, and we will sit down with you and go over your options toward a smile you will love.”



Following in the footsteps of his mentor — longtime Midlothian dentist, Dr. Maxwell — John dreamed of having the same bond with patients. In turn, he attended The University of Texas at Austin and graduated from Baylor College of Dentistry in 2007. “Dr. Maxwell was my dentist as a child and the reason I went into dentistry,” Dr. Vinton admitted.

“With our focus on personalized care and building a trusting doctor-patient relationship, we create customized treatment plans to help you reach your oral health goals.”

To meet demands of his ever-growing practice, Dr. Vinton relies on three hygienists and an office manager, who happens to be the aforementioned Dr. Maxwell’s daughter-in-law. He also credits his wife, Chelsea, with public relations, including website and social media management. “We’ve doubled in volume with the number of hygiene hours and added new technology to better serve our patients,” Dr. Vinton noted. “Good word-of-mouth has been our best PR.”

Soothing Dental remains committed not only to patients in the office but also to supporting the community by assisting organizations like local dance and sports teams. “Our now 4-year-old son, Michael, just played his first season with Midlothian Soccer Association. As he becomes involved in various things, we really look forward to helping out,” Dr. Vinton said.

Having lived and worked around the Metroplex, Dr. Vinton believes there’s no place like home. “The support of my family and my hometown helps me provide a dental office experience like no other. I cater to the needs of my patients, and I do everything possible to make sure they look forward to every visit,” he said. “Comfortable patients make everybody happier!” **NOW**

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In 2005, at age 19, Lindsey Prince and Aaron Thrash met as a waitress and a cook in another state. Years later, they were reunited, became engaged and discovered they are “an amazing team in the kitchen,” Lindsey noted.

Aaron attended culinary school and worked at restaurants around the U.S., including roles as head chef, before entering the world of sales. A nurse since 2007, Lindsey works hospice in Ellis County. She is from a multicultural family that exposed her to a variety of cooking styles. “Continuing both sides of my family’s recipe legacies is important to me. The time spent in our kitchen helps us honor lost loved ones,” she admitted. “Aaron and I take pride in cooking for our family’s enjoyment and sharing that with our children.” **NOW**

## Grandma’s Fideo

**2 lbs. ground beef**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**Pepper, to taste**  
**Garlic powder, to taste**  
**Onion powder, to taste**  
**16 oz. fideo**  
**1 potato, chopped into small cubes**

**1/4 onion**  
**1 Roma tomato**  
**5 tsp. Knorr Caldo de Pollo**  
**5 oz. tomato sauce**  
**4 cups water**

**1.** Season the ground beef with the spices. In another pan, fry the fideo (vermicelli) noodles until golden brown. Add the

ground beef and potato to the fideo.

**2.** In a blender or food processor, blend the onion, tomato, caldo de pollo and tomato sauce with the water.

**3.** Add the blended mixture to the pan of fideo, ground beef and potatoes. Cook for 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft.

## Granny’s Creamy Cornbread

**2/3 cup butter, softened**  
**1 cup sugar**  
**3 eggs**  
**1 2/3 cups milk**  
**2 1/3 cups all-purpose flour**  
**1 cup cornmeal**  
**4 1/2 tsp. baking powder**  
**1 tsp. salt**

**1.** Cream the butter and sugar with a mixer. In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs and milk.  
**2.** In another bowl, blend the flour, cornmeal, baking powder and salt. Alternately add the egg/milk mixture and the flour mixture to the creamed butter, mixing after each addition.



3. Spread the batter in a greased 9x13-inch pan; bake at 400 F until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 22 to 27 minutes. Serve warm.

**Chicken Pesto Sandwich**

*The marinade is enough for up to 2 lbs. of chicken.*

**1 6-oz. chicken breast**

*Marinade:*

- 1 cup zesty Italian dressing**
- 1/4 cup pickle juice**
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic**
- 1 Tbsp. pepper**

*Pesto Mayo:*

- 1/4 cup mayonnaise**
- 1 Tbsp. pesto (homemade or store bought)**
- 1 Tbsp. pickle juice**
- Pepper, to taste**

*Spritzer:*

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil**
- Juice of half a lemon**
- 1 tsp. sugar**
- Pinch of salt**

*Sandwich:*

- 1 ciabatta bun**
- 2 Tbsp. pesto mayo (divided use)**
- 1/2 cup spinach or arugula, spritzed**
- 2 tomato slices**
- 2 slices provolone**
- Salt, to taste**
- Pepper, to taste**

- 1. *For marinade:* Combine all ingredients. Marinate the chicken breast for 4 hours — a maximum of 24 hours.
- 2. *For pesto mayo:* In a small bowl, mix all pesto mayo ingredients; blend until well incorporated.
- 3. *For spritzer:* In another bowl, repeat the same process with spritzer ingredients.
- 4. Grill the chicken breast until 165 F.
- 5. *For sandwich:* Toast the ciabatta bun. Place 1 Tbsp. of pesto mayo on the bottom bun and 1 Tbsp. of pesto mayo on the top bun.
- 6. Toss the spinach or arugula in the spritzer.
- 7. Build the sandwich with the remaining ingredients.

**Texi-can Chicken Croissant Enchiladas**

- 3 cups chicken, shredded**
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup**
- 1 10-oz. can mild Ro-Tel, slightly drained**
- 3 cups pepper-jack cheese, shredded (divided use)**
- 2 cans crescent rolls**

- 1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Prepare

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Chicken Pesto Sandwich

- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 1 tsp. lemon juice**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 1 unbaked pie shell**

- 1.** To a mixing bowl, add the butter and sugar; mix well. Add the eggs and flour; mix well.
- 2.** Add the buttermilk, lemon juice and vanilla. Mix all together, whisking well.
- 3.** Pour the mixture into the unbaked pie shell. Bake at 350 F for 45 minutes to 1 hour.

a 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

**2.** In a bowl, mix the chicken, cream of chicken soup, Ro-Tel and 2 cups of the cheese together.

**3.** Separate the crescent roll dough; scoop a spoonful of the chicken mixture onto the wide end of each crescent roll. Fold the long point of the dough over and around the chicken to create a little packet. Place each packet into the prepared baking dish.

Sprinkle the remaining cup of shredded cheese on top.

**4.** Bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown; serve warm.

### Old-Fashioned Buttermilk Pie

- 1 stick butter, softened**
- 1 1/4 cups white sugar**
- 3 eggs, well beaten**
- 3 Tbsp. flour**

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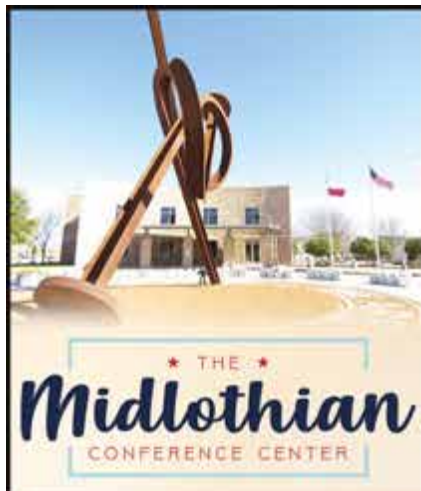
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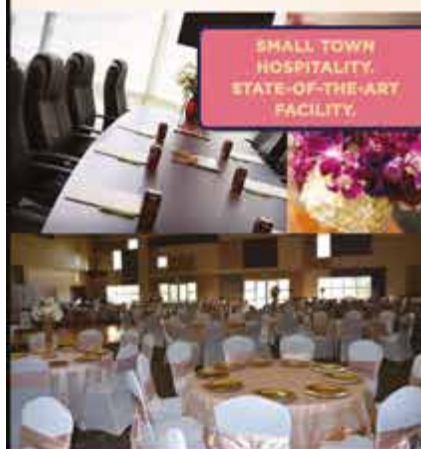
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# GEOLOGY IN ACTION

— By Virginia Riddle



*Camp in Caprock Canyons State Park, and awaken to a glorious dawn, glowing on red, orange and white shale, sandstone and siltstone walls. Bison graze freely nearby in the park's almost 14,000 acres. Prairie dogs scamper around in "towns." Sheep, mule deer, bobcats, coyotes, porcupines, jackrabbits and birds live among the blue grama, buffalo grass, sideoats grama, Indian grass, yucca, wildflowers, cacti, cottonwoods, wild plum thickets and junipers that dot the park's many vistas.*

Caprock Canyon was formed by two forks of the Little Red River, cutting into the Llano Estacado High Plains Escarpment for almost a million years, producing some rock walls over 1,000 feet high. Nomadic people, the Folsom, arrived in the canyon about 10,000 years ago. From the rock, they fashioned spear tips used to kill large animals. Hunter-gatherer groups followed. Permanent settlements began about 1,000 years ago, and the Spanish explorer, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, discovered the canyon in 1541. The Apache, Kiowa and Comanche occupied the canyon during the 1700s-1870s.

Anglo settlers arrived in the 1800s, when bison were being killed in large numbers by trappers, hunters, *comancheros* (traders) and the U.S. Army. Mary Ann Goodnight, who was co-owner of JA Ranch with her husband, Charles Goodnight, saved bison to prevent probable extinction. The Texas State Bison Herd is genetically descended from the Goodnight herd and is perhaps one of the last examples of native Texas bison.

Also unique to the park is an abandoned railway line that offers hiking, biking and an equestrian trail. The 64-mile trail crosses Quitaque Canyon to Estelline, running through the 742-foot-long Clarity Tunnel, home to Mexican free-tailed bats, and along many original trestles. Over 90 miles of multiuse trails exist ranging from easy to very challenging, and visitors can boat, fish and/or swim in Lake Theo. A lodge, as well as campsites with water or water and electricity are offered, and backpackers and equestrians can take advantage of primitive camping sites. Hands-on activities await visitors of all ages at the Children's Discovery Center, and the exhibits at the Interpretive Pavilion explain the canyon's geology and Native American history.

In this ranching country, the weather and terrain changes quickly, making for hardy residents. The town of Quitaque is near the intersection of the Cottonwood and Los Lingos creeks. Area attractions include Camp Resolution, one of four encampments of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition; the Valley of Tears; and the Comanchero Canyons Museum, which tells the history of the area with exhibits of artifacts





dating from the Clovis era through the 1800s. Dining, bed-and-breakfasts and hotel accommodations are available in Quitaque, Silverton, Turkey and Childress, Texas. Horseback riding is offered at the historic Pole Canyon Ranch and the Quitaque Riding Stables.

Internet and cell service are rare or nonexistent in the area, but that's not why people flock to Caprock Canyons State Park. The stunning vistas, geology, wildlife, adventures, bison and a return to ranching days of old where a handshake still means something are just a few reasons to visit. **NOW**

Sources:  
 1. Parent, Laurence. *Official Guide to Texas State Parks & Historic Sites*. 2018, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas. pgs. 102-104.  
 2. "Caprock Canyons State Park & Trailway." Texas Parks & Wildlife online.

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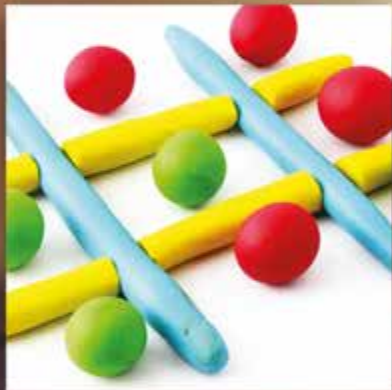




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# A GAME FOR ALL AGES

— By Bill Smith

*Whether you call it tic-tac-toe, noughts and crosses or simply X's and O's, chances are you have played this familiar game and find it particularly engaging with young children. It can be played almost anywhere if there is a pencil or crayon and paper handy, or perhaps a piece of chalk and a chalkboard. Some of the best games are played with chalk on a sidewalk!*

Children have been known to cause walls to need some stout scrubbing or perhaps even repainting after drawing the familiar hashtag playing field in “unapproved places” around

the home. Perhaps a DIY project is in order to provide a fun place for this popular game to be contested.

Who says the game has to be played with X's and O's? A party host could create a large board, 3 feet square, and mark nine sections with paint. The playing pieces could be anything seasonally themed — so long as they come in two different colors. Families will enjoy challenging one another to see who will be the first to line up three items in a row.

Painting the familiar playing space on just about any surface makes this an easily created project. An alternative to painting on wood is using a wood burning tool to make the design more permanent. Markers for the board can be as simple as picking up stones. Gather five stones for each player, just making sure that one player has large stones and the other has small stones, or perhaps one player has round stones and the other has flat stones. If you forget to bring the board you created, just draw the hashtag in the dirt!



Rock painting is a popular hobby for some, and they make excellent playing pieces. The rocks can all be the same size, just paint five of them red and the other five green (or any colors you choose). Or get more creative, and paint the rocks to look like bugs, bunnies or unicorns. Personalize the pieces for your children by painting them their favorite color or painting their name on their set.

Do your children enjoy molding shapes with clay? Make the playing surface out of four long, thin pieces of clay that have been rolled and formed, then have the kids make the playing pieces in their favorite shapes. If they create their pieces in the morning, when the clay dries in the afternoon, they will have their own playing pieces with which to challenge their young friends.

If you are interested in a little more creativity and a game that could be displayed as home decor and always available for play, consider building your game in the woodshop. There are any number of designs available depending on your woodworking skills. The size of the base is flexible. It could be as large as an end table, about 2 feet square, or small enough to sit on a book shelf, perhaps 6 inches square. Whatever size you choose, the board should be about 1 1/2 inches thick for this project.

The board should be cut square, then draw lines on it with a pencil, dividing the top into nine equal sections. Using a hand saw, cut the lines about 1/8 inch deep. You could invert the board and cut the shallow lines with a table saw. Drill holes in the center of each square about 3/4 inch deep. If you have access to a drill press, you can set the depth stop, but if you are drilling with a hand-held drill motor, wrap a piece of masking tape around the drill bit to mark the depth for consistent results.

Cut 10 wooden dowels 2 inches in length that will fit in the holes for playing pieces. Paint or stain the board and the playing pieces, and, of course, half of the playing pieces should be a different color than the other half.

Your personalized tic-tac-toe game can be as creative or simple as you want to make it. Then enjoy yourself, while keeping your kids entertained with a game that is fun and easy to play at every age! **NOW**



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**James 1:16-18 NIV**

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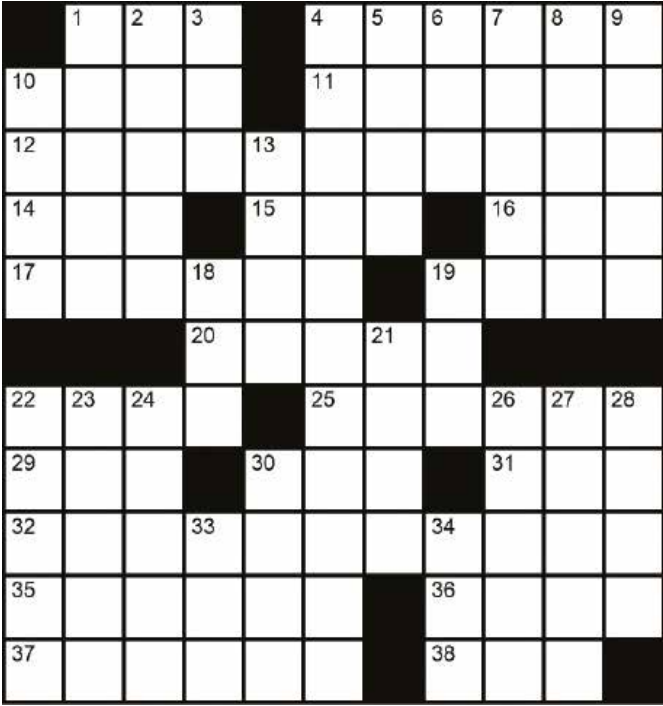
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**f**



# Crossword Puzzle



CrosswordSite.com Ltd

### Across

- 1 USSR successor
- 4 Savanna grazer
- 10 "Bless me, Father, --- have sinned"
- 11 Impulse transmitter
- 12 Formal attire
- 14 1/100 yen
- 15 Contents of some whistles
- 16 Heard in a herd
- 17 Small earthquake
- 19 Numerous
- 20 Sesame Street grouch

### Down

- 22 Encourage in wrongdoing
- 25 Stifle awkward pronoun
- 29 They're white at Guaranteed Rate Field
- 30 Hindu honorific
- 31 Myself, in Munich
- 32 Repaired, decrepit lab is unsurprising
- 35 Sign up
- 36 Shellac
- 37 Irritate
- 38 Health security agency
- 1 Lid
- 2 Castle of the turkey trot
- 3 Transgression
- 4 Coterie
- 5 Starter for a million
- 6 Brick-making clay
- 7 Fragrance
- 8 Running out of
- 9 Bug
- 10 Celebration suffix
- 13 Nasdaq events
- 18 Witty remark
- 19 Miss, once?
- 21 On the job
- 22 Trembling poplar
- 23 Carried
- 24 Apply
- 26 Plant firmly
- 27 Pale purple
- 28 Guitar ridge
- 30 Low-down horizontal beam
- 33 Half a colon
- 34 Simplicity simile

Online versions and solutions available at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://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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# Sudoku Puzzle

Easy

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

Medium

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

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# HAPPY Mother's Day

## MAY

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.

### 5/4

#### **Ellis Christian Women's Job Corps ROSE Award Luncheon and Fundraiser:**

Women in the community recognized for commitment to serving others. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Firefly Gardens, 5410 U.S. Hwy. 287. Call (972) 937-6620 for more information.

### 5/6

#### **Mental Health Awareness Walk:**

Family fun walk to benefit Paws for Reflection Ranch. Food, music, kids play zone, vendor and mental health resource booths, plus a chance to meet therapy animals. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Midlothian Methodist Medical Center, 1201 E. U.S. Hwy. 287. Register at [pawsforreflectionranch.org](http://pawsforreflectionranch.org).

### 5/12-5/13

#### **Raise the Roof ConcertFest:**

Two-day music festival featuring Le Freak disco band **7:00 p.m. Friday**; XFactor, variety dance band **5:00 p.m. Saturday** and Dale 305 tribute to Pit Bull **8:00 p.m. Saturday**. Bring blankets and chairs for lawn seating. Food available for purchase. Free and open to the public. 7:00-10:00 p.m., Midlothian Community Park, 3601 S. 14th St. For more information, visit <https://www.midlothian.tx.us/925/ConcertFest>.

### 5/13

#### **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event:**

Safe disposal of household chemical waste. A voucher must be purchased prior to the event for \$20 (residents) or \$50 (nonresidents) at Midlothian's Utility Billing Office, 102 W. Ave. E. The collection takes place from 9:00-11:00 a.m., 1050 N. Hwy. 67. Learn more at the calendar link of [www.midlothian.tx.us](http://www.midlothian.tx.us).

### 5/20

#### **Wildflower Nature Walk:**

A 1/2-mile nature walk led by the Texas Master Naturalists Indian Trail Chapter of Navarro and Ellis Counties to learn about indigenous plants and wildlife. 9:00-10:30 a.m., Mockingbird Nature Park, 1361 Onward Rd. Learn more at <https://www.midlothian.tx.us/706/Nature-Activities>.

#### **First Responders Benefit Car Show:**

Awards for Top 25, Best of Show Car and Truck, Police Officers Pick, Firefighters Pick. Entry fee: \$15 plus a case of water or 6-pack of Gatorade. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Kroger, 2200 FM 663. Call Bill at (972) 977-3289 or Jim at (214) 364-8091, for details.

**Taste of Ellis County:**  
Samples from local restaurants. Someone will be crowned Best Bite & Best Cocktail in Ellis

County. \$30 per ticket.  
5:00-10:00 p.m., Union 28,  
651 Highlander.

### 6/3

#### **Pancake Breakfast Fly-In/Drive-In:**

Classic airplanes and fighters, helicopter and CAF airplane rides, classic cars and motorcycles, live music, children's activities. Free admission and parking. 8:00-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport, 131 Airport Dr. Learn more at [www.mid-wayregional.com](http://www.mid-wayregional.com) or call (972) 923-0080.

### Second Tuesdays

#### **National Active and Retired Employees:**

Monthly luncheon featuring guest speaker. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at various restaurants. Email [rjcarey1@gmail.com](mailto:rjcarey1@gmail.com) or call (972) 775-2463 for more information.

### Wednesdays

#### **DivorceCare:**

Group sharing for those who have gone through or are going through divorce. DivorceCare for Kids ages 5-12 meets at the same time. Care for younger children available. 6:30-8:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church Family Life Center, 800 S. 9th St. Call (972) 775-3993 for more information.

### Wednesdays and Thursdays

#### **Story Tots!:**

Story time for children 2 years old through pre-K. 10:00-11:00 a.m., A.H. Meadows Library, 922 S. 9th St. Registration required: Call (469) 856-5211 or email [kathy.lynch@midlothian.tx.us](mailto:kathy.lynch@midlothian.tx.us).

### Second and Fourth Wednesdays

#### **Jesus Feeds Us:**

Free grocery distribution. 3:00 p.m. until supplies run out, Midlothian Church of Christ, 1627 N. Hwy. 67.

### Third Wednesdays

#### **Lancaster Women's Connection:**

Welcoming all women in Ellis County to its once-a-month event. Cost: \$15 and includes lunch, a special feature and a Stonecroft Speaker. Reservations due **Thursday prior** to the monthly meeting. 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Country View Golf Course, 240 W. Belt Line Rd., Lancaster. Dee Ann Ellis at [deeannellis@sbcglobal.net](mailto:deeannellis@sbcglobal.net) or (972) 921-6221.

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [angel.morris@nowmagazines.com](mailto:angel.morris@nowmagazines.com).*





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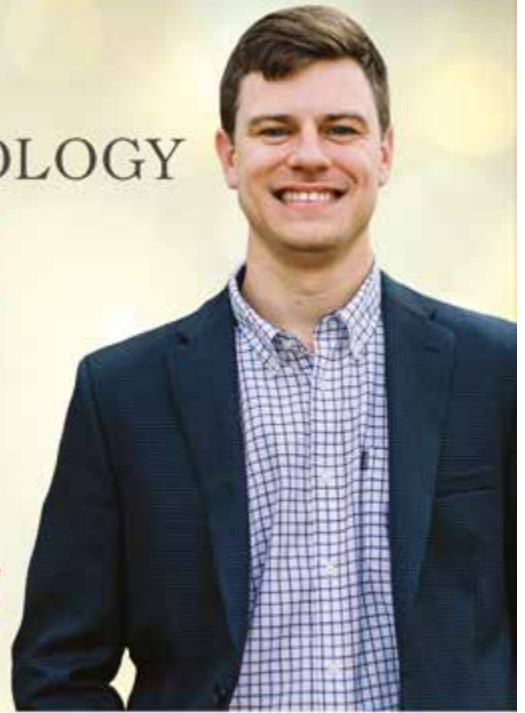
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