

# Midlothian NOW

M A G A Z I N E

MAY 2024

## Windmill Maker

Richard Jones' creations wave at the past

## Records Are Made To Be Broken

Byron Nelson's 11-tournament winning streak still stands

In the Kitchen With Carmen Cardona

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword/Sudoku

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## ON THE COVER



Retirement sparked the creative side of local windmill maker Richard Jones.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE



*Angel*

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## Setting up camp ...

While there's one more month of school, thoughts are already turning to plans for the summer. The time is now for kids' camp registration! (Some activities are already booked for the season, in fact.) Here are a few things to consider if you're making plans for the children in your care.

When considering summer camps, communities explode with opportunities for a variety of interests. Sleepaway camps are still a thing, but day camps abound and are better suited for many children (and possibly more budgets). For early childhood, investigate camps that promote play-based learning in nurturing environments. Camps for elementary ages should start to target children's interests — acting, art, athletics and more — where kids can begin to investigate areas that might peek their interests. Tween camps should expand on those areas of interest and begin to present greater opportunities for campers to develop those skills, while also delving into personal growth and leadership. Camps for teens can help youth zero in on potential career opportunities while still having fun: game design, journalism, medicine, robotics, STEM, the list goes on and on. At this age, campers may want to focus on future goals, or they may look forward to outdoorsy adventure where activities in nature are the norm. Either way, the ultimate goal is gaining some independence and having new experiences.

If paid summer camps aren't an option, don't despair. It never hurts to reach out about sliding scale and scholarship opportunities, particularly through churches, schools and mentorship programs. If your child is old enough to volunteer, they may also be able to experience discounted or free programs by offering to help around camp. Putting in some work may help kids appreciate recreational opportunities that much more!

*Happy camping!*



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*While windmills were originally designed to pump water and grind grain, they advanced to generating electricity. By the 1950s, however, most U.S. windmill companies went out of business. Over the next several decades, interest in using wind turbines to generate renewable energy has ebbed and flowed, but the image of early windmills still beckons simpler times. One Midlothian resident helps keep that time alive.*

# WINDMILL MAKER

— By Angel Morris

Richard Jones moved here in 1975, building a home with his wife, Kay, on 1.5 acres. “We wanted a place to raise our two boys, and they had so much fun growing up here, riding motorcycles and four-wheelers across the land,” Richard recalled. “There was only one other house around us, and the road to get here was a dirt one.”

Today, construction of nearby neighborhoods can be heard from the Joneses’ back patio. The sound of progress, however, is tempered by nostalgia, with some half dozen windmills dotting Richard’s yard, all of his own making.

“Before I retired, I traveled for work, so I was gone a lot. Now that I’m home, I prefer to stay busy,” Richard said.

While serving in the Marines Reserves during Vietnam, Richard was employed in his father-in-law’s machinery company. He then went on to a 40-year career with the Case Corporation, a manufacturer of agricultural machinery and construction equipment.

In 2008, Richard retired to full-time tinkerer. “I’ve always done stuff with my hands — making cabinets, roofing houses, putting in ACs, mending fences. I’ve done a little of everything, and I like helping people,” he explained.

Besides building his own barn and carport, Richard was always interested in woodwork and welding. He



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also liked giving discarded things new life. "My neighbor was in the AC business and had a lot of scrap parts. Sometimes, my son's business had big fans returned with freight damage. When I saw those things would just be thrown out, I said, 'Oh, no, no. I want 'em,'" Richard reflected.

"I fix or weld or build something for someone just about every week, and I was thinking what to do with this stuff I'd collected. Windmills just popped in my head one day," Richard continued.

Dozens of windmills later, Richard said each project can be finished in about a week. "The first step is to think about what you want your windmill to look like. You sketch it. Is it going to be fancy or plain? And you decide on its height," Richard outlined.

Richard said standard supplies include bearings, angle iron, pipe and 3/4-inch sucker rod. "I walk around and see if I have the supplies I need. I try not to buy anything new. Then I start cutting and welding, and it just flows and goes," he explained.

The end result is a customized windmill with metal tails ranging from cardinals to state flags. "I made one for my in-laws with their initials on it. I made another for a couple who wanted a Great Dane on theirs," Richard described. "The lady around the corner, hers has ducks on top."

Richard's most visible windmill sits at Union 28 restaurant and event center, featuring the business logo. "I like to see it when I go to town and know that others are seeing it even though they don't know I built it," he admitted.

One of Richard's favorites is a 12-foot-tall design with a blade span of 6 feet made for a friend in Nacogdoches. Nine feet is more standard, and less cumbersome for Richard, whose Mr. Fix-it ways have led to some accidents. "In 2019, I fell off a barn and shattered my pelvis. Before that, I had a double aneurysm and caught E. coli in the hospital," he remembered.

In 2002, Richard had quintuple coronary bypass surgery, and today has 14 stents and two filters to eliminate potential blood clots. "It don't bother me. If you pay attention to it, it'll make you sick," Richard stated. "The pelvis thing slowed me down about six months. Nothing slows me down longer than that!"

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Prior to windmills, Richard made metal lawn art flowers and birds, and crosses and windchimes from horseshoes. "I like stuff related to Texas — and Western stuff," he noted.

The 79-year-old grandfather of four shared his lawn art with First Presbyterian Church, where he also built the post for the church sign, as well as a railing for the building's porch. "I like to help people," he admitted, but said his best work is, "Raising two boys to be fine young men with families of their own."

Married 58 years this July, Richard enjoys the local Independence Day parade, where the 6-foot Statue of Liberty from his yard is often on display in the church float. "She's from a lake property my son bought. They were going to throw it out, but I decided to bring her home," Richard said. "I've been taking good care of her ever since."

Calling themselves "the grandparents of the neighborhood," the Joneses care for those around them. Kay formerly worked as an assistant to Dolores McClatchey — whom she called "the best boss ever" — and owned the Dizzy Daisy Florist for eight years. "She was frazzled by the end. I think she really just did it because her dad loved being the flower delivery guy," Richard explained.

Richard's father was a truck driver. "My dad always wanted to be able to build things, but it just wasn't him. I learned all that type stuff from my father-in-law," Richard credited. "My dad was gone all the time, but I had a good childhood. We didn't have a pot to pee in, but we always had something to eat."

Building windmills allows Richard time to reflect on life. "It's a lot of work, but it's relaxing. It actually gives me peace of mind to be in my barn, listening to country music and building," he said. "I don't like to just do nothing. How boring to sit and watch the TV, play on a phone or computer. Building gives me satisfaction."

Richard hopes those happening upon one of his windmills might be inspired to tackle something new. "You may throw a lot of stuff away, but if you keep at it, eventually you'll get there," he promised. "I think my windmills, you just have to see 'em to believe 'em. And that thing you want to do? If you don't try, you'll never find out if you can." **NOW**



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Byron Nelson at the 1945 Tam O'Shanter Country Club Tournament in Chicago. From the collection of the Texas Sports Hall of Fame – Waco, Texas.

— TALES OF TEXAS —

# RECORDS ARE

# MADE TO BE BROKEN

— By Bill Smith

*During the 2023 edition of the AT&T Byron Nelson Golf Tournament (now the CJ Cup Byron Nelson), the television commentators mentioned Byron's record of 11 straight PGA tournament victories. They said, and rightly so, that 11 wins would be an outstanding career for any golfer today, but to win 11 in a row is essentially unheard of. Byron Nelson accomplished this feat in 1945, so he has held the record for 79 years.*

Byron was born in 1912, the same year as a couple of other well-known and similarly accomplished golfers, Sam Snead and Ben Hogan. The Texas State Historical Association lists his birthplace as Long Branch, Texas, which may have been a "suburb" of Waxahachie, and many biographies of Byron simply list his birthplace as Waxahachie. His childhood included working on the family cotton farm until age 11, when the Nelson family moved to Fort Worth.

By age 12, Byron was working as a caddie at the Glen Garden Country Club. It was there that he first met one of

his great rivals on the course, the legendary Ben Hogan, who was also serving as a caddie. Originally, caddies were not allowed to participate in the game on Glen Garden, but the rules were later relaxed, and a tournament for caddies was eventually contested. Byron beat Ben by one shot in a nine-hole playoff in 1927.

Byron completed his formal education in 1928, and after a brief stint working with the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway, he began golfing full time in 1929. He joined the Professional Golfers' Association in 1932 and worked as a golf pro at a number of clubs around the country. His first professional tournament was in 1932 at the Texarkana Open. The entry fee at Texarkana was \$5. Byron finished third in the tournament and collected \$75 for the effort. His career as a professional golfer was underway, and while it was a very successful career, it would be considered brief, certainly by today's standard. Apparently, playing golf was a "means to an end" for Byron, and he retired from the tour at age 34 to purchase his dream, a ranch in Roanoke, Texas, known as Fairway Ranch.

It was also in Texarkana where he met and married Louise Shofner, his late first wife of 50 years. In an interview with *Sports Illustrated* in 1979, Louise made it clear that she was originally opposed to Byron retiring from golf and becoming a rancher. She reasoned that he knew a lot about golf and nothing about being a rancher. The ranch essentially cost the



Nelsons all they had, but the work to bring it to the comfortable home they enjoyed for many years was worth the effort.

There were a few lean years when Byron found it necessary to pick up his clubs again to help support the ranch. He was able to play some exhibition matches and was successful playing matches in the mornings, followed by luncheons, clinics and dinner speeches. He could still hit some great golf shots, but he did not take it too seriously. When he entered a tournament, he admitted that he was just playing for fun.

Byron's record of 11 PGA victories in a row may never be broken. The 11 wins are not the sum of his golf career, as he is also a top contender in several other categories. He had 54 career victories, twice winning The Masters, twice winning the PGA Championship and one victory in the U.S. Open. While the record he is most remembered for was set in 1945, he claimed 1939 was his best year on the course. That was the year of his U.S. Open victory, among others, and he set a professional scoring record with back-to-back rounds of 65 at the Phoenix Open.

In his later years, Byron regularly attended the golf tournament in the Dallas area that bears his name, along with his second wife of almost 20 years, Peggy. The Byron Nelson Tournament is the first PGA Tour event named in honor of a former player. Players who came off the course after the 18th hole looked forward to a wave or a handshake from him.

His reputation as a gentleman earned him the nickname "Lord Byron." In 2004, the World Golf Hall of Fame honored him with an exhibit called "Byron Nelson: A Champion ... A Gentleman." What a great legacy, regardless of the records. And besides, they are made to be broken, aren't they?

Sources:

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2. <https://vault.si.com/vault/1979/05/07/good-lord-of-golf-in-those-days-he-was-lord-byron-and-set-records-still-unequaled-then-at-34-byron-nelson-quit-the-game-to-fulfill-an-old-dream>
3. <https://thecupbyronnelson.org/legacy/>

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## Zoomed In: Jessica Morgan

By Angel Morris

Jessica Morgan is not your ordinary chicken lady. “We have a diverse flock of over 20 breeds — a few rare — and to my knowledge, no one else has them in Midlothian,” Jessica noted. “I have pasture-raised rainbow or heirloom chicken and duck eggs!”

Calling hers a “small-hobby farm and homeschool project,” Jessica is “able to provide extra care that not all poultry farmers can,” due to her flexible schedule and “neat-freak nature.” Her flock of 25 receives a high-protein, assorted diet supplemented with vitamins, probiotics, fresh foods and treats. “In other words, they are spoiled!”

In turn, she is getting one to two dozen eggs per day. “I love raising and caring for birds and collecting, eating and sharing eggs, but the time with my daughter is priceless.”



Jayden King, Marisa Fleischman, Kezia Cowans and Angel Brefo set a new Heritage High School record in the Varsity 4x200 relay at the Steve Goben Invitational.



Dance instructor Chloe Hawpe (center), helps Chris Douglas and Melissa Shook earn the Best Dance trophy in the Ellis County Dancing with the Stars competition.



MISD Civil Engineering students deliver dog houses, which were built as their service project this year, to the animal shelter.





Jane Clemmons and Helen Syme enjoy a game of dominoes in the spring weather at Midtowne Meadows Health & Rehab.



FirstLook Sexual Health and Pregnancy Center representatives, Jon Brdecka and Alisha Woodall, receive \$42,162.90 from Cowboy Church of Ellis County representatives, Audrey Phillips and Sandy Miller.



Roman Parham and Dade Manley attend the Class of 2024 Senior Breakfast, a perk of Project Graduation membership.

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BusinessNOW

# Jerry's J&W Carpet and Flooring

— By Angel Morris

## Jerry's J&W Carpet and Flooring

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<https://www.jandwcarpet.com/>  
Facebook: Jerrys Jandw Carpet

**Hours:** Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Sunday: Closed

Jerry's J&W Carpet and Flooring has been a staple of the Midlothian community since 1971. Through the years, some of the most memorable flooring projects completed were



Billy Bob's Texas, the home of Lady Bird Johnson and the Texas Motor Speedway.

After almost 50 years under the leadership of Jerry Massey, ownership changed but remained in the family. On June 17, 2019, ownership passed to Jerry's son, Cliff. "The Massey family has full intentions of keeping the store within the family for the unforeseeable future. When you come by the store, you never know which family member you will find there," Cliff explained.

Cliff has two sons who work full time for the company: Jimmy oversees the day-to-day operations, and Blaine does measuring of the jobs as needed, helps with pick-up and delivery of materials and runs a crew. In the summer, you will find two more of Cliff's children in the mix, Karley and Brody. "Who knows? One day you may see one of my five grandchildren entering the scene," Cliff predicted.

The business has a family-like company culture, and employees and installers remained intact during the ownership transition. "Keith has 35 years with the business, Linda 32 years, Austin 10 years, Angie five years and Kelly



four years,” Cliff calculated of his longtime crew.

“The business has also kept many of the same installers, and it is a well-rounded group that, together, can install any type of flooring, back splashes, showers and even patios,” Cliff continued. “We are honored to have had the skills of David Gryder, Jay Waggoner, Adrian Graciano and others through the years and look forward to many more years with them on our team.”

At one time or another, Cliff, Jimmy and Blaine have all worked in the field, as well, so they have the knowledge of all aspects of the job and can walk customers through their projects from start to finish.

## “WE CONTINUOUSLY UPDATE TO HAVE THE MOST MODERN AND SOUGHT-AFTER ITEMS AVAILABLE.”

Jerry’s I&W Carpet and Flooring installs for both commercial and residential jobs. Some of its larger projects have been hospitals, schools, churches, distribution centers, jails and new residential communities for construction companies. They complete jobs not only in the DFW area but also in other states. “No job is too small, too large or too far away. We consider it a privilege when any person reaches out to us for their installation needs, and we aim to do whatever it takes to make the customer happy,” Cliff shared.

The business specializes in wood, carpet, luxury vinyl plank, laminate and tile from its Midlothian showroom. “We continuously update to have the most modern and sought-after items available out there in the industry. We also have financing options — some with no interest — for your project,” Cliff noted.

Jerry’s I&W Carpet and Flooring continues to uphold its motto. “Words cannot express our gratitude for all the companies and individuals who have brought business our way through the decades. Ellis County has abundantly blessed us,” Cliff said. “We will continue to strive to exceed our customers’ expectations on each project, and we’ll deliver on our promise: Drive a little, save a lot.” **NOW**



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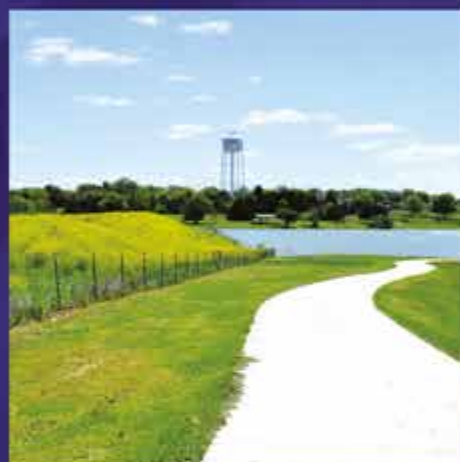
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### **New Lake Grove Park preserves area beauty**

Now open, the new Lake Grove Park at 1000 Hawkins Run Road offers lake shore access and a beautiful nature trail for the enjoyment of the public. Funded by MCDC, the project includes a 10-foot-wide and 2,500-foot-long concrete trail combined with a natural surface trail from Hawkins Run Road to the property line of Hawkins Meadow at Midlothian Community Park. This parcel was purchased by the City of Midlothian in 2010 as part of the development of Community Park.

"This park retains the natural habitat of the area, while adding a few amenities like a boardwalk and benches," says Heather Dowell, director of Parks and Recreation Department. Tucked into the woods between South 14th Street and Oak Tree Lane, Lake Grove Lake is a Texas Conservation Service Site 5 reservoir. The lake may be used for catch-and-release fishing, but no swimming is allowed. Midlothian Parks staff will maintain the facility.

"Lake Grove Park is part of the Parks Master Plan to provide access to more trails and open space for our citizens to connect with nature," says Dowell. This project and other potential parks can be found in the Midlothian Park Vision Plan that was approved by City Council in 2022. As stated in the five-year Strategic Plan of Midlothian Community Development Corporation (MCDC), supporting parks and recreation infrastructure projects like this is one of MCDC's key priorities.



Courtyard by Marriott opened in 2016. Breakfast, dinner and cocktails are offered in its Bistro.

### **Discover Courtyard by Marriott – the area's only full-service hotel south of I-20**

Courtyard by Marriott has been serving Midlothian since 2016. "Being located next door to the Midlothian Conference Center makes it convenient to accommodate corporate clients holding meetings, as well as out-of-town visitors attending wedding receptions there," explains Gene Rios, area director of sales and marketing. Whether traveling for business or leisure, Courtyard guests will find the perfect blend of comfort and convenience, with all the amenities the full-service hotel has to offer, including a fitness center, outdoor pool, on-site dining, coffee and cocktails at the Bistro, as well as room service. Rios notes that people are surprised to learn they can also hold meetings and events in the hotel's conference space that can accommodate 60 for catered dining or up to 100 for theater-style seating.

"Having the Marriott entrust its brand to Midlothian helped us to build on what the Conference Center did to put the city on the map in the early 2000s," says Jan Davis, president of MCDC. "We greatly value our partnership with Marriott and look forward to what the future may hold for continued development in the vicinity."

"If you're in the area," says Rios, "stop by for a cup of Starbucks® coffee, and check out the property. We'd love to show you around."



# BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES



Joann Parker once worked as a cook at the center and since retiring, returns to play cards with her friends.

## Midlothian Senior Activity Center supports physical and mental wellness

"The goals of the Midlothian Senior Activity Center are to help people stay in their homes longer; lead a healthy, active lifestyle; and have a place to be with their peers," explains Senior Center Director Karen Cox. The Center has been serving the community's older adults in its current location since 2002. For \$5 a year, residents aged 50 and older can enjoy daily activities designed to promote physical and mental wellness. Members can visit the center between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, to play card and board games, make arts-and-crafts projects, use computers, participate in exercise classes and more. The Center provides free morning snacks in addition to lunch each weekday. Musical entertainment, educational programs, and field trips are frequently on the schedule as well. A caring and experienced staff works hard to provide quality services and programs in a safe and comfortable environment.

Operated by the City of Midlothian, Senior Center programs are provided on a donation-only basis, ensuring that no senior is denied services based on their ability to pay. MCDC has been a longtime benefactor of the Center, along with many individuals, businesses and corporate donors.

The Center is located on Mt. Zion Road between the Midlothian Conference Center and Navarro College at 4 Community Circle Drive. Drop by for a tour, or call to ask questions at (972) 775-6401. Information is also available on the city's website along with the Center's quarterly newsletter, <https://www.midlothian.tx.us>.



Jan Davis, MCDC president; her grandson, Carson; and friend, Henry Maxwell, staffed the Kindness Eclipses All booth at the watch event on April 8.

## Midlothian Community Development invests sales tax dollars into quality-of-life enhancements for citizens

Midlothian Community Development Corporation began in 1999 and has since funded grant requests for more than 100 projects that enhance the way we live and work in our hometown. Made possible by a 1/2-cent sales tax to create the Type B corporation, MCDC consists of a seven-member board appointed by the City Council. The board chooses projects that positively affect residents' quality of life and contribute to the local economy. Funds must exclusively be used for qualified development projects authorized by state statute, ranging from small to large improvements in parks, roads, auditoriums, open spaces and the like. For more information about how projects are evaluated and funded, contact MeLissa Boler, senior manager, at (972) 775-7181 or [MeLissa.Boler@midlothian.tx.us](mailto:MeLissa.Boler@midlothian.tx.us).





CookingNOW

*In the Kitchen With*

CARMEN CARDONA

— By Angel Morris

Carmen Cardona fondly recalls her parents cooking together. “My love of cooking and baking comes from my parents. Both were awesome cooks,” she praised. “During holidays, I make and sell my mom’s original recipe tamales, and throughout the year, I also make and sell lunch plates.”

A single mom of four, Carmen and her children are all Midlothian graduates. “My oldest daughter does lash extensions and permanent makeup locally. My son is a truck driver. My other daughter is an administrative assistant, and my youngest will graduate from Midlothian High School in May. I’m proud of them all!” Carmen admitted. “My only grandchild, Michael Oropeza, loves to both eat and help me in the kitchen. He likes to invent new recipes sometimes.”

Today, Carmen pays tribute to her parents through food. “I use their recipes to feed family and friends. It’s my way of honoring them.” **NOW**

### Carne Guisada

**1 Tbsp. olive oil**  
**1/2 onion, diced**  
**2 cloves garlic, minced**  
**2 lbs. chuck steak, thinly sliced**  
**4 large Roma tomatoes, thinly sliced**  
**1 1/2 cups water (divided use)**

**1 jalapeño pepper, diced**  
**2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**Pepper, to taste**

**1.** Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic. Cook until softened.

**2.** Add the beef, cooking until lightly browned. Add the tomatoes. Cook until the tomatoes have softened. Mash the tomatoes with the back of a spoon to release their juice.

**3.** Add 1 cup water; bring to a boil. Add the peppers. Lower the heat; simmer for about 20-30 minutes. Add the remaining water, as needed.

**4.** Add the potatoes; simmer another 8-10 minutes, until the potatoes are tender. Season with salt and pepper.

### Homemade Flour Tortillas

**2 cups all-purpose flour**  
**1 tsp. baking powder**  
**1 tsp. salt**  
**1/4 cup vegetable oil**  
**3/4 cup warm water**

**1.** In a bowl, mix the flour, baking powder and salt together. Add the oil and water. Knead until soft. (If sticky, add flour, 1 tablespoon at a time, until you reach a soft, workable and stretchy dough.) Let sit 5-10 minutes.



2. Divide the dough into 10 equal portions. Heat a griddle. Lightly flour a work area.
3. Using a rolling pin, roll out the tortillas. Transfer the tortillas to the griddle; allow to cook 1-2 minutes on each side.

## Pear Bread

- 2 pears, grated
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 cups flour
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup pecans, chopped

1. In a bowl, mix together the grated pears and the sugar; let sit 20 minutes.
2. In a separate bowl, add the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, vegetable oil, eggs, vanilla and pecans; mix together. Add the pear and sugar mixture.
3. Pour the batter into loaf pans until 1/2 full. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour.

## Chicken Flautas

- 6-8 chicken breasts
- 2 cloves garlic
- Salt, to taste
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 1 serrano pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- Corn tortillas
- 3 Tbsp. Crisco
- Crema Mexicana, to taste
- Lettuce, shredded, to taste
- Queso fresco, to taste
- Jalapeños, sliced, to taste

1. In a large pot, boil the chicken with the garlic. Once boiling, add the salt to taste.
2. When the chicken is thoroughly cooked, remove it from the pot and shred the meat.
3. In a pan, add the olive oil, onions and serrano peppers; allow to sauté.
4. Add the shredded chicken and the chicken broth. Let simmer 10-15 minutes. Add the sour cream; let simmer so that the liquid is reduced. (You don't want too much liquid.)
5. When the liquid is reduced, take 12 corn tortillas at a time, and heat them in the microwave, about 45 seconds to 1 minute. (This will help them not to crack or break when rolling.) Place 1 tablespoon of the chicken mixture in each tortilla and roll them.
6. In another pan, heat the Crisco. Add the rolled tortillas; allow them to fry until slightly golden, turning until all sides are done. Place in a bowl or plate lined with paper towels.

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Shrimp Ceviche

- 2-3 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- Lemon juice from 5-6 lemons
- Salt, to taste
- Tostadas or crackers, to taste
- Valentina Hot Sauce, to taste

1. In a bowl, add the shrimp, onion, peppers, avocados, tomatoes, cilantro, lemon juice and salt.
2. Mix thoroughly. Serve on tostadas or crackers with a dash of Valentina Hot Sauce.

7. Plate and top them off with a drizzle of crema Mexicana, shredded lettuce, crumbled queso fresco and jalapeño slices. Serve with salsa, rice and beans.

1. Boil the tomatillos and peppers. Once boiled, place them in a blender.
2. Add the cilantro, onion, garlic and salt to taste. Puree to desired consistency.

### Salsa Verde

- 6 tomatillos
- 4-5 serrano or jalapeño peppers
- 5-6 sprigs cilantro (optional)
- 1/2 onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- Salt, to taste

### Shrimp Ceviche

- 2 bags salad shrimp
- 1 small white or red onion (your preference)
- 2 serrano or jalapeño peppers, diced (your preference)
- 3-4 avocados, diced

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

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# Dip Your TOES in the sand

— By Amber D. Browne

*On the coast of Alabama sits a 32-mile stretch of white sand beaches that entices visitors to frolic in the Gulf of Mexico. Children build castles or toss the football, and parents relax in the sun, slathered in sunscreen, of course, as they take in all that Alabama Beaches — the twin cities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach — have to offer.*

Alabama Beaches are about a 10 1/2-hour drive southeast from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. With 15 public beaches from Gulf Shores east along Alabama Highway 182 to Orange Beach, beachgoers have much to explore. Temporary vacation accommodations are offered at a variety of hotels, condos and houses along both sides

of the highway. Caribe Resort is a popular travel destination in Orange Beach. The resort features an on-site restaurant, several pools, beach trolley service and access to a marina.

Best Western Premier – The Tides Hotel is an affordable alternative. Best Western Premier offers typical room options, plus a double queen room with two bunk beds for the youngsters and suites. The outdoor pool on the lower level includes a bar for cocktails and beer for adults, or fruit smoothies for the children. With beach access and available chairs and umbrellas for rent, it is easy to spend most of your time on the beach near the hotel.

Swimmers might catch a glimpse of various species of marine life in the clear Gulf waters. Seasonal lifeguards keep a watchful eye to aid in emergency situations. For a view from outside the water, dolphin tours, parasailing, offshore fishing and even an Orange Beach Pirate Cruise can be booked for some fun out on the Gulf.

Orange Beach offers a variety of dining options from



The Gulf, with offerings of American fare near Perdido Pass, to Coastal and its menu of seafood, sandwiches and more, plus creative cocktails. Whatever restaurant is on the agenda, try the gumbo (if available) and try to make a reservation. For dessert, Kayden's Candy Factory is a must-try, but several ice cream and dessert shops offer tasty treats in the area.

Orange Beach's retail shops are open for all your vacation necessities and souvenirs. For an afternoon of entertainment, vacationers can visit Adventure Island for go-karts, golf, arcades and more. At Gulf State Park, visitors can spend their days swimming, hiking, biking and simply enjoying time in nature. Anglers can catch a big one at area fishing spots, including the Gulf State Park Pier, which is expected to reopen this summer following renovations for damage caused during Hurricane Sally in 2020. The state park offers a variety of camping and lodging options, as well.

Just a short drive north sits The Wharf, where visitors can spend hours shopping retail stores, enjoying entertainment and feasting at waterfront restaurants along Portage Creek. Go for a spin on the Ferris Wheel, view the nightly SPECTRA Laser Light Experience or catch a concert at The Wharf Amphitheater. Hotel accommodations are available at The Wharf, and The Wharf Marina provides access to guests joining by land, air or sea.

Several miles west of Orange Beach, vacationers will find Gulf Shores, where more white sand beaches await to tempt them into the warm waters. Gulf Shores offers even more dining, nightlife, entertainment and shopping options.

Regardless of where you choose to dip your toes in the sand at Alabama Beaches, much fun is to be had and fresh seafood to be shared with family and friends. The peak season includes the summer months, so if Alabama is on your mind, make those reservations soon. **NOW**

**Sources:**

1. [gulfshores.com](http://gulfshores.com).
2. [cariberesort.com](http://cariberesort.com).
3. [alwharf.com](http://alwharf.com).
4. [alapark.com/parks/gulf-state-park](http://alapark.com/parks/gulf-state-park).

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# Oh, Baby!

— By Becky Walker



*Once considered an event only for the mom-to-be and her close female friends and relatives, these days, couples' baby showers are becoming more popular. The choice of whether to go with a more traditional shower or to open it up to everyone is strictly up to the expectant parents. But if you have older children, an inclusive shower might be an excellent way to help them get excited and feel involved as they await the arrival of their new sibling. So, how do you throw a baby shower that everyone in the family will enjoy?*

Of course, the focus of any baby shower will be the gifts for the new little one. If you already have other children, it is natural for them to feel a little anxious or even a little jealous over the new baby. After all, their own place in the family is about to change, and they aren't going to have as much of your undivided attention as they are used to. So, why not make the baby shower more like a birthday party held before the birth? Older children will understand the baby getting gifts in this setting — and if there are games or activities planned especially with them in mind, they won't get bored and will have a great time. Depending on their ages, they can even help with the preparations.

Any good party needs great food. Do you have a great pitmaster in the family? This would be the perfect time for them to show off their skills. Who doesn't love homemade brisket sandwiches? Traditional sides that have been passed down through the family like mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese or barbecued beans could be

prepared ahead of time, or various family members could bring a dish potluck style. Round out the meal with a tres leches cake or a variety of cupcakes.

When hosting a baby shower of this nature, make sure some of the games are geared toward the children who are present. Do you have a swimming pool? Consider opening it up. Just make sure you have communicated with each child's parents about this plan in advance, so no one arrives without a swimsuit! Also, be sure an adult lifeguard is present at all times for safety reasons.

A baby pacifier hunt is a big hit! This is basically an Easter egg hunt, but instead of hunting for candy-filled eggs, the children hunt for candy baby pacifiers. You can also purchase plastic pacifiers at a party store and attach your choice of candies to them with a piece of tape. Have the children decorate a paper sack with crayons and their choice of baby-themed stickers before the hunt begins.

A game that will be enjoyed by adults





and children alike is called Guess How Many Candies. A large plastic baby bottle-shaped jar can be purchased for this game, or you can use any clear candy jar. Before everyone arrives, count each piece of candy as you add it to the jar. Write down the total for later reference. Whoever guesses closest to the actual total without going over wins. Have a sheet of paper next to the jar where people can write their name and their guess. The winner gets to keep the jar of candy!

The baby bottle chugging game brings a lot of laughs and is another game that both adults and children can enjoy. Fill several baby bottles with juice, milk, Kool-Aid, etc. Whoever finishes drinking their bottle first is the winner!

Remember that the key to any good party is to keep things moving. Space out the games and activities to keep people interested in what is going to happen next. And make sure to open the presents before people start to leave! Everyone wants to see your reaction to their gifts for the new little one! **NOW**




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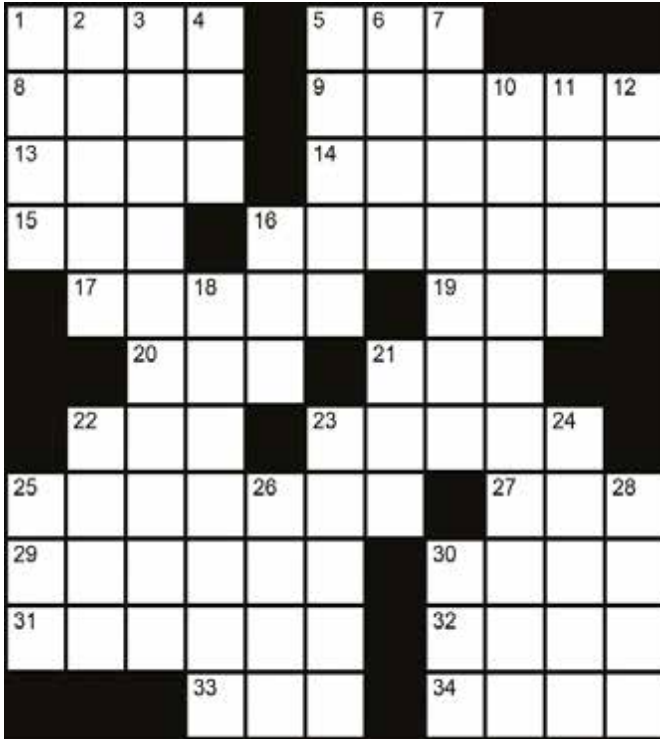
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# Crossword Puzzle



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## Across

- 1 Diamond element?
- 5 Norm, briefly
- 8 October's birthstone
- 9 Puncture
- 13 Goose cry
- 14 Tip off
- 15 Piece
- 16 "And Still I Rise" poet
- 17 Luxurious
- 19 Kind of deal in the 1930s
- 20 Open mesh fabric
- 21 Cleo's nemesis
- 22 "... Degrees of Separation"
- 23 Live

## Down

- 1 Atomic physicist Niels ---
- 2 "... --- player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage ..." (Shakespeare, "Macbeth")
- 3 Nicaraguan politico
- 4 Large deer
- 5 Like a porcupine
- 6 Sound of a small bell
- 7 Resistance against attack
- 10 Deploy Earl badly on stage, perhaps?
- 11 Humiliating meal?
- 12 It'll never get off the ground in Australia
- 16 AIDS fighter
- 18 Cloth
- 21 Amazement
- 22 Adam and Eve's third
- 23 Overpowering fear
- 24 Skier's shelter
- 25 First animal in the Chinese Zodiac
- 26 "Little Shop of Horrors" dentist --- Scrivello
- 28 Shakespeare character "more sinned against than sinning"
- 30 Medical insurer

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.

## OVERCOMING SELF-HATE: A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY AND COMPASSION



**Ufon Ahime, Ph.D.**  
Mental Health Coach  
[ufonahime@higherlivingtoday.org](mailto:ufonahime@higherlivingtoday.org)

Self-hate can be a pervasive and damaging force that profoundly impacts our mental health. When we harbor negative feelings toward ourselves, it can lead to low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and even self-destructive behaviors. Constant self-criticism and feelings of worthlessness erode our sense of self-worth and contribute to a cycle of negative thinking.

The first step in overcoming self-hate is acknowledging its presence and its effects on our mental well-being. This involves cultivating self-awareness and recognizing the patterns of negative self-talk and self-sabotage.

Next, we need to practice self-compassion. This involves treating ourselves with the same kindness and understanding that we would offer to a friend in need. We must challenge the harsh inner critic and replace negative thoughts with affirmations of self-worth and acceptance. A support network of friends, family, or mental health professionals can provide validation and encouragement as we navigate our journey toward self-love.

Engaging in self-care activities that nourish our mind, body, and spirit is also crucial. This could include exercise, mindfulness practices, hobbies, or creative outlets that bring us joy and fulfillment.

No matter the root of our self-hate, we can cultivate a greater sense of self-worth and inner peace by prioritizing our mental health and actively challenging negative beliefs.



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

Medium

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

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5/1

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5/9

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**Le Freak Beats:**  
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5/18

**Wildflower Walk:**  
9:00 a.m., Mockingbird Nature Park, 1361 Onward Road.

**Janie Fricke in Concert:**  
Doors open: 7:00 p.m.; start time: 8:00 p.m., The Texas Theater, 110 W. Main St., Waxahachie. For ticket information, visit <https://thetxtheater.com>.

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**Jesus Feeds Us:**  
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## Saturdays

**Midlothian Farmers Market:**  
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*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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