Burlesonne

Shimmering in the Spotlight

Pageants open doors for Zaylee Boyer

2025 Hot Sounds of Summer Shopping Guide **In the Kitchen With** Bailee Piercefield

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

Featured Business: Mountain Valley Studios

Postal CustomerECHM28 EDDW



Martha, Midlothian, TX

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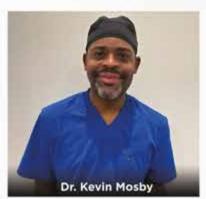
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ON THE COVER



Zaylee Boyer learns life skills through pageant competitions.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (817) 477-0990 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.





EDITOR'S NOTE

Are you ready?

After what feels like the longest months of the year are finally over, May brings many things to celebrate. On 5/4, nerds everywhere celebrate Star Wars Day, greeting everyone they meet with, "May the Fourth be with you." Directly after, we celebrate Cinco de Mayo, which marks Mexico's victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla. Dust off your kid-sized cookware and remember to buy a gift because mothers get their special day on 5/11, when we celebrate all the sacrifices they've made and the love so readily they give. We end the month with Memorial Day, 5/26, when we'll take the time to honor the friends, family and strangers who've made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country.

May also kicks off the first round of graduations. Whether you are leaving kindergarten, middle school, high school or college, congratulations to you and your hard-earned accomplishments. For those who still have a little more schooling to do, have a happy summer and a well-deserved break from learning. Just don't forget your summer reading!

During the final full weekend of May, bikers from all over will travel to Burleson to challenge themselves at the Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce BTX Honey Tour. As a way to kick off the summer and celebrate the bikers' accomplishments, the Parks and Recreation Department is hosting the Third Annual BTX Honey Tour Carnival. If you see me there, feel free to come up and tell me what fun things you've been up to this month! I look forward to chatting with you.

May this month be a good one!



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- 1 -10 lb. Smoker Ready Brisket
- 1 7 lb. Pork Shoulder (for Pulled Pork)
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In 2023, then-fourth-grader Zaylee Boyer received a letter from National American Miss stating someone had recommended her for their pageants and inviting her to participate in an open call. "I was like, 'Mom, I'd like to try this out. This could be a big opportunity for me."

At the time, the only thing on Zaylee's schedule was her weekly gymnastics practices, so she was eager to participate in more extracurricular activities. "I don't know I love something until I try it out. When I was 6, I did a front roll in my living room. I was like, 'Mom, you should sign me up for gymnastics.' So I went Ito the pageant open call] and tried it out." There, the organizers interviewed Zaylee to see if she was fit to compete. "I got the letter saying I got in, and I'm going to be doing the state pageant!"

Although she'd received help from the organizers before the state competition, Zaylee felt nervous that day. She'd spent months preparing for the interview questions, writing her résumé, practicing her talent and rehearsing her personal introduction. "I was not excited for the personal introduction. I didn't know how to act in that. I was playing with my hands," she lamented. Despite her nerves and inexperience, Zaylee's dedication to preparing for the state pageant competition

helped her place in the top 10.

Since her first state competition, Zaylee has competed in two nationals and one other state pageant, with her third state competition occurring this June. During her first experience at nationals, Zaylee only got to perform her gymnastics routine for the talent portion, which occurred before she and her little brother, Zakary, came down with the flu. Despite having been wary due to her encroaching illness, Zaylee placed 4th runner-up in the talent portion.

At her second state pageant, she was crowned National American Miss Texas Pre-Teen Cover Girl, along with winning Miss Spirit, the Portfolio Award, Spirit of Pageantry and 4th Runner Up Photogenic. When she got to compete at nationals over Thanksgiving 2024, Zaylee won Spirit of Pageantry again and was crowned National Cover Girl.

"They're showing me how to be confident." Before competing in pageants, talking to strangers made Zaylee nervous. "When I first went to state pageants, I didn't know anybody. Now, I know people. I'll go up and talk to them. My confidence has been growing." Zaylee has enjoyed befriending her fellow contestants. "We all support each other. We all say, 'Good luck!' We're all there for each other."









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Zaylee appreciates the résumé and the interview portions of the competition since she knows, along with her confidence, they will prepare her for when she searches for jobs later in life. "The interview is probably one of my favorite parts. You get one-on-one time with the judges. They ask questions about everything. They ask what charities you donate to. 'If you got a million dollars, what would you do with it?' They also make sure to say when they ask that question, 'Don't just say you'll donate it all to charity," she explained.

To participate in pageants, Zaylee must log hours of community service or donations. "Before the pageants, I didn't know what community service was," she said. Over the past couple of years, she's gotten to serve at Harvest House, pick up trash with her school and at Trash Bash, donate to the animal shelter and Blessing Boxes and greet her peers at her church. "I'm glad they [require] community service. It helps you realize your community sometimes needs help," she said. "It was really fun, especially the times I've done it with my friends and my mom.

"My favorite part is getting to stand up on stage in a dress that I feel confident in. It feels special to be up there. When I'm up there, I think of all the things I've done leading up to NAM. I think about all the community service I've done. All the people who I have helped. I also think about my parents, who've helped me with everything. I could never have done pageants without them," Zaylee said.

In addition to the thrill of the competition and the joy of being in the spotlight, Zaylee's favorite thing to come out of participating in pageants has been all the traveling she's gotten to do. "We didn't really travel much, but now we do, especially for NAM." For her state competitions, Zaylee has traveled from Dallas to Houston. To compete in nationals, she and her family stayed for the week in Orlando, Florida. "We got to go to Universal Studios, which was so much fun!" she said. As a National Cover Girl, Zaylee and her family have been invited on a cruise to the Bahamas this summer. "This is going to be the first cruise I've ever been on, and I'm so excited!" she shared.

When she's not preparing for pageants, Zaylee keeps her plate full of other activities that pique her interest. She competes on her gymnastics team, which she dedicates 11 hours a week to practicing for. She loves playing on her trampoline with Zakary, watching crime shows with her mom and spending time with her cousins. "I'm not just pageants," Zaylee expressed. "I can do a lot of other things. I can do volleyball. I'm going to be trying out for cheer soon. I have gymnastics. I recently did an archery competition. I'm an Honor Roll student. I also do theater in school." When she grows up, Zaylee hopes to be a crime scene investigator, so she can solve mysteries like the ones she watches on TV. Until then, she's excited to continue competing in pageants and seeing what opportunities they lead to.

"To the person that recommended me, I am so glad that they did," Zaylee smiled. "That's what led me to where I am today. I would have never gotten to meet new people. I would have never gotten to see how much I could help out my community." NOW





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- By Emma McKay

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"I think all kids should do music," Rebecca Brown, owner and founder of Mountain Valley Studios, stated. Rebecca began taking piano lessons at age 6 and fell in love with the instrument. "In 1991, I taught my first piano lesson in college and just went, 'That's what I want to do for the rest of my life.' I've taught ever since."

At Mountain Valley Studios, Rebecca offers private piano lessons, group piano, private voice, group voice in her Little Singers classes and preschool music in her Little Mozarts classes. "I love the development of communication in children. Reading music is a form of communication. Performing music is another form of communication. That's why music is exciting for me to teach. I like being a part of that process."

Her Music for Little Mozarts class exposes kids ages 3 to 5 to the basics of music in a fun and engaging way. "A lot of that class is rhythm, how to clap to a steady beat and how to listen to music and respond to it. They're learning things like high and low, fast and slow, loud and soft — all those opposites in music." They also learn about different composers and styles of music, and, in the second-level course, they start to learn how to read music, too. Although it's neither a piano class nor a prerequisite for taking piano lessons with her, Rebecca encourages parents who do want their children to eventually take piano to enroll them. "Some of those inhibitions students sometimes come into piano with, they're getting rid of those because they're interacting with other kids, and it's fun. It feels like playtime," she stated. "Those kids are always a lot more successful when they start piano lessons."

In her Little Singers class, Rebecca teaches kids ages 5 to 8 how to confidently sing within their natural range. "We work on breath control and learning how to find their head voice. Young kids usually already sing that way. It's about encouraging them to keep singing that way." Students learn diction and solfège, so their words will be clear and on pitch. "I work with them on self-confidence. Singing by yourself in front of an audience is way more intimidating than playing an instrument because you are your instrument. I don't force them to do anything by themselves in front of the class. That's an advantage of the group. They have that security blanket of their friends singing along with them."

"Hove the development of communication in children. Reading music is a form of communication. **Performing music** is another form of communication."

In addition to her classes throughout the year, Rebecca offers mini camps for both her Little Mozarts and Little Singers classes that cover many of the same concepts as during the regular semester. Piano students are welcome to participate in the themed piano camps, where they get to play piano games, do on-theme crafts and play ensembles among other activities. Although it's primarily her students who sign up for it, students from other piano studios are welcome to attend. "It's a fun supplemental thing they can do."

In January, Rebecca moved the studio from Cleburne to its new location in Burleson. "I'm super excited for this new location. It's more accessible for the students." With this new location also comes an increased ability to focus on her passion for teaching and inspiring confidence in students through music. NOW



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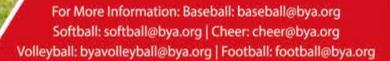
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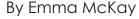




Around Town



Zoomed In: Lisa Chick





Morgan Beach of Beach Insurance Group, LLC, finds the right plans for Burleson's health care needs.

Lisa Chick, vice chair of the Burleson Animal Shelter Advisory Committee and treasurer of the Cowtown Heifers, refereed the basketball team's fundraiser game against the Burleson Fire Department, supporting the shelter's injured animal fund. "I've played basketball all my life," she shared.

After discovering the Granny Basketball League, a 501(c)(3) comprised of women over 50 who play basketball for charity, Lisa knew she had to join. "We have a good time together. It's very social," she noted.

Lisa (pictured on the right with team captain Kay Vaughan) enjoys meeting women on the organization's 52 other teams across America and Canada. "We have a lot of fun as a group," Lisa said. "We eat together, we travel together and we give each other a hard time."



Lily, Jennifer, Sadie and Tucker Tawater have fun chatting and running around at Cindy Park.



The i9 Sports crew kicks off the sports season with a day of play for Burleson youth at Hughes Middle School.



Therapy dogs and their humans celebrate Employee Appreciation Day at Texas Health Huguley.



Amanda, Garrett, Josie and Everrett Bonham play together at Mistletoe Hill Park.



Apollo, Amanda and Amelia Flores take advantage of the warm weather by spending the day in the great outdoors!



Rosina Wallace and Josianne and Aurora Scholl enjoy the newly remodeled Centennial Park.



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CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH BAILEE PIER(FFIFID

- By Emma McKay



"I love making recipes passed down from my mom, trying recipes from others and creating new, delicious dishes," Bailee Piercefield shared. "I grew up on the outskirts of Burleson. With two working parents and a busy schedule playing travel ball and high school soccer, our meals had to be quick and simple — but they never lacked flavor."

Bailee's love of food led her to earning a degree in gastronomy and kitchen management from The Culinary School of Fort Worth. "I cook for my amazing husband every day. We also live just a stone's throw away from my in-laws, so I always share meals with them to make sure they're getting something delicious, too!" She also enjoys sharing the recipes she creates online. She laughed, "I just love to eat!" NOW

Watermelon Lemonade

- 2 cups watermelon
- 3 lemons, juiced
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 cups water
- 1. Blend the watermelon, lemons and sugar until smooth.
- 2. Pour the mixture into a pitcher; fill it with water. Adjust the sugar to taste; serve chilled for a cool, fruity treat!

Nana's Potato Salad

- 3 lbs. Golden Potatoes, cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 tsp. salt (divided use)
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 5 eggs
- 1/2 white onion, diced small
- I cup bread and butter pickles, chopped small
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp. yellow mustard
- I tsp. onion powder
- I tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika, plus extra for topping
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. bread and butter pickle juice
- **1.** Add the potatoes to a large pot of water with 1 tsp. of salt. Bring to a low boil for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft. Strain the water into a medium-size pot; let the potatoes cool.
- **2.** To the water, add the remaining 1 tsp. salt and baking soda. Bring to a boil. Add the eggs; cook for 12 minutes. Remove the eggs; place them into a bowl filled with ice and water for 10 minutes. After cooling, peel and chop 4 of the eggs into bite-size pieces. Place them into a large bowl. Cut the last egg in half from top to bottom; set
- **3.** Add the rest of the ingredients to the large bowl with the chopped eggs. Gently toss. Once the potatoes are cool, fold them into the mixture. Taste and adjust any seasoning to your preference.
- 4. Clean the sides of the bowl. Place the last egg in the middle with the yolk side facing up. Sprinkle with smoked paprika.
- **5.** Refrigerate for 12 hours for the best results.

Cherry Dr Pepper Baby Back Ribs

- 2 slabs baby back ribs
- 4 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 2 tsp. smoked paprika
- 3 tsp. garlic powder
- 2 tsp. onion powder

1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper 3 cups barbecue sauce 2 cups Cherry Dr Pepper

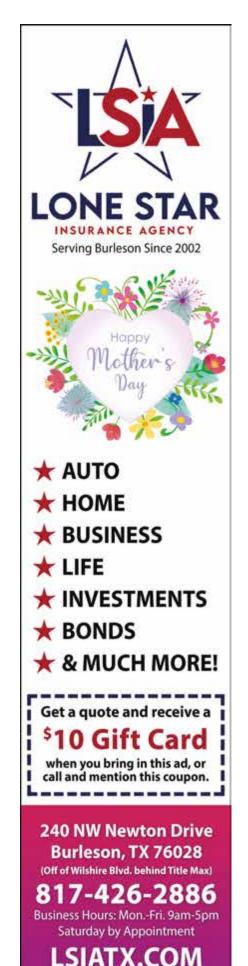
1 stick (8 Tbsp.) butter, cut into Tbsps. (divided use)

- **I.** Preheat the oven to 275 F.
- 2. Line a large baking sheet with foil. Remove the silver skin from the back of the rihs
- 3. In a small bowl, mix the brown sugar, salt, black pepper, smoked paprika, garlic powder, onion powder and cayenne pepper. Rub the seasonings evenly over both sides of the ribs.
- 4. Place the ribs meat-side up on the prepared baking sheet; bake for 2 hours.
- 5. In a medium bowl, mix the barbecue sauce and Cherry Dr Pepper; set aside.
- 6. After 2 hours, remove the ribs from the oven. Lay out two long sheets of foil, slightly overlapping. In the center of the foil, place 4 Tbsp. of butter and 1/2 cup of the barbecue sauce mixture.
- **7.** Place the ribs meat-side down on top of the butter. Add the remaining 4 Tbsp. of butter on the bone side. Wrap tightly in the foil.
- **8.** Return the wrapped ribs to the baking sheet, with the meat side down, and bake for another 2 hours.
- **9.** After the second bake, carefully remove the ribs from the foil; place them meat-side up on the baking sheet. Brush with more barbecue sauce.
- **10**. Broil for 1-2 minutes until the sauce is bubbly and sticky.
- 11. Let rest for a few minutes before serving. The ribs should be tender and fall off the bone. Enjoy!













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- Virginia Woolf

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Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	
10	T	+	T		11	+	+	+	+	
12	T	T	\vdash	13		\vdash	\vdash	T	T	14
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	35	+	+	+	╁		36	+	+	+

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Online versions and solutions available at www.nowmagazines.com. From our Homepage, click on the Features tab. Click on the Crossword-Sudoku tab. Click on a puzzle to view solutions.

Across

- Wind-driven clouds
- 5 Facebook's home Park
- 10 Without accompanimen t
- 11 Understand finer mess
- 12 Juice
- 15 A nickel short of a dollar
- 16 "I Guess ---Rather Be in Colorado" (John Denver)
- 17 It's about three-quarters of the Earth's surface
- 18 Had liabilities
- 20 Colorfulsounding name for a man?
- 21 Bud supporter
- 22 One-third of a 1970 Pearl Harbor movie

- 23 Exact double
- 24 Anger
- 25 Old card game 26 Easy-going airport?
- 27 "More info
- 30 Owned apartment
- 33 Sao ---, Brazil
- 34 Jane Austen's meddling matchmaker
- 35 The Memorial --- Kettering Cancer Center
- 36 Citrus peel, particularly when grated

- Down
 - Citizen Kane's Rosebud, for example
 - 2 Health menace 26 E ---
 - 3 Stoic
 - 4 John Lennon was murdered in this month
 - 5 Stuck fast
 - 6 Geraint's wife in "Idylls of the King" (Tennyson)
 - 7 Packers' group
 - 8 Duty-free hours?
 - 9 Salsa brand
 - 13 Not us
 - 14 Mocking cry
 - 19 Skin lump
 - 20 Big bike
- 21 Pounces
- 22 Joni Mitchell's was big and yellow
- 23 Maintenance, perhaps

- 24 Manor reorganised a Spanish fellow
- 26 Barry Manilow's drunken showgirl
- 28 Mooches
- 29 "I --- a loss for words!"
- 31 Batman and Robin, for example
- 32 Percé (Northwest Native Americans)





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46TH ANNIVERSARY

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5/3

Cinco de Mayo:

Bring the family for a night of fun! Music by Texican Internet Radio and performances from the Daniel Lopez y Aventura band and Ballet de Folklorico de Fort Worth. Food and drinks available for purchase. 6:00-8:00 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St.

5/10

Mother's Day Outing:

Enjoy a Mother's Day outing featuring a DJ, local vendors, raffle items, giveaways and more! If special accommodations are needed to participate, please email inclusion@burlesontx. com. This event is free, but registration is needed to guarantee your food (while supplies last). 5:00-7:00 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St. Register at burlesontx.com/events.

5/16

Show Me How Festival:

Observe Texan artisans showing off their cool skills right in front of you, munch on delicious food, groove to live music and shop tons of unique stuff. It's gonna be a blast for the whole family! 5:00-8:00 p.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. CR 714.

5/22-5/25

BTX Honey Tour Carnival:

Experience the third annual BTX Honey Tour Carnival. Celebrate the fun, festive, family atmosphere of Burleson with live music featuring a variety of bands. Enjoy novelty entertainment, carnival rides, arts and crafts vendors, an entertainment stage, food and plenty of fun for all! Free parking and admission. Thursday: 5:00-10:00 p.m.; Friday-Saturday: noon-11:00 p.m.; Sunday: 2:00-11:00 p.m., Old Town Burleson.

5/23-7/4

Hot Sounds of Summer:

Every **Friday night,** experience electrifying music and unforgettable vibes. 7:30-9:00 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza in Old Town,

141 W. Renfro St.

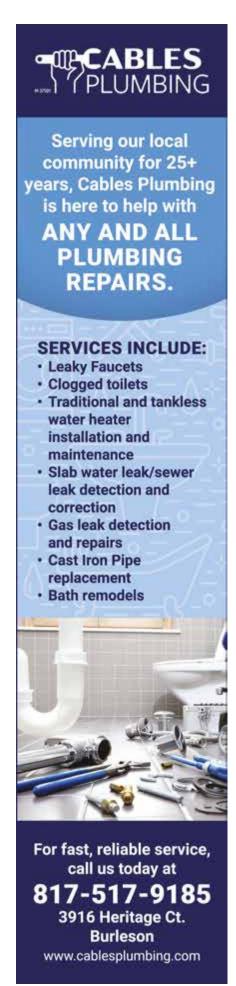
5/26

Pops at the Pool:

Celebrate the start of summer with games, popsicles and fun at the pool! Admission and popsicles are free. 1:00-7:00 p.m., BRiCk outdoor pool, 550 NW Summercrest Blvd.

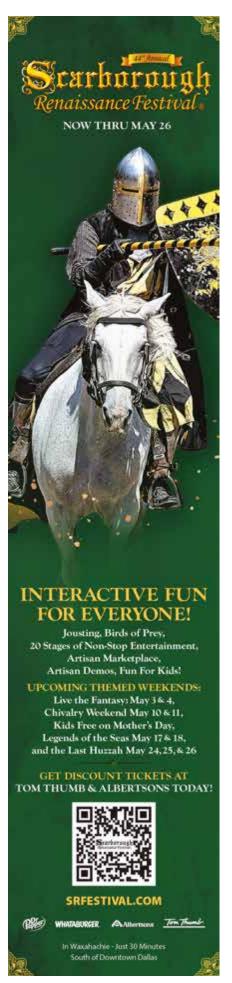
Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to emma.mckay@nowmagazines.com.

















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