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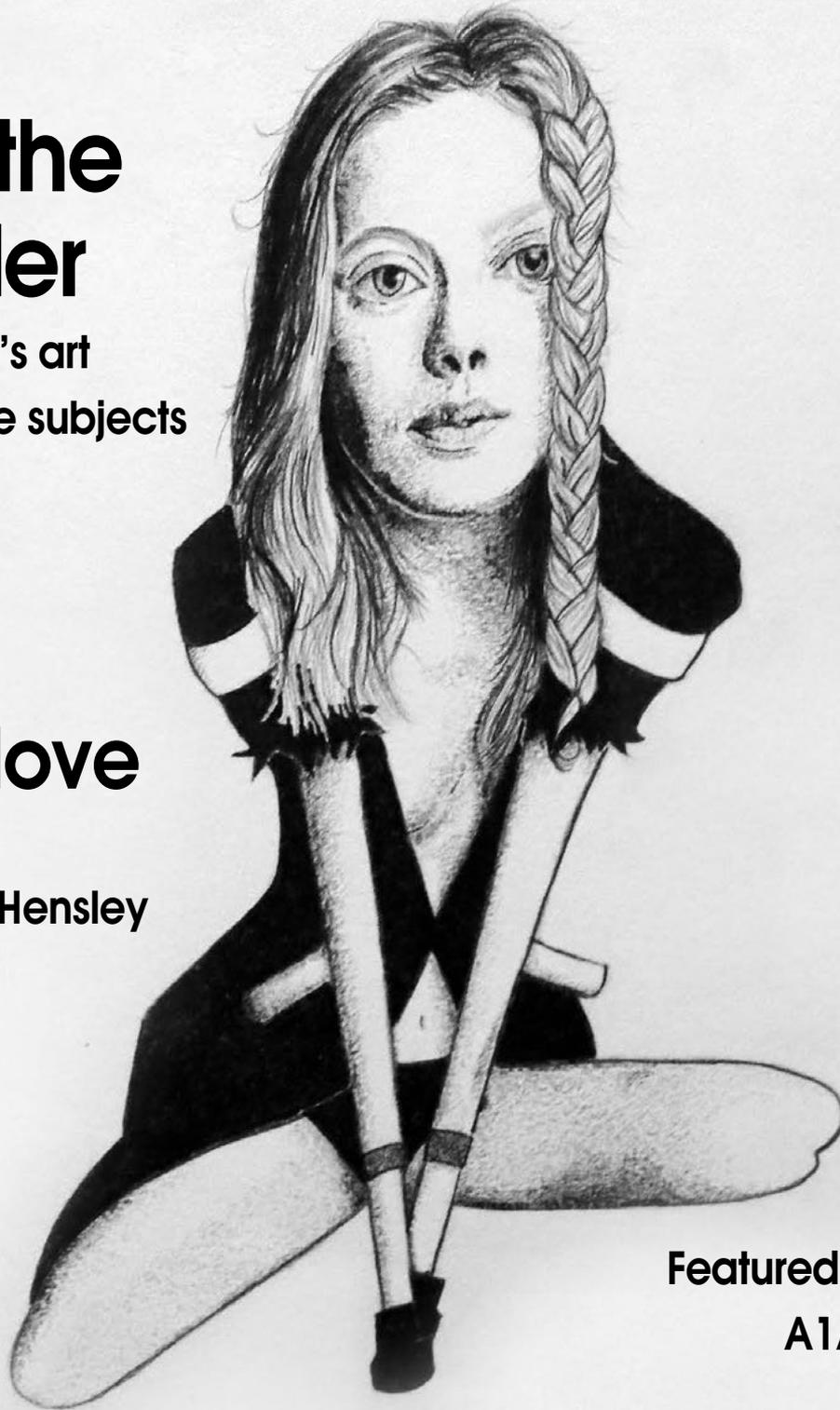
JUNE 2018

Eye of the Beholder

Ariel Janousek's art portrays unique subjects

Smart Move

At Home With
Mark and Kim Hensley



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ON THE COVER

Ariel Janousek intertwines traditional and nontraditional beauty.

Photo by Hannah Chartrand.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Angel

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Hello, Midlothian!

While it has one fewer day than most months, June is beloved as the start of summer. Daylight hours are the longest they will be all year, presenting the perfect opportunity to dive back in ... to the pool, a good book by the pool or to pool your resources and tackle an outdoor project. Children have more time to be kids, and adults, hopefully, can explore adventures not possible during the rest of the year.

I'm not much of a camper, although the "glamping" (glamorous camping) trend has a little more appeal. This month, we offer tips toward finding the vehicle best suited to your own camping or traveling desires. Our June stories also showcase an inspirational young woman who transcends a disability through art, a cook whose favorite meal was served on mission fields, and homeowners who, appropriately for this month, installed a pool with their grandchildren-to-be in mind.

Perhaps the best thing about June is the longer daily opportunity to sit in the sun and do nothing at all. Discovering the rare neighborhood lemonade stand, watching children run through lawn sprinklers, enjoying a snow cone that never tastes better than in the summer — all simple opportunities one might seize during this one-day-shorter month. For me, at least, the days of having nothing in particular to do are when I most appreciate all I already have to celebrate in my everyday life.

Enjoy your June and everything — or nothing — it allows you to do!



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Eye of the

Behold



Art is beauty. When an artist puts a pencil to the canvas, he or she has a beautiful image in mind to convey to their audience. For Ariel Janousek, art is a way to show the beauty in people, even when the world may not see them as beautiful. And now, Ariel is taking her work to a broader audience.

Ariel has lived in Midlothian with her parents and brother most of her life. "I went to Baxter, Walnut Grove and then graduated last year from Midlothian High School," she detailed. Like most people, she drew and colored as a small child, and it was at an early age that she realized she really liked art. "I think I was in first grade when I started to think I could be an artist when I grew up," she recalled.

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

Art



Fast forward to today, and Ariel just finished her freshman year at Navarro College, highlighted by a showcase of about a dozen of her favorite drawings. With her art, Ariel tells a story of how she sees herself, how she sees beauty



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where some others do not and how living as someone whom others see as different has shaped her life.

Ariel was born with a rare condition called VATER syndrome. "With this syndrome, I had severe scoliosis that had shaped my spine to a 90-degree angle. It resulted in numerous surgeries," she said. Symptoms and severity vary with this syndrome. Ariel's heart is on the opposite side of her body, and her left leg did not form fully, resulting in her permanent use of a walker and needing an eventual amputation to that leg.

Rather than dwell on how this impacted her, Ariel focused on drawing. By the time she was in middle school, art had become a very important part of her life. "I was drawing consistently," she said. "Mainly a lot of fantasy, castles and superheroes that I admired from watching cartoons. And horses, because I admire horses."

When Ariel reached high school, though, a little direction helped take her skills to new levels. "My art teacher, Mr. Gentry, was the most influential person for my art," she recalled. "He encouraged me to use it to express myself. He suggested I draw people with disabilities to show that there is more to them."

Once she started focusing on the beauty of people who look different, Ariel's art took a new form, and

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her passion exploded in her work. “Typically, I’ll use some picture as a starting point when I draw. But then I add my own spin on them, so I can show their beauty in new ways,” she explained.



Ariel’s work intertwines traditional and non-traditional beauty. One of her favorite pieces is that of a young girl with a pretty, but sullen, face. At first glance, she appears to be sitting with her dress covering her legs. Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that her arms have been replaced by crutches, and she has no legs at all. “That drawing is kind of how I see myself, with how much I



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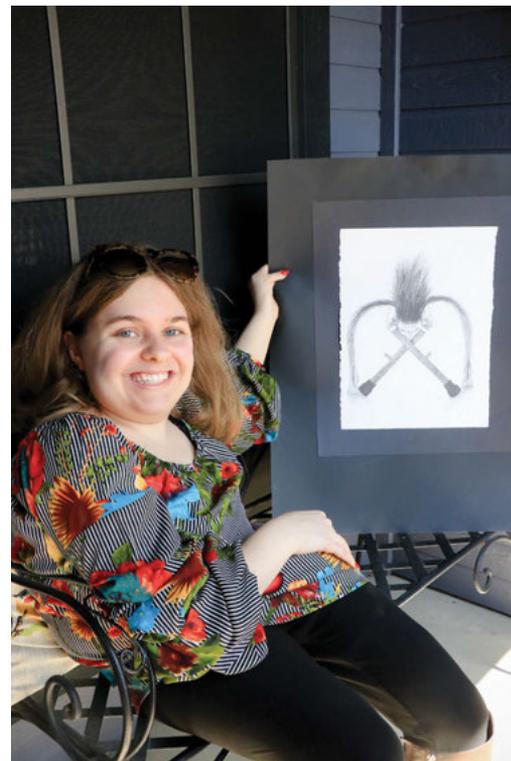
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“Typically, I’ll use some picture as a starting point when I draw. But then I add my own spin on them, so I can show their *beauty* in new ways.”

rely on my arms for art and for just getting around,” Ariel explained.

While none of her drawings look like her on the surface, many of them express how she feels about herself. One piece depicts a girl who is made up of little more than a head, crutches and long, flowing hair. “Even though she has crutches, she kind of uses her hair to stand, because that’s the thing she finds supporting her and what makes her unique,” Ariel said.

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Ariel enjoys sharing her art with others, and this year had her biggest audience yet. “My art appreciation teacher wanted to show off some of my work,” she said. “So, I had a collection on display in the college’s main building for most of the first semester.”

Ariel’s passion extends beyond her art. “I’m studying art, but also mechanical engineering,” she noted. “I want to make prosthetics with artistic designs.” She also plans to become certified as a physical therapist in order to work with those with disabilities. “I also yearn to have my own art gallery for selling my art and to hold fundraisers to give to children’s hospitals. Because everybody deserves a chance in life, no matter how different one looks,” she said.

When not drawing, Ariel likes hanging out with friends, advancing in her studies, going shopping with her mom and friends and gardening. Still, she is always thinking of new art goals. “I drew a portrait of my brother for his birthday,” she began. “But other than that, I’ve really only drawn girls. I want to start drawing men, young kids, cancer patients and even people with mental disorders, not just physical differences.”

The short biography displayed with Ariel’s college exhibit best summarizes her art’s purpose. “I want people to understand how I feel,” she said. “The girl with crutches doesn’t care what people see. She knows she’s beautiful.” **NOW**

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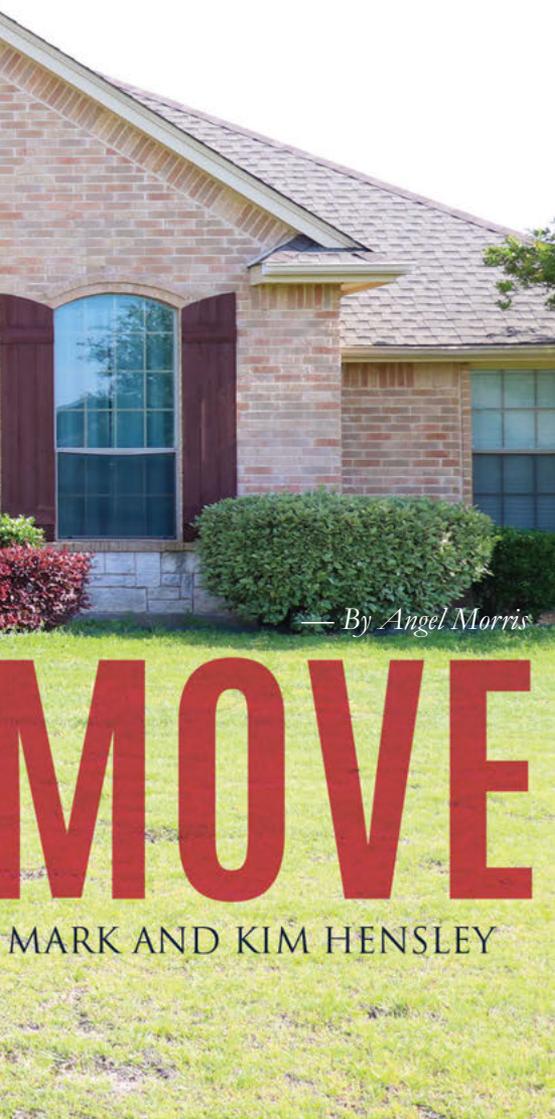


Like many people in the area, Mark and Kim Hensley moved to Midlothian for the schools, and stayed for the environment. After an extensive search of neighborhoods in 2003, the couple decided to build their current home in Westchester Estates. In 2004, they were one of the first families to settle there. “There were only three or four houses when we moved in. Now there are four streets and probably around 40 homes,” Mark noted.

Large lots allowed for plenty of space between homes, however, and it wasn't unusual to see coyotes, donkeys and chickens wandering near their property. “Our sons were 12 and 14, coming from the city, and suddenly they were outside trying to catch goats,” Mark recalled.

The boys weren't initially excited about the move from their home in Cedar Hill. “It was a hard sell on boys at that age,” Mark said. “But they made great friends. Now they are 26 and 28 and still stay in touch with the friends they made here.”





— By Angel Morris

MOVE

MARK AND KIM HENSLEY

Kim had a plan all along for getting the boys acclimated. “I knew I’d have them ride the bus to school. It was a long day — from about 7:30 in the morning to 4:45 in the afternoon — because our house is so far out,” Kim said. “But I knew they would meet kids on the bus, and that’s exactly what happened.”

While Mark and Kim graduated from Duncanville High School



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a few years apart, they met after school through mutual friends. They wanted their sons to grow up in an environment similar to what they experienced in their hometown. “They adapted quickly and loved growing up here,” Kim said. “The boys were always here, and their friends didn’t knock. They just came in. It was a neat neighborhood with those kinds of relationships.”

Their home’s split-bedroom design put the two boys’ bedrooms on one

side, and the master bedroom on the other. A semi-open concept living room, eat-in kitchen and dining room anchored the center of the home. “I expanded the kitchen/dining area by 3 feet and made what is traditionally a formal dining room into a small sitting area,” Kim recalled. “I love to cook, and everyone always gathers in this space, so I’m glad I enlarged it.”

Over the years, the Hensleys replaced much of the original flooring with dark hardwoods,

changed paint colors and updated lighting, but Kim’s original selection of tile and backsplash in timeless off-white shades allowed those items to remain. Gray and white furnishings with turquoise accent pieces update the living area.

Family favorites are sprinkled throughout the home, including an antique hutch in the breakfast nook that the Hensleys use as a coffee bar. Kim’s grandfather received the piece as payment for plowing a field in



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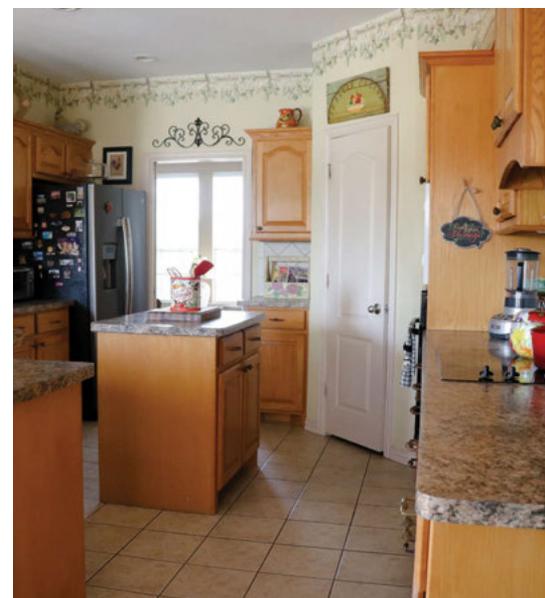
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Ennis. Another antique storage piece houses a stereo in the home's sitting area. "My mom stripped it of green paint and discovered it's made of tiger wood," Kim said. "We also have a painting my mom did of horses, and a few images of horses around the home, because I love them. I rode horses for fun in my youth."

Now empty nesters, Mark and Kim transformed the boys' rooms into guest spaces, while a third room has evolved into Mark's music area through the years. Kim created a custom wall border out of album covers in the room that houses Mark's guitar collection. "I've played guitar since I was 17 and am still in classic rock bands that perform around here. I write songs. My style is probably what you would call Americana ... blues, country, folk, rock, a little of all of those," Mark explained.

Although he hasn't counted, Mark estimates he owns 17 guitars, including the 1979 Fender Stratocaster he bought when it was first made. A mini fridge outfitted to look like a Marshall amplifier blends





in with Mark's music room collection, as well. His most vintage keepsakes are from Kim's mom. "I have all her old 45 records from the '50s and the stereo she got when she was 18. She's 75 now," Mark said.

While the music room will remain, plans are underway for building a studio on their land so Mark's entire five-man band, Random Blue, can practice together and "not disturb Kim or the neighbors." The couple also looks forward to an outdoor fireplace to accompany the pool they installed last year. "We don't have grandkids, but we built the pool with them in mind," Kim admitted of the not-too-deep pool with a shallow sundeck just outside their patio door.

Mark is a business applications specialist for Oncor, and Kim continues to substitute teach in MISD, where she formerly subbed and served as a job coach at Midlothian High School. In their free time, Mark plays baseball on a senior men's league, and Kim volunteers for Bridges Training Foundation.

The couple continues to host meals for family and enjoys the home they built 14 years ago. "The boys still have rooms, and we still gather in the kitchen when everyone is here," Kim said. "I couldn't really choose a favorite thing about the house. I love everything — all of it." **NOW**

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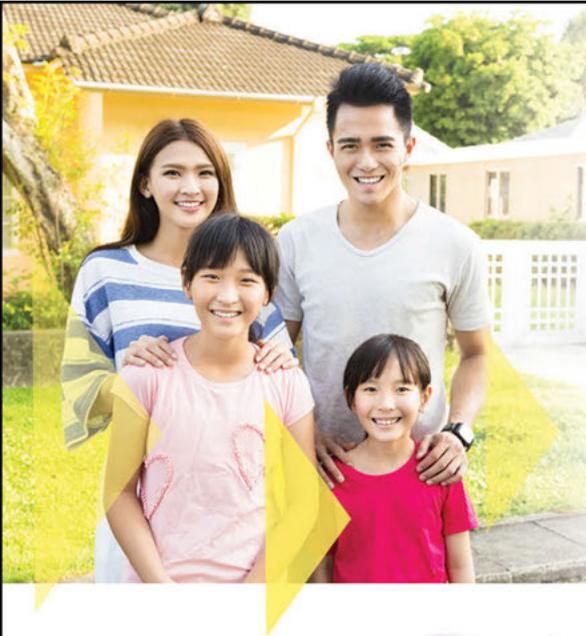
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Puppy Love

— By Angel Morris

Sage Lechtenberg proves that the next generation really is going to the dogs ... in the very best way. When the time came to plan her 12th birthday party, in fact, dogs were one of the first things to come to mind. "My mom and I had talked about what I wanted to do for my birthday, and I really didn't know. We adopted from the SPCA once. I wanted to volunteer over the summer, but I asked if me and my friends could volunteer for my birthday instead," Sage explained.

Sage's mom, Bre Gray, was not surprised by her daughter's decision to use her birthday as an opportunity to serve the community. "She's a very good girl with a big heart and big emotions. This was fun for her," Bre said. "I don't think she really understands how this was a big act of kindness. To her, it was just a natural thing."

While other tweens might prefer more traditional get-togethers and gifts, Sage instead committed to spending her birthday cleaning cages and cuddling animals at the Ellis County SPCA adoption center. "My friends were really excited. They talked about it all week before, and we even had matching shirts. They really had fun," Sage said of her guests' reaction to her unusual party plans. "Cleaning poop wasn't even that bad."

Further seeing things on the bright side, Sage didn't think of the unusual birthday as a loss of presents for herself, but as a gift to furry friends. With her mom's help, she took to Facebook to request animal-appropriate donations for the SPCA. "There wasn't anything I needed for my birthday. The animals needed things more than me," Sage said. "It was fun to collect for the animals instead."

Several friends responded to the Facebook post, and Sage was able to fill her mom's van with more than 50 towels and blankets, pet food and treats, cat litter and several toys — around 200 donations in all. "With my family and friends, it was a lot! I was happy the animals

would have new toys and special treats,” Sage said.

After unloading donations at the SPCA, Sage and her friends put on their “Give me all the puppies” T-shirts and spent the afternoon cleaning kennels, bathing dogs and feeding them treats, as well as loving on the SPCA’s pet residents. “I was happy to know they would have cleaner cages, and that they would feel loved,” Sage noted.

While Sage doesn’t yet know how she will top this idea on her next birthday — although she promises to give it some serious thought — her involvement with animals will undoubtedly continue. “She lives and breathes dogs. Ever since she could talk, she has wanted to be a veterinarian. Initially, she would say she wanted to be a vet in outer space,” Bre laughed. “Who knows? That may actually happen!”

In the meantime, the Frank Seale middle schooler works to keep her grades up in hopes of attending Texas A&M University someday. She enjoys practicing her clarinet, drawing, listening to music and spending time with her friends and youth group. “And, of course, time with my dog, Charlie,” Sage said of her pet, which the family rescued. “He’s my baby. I don’t think he knows he’s a dog!”

The unique birthday adventure also inspired Sage to seek more volunteer opportunities. “Last year, she spent a Saturday with us passing out blankets and toiletries to the homeless in Dallas. She has already talked about raising money this summer by washing and walking neighborhood dogs to help out the SPCA and wants to volunteer more,” Bre noted. “I am very proud of her heart and how it was so easy for her to just bypass a traditional party and gifts and donate her time. We’re thrilled to help her with her goal to volunteer more!” **NOW**



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PLAY BALL

Every spring and fall, umpires across the country yell out two words — “Play Ball!” — countless times as kids and adults participate in America’s pastime. As Midlothian has grown over the last two decades, its youth baseball association has grown, too. Blane Rogers has his work cut out for him, as he balances coaching a team with serving as president of Midlothian Amateur Baseball Association.

Blane grew up in Duncanville but had some experience with Midlothian baseball. “I actually played for a select team based here, but I mainly remember our youth teams playing against Midlothian teams,” he recalled. “And a lot of guys who lived here came and played in our leagues back then.”

After he graduated from Duncanville High School, Blane headed to The University of Texas, where he majored in education. During his time in Austin, Blane started dating Emily, whom he knew from their days together in Duncanville. “She graduated before me, and when she was done with school, I transferred to UTA, so we could move back up this



LL!

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

way,” he detailed. “We got married, started our family and moved to Midlothian. Both of us got our first jobs in education with the Midlothian ISD.” Their oldest two, Brady and Lila, go to McClatchey Elementary, and the youngest, Reese, will follow suit in a few years. Brady and Lila have played a few sports, but at heart, they are a baseball family.

Blane works as an assistant principal in Burleson now, but much of his spare time is spent with the



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Blane Rogers encourages his team's love for baseball.



MABA. “Brady started playing when he was a 4U, but I didn’t coach him at first,” Blane explained. “It turns out I wasn’t a very good sideline dad, so I started coaching him before he was 6.”

Blane has coached Brady’s teams in MABA for 10 seasons, and eventually, the board asked him to join its ranks. “I knew all the guys just from being involved with the association and from being at the fields so much for so many years. Last year, they talked me into joining the board as secretary — to get involved and help with organizational things. Then last April, they asked me to be president of the board. Against my wife’s advice, I accepted,” he said with a laugh.

As MABA president, Blane has a big job. “As a group, we are trying to make sure kids in Midlothian have

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a high-quality association, so they can stay here to play,” he explained. “Even with the growth and good work the MABA has been doing for years, there are a lot of families that feel like they need to go to Mansfield or Arlington to get a good playing experience, and we’re trying to change that.” They are seeing the fruit of their labor, and this season they had about 200 more players sign up than ever before.

Blane and the board are not satisfied just by good registration numbers. “From the actual baseball standpoint, we want to make sure, as an organization, that we are teaching sound fundamentals, basics and competitive sportsmanship,” he specified. “We want to help kids develop a love for the game and help develop all-around baseball players.”

These goals make for a busy schedule for Blane, the board and countless volunteers who make the league run season after season. “We get started well before the season with pre-registration. We’re updating the website, answering lots of emails and getting ourselves ready,” Blane explained. “Then, as registration starts, we are scheduling games, getting umpires coordinated, getting the fields ready and working with the city on any repairs that need to be done.”

Once the season starts, Blane and the board work to answer emails from parents and coaches, handle their own teams and coordinate with

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each leagues' commissioner. "Each age group has a commissioner, so they handle some of the day-to-day things," he said. "But as a whole, we are at the fields every single day between games and practices. If Brady has a Monday night game, I may serve as the MABA board member on duty, but that means I might have to leave his game to take care of something on another field."

With the abundance of duties and responsibilities the board has, it is sometimes a lost fact that it is comprised completely of parents and coaches who are giving their free time to make the organization great. "Our coaches are definitely the backbone of the organization, but our board is made up of volunteers who also coach. For those who aren't coaches, they are player parents who also invest in their team, as well as the board," Blane said.

"Of course, they are all dads or moms with full-time jobs. It takes a lot to keep things going, and we have more players registered this season than ever before," Blane said. The work he and the rest of the board do is paying off, as hundreds of players run on to Midlothian fields each season and every time an ump yells out, "Play Ball!" **NOW**

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CookingNOW In the Kitchen With CHRISTI OLSON

— By Angel Morris

Christi Olson's passion for cooking began when she was just a little girl. "I would rush home from school and eagerly begin dinner before my parents would get home from work," she recalled.

Through the years, Christi has accumulated recipes passed along from special friends, beloved family members and even a famous New York City pizza establishment. "Hospitality is my spiritual gift, and I find great joy in sharing delicious food with friends and family," Christi said, regarding the preparation of these treasured recipes.

Christi has a feather in her chef's hat that few can claim, having demonstrated her kitchen expertise globally. "A highlight of 2017 was being able to share some of my recipes and cooking techniques while on a mission trip to Southeast Asia," she said. **NOW**

Homemade Sicilian Style Pizza

Dough for 4 10- to 14-inch pizzas:

- 2 1/4 tsp. (or 1 pkt.) active dry yeast
- 1/8 tsp. sugar
- 12 oz. warm water (110 F)
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Semolina flour (for dusting pizza peel)

Simple Sauce:

- 24 to 28 oz. pureed tomatoes
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 cloves raw garlic (or 1 tsp. garlic powder)

Spicy Sausage:

- 1 lb. ground pork

- 1 Tbsp. fennel seed
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 1 Tbsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp. garlic powder

Additional Toppings (optional):

- Shredded mozzarella
- Pecorino Romano
- Fresh basil

1. *For dough:* Preheat pizza stone or pan in oven at 475 F (or higher, if stone can withstand higher temperatures). Preheat 1 hour if using stone or 1/2 hour if using a pan.
2. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast and sugar in warm water; set aside. In a large bowl, combine flour, salt and oil. Slowly add yeast mixture, stirring until dough is shaggy and doesn't stick to your hands.
3. Place dough on a lightly floured surface.

Knead until smooth (or let your stand mixer do the work). Divide dough into fourths, place each in a greased bowl. Cover and let rise at room temperature, at least 45 minutes.

4. *For sauce:* While the dough is rising, combine all ingredients for the sauce; stir well.

5. *For sausage:* Season pork with spices. Brown over medium heat; drain well.

6. *To assemble pizza:* Gently press out the dough on a lightly floured surface, stretching it into a 10- to 14-inch crust. Sprinkle semolina flour on pizza peel; transfer crust. Add desired toppings, keeping it light, so crust is not compromised. Transfer pizza to oven; bake around 6 to 10 minutes.

Lemon Poppy Seed Bundt Cake

Cake:

- 1 box lemon cake mix
- 1 small box instant lemon pudding
- 1/4 cup poppy seeds
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 cup water
- 4 eggs

Frosting:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 lb. powdered sugar
- 5 Tbsp. fresh squeezed lemon juice (2-3 lemons)
- Lemon zest (optional)

1. *For cake:* Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease and flour a Bundt pan.
2. Mix all cake ingredients on low to medium speed until well combined.
3. Pour cake batter into pan; bake about 45-50 minutes. Remove cake from pan after cooling 10 minutes; cool completely.
4. *For frosting:* Mix butter and powdered sugar on medium speed until well blended. Gradually mix in lemon juice by the Tbsp., until you reach desired consistency. Stir in lemon zest, if desired.
5. Spread cake with frosting or use pastry bag to pipe long, thick lines of frosting up and down over cake.

Strawberry Cake

Cake:

- 1 box white cake mix
- 1 3-oz. box strawberry Jell-O
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup fresh strawberries, chopped
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup milk

Frosting:

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2 lbs. powdered sugar
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, chopped

1. *For cake:* Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease and flour a Bundt pan.
2. Mix all cake ingredients on low speed until just combined. Scrape the side of the bowl, increase mixer to medium and beat for 3 minutes.
3. Pour cake batter into the pan; bake about 45-50 minutes. Remove cake from pan after cooking 10 minutes; cool completely.
4. *For frosting:* Cream the butter; add powdered sugar and strawberries until well combined. Refrigerate about 5-10 minutes to firm it up slightly.
5. Spread cake with frosting or use pastry bag to pipe long, thick lines of frosting up and down over cake; refrigerate.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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BusinessNOW

A1A Moving

— By Sandra Strong

A1A Moving

4710 N. Interstate 45 • Ennis, TX 75119
(972) 921-6515 • www.a1amoving.com
Facebook: A1A Moving

Hours: Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. • Closed on Sundays and major holidays.

A1A Moving is a full-service, customer-oriented, one-stop packing and moving service provider. “We work to build rapport and a positive relationship with each customer and strive for a high level of performance,” Frank Weaver, owner of A1A Moving, said. “We are a hometown business, and the majority of our customers are from Waxahachie and Midlothian.”

Frank, an Ennis native son, is a proud graduate of Texas A&M University. Frank had already become a business owner when his former college roommate asked him to join his moving business. In 2004, Frank opened A1A Moving as a

subcontractor to larger companies, such as his roommate’s company. “Most of our customers are in Ellis, Navarro and Kaufman counties,” Frank stated. A1A Moving is authorized to operate anywhere in Texas, as well as make interstate moves. “We handle residential and commercial moves. Every move is different, so we completely customize that move according to a customer’s needs,” he explained.

The customized service can include full packing services; secured handling of sensitive legal, medical or financial documents; and special handling of family heirlooms, valuable art collections, antiques or very fragile pieces. “For instance, all crew members are trained to look for antique fragile parts and give them special attention when packing and loading,” Frank shared. “We handle a great many jobs in the Dallas art and design district for artists and decorators who change out furnishings repeatedly until they get the mix they want. In all

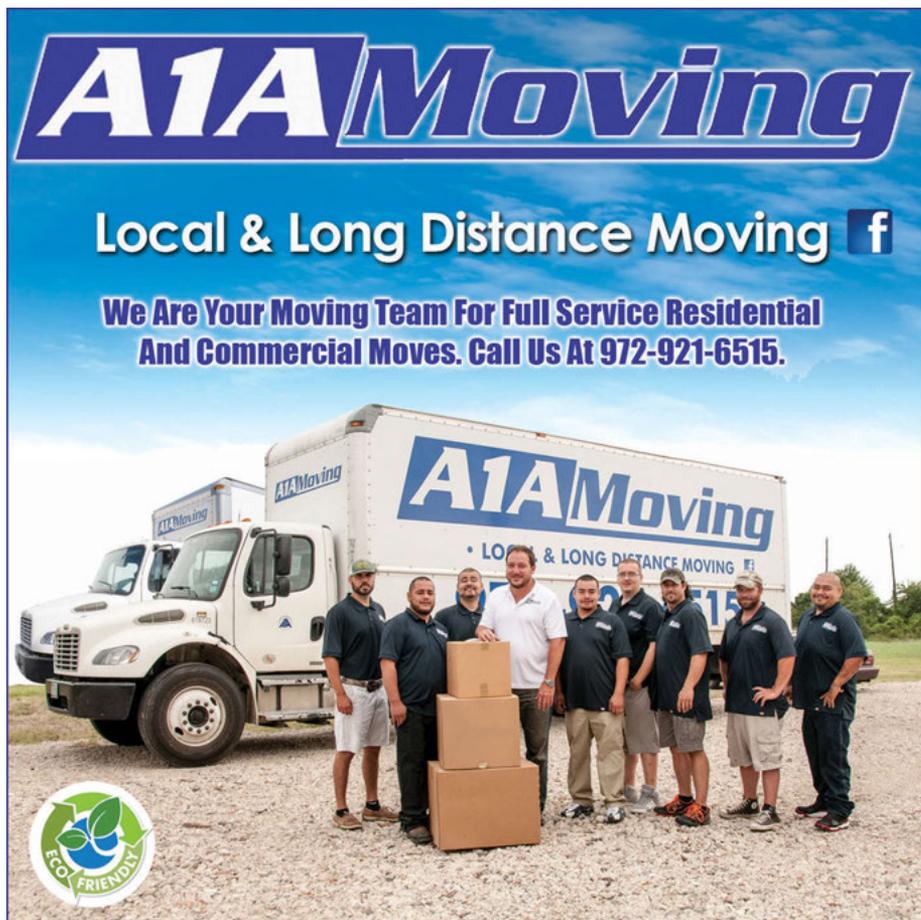
we do, the crew realizes that even happy moves are stressful to the customer, so we try to lessen the stress.”

With A1A Moving, the customer’s belongings are the only load on the truck, and the customer decides the schedule of pickup and delivery of those belongings. “We have worked jobs in inclement weather, but we will pull off the road if it gets too hazardous to drive safely,” Frank said. “The same crew that packs will unload and unpack, if the customer wants that level of service. We unhook appliances and re-hook them at the other end of the move. We give free quotes that will not increase, unless the customer changes a variable.” Most customers who wish for a full-service move are businesses and homeowners.

The rapid growth in the Waxahachie and Midlothian areas has added the need for a fleet of four trucks with multiple crews. “A1A Moving can handle whatever the needs of our customers may be,” Frank added, stating that movers are a luxury, since individuals can always pack and move themselves. “Our crew of eight is experienced, and they love what they do.”

Not all moves are stress-free. The crew handles emergency moves that might be necessitated by abusive relationships, floods, roof damage, hoarders or eviction of the owner. “We also offer temporary, on-site storage for customers who need a few weeks or so before they can locate and/or occupy a new residence,” Frank said.

Loading belongings onto the truck is very much like fitting jigsaw pieces together, and the moving industry offers many challenges. However, Frank and his crew at A1A Moving handle every situation professionally. “We know we are dealing with an intimate part of a customer’s life,” Frank shared. “We want them to be able to breathe a sigh of relief and be completely satisfied at the end of the day.” **NOW**



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TravelNOW

Cultural Attraction

— By Andrea Panozzo

For a slice of Americana, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, beckons Texans with family fun, outdoor adventure, live music, shopping, museums and history. Enriched culture, ever-growing culinary and brewery scenes, beautiful art and a variety of sports entertainment are all within visitors' reach. Driving northeast from Fort Worth will take almost 16 hours and about \$150 in fuel. Or, the Eastern Iowa Airport is 9 miles from Cedar Rapids, where cultural immersion is easy, thanks to a community proud of its heritage.

For many years, Czech was commonly spoken in Cedar Rapids, and today, more people of Czech ancestry live in Cedar Rapids than in any other city in the world, except for the Czech capital of Prague. It is a proud aspect of Cedar Rapids culture, and the history is expressed through extraordinary

exhibitions and experiences at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library.

The museum isn't the only representation of the Czech culture. Czech Village/New Bohemia Main Street District was voted Best Cultural Attraction by the *Corridor Business Journal* in 2017 and was a 2016 Great American Main Street Award semi-finalist. It is home not only to incredible artists and world-class museums, but also some of the best dining, shopping and entertainment in the area.

One fantastic shopping area in the district is NewBo City Market, a year-round indoor farmers market. Visitors can taste local cuisine and brews and support local artistry, all while experiencing a unique and fun atmosphere.

One of Cedar Rapids' most famous local artists, Grant

Wood, got his start here. Cedar Rapids Museum of Art holds the largest collection of his works. The classic art piece, *American Gothic*, was painted in his studio home in 1930. His studio is located near downtown Cedar Rapids and is available to visitors on weekends from April through December.

Another historic landmark is the Brucemore Estate, former home to several history makers who played a large role in Cedar Rapids' factory industries, including Quaker Oats. The estate was donated to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1981, and today 43,000 people are drawn to the site every year. Brucemore Estate hosts signature events for the public, like the poolside Tahitian Party, Balloon Glow in the summer, Brucemorchestra in the fall and A Modern Salon in the winter. The house and incredible gardens are open for tours throughout the year.

Hundreds of other parks allow for escape into nature. Indian Creek Nature Center's grounds and trails are explorable at no charge. Families can hike scenic trails, see a concert in the amphitheater, participate in a yoga class or let their children play in the outdoor classroom.

Throughout spring and summer, visitors can join residents cheering on their Cedar Rapids Kernels baseball team, the Minor League affiliate of the Minnesota Twins, playing at the single A level. Fans get to experience firsthand future MLB talent, as top prospects from all over the world play for and against the Kernels. There are also hockey, indoor football and soccer teams competing in the winter.

At the end of full days, calm and cozy lodgings abound. People who need the comfort of a hotel will find every national chain has a key just for them. And those towing an RV will rest securely at campsites nestled close to the Cedar River. **NOW**

For more information or to plan a trip to Cedar Rapids, visit gocedarrapids.com.

Photos by Liz Zabel, GO Cedar Rapids.



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RV There Yet?

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

You may be thinking about getting a new ride before your family heads on its ultimate adventure. Whether you just need a vehicle to get to your destination, or you are thinking of having the RV experience this year, here are some tips to keep in mind before you head to the dealership.

The Best Type for You

- *Compact vs. Roomy* — If you are just looking at getting a simple sedan, the main decision is two-door or four-door. If you have kids, a compact car with limited legroom in the back may not be the best choice. But, if you just need something to get to work and back, a compact car is often cheaper and offers better fuel efficiency.

- *Minivan vs. SUV* — If you have a big family or tend to drive a lot of people around town, you probably need

something that seats seven or eight people. While minivans are sometimes thought of as uncool, their sliding doors and lower access make them more convenient than bulkier sports-utility vehicles. If you need the space but not necessarily the seating, an SUV or even a pickup truck may be the ideal choice for you.



If the Car is More Than a Car

While alternative accommodation options like Airbnb have given travelers more choices than ever, many people still love the freedom of having a vehicle that doubles as lodging. If you are looking for the perfect RV, here are the questions you should ask:

• *Pull vs. Drive* — While there are many specific choices, the first decision to make is whether you want something that attaches to a vehicle, or if you want to buy a larger unit that is a vehicle in and of itself. Motor homes vary in size, but they are self-contained houses that sleep any number of people, while fifth wheels and bumper pulls attach to trucks, and even small cars, in some cases, and tend to be less expensive on average.



• *Fifth Wheel vs. Bumper Tow* — Fifth wheel RVs are a specific type of trailer that use a sophisticated system to hitch to the entire bed of a pickup truck. Because of their attachment method, they tend to be bigger than other towable RVs. But there are varied sizes available for those who want to tow from a bumper hitch. Some of the smallest pop-up campers can actually trail a sedan, though most RVs will still require a decent-sized truck for the towing power they afford.

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• *A vs. B vs. C* — If you decide to go the route of a true motor home, there are three classes, A, B and C. Type A is the largest and, understandably, the most expensive, but it offers more sleeping accommodations. Type B is essentially a larger version of a minivan, with sleeping enough for a small family. Type C is smaller than type A but, typically, offers sleeping space over the driver's area, similar to the way type B does.

While there are no special license requirements for operating an RV, you will want to practice driving such a large vehicle before heading out on the open road for the first time. If you opted against a motor home, be sure you have all the necessary hitches, light hookups and the registration needed to tow from your vehicle. This summer could be the perfect time to take your family on the road trip of a lifetime, so be prepared and get the perfect vehicle to meet your family's needs. **NOW**



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Zoomed In: Sean Byars

By Angel Morris

Sean Byars registers participants in this year's fundraiser for Mentors Care, a program for high school students who may be at risk of not graduating. Sean began as a mentor in January, 2015. He was hired by Mentors Care to be the campus coordinator for Midlothian Heritage High School in October the same year. "We bring in individuals who will be a positive influence to a student, and they meet one-on-one once a week," Sean explained.

The freshman student Sean began mentoring three years ago just graduated. "We have developed a bond that will remain for a long time," Sean said. "I have been impacted as much or more than the students that I have had the privilege of helping."



Haden Covert and Dr. Blu, (Johnny Hill), help celebrate the grand opening of Chick-Fil-A in Midlothian.



Lory Ellis shows off the T-shirt she received from the Howdy Midlothian movement after posting a positive review online about a local business.



Dr. Jay Oza, dentist and owner of Marvel Dental, is joined by many for a ribbon cutting ceremony.



Sean Kirkland, Jonathan Anderson, Thomas Alred and Matthew Anderson advance to Eagle Scout rank.



Midlothian firefighter paramedic Teresa Smith shows Baylee Bentle around a firetruck at the Heritage High School Band Booster Classic Car Show.



Dr. Matt Moreland, with Baylor Scott & White Signature Medicine in Midlothian, welcomes guests to an open house.



Iyonne, Armando, Victor and April, employees with Midlothian McDonald's, celebrate its grand re-opening.

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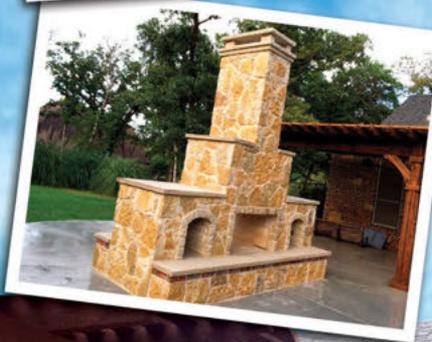


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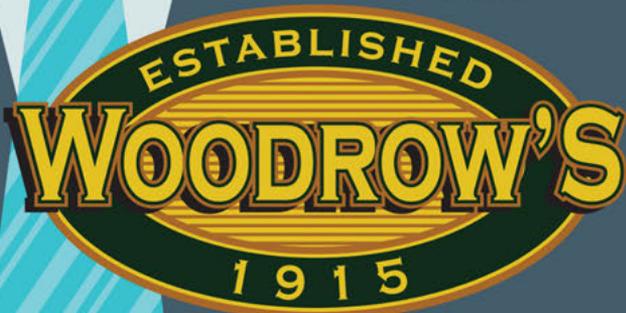
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Calendar

1 — 30

Bricks 4 Kids Summer Camps: STEM-based, five-day camps in Ellis County for ages 6-12. Register at www.bricks4kidz.com/texas-elliscounty.

2

Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in: 8:00-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport. Classic airplanes and fighters, helicopter and vintage airplane rides, fly-overs, Midlothian Classic Wheels, Gold Wing Road Riders, live music, children's activities and more. Breakfast: \$6 for adults/children 8 and above; \$3 under 8. For more details, call (972) 923-0080 or visit www.mid-wayregional.com.

Fundraiser Car Wash: 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Brookshires, 1400 E. Main St. Donations accepted to support Midlothian High School Panther Wrestling.



4 — 8

Art, Academic Review and Math Camps: Times and grade levels vary, Ovilla Christian School, 3251 Ovilla Rd., Ovilla. Open to the public. Contact hnoice@ovillachristianschool.org for more details.

9

Horsepower Poker Run: 10:00-11:30 a.m., registration; 3:30-7:00 p.m., auction, food, music, Paws for Reflection Ranch,

5431 Montgomery Rd. Benefits veteran programs. Learn more: www.PawsforReflectionRanch.org.



Book Signing for *Operation Caregivers/ Life with Dementia* by Alex Allred: 10:00 a.m., Isle of Watercrest Memory Care and Assisted Living. A representative from the Alzheimer's Organization will be on hand to answer questions.

10 — 14

Vacation Bible School: 6:00-8:30 p.m., FUMC Midlothian, 800 S. 9th St. Ages 3 to entering fifth grade. Learn more at www.fumcmidlo.org.

11 — 14

Basketball, Baseball and Volleyball Camps: 9:00 a.m.-noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m. (dates and times vary by sport/grade level), Ovilla Christian School, 3251 Ovilla Rd., Ovilla. Contact mjones@ovillachristianschool.org for more details.

15

Daddy-Daughter Dance: 6:30-9:30 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center, 1 Community Dr. Tickets at midlothiancenter.com or call (972) 775-7125.

16

Lions Club Pancake Breakfast: 7:00-10:30 a.m., Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th St. Advance tickets from any Lions Club member are \$2;

door tickets are \$5 for adults/\$3 for children. Learn more on Facebook at Midlothian Lions Club.

18

The Writers' Circle: 6:00 p.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. Open to the public to provide support, motivation and writing tips. For more information, contact Sarah at writerscirclemidlo@gmail.com.

18 — 21

Art, Academic Review and Math Camps: Times and grade levels vary, Ovilla Christian School, 3251 Ovilla Rd., Ovilla. Open to the public. Contact hnoice@ovillachristianschool.org for more details.

25 — 28

Basketball, Baseball and Volleyball Camps: 9:00 a.m.-noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m. (dates and times vary by sport/grade level), Ovilla Christian School, 3251 Ovilla Rd., Ovilla. Contact mjones@ovillachristianschool.org for more details.

30

Independence Day Parade: 10 a.m., downtown Midlothian through Heritage Park. Visit www.midlothian.tx.us/idparade for more details.

Ongoing:

Second and Fourth Mondays Rag-Tag Readers Book Club: 10:00 a.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. For more information, call Sandy at (972) 775-3417.

First Tuesdays Midlothian Area Historical Society meeting: 7:00 p.m., Community Room of CNB, 310 N. 9th St. For

more details, contact Edwin Bateman at (972) 743-2379.

First and Third Tuesdays
Bluegrass Jam Session: 7:00 p.m., Lighthouse Coffee Bar, 1404 N. 9th St. Everyone's invited to join in. Bring your instrument or simply relax and enjoy.

Wednesdays
Movies at the Meadows Library: 1:00 p.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. Bring a blanket. Children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Second and Fourth Wednesdays
Senior Dance at Western Kountry Klub: 7:00-9:30 p.m., Western Kountry Klub, 5728 Lake View Rd. Adults age 45 and older welcome. \$5 cash admission. Call (817) 800-4585 or visit www.westernkountryklub.com.

Thursdays
Scrabble Club: 10:30 a.m., A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. For more information, call (972) 775-3417.

Midway Composite Squadron of Civil Air Patrol/US Air Force auxiliary: 6:45-9:00 p.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport, 131 Airport Dr. Cadets ages 12-18 and Senior Members 18 plus. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com.



Fridays
Preschool Storytime: 11:00 a.m.,

A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. Story, craft and snack provided. For more information, call (972) 775-3417.

Saturdays
Midlothian Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 234 N. 8th St. Message flowersbyroberta@att.net for more information.

Third Saturdays
Midlothian Opry Country Music Show: Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th St. Old country and gospel music. \$5 admission. Call Davonnia at (214) 676-1706 or go to Facebook Midlothian Opry for tickets and show times.

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Although rest and relaxation are the goals for most vacations, they usually involve a lot of walking, and a lot of walking usually involves sore feet. Walking is great exercise and one of the most reliable forms of transportation. But if your feet aren't in the best shape or you don't have the right shoes, too much walking can cause foot problems. Good foot care is essential if you plan to subject your feet to long periods of walking.

Some simple foot care tips include:

- Wear thick, absorbent socks (acrylic instead of cotton).
- Dry feet thoroughly after bathing, making sure to dry between toes. Use powder before putting on shoes.
- Nails should be cut regularly, straight across the toe.
- Bunions, hammertoes or any other serious foot problems should be evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon.



The right shoe is also important for healthy walking. The ideal walking shoe should be stable from side to side and well-cushioned, and it should enable you to walk smoothly. Many running shoes will fit the bill. There are also shoes made especially for walking. Walking shoes tend to be slightly less cushioned, yet not as bulky, and lighter than running shoes. Whether a walking or running shoe, the shoes need to feel stable and comfortable.

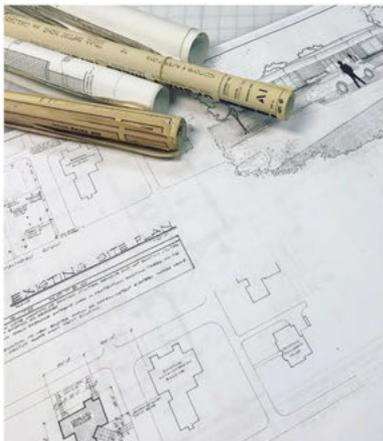
Warming up exercises to help alleviate any muscle stiffness or pulled muscles are also advised before walking. Loosening up the heel cords (Achilles and calf) and thigh muscles before a walk is especially effective. If you're not accustomed to long walks, start slowly and rest if your feet start hurting. And above all, have fun. **NOW**

Christopher Schmitt, DPM
Associate of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons
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Just because your child is off for the summer doesn't mean their oral care needs a vacation! Make sure to remind your child the importance of brushing and flossing every day.

2. BRING ENOUGH SUPPLIES FOR TRIPS

Going on a trip? Be sure to pack enough toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss for the whole family. Keep them in an easily accessible place so everyone can brush and floss every day.

3. BRING AN EMERGENCY DENTAL KIT

In case of an emergency, bring these supplies to keep on hand: gauze, a small container with a lid, pain reliever and a handkerchief. It's also a good idea to include your dentist's emergency contact info.

4. TEACH YOUR CHILD WATER SAFETY

Summer is a great time for swimming, but the pool could be hazardous and result in oral injuries. Teach your child the importance of water/pool safety: no running on slippery surface or diving into shallow water.

5. EAT HEALTHY AND DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

Eating fruits and veggies and drinking water can help your child's overall oral health. Avoid too much sugar.

6. PRACTICE ROUTINE ORAL CARE

Help teach your kids not to slack off on their dental care during summer break. Daily oral care is the best way to keep your child's teeth healthy.



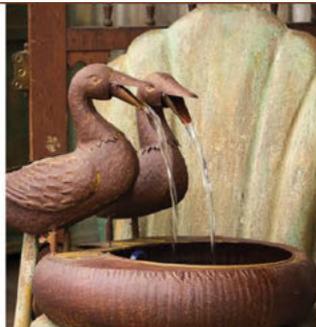
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