urlesc UNE 2024 BURLESONBOOZE Dads Just 2024 Hot Sounds of Wanna Summer Shopping Guide Have Fun In the Kitchen With The Burleson Booze Phillip Baker Vikings Facebook Also inside: group gives back to Scavenger Hunt

Featured Business: Mama's Pizza

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the city

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ON THE COVER



Four friends set out to build brotherhood and community in Burleson.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Happy June!

One of my favorite things about humanity is the brief moments of connection I feel with strangers. Humans are social creatures. We thrive when we experience kindness and connectivity with others. In Lady Lamb's song "Billions of Eyes," she describes this moment of strangers on the train smiling at her when she barely makes it on because they understand how she feels. "We share a look like a family does / like we have inside jokes / like we can call each other by little nicknames," she sings.

For me, these moments of collective emotion when people cease to be strangers feel like singing along to familiar songs with people at karaoke. They're giving and receiving recommendations from other readers at bookstores. Helping pick up a parent's overturned grocery cart and women complimenting each other for the sake of "she deserves to feel nice about herself." Chatting with a grandmother at La Madeleine's about how her granddaughter doesn't realize her doll-sized chair won't support a toddler's weight and that things are no longer built to last. I think of making conversation with a service worker, who wanted to joke around while I waited in line for a galette two years ago.

I don't know these people and will likely never meet them again, but I treasure these divine moments of human connection almost as much as I do moments with my friends. They make the world feel not quite so lonely and remind me that strangers may be looking for that moment of connectivity and community, too.

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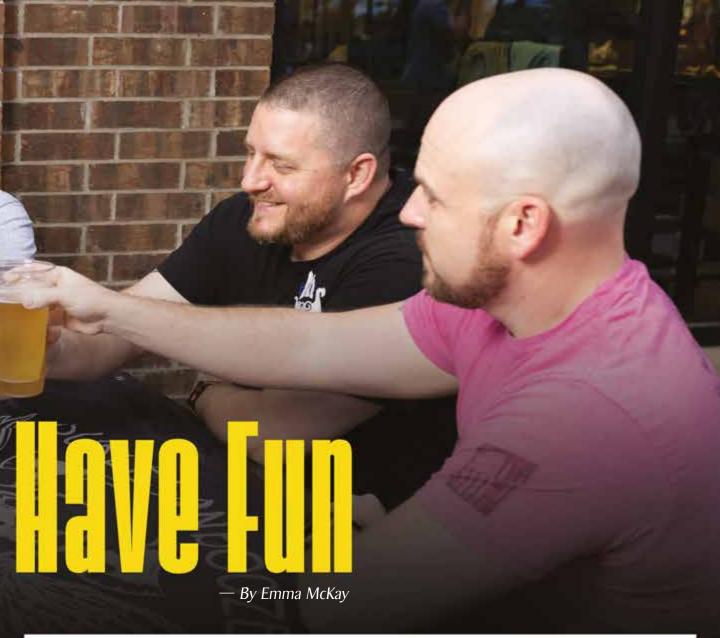
When creating the Burleson Booze Vikings' Facebook group on December 12, 2020, Clayton Singleton hoped to build a sense of brotherhood within his own community. "At the time, there was a women's only booze group called the Burleson Booze Fairies, and I was like, Man, there really needs to be something like that for guys," he explained.

Once the page was up and running, Clayton invited his friends, Jeff Vandergriff and brothers Aaron and Michael Steele to join the administration team to help bring the idea out of cyberspace. Initially, the Vikings built community through drinking together, sharing memes on the Facebook group page or by "boozing" each other, which involved members dropping cases of beer off at other members' houses. "Who doesn't want to come home to a gift box of alcohol and snacks?" Clayton asked. However, when "Snowmageddon" occurred, the group's activities took a charitable turn.

In February 2021, the state of Texas experienced a freeze like no other, leaving many without heat or power. "Aaron said, 'Hey, I have a truck. Is there anything we can do to help the community out?" Clayton recalled. This prompted the Vikings to brainstorm ways to aid those in need. "Someone suggested firewood, so we reached out to a couple of people and got the firewood donated. All we had to do was go pick it up."

"It spread like a wildfire," Jeff stated. The guys asked people on Burleson residents' Facebook groups if they needed firewood. "We tried to focus mainly on people who didn't have power and had a fireplace because we knew they'd be the coldest." With the help of the Vikings' wives, who complied lists of all the replies and used GPS to locate the areas with the most replies, the Vikings were able to deliver firewood to 60 Burleson families in two days.

"We realized most of the guys in the group had a heart to give. It was more than just booze. It was truly becoming a brotherhood," Clayton said. After the events of Snowmageddon, the administrative team decided to start incorporating more charity into their activities. "We can't do it all, but we can at least do something once a quarter." Since many of the Vikings grew up in Burleson, they wanted to focus on giving back to the organizations that helped them when they were kids, such as the Burleson Fire Department and Harvest House.









"That summer, we saw a Facebook post saying the fire department needed water, so we put it in the group, and all the guys started donating," Jeff said. "Once one person donated, it almost became a competition of who's going to donate the next one." The first summer, they raised \$1,200, which allowed them to buy 144 cases of water bottles, three \$100 gift cards and four cases of Gatorade mix to donate to the three Burleson fire stations. Encouraged by the members' eagerness to donate, the Vikings did it again the next summer, nearly doubling what they were able to donate in 2021 and allowing them to include the Briaroaks Volunteer Fire Department.

Almost all their charity drives are kept within the group. The only event they seek outside help with is their TikTok famous "Dad Bod" Car Wash. Inspired by bikini car washes, this event benefits Harvest House by raising money for food donations. With Advance Auto Parts and Dan Belair from Sapphire Auto Spa donating cleaning supplies, water and a location to host the car wash food drive, the Vikings have been able to successfully hold three events in the past two years.

"The weeks before, every member starts sending photos of what they plan to wear," Clayton said. "Some of these guys wear skimpy things. They're dads, but they want to have fun. If you saw them at the grocery store, you'd never know that they were dancing on a truck bed in a cut off shirt and short shorts getting people to go to a car wash the day before!"

"We've found that the more fun we have, the more people like to donate," said Aaron. "And who doesn't like to see dad bods dancing with water?" With this sentiment in mind, the Vikings





strived to outdo themselves with each car wash by blasting the event on social media, having more fun and acting more absurd. Their strategy worked. "The first food drive of the Vikings donated just shy of 1,000 pounds. The second food drive was 2.640 pounds of food. The third food drive blew everything out of the water. We raised just shy of 7,000 pounds of food."

"It's always a competition for the next year. After that final number is said. almost every guy at the donation says, 'We're going to double that number next year," Jeff claimed. "I am proud it's become a brotherhood that's equal to those donations. If it hadn't, there's no way we would have those donations or that effort to get there, so I love that part of it."

In addition to their charity work and "boozing," the Vikings hold events to build brotherhood and include their families, such as bonfire nights, crawfish boils, pumpkin carvings or even their adults only nighttime Easter egg hunt. "We put glow sticks on Easter eggs and filled them with little bottles of liquor. One of the guys has a bunch of land, so we spread them all out, and you saw just a bunch of grown men running out in a field trying to find Easter eggs," Clayton shared. "It's awesome to see grown men be kids again.

"We like to have fun," Clayton continued. "Most of these guys are great guys who want to help the community. We've donated more than I ever thought we would. We're not a charity. We're a Facebook group that decided to do good." Through the group's work, the men hope others will be inspired to give back to Burleson, too. NOW



















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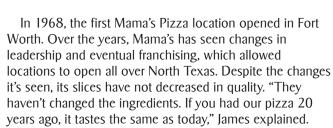
Mama's Pizza

By Emma McKay

Mama's Pizza 721 SW Wilshire Blvd. Burleson, TX 76028 (817) 447-4114 mamaspizzaburleson.com

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"I grew up on Mama's Pizza," said Burleson Mama's Pizza Manager James Rose. "It takes me back to my teenage years. Friday nights after football games, we'd all hop in the car and go to Mama's Pizza."



When walking into Mama's Burleson location, customers are greeted by the tantalizing aroma of baked dough and the sights of model planes hanging on the walls and the ceiling. "The owner, Mark Schuster, flew planes when he was younger," James shared. "Since Spinks Airport is nearby, he decided to make the place airplane themed."

Having spent the past 36 years working at several different pizzerias, James is somewhat of a pizza expert. "It's a better pizza," he said of Mama's Pizza. "We're known for our crust. It's a little thicker. We put a decent number of toppings on it. Our meats are better quality meats." In order to provide the freshest slice, they prepare their dough and grate their cheese every day in-house. After baking in their brick ovens, these "East Coast" inspired pizzas have their crusts brushed with garlic butter, ensuring each slice is flavorful until the last bite.

Mama's Pizza prioritizes customer satisfaction by providing a substantial array of choices. When ordering a pie, customers can choose Mama's traditional thick crust, thin crust, gluten-free crust or the Keto-friendly cauliflower crust. Pizzas can be customized with a variety of highquality sauces and toppings, including Alfredo sauce and Canadian bacon.

In addition to pizza. Mama's menu includes salads, subs, bread sticks and wings. For those who need a bit of dessert with their pie, Mama's started offering Dippin' Dots and cake slices from Carlo's Bakery, which is owned by Cake Boss' Buddy Valastro. "It's really rich. I can't finish a whole slice," lames admitted.

From Monday through Saturday, Mama's provides a lunchtime buffet for those whose appetites cannot be confined to one type of pizza. "I like to keep it stocked with what everybody likes," James said.

Mama's Pizza Burleson enjoys giving back to the community. "When we first opened, we went by the fire stations and police stations to feed everybody and introduce ourselves." They also aid BISD schools through fundraisers. "Whether it's the basketball team, softball team or the band, we try to do some kind of donation to help them out."

Having managed the Burleson location since it opened three years ago, James has enjoyed getting to know the customers and his coworkers. "It's a fun place to work. These people are more like a family. We all get along.

"Mama's Pizza has good quality, lifetime customers, and first-timers love it when they come in," James explained. Stop by Mama's Pizza Burleson to try it out for yourself or order online or over-the-phone. For delivery options, Mama's Pizza Burleson is set up with DoorDash and Uber Eats. NOW





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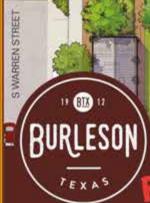
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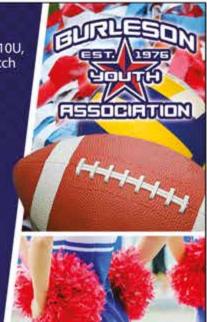
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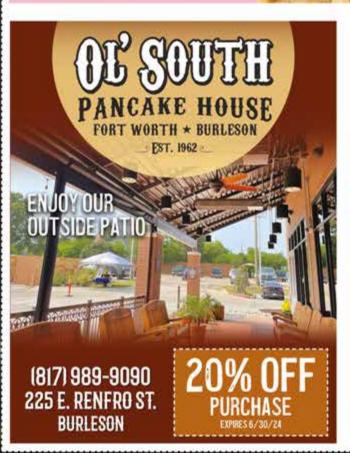


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- Virginia Woolf







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Around Town



Zoomed In: Krissi Dallas

By Emma McKay



Felipe Fernandez, Itzabella DeLuna and Jaime Rivera enjoy the sights at the city's Cinco de Mayo celebration.

Teen and Young Adult author Krissi Dallas is one of the 100 writers taking part in the 100 Pages Movie. "Each writer was assigned one page to write within 24 hours," Krissi, writer for page 58, explained. After each had written their page, the script was passed to the next writer to continue the story. "Once your page is written, you're kicked out of the process. We didn't know how the movie turned out until the table read."

Director Christian DelGrosso plans to turn the script into a feature-length film, slated to release in 2025 alongside a documentary about the creative process. "This has been a cool experience and reignited a lot of inspiration and enthusiasm for what we, as creators, get to do."



Jini, Lincoln and Brinley Barile celebrate Earth Day with the city at Bailey Lake.



Harvest House holds another successful Vineyard Vibes at Lost Oak Winery.



The crew at Stewart Title serves a free barbecue lunch to Burleson's first responders.



Han and Tran Le share a bowl at Mr. Poké.



Jessica Jimenez, Vivian Trevino and Sofia Garcia dance at Burleson's Cinco de Mayo celebration.



Layne and Randi Brown play at Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza's playground.



The Storm FC soccer team raises money with a bake sale fundraiser.









"I grew up with a father who smoked most meals or cooked over open flame, so naturally, that's my favorite cooking style," said retired firefighter Phillip Baker. "I learned a lot in my early years as a rookie firefighter. I cooked alongside the senior guys and adopted some of their recipes and techniques."

Years ago, Phillip was featured on Fox 4 *Good Day's* "Cooking with a Fireman" segment. "They came with a news crew, and we filmed throughout the broadcast while I cooked," he shared. "It was all done live, so we had to prepare the dish and have one precooked for the tasting. It was fun." These days, Phillip enjoys cooking for his large family or using social media to experiment with his recipes. Now

Smoked Brisket

I 10-15 lb. brisket 6-8 Tbsp. Meat Church Holy Voodoo 6-8 Tbsp. Meat Church Holy Cow BBQ Rub

1. Set a smoker to 250 F.

2. Let the brisket come to room temperature on the counter. This allows the brisket to sweat a little, and then you won't need a binder to hold the seasoning in place. Trim the fat off the brisket, so you are left with a thin layer of fat, usually around 1/4 inch. Once you have the brisket trimmed, coat it with the

seasonings on both sides; apply heavily, so the entire brisket is covered. Let it set for about 30 minutes.

- **3.** Place in the smoker, fat side up. Leave it uncovered until it reaches an internal temperature of 185 F. Pull the brisket out; wrap it in peach paper to completely seal it up; return it to the smoker until it reaches an internal temperature of 203 F. Note: The key is to cook the brisket based on the internal temperature, not a specific time schedule.
- **4.** Pull the brisket out; wrap it in a towel. Place it directly into an empty ice chest. Let it rest in the ice chest for at least 1 hour before you cut into it. (I let them rest for up to 3 hours, and they turn out perfect.) As the brisket rests, the juices will stay inside the meat and allow for the brisket to tenderize even more.
- **5.** Once it's ready to eat, I like to pair the brisket with baked beans, homemade potato salad and homemade coleslaw.
- **6.** Tip: When picking out your brisket, the best ones to use nearly bend in half when

folding them over. If it's not very bendable, get a different one, or it will be tough.

Hamburger Stew

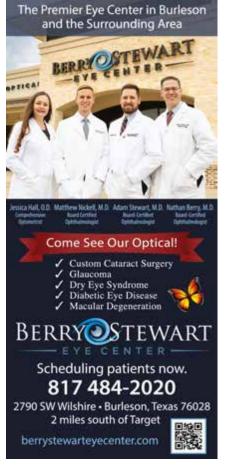
2 lbs. ground beef (80/20 or 90/10)

- I large white onion, diced
- 1 Tbsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. pepper
- 1 Tbsp. Meat Church Holy Voodoo
- 2 1/2 cups beef broth
- 2 15-oz. cans stewed tomatoes
- 1 6-oz. can tomato paste
- I bag baby carrots
- 2 15-oz. cans yellow corn, undrained
- 2 15-oz. cans green beans, undrained
- 1 15-oz. can Ranch Style Beans, undrained
- 2 cups water
- **1.** In a large stew pot, brown the ground beef and onions; season with salt, pepper and Holy Voodoo.
- **2.** Add the beef broth; allow the mixture to release anything that might be stuck to the bottom of the stew pot. Bring to a quick boil; add in stewed tomatoes and tomato paste.
- **3.** Reduce the heat to medium; add the carrots, corn, green beans and Ranch Style Beans. Slowly add the water; return to a boil.
- **4.** Reduce the heat to low; cover with a lid and let simmer for 3 hours, stirring occasionally. Add additional salt and pepper to taste, if needed. Serve hot with crackers or corn bread. Reheat leftovers on day 2, and prepare for an explosion of flavor!

Beer Butt Chicken

- 1 12-oz. can of beer (I use Shiner.)
- 2 Tbsp., plus 1 tsp. Meat Church Holy Voodoo (or any seasoning you prefer) (divided use)
- 2 cloves garlic (optional) I large whole chicken
- 1. Set a smoker to 275 F.
- **2.** Pour out approximately 1/4 of the beer; add 1 tsp. of the Meat Church Holy Voodoo and the garlic, if using, into the can.
- **3.** Place the beer can into a beer can rack or holder for smoking. Place the chicken onto the beer can holder. (It will look like it's sitting on the beer can.)
- **4.** Completely cover the chicken with the rest of the seasoning, getting under the skin if you can. Place in the smoker standing up.
- **5.** Smoke for approximately 2 hours, or until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 F. Remove; cover with foil. Let rest for approximately 10 minutes before serving.









6. Serve with your favorite sides and enjoy!

Refrigerator Dill Pickles

- 1 1/4 cups white vinegar (5% acidity)
- 3 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. white sugar
- 2 cups cold water
- 8-10 pickling cucumbers, cut into spears
- 2 Tbsp. coriander seeds
- 1 Tbsp. peppercorn seeds
- 1 Tbsp. dill seeds

- 1 tsp. mustard seeds
- 4-6 garlic cloves, peeled
- I jalapeño, seeded and sliced longwise (optional)
- 4-6 fresh dill sprigs
- **1.** Make a brine by combining the vinegar, salt and sugar in a small stainless steel or glass saucepan over high heat. Whisk until the salt and sugar are dissolved. Transfer to a bowl; add the cold water. Let set out to cool to room temperature or refrigerate.
- **2.** Divide and stuff the cucumbers into mason jars. Add the coriander, peppercorn,

dill and mustard seeds, garlic cloves, jalapeños and dill sprigs into the jars, dividing evenly.

- **3.** Fill up the jars with the brine so that it covers the cucumbers. If you run a little short on the brine, you can add a little water to top off the jar. Screw on the tops; refrigerate overnight or at least 24 hours.
- **4.** Enjoy the best pickles ever! You won't want to eat them any other way! The pickles will keep in the refrigerator for around a month. I usually make a double batch.









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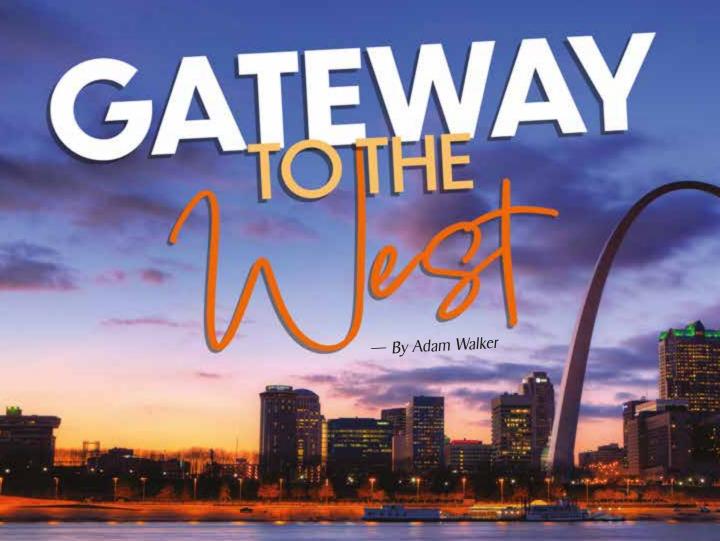
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The history of St. Louis, Missouri, reaches back long before Europeans arrived. The city holds ruins of Cahokia, an ancient Native American city of the Mississippian culture, once larger than many European capitals, such as London. The modern city of St. Louis was founded by the French over 300 years ago and was the starting point for the Lewis and Clark Expedition. In 1904, St. Louis was host to the World's Fair and became the first city outside Europe to host the Summer Olympics.

Since the arrival of steamboats in 1817, St. Louis has been a major port on the Mississippi River, which is spanned by nine bridges, with six others crossing the Missouri River. Historic Route 66 runs through the city and is commemorated by plaques at various points. The Old Meramec Bridge was part of Route 66 and is preserved in Route 66 State Park. St. Louis includes many historic neighborhoods of old houses and businesses, some also along Route 66.

Six Flags Over St. Louis (formerly Six Flags Over Mid-America) has everything from thrilling rides to the Hall of

Justice where you can hang out with Superman, Wonder Woman, Batman and the rest of the Super Friends. RYZE Adventure Park offers a more active adventure, while roller coaster enthusiasts can check out a number of wooden coasters dotted around the city. Historic Union Station is a center for dining and a hotel, and it hosts a mirror maze, a ropes course and a world-class aquarium. That is also where you will find The St. Louis Wheel, a 200-foot, climate-controlled Ferris wheel.

The city's food scene is dominated by St. Louis-style barbecue, toasted ravioli and gooey butter cake. Thick frozen custard concretes and the Chinese take-out St. Paul sandwich also have their origins here, so there is plenty for the foodie traveler to explore. For the less adventurous, Panera Bread was founded in St. Louis, where it still operates under its original name, St. Louis Bread Co. For the nostalgic, there are multiple soda fountains including Crown Candy Kitchen, which has been in operation since 1913.

The Romanesque Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis, with its iconic green dome, was built in only six years (1907-1913), but the interior mosaics and artwork were not completed until 1988. Two of the chapels were decorated by Tiffany & Co. The on-site museum, archives and guided tours make it a must-see. The Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, known as the Old Cathedral, was built in the 1830s to replace a log church dating back to the 1770s and still stands near the famous Gateway Arch.

The 630-foot symbol of the city is still the world's tallest



arch though it was constructed nearly 60 years ago. Some authorities note it as the tallest man-made monument in the Western Hemisphere. Tram rides to the top of the stainless-steel structure often sell out, so it is important to book tickets in advance.

The St. Louis Zoo has its roots in the 1904 World's Fair and currently focuses on conservation, research and education. It has no entrance fee. The Missouri Botanical Garden, known as Shaw's Garden, has over 6.6 million specimens and is the second largest in the U.S. It includes the largest Japanese garden in the country and a huge domed rain forest. Other significant museums in the area focus on African American, lewish. Civil War and Old West history; various periods and styles of art; transportation and air craft; science; technology; miniatures; the economy; and beer making. There are also several hands-on children's museums.

St. Louis truly has something for everyone. Give this American gem a try on your next trip! NOW





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Medium

Sudoku Puzzle

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- 4 24 oz. Full Cut Tenderized Round Steak (Chicken Fried)
- 6 20 oz. Chuck Eye Steaks (Delmonicos)
- 2 24 oz. Porterhouse Steaks (King Cut)
- 5 lbs. Seasoned Skirt Fajitas (3 packages)
- 12 Ground Chuck Patties (approx. 8 oz. each)
 6 1 lb. Packs, Ground Chuck (85/15)
- 1 -10 lb. Smoker Ready Brisket
- 1 7 lb. Pork Shoulder (for Pulled Pork)
- · 3 lbs. Beef Short Ribs (Great for Smoker)
- 3 lbs. Thick Texas Bacon
- 3 lbs. Farm Sausage
- 12 Thick Pork Chops
- · 2 Racks St. Louis Pork Ribs
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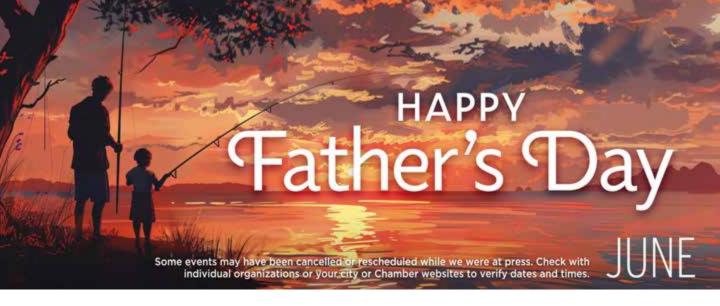
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6/1

Autism Resource Fair:

Ioin Galliant Autism and Russell Farm for their first Autism Resource Fair. Meet service providers and learn more about resources in the DFW area. There will be face painting, sensory activities, farm animals and food! This is a free event. 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. County Road 714. For more details, email aimee.pryor@galliantcare.com.

6/1-6/8

Bag of Books Bonanza:

Support The Friends of the Burleson Library and acquire some new favorite reads at their Bag of Books Bonanza! \$5 purchases a single use bag to fill with books, CDs and DVDs for all ages! This event takes place during regular library hours in the entryway of the Burleson Public Library, 248 SW Johnson Ave.

6/7-7/4

Hot Sounds of Summer:

The Hot Sounds of Summer concerts are back! Enjoy good music from musicians of various genres. Be sure to bring your own chairs and picnic blankets. This free event occurs on all Fridays in lune, Saturday, 6/29 and Thursday, 7/4. Concerts start at 7:30 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St.

6/5-6/7 and 6/12-6/14

Fun on the Farm Camp:

Come enjoy farm activities such as learning how to safely work with the Russell Farm donkeys, going on a nature hike with plant identification, partaking in culinary activities, exploring history and much more! Please pack a picnic lunch. \$125 per camper for the 3-day week. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. County Road 714. Register at

6/8

burlesontx.com/events.

June Craft Fair:

Join the Senior Activity Center once again to shop local vendors' sewn creations, art, jewelry and other handmade items. 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Senior Activity Center, 216 SW Johnson Ave.

6/15

Father's Day Fishing **Tournament:**

A fishing trip as epic as dad himself. Prizes will be awarded for the biggest fish, smallest fish and biggest combination of father and child fish. Bring your own fishing gear. This is a free event, but spots are limited. Registration is required to receive a meal. 9:00 a.m.-noon, Bailey Lake, 280 W. Hidden Creek Pkwy. Register at burlesontx.com/events.

Juneteenth Art, Music and Food Festival:

Come celebrate the luneteenth holiday with cultural educational opportunities as well as art, food and live entertainment. This is a free event. 7:30-9:00 p.m., Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St.

6/18

Ramblin' Rita's Texas Tales:

Listen to cowgirl storyteller, Ramblin' Rita, share some tall tells from her adventures from the West Texas deserts to the Gulf Coast shores. This is an all-ages event. 6:00-7:00 p.m., Burleson Public Library, 248 SW Johnson Ave.

6/25

Paint by Numbers:

Spend a relaxing evening at the library painting by numbers. Participants will receive a kit including brushes, paints, numbered canvas and instructions. This event is for ages 18 and up. No registration required, but supplies are limited. 6:00-7:30 p.m., Burleson Public Library, 248 SW Johnson Ave.

6/29

International Mud Day:

Join the library in celebrating International Mud Day by getting muddy and messy! Be sure to wear clothes and bring towels

you won't mind getting dirty. 9:00-10:30 a.m., Russell Farm Art Center, 405 W. County Road 714.

Second **Tuesdays**

National Active and Retired **Federal Employees:**

Monthly meetings of NARFE Chapter 1191 feature guest speakers. Open to federal employees. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., various locations. Follow on Facebook. rjcarey I @gmail.com.

First and Third Wednesdays

Senior Bingo:

Have fun and win prizes twice each month. 10:00 a.m., Burleson Senior Activity Center, 216 SW Johnson. www.burlesontx.com/320/ Senior-Activity-Center or (817) 295-6611.

Saturdays

Burleson Farmers Market:

8:00 a.m.-noon, The Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza, 141 W. Renfro St. www.burlesonfarmersmarket.com.

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



OF BURLESON

The ATHENA Society of Burleson, comprised of local women who have won an ATHENA award for showing leadership and charity in their own lives, works to embolden women in the workplace, provide scholarships to the local junior college and assist Johnson County cancer patients and their families. sites.google.com/view/athena-society-of-burleson.

CENTER FOR ASD

Since 2009, Center for ASD has served families affected emotionally and financially by autism. From educational programs to after-school care to social events, they strive to provide opportunities for people of all ages and all ability levels. centerforasd.org, facebook.com/centerforasd, (682) 499-6655.

COMPASSION CONNECTION OF TEXAS

This organization provides services and resources to victims and survivors of domestic violence and families and seniors in need. They educate people on what abuse looks like and how to make an exit plan. In the next couple years, they hope to build a Domestic Violence Shelter with round-the-clock security in Burleson. compassionconnectionoftexas.org, facebook.com/CompassionConnectionofTx, (817) 999-9112.

FITABILITYTX

FitAbilityTx provides personal training as well as group fitness for those with different abilities. With certified trainers and instructors, they work to help people gain strength and confidence in the gym. fitabilitytx.org, facebook.com/fitabilitytx, (817) 637-8190.

OSTRANDER SCHOLAR SOCIETY

This organization provides scholarships for Eagle Scouts who are active members of the Order of the Arrow, Scouting's National Honor Society. With funding, they hope to expand their scholarship program and create internship opportunities. ostranderscholars.org, facebook.com/OstranderScholarSociety, (817) 350-0199.

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