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M A G A Z I N E

JULY 2023

## Outfield Assistants

Sean Kelly and  
Steve Samuels lead  
youth leagues

Also inside:  
Scavenger Hunt

In the Kitchen With  
Destiny Ruiz

## Pouring His Art Out

Billy Nelson finds his  
creative side

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Angel

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### *Got game?*

I saw it suggested that instead of aging ourselves in “years,” we do it in “levels” because, “I’m level 53,” sounds much cooler than, “I’m 53 years old.” Although I’m generally of the “age is just a number” mindset, I’m not opposed to this new video game approach. While we’re at it, here are a few other game-related terms parents may use to “level up” their language ...

Your child says they’re bored for the 100th time this summer? Simply reply, “AFK.” It means you’re “away from keyboard,” and cannot be disturbed. Go a step further and suggest they try to earn some “XP” (experience points) by making a craft or cleaning their room. Perhaps this will encourage them to “sweat” (a term referring to a try-hard gamer using over-the-top means to win) their own ways to entertain themselves.

Hunting some affordable family time? Try a new take on “Easter eggs” — hard-to-find images or clues in video games. Have the kids create a scavenger hunt around the house (or around town), including “crafting” (items gamers collect to create something new). Pack a “loot box” (container of small prizes that help players in a game) to open at the end of your hunt, like snacks, a book to read aloud, etc.

Start a “Caught you in 4K” tradition — referring to high-definition resolution of TVs and cameras and meaning to catch someone red-handed via images. Put a positive spin on it by rewarding family members when they are caught doing something good, like teaching a sibling something new, assisting a neighbor or complimenting a stranger. Perhaps simply re-framing how we use the lingo can help us “respawn” IRL time (in real life time) over screen time. Sounds “GGEZ” (good game, easy) to me.

### *Game on!*



## Do it all this summer. Except for the ER.

Most summer-related ER visits are preventable with a little precaution, but we'll always be here when you need us. Remember to use **sun protection** and **insect repellent**, **stay hydrated**, **wear life jackets**, and **leave the fireworks to the professionals**. Helping keep our friends and neighbors safe. That's community and why so many people **Trust Methodist**.

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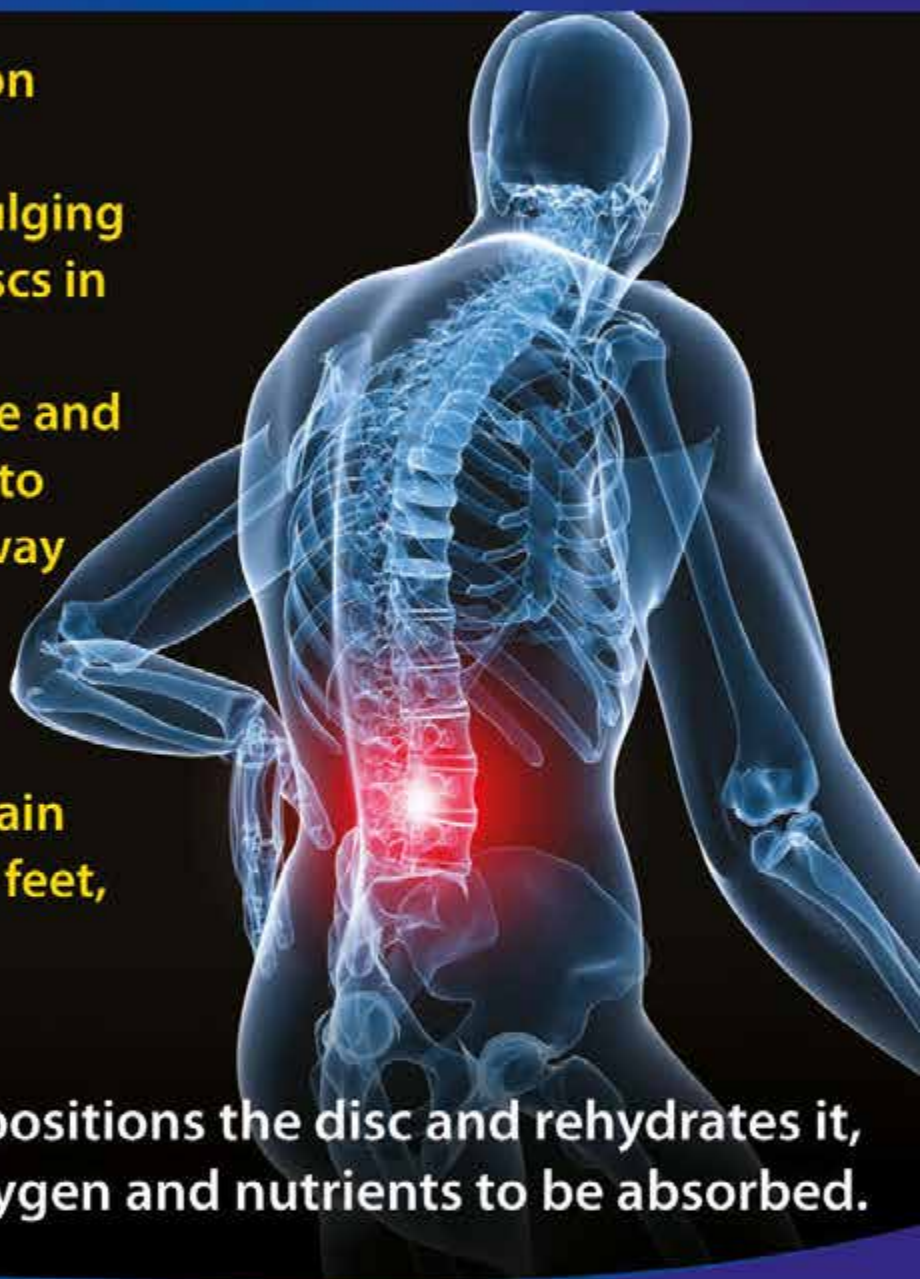


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# OUTFIELD ASSISTANTS

— By Angel Morris

*Sean Kelly and Steve Samuels know what it means to support one's community, and today they are the backbone of the Red Oak Baseball and Softball Association. Their dedication to the city runs deep.*

Sean, who moved to Red Oak in 1984, attended local schools through graduation. He played Little League and was a Red Oak High School player. "Growing up, there were only two city fields, maintained completely by volunteers. My dad helped move the fields from where the current new city building is on Live Oak to behind that building," Sean reflected.

After graduation, Sean became a volunteer firefighter in 1994. He completed fire academy and paramedic school allowing him to serve as a local firefighter/paramedic/engineer for more than 20 years. "I'm also a commissioned police officer. My days off consist of part-time work for Ellis County Emergency Services District No. 6 and volunteering for ROBSA," Sean noted.

Steve grew up in Ferris and moved to Red Oak in 2005. He joined the staff at Red Oak High school nine years ago. "Before becoming a Special Education educator, I worked in the restaurant industry for 30 years. Today, I incorporate vocational, functional and social skills into my lesson

planning to help my students be successful," Steve explained. Previously a rec league and high school umpire, Steve was involved with ROBSA for 11 years before becoming president in 2013.

Sean was the Ellis County umpire director for many years, coached baseball and softball and was a college hitting instructor. "I became involved with ROBSA about 25 years ago when my mom, Ginny Lindsey, was league president and my stepfather, Scott Lindsey, was umpire director," Sean recalled. "When my oldest daughter began to be interested in softball, I joined the board as softball commissioner and have been serving as vice president for 10 years."

While Sean and Steve saw the number of fields double and the addition of a mini field for T-ball practices, fields were still being maintained by volunteers. "Parents and the board did everything from building bathrooms, running concessions, repairing or contracting lights, mowing, chalking, fence and field repairs, to emptying the many trash cans weekly from games and practices," Sean noted.

Five years ago, the city purchased the property from the school district and built six turf fields with a concession building and restrooms. Now Steve and Sean work together to manage ROBSA. "I'm proud to be a part of the growth, but it's the board members who are why we are successful. The dedication and time that they put in with the draft, concession stands and communications is what keeps this organization running," Steve praised.



For those interested, fall league sign-ups are July through August. “We look forward to new players,” Steve said, “but seeing the growth of players from T-ball to 12U is the best. I am proud to know that we are all a part of their journey.” **NOW**



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# POURING



# HIS ART OUT

— By Angel Morris

*“Paint pour” is an artistic method in which flowing designs are created by pouring acrylic paint onto a surface. Glenn Heights’ Billy Nelson joked that he became interested in paint pouring because he “has no real artistic skill.”*

Midway into the pandemic, Billy saw a video on TikTok of paint pouring and found it to be interesting. He tried his hand at it and called it, “Love at first art!” Although he was never into art before, acrylic paint pouring lit a spark.

Like other artistry, there are countless techniques and tutorials described online. “There are so many types of the art, like Dutch pouring — using a blow dryer to ‘dirty pour’ paint on a canvas and tilting the canvas around,” Billy described. “YouTube is where I learned everything!”

Billy noted acrylic pouring is a great technique for beginning artists, with no painting or drawing skills required. He also said the art form doesn’t require a significant investment of time or money. “It uses a small number of supplies, and you can finish a painting in half an hour,” Billy estimated.

Paint, a paint medium (a substance used to make acrylic paints pour more fluidly), something to pour the paint from and something to pour it onto are the only necessary supplies. There are packaged sets available that contain the paints and the pouring mediums. A few other supplies can be used to manipulate the pour if someone is so inclined.

Besides prepping your workspace to protect surfaces and making sure the table on which you’re working is level, Billy said, “Measuring and mixing are the first steps. Decide between making your paint a little thick or thin, depending on the style of pour you’re going for.”

While wearing gloves, add acrylic paint followed by the pouring medium into a cup or the dispenser of your choice. A 2:1 ratio of pour medium to paint is often recommended. Mix well to a honey-like consistency, adding water if thinning is necessary. At this point, one must decide between any number of pouring techniques to develop the design of their choice: Flip cup, straight pour, swipe pour, puddle pour, dirty pour or many others.

The end result is a natural-flowing pattern with as many or as few colors as desired. Billy sold some of his pour designs and still has many in his own collection. “With paint pouring, it’s a lot of standing, and you can’t be bothered by wasting





paint because there's a lot of that," he admitted. "But if you love art and don't mind getting messy, definitely give it a shot!"

Now Billy is trying his hand at other artistic endeavors. "I started doing resin art after fluid art, and I'm very new to laser engraving," Billy listed. "Laser engraving is less messy and less involved. I love that after choosing my design, I just put on my protective eye gear, open an app, connect to the laser, sit back and watch it happen. You can create whatever you want, like wooden key chains, stainless steel bottle designs and more ... it does require you to be patient though."

By day, Billy works at Kohls eFulfillment Center, where he has been employed almost nine years, but his free time is increasingly filled with artistic endeavors. He credits his faith and his daughters, MJ and Shyla, as his creative motivators. "Without God, nothing is possible. I give Him all the glory for everything in my life," Billy stated. "And my daughters are my purpose for living."

Billy hopes sharing his amateur art will motivate others to try something new. "Honestly, no artistic skills are required with paint pouring. It's just about what looks good to you," he said. "With laser engraving, it can be one's custom art if they wish, or it can be something they find online and laser onto the item of their choice. Even a photograph can become a piece of laser art."

Billy's Laser Engraving Creations can be seen on Facebook, and he encourages others to follow along as he shares what he learns and designs. "I'm pretty shy, but I enjoy making new friends, and I can do that through art," he said. "I just like making things that bring others joy, too." **NOW**

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## Zoomed In: Jonathan Dyess

By Angel Morris

Jonathan Dyess started the Teddy Bear Task Force in Ellis County to put his extra time to use and make an impact on the community. Connecting with Keri Bickerstaff and Cindy Cantero helped get the program started. “Keri is a busy mom and owner of multiple local businesses who has a huge networking circle,” Jonathan said. “Keri thought to involve Cindy, who is the family services counselor for a local funeral home.”

After reaching out to police departments, nursing centers and hospitals, Teddy Bear Task Force was born. Jonathan purchased the first huge order of teddy bears himself, before acquiring the LLC. A Facebook page named for the group explains how folks can get involved. “The goal is to provide children who have been affected by any sort of trauma a soft animal to comfort them,” Jonathan explained. “We donate to nursing homes, so the residents feel loved, as well.”



Nathan Koval (center) welcomes customers, Jack and Hawkins, during Snow Place Like Home’s summer kickoff event in downtown Ovilla.



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The city of Red Oak celebrates Logan Ragsdale's retirement after eight years of service with the local library.



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Bentley Strickland slides into home for his team, the Arlington Braves 12u AAA, in the Remember The Fallen baseball tournament in Euless.

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# CookingNOW

## *In the Kitchen With*

### DESTINY RUIZ

— By Angel Morris



“My grandparents’ house was always a place where we could go and eat a good meal!” remembered Destiny Ruiz, who became interested in cooking by helping her nana around the kitchen, preparing food for the family. She was inspired by her father’s cooking skills, too. “My favorite memory is watching my dad scrape up what little food we had left and somehow make a gourmet meal for my siblings and me.”

A mom of “three crazy kids,” Destiny’s favorite place to be is in front of the stove. “There’s nothing like cooking for your family. I like learning new recipes and challenging myself to create new things to try out since we have a big family,” she said. “I also enjoy baking — especially cookies!” **NOW**

### Banana Pudding

- 1 8-oz. block cream cheese, softened to room temperature**
- 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 5-oz. pkg. instant vanilla pudding mix**
- 3 cups milk**
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract**
- 1 8-oz. tub Cool Whip (divided use)**
- 1 11-oz. box Nilla wafers**
- 5-7 bananas, peeled and sliced**

**1.** In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese with an electric mixer on medium speed

until smooth and fluffy. Add the sweetened condensed milk, pudding mix, milk and vanilla extract. Mix until combined well. Stir in half the Cool Whip.

**2. For layering:** Place 1/3 of the wafers in a layer on the bottom of a trifle dish, a large bowl or a 9x13-inch baking dish. Add a single layer of bananas. Pour 1/3 of the pudding mixture on top (enough to cover all the bananas).

**3.** Continue with two more layers. Top with the remaining Cool Whip. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate for at least 1-2 hours before serving.

**4. Variation:** Top with blueberries and strawberries in an American flag pattern for a fun Fourth of July dessert!

### Strawberry Cake Mix Cookies

- 1 15.25-oz. box strawberry cake mix**
- 2 eggs**
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil**
- 1 cup white chocolate chips**

**1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F; line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Add the cake mix to a large bowl.

**2.** In a smaller bowl, whisk the eggs together; add the oil. Whisk until well combined. Add the egg/oil mixture to the cake mix; combine until a dough forms. The dough will be soft. Fold in the white chocolate chips, leaving a few for decorating the cookies after baking.

**3.** Using a small cookie scoop, scoop the batter onto the baking sheets, spacing them apart evenly. Bake 8-10 minutes. The edges will be lightly brown, and the cookies will be soft when you remove them. Press the remaining chips lightly into the tops of the cookies.



**Award-winning Chili**

- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 jalapeño
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 8-oz. can tomato sauce
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel
- 1 15-oz. can light red kidney beans
- 1 15-oz. can black beans
- 1 15-oz. can dark red kidney beans
- 1 cup beef broth
- 1 1.25-oz. pkg. McCormick Original Chili Mix
- 1 tsp. ground black pepper

1. In a large skillet, cook the onions in the olive oil for 2-3 minutes. Add the ground beef; cook 5-7 minutes, until browned. Drain the grease from the skillet.
2. In a large pot, combine all the remaining ingredients with the cooked onions and ground beef. Stir well to mix. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low; simmer, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**Broccoli Rice Casserole**

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 16-oz. pkg. frozen chopped broccoli
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups regular long-grain white rice, cooked
- 1 14-oz. can of cream of chicken soup
- 1 14-oz. can of cream of mushroom soup
- 1 16-oz. block Velveeta cheese
- 1/3 cup milk

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Heat the butter in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the onions; cook until tender-crisp, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the broccoli and celery; cook until tender-crisp, stirring occasionally. Stir in the rice, condensed soups, Velveeta and milk. Cook and stir until the cheese is melted.
3. Pour the broccoli-rice mixture into a 2-quart shallow baking dish.
4. Bake until hot and bubbling, about 30 minutes.

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

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Jeremy Young

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# HAPPY Independence Day

## JULY

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

7/1

### Red Oak, White and Blue:

Family fun including bounce houses, face painting, food trucks, live music and fireworks. Parking begins: 6:30 p.m. Fireworks: 9:15 p.m. (Vehicles will not be allowed to enter parking lots before 6:30 p.m. or after 9:00 p.m.) Oaks Church, 777 S. I-35 East Service Rd. For a map and more details, visit <https://www.redoaktx.org/378/Red-Oak-White-and-Blue>.

7/1-7/19

### Summer Reading Program:

Red Oak Library offers stories, crafts and educational fun throughout the month. Toddler-age 5 story times are

**Tuesdays:** 10:00 a.m. Craft/Theme Days are **Wednesdays:** 2:00 p.m. Family Fun Nights are

**Thursdays:** 7:00 p.m., 101 S. Live Oak St. For more information, call (469) 218-1230.

7/10-7/12

### Summer Bash:

Three fun-filled mornings of kids' recreation and services culminating in a block party for the whole family, designed for children who have completed K-5th grade. 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Oaks Church, 777 S. I-35 East Service Rd. Learn more at [oaks.church/summerbash](https://oaks.church/summerbash) or email [kids@oaks.church](mailto:kids@oaks.church).

Monthly

Dallas Polo Club:

Offering polo lessons and monthly sporting events. 730 Bent Trail, Red Oak. Learn more at <https://www.dallaspoloclub.org/>.

First Mondays

### Red Oak Lion's Club Meeting:

Join Lions Club to network with other businesses, community leaders and civic-minded people while helping your community. 6:30-7:30 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. To learn more, call (469) 571-7265.

Third Mondays

### Book Club:

New members always welcome. 6:30-8:00 p.m., Red

Oak Library, 101 S. Live Oak St. For more information, email [redoakbookclub@gmail.com](mailto:redoakbookclub@gmail.com).

Wednesdays  
and Thursdays

### Senior Citizen

### Center of Red Oak:

Enjoy coffee, juice and donuts each morning, as well as a sponsored lunch on first-third Thursdays and a potluck on fourth Thursdays. Also, games, puzzles, bingo and informative guest speakers. 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd.

Call (469) 218-1217 for more information.

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

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