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ON THE COVER



There are big things in the wind for Tyler Dodson and his unified partner Bobby Westlake.

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Adam Walker
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Reducing it down ...

Before my last semester of my undergrad, I misunderstood my advisor. She told me I needed a science class, and I needed four more hours to graduate. What I *heard* was that I needed a four-hour science class. So, I took chemistry. Not the three-hour class to learn cool things to do with dish soap and why you don't mix brake fluid with *anything*. No, I took the four-hour class for premeds and other serious science folks.

It was a tough class that I lacked a sufficient background for, but I made it through. I learned to calculate moles and valence shells and other stuff that turned out to be quite a bit of fun, despite the stress. Dr. Wilson was helpful with after-class tutoring.

That class gave me new perspective on many things, like fireworks. All those beautiful colors are chemistry in action. The Chinese invented fireworks well over 2,000 years ago, but those were just loud firecrackers. At the first Fourth of July, there was only one color. The Italians added color to the mix in the 1830s. Chemists started adding strontium for red, calcium for orange, sodium for yellow, barium for green, copper for blue and mixing copper and strontium for purple. You get silver from hot magnesium and aluminum. And white comes from metals so hot they're on fire. The periodic table is all in there.

And it's in your kitchen, too. Cooking is applied chemistry. Taste depends on chemical reactions in your mouth. Whether food has that acid bite or not, is all about who has an ion to donate, and who gets that ion.

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Propelled by the Wind

— By Adam Walker

Tyler Dodson got into sailing because, “It looked interesting. It looked like something fun to do.” He had the opportunity to try the sport through a program at Duncanville High School that trains athletes to compete in various events through Special Olympics.

Tyler tried several sports while he was a high school student. “I did the 50-yard dash, the softball throw, bowling and the 100-meter relay in swimming.” He even won some medals at a state-level track and field competition during those years in the program led by longtime DHS teacher Sharon Presley. But sailing is what caught his imagination.

“The first time I tried it, it was difficult, but it was also fun,” Tyler admitted. “I was 15 or 16 then. Now I’m 25.” Ten years of sailing experience paved the way for him and his unified partner, Bobby Westlake, to travel to Berlin, Germany, for the Special Olympics World Games in June of this year. This was partner Bobby’s first time, but Tyler has been to the World Games before.

In 2019, Tyler took a silver medal at the World Games in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. “Abu Dhabi was really nice. It was very clean. There was no litter. The water was beautiful and clear.” That time was with longtime partner, Roland Foerster, who is the coordinator for the Special Olympics sailing program at the Corinthian Sailing Club.

Tyler also competed internationally in 2022 at the Virtus Oceania Asia Games in Australia, on the Gold Coast, where he won gold. “Australia was beautiful, and it was nice to see kangaroos,” he shared. That time was with partner Steve Comen. “It’s different sailing with a different partner,” Tyler explained. “But it’s fun.”

“Tyler and I were paired in October,” Bobby revealed. “But we didn’t get to sail together until January. I started volunteering with Special Olympics in 2018, after I was in a mixed regatta at the Corinthian Sailing Club on White Rock Lake. The Special Olympic sailing teams were sailing alongside the rest of us. One Special Olympic team crossed the line ahead of my boat. That was Tyler. I recognized his mother at the dinner afterward. I’d known her since first grade. Our parents were friends. She convinced me to get involved, so when Tyler needed a new unified partner, I stepped in.”



A unified partner is a non-Special Olympian who works alongside a Special Olympics athlete in team sports. In Tyler's case, sailing is a sport for two sailors. One sets the sails for maximum speed, and the other helms the craft, choosing the path through the water. Competition is divided into several levels, depending on how the athlete and unified partner divide up the tasks. "In the initial level, the athlete works the sails with the help of a unified partner. At level one, the athlete works the sails alone. Tyler controls the helm," Bobby explained. "And I work the sails. That's level two. It takes a lot of trust. He has to trust me to put the sails where they need to go to catch the wind. I have to trust him to steer a good course and not capsize the boat or toss us around too much. We have a heck of a lot of fun doing it!"



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“I like going really fast,” Tyler reported. “I have to move my arms a lot, so it’s good exercise.” The kind of sailboat Tyler practices in, a Flying Scott, can go 11 mph (or 10 knots in nautical terms) when it’s down in the water, and even faster if it comes out of

the water and hydroplanes. He sailed an RS Toura in Berlin.

“It’s a brand-new style of boat,” Bobby underscored. “There’s an equation for figuring maximum hull speed, based on the shape of the hull. All that physics stuff is why I sail. It’s

fascinating. But we don’t really train for a type of boat. It’s more about building rapport and communication. We can do that in any sailboat. I have a couple of sails. One is an American flag sail. Tyler loves that one. It makes it fun, even though the other sail works better.”

The World Games in Berlin opened in the same stadium where the 1936 Olympics were held — the same stadium where Jesse Owens won his gold medals. There were 190 delegations from all over the world competing in 26 different sports. Tyler was there representing us from June 17 to 25. His event happened just outside Berlin, at the Wannsee lake in the southwestern suburbs.

When he’s not training for sailing competitions, Tyler still leads a busy life. He has a steady job as a pizza delivery driver, and he’s going to college to finish his associate degree. “When I came back from Germany, I wanted to relax and try to adjust to the time zone again.” With several international competitions under his belt, he knows all about jet lag, but he loves competing. “I might continue. It’s fun.” **NOW**

An advertisement for Mechanical Comfort Systems Inc. The background features a large American flag. In the lower-left corner, a family of four (a mother, father, and two children) is smiling and posing together. On the right side, there is a circular gold logo with the text 'COMFORT Mechanical SYSTEMS INC.' around the perimeter. Below the logo, the text reads: 'Will your family be cool this summer? Mechanical Comfort Systems Ensuring your family stays comfortably cool this summer! Heating-Air Conditioning-Plumbing'. At the bottom, it says 'KeepingAmericaCool.com Call Today (214) 333-4410'. Small text at the very bottom indicates 'Regulated By: Texas Department of Licensing & Regulations P.O. box 1215 Austin, TX 78711 (512) 463-6599'.



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— By Adam Walker

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Amber Haydin is the manager of Split Endings, a family-owned and -operated hair salon in Cedar Hill. “We do everything for women’s, men’s and children’s hair,” she reported. “We cut hair in any style. We do perms, highlights and color. We have stylists who work with braids in natural hair and extensions. We do Brazilian blowouts and updos. We also offer facial waxing.”



Mom, Darla Haydin, bought the business in 1996. “It was called the Hair Centre back then, but I wanted something more modern and up to date, so I changed the name to Split Endings,” Darla said. “The salon started in 1987, so we are the longest running salon in Cedar Hill. Our staff have been with us for many years. About 80 percent of the receptionists we’ve had over the years have gone on to cosmetology school and become stylists with us! I retired from the day-to-day operations last year. I miss doing it so much, but my back won’t allow me to do it anymore. We’ve been at a couple of locations, but we’ve been at our current location for 14 years.”

That current location is the corner of Bryan Place and Straus Road, about three or four blocks off FM 1382. “We’re in the same building as my dad’s Haydin Insurance,” Amber informed. “He helps out at the salon, too. He gets rid of wasps and fixes toilets.”

“I do help with maintenance and plumbing, but I also handle the financial side of the business,” longtime city council member Daniel Haydin confirmed. “I think my wife is

"We've been chosen as the best hair salon in Cedar Hill every year since 2010," Darla confided. "And Amber has been chosen as the best stylist in the city six times! I'm very proud of the fact that this family runs this wonderful business together."

“We’re a tight salon family,” Darla declared. “My motto that I created for Split Endings is: *Your personal image is our success.*”

“We can be booked for special events, like wedding parties,” Amber informed. “Working here is fun. It’s energetic and feels like family. We carry a line of products called Cotril. They’re Italian made and really smell great. Everybody loves them. Amika products are also popular with our clients. But if there is another brand that you are used to, we can order that for you, by request.”

The salon is set up with a series of private rooms, where the stylist attends to one client at a time. There are no rows of chairs, with the stylists gossiping among themselves here. The stylist is focused on the customer, and each styling space is decorated to feel homey.

"We're a tight salon family," Darla declared. "My motto that I created for Split Endings is: *Your personal image is our success.*" All of the stylists at Split Endings embrace that philosophy.

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Zoomed In: Dionn Megginson

By Adam Walker

Dionn Megginson just made CHSD history as the youngest ever graduate of Cedar Hill High School. She's only 15. "I just live my life. Knowing I accomplished something big makes me feel really good. Being salutatorian was so much more stress than anything else. There were approximately 500 in my graduating class. Speaking in front of a lot of people was difficult."

She'll be going to Texas Woman's University to finish her degree. "I already have 51 college credit hours. I'll be studying real estate finance. A business program in middle school introduced me to finance, and my mom introduced me to real estate. It seems like a nice combo. CHSD shaped who I am. The teachers and administrators pushed me to become all I can be."



Entrepreneurs Keili and Kelis Gulley serve up sweet treats in DeSoto.



Coach Dacia and the 9U Lady HAVOK football team celebrate a victory.



CHHS receives a check for \$30,000 from artist Blue the Great for art desks.



STAR Transit celebrates expanding its service to Cedar Hill.



Cedar Hill High School's PTSA presents the first scholarships in honor of former principal, Shay Whittaker.



Aquatic Team members from IBOC bring out the touch tank for the kiddos to experience some underwater species.



Jones Inck Custom Embroidery & More holds their ribbon cutting in Duncanville.



De'Kenley Dixon and bestie, Roy Donnell, explore reading at the DeSoto library.

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Smoothies are a great way to start your day or cool off after a workout on a hot summer day. They are quick and easy to make and packed with good nutrition. Instead of reaching for an ice cream, why not try one of these cool treats? We have provided recipes from each of our nine magazines for you to sample **NOW**

Rainbow Smoothie

Provided by Lovelea Lynch for the September 2016 issue of *SouthwestNOW Magazine*.

- 1/2 cup spinach
- 1 green apple, cored
- 5 raspberries
- 5 strawberries
- 1/4 cup oranges
- 1/2 cup canned pineapple
- 10 blueberries
- 5 cubes ice

- 3/4 cup apple juice
- 3/4 cup Greek yogurt

1. Wash and cut all fruit, including spinach; place in a blender.
2. Add ice cubes, juice and yogurt. Blend until smooth; serve.

Midday Smoothie Snack

Provided by Amy Wooten for the July 2022 issue of *BurlesonNOW Magazine*.

- 1 banana
- 1/4 cup ice
- 1 Tbsp. nut butter
- 1 scoop Just Ingredients protein powder
- 1/4 cup milk

1. Add all ingredients to a blender. Blend until smooth; serve.

Peanut Butter Banana Cacao Smoothie

Provided by Amanda Grant for the November 2016 issue of *EnnisNOW Magazine*.

- 8-oz. raw whole milk
- 1 peeled, frozen banana, broken into pieces
- 1 heaping Tbsp. fresh ground, raw peanut butter (no sweetener added)

1 tsp. raw cacao powder or cocoa powder

1. Place all ingredients in a blender; blend well.
2. Serve immediately.

Breakfast Smoothie

Provided by Lea Dominy for the April 2015 issue of *CorsicanaNOW Magazine*.

1 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 scoop powder protein
1/4 cup fresh blueberries
1/4 cup fresh strawberries
1/4 cup fresh pineapple
Handful of fresh spinach
8 oz. ice
8 oz. water

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender; mix well.

Organic Banana “Milkshake”

Provided by Athena Runyan for the August 2007 issue of *MansfieldNOW Magazine*.

1 whole frozen banana
2 Tbsp. organic almond butter
2 Tbsp. “yammit” (dried organic yams, which can be found at health food stores; or use organic corn flakes)
1 tsp. organic honey
1/2 cup organic soy milk
6 oz. crushed ice

1. Place all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth. *Note: Makes 1 rich and creamy, but healthy, summertime snack.*

Power Smoothie

Provided by Stephanie Deese for the February 2019 issue of *MidlothianNOW Magazine*.

2 cups almond milk
2 Tbsp. peanut butter or almond butter
2 Tbsp. flax seed
1 scoop plant-based vanilla protein powder (I use Sprouts Pea Protein Powder Vanilla)
Handful of fresh spinach

1. Blend until mixed, serve immediately.

Fruit Smoothie

Provided by Melissa Rawlins for the October 2022 issue of *WeatherfordNOW Magazine*

1 cup fresh kale
1 banana
1 organic lemon, sliced into 1/4-inch chunks
1 avocado
1 organic apple, sliced into 1-inch chunks
1 clove garlic
1 cup pure water

1. Place all ingredients into a good blender, in the order given; cover tightly.

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2. Press the chop button; process until the entire smoothie looks mixed.
3. Switch the speed to puree or liquefy; process for 30 seconds.
4. Pour into a large mug or travel cup; sip slowly until gone. Follow with another 16 oz. of pure water before eating other food.

Pineapple Green Smoothie

Provided by Bubba Walker for the July 2015 issue of *North Ellis Co.NOW Magazine*.

- 1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1/3 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1 cup frozen banana slices (about 1 medium banana)
- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple chunks
- 1 Tbsp. chia seeds
- 1-2 tsp. pure maple syrup or honey (optional)

1. Add almond milk and yogurt to a blender; add spinach, banana, pineapple, chia seeds and sweetener (if desired).
2. Blend until smooth. Enjoy!

Peanut Butter & Banana Smoothie

Provided by Lovelea Lynch for the September 2016 issue of *SouthwestNOW Magazine*.

- 1/2 cup vanilla almond milk
- 1 banana, sliced
- 2 Tbsp. peanut butter
- 5 cubes ice
- 1 Tbsp. ice cream, optional (if you want to gain weight/muscle mass)

1. Mix all ingredients in a blender; blend to preferred texture and serve.

Quick Breakfast Smoothie

Provided by Kathy Dickey for the June 2016 issue of *North Ellis Co.NOW Magazine*.

- 1 cup almond milk (plain or vanilla)
- 1 scoop protein powder
- 1 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup fruit of choice (fresh or frozen)

1. Add all ingredients to a blender; mix until smooth. Pour into a cup and enjoy.

Cherry Smoothie Breakfast

Provided by Paula Thedford for the January 2020 issue of *WaxahachieNOW Magazine*.

- 1 cup frozen cherries
- 1/3 cup light vanilla yogurt
- 1/4 cup tart cherry juice
- 1/8 cup artificial sweetener
- 1/2 cup raw oats

1. Blend all ingredients until smooth.

Bubbly Cherry Dess Yummy Smoothies

Provided by Adam Huff for the May 2008 issue of *MansfieldNOW Magazine*.

- 1 8-oz. container of plain yogurt
- 1 Tbsp. Acidophilus (powder or liquid)
- 2 Tbsp. flax seed powder
- 1 14-oz. can fruit, your favorite (in heavy syrup to avoid adding sweetener)
- 1 cup fresh fruit of choice
- 2 bananas
- 1-2 cups ice

1. Place the first 6 ingredients in a blender with 1-2 cups of ice (for consistency).
2. Mix well and enjoy.

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JULY

7/4

Independence Day Parade:

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Independence Day Celebration:

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7/8

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presents this event to help parents struggling with inflation to get their kids ready for school. Free. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., 1231 E. Pleasant Run Rd., Cedar Hill.

7/10

Zula's Got Talent!

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7/21

A Night of Comedy:

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7/22

Artist Talk:

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Brianna Holt:

Ms. Holt is a DeSoto native, based in New York, who is a reporter, screenwriter and author. She will be discussing her book *In Our Shoes*. Free. 1:00-3:00 p.m., DeSoto Library, Multipurpose Room, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

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