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JULY 2023

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ON THE COVER



Jeff Oakes inspires others to clean up local neighborhoods.

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Sarah Brown.

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EDITORIAL
Managing Editor, Becky Walker
Weatherford Editor, Amber D. Browne
Office Assistant, Kristin Bato
Editors/Proofreaders, Rachel Rich
Virginia Riddle

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN
Creative Director, Chris McCalla
Artists, Kristin Bato . Martha Macias
Anthony Sarmienta

PHOTOGRAPHY
Photography Director, Chris McCalla
Photographer, Sarah Brown

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Amber D. Browne
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Happy summer!

July is full of entertaining events for area residents and visitors to enjoy. Boomin' 4th at Gene Voyles Park in Hudson Oaks celebrates our country's independence with a choreographed fireworks display, live music, Kid Zone and food court. Also on July 4, Spark in the Park 2023 at Heritage Park in Weatherford will include a performance by Texas country artist Pat Green, food vendors and, of course, a fireworks show.

Historic Downtown Weatherford has been a place of celebration for Parker County's agricultural heritage for nearly four decades. On July 8, that tradition continues with the Parker County Peach Festival. The Peach Pedal kicks off the day of festivities with cyclists starting their miles-long bike rides at Weatherford High School. Festival goers can enjoy all things peach in downtown with more than 200 arts, crafts, food and activity booths, as well as live music and entertainment.

With so many fun activities happening in our little corner of the Metroplex, it is refreshing to know we can enjoy events in our own backyard while supporting the community. I remember attending the Peach Festival and Boomin' 4th for the first time with our little ones many years ago. It was hot, as summer in Texas is, but we had a blast making memories and celebrating with others in the community.

If you expect to attend any local celebrations this summer or plan to head out of town on vacation, make the most of the time spent with family and friends. As Ferris Bueller once said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

Enjoy yourselves!



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UNCOVERING Nature's Beauty

— By Amber D. Browne

To love means to take pleasure in something of great interest. For Jeff Oakes, Weatherford has become one of his loves. And he is passionate about making it the cleanest city in Parker County.

As locals drive on area roadways, many take notice of wildflowers and the beauty of nature. What they do not want to see is trash covering the roadside. To help curb this problem, Jeff founded Love Weatherford, and volunteers across the area are taking to the streets to alleviate the trash problem.

The idea of Love Weatherford sparked in November 2022 when Jeff, his wife, Dr. Jennifer Oakes; and most of their eight children, began picking up trash along an 11-mile stretch near their home on Upper Denton Road. They had such a great experience, Jeff decided to clean the next street. “The neighbors loved it, and the place looked cleaner. There’s a good feeling that comes from doing stuff like that,” Jeff said. He thought to himself that more people would want to have a similar experience, so he created the Love Weatherford public group on Facebook around Thanksgiving last year. In just five months, Jeff and other area volunteers filled more than 1,200 bags with trash, and the Facebook group grew to more than 1,000 members. “We have other people just like

me and my family cleaning up their drives. We have people around town who are doing the exact same thing.”

Anyone in the community can join the Facebook group. Love Weatherford holds a neighborhood cleanup on the second Saturday each month, but Jeff encourages residents to go out into their neighborhoods and pick up trash any day during the week. “We don’t care where or when you pick up trash. We just want you to pick up trash,” he said. “Everybody’s kind of their own boss, and they decide what they’re going to do.” Love Weatherford members are encouraged to post a photo of their progress in the Facebook group.

“I think we’re waking people up — that the trash is gross. You drive down a stretch, and you’re used to it being really ugly. But then the next time you drive down, it’s beautiful because all the trash is gone, and the flowers are around. There’s so much beauty.”

After cleaning up various roadways, volunteers have noticed that drivers are not throwing out as much trash as they previously did. “I think it’s harder for them to throw trash out when it’s a clean area, when it looks good versus if there’s a whole bunch of trash.”

Jeff tries to clean an area within the city at least once a day. As the discarded items accumulate, he will leave the bags behind to gather later. Oftentimes, when he returns for the full bags, they have disappeared. “They’re stopping, and they’re



NG auty

picking up the bags of trash. They're taking them, and they're disposing of it. So people are getting involved."

Love Weatherford has partnered with Weatherford Code Enforcement, which also disposes of filled bags. "I almost get teary eyed because I love seeing them. They're there to say, 'Hey, can I take your trash?' I get the warm fuzzies."

The city of Weatherford also partners with Love Weatherford. Jeff said the city does not provide money, but they provide T-shirts for volunteers, food and other things. In an agreement with the city, Love Weatherford can now provide community service opportunities.

Jeff and members of the Love Weatherford board are fundraising and looking for sponsors in order to provide volunteers with coupons, door prizes, gift cards and treats at the monthly cleanup events. Love Weatherford provides necessary supplies at those group cleans and if a neighborhood group requests them. When out cleaning a neighborhood, volunteers

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Love Weatherford created a rewards program for its volunteers. Members of the rewards program who pick up one or more bags, once a month for two months in a row and post photographs on Facebook, will be invited to the Halloween Spooky Hayride and Dinner Bash in October, as well as an Easter celebration in the spring.

Love Weatherford’s short-term goal is to clean up the city with help from volunteers. “The volunteers aren’t going to do this forever. They’re going to get burned out,” he said. The initial cleanup is more difficult and takes additional time. After that, upkeep is easier. The long-term goal is to generate funding to hire a paid force to spot clean and maintain the roadways.

“When you teach your children how to pick up trash, you’re teaching them more than just picking up trash. You’re teaching them all sorts of things — not



to throw trash; that when there’s a problem, you get out and you fix the problem; to go the extra mile,” Jeff said. “It’s teaching them humility and service.”

In addition to picking up trash around the area, Love Weatherford improves unmaintained sidewalks by removing extra dirt and weeds. “We will get it right down to the concrete,” he said, “and it will look maintained.”

The idea of Love Weatherford is spilling over into other towns. “We

could create a really huge movement.” And that is exactly what Love Weatherford is doing. Drivers can see the difference around town.

Jeff hopes Love Weatherford inspires others to get outside and clean up their neighborhoods by picking up one bag of trash, once a month. “It gives you that really good feeling,” he said. “I believe that that’s the Heavenly Father smiling, and you can feel it. There’s no better feeling.” **NOW**

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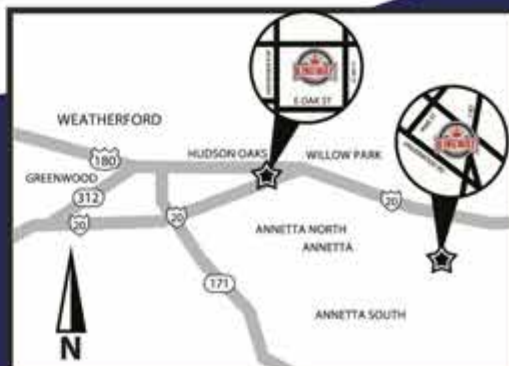
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Zoomed In: Courtney & Emma Braddock, Lola Lambert

By Amber D. Browne

It takes a special kind of person to receive the Gold Level of The President's Volunteer Service Award, and three area residents did just that for their work with horses at Golden Reward Sanctuary in Weatherford. Courtney Braddock volunteered just shy of 1,400 hours in 2022, and her 15-year-old daughter, Emma, served 1,155 hours. Emma rehabilitated Jessie Jayne after she was discovered suffering from starvation on the roadside. Lola Lambert, 15, served 930.5 hours last year to help rehabilitate Gracie following a skull fracture.

"They are not only helping the horses but it helps their character, too, and they get better at being horsemen," Courtney said referring to the teens. GRS founder Melissa Hadley presented the certificates and medals to the three volunteers in late May.



Tori Case and her son, Crew, spend the afternoon playing at Bearcat Park in Aledo.



Ian Christiansen celebrates his birthday with snow cones and his family, Angie, Emilyynn and Cooper, at Funky Munky.



For the first time in school history, Weatherford College's baseball team played in the NJCAA Division I World Series. The season ended one win away from the championship game.



Volunteers with Aledo Young Men's Service League help with landscaping and trash removal at Branch to Hope Community Center.



Operation Texas Strong co-founders Peggy and Bobby Crutsinger accept donations for the resale shop that benefits homeless veterans.



Jeanna Vaughan and Lisa Flowers support local businesses at the East Parker County Chamber of Commerce.



Dr. Hyeyoung Song, master pianist and artist-in-residence at Weatherford College, will be inducted into the Steinway and Sons Teacher Hall of Fame this fall.

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— By Amber D. Browne

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Thrive Apothecary in Weatherford is trying to end the stigma associated with cannabis. “I’m a retired police officer. I was raised in the environment that all cannabis is evil, and it destroys communities,” said Trey Phillips, co-founder of Thrive Apothecary. Self-education changed his perception. Now, he and his wife and Thrive Apothecary co-founder, Dr. Lisa Gardner, are trying to educate the community and



provide consumers with the safest, highest quality products.

Dr. Gardner, a physician for two decades, specializes in anti-aging. She found that her patients, despite adjusting hormones, supplements and diet, were still complaining of anxiety, depression and insomnia. Dr. Gardner began researching treatment options and discovered cannabis. “This store was born out of a need to solve a problem within her medical practice, and it’s just grown from there,” Trey said.

A cannabis plant has two main variations — one with a high content of THC, or Tetrahydrocannabinol, which is considered marijuana, and one with low THC, which is considered hemp. “The federal government says any cannabis plant that has a higher THC concentration than three-tenths of 1 percent is marijuana. Anything lower is hemp,” Trey explained. “Within both versions, you have a couple hundred chemical compounds that make up the plant. They’re called cannabinoids. And one of those cannabinoids is CBD.” CBD, or cannabidiol, is available in a number of Thrive Apothecary products. Products with THC, the intoxicating compound, are also available.

The biggest drivers for people to begin using cannabis is to help ease insomnia, anxiety, chronic pain, depression, inflammation and post-traumatic stress disorder. “They’re coming in here after they’ve tried traditional methods, whether that was big pharma-related or traditional medicinal approaches.”

At Thrive Apothecary, products are separated by category, and the staff is extremely knowledgeable about the merchandise and what types of ailments they treat. One category includes zero THC for those who may have a rare allergy to the chemical or want to avoid it because of employment drug testing. Zero THC is low THC hemp that has had the THC chemically removed. Options include oil, which can be ingested, or gummies.

Full Spectrum CBD products include less than three-tenths of 1 percent of THC and are available in topicals, oils, gummies and soft gels. Animals that experience joint or gut health issues, hyperactivity or separation anxiety can benefit from Thrive Apothecary’s pet health products.

Traditional hemp flower is available in smokable or inhalable form. Delta 8-THC or Delta-9 THC edibles are available as cookies, chocolate bars, gummies, cereal treats, etc., which can be used for therapeutic reasons or for recreation. “We encourage people to use it responsibly.”

Thrive Apothecary offers its own line of cannabis products — WelCel — produced from ingredients grown and manufactured in Fort Worth. Products include shampoos, bath bombs and face creams, as well as hormone and stress response supplements.

When Thrive Apothecary first opened in Fort Worth in 2018, they thought they would cater toward millennials. However, the female demographic over the age of 35 has become their biggest sales driver.

The brand has three locations — one in Weatherford and two in Fort Worth. To carry a product, Thrive Apothecary requires third-party lab results, as well as internal independent testing. “We’ve essentially done the homework for the consumer, so they can feel confident when they come in here,” Trey said. “Everything in here is doctor approved.” **NOW**



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CookingNOW

In the Kitchen With

MANDY YEARY

— By Amber D. Browne

“Food is medicine,” said Mandy Yearly, a practicing dietitian for 25 years and lifelong Weatherford resident. In some recipes, she might substitute one ingredient for a healthier option. However, a healthier version of coconut pie for the youth minister at Greenwood Baptist Church, where Mandy has been a member since 1995, did not turn out as planned. “Sometimes, I just need to stick to the recipe and remember it’s about the portion size.”

Mandy enjoys sharing homecooked meals with family, friends and neighbors. Inspiration is sparked by ingredients, occasion or amount of time available to prepare the meal. One of Mandy’s family traditions is sharing a meal around the table. “This allows us to have community and communicate with each other.” And, of course, enjoy a great meal. **NOW**

Korean Beef and Rice

- 1 1/2 cups beef broth
- 1 cup rice
- 1 Tbsp. avocado or olive oil
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup soy sauce or coconut aminos
- 2 tsp. sesame oil
- 1/2 tsp. pepper flakes

- 1/4 tsp. ginger
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (Can substitute with jarred minced garlic or 1 Tbsp. garlic powder.)
- 2 green onions, chopped (optional)
- 1/4 tsp. sesame seeds (optional)

1. In a medium-size pot, boil the broth. Add the rice. Cover; reduce heat. Simmer 20 minutes; set aside.

2. In a skillet, add the oil and ground beef. Brown and drain. Add the brown sugar and the next 5 ingredients. Cook on low; mix well. Serve over rice; top with green onions and sesame seeds, if desired.

Stuffed Bell Peppers

- 3 large bell peppers, halved and seeds removed
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel Original Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies
- 1 15.5-oz. can black beans, drained
- 1 cup rice or couscous, cooked
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
 2. In a greased baking dish, place the bell peppers sliced side down. Rub each with olive oil; bake at 350 F for 5 minutes. Set aside to cool.
 3. In a large skillet, sauté the onions for 3-4 minutes. Add the ground beef and

Ro-Tel. Cook until the meat is browned; drain.
4. Add the beans, rice and cheese to the meat mixture; combine well. Flip over the bell peppers; scoop the meat mixture into the peppers. Bake at 350 F for 10 minutes. Serve with a side salad and Soda Bread. Enjoy.

Easy Soda Bread

- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 12 oz. club soda, carbonated water or O'Doul's**
- 1 stick unsalted butter, melted (divided use)**

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F Grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.
- 3.** Add the soda to the dry ingredients; stir with a wooden spoon until mixed well.
- 4.** Pour half of the melted butter into the bottom of the prepared loaf pan. Spoon the batter into the pan; pour the remaining butter on top. Bake at 350 F for 50-60 minutes until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Smoothie

- 1 8-oz. pkg. H-E-B Select Ingredients Blendables The Starter Smoothie**
- 8 oz. coconut water, or your choice of milk — 2%, coconut, almond, etc. (divided use)**
- 1 Tbsp. peanut butter (optional)**
- 1 Tbsp. protein powder (optional)**
- 1 Tbsp. flax seed (optional)**

- 1.** In a blender or Magic Bullet, add the fruit mixture and 4 oz. coconut water or milk. Blend.
- 2.** Add the peanut butter, protein powder and flax seed, if desired. Blend; add more coconut water or milk until desired texture is reached.


To search for more great recipes from any of the **9 NOW Magazines** publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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JULY

7/4

Boomin' 4th:

Celebrate America's freedom with a fireworks show, kid zone, music, food and more. 5:00-10:00 p.m., Gene L. Voyles Park, 210 Hudson Oaks Dr., Hudson Oaks. boomin4th.com.

Spark in the Park:

This free event features Texas Country's Pat Green as headliner with fireworks starting at sundown.

Food and beverages will be offered. 6:00-10:00 p.m., Heritage Park Grounds, 317 Santa Fe Dr. experienceweatherford.com.

7/7

Peaches in the Warehouse:

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7/8

Parker County Peach Festival:

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8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Downtown Weatherford. peachfestivaltx.com.

7/8-7/9, 7/15-7/16

Three Little Pigs:

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Performances on

Saturday: 11:00 a.m. and **Sunday:**

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7/22

PCCOA Summer Carnival:

The Parker County Committee on Aging invites the public to enjoy live music, food, bounce houses, etc. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Parker County Senior Center, 1225 Holland Lake Dr. (817) 596-4640, pccoa.org.

7/28

End of Summer Celebration:

Free program at the Doss. 10:30 a.m., Doss Heritage & Culture Center, 1400 Texas Dr. dosscenter.org.

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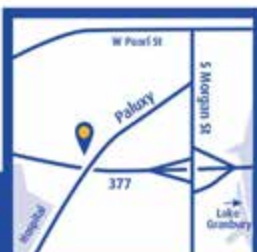
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- 3 lbs. Thick Texas Bacon
- 3 lbs. Farm Sausage
- 12 - Thick Pork Chops
- 2 - Racks St. Louis Pork Ribs
- 3 Whole Chickens (Great for Smoker)

TASTE THE DIFFERENCE

100% GUARANTEED
FREEZER WRAPPED
& LOADED FREE

ALL FOR
\$799.95
PLUS TAX

ALL ORDERS CUT FRESH

CUT OUT THE MIDDLEMAN
and eat the best meats at a
HUGE SAVINGS!

NEW MEXICO

- BISON & ELK
- Ribeyes
- Tenderloin
- Andouille Cheese,
- Jalapeno Sausage
- Ground Bison
- Bison Patties
- Ground Elk
- Elk Sausage
- Elk Tenderloins
- Elk Back Strap

OUR FAMOUS

- LINK SAUSAGE
- Italian
- Sicilian
- German
- Polish
- Texas Hot Links
- Chorizo
- Farm Breakfast Sausage

GULF OF MEXICO FRESH SEAFOOD

- Texas Gold Shrimp
- Red Fish
- Black Dray
- Grouper
- Scallops
- Halibut
- Orange Roughy
- Red Snapper
- Salmon
- Catfish
- Tuna

WE MAKE
THE BEST
JERKY!

- Dog Treats
- Dog Bones
- Dog Food
- Beef Hearts
- Beef Liver
- Beef Fat
- Cheek Meat
- Pork Belly
- Ox Tails
- and much more!

EAST TEXAS

HOT LINKS
\$34.95
5 LB BOX

SICILIAN SAUSAGE

LINKS
\$34.95
5 LB BOX

POLISH SAUSAGE

LINK
\$29.95
5 LB BOX

GERMAN SAUSAGE

LINKS
\$29.95
5 LB BOX

HOT ITALIAN

LINKS
\$29.95
5 LB BOX

SWEET ITALIAN

LINKS
\$29.95
5 LB BOX

TEXAS

FILET STEAKS
\$69.95
5 LB BOX

BACON WRAPPED

FILET STEAKS
\$59.95
5 LB BOX

TEXAS

T-BONE STEAKS
\$49.95
5 LB BOX

TEXAS

RIBEYE STEAKS
\$49.95
5 LB BOX

FRESH CHICKEN BREAST

\$39.90
10 LBS
\$3.99 LB

V.I.P. PACKAGE

- 4 - 8 oz. Filets
- 4 - 12 oz. NY Strips
- 4 - 12 oz. T-Bones
- 1 - 3 Rib Prime Rib
- 4 - 12 oz. Top Sirloin
- 1 lb. Texas Jumbo Gulf Shrimp
- 4 - 12 oz. Rib Eyes
- 2 - 14 oz. Main Lobster Tails
- 4 - Chicken Breasts
- 1 lb. Large Scallops

\$299.95

SPLIT

1/2 BEEF

\$700.00

FREEZER

WRAPPED / CUT FREE

All The

Beef Cuts

15 lb. Pork & Poultry FREE

RIB EYES

10 One Pounders

\$119.95

16 oz. cut,
Grass Fed
and Grain
Finished

TEXAS

FILETS

20 8 oz.

Steaks

ONLY
\$119.95