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ON THE COVER



A childhood fascination with planes led Gerald Oliver to form an aircraft preservation organization.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Angel

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Golden opportunity ...

Even though I won't personally know a single participant in the Summer Olympics, my heart will swell with pride as Team USA makes its appearance at opening ceremonies. Watching these events is a perfect ending to the most patriotic of months in America, when the best of the best compete for gold. Beyond cheering them on through your TV, however, there are ways to get your family in the spirit of the games. A favorite summer memory of mine is hosting a family Olympics.

You can be as low-key or as elaborate as you'd like, but here are a few simple ideas for hosting your own events. We set aside the week coinciding with opening games and choose a different country as our theme each day. Then, we find simple games, movies and meals related to the countries on their designated day. On day one, the kick-off breakfast is a short stack of pancakes representing the five rings of the Olympics' logo.

Breakfast leads into "That's Amore Monday," when we celebrate Italy playing the board game, Pente. Pente, you see, was created by a pizzeria worker. And pizza, obviously, is our Italian dinner of choice, followed by tiramisu for dessert. On "Taco Tuesday," we recognize Mexico, watching the animated movie, *Coco*, and playing several hands of the card game Uno (Spanish for the word "one," of course). For "Waddyasay Wednesday," we dine Aussie style at Outback Steakhouse, followed by a variation on the game of cricket, Australia's national sport. The week goes on in this vein, with more movies, meals and makeshift games — both indoors and out — culminating in our own medal ceremony with lots of bronze-, silver- and gold-wrapped snacks. Assign each family member a day and compete creatively.

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— By Angel Morris



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As a boy, Gerald Oliver was constantly watching airplanes. “They fascinated me, especially the history. At 12, I asked my dad if I could start taking flying lessons,” Gerald recalled.

The agreement was that as soon as Gerald could drive himself to the airport, he could learn to fly. “I earned my private pilot’s license at age 18, right after high school graduation,” he noted.

Almost five decades later, Gerald would come to live in an aviation-oriented Midlothian neighborhood, but not before making a name for himself in real estate. With an accounting degree in hand, he initially began working in the real estate division of an insurance company. From there, he worked for several large real estate firms. “I moved from Chicago to Dallas in 2008 when I was recruited by a company that owned 50-plus office buildings in 35 cities around the U.S., including the tallest building in Fort Worth,” Gerald outlined.

That same year, Gerald joined the Commemorative Air Force, an organization dedicated to preserving World War II aircraft. He sits on the board of its foundation, and is the volunteer captain for *Ike’s Bird*, the Aero Commander L-26 used by the Eisenhower White House, and the smallest plane ever to be used as Air Force One.

“The best part of aviation is meeting all the great people on the ramp at fly-ins and airshows. I’ve participated in nearly 100 events,” Gerald said. “There are always people who come up and relate stories of their family, the sacrifices of a veteran or express with wide eyes their appreciation of the aircraft. It’s satisfying to bring that kind of joy to others.”

Gerald was involved in the move of the Commemorative Air Force from Midland, Texas. “Using my real estate background, I helped survey the nation





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for the right airport and location. We looked at 26 cities and chose Dallas. It's very satisfying to see the new location and especially the new 50,000-square-foot National Aviation Education Center on the campus of Dallas Executive Airport," Gerald shared.

In 2016, Gerald founded the Historic Aircraft Preservation Society (HAPS) with four friends, gaining IRS approval as a tax exempt 501(c)(3) the next year. "We have received donations from over 600 people in the last few years," Gerald credited. Gerald retired from real estate in 2017 and wrote a beginner's guide to careers in commercial real estate management titled, *How to Land the Best \$100,000 Job in America*, available on Amazon.

In 2018, he was finally able to make a home where his passion for airplanes could soar. "We had been looking at the Eagle's Nest subdivision for at least three years. Houses there don't come up for sale very often," Gerald noted.

Writing letters to homeowners there and a chance stop at a garage sale led Gerald and his wife, Kathryn, to a couple thinking of selling their home. "A few weeks later, we had the house under contract before it ever hit the market," he said.

Now, Gerald spends much time promoting HAPS. "The organization is focused on vintage aircraft from the 1930s to the 1950s. We've been able to acquire two historic aircraft: The 1942 Piper J-3 Cub, used during the war to serve as a trainer for artillery spotters, and the 1931 Fleet Model 8 biplane.

"This is the last flying Model 8 in the world, once owned by a famous World War II bomber pilot, Fred J. McConnell. McConnell Air Force Base is named in honor of Fred and his two brothers."

HAPS acquired the plane in 2022, along with its storied past. "Just after the war, Fred was flying to his new duty station in this airplane. He hit a high-tension wire, was thrown out and killed instantly," Gerald relayed. "His wife survived, but never wanted anything to do with flying again. She allowed the parts to lay in the farmer's field for 37 years.

"The center section became a chicken coop, the tail a windmill stand. An aircraft mechanic teacher at Central Missouri State University heard about the parts. He drove to Kansas, made

a deal with the farmer and took the pieces home. Over the next 12 years, he worked to rebuild the plane. It flew again in 1995, 50 years after the accident.”

Stories such as this validate HAPS’ mission. “We feel the Society is important because it is dedicated to helping preserve the aircraft and stories of the men and women behind these aircraft,” Gerald said. “They are worth remembering and retelling. What make the planes interesting are the stories they tell.”

HAPS’ biggest challenge is finding funding to restore and preserve planes that no longer have utilitarian value. “We decided to put together a sweepstakes giveaway to raise money for the restoration of the Fleet biplane. The grand prize is a 1965 Ford Mustang GT350 Tribute convertible valued at \$40,000,” Gerald stated. “In addition, the grand prize winner will win a ride in a WWII P-51 Mustang fighter.”

Proceeds from HAPS’ Great Mustang — Mustang Giveaway will help further the organization’s goals. In addition to saving more vintage aircraft, HAPS hopes to add a small training aircraft to its stable to begin flight training for youth. “As aircraft become available, we would like to offer rides and take the planes to fly-ins and airshows to tell the stories of the men and women who pushed the boundaries of aviation,” Gerald said.

Gerald invites other enthusiasts to join HAPS, which has no membership fees. “You can write to us at our website, and we’ll add you to our email list. We publish a newsletter on an irregular basis,” Gerald stated. “We also have a schedule online that keeps track of historic aircraft events in North Texas.”

Gerald is proud of having made HAPS a reality, and gives special thanks to Kathryn, and son, David, for their support; to his brother, Jon, Chief Pilot of Airborne Imaging at the Midlothian Airport; and brother-in-law, Bruce Granger. He reminds folks that donations of cash, cars, planes or RVs are tax deductible, and reiterates such donations help preserve memories for people who, “Have never stopped watching the sky.” **NOW**

Editor’s Note: Great Mustang – Mustang Giveaway tickets are available at www.HistoricAir.org/Mustang.

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Spirit

— By Virginia Riddle

It's almost dusk in summertime. A slight breeze, refreshing after a hot day, begins to whip around the scrub brush of Palo Duro Canyon State Park's rock walls. Spotlights dance along the park amphitheater's natural backdrop searching frantically. Hooves pound with increasing intensity. The spotlights converge on a lone rider, leaning forward to urge on her galloping horse crossing a 600-foot narrow ledge. Reins in her left hand, she holds proudly and steadily in her right hand a Texas flag fluttering fully. The crowd rises, whoops and claps, while musicians strike up the overture. Texas Outdoor Musical has begun to the delight of another full house.

Since 1965, this story of Texas Panhandle Comanches, led by Chief Quanah Parker; ranchers, such as Colonel Charles Goodnight, co-owner of the famed JA Ranch and co-founder of the Goodnight-Loving Trail; and other settlers such as sheep herders

and farmers has been told through well-known, loved songs, dances and state-of-the-art sound and lighting effects. There were struggles as those cultural groups converged in the late 1800s, along with celebrations, death, the coming of the railroad and politics with those legislator folks down in Austin. There's humor, tears, courtships and drama.

The idea for this legendary production was hatched in 1960 when Margaret Harper, a Canyon ISD piano teacher and author, read a story in *Reader's Digest* about Paul Green, a Pulitzer prize-winning playwright of regional themed plays, screenplays, poetry and musical dramas. She contacted Green with information about the beauty of the canyon and the drama of the land's history. By the next year, Mrs. Harper had founded the Texas Panhandle Heritage Foundation, which funded through donations from area residents a very interested Paul Green to journey to the High Plains with the intent to write the saga. The Pioneer Amphitheater was carved out of the wall of sandstone, siltstone shale and caliche color shades; moveable sets, sound and light boards were installed; and, as the saying goes, the rest has become part of the area's history and hospitality. Financing for the production comes from ticket and concession sales, as well as underwriting that still comes from area foundations, individuals and businesses.

Over 60 actors, singers and dancers in colorful and authentic period costumes have brought Paul Green's script to life each season for 58 years to a nightly, nearly always sold-out audience. Either as part of the warm-up or as the audience is reseated after intermission, a cast member comes out and asks members of the audience to declare their hometowns. It's an amazing time of discovery, since many have come from far away international locations to share this experience. The cast and crew, which include sound, lighting, choreography and set design folks, as

well as electricians, wardrobe, horse wranglers for the equine performers and instrumentalists, have come from far and wide to audition, rehearse and perform. A “Who’s Who” listing of the cast and crew members is part of the provided program. West Texas A&M University provides housing and much of the administrative and hospitality staff. All ages and ethnicities are represented, and Native American actors and singers speak and sing in their ancestral languages.

Tickets include admission to the park during preshow hours, and audience members are warmly welcomed by park rangers at the park’s entrance. Palo Duro Canyon’s history is told at the Visitor Center and along the drive through the park. Theater goers can explore the beauty of this second largest canyon in the United States on hikes and birdwatches, or they can prearrange an overnight camping site or cabin. A chuck wagon barbecue and canyon outfitter horseback rides can be arranged separately to add to the “flavor” of the Texas experience.

Thunder echoes in the canyon as lightning flashes along the wall in one of the scenes. Sometimes the rain becomes very real, and unless there is a major threat, the show, in true theatrical tradition, still goes on. Audiences get a real experience of how quickly the summertime High Plains weather changed for the Native American peoples who made the canyon their home for centuries and for the pioneers who later settled there.

The show ends with a bang. Patriotic fireworks resound for several minutes throughout the canyon. Cast members await the departing audience and pose for group photos, ending the evening with, “Thank y’all for coming!” NOW

Sources:

1. Texas Outdoor Musical program, Texas Panhandle Heritage Foundation, Inc., 2023.

2. Texas State Historical Association, Harper, Margaret Pease, www.tshaonline.org.

3. Texas Outdoor Musical, www.texas-show.com.

Photos by TEXAS Outdoor Musical official photographer Jim Livingston. www.jimlivingstonart.com.



Brenda Leonard, owner of Simple Simon's Pizza, poses with her mascot at a community event.



Jonah Hebert and Adam Poteet enjoy Kids Camp with Longbranch Community Baptist Church.

Zoomed In: Russell Wyatt

By Angel Morris

Russell Wyatt's family moved to Midlothian in 1950, and he began first grade in the town's only school. "That was Midlothian School, which would later become J.R. Irvin Elementary," Russell explained.

Living in a house behind the school gymnasium, Russell practiced throwing a baseball against the gym's brick wall and catching it on the bounce back. "I played high school baseball at Kimmel Park, with the bandstand being in direct line with first base," he recalled.

In the early 1960s, as a young husband and father, Russell served a duty in Korea with the Army. Earlier this year, he marked his 80th birthday with 65 guests. "It was a great turnout!" Russell noted, including some friends and family he hadn't seen in 20 years.



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Mason Mires gets acquainted with some of the animals at Broken Road Farm.



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Mila Jo Evans enjoys the petting zoo at a Midlothian Civic Center Market event.

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BusinessNOW Higher Living Today

— By Angel Morris



Higher Living Today

Dr. Ufon Ahime
2426 Byrd Ranch Rd.
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(615) 839-8906
ufonahime@higherlivingtoday.org
www.higherlivingtoday.org/

Ufon J. Ahime started her career as an emergency room nurse, where she discovered she might better serve patients differently. “For people to thrive, they need to be healthy both physically and emotionally, but as a nurse, I saw how severely lacking mental health services were,” Dr. Ahime said.

This inspired her to earn her master’s degree in general psychology and a Doctoral Degree in Counseling and Psychology. Now a board-certified Mental Health Coach, Dr. Ahime said her mission is to “help individuals take

ownership of their mental health, so they can thrive and not just survive.”

Through her Higher Living Today practice, Dr. Ahime focuses on providing evidence-based mental health education and coaching. “There is much misinformation about what mental health is, and people often wait until they have a mental health crisis before they seek help,” Dr. Ahime noted.

“When we are equipped with the right information, we become empowered to make informed decisions toward improving and maintaining a positive mental health that helps us cope, connect, function and thrive,” she continued.

Through coaching, Higher Living Today clients can look forward to cultivating healthy coping skills that help reduce stress, improve communication skills, increase emotional awareness, build resilience and develop a healthy sense of self. “Our thoughts and feelings impact our daily lives: personal care, relationships and work,” Dr. Ahime emphasized. “A transformed mind and soul can rejuvenate relationships and help focus you toward your goals in all areas.”

When mental health is ignored, anxiety, depression and stress can lead not only to poor mental health but also to several physical ailments. "It can also lead to a loss in productivity, relationships and one's self-efficacy and self-worth," Dr. Ahime underscored. "That speaks to the fact that mental health is too essential to be ignored."

Dr. Ahime also trains church leaders to address congregants' mental health needs. Higher Living Today offers free consultations for church leaders to understand faith's role in mental health.

Under Dr. Ahime's guidance, church leaders are taught how to identify the signs and symptoms of common mental disorders, respond to mental health emergencies and refer individuals to mental health professionals if the need arises.

Dr. Ahime said her mission is to "help individuals take ownership of their mental health, so they can thrive and not just survive."

Church leaders are also equipped to utilize active and reflective listening in ministry and promote mental health education in their congregations. This makes church a place where people with mental health challenges feel welcomed. "Sometimes, our church leaders are the first, if not only, resource of people who are struggling. They play a vital role in mental health care, and we are proud to be part of preparing them to fulfill that role," Dr. Ahime shared.

Dr. Ahime also holds monthly webinars, where she provides practical tools individuals can use to improve their mental health. "The webinars are very interactive, with question-and-answer opportunities," she said. "You will gain proven methods to use in overcoming mental health challenges and an understanding of how not caring about your mental health can keep you from reaching your potential."

"I want to help individuals prevent the onset of mental illness," Dr. Ahime continued. "Improving one's mental well-being helps individuals live life to the fullest." **NOW**

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CookingNOW
In the Kitchen With
MARIAN SWAFFORD

— By Angel Morris

While Marian Swafford moved to Midlothian just three years ago, her grandfather graduated here in the 1930s. Family is important to Marian, who grew up in the kitchen with her mom. “Friends and family call her one of the best cooks they’ve known!” Marian praised. “We love to cook for others. We never show up to a function — [whether] happy, sad and all in between — empty-handed.”

Marian’s hospitality industry job provides travel benefits, which she enjoys with her husband, Mason. She also likes time with her Pug, Eggsy; reading; crafting; hunting; fishing; and helping care for the family cattle ranch. “I also love making any kind of comfort food,” she shared. “Something that keeps you full and happy, usually with lots of butter.” **NOW**

Cornflake Chicken

- 1 11-oz. Hidden Valley Ranch Seasoning packet (or 2 Tbsp. ranch seasoning)
- 1/4 cup Parmesan, grated
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste
- 1 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 3 cups cornflake cereal, crushed in a Ziploc bag

- 1-2 large eggs (depending on amount of chicken)
- 2 Tbsp. real mayonnaise
- 8-10 boneless, skinless chicken tenders (or 3-4 breasts sliced into tenders)

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Add the first 5 ingredients to the cornflake crumbs in the bag; shake to mix well.
2. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs and

mayonnaise well with fork to form a thick batter. Add additional salt and pepper to the mix, if desired.

3. Coat the chicken tenders in the egg/mayo mix, 2-3 tenders at a time, and place in the bag with the cornflake mix. Shake to coat evenly.

4. Spread the chicken out in the prepared dish; top with any remaining cornflake mixture. Bake 18 minutes until the cornflakes are golden brown and the chicken has reached 165 F. *Note: This can also be made in an air fryer with tenders at 380 F for 12-15 minutes, depending on how hot the air fryer cooks.*

Mexican Pinto Beans

- 1 1/2 cups dried pinto beans
- 1 32-oz. carton chicken broth
- 3 slices raw bacon (optional)
- 1/2 large white onion, chopped
- 1 small green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, deseeded and chopped
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. chili powder

- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. Cholula green pepper sauce (optional)
- 1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel Original Diced Tomatoes (optional)

1. Sort and rinse the beans in a colander. Place in a large pot. Cover with water 2 inches above the beans.
2. Bring to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Cover; remove from heat. Allow to soak for 1 hour.
3. Drain the beans; lightly rinse them off. Add the chicken broth and the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil.
4. Cover; reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer and allow to cook for at least 3 hours (or longer if desired). Check the water level periodically; stir to keep from sticking, adding water to cover beans as needed. Taste occasionally, and add additional spices and Cholula to flavoring/spice level of your choice. These can simmer, monitored, all afternoon as needed.

Miss Sally Baker's Famous Pecan Pie Muffins

Makes 12 muffins.

Foil-lined baking cups (Paper will not work.)

- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) salted butter, melted
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp. real vanilla extract

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. In a medium bowl, mix the pecans, brown sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Add the butter, eggs and vanilla; mix well.
2. Spoon the batter into the baking cups until they are half full. Bake for 23 minutes. Muffins will not rise a lot.

Chocolate Chip Cake

- 1 box Duncan Hines Original Yellow Cake Mix
 - 1 small box instant Jell-O Vanilla Pudding/Pie Filling
 - 4 eggs
 - 1/2 cup canola oil
 - 1 cup water
 - 1 1.55-oz. plain HERSHEY bar, finely chopped or grated
 - 1/2 bar Bakers German Chocolate, finely chopped or grated (To save time, chop the chocolate into small pieces in a food processor.)
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

POSITIVE THINKING

Ufon Ahime, Ph.D.
Mental Health Coach
ufonahime@higherlivingtoday.org

In a world full of challenges and uncertainties, cultivating a positive thinking mindset can be a powerful tool for enhancing mental health. A positive mindset includes positive-oriented thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes, and key well-being factors.

You see, having a positive outlook on life helps mitigate the effects of stress. Individuals with a positive mindset are more likely to view challenges as opportunities rather than threats, which helps reduce stress's physiological impact. By focusing on positive outcomes and maintaining a hopeful outlook, individuals experience fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Many of us tend to focus on our shortcomings, but if you want to develop a positive mindset, it will require you to begin to focus on your strengths and positive qualities. Be intentional about being grateful for the things that are working in your life, and practice self-compassion by reminding yourself about what you are doing right. Other strategies include shifting your attention away from negative thoughts and thinking of best-case scenarios.

While it may not always be easy to maintain a positive outlook, incorporating practices like gratitude, mindfulness, and affirmations into daily life can help cultivate and sustain a positive mindset, paving the way for a healthier, happier life.

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Chocolate Chip Cake

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F. Spray a Bundt pan with baking spray or flour spray. Combine the cake mix, pudding, eggs, oil and water, mixing by hand or in a mixer on medium speed for 2 minutes.
2. Fold in the chocolate bits on low speed or by hand. Pour into a greased Bundt pan. The batter will be thick.
3. Bake for 1 hour. Toothpick test to ensure it is baked thoroughly. (If the oven runs hot, cook 50-55 minutes.) Cool for 10 minutes in the pan and remove. Once cool, add a dusting of powdered sugar for decor.

“Marry Me” Chicken

Great with pastas, rice or roasted potatoes.

- 3 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts, sliced lengthwise into thin cutlets**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
3 cloves garlic, minced (or 3 tsp. pre-minced garlic)
1 cup chicken stock
1 cup heavy cream
1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated (Fresh is best for melting.)
1 tsp. red pepper chili flakes
1/4 tsp. oregano
1/4 tsp. thyme
1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes (optional)
1 Tbsp. fresh basil leaves

1. Season the chicken with salt and pepper.
2. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil, and melt the butter on medium heat. Coat the pan with the oil and butter evenly. Brown the chicken for 4-5 minutes on each side, or until golden brown and cooked thoroughly. (Do not overcrowd the pan; work in batches, if needed.)
3. Transfer the chicken to a paper towel-lined plate. Add the garlic to the pan with

- the butter/oil mixture; cook until fragrant. Add the chicken stock to deglaze the pan; scrape any bits stuck to the bottom with a wooden spoon.
4. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the cream and Parmesan. Let the sauce simmer a few minutes. Season with chili flakes, oregano and thyme; stir.
 5. Return the chicken to the pan; coat with the sauce. Add the sundried tomatoes, if using. Top with fresh basil and additional Parmesan cheese, if desired.

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

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“I still hear your sea waves crashing” is a line from the song “Galveston,” which was written by Jimmy Webb and made famous by Glen Campbell. You will immediately recognize the relaxing sound of the waves as they crash into the seawall on a windy day on Galveston Island. The historic seawall was constructed shortly after the devastating hurricane of 1900 and proved its worth just a few years later when an even stronger storm hit the island but did far less damage.

While the original seawall was just over 3 miles long, today it spans more than 10 miles and invites tourists to visit the beaches, restaurants, hotels, souvenir shops and amusements that the island offers its guests. A diner cannot go wrong ordering seafood on the coast, and Gaido’s Restaurant has been a favorite in Galveston since 1911. The beautiful dining rooms are meticulously appointed, but there is also a casual atmosphere that makes your party feel at home. Another choice for dining on the seawall is Fish Tales, and it is conveniently located just across Seawall Boulevard from the Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier.

The Pleasure Pier offers dining, rides and amusements for all ages. The Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. has restaurant-style dining, but there is also traditional carnival food on the pier. Funnel cakes, hamburgers, hot dogs, turkey legs and just about any beverage you seek is probably available.

Galveston Island is much more than sand and surf. Travel just a few blocks north from the seawall, and you’ll find yourself surrounded by beautiful homes from decades, even a century, past. Some of the old homes boast plaques on the front porches that acknowledge the hurricanes they have survived. Many are restored to their original splendor. Perhaps the most notable are the Bishop’s Palace and the Moody Mansion. Both homes survived the 1900 hurricane, and the restorations and maintenance are breathtaking. Self-guided tours with audio from your own cell phone are available with your admission.

The Strand is a famous street in Galveston that was once known as the “Wall Street of the Southwest.” Today the name “The Strand” has come to mean the entire historic downtown and includes museums, ice cream parlors, candy shops, pubs, grills, restaurants and gift shops.

BEACH

— By Bill Smith



Just a little farther to the north and you reach Galveston Harbor. Great cruise ships gather their guests for ports of call from the harbor. Pier 22 features dining at Fisherman's Wharf, as well as a tour of the 1877 Tall Ship *ELISSA*. The *ELISSA* has been restored and continues to sail today, but it spends most of its time in the harbor for visitors to tour at their leisure. Another attraction is a one-hour boat tour of the harbor that passes by the Ocean Star Offshore Drilling Rig & Museum, Seawolf Park, the dry dock where the *Battleship Texas* is being restored and the wreckage of the *S.S. Selma*, a concrete tanker built in Mobile, Alabama, in 1919. She was scuttled in her final resting place in 1922. On the harbor tour, be on the lookout for dolphins that populate the area.

Accommodations in Galveston are varied and plentiful. Galveston Island State Park has been completely renovated since hurricane Ike passed through and has room for everything from tents to motor homes. Beach houses are plentiful, as are motels and hotels from familiar chains to luxury suites.

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Sources:

1. www.visitgalveston.com.
2. www.pleasurepier.com.
3. www.downtowngalveston.org.



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WHAT'S COOKIN' IN KITCHEN TRENDS

— By Angel Morris

If a Google search or social media crawl isn't enough to inspire your kitchen remodel plans, the National Kitchen and Bath Association releases a trend report that anticipates the next three years' styles toward colors and finishes. Its findings are based on responses from some 630 participants including designers, contractors, architects, remodelers and other industry professionals.

It's latest report — released in the fall of 2023 — suggests an interest in low-maintenance designs, greater focus on sustainability and an emphasis on the kitchen island as the focal point of the home. Bright white kitchens, so trendy in recent years, are giving way to creamier whites, as well as wood tones. Warmer, more colorful spaces are on the rise, with green being the “it” color for kitchens in the coming years.

In cabinetry, natural wood is back, emphasizing connection to the outdoors and nature-inspired design. The wood choice du jour are lighter shades, like alder, maple and white oak, but warmer tones are seeing a return to popularity, too. To break up a sea of wood tones, however, painted kitchen islands remain on trend. Here, homeowners have their pick of warm, earthy tones, or cools like blue and gray. Black is

seeing a surge of popularity for islands, but also for cabinets and even walls!

Good news for homeowners, many styles of cabinet faces are trending, from modern and contemporary to mid-century or Scandinavian designs. This means if you want to change the look of your kitchen, it may not necessitate cabinet replacement. Refinishing and re-staining may save you thousands in this area of a kitchen makeover.

While hardware-free, push-to-open cabinetry is hot, gold-finished knobs and pulls in brushed, matte or satin, followed closely by stainless steel or black choices, are also on trend. Changing your hardware is another affordable way to impact the look of your kitchen with low investment.

Countertop replacement is where a good portion of many kitchen makeover budgets may go. Quartz continues to be the overwhelming choice of designers, but granite, stone, marble and quartzite are also in the running, with colors leaning lighter than cabinetry. A popular backsplash trend is the continuous slab over individual tiles.

Most TV makeover shows cannot remodel a kitchen without emphasizing the beauty and usefulness of an island. They are often used as not just prep space, but include dine-in seating — often replacing the breakfast nook and kitchen table altogether — and provide ample storage.

Storage is of key importance in the kitchen makeovers of today. Drawers are deep, and there are lots of them. Floor-to-ceiling cabinets and appliance cabinets help keep

counters uncluttered. If you have the budget and the space, butler's pantries keep everything out of sight, placing prep space and appliances behind your main kitchen, which becomes more of a gathering and eating space for you, your family and guests.

The designated mini bar space — popular in the 1980s — gets an update, with many kitchen remodels including designated beverage areas such as coffee or smoothie bars, mini wine fridges or a well-stocked spirits cabinet.

NKBA's report shows an interest in "well-curated lighting," and designers suggest that light choices don't stop at the ceiling. Remember under-cabinet lighting, pendants over islands and bars and even wall sconces to layer lighting around the space. Natural light is perhaps the biggest trend, another nod to bringing nature indoors. Homeowners can achieve this by increasing the size of windows or, more affordably, removing heavy blinds in exchange for decorative window films or shades that only cover the lower half of windows.


As is the case in most industries, sustainability is on-topic for kitchens, too. Homeowners remodeling kitchens have a plethora of environmentally conscious materials and energy-efficient appliances from which to choose. At the very least, one can consider donating anything from a kitchen makeover they will no longer use ... cabinets that are undamaged, working appliances, lighting, hardware, even the kitchen table can go to another home to increase the lifespan of these materials. And just because your style is changing, doesn't mean these things can't update someone else's space.

Whether you have a champagne or beer budget, various kitchen trends can be achieved. The most important factor in a stylish kitchen space is whether or not it creates the environment you want to share, which is likely warm and welcoming ... with whatever counters, cabinets and lighting that bring that feeling to life for you. **NOW**

Sources:

1. <https://kb.nkba.org/research/2024-kitchen-trends-report/>.
2. <https://www.realsimple.com/kitchen-trends-2024-8348184>.

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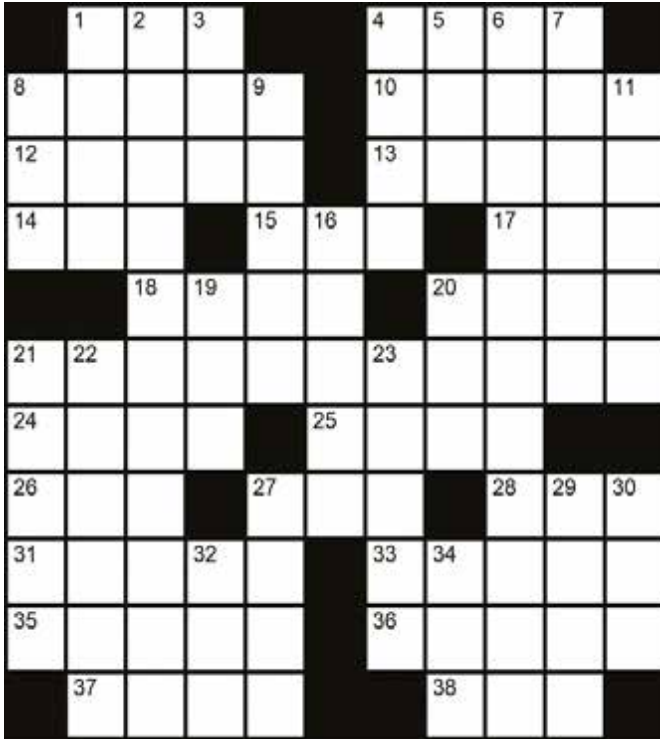


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Across

- 1 "... we there yet?"
- 4 Fall short
- 8 Bit of color
- 10 Veep disgraced in 1973
- 12 Capital of Jordan
- 13 Shingle material
- 14 Menlo Park initials
- 15 Superlative ending
- 17 Fiancé's last words?
- 18 Like a lamb
- 20 Where Gretel shoved the witch
- 21 Teenager's occupation
- 24 Concerning, in legalese
- 25 Nervous twitches
- 26 Viral gene material
- 27 Exploit
- 28 Pronunciation guide
- 31 Beach formations
- 33 "Dead Poets Society" actor - Williams
- 35 Plunders
- 36 Huffish
- 37 Ogle
- 38 Course launch site?

Down

- 1 Michigan college
- 2 Recognition
- 3 Federal cultural exchange organization
- 4 It's not fiction
- 5 Subdivision of an epoch
- 6 Ibis lived in chaos, as recited in the Pledge of Allegiance
- 7 Heavy
- 8 Trainer's target
- 9 Prayer supports?
- 11 Off base
- 16 Short satires
- 19 Scrutinize
- 20 One way to trade stock
- 21 Shuttlecocks
- 22 Once-a-year publication
- 23 Rows
- 27 Former Red giant?
- 29 Medieval weapon
- 30 "Unsafe At --- Speed" (Ralph Nader book)
- 32 Duke Ellington, initially
- 34 "Shoo!"

Online versions and solutions available at www.nowmagazines.com. From our Homepage, click on the Crossword-Sudoku tab. Click on a puzzle. Click on the See All button to view solutions.



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Easy

	3			7	1		
			8				
9		4			3		
				6			7
				1	4		
	8						5
			4	5			
		9					2
		2	3		1		8

Medium

1			5			8	
							5
				4	7	9	
		3	7		6		4
	8	2			5	1	
5				2			9
3		8				4	
			8	6		9	
				3			

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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.

7/3

Independence Day Fireworks:

MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium parking lot opens for viewing: 6:00 p.m., but the stadium is not open for seating. Fireworks start at about 9:15 p.m., 1800 S. 14th St. Rain out date:

July 5. Learn more at midlothian.tx.us/708/Independence-Day-Fireworks.

7/13

Movie in the Park:

Free showing of *Migration*. Bring snacks and chairs or blankets for lawn seating. Movie starts at dusk. 7:30-9:30 p.m., Community Park, 3601 S. 14th St. Rainout date **July 20**.

7/19

Parktopia:

Celebrating National Parks and Recreation Month, this event features lawn games, face painting, kite flying and more, plus refreshments and souvenirs while supplies last. 6:00-9:00 p.m., Community Park, 3601 S. 14th St.

7/27

Summer Beats:

Free concert featuring Emerald City. Bring chairs and blankets for lawn seating. Food for purchase available. Outside

food, beverages and coolers are allowed. 7:30-9:30 p.m., Community Park, 3601 S. 14th St.

Weekdays

Library Events:

Daily events for a range of ages, from Baby Sign Storytime and Crafty Adventures, to How to Survive A Zombie Apocalypse and more. A.H. Meadows Public Library, 923 S. 9th St. For schedules, visit midlothian.libcal.com.

Fourth Mondays Through November

Creative Quilters of Ellis County:

Social time, business meeting, show and tell program. Sign-in/social time begins: 6:00 p.m.; meeting: 6:30 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 N. Grand Avenue, Waxahachie. Learn more at elliscountyquilters.com. Email klbright53@gmail.com for more details.

Second Tuesdays

National Active and Retired Employees:

Monthly luncheon featuring guest speaker. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at various restaurants.

Email rjcarey1@gmail.com or call (972) 775-2463 for more information.

Wednesdays

DivorceCare:

Group sharing for those who have gone through or are going through divorce. DivorceCare for Kids ages 5-12 meets at the same time. Care for younger children available. 6:30-8:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church Family Life Center, 800 S. 9th St. Call (972) 775-3993 for details.

Third Wednesdays

Waxahachie Women's Connection Luncheon:

Cost is \$15, which includes lunch, a special feature and a Stonecroft speaker.

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Thursday before the meeting, which is held 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287 Business. For more details, contact Dee Ann Ellis at (972) 921-6221 or deeannellis@sbcglobal.net.

Second and Fourth Wednesdays

Jesus Feeds Us:

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Thursdays

Midway Composite Squadron of Civil Air Patrol/ U.S. Air Force Auxiliary:

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Celebrate Recovery Meeting:

A Christ-centered recovery program designed to help those struggling with hurts, habits and hang-ups. 7:00 p.m., The Lighthouse Church, 1400 N. 9th St. For more details, email CR@dfwlighthouse.org.

Saturdays

Midlothian Farmers Market:

Saturdays through November. 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Downtown Heritage Park, 234 N. 8th St.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to angel.morris@nowmagazines.com.



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