

JULY 2024

# A Swinging Good Time

A group of dance enthusiasts finds ways to build community

# Experience the Spirit

Natural grandeur and Texas pride enhance this hoedown 2024 Summer Savings Shopping Guide

> In the Kitchen With Adam Walker

> > Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

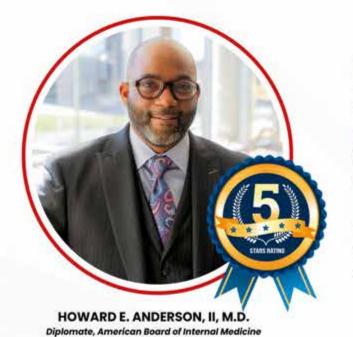
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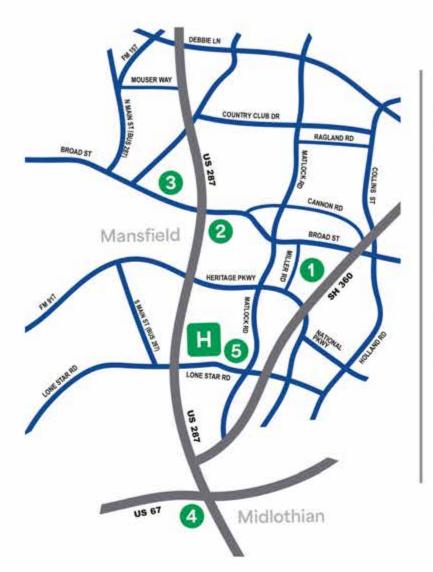
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# Academic Calendar

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## **IMPORTANT DATES**

Independence Day	July 4
First Day of School	August 13
Labor Day	September 2
Fall Break	October 14-18
Thanksgiving Break	November 25- 29
Winter BreakDece	ember 23-January 2
MLK Jr. Holiday	January 20
Presidents Day	February 17
Spring Break	March 18-21
Good Friday	April 18
Last Day of School	May 22
Memorial Day	May 26

# MEET THE TEACHER

(6:00 - 8:00 p.m.)

Elementary: August 8 Intermediate: August 15 Middle: August 22 DHS/PACE: August 29

# SCHOOL HOURS

Elementary

8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Intermediate 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Middle School 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. High School 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

# LEGEND

🌒 Но	liday,	No (	Classes
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	First/l	Last	Day	of	Scl	ıool
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Meet-the-Teacher Night

# Professional Development, No Classes

Teacher Work Day, No Classes

PD Exchange Day, No Classes

Bad Weather Day

Nine Weeks Begins

Nine Weeks Ends

## ON THE COVER



Swina Therapy draws people from all walks of life who enjoy dancing and caring for others.

#### Photo by

Shane Kirkpatrick.

Publisher, Connie Poirier General Manager, Rick Hensley

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# Adam Walker SouthwestNOW Editor adam.walker@nowmagazines.com (469) 285-2008

# **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Swifter, Higher, Stronger ...

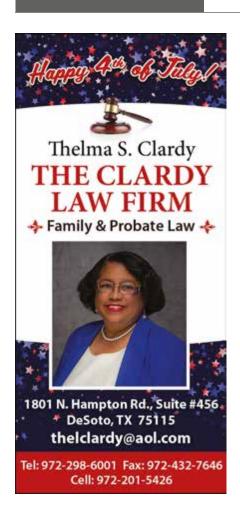
It's Olympics time again! The 1984 Olympics were magical. We went to watch the torch run through Dallas on its way to Los Angeles. I have some vague memories of the 1980 winter games, but we boycotted the summer games. The 1976 games happened while we were living in a place that barely had reruns of *Rin Tin Tin*. So these were the first games that made an impression. I mean, that guy flying into the stadium on a jet pack!

I watched sports I'd never even heard of: pole vault, gymnastics, bobsled. My siblings and the neighbor kids and I found it exciting enough that we created our own neighborhood Olympics. We stretched a tape measure in the side yard and practiced long jump. We taped music off the radio and roller-skated impromptu routines in the driveway. We ran races.

We never did figure out how to substitute a mimosa branch for the high bar or the uneven parallel bars to copy Mary Lou Retton or Timothy Daggett. But we did practice cartwheels and round-offs, and failed at back flips and front flips.

I was already a strange child, fascinated with languages and cultures. I sat with a tape recorder to capture the national anthems of the athletes who won gold. In those days, we didn't ignore all medal ceremonies not featuring our own athletes, so I collected a lot of anthems. I also made lists of the names of the athletes by country. That's when I learned that Romanian names often end in *-escu* and Finnish names tend to end in *-nen*.

Citius, Altius, Fortius!





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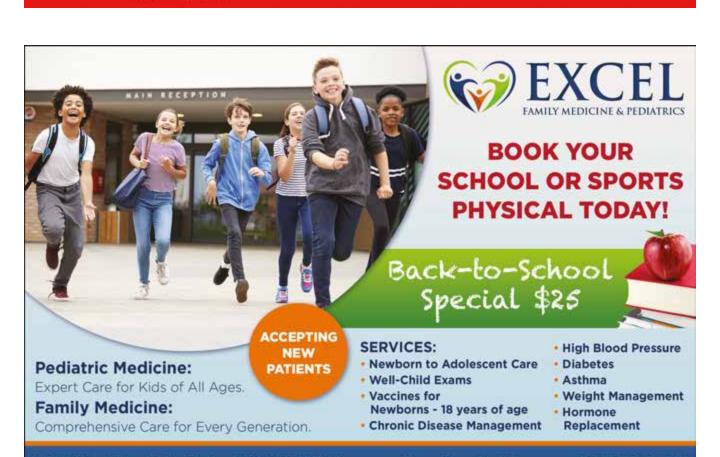


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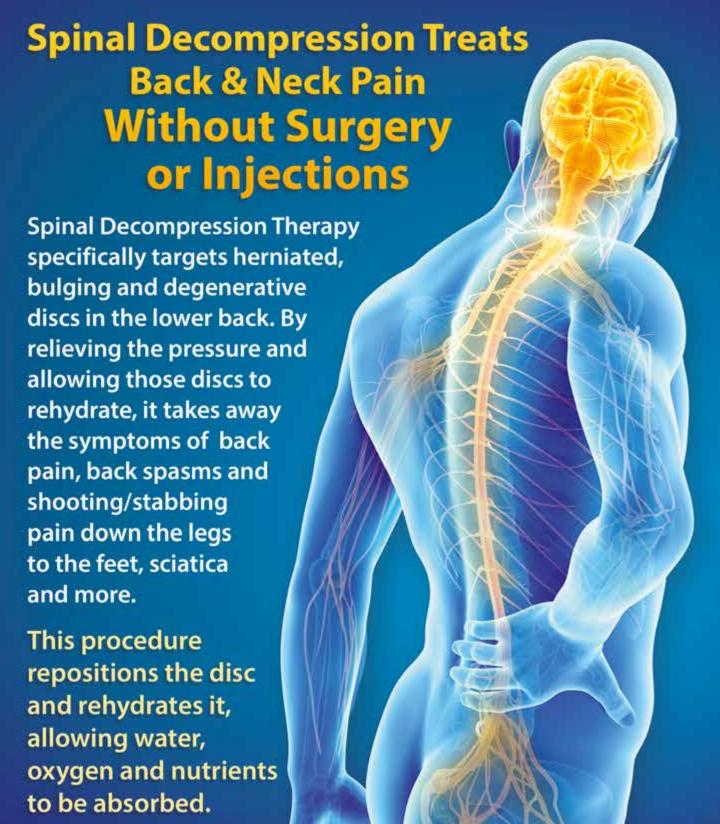
"...Staff... treats you like you are their biological family." - Kathy

"...Family friendly community." - Margaret



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# A SWINGING GOOD TIME

— By Adam Walker

Swing dance is one of those things that just looks like fun. And it is. It goes back to before WWII. Line dancing is something that has been popular for decades. Swing is improvisational couples dance, while line dancing is scripted and perfect when flying solo.

Swing Therapy is a group of people who love to dance as a way to build community and love their neighbors. Timothy Scott started the group where Rosalind Taylor and Jacqueline Thompson are among those who have found a family of friends.

"I was actually taking another class on swing dance that met at Benavidez restaurant, when a guy who had a business at Red Bird Mall asked me to consider teaching a class at his shop," Timothy remembered. "I had helped out at other classes, but I had never taught before. I waited a while before I decided to take him up on his offer." Later, the Swing Therapy class moved to the Daiquiri Cafe in Duncanville and has migrated to a number of other locations before finding its current home at Harold's Chicken in Cedar Hill, where they now meet at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. "Rosalind was at that very first class on January 6, 2016," Timothy reported.

"There were only six to eight people at that class," she recalled. "Now we have more than 40 who attend regularly. People want to be part of something bigger. I had just moved here from West Virginia, and I was looking for fun ways to connect. I was looking for a barber, and someone there told me about Tim and the class he was starting. It was on a day of the week when I could go, so I did. I fell in love with the class. I've missed a few nights, but not many! I've been coming for eight years. Tim is an elder at his church. We pray before class. It's part of the emotional and physical therapy of the group. People go through a lot at work every week. This is dance with a purpose. Tim picks some great causes to support. We have sponsored families in need and partnered with SDS Gents to raise money for scholarships and





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sponsor young men to dress up for prom. We also do back-to-school events. We even helped out with Hurricane Harvey. We team up with other dance groups for toy drives and go to nursing homes to dance for the people there and donate personal items to the residents."

Jacqueline is a more recent addition to the Swing Therapy family. "I joined in 2019, just before COVID. There were over 70 people in the group then, and I was sold the first day I walked in." She smiled and gestured at Rosalind. "That first day, this lady was here to

greet me like she had known me all my life! It wasn't just the dance. It was the outreach that connected me. Dance can connect your heart, your mind and your soul and build community. We care about our community and the people in it. We have people from all walks of life — blue collar and white collar, nurses, retired people, single parents. It's a way of social networking."

Swing Therapy draws a wide range of people looking for a good time and ways to help their neighbors. They have members from their late 20s to their late 70s, and even have some teens who drop in from time to time. Dancers come from as far away as Arlington and Frisco to connect with the group of fellow enthusiasts. And about 30 percent of the group is men, which is due to Timothy's strong leadership.

"I want to be sure men feel welcome here," Timothy explained. "We're a loving family. This started as recreation and turned into ministry. Swing dance is a lot of fun, but we do a lot of good in the community. We have a lot of little i's, but no big U's. People have so much mess in their lives. This is a good



place to get rid of some of that."

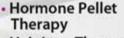
Rosalind agreed. "We pray for God to send people with like hearts and minds. Tim is a great leader. Everyone is welcome here. If you come once, you'll come back. This is bigger than just dance." NOW

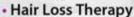
Editor's Note: Timothy Scott and Swing Therapy are now also offering a Thursday night class through the continuing education program of Dallas College, West Dallas Center. See https://www.dallascollege.edu/cd/ce/ pages/contact.aspx to register.





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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:

I. 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.





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- Virginia Woolf



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# Zoomed In:

By Adam Walker

# Melissa Valdez-Cummings

Melissa Valdez-Cummings is about to become the next city manager for Cedar Hill on August 1. "It has been an extreme honor and privilege to serve the community that I love so much and to work alongside such an amazing team," Melissa said. "My time in Cedar Hill has been rewarding and heartwarming. I am excited to serve the community as Cedar Hill's next city manager."

Melissa has been working for the city of Cedar Hill for more than 20 years, so she'll be able to hit the ground running in this new role as she moves from her last role as deputy city manager. She is committed to preserving Cedar Hill's green spaces and keeping it a great community to live in.



Village Tech students build bat houses for the Dallas Zoo.

# **Around Town**



Nakia McGuire sells produce at the Cedar Hill Farmers Market.



Duncanville supports Special Olympics with their annual Fire Truck Pull.



Kim & Jenny's, a Duncanville staple, relaunches with a ribbon cutting.



DeSoto graduates celebrate their success.



Cedar Hill High School seniors Faith Alvarez and Isaiah Castillo design logos for local events.



Joseph and Isaiah stop by Grow DeSoto Market Place for a father-son lunch.



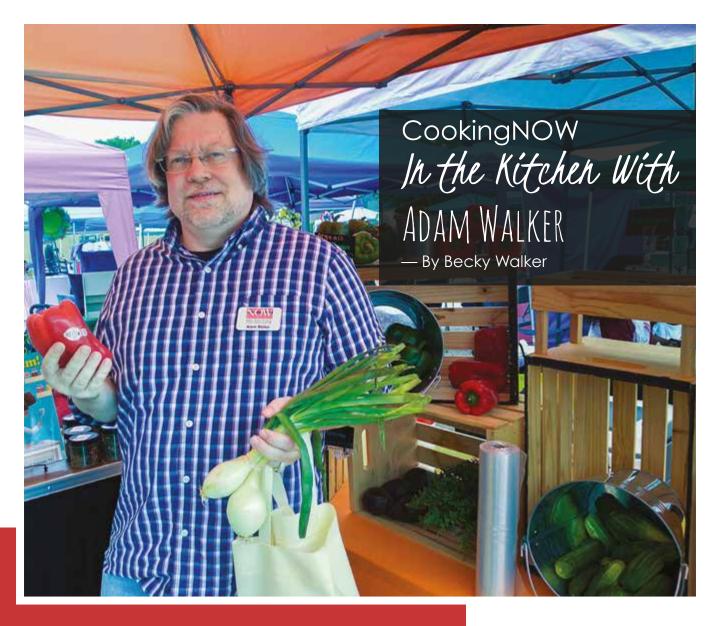
Snow cones are very popular during DeSoto's Touch-a-Truck event.



Students at First Methodist School participate in Read Across America Day.







Adam Walker enjoys eating Southern and Tex Mex food because he grew up in Dallas. But he loves other cultures — from Chinese, Vietnamese and Solomon Islands, to North African, Greek and Indian — and this love of cultures makes him a very adventurous eater. "I've tried everything from dry-roasted ants to sea cucumber," he said. "I enjoy cooking foods from Taiwan where I lived for three years."

A self-taught cook, Adam picked up tips from his mom and by watching PBS shows. He inherited recipes from his mom, her aunts and both of his grandmothers, but he also enjoys inventing his own, such as Stuffed Acorn Squash, Apples and Pork and Sausage and Peppers. NOW

# **Stuffed Acorn Squash**

2 acorn squash, halved and deseeded Salt, to taste (divided use)
Pepper, to taste (divided use)
Olive oil, to taste (divided use)
1/2 yellow onion, fine dice

- 1 lb. maple breakfast sausage
- I clove garlic, chopped
- I red bell pepper, large dice
- 1 Tbsp. dried rosemary
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

- 1 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar 3-4 drops smoke flavor
- 1/2 cup queso Cotija, crumbled (divide use)
- **1.** In a large baking dish, add about 1 inch of water. Liberally, salt and pepper each acorn squash half; place face down in the water. Bake at 375 F until the squash rind gives to the touch.
- **2.** Meanwhile, in a skillet, add a little olive oil; fry the onion until translucent. Add the

sausage; fry for 5 minutes, breaking up the large clumps.

- **3.** Add the garlic, bell pepper and rosemary. Add salt and pepper, to taste. Add the Worcestershire, vinegar, smoke flavor and half the cheese. Fry until the pork is well browned.
- **4.** Remove the squash from the pan. Empty the water from the baking dish and wipe it dry with paper towels. Fill each squash half with a generous portion of the meat. Place face up in the baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil; bake for 10-15 minutes.
- **5.** Remove from the oven; sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Return to the oven; bake until the cheese melts and browns slightly.

#### Stuffed Onions

6 large onions
1/2 cup Minute Rice
1 lb. ground beef
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. all spice

I tsp. salt 1/2 tsp. pepper 3 whole stewed tomatoes, diced I drizzle olive oil 3 16-oz. cans beef broth

- 1. Remove the root and stem ends of each onion. Make one cut halfway through each onion to the center. Remove the papery outer skin. Place all the onions in a 5-quart pan; fill with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil, and simmer for 20 minutes. Reserve I cup of the boiling water. Drain the remaining water: let cool enough to touch.
- 2. In a bowl, soak the rice in the reserved cup of onion water.
- 3. In a separate bowl, use your hands to combine the beef and spices. Add the tomatoes and soaked rice; combine.
- **4.** In a 5-quart pot, add a drizzle of olive oil. Once the onions are cool enough to handle, remove the outer laver, add about 1 Tbsp. of the meat to an onion layer and roll it up. Place the onion, bottom end down in the pan, and continue until you have enough stuffed onion skins to pack them in, standing upright. Fry for about 5 minutes. Add enough beef broth to just barely cover the onions. Chop some of the remaining onion centers and return them to the broth. Simmer for 30 minutes.

#### Mom's Meatloaf

**Tomato Soup** 

2 lbs. ground beef I small onion, chopped I medium green bell pepper, chopped Salt, to taste Pepper, to taste 8-12 saltine crackers 2-3 eggs 2 14.5-oz. cans new potatoes, drained 1 lb. baby carrots 2-3 10.75-oz. cans Campbell's

**1.** In a slow cooker pan (or Crock-Pot), mixing by hand, combine the meat, onions, bell peppers, salt and pepper with enough

I cup cheddar cheese, shredded

crackers and eggs to form a nice solid loaf. 2. Surround the loaf with potatoes and carrots. Cover with the tomato soup. Add more salt and pepper, to taste. Cook on high for 6 hours, or until done all the way through.

3. Add the cheese; allow to melt before serving.

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# **Crossword Puzzle**

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# Sudoku Puzzle

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# 7/2

#### Wonka:

Enjoy a movie and popcorn. Free. 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Duncanville Library, 201 James Collins Blvd.

# 7/2 and 7/9

## **Resin Workshop:**

Teens, come learn how to create in resin. 5:00-6:00 p.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill.

# 7/4

# Independence Day Celebration:

Come for all day celebrations.
Armstrong Park,
100 James Collins Blvd.

#### **Poetry Mural:**

Come watch Kas Jones create public art. Noon-4:00 p.m., Grow DeSoto Marketplace, 324 E. Belt Line Rd., DeSoto.

#### **Fireworks Celebration:**

Join DeSoto and Lancaster to celebrate Independence Day. Free. 6:00-9:30 p.m., Grimes Park, 501 E. Wintergreen Rd., DeSoto.

# 7/8

# Lucas Miller the Singing Zoologist:

Funny songs and skits about science. 10:30-11:30 a.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill.

#### **The Buzz About Bees:**

Fun for the family while learning about bees. 6:30-7:30 p.m.,
Traphene Hickman Library,
450 Pioneer Trl.,
Cedar Hill.

# 7/9

#### Wish:

Enjoy a movie and popcorn. Free. 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Duncanville Library, 201 James Collins Blvd.

#### Summer Charcuterie Board Party:

Adults, learn to craft the perfect flavor combo. Free, but registration required. 6:30-8:00 p.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill. signupgenius.com/go/9040B4CACA62BA7FD0-make#/.

# 7/10

#### **Poetry Chalk Fest:**

Use your poetry to decorate a section of concrete with positivity. 2:00-4:00 p.m., DeSoto East Middle School, 601 E. Belt Line Rd.

# 7/11

#### David Chicken:

He's back again with songs, dance and tomfoolery for

parents and kids. Free. 10:30-11:30 a.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill.

# 7/15-7/19

# Family Vacation Bible School:

Breaker Rock Beach. Free. 6:30-8:30 p.m., New Legacy Community Church, 200 S. Polk, DeSoto. Register at newlegacycc.org or call (972) 230-8282.

# 7/16

#### Wildflower Seed Bombs:

Adults, learn to support pollinators and beautify the landscape. Free. 6:30-8:00 p.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill.

# 7/20

#### **Senior Pool Party:**

Come for the pool games or just to lounge. 50-plus residents free, non-resident seniors \$5. Mosley Pool, 1300 Honor Dr., DeSoto.

# 7/22

#### **Children's Theater:**

The Kid's Library Drama Club presents a play based on a book. Free. 2:00 p.m., DeSoto Library, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

# 7/24 and 7/31

#### Mosaic in the Making:

Watch Jennifer Kindert create an outdoor mosaic at the Rec Center's back door. 2:00-4:00 p.m., 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

# 7/25

#### **Business Plans 101:**

Learn how SCORE can help your small business thrive. Free. 6:30-8:00 p.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill.

# 7/27

#### **Chair Yoga:**

Come for some gentle exercise. Free. 10:00 a.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 1302 S. Clark Rd., Duncanville.

# 7/30

# Tech for Business and Career:

Learn how Google tools can help your small business. Free. 6:30-7:30 p.m., Traphene Hickman Library, 450 Pioneer Trl., Cedar Hill.

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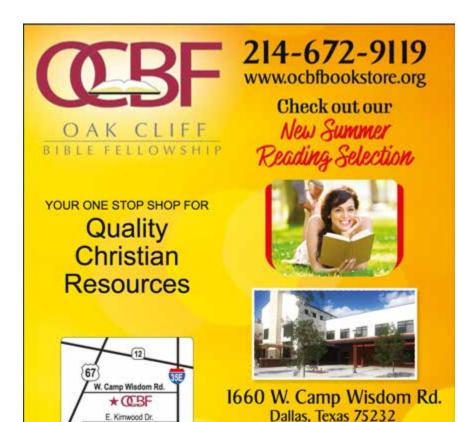
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If you are an adult who is afraid of going to the dentist, or even just a little extra anxious, Serenity Advanced Dentistry may be just what you are looking for. "We do a lot of sedation dentistry, mostly for adults," Dr. Allala explained. "It's kind of my niche. Many adults may have some pretty serious anxiety about going to the dentist. They may not even seek care. They'd rather be in pain. I provide a place to take care of these people. When patients elect to get treatment, we lower the statistics of people living in pain. I like being able to contribute to improving people's lives.

"Coincidentally, a lot of people who are anxious about going to the dentist are also people who don't have good insurance. That's a bad combination. I have membership plans for patients without insurance, and really good discounts on implants and dentures. A membership might not be necessary if you only need one simple procedure, but if you need sedation and a lot of work, it really pays for itself."

Dr. Allala is a graduate of the Texas A&M School of Dentistry. "When I started there, it was still Baylor. My diploma has both names on it," she recalled. "I specialize in oral surgery, and we're really good at it. I'm nothing without my team. We do everything in dentistry. I like being well rounded. I enjoy being an overachiever, so I'm constantly taking continuing education, keeping up with all the

newest techniques and technology. I'm also a native Spanish speaker. I grew up speaking both languages. Our YouTube videos explaining procedures are available in both English and Spanish."

Dr. Allala is proud of the service they provide at Serenity Advanced Dentistry. "I think we give five-star service. And I know my staff is five-star. We know what works and what doesn't. I know it sounds corny, but this is my life's work. Most of my staff have been with me for years, at different locations around DFW, before I came to Cedar Hill. I met Mariela seven years ago, in Pleasant Grove. It was my first job out of school. Racine has been with me four years. and Jazmine three years, both in Red Oak. Our newest team member is Jessica. She found us three months ago when she emailed me looking for an opportunity to shadow a dentist."

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theserenitydentist.com | 972-634-1434 Dr. Cristina Allala 605 E. Belt Line Rd., Suite 101, Cedar Hill



