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M A G A Z I N E

JULY 2025

Fossil Fueled

Dr. Brian Thomas
researches
dinosaur origins

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

In the Kitchen With
Xochitl Armendariz

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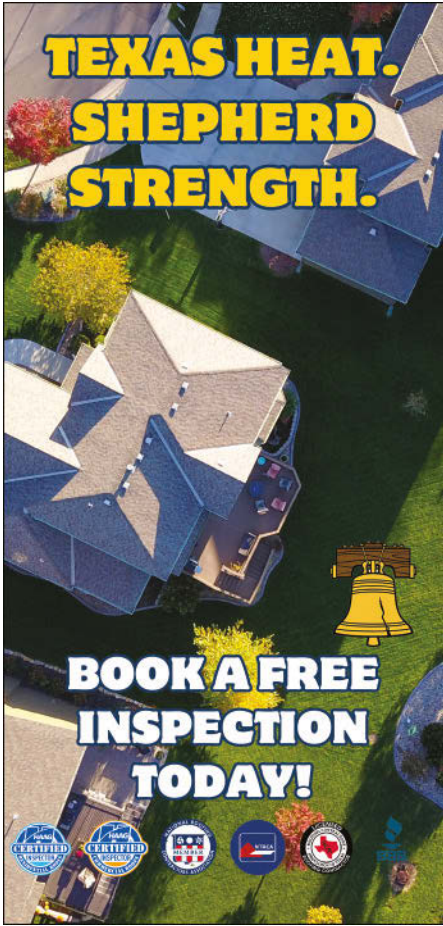
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Angel Morris
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Be cool ...

Have you hit that midsummer slump when the heat's unbearable and longer days just mean more time to feel sweaty? Consider these "cool" family fun ideas to survive the month of July ...

Organize a neighborhood water gun (or balloon) war. Early mornings or late evenings are better times to beat the heat, but you'll definitely need some ground rules. No one wants younger kids getting overzealously attacked by older kids, or overly competitive parents taking things too far. Set safety guidelines like streets being off limits and no squirting in the face. Remember, it's about cooling off and having fun.

Host a family fundraiser car wash. Choose a charity you will donate the money to in advance, and deliver flyers to neighbors about your event. For every car cleaned, the family gets a "run through the sprinkler" break!

Move outdoor activities inside. Build a fort or pitch a tent right in the living room for an indoor campout. Movie marathons, picnics, scavenger hunts and other traditionally outside events take on new life under the roof. The best part? Air conditioning and no bugs!

Chill out!

July 2025
Volume 20, Issue 7

ON THE COVER



Paleobiochemistry helps Dr. Brian Thomas examine the world's beginning and biblical history.

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Some believe dinosaurs only existed before the flood that destroyed the world, while others think dinosaurs lived after the flood alongside humans. As a research scientist for the Institute for Creation Research (ICR), Dr. Brian Thomas' passion has been to share evidence supporting the Bible's history: "In general a supernatural origin of our world and, in particular, an origin that exactly matches the histories we read in the Book of Genesis," Brian noted.

Before studying fossil proteins, Brian completed degrees in biology and biotechnology. He taught at Ovilla Christian School and Navarro College before becoming a full-time professor at Dallas Baptist University.

Eventually, Brian began a career as a science writer for Dallas-based ICR, penning more than 1,000 articles. As a science writer, he kept encountering discoveries of proteins in fossils. "By 2013, I had accumulated a list of 40 technical publications describing short-lived biomaterials including proteins. I wanted to know how long such materials could possibly last, since I was taught that fossils have zero original organics left," Brian noted.

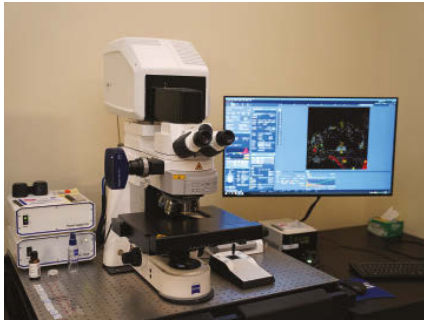
"I was told that fossil bones were all stone. Wrongo! I found that even long-lasting collagen, of which the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls are comprised, cannot last 1 million years before chemistry reduces it to dust."

Brian and his colleagues replicated those decay rate experiments to find that collagen has a shelf-life of only hundreds of thousands of theoretical years based on measured decay rates in ideal conditions. "I applied a biomedical technique to fossils for the first time — that was the subject of my Ph.D. dissertation. Results showed collagen remnants still inside dinosaur and other fossil bone."

Brian earned a doctorate in paleobiochemistry from the University of Liverpool, UK, in 2019. "Then I took on my current role as research scientist. In my 15 years at ICR, I have written books and been privileged to speak mostly at churches across the country and a bit beyond," Brian recounted.

Brian recently published in *Analytical Chemistry* evidence of collagen in an Edmontosaurus hip bone. "We found that these fresh fossils might occur in any kind of creature, any rock layer and on any continent," he explained. "I leave it to readers to solve the mystery as to how such fresh tissue could persist in such old bone. I don't think it's nearly as old as I was told."

The study of fossil proteins involves finding a curated fossil that the curator will let you drill into, extracting a sample and running that through a series of analytical techniques that detect protein signatures and sequence proteins. "Then, you interpret those results, explaining why any apparent protein discoveries either came from the fossil or from somewhere else," Brian explained.



Once those results have been detailed, the interpretations are submitted to a journal in hopes of publication. “Meanwhile, I collaborate with curators, technicians and experts around the world who may or may not believe the Bible, but who take interest in fishing for

proteins in fossils,” Brian shared. Some of his discoveries include finding radiocarbon in fossil samples, including dinosaur remains, taken from Mesozoic rock layers. “I wonder if they were all deposited during the single, year-long flood of the Bible, since they have both radiocarbon and tissues,” Brian pondered. “I even sent samples of heavily mineralized Jurassic System Diplodocus and Stegosaurus dinosaur bone to a commercial lab, and they found radiocarbon still in them! I thought all the original bone had been replaced by mineral, but apparently not. Radiocarbon has a shelf-life of 100,000 years, so it should not be there if these fossils are as old as we all memorized.” According to Brian, fossil proteins fit what we might expect from a literal Genesis. “The often-scorned idea of Noah’s worldwide flood explains how young these fossil proteins must be, as well as how widespread they are and the fact that we have fossils at all. “According to the Bible, the flood happened about 4,500 years ago. Can proteins last that long under ideal conditions? Yes. But not a million years.

Even if bacteria don’t consume them, oxygen will. So, although it’s common to scoff at Genesis, our studies suggest we give that Book another look.” Brian’s discoveries led him to write the ICR book, *Living in Light of Genesis*. “It tells the story of how good science steered me toward Creation, the Bible and God,” Brian described. Despite the difficulties of his work, Brian said his biggest challenge (and joy) has been raising five children with his wife, Michele. Today, his hobbies include “mountain biking, backpacking, hiking trails across the U.S., road riding, evangelism, apologetics, Bible study and, mostly, cuddling grandbabies.” What began years ago with the intent to refute an ICR book as “quack science” led to Brian’s career in discovering science that supports Scripture. He thanks his wife, his Ph.D. supervisor Professor Stephen Taylor and many others for his achievements. “All these people, including the Lord God and many others, have encouraged, warned, admonished and celebrated along the way,” he credited. “It’s all a collaboration.” **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Dr. Glyn Horn

By Angel Morris

Dr. Glyn Horn recently received his Glenn Heights Chief of Police badge with his wife, Jasmine Horn, by his side. “From my interactions with the executive leadership team, staff members and the community, it’s evident that Glenn Heights is where I’m meant to be. My strong sense of faith reinforces my belief that my path is clearly defined, and my steps are ordered,” he shared.

Chief Horn began his career in Stafford, southwest of Houston, and most recently worked for the Regional Transportation District in Denver, Colorado. In Glenn Heights, he will emphasize “one-by-one policing.” “By focusing on individuals, we recognize that each person and their circumstances are unique,” he noted. “When we execute this approach effectively, we can transform our environment into one that is safe and secure, enabling everyone to thrive.”



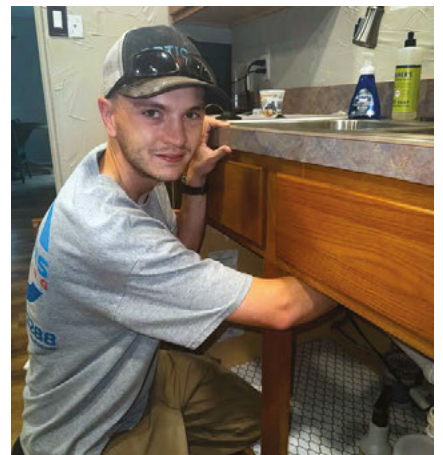
City Council members Ricardo Miller and Willie Franklin present Ebonie Zackery with the city of Red Oak-sponsored Red Oak Area Chamber Scholarship as she heads to Texas State University.



Marilyn Nash, Ovilla Garden Club member and Ellis County Master Gardener, helps at the OGC spring plant sale.



The Ovilla Fire Department hosts a push-in ceremony for its newest ambulance.



Hunter Hill of Options Plumbing repairs his own home sink before heading to work.



Miltie Buxton makes a door hanger as part of the Art Throbs Club of the Civitas Senior Living.



Mayor Mark Stanfill presents Chief Garland Wolf with a proclamation recognizing National Police Officer Memorial Day.



Glenn Heights Councilman Travis Bruton, Olive Garden General Manager Shellie Grisham and Red Oak Chamber President Clint Woodward attend the restaurant's grand opening.

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XOCHITL ARMENDARIZ

— By Angel Morris



Xochitl Armendariz is a single mom striving to create the best life for her and her 12-year-old son. “I work as a chef, concentrating my services on the senior living communities,” she shared. “I have done this for over 20 years, and I absolutely love it!”

This mission was inspired after Xochitl visited her grandfather in a nursing facility. “I knew things could be better, so I applied and became the cook there!” she recalled. “After his passing, I continued serving good food at local care centers.”

From a line of great cooks, Xochitl said she can prepare just about any food. “My favorite to cook is actually chicken piccata,” she noted, “but I’ll make anything to bring a smile to people’s faces.” **NOW**

Chicken Piccata

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, butterflied to 2 pieces per breast**
- Salt, to taste**
- Black pepper, freshly ground, to taste**
- Flour, for dredging**
- 6 Tbsp. unsalted butter (divided use)**
- 5 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil (divided use)**
- 1/2 cup dry white wine**
- Juice of 1 large lemon (about 1/3 cup)**
- 1/2 cup chicken stock**
- 1/4 cup capers, rinsed**
- 8 oz. angel hair pasta, cooked and lightly buttered (optional)**
- 1/3 cup fresh parsley, chopped (optional)**

1. Season the chicken with salt and pepper.

- Lightly dredge the chicken in flour.
- 2. In a large sauté skillet over medium-high heat, add 2 Tbsp. butter and 3 Tbsp. oil. When the butter and oil start to sizzle (before they begin to smoke), add two pieces of the floured chicken; cook 3 minutes.
- 3. As the chicken begins to brown, turn and cook the other side for 3 minutes. Remove; transfer to a holding plate (with paper towel). Allow the cooked portion to drain.
- 4. Add 2 more Tbsp. butter and remaining oil; add remaining chicken, and cook as previously instructed. Remove to drain.
- 5. Add the white wine to the pan and deglaze, scraping to free any bits that are stuck to the bottom. As the wine begins to reduce, add the lemon juice, chicken stock and capers; bring to boil. Taste for seasoning and continue cooking until the sauce has reduced by half. Finish the sauce

- by adding 2 Tbsp. of butter and whisking vigorously.
- 6. Plate the chicken over pasta, if desired. Spoon the sauce over the top. Garnish with parsley.

Red Enchiladas

- Sauce:*
- 3 cloves garlic**
- 1/4 onion**
- 6 New Mexico chili pods, cleaned out and toasted 5 minutes**
- Water, enough to cover ingredients in blender**

- Enchiladas:*
- 1/2 cup oil**
- Salt, to taste**
- 1 1/2 cups flour**
- 3 cups chicken broth**
- 6-8 corn tortillas**
- Cheese, shredded, to taste**

- Garnishes:*
- Onion, diced**
- Cheese, shredded**
- Lettuce, shredded**
- Tomato, diced**

- 1. *For sauce:* Boil the first three ingredients for 15 minutes; drain. Blend with some of the water/broth from boiling until smooth, about 20 minutes. You may need to add water at the end to get a smooth consistency.
- 2. *For enchiladas:* Mix the oil, salt and flour. Whisk in the chicken broth; once the base is smooth, add the blender ingredients.
- 3. Simmer all ingredients in a non-oiled pan on low, so the flavors marry.
- 4. In an oiled pan, soft fry the tortillas, patting out oil as you go. Once fried, smear with a thin layer of the sauce; add cheese, to taste. Roll the tortillas; smother with the sauce; top with garnishes.

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