## 15-YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

# MidlothianNOW

M A G A Z I N E

AUGUST 2020

# A Divine Difference

Darlene Hardy gives back through volunteerism

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Kids' Fun Page

Crossword/Sudoku

Featured Business: Midlothian Plumbing

In the Kitchen With Ratana Berg

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A DIVINE **DIFFERENCE** 

> Life experiences make Darlene Hardy a sympathetic counselor.

**14** BUSINESSNOW Midlothian Plumbing

18 AROUND TOWNNOW

COOKINGNOW Ratana Berg



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#### ON THE COVER

Local counselor Darlene Hardy shares simple mental health recommendations for these trying times.

Photo by Kobbi R. Blair.

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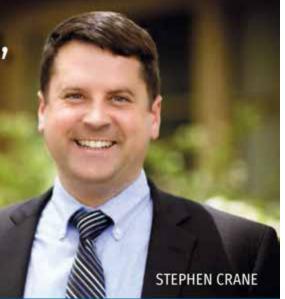
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### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Keep your distance ...

If there was just one thing you could keep from this weird, wild year, what would that be? What one lesson would you like to walk away with once you can freely walk away? How do you want to remember this year that, while we're in the middle of it, seems best forgotten?

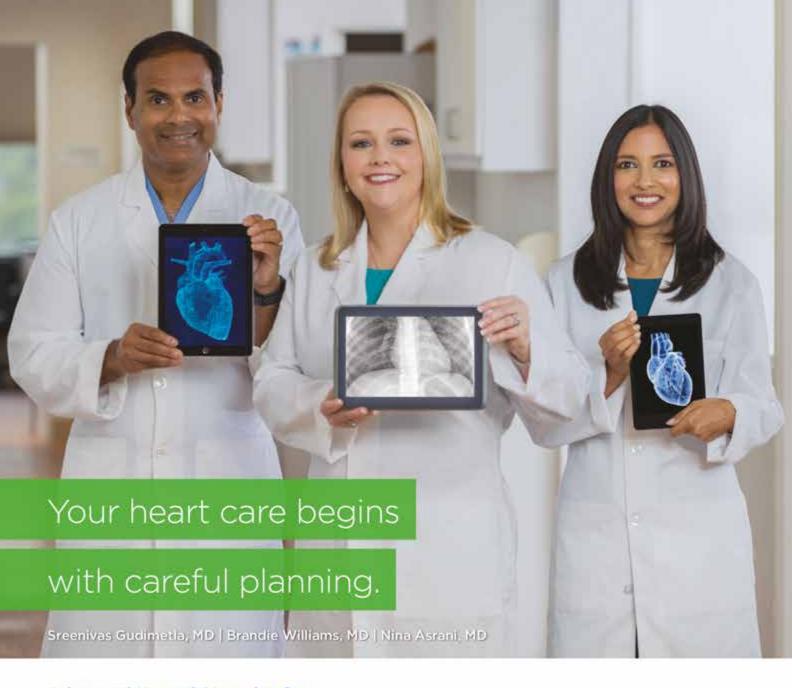
I've mentioned before that mine is a family of homebodies, so "quarantine" hasn't really been so different for us. I'm the most social, but if I can't be thrift shopping, I'm equally happy with my nose in a book. My husband and son find enforced isolation just makes their preferred lifestyle not only more acceptable, but also more responsible. Socially distant is the new community activist ... and boy are we a family of leaders!

Joking aside, we, too, have struggled with this new normal. I can only imagine the toll it has taken on the extroverts of this world. Making time to safely visit with friends and extended family is actually good for your health, even for the introverts — and ambiverts, like me! With windows rolled down, I recently sat in my car visiting with a friend who was in her car while eating Chick-fil-A. It was the best lunch I'd had in a long while, and not just because of the Lord's chicken.

Many obvious lessons should come from this unique year. I hope some of those include not to judge others on if they like to stay in or go out, that even a little social interaction helps us feel connected and that family and home are meant to shelter us from life's storms.

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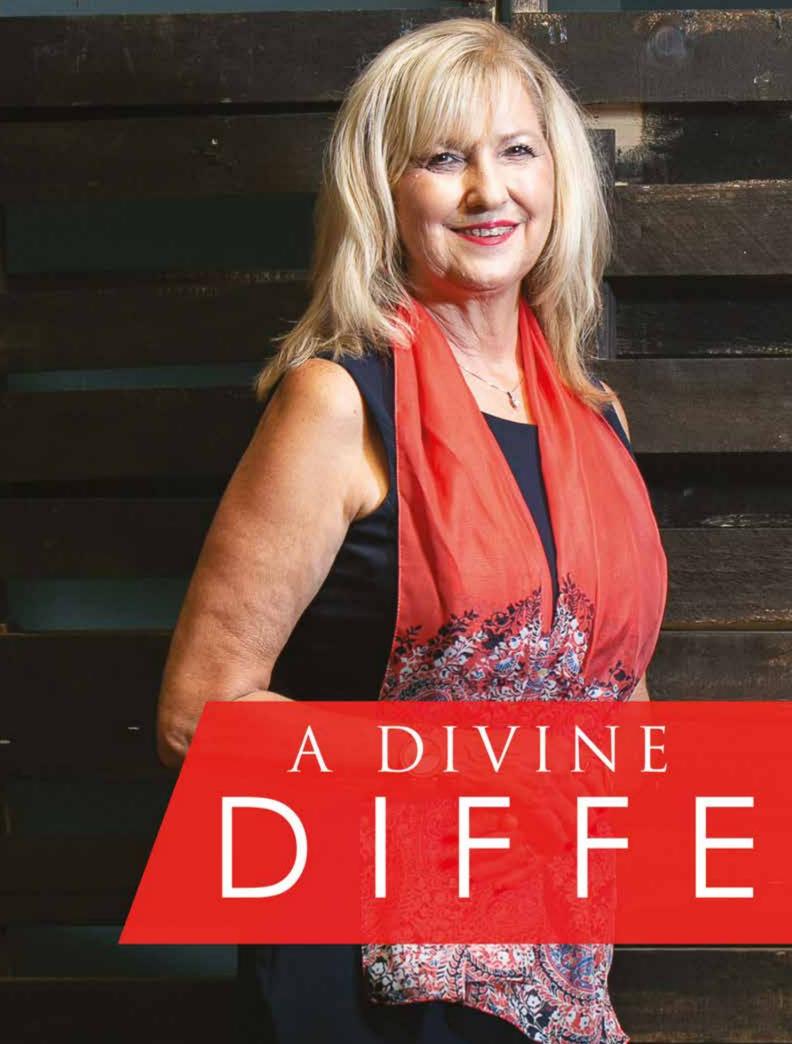
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If you'd asked a young Darlene Hardy what she wanted to do with her life she would have said, "Make a difference." As first a teacher, then volunteer and now counselor, Darlene fulfilled that goal. "I knew from very early on that no matter what I did, I wanted to help people," she said.

Through a traumatic childhood and some devastating experiences, Darlene believes life has perfectly prepared her for where she is today. The death of her father when she was only 2 changed the course of Darlene's life, although she notes her mother did the best she could. "My early experiences gave me a heart for broken people," Darlene noted.

A Baylor University graduate with an elementary education degree, Darlene's first community servant role was as a teacher. She taught kindergarten through third grade, as well as special ed, in the initial stages of her career. Then she and her husband pursued master's degrees from Texas A&M University-Commerce, where Darlene earned her counseling degree. "At that time, we had six kids — one a new baby — and we drove almost two hours one way to attend school," Darlene recalled.

Fast forward to 2007, and Darlene has begun private counseling, officing at Midlothian Bible Church, where her focus is trauma and depression. "It exploded overnight. I never dreamed it would take off like it did," Darlene remembered. "I had two interns and was working day and night."

September 23, 2014, however, Darlene shuttered her practice to help her husband following his lymphoma and leukemia diagnosis. "I remember the date because he died one year to the day after his diagnosis," Darlene explained.

Three months after his death, Darlene and her children decided Christmas would be better celebrated away from home and spent a few days at the Gaylord Texan. December 26, Darlene bought a new a car, "Because my husband wasn't going to be around to make repairs, I needed something reliable," she said.

When Darlene checked her phone after leaving the dealership, it was filled with urgent text messages. "I returned my neighbor's call, and she told me there had been a tornado in Midlothian. My house was destroyed," Darlene said.

Two weeks after rebuilding her home, Darlene began caring for her mother who suffered a stroke. Also during that time, Darlene's brother was put on dialysis treatment and her oldest stepson died. "I had to assure people I was OK. The peace of God covered me," Darlene admitted.

Darlene believes her various struggles make her not only a better counselor, but a more compassionate volunteer. She was formerly chaplain for the Midlothian Police Department as well as Ellis County's Victim Relief Ministry. In 2008, she was a member of the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team, working alongside Samaritan's Purse as a chaplain in Galveston after Hurricane Ike. She was part of Midlothian CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and conducted Mission Midlothian volunteer and parent training.

Today, Darlene is a board member of BESTWA (Building

# RENCE By Angel Morris



Everyone's Success Together in West Africa), which feeds 1,200 children daily in Liberia. "We meet essential needs and help keep families together," Darlene explained. "Two years ago, I was privileged to visit our Liberian feeding sites."

As a board member of The Anchor Home, Darlene runs a widow support group, where she often facilitates a women's Bible study. "I also attend the weekly prayer group started by former mayor Bill Houston years ago and am a member of the Pillars Prayer Team, set up by Dena Petty, founder of Mentors Care. "I believe in praying over the community," Darlene said.

Reflecting on her life, Darlene sees divine intervention at work. "I experienced some horrible things, and it's a good thing I did. It gave me so much more compassion," she reflected. "From the classroom to counseling, I could always sense when someone was hurting."

In her downtime, Darlene enjoys entertaining and the preparation involved, from cooking to decorating. She is a published poet, plays piano, gardens and does calligraphy. As an inspirational speaker, she encourages people to find what brings them joy and to assist others. "The problems you've gone through are where your experience lies. Your mess is your ministry," Darlene explained. "When I was 16, my mom gave me a Bible. I opened it to the verse, "Don't pretend you love people. Really love them.' It has driven me my whole life."



#### **Mental Health Recommendations** for Trying Times

Loss of control can lead to fear, anxiety and depression. Stress can lead to decreased immunity and increased infection susceptibility. Darlene offers this abbreviated list to help navigate current circumstances:

- 1. Turn off the news! Twenty minutes, twice a day, is ample for most and too much for many.
- 2. "Social distancing" is not "social isolation." Everyone needs some connection, even if it means investing time in learning new technologies.
- **3.** Eat right, exercise, take walks. Committing to eat only when truly hungry, rather than just bored, can stave off unwanted pounds.
- **4.** Sip water throughout the day. This keeps you hydrated and can flip the switch on your parasympathetic nervous system, abating fears and bringing calm.
- **5.** Deep breathing is perhaps the most helpful and readily available medicine. Online sources can teach you more. Also, designate a quiet spot in your house to visit daily, even if only for a couple minutes, to deep breathe, meditate and self-calm.
- **6.** Children can experience symptoms of separation anxiety during stressful times (even if under foot) making them particularly clingy. Older children experience environmental boredom, exasperated with being home yet afraid to go outside. Discuss their fears. Keep a sense of humor and give a lot of grace.
- **7.** Research ties a strong immune system to spirituality. Download free apps, such as ABIDE, to facilitate calm and assist in restful sleep.
- **8.** Contact churches for counseling/ coaching referrals. Check insurance for mental health/behavioral health providers and if uninsured, research therapists who provide income-based sliding fees.
- **9.** Be on the look-out for ways to show kindness. Focusing on others brings joy in trying times. NOW

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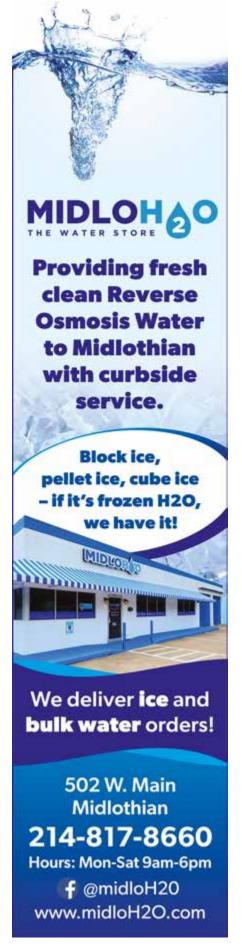














- By Angel Morris

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Hours: Monday-Friday: 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Tommy and Angela Ewton moved their plumbing business to Midlothian five years ago, after serving Mesquite customers since 1999. Formerly Preferred Plumbing & Gas, they then became Midlothian Plumbing. "We wanted to make it easy for customers to find us," Angela said. "So, the name just made sense."

Visits to family prompted the move. "We realized how much we enjoyed the area. After 18 years, we sold our Mesquite home and built a new one here. It's been one of the best

decisions, and we wish we'd made it sooner," Tommy said.

The Ewtons believe living in the community they serve holds them accountable. "We work, live and play here. You may find us at the supermarket, car wash or even a youth sporting event," Angela noted. "We also engage in doing business with other small businesses in the area."

Midlothian Plumbing prides itself on loyalty. "We're fair and honest while diagnosing and resolving plumbing issues. We want customers for life," Tommy said. "Building a positive rapport with customers and knowing the specifics of their plumbing system makes our job more interesting."

Following the motto "Local-Licensed-Loyal," Midlothian Plumbing's customers can expect prompt, professional, affordable services. "We offer lower rates than most competitors. If you get a quote that seems too high, call us for a second opinion," Tommy suggested.

Midlothian Plumbing is fully insured as well as licensed by The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners. "It's important that your issues are resolved by a licensed plumber," Angela said. "And if for some reason we can't get to it, we'll refer customers to another reputable plumber."

Midlothian Plumbing emphasizes respectful relationships. "We're invited into intimate personal spaces with each call, and we show much respect toward customers and their property," Tommy noted. "We strive to communicate clearly and do our best to educate them about their specific situation."

Treating customers like family has paid off. "We've grown drastically! We are blessed with many repeat customers and even more are referred to us by a friend or neighbor!" Angela said.

As growth continued, the Ewtons hired additional plumbers for their team. Dustin and Justin are both licensed plumbers looking out for the health and safety of the community. "We receive tons of positive feedback about them and are proud to have them on the team," Tommy said. "Both men are trustworthy, reliable and the community can count on them to do the right thing."

Midlothian Plumbing plans to continue supporting the community that has been so welcoming. "We offer discounts to all military, teachers, law enforcement and fire/EMT personnel," Angela said. "We also look out for elderly residents, offering discounts toward their services."

Midlothian Plumbing also encourages customers to conserve water. "Clean water is a privilege we all take for granted. There are about 663 million people in the world without access to safe water," Angela said. "In certain parts of the world, many women and girls cannot work or attend school because their daily chore is to walk for miles to collect water. We remind everyone to save water whenever possible!"

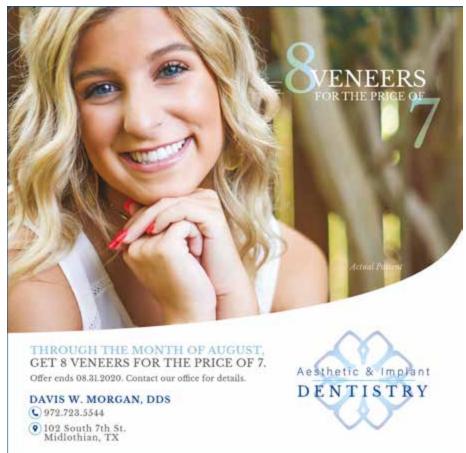
As they continue providing plumbing services in Ellis County, the Ewtons express gratitude to Midlothian. "Our plumbers are passionate about the health and safety of our customers and will always provide the utmost care in servicing all of your plumbing needs," Angela said. "We have the kindest customers, and it's our pleasure to help out!" NOW





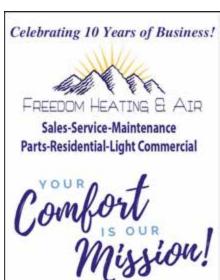












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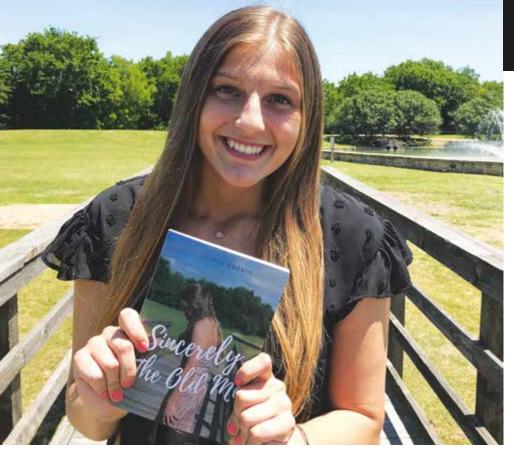
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## **Around Town**





Midlothian residents Bob and Patti Ramsden pose in the sunflower field at FM 879 in Ellis County.

## Zoomed In: Olivia Goerig

By Angel Morris

Changing schools, losing friends and battling depression are some of the experiences 17-year-old Olivia Goerig includes in her self-published book, Sincerely, The Old Me, available at barnesandnoble.com. "It's a self-help book about my journey through the last year, sharing everything from getting dumped hours before prom to experiencing the pandemic this year," Olivia explained.

A Midlothian resident, Olivia is a senior at Ovilla Christian School. Looking for ways to get her book in front of as many readers as possible, she believes it is her purpose to share these stories. "The goal of my book is to help others realize they are not alone and to turn to God in times of hurt and uncertainty. I just want to get His message out there!"



Anai Garfias serves up delicious food at Smoothie Plus in Midlothian.



The Kuykendall family prepares to watch the community fireworks show.



As part of the Rotary Club Flag Program, Scouts Travis Baldwin, Stetson McDonald, Aiden Toon and Tucker Baldwin post flags at participating homes.



Avianna Segura and Austyn Yarbrough enjoy a pool day.



Heritage High School students Kenlee Ponavis, Emma VanCleave and Kate Purdy wrap up summer in Destin, Florida,

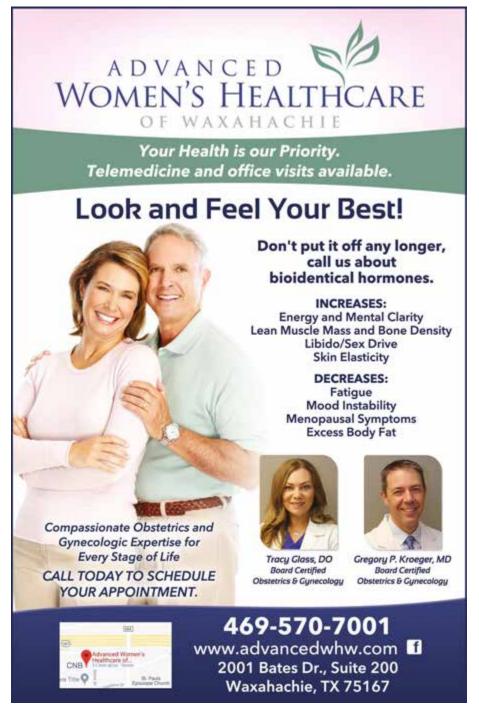


Matty and Jen Kitchen vacation at Big Rocks park in Glen Rose.



Southern Star Realtors join The UPS Store in collecting donations for Manna House.







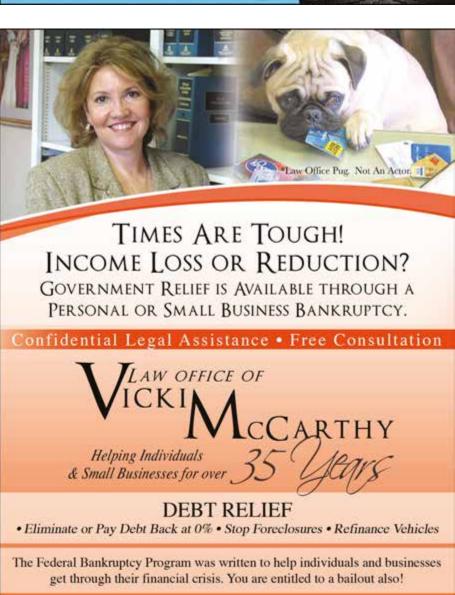
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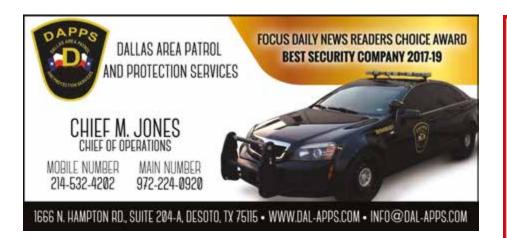
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Scavenger Hunt

Find 5 hidden apples in 5 different ads in this issue (not counting the one above). Email the page numbers and specific ads where they are found, plus your contact information and phone number, by August 15th. To ensure your Scavenger Hunt answers go in the drawing, you must use the



Ratana Berg's passion for cooking started at age 13 after discovering a 1920s' cookbook. "It had a unique texture and smell to the pages, plus it was chock-full of vintage recipes and information about herbs and spices that you can't find in new recipe books," Ratana recalled.

For Ratana, cooking is therapeutic, and she prefers simple, yet savory, meals. "As a Realtor, there are stressful days, and cooking and baking are my way of decompressing. I enjoy cooking Mexican, Italian, Asian and a variety of other dishes from different countries," she explained. Her new creative passion is making sushi, because her sons love it, but eating out can get expensive. "I've tested a variety of sushi plates at home, and so far, they've been a hit!" Now

#### **Southern Shrimp and Easy Grits**

- 3 cups chicken stock Pinch kosher salt
- I cup corn grits (quick or regular, not instant)
- 3 Tbsp. heavy cream
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 8 slices slab bacon, cut into 1- to 2-inch pieces

- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 lb. large shrimp, shelled and deveined
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced (should be a heaping tsp.)
- 3 Tbsp. flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- 4 scallions, white and green parts, chopped (divided use)
- I tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 or 3 good shakes Tabasco sauce
- 4 tsp. fresh lemon juice

- 1. In a medium saucepan, bring stock to a boil with the salt. Whisk in the grits; cook over moderately high heat, stirring vigorously at first to eliminate lumps. Continue stirring periodically until thickened and the grains are tender, about 4-5 minutes. (If using regular grits, they will take up to 45 minutes).
- 2. Add cream, butter and cheese; gently stir. Cover; remove from heat.
- 3. In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium-high heat until crispy. Transfer cooked bacon to a paper towel-lined plate.
- 4. Pour out all but about 4 Tbsp. of the bacon fat from the skillet; re-heat. Sprinkle black pepper over the shrimp; add to the hot skillet, cooking until curled and pink, about 3 minutes.
- **5.** Stir in the garlic, parsley, 3 of the scallions, paprika, Worcestershire, Tabasco and lemon juice.
- **6.** Crumble bacon into slightly smaller pieces; set aside. Spoon warm, cheesy grits into 4 shallow serving bowls; top each with a quarter of the shrimp mixture. Garnish with bacon and 1 scallion; serve immediately.

#### Hoisin Sriracha Chicken

1 1/2 lbs. chicken thighs (about 4)

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 1-inch piece ginger, peeled and minced

1 1/2 Tbsp. hoisin sauce

1/2 Tbsp. Sriracha sauce

1 Tbsp. honey

1 Tbsp. soy sauce

1 pinch salt

1 Tbsp. oil

White sesame seeds (optional) Rice, steamed, to taste

**1.** In a big bowl, combine the chicken with the garlic, ginger, hoisin sauce, Sriracha sauce, honey, soy sauce and salt. Stir to combine well; let marinate for 15 minutes.

2. Heat a skillet over medium heat; add the oil. When the skillet is hot, add the chicken (reserving the marinade) skin side down first; pan-fry on both sides.

**3.** Continue to pan fry until the skin turns nicely brown. Add the marinade into the skillet; reduce the heat to low.

4. Continue to cook the chicken while the sauce reduces to a thicker consistency. When the chicken is cooked through, turn off the heat. Garnish with white sesame seeds; serve immediately with steamed rice.

#### **Copycat Taco Bell Crunchwraps**

1 lb. ground beef 1 tsp. chili powder 1/2 tsp. ground paprika 1/2 tsp. ground cumin Kosher salt, to taste Freshly ground black pepper, to taste 8 large flour tortillas 1/2 cup nacho cheese sauce

4 tostada shells

I cup sour cream

2 cups lettuce, shredded

I cup tomatoes, chopped

I cup cheddar, shredded

I cup Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

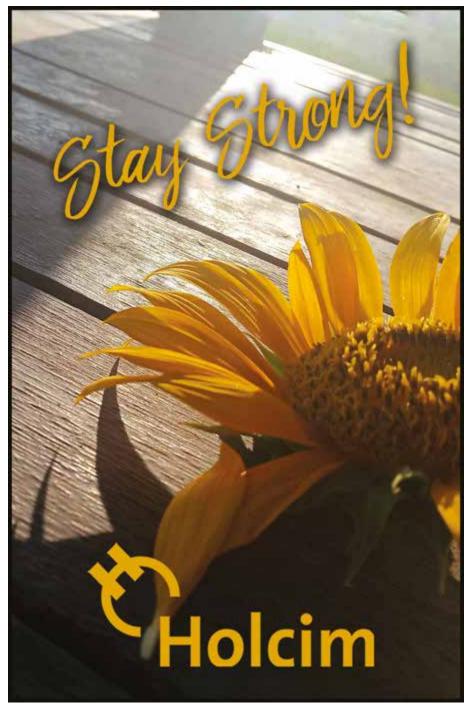
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil

1. In a large, nonstick skillet over medium heat, combine ground beef and spices. Cook, breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Drain the fat; wipe the skillet clean.

2. Stack 4 large flour tortillas; place a tostada shell in the center. Using a paring knife, trace around the edges of the shell to cut 4 smaller flour tortilla rounds.

**3.** Build Crunchwraps by adding a scoop of the ground beef to the center of the remaining 4 large flour tortillas, leaving a generous border for folding. Drizzle cheese sauce over each; top with a tostada shell.





- **4.** Spread sour cream over each shell; top with lettuce, tomatoes and cheeses. Place a smaller flour tortilla cutout on top of each; tightly fold edges of the large tortilla toward the center, creating pleats. Quickly invert Crunchwraps, so the pleats are on the bottom and stay together.
- **5.** In the same skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add I Crunchwrap seam side down; cook until the tortilla is golden, about 3 minutes per side. Repeat with remaining Crunchwraps.

#### **Easy Spanish Rice**

- 1/4 cup onion, finely chopped (optional)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups white rice, uncooked
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup chunky salsa
- 1 tsp. garlic salt
- 1 tsp. cumin
- **1.** Sauté onion in oil over medium heat. Cook until tender, about 5 minutes.
- **2.** Mix rice into the skillet, stirring often. When rice begins to brown, stir in broth, salsa, garlic salt and cumin.
- **3.** Reduce heat. Cover; simmer 20 minutes, or until the liquid has been absorbed.



#### Super Easy Peach Cobbler

1/2 cup butter, melted

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- I tsp. baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 1 15-oz. can sliced peaches, drained
- **I.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Pour melted butter into an 8x8-inch baking dish.
- 2. Mix flour, sugar, baking powder and milk to combine. Pour batter over the butter. Do not stir!

**3.** Place peaches atop batter; bake about 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

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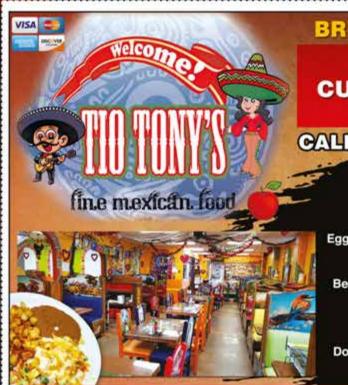




# THE **LOCAL TABLE**

One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.

- Virginia Woolf



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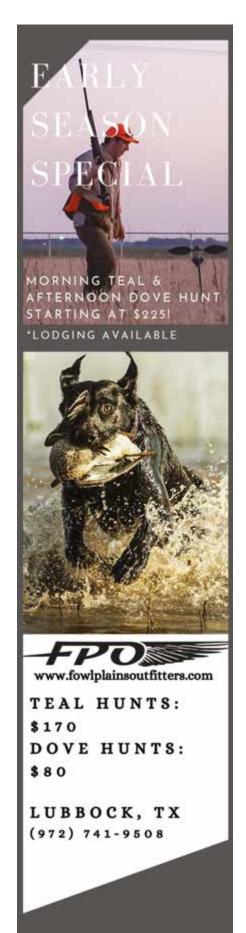
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#### 8/1

#### Law Enforcement Rally:

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#### 8/3-8/7

#### **Bricks 4 Kidz Summer Camps:**

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#### 8/12

**Ellis County Christian Homeschool Organization Park Day:** 

Homeschooling families or those interested in learning more are invited to enjoy the fishing pond, concrete area for scooters and playground. 9:00 a.m., Pearson Park, 200 Lakeview Pkwy., Red Oak. For more information, email info@eccho.us.

#### 8/15-8/16

#### **Dallas Air Dogs Competitions:**

Height and distance water jump contests for dogs. Registrations ends at midnight, August 12. Event schedule and registration available at https://northamericadivingdogs.com/. Dallas Air Dogs, 1251 E. Wyatt Rd.

#### Ongoing

#### Motorcycle Raffle Ticket Sale:

Help American Legion Riders Chris Kyle Chapter 388 support local veterans by purchasing a \$20 raffle ticket toward a 1998 Harley Ultra Classic. Drawing on Veterans Day. For more information, call (817) 952-1880.

#### **Thursdays**

#### Celebrate Recovery Meeting at **Lighthouse Church:**

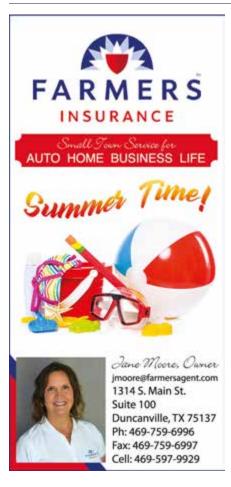
A Christ-centered recovery program designed to help those struggling with hurts, habits and hang-ups. 7:00-9:00 p.m. We are currently holding meetings virtually. For more information. email CR@dfwlighthouse.org.

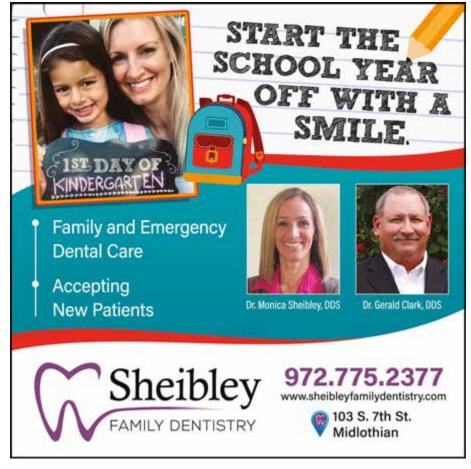
#### Saturdays

#### Midlothian Market:

Craft and food vendor booths. 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 234 N. 8th St.

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







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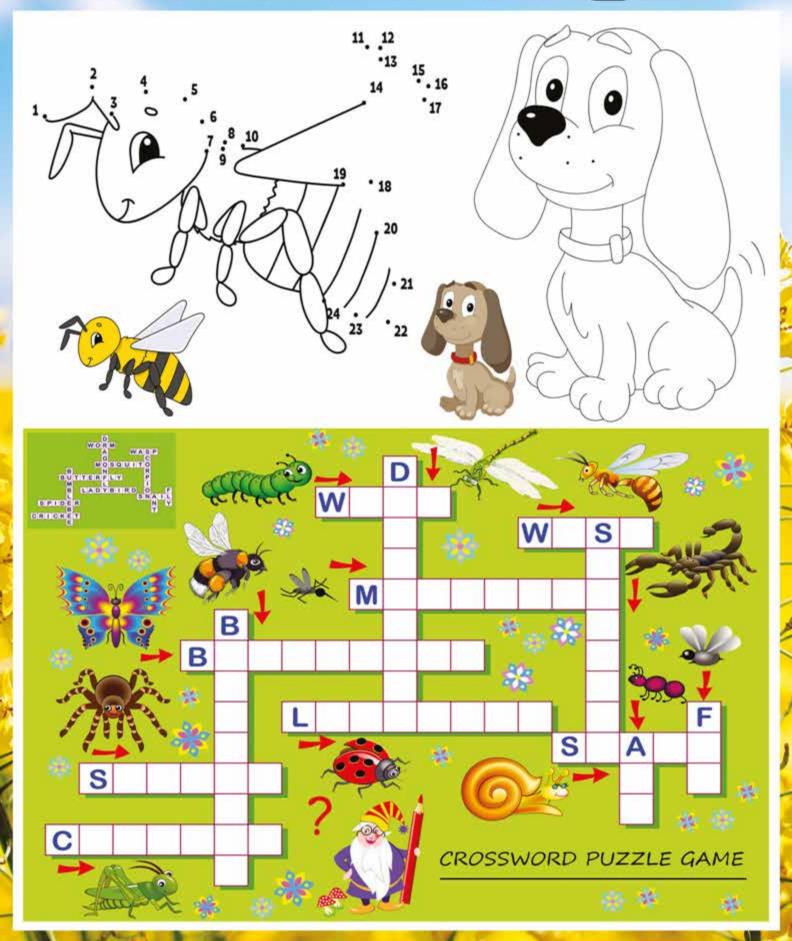
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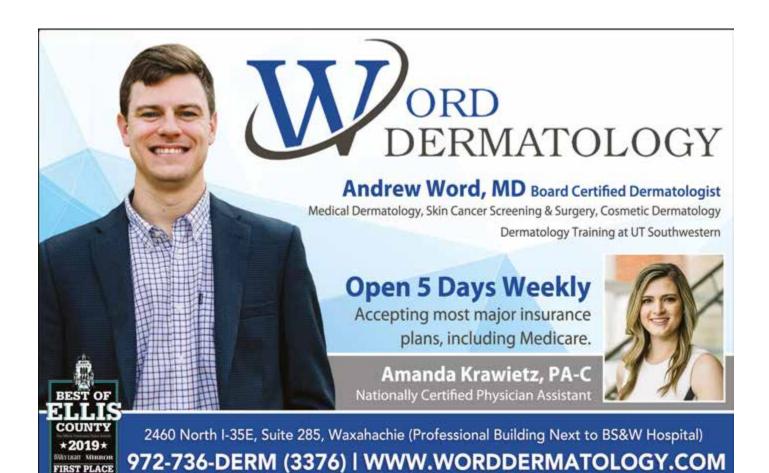
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# Mis Fun Page





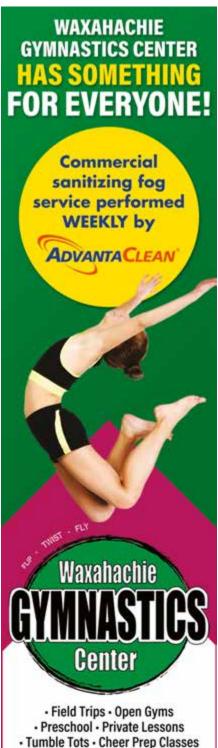
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### **Crossword Puzzle**

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9
10		$\vdash$		11	T			12	t	
13	t	+		14	T	T	15		T	1
16	1	+			17	+		T	t	
18	$\vdash$	$\vdash$	19	20		+	+			
21		T	T	T		22	$\vdash$	23	24	25
			26	T	27	T			T	
	28	29		T	T			30	T	1
31		1		T	T	32	i.	33		T
34	T	T		35	+	$\vdash$		36	1	t
37		+		38	+	+		39	+	+

Solutions on page 36

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

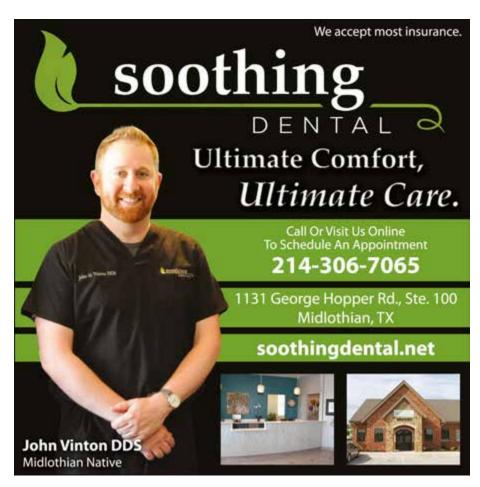
#### Across

- 1 Label for Elvis
- 4 Trucker's bedroom?
- 7 Youngster
- 10 "Huffington Post" owner
- 11 Undergarment
- 12 Position of a golf ball
- 13 Corn eater's leftover
- 14 Organizations
- 16 Mamie's other half
- 17 Rubbed in during Lent
- 18 787 or MD90
- 21 Admitted
- 22 Some final resting places
- 26 To a certain extent
- 28 Utah's --- Hatch
- 30 Semiformal evening jacket
- 31 One is super every four years
- 33 Pismire
- 34 Bill dispenser
- 35 Ram's dam
- 36 Fifth sign
- 37 Howl
- 38 Steep
- 39 Wrongdoing

#### Down

- 1 Kind of discrimination
- 2 A website might send you one
- 3 Queen Victoria's consort
- 4 TV network with eye logo
- 5 From eastern old Iran
- 6 Droopy-eared hound
- 7 Turn tail
- 8 Outer edges
- 9 Triumphant cry
- 15 Deliberately lose
- 19 Kind of poker
- 20 Person with special access
- 23 Mercury and others
- 24 Sultanate in Borneo
- 25 Churchyard gravedigger
- 27 Dumbfounded
- 28 "--- sight!"
- 29 Cognac bottle name
- 31 Check
- 32 Nevertheless

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### Sudoku Puzzle

Easy Medium

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

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

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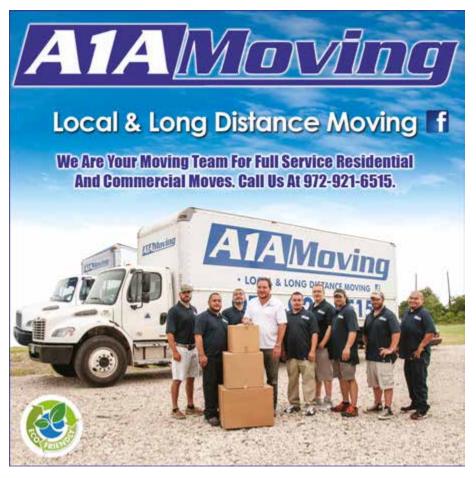
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Solutions on page 36









# Crossword Sudoku Solutions



#### Easy

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

#### Medium

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

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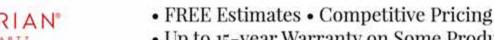
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