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# Destined for Championships

Cutting horses fuel passion for father/son Ascencion and Adan Banuelos

In the Kitchen With Christina Fakhoury

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

Featured Business: Flavor on 51

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### ON THE COVER



Made from the same mold, Ascencion and Adan Banuelos love their job.

### Photo by

Lori Baur.

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### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

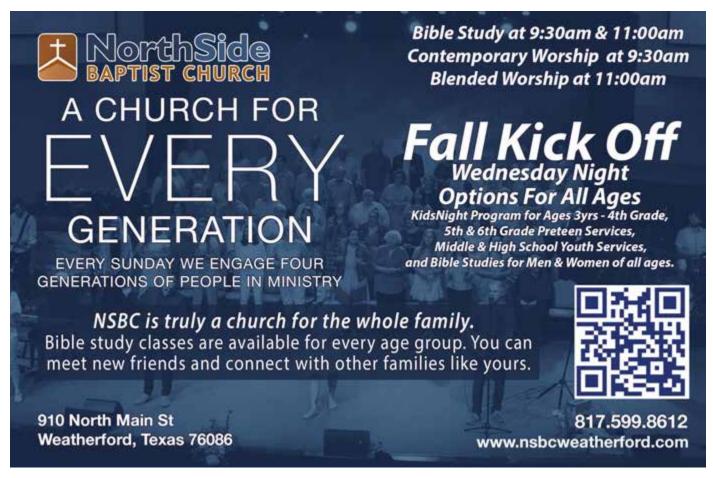
What to celebrate in August?

The only month without a nationally recognized holiday, do you wonder how you can find a reason to celebrate this month? I got you covered. You can celebrate with me. Five years ago, on August 19, 2017, I suffered a stroke. It blindsided me and left me feeling as if a massive truck ran me down. Statistically, I should have experienced more strokes or heart issues, residual — perhaps debilitating — physical symptoms. OK, one area of my brain doesn't process information well. The cells surrounding the dead part work hard to reroute tasks, but if I'm too tired, they slow down. Most people never notice. For that, I'm beyond grateful. Had I not believed in miracles before, my story would convince me they exist.

The five-year mark resets my medical event clock, as if it never happened. Did you ever notice that? Life and medical insurance and medically related forms state "within the last five years." That's because after five years, my risk of another stroke declines exponentially. Reason to celebrate? Absolutely!

Considering my past, I'd be remiss if I didn't tell people, know the signs of a stroke. I'm a miracle because the time before EMS got me to a hospital fell far outside those critical few hours following the event. I thought only elderly people had strokes. Since mine occurred about six weeks shy of my 57th birthday, I now know better. Don't take chances. Make changes now and avoid the experience if possible.

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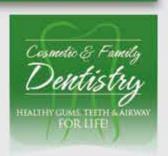
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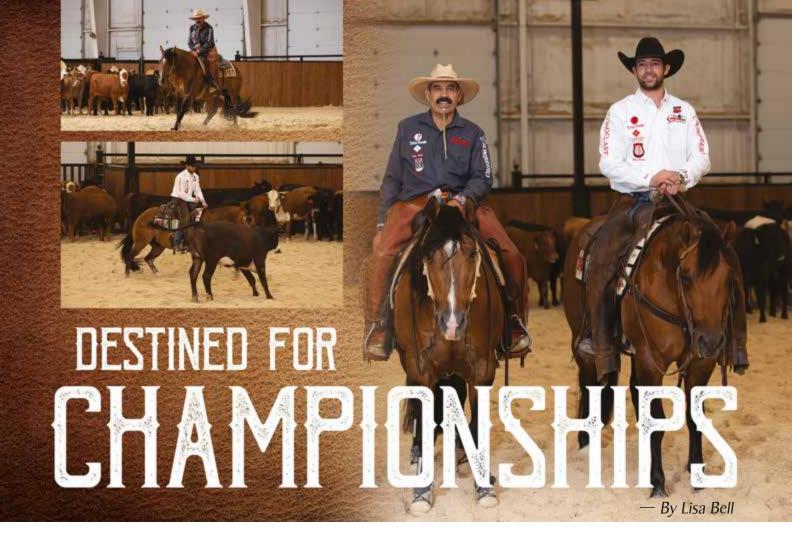
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On a ranch with more than 90 acres, Ascencion and Adan Banuelos train cutting horses. Though you seldom catch both men on-site, their shared love of the animals strengthens a family bond, cementing the only dream either of them can imagine fulfilling in life. Until three years ago, Adan leased ranches in the Weatherford area. When Stephen Finer offered a partnership for the ranch, Adan agreed. "It's been a huge blessing," he said. Still a work in progress, the ranch provides the perfect place to call home and train horses.

Ascencion grew up in Mexico, but at 13, he came to the United States alone knowing very little English. In 2000, he earned his citizenship. Growing up with horses, he wanted to work with them more than anything. "I hated leaving my family, but I couldn't accomplish my dream in Mexico. I had to come to the U.S. if I wanted to be somebody," he reminisced. "I loved horses and didn't care what I did with them. My granddaddy used horses to plough and took the same horse to the rodeo on Saturday night."

After arriving, Ascencion worked at a dairy for five years. "Milking 400 cows twice a day teaches you about hard work. You're too tired to get in trouble. I always heard too little work, people get in trouble or die," he said.

During a few days off work, he came across a ranch in Texas with horses, and they agreed to hire him in 30 days. With mixed emotions, he gave notice. "We cried because they treated me like family," he shared.

In his new job, he cleaned stalls, took care of horses and even did yard maintenance. Eventually, he worked his way up to riding. He left to work for Wayne Hodges, helping train 1 1/2- to 2-year-old cutting horses. From there, he met and went to work for the Allsup family. Working in the industry, he met amazing horse trainers. Buster Welch, alongside Pat Patterson, taught Ascencion about winning competitions at Futurity. Although he competed in some small rodeos before the mid-1980s, Ascencion admitted, "I had no business being at the Futurity." Nevertheless, he placed 11, while Buster came in at number 12 that first time. The two seasoned trainers became lifelong friends who taught Ascencion to train and show cutting horses.

As a horse trainer, Ascencion earned over 2 million dollars and became the first Mexican-American inducted into the National Cutting Horse Association Hall of Fame. A world-renowned trainer, he earned his reputation as one of the greatest horsemen of his time.

Unlike many horse trainers' kids, young Adan followed in his father's footsteps. At 5 years old, he showed a horse for the first time, although he can't remember when he didn't ride. "Dad always boosted my confidence. I owe my talents to my parents," he said. "I come here to play every day. It never feels like work. If this is what you love to do, you can make a living at it." Adan does more than make a living. Inducted into the NCHA Riders Hall of Fame in 2017 as one of the youngest inductees ever, Adan recently passed the 5-million-dollar mark in career earnings. At 28, he may be the youngest to achieve that distinction.

Although Adan understood cutting horses from a young age, at one time he considered rodeoing his passion and went to Vegas for four years. Despite some success, when his parents said, "Come home," he didn't hesitate. "I got sidetracked until I realized roping wasn't my true passion," he said. "It made my mental game stronger. Learning to conquer disappointment lessens your fear of failure."

He attributes his success to staying the course, likening the frustrations of success to golf. Rather than making a massive adjustment and failing, he learned from Ascencion to continue with the same plan, knowing changes take the same time for perfecting as sticking with the current program. "I owe a lot to the horses," Adan admitted. "I want to win, but not in a harsh way."

While these two men make training horses appear easy, they work hard, beginning their days early and often working late. While Adan spends much of his time on the road, Ascencion prefers remaining at the ranch and training. At 65, he continues riding 25-30 horses per day, and when he goes to competitions, he continues winning.

A trip involves more than packing a bag and taking off. Preparing trucks, trailers and horses, in addition to selecting and packing multiple outfits per day, requires planning. Adan quickly gives credit to those surrounding him, saying, "The team I have around me is more responsible for my success. I'm grateful for all they do behind the curtain, out of the spotlight. And I thank our customers for sticking with me through the years and giving me an opportunity with their expensive horses."

Ascencion doesn't care as much for the road, but he still loves being on the back of a horse. "I pray the Lord lets me keep doing it for a few more years," he stated. "It works for me to stay here while Adan goes and wins." He still enjoys the horses immensely, but his joy comes from teaching the kids and watching them win. His daughters also do well in the industry, and he feels blessed to see them work hard, believe in God and not steal — the most important lessons he could teach them.

Both father and son have too many awards to list. While Ascencion finds contentment with his achievements, he typically only shows at the National Futurity now. But with horses and kids to train, he has much left to do.

Adan said, "I haven't done enough. If your dreams don't scare you, they aren't big enough. I hope to set as many records as possible. At retirement, I want to say I did it the right way without success changing me." NOW





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# **Around Town**



### Samuel Linguist, district master councilor from the International Order of DeMolay fraternity presents the Flower Talk to mothers.



Mike Palmer of Rancher's Fed Beef prepares for a busy day at the butcher shop.

# Zoomed In: Amber D. Browne

Known for her many articles, Amber D. Browne enjoyed a recent signing event for her first book, The Little Book of Hermetic Principles. As part of an online group, she saw where the publisher, Ulysses Press, posted the idea for the book. Amber reached out to them, and they chose her to write it. After a great deal of research and interviews, she completed the manuscript. "There's so much info, lots of tips. I hope it helps people," she said. A full-time freelance writer, Amber plans to complete additional titles. "I have ideas for other books I want to pitch to the publisher and an idea for a screenplay," she added. "And I want to write fiction." Until then, she continues writing articles and caring for her family.



Senior Pastor Van N. Houser and NorthSide Baptist Church celebrate their 125th anniversary.



Congressman Roger Williams and Fire Chief Jonathan Peacock congratulate Dakota Stroud as Firefighter of the Year.

By Lisa Bell

# NOW



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Marsha Smith, Melissa Bass and Joyce Tarter celebrate Westside Antique Marketplace's fourth anniversay.



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# Flavor on 51

— By Lisa Bell

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Hidden in an industrial park on Highway 51 just south of Weatherford, Flavor on 51 offers a variety of food in a unique setting. This hidden gem of Parker County recently won several awards during the 2022 Taste of Parker County. They received honorable mention for best appetizer, third place for best side dish, second place for most unique dish and first place for most hospitable. Not a bad day for Jonathan and Rebecca Schiller's one-year-old business.



location down made sense. Jonathan didn't mind much, because he preferred being part of the community where he, his wife, Rebecca, and their four daughters live.

Having grown up in Parker County, he knew the area well. With the community engrained in him, Jonathan embraced lessons from the Arlington business and opened Flavor on 51. "We've got something special here," he shared.

Although Rebecca didn't start working with her husband at the beginning, before long, he needed her help to keep up with the many customers. Occasionally, their daughters pitch in, learning from their parents.

From a hybrid food truck/restaurant with a covered patio, they serve breakfast, lunch and dinner. "We have something for everyone," the couple said. They serve American dishes, gyros, Tex-Mex, burgers, ribeye steaks, barbecue and shrimp. From their original breakfast pretzel to fresh-made salsa, guacamole, street

tacos, cheesesteaks, sandwiches, jalapeño peppers, smoked meats, wraps and salads, plus desserts, they have enough variety for multiple visits. "Our best seller is our Bang! Pow! Boom! Shrimp," Jonathan said. They make dishes from scratch, including cutting fresh potatoes.

# THIS HIDDEN GEM OF PARKER COUNTY RECENTLY **WON SEVERAL AWARDS DURING THE 2022 TASTE** OF PARKER COUNTY.

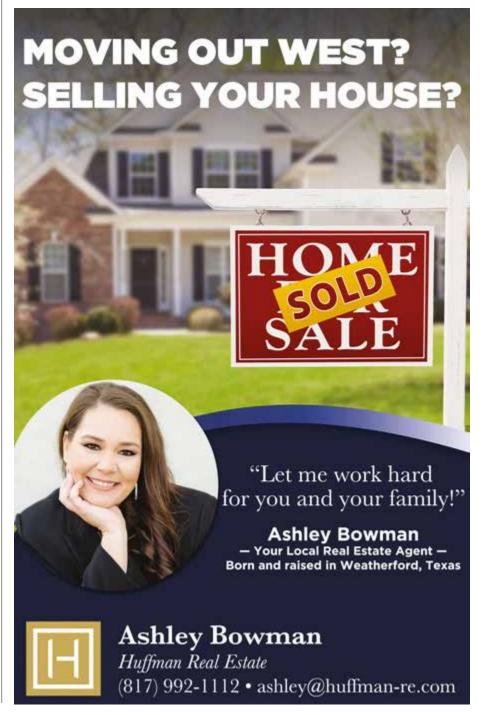
In addition to their location on Highway 51, they offer catering. From elegant weddings, corporate events and graduation parties, down to simple boxed lunches, they can handle small or large groups. Jonathan simply enjoys cooking. "When someone compliments me, that constant feedback keeps me going," he divulged. "We're community driven, so the menu wrote itself. If a customer suggests adding an item, we consider adding it. The community has been good to us, and we want to be good to our community."

Rebecca said, "We try to help Parker County Committee on Aging. We also shop local, eat at local restaurants and support local businesses and Chamber events as much as possible."

At the family-owned and -operated Flavor on 51, they cherish all their employees. "Each staff member has an individual personality. When you come for a meal, it's never boring, and our plates look like the pictures. If you haven't tried us yet, why not?" Jonathan asked.

Striving to serve the freshest foods in a friendly environment, Flavor on 51 continues growing after only a year in business. But Jonathan hinted, "We have future projects coming. Stay tuned." In the meantime, use GPS or look for the gigantic sign that points to their location. Drop by on Thursday evenings for open mic night, or try them anytime. And be sure to check their NOW Magazine advertisement for 10 percent off. NOW





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Growing up in a Middle Eastern household, Christina Fakhoury entered the kitchen as a young child, helping her mom prepare meals. "My mom is one of the best cooks I know," she stated. "Being in the kitchen with her at such a young age is part of why I still love cooking."

Christina enjoys her job at the Parker County AgriLife Extension Service. She teaches health education and nutrition classes. A large part of her job includes creating, cooking and teaching others how to make healthy recipes. While she believes in everything in moderation, she agrees a healthy diet produces an overall better quality of life. Her recipes, filled with bold flavors and fresh produce, incorporate a healthy lifestyle. "Who said eating healthy has to be boring?" Now

### Spinach & Red Pepper Frittata

Omelets' better half: Serves 4.

### 8 whole eggs

- 1/4 cup full-fat Greek yogurt, unflavored
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder (or fresh garlic)
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- I cup baby spinach, packed

### 1/2 cup low-fat feta cheese (divided use) Fresh parsley, to taste

- 1. Whisk together the eggs, yogurt, garlic powder, salt and pepper; set aside.
- 2. In a deep pan, heat the olive oil; add the red bell peppers and onions; cook until softened, about 2-3 minutes. Add the spinach; cook until it starts to wilt.
- **3.** Pour the egg mixture on top of the cooked vegetables; add half of the feta

cheese. Cover the pan; let it cook on low for about 10-12 minutes.

4. Once it is no longer jiggly, pull it off the stove. Top with the remaining feta cheese and fresh parsley. Serve hot!

### Greek Tzatziki Dip

Makes 12 2-Tbsp. servings.

I unpeeled cucumber

1 1/2 cups low-fat plain yogurt

I tsp. garlic powder

1 tsp. dried dill or 1 Tbsp. fresh dill

1 Tbsp. fresh mint

1/4 tsp. salt

1 Tbsp. olive oil

1 Tbsp. lemon juice

- **1.** Wash and slice the cucumber lengthwise. Use a spoon to scrape out the seeds. Dice into small pieces.
- **2.** Spread the cucumber on a paper towel; top it with another paper towel. Roll up the towels: squeeze to remove the excess liquid.
- **3.** Place the cucumbers in a medium-size bowl. Add the remaining ingredients; mix.

**4.** Use as a condiment or serve as a dip with carrots or more cucumbers!

# Fattoush (Middle Eastern Bread Salad)

A simple and delicious salad you can modify to make your own! The best part is the toasted pita chips that serve as "croutons." Serves 4.

### Dressing:

Juice of 1 lemon
1/2 cup olive oil
2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
1 Tbsp. pomegranate molasses
(optional)
Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste 2 tsp. sumac

### Salad:

- I head romaine lettuce, washed and cut into large pieces
- 1 small cucumber, chopped
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 3 radishes, thinly sliced
- 2 green onions (both white and green parts), chopped
- 1/2 red onion, halved and sliced
- I bunch fresh parsley leaves, stems removed and coarsely chopped
- I bunch fresh mint, coarsely chopped
- I large piece of pita bread, toasted and broken into pieces (You can also use store bought pita chips.)
- **1.** For dressing: In a small bowl, use a fork to whisk together all the dressing ingredients, except for the sumac; set aside.
- **2.** For salad: In a large bowl, toss all the salad ingredients, except the pita bread pieces. Add the dressing and half the sumac to the salad. Let the salad rest in the refrigerator for several minutes to let the flavors come together.
- **3.** Before serving, add the pita "croutons"; sprinkle the rest of the sumac on top.

### **Oven-baked Kafta Kebabs**

Serves 4. (2 skewers per person)

1 lb. lean ground beef

1/4 cup parsley, coarsely chopped

1/4 cup cilantro, coarsely chopped

1 tsp. dried mint

1 tsp. cumin

1 1/2 tsp. paprika

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. black pepper

1/4 tsp. turmeric

1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper (optional if you don't prefer spice)

1/2 tsp. ginger powder

Vegetable oil or oil spray







- **I.** Preheat the oven to 425 F.
- **2.** In a bowl, add all the ingredients, except the oil; mix until well combined.
- **3.** Using your hands, shape the meat onto the skewers. If using wooden skewers, make sure to soak them in water for the recommended time written on the packaging to avoid catching fire.
- **4.** Place the skewers on a lightly sprayed oven-safe pan. Bake the skewers for about 10-12 minutes. You can also cook them on the stove top or grill (which is my favorite during the summer season).
- **5.** Remove from oven; enjoy warm with roasted potatoes, rice or a salad.

### Walnut Pecan Bites

Recipe adapted from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Dinner Tonight. All the flavors of a delicious pecan pie without all the excess calories! Serves 5. (3 shells each)

- I large egg
- 3 Tbsp. dark brown sugar
- 1/2 Tbsp. whipped butter or light buttery spread, room temperature Splash of vanilla extract
- 1/8 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. pecans, coarsely chopped (divided use)

- 2 Tbsp. walnuts, coarsely chopped (divided use)
- I pkg. (15 pieces) frozen mini phyllo shells (Purchase in the frozen aisle at most grocery stores.)
- **I.** Preheat the oven to 375 F. Spray a baking sheet with nonstick spray or line with parchment paper.
- **2.** In a medium bowl, combine the egg, brown sugar, butter, vanilla extract, cinnamon and salt: mix well.
- **3.** Stir 1 Tbsp. chopped pecans and 1 Tbsp. chopped walnuts into the mixture. Arrange shells and evenly distribute the mixture among the phyllo shells.
- **4.** Combine the remaining nuts; sprinkle them on top of the shells (a little less than 1/2 tsp. per shell).
- **5.** Bake in the oven until the edges are crisp, 15-18 minutes. Allow to cool slightly before serving.







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# **Crossword Puzzle**

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

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

### Across

- 1 Out of whack
- 4 Brass groupings
- 9 Running great --- Devers
- 10 In plain view
- 11 Approximately
- 12 More recent
- 13 Where landlubbers are found
- 15 Drink greedily
- 17 Rotation period
- 18 Wingless parasites
- 19 Sacked out
- 22 Al --- (pasta order)
- 23 Shuck
- 24 Short Egyptian boy-king?
- 25 "Avenger" Mrs. Peel
- 26 Birl
- 30 Gem State capital
- 32 Czech track champ --- Zátopek
- 33 Orange Muppet
- 34 Pestered persistently
- 35 Takes five
- 36 It can be the limit

### Down

- 1 Rowers in a boat
- 2 Angle
- 3 Bad places to build houses
- 4 Thin as a rake
- 5 Reverential salutation
- 6 Publications from special groups
- 7 Became shorter
- 8 Hard-and-fast
- 9 Former Portuguese colony in India
- 14 Backstabber
- 16 "Aw, heck!"
- 19 --- who must be obeyed
- 20 Surplus furniture
- 21 "Rum Punch" writer --- Leonard
- 22 Batman and Robin, for example
- 24 Corners
- 27 Out of control
- 28 In apple-pie order
- 29 Catastrophic occurrence (abbr.)
- 31 Command to Rover

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.









### 7/29-8/7

The Stinky Cheese Man & Other Fairly Stupid Tales: Annual children's production presented by TOTS. 7:30 p.m., Theatre Off the Square, 114 N. Denton. For more information, visit www.theatreoffthesquare.org.

### 8/5-8/7

### **Texas Tax-Free Weekend:**

No sales tax on qualifying items. Information online. www.epbusinessjournal. com/2022/07/texas-sales-tax-holiday-is-august-5-7-2022/.

### 8/17

### School First Day 2022-2023:

Back to school for Weatherford and Aledo public schools.
Details available online.
www.weatherfordisd.com;
www.aledoisd.org.

### 8/12-8/14

### Bye Bye Birdie:

Live performance of the musical comedy. **Friday and Saturday:** 7:30 p.m.; **Sunday:** 2:00 p.m.

8/13

Writing in Vivid Color:

\$20. 10:00 a.m.-noon. Russell Farm, 405 W. County Road 714, Burleson. Register online. www.radicalwriters.ticketleap. com/radical-writers-workshop-writing-in-vivid-color.

### Clays 4 Cabins:

Fundraiser event for the Pioneer Cabin Park at the Doss Center. 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Defender Outdoors Clay Sports Ranch, 8270 Aledo Road, Fort Worth, TX 76126. For more information, visit www.dosscenter.org/clays-for-cabins/.

8/22

2022 Fall Classes:

Weatherford College fall semester classes first day. Registration ends **8/16.** www.wc.edu.

### 8/31

### **Pet Mobile Clinic:**

Parker Paws and PetVet Relief provide low-cost pet care. Spay/neuter/dental by appointment. Vaccinations: Noon-3:00 p.m., Pet Supplies Plus, 222 W. I-20. Services, prices, appointments: www.petvetrelief.com.

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









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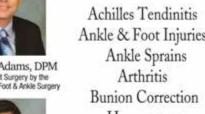


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