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M A G A Z I N E

AUGUST 2024



Brotherly Bonds

The Tompkins family makes its mark at the Air Force Academy

In the Kitchen With Natasha Woolery

Also inside:

A Texas Baseball Legend

Nolan Ryan's name is huge in these parts

Scavenger Hunt

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ON THE COVER



Four siblings accepted to the United States Air Force Academy make history.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Angel

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Getting structured ...

Not everyone is sending kids back to school this month, but it's still the perfect time to consider how good routines impact our lives. From pre-K to college (and even as adults), systems can eliminate unnecessary stress. While implementing schedules may seem daunting, it undoubtedly makes days less chaotic. Preparing for what to expect helps lessen anxiety no matter your age.

For young back-to-schoolers, this can mean easing into the structure a new school year will bring. Begin waking up a bit earlier than summer days require and have a few morning run-throughs to consider how long it will take to get dressed and eat before heading to campus. Parents, drive to school and consider how much time you'll need (being sure to account for extra traffic), or walk the kids to the bus stop to see how long that takes. Discuss what has to be accomplished before school, so that children clearly understand what they are meant to do and in what order. For example, do we brush teeth before or after breakfast?

Consider ways to make mornings smoother, like choosing outfits in advance and packing lunches at night. Try on first-day outfits and take photos the day before school starts for one less thing to worry about on that inaugural morning! Talk about what's expected after school, too, like allotted homework time or baths before bedtime reading. Backpacks should be packed at night to avoid morning scrambles, as well.

College kids also benefit from pre-planning as much as possible. Practice walking routes through campus. Review class syllabi. Read online forums about classes and teachers. Grown-ups, too, can use good morning routines, daily schedules and advanced planning to make days less hectic. As it's been said, the future belongs to those who prepare for it today.

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BROTHERLY BONDS

— By Angel Morris



Acceptance to the United States Air Force Academy is extremely rare, with fewer than 1,500 students typically admitted each year. The Tompkins family, however, has four sons in that esteemed roster, all accepted to play sports at USAFA.

A 2021 Midlothian High School graduate, Kaleb was the first to set his sights on the academy. "It's not a place to go if you want the typical fun college experience," Kaleb, who will graduate USAFA next year, admitted. "It's very hard between the academic rigors, the military demands and being an athlete, but I know that it will all be worth it in the end."

An MHS Class of 2023 grad, Kade followed Kaleb's lead. "I've been told that we will be the first ever set of four siblings accepted to USAFA. The reason this is possible is due to each of us being individually good enough to play our sport at the Division I level, as well as Kaleb getting the offer first, which naturally made the coaches look at the rest of us," he explained.

Twin brothers Karson and Kole, who graduated MHS this year, start the academy this fall. Kole will play football like his two older brothers, while Karson will be on the wrestling team.

The brothers' athletic journeys began when Dad, Ryan, and Mom, DaNeil, registered all four of their sons with the Mansfield PeeWee Football Organization when each reached age 5. "Once we moved to Midlothian in 2015, Kaleb transitioned to middle school football, and the other three played for the Midlothian PeeWee Football League," DaNeil recalled.

The boys wrestled, as well. "They started wrestling for the Bandits out of Arlington, then moved to Midlothian's youth program for the remainder of their time in youth wrestling," Ryan noted. "Karson was the only one of the four who had a stronger passion for wrestling. Once they started high school, that is when they took off in their respective sports."

A scholarship to USAFA allowed Kaleb to continue his athletic pursuits. "Attending the academy was a pretty simple decision for me because I wanted to play football at the highest level I could," he shared. "That was always my dream. Since I was a little kid, all I wanted to do was play Division I football."





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Kade said his brothers share the Proverbs 12:17 philosophy, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." "We all set our sights on USAFA when Kaleb got offered to play football there. But after learning about everything the academy sets you up for in life is when the rest of us committed to the idea."

Kaleb said his first year away from his close-knit family was tough. "The biggest challenge I have overcome is going through basic training and freshman year of the academy without my family. There's no magic in how I did it, I just prayed a lot, and kept working my tail off."

Prepared to graduate with an undergraduate degree in law next spring, Kaleb continues on the football team, participates in the Special Warfare Club on campus and is part of Squadron 21. "My goal after the academy is to become an Air Force special tactics officer for four to six years, followed by a program where the Air Force will pay for law school," Kaleb outlined. "After 20 years of service, I hope to retire and buy a big plot of land, and then ride off into the sunset."

Kade is relieved to have completed a challenging freshman year. "When you're a first-year cadet, you are considered 'unrecognized,' which means you have a lot more 'rules of engagement' than the upper three classes, such as running everywhere you go and greeting upperclassmen in the hallways," Kade described. "The experience teaches you to enjoy the little moments, like having an hour break in between classes and football practice."

Excelling in physics and Japanese classes, Kade's goal is to graduate and become a heavy pilot for the Air Force. "Likely C-17s so I can get stationed in Japan," he predicted.

Karson and Kole will be better prepared for college thanks to their



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brothers' experiences, but others have impacted the twins, too. "Our late coach, Coach Clif White, fought through cancer while showing up and coaching the team still. He showed me how to live with the cards you were dealt," Kole credited.

Karson said turning defeat into motivation is something he learned at MHS. "Being a four-time state champion in wrestling was a goal of mine, but losing at the state wrestling tournament freshman year led me to train harder. It made me become relentless on the mat."

THE BROTHERS ATTRIBUTE THEIR FAMILY'S FAITH FOR THEIR ULTIMATE SUCCESS.

As a result, Karson was a three-time state champ, two-time national champ and was ranked No. 3 in the nation with an overall high school record of 155-2. Besides wrestling for the academy's RTC program, Karson hopes to someday participate in the Olympics.

While Kole would like to play in the NFL, he also aspires to be a head coach of a winning high school or college program. He and Kade were on the 2022-2023 undefeated District Champions football team that went to the third round of playoffs. He also played a true tight end position, which was new to the offense the past two years.

He credits a brotherly bond for the unique impression the Tompkins will make at USAFA. "We all ride or die for each other," he said.

Kaleb seconded that sentiment. "The most important accomplishment in my life is that I was a good enough big brother, that all three of my little brothers wanted to follow me to the academy."

Karson agreed. "My brothers always inspire me to be a better person. We are very competitive with each other, and they motivate me to want to be the best."

The brothers attribute their family's faith for their ultimate success. "We all have good heads on our shoulders. We are all faith-driven men," Kaleb noted. "I fully give all the credit and glory to God. Without Him, none of this would be possible." **NOW**

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— TALES OF TEXAS —

A TEXAS BASEBALL LEGEND

— By Sandra Walters

Some sportsmen are regarded as icons in their respective sports. One of Texas' most accomplished baseball players, Nolan Ryan, is well-known in the Lone Star State. He was born on January 31, 1947, in Refugio, Texas, as the family's sixth child. When he was 9 years old, Nolan began playing baseball in his hometown of Alvin, Texas, where he grew up. At the age of 11, he was selected for the All-Star team and went on to succeed. At that time, he threw his first no-hitter.

He continued perfecting his gift throughout the years, and following his high school graduation, Nolan was chosen by the New York Mets in the 1965 Major League Baseball Draft. Within four years as a team pitcher, he helped the Mets in their World Series victory. However, he was traded to the

California Angels in 1971. During this time, his name started appearing in the record books after winning games, striking players out and pitching his first career no-hitter in the major leagues. From 1972 to 1977, Nolan averaged 19 wins and 322 strikeouts per year. He assisted the Angels in winning the American League West title for the first time.

Eventually, he signed a deal with the Houston Astros as a free agent, returning close to his hometown as the first million-dollar-per-year player in league history. He accomplished the 3,000th, 4,000th and 4,500th strikeout milestones while playing for the Astros. The '80s signified many successes for Nolan, as he passed Walter Johnson's all-time strikeout mark, broke Sandy Koufax's major league record of four no-hitters with his fifth in 1981 and helped the Astros reach the postseason for the first three times in franchise history. He played as an Astro from 1980 to 1988.

Following his last season with the Astros, Nolan joined the Texas Rangers as a free agent. By continuing to throw a powerful fastball into his 40s, he became a national phenomenon. In 1990, Nolan pitched his sixth no-hitter, and a year later, at the age of 44, he produced his seventh. Nolan was selected in eight All-Star Games, started 773



times, achieved the lowest hits-per-nine-innings-pitched ratio, being 6.56. He pitched for the Texas Rangers from 1989 to 1993, bringing his career to a close.

Nolan retired after the 1993 season, and in 1999, they inducted him into the National Baseball Hall of Fame, becoming the first Texas Ranger to receive this honor. In 2003, he was inducted into the Texas Rangers Hall of Fame. Shortly after those accomplishments, the Rangers and Astros named him the Hometown Hero in 2006. He also earned a place in the Irish American Baseball Hall of Fame in 2011. Then, the Angels, Astros and Rangers retired Nolan's number. And because of his expertise in the industry, he served as president and CEO of the Texas Rangers from 2008-2013.

For many years, this tough competitor was among the most intimidating on the pitching mound. He acquired the nickname "The Ryan Express," and he played for four decades. "His 27-season career record is 324-292 with a 3.19 ERA, 222 complete games, 61 shutouts and a baseball best 5,714 strikeouts," according to astrosdaily.com. He continued to pitch after turning 46, but in September 1993, he blew out his elbow and made his final pitch. He earned numerous titles in Major League Baseball and is definitely considered a Texas baseball legend. NOW

Sources:

1. <https://www.tshmf.org/Ryan>.
2. https://www.astrosdaily.com/players/Ryan_Nolan.html.
3. <https://baseballhall.org/hall-of-famers/ryan-nolan>.

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Ufon Ahime, Ph.D.
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What have you been feeding your mind lately? Just as a healthy diet is crucial for physical health, the information and experiences we expose ourselves to significantly shape our mental well-being.

The content we consume, whether through news, social media, or conversations, plays a significant role in our mental health. Consistently consuming negative or distressing news can lead to anxiety, stress, and a pessimistic worldview. On the other hand, engaging with positive, uplifting content can foster feelings of happiness, hope, and optimism.

The same is true about our relationships. Positive, supportive relationships can provide emotional stability and contribute to a sense of belonging. Conversely, toxic relationships can drain our energy, lower self-esteem, and increase stress. Nurturing healthy relationships while distancing ourselves from harmful ones is vital for mental well-being.

Our internal dialogue, or self-talk, is another critical factor. Negative self-talk can perpetuate feelings of low self-worth and increase anxiety and depression. Cultivating a habit of positive self-talk and self-compassion can enhance our mental resilience and overall happiness.

I encourage you today to become deliberate about what you feed your mind through what you choose to listen to, who you choose to hang out with, and how you speak to yourself. Doing these things will lead to a change in your mental well-being.

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Mya Jacobs enjoys the FBC Midlothian Summer Blast program.

Zoomed In: Aaron Cox

By Angel Morris

Aaron Cox received the 2024 Humanitarian Award from US LBM, parent company of Higginbotham Brothers, where Aaron is retail manager. “I’m honored to join a small, but growing, group of recipients,” Aaron noted. “I dedicate this award to my parents, who taught me the true meaning and value of giving back.”

Recognized for outstanding community involvement and charity work, Aaron is involved with Midlothian Economic Development, The Lumbermen’s Association of Texas and formerly served as an ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce, to name a few.

The award provides a grant to Aaron’s organization of choice. “I chose Midlothian Education Foundation. I wanted the money to stay in the town that I get to call home,” Aaron shared. “MEF does so many great things for students and teachers. It just made sense to give it to them.”



Jantin and Aaron Smith enjoy the Mac McAnally concert at the Margaritaville RV Resort in Crystal Beach during summer vacation.



MISD health science program incoming seniors tour Methodist Midlothian, learning about the hospital’s advanced technology.



Lacie Smith, with daughter, Olivia, and their dog, Gemma, enjoy a day in the pool.



Nicolas Del Rosario receives a trophy from Officer Scott Hughes for his success in the Midlothian Police Department's 8th Annual Bicycle Safety Course.



Kasey Cheshier presents Carol Smith with the Midlothian Lions Club Lion of the Year Award.




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BusinessNOW

Scooter's Coffee

— By Angel Morris

Scooter's Coffee

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(214) 817-8866
www.scooterscoffee.com

Hours: Monday-Friday: 5:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday: 6:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.

Celebrating its one-year anniversary in Midlothian, Scooter's Coffee is founded on "connecting through love, humility, integrity and courage." Owners Matt and Erin Longenecker were introduced to the franchise while living in Nebraska. "There was always a distinct charm in starting my day with Scooter's Coffee, though initially, I couldn't quite pinpoint why," Erin recalled. "Upon joining its headquarters



as a project manager, I discovered that this allure was purposefully woven into the fabric of the business. I deeply admired the founders and executives for their commitment to their mission, 'Creating an amazing experience for each life we touch.'"

When the opportunity to franchise Scooter's Coffee arose, the Longeneckers started with one in their hometown, Wahoo, Nebraska. Wanting to return to the DFW area to live, the couple decided Midlothian felt like home, and they opened their second Scooter's Coffee here. They own a third location in Arlington situated at Matlock and Eden roads.

Scooter's menu of "relationship drinks" includes hot and iced coffees, blenders, smoothies and teas. "Our signature drink, the 'Caramelicious,' is available in hot, iced or blended variations, with the blended option being the most popular," Erin described. "Additionally, we offer a rotating selection of featured drinks every couple of months — with features including s'mores and cinnamon toast crunch lattes, which can be hot, iced or blended. Alongside these, we serve

exceptional brewed coffee, energy drinks and a range of smoothies.

“Our menu features freshly roasted coffee beans tailored for our signature drink recipes, offering a balance of sweetness and smoothness. Whether you prefer your latte hot, iced or blended, we have a diverse selection, including options reminiscent of your favorite candy bars.”

Driving through Scooter’s, guests can also order from the food menu, which includes bagel, ciabatta or waffle sandwiches. They also offer burritos, omelet bites, cinnamon rolls, muffins and more. “Our most popular food item here is our Maple Waffle Sandwich. However, if you’re pressed for time and seeking a convenient on-the-go option, our Mini Donuts for \$1 are among my personal favorites,” Erin noted.

Scooter’s serves breakfast throughout the day, accompanied by baked goods and cake bites. Pretzel Snackers are a new on-the-go treat. The company’s mission is to offer its menu with a smile using the slogan, “Amazing People, Amazing Drinks ... Amazingly Fast!®” and this starts with the staff.

“We prioritize the well-being of employees. Fostering an environment of compassion and respect, we not only encourage personal growth but also instill in team members the importance of treating others with the same level of empathy and understanding,” Erin shared. “Moreover, we place a significant emphasis on speed. It’s our priority to ensure customers are served punctually!”

As a Chamber of Commerce member, Scooter’s is involved in local events, including sponsoring Midlothian Youth Football League. The business also partners with LaRue Miller Elementary, REACH Council and Paws for Reflection Ranch, among others. “One of the most rewarding aspects of being part of Scooter’s Coffee is giving back to this wonderful community,” Erin said.

“Every day, we cherish the opportunity to meet more members of the community, sending them off with a smile and an exceptional cup of coffee,” Erin continued. “To all our customers, both familiar faces and newcomers, we extend our heartfelt appreciation and look forward to continuing this journey together.” **NOW**

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8/22	AT WAXAHACHIE
8/30	AT STEPHENVILLE
9/06	AT ARGYLE
9/13	TEXARKANA (HOMECOMING)
9/20	AT GREENVILLE
9/27	ENNIS (FIRST RESPONDERS/MYFL/GOLD OUT)
10/11	AT TERRELL
10/18	CRANDALL (MEN OF INFLUENCE/WHITE OUT/CHEER MANIA)
10/25	AT MESQUITE POTEET
11/01	CORSICANA (SENIOR NIGHT)
11/08	AT KAUFMAN

MOST GAMES START AT 7PM.

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INFORMATION AND GAME UPDATES.



FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS



MIDLOTHIAN PANTHERS 2024 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

8/22	MANSFIELD
8/30	CEDAR HILL (SENIOR NIGHT)
9/06	AT ENNIS
9/12	AT KIMBALL
9/20	HARKER HEIGHTS
9/27	AT JOSHUA
10/04	CLEBURNE (HOMECOMING)
10/11	AT BURLESON CENTENNIAL
10/25	TYLER (PINK OUT)
11/01	AT RED OAK
11/08	HIGHLAND PARK (BLUE OUT)

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CookingNOW
In the Kitchen With
NATASHA WOOLERY

— By Angel Morris

Natasha Woolery’s mom, grandmother and aunts all love to bake. “Baking their recipes brings back memories of my childhood and my kids’ younger years,” she shared.

Natasha loves eating homemade food and sharing it with others. She has perfected bread, but one early prep session sticks with her. “I make popovers without looking at my recipe, but once I put in too much flour, and they came out too dense and were a flop. I declared those were ‘pop-unders’ instead of ‘popovers!’”

Today, Natasha is active in Girl Scouts and real estate and sells homemade small-batch trail mix. “We are what we eat. Having clean food without preservatives is essential for overall health,” she noted. “I love to share this amazing healthy snack with everyone.” **NOW**

Jordan Pond Popovers

Still made with Grandmother’s popover pan. Makes 8-12 popovers.

- 4 eggs**
- 2 cups milk**
- 2 cups flour**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**

1/8 tsp. baking soda

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 450 F. Spray a muffin tin or custard cups with nonstick spray. Break the eggs into a bowl; whisk.
- 2.** Add the milk; blend. Add the remaining ingredients, mixing together until nearly smooth. Do not overbeat.

- 3.** Fill the tins 3/4 full. Bake for 14 minutes. Reduce the heat to 350 F. *Note: Do not open the oven door to let out the heat.* Bake an additional 10-12 minutes. Popovers should be crispy brown on the outside and moist inside.
- 4.** Remove from the oven and pans. Serve with butter and/or jam.

Instant Pot Pulled Pork

Never fails to be tender.

- 3 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- 2 1/2 tsp. sea salt**
- 2 tsp. garlic powder**
- 2 tsp. smoked paprika**
- 1 tsp. ground cumin**
- 1 tsp. chili powder**
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper**
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano**
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper**
- 6 lbs. boneless pork shoulder roast**
- 1 1/4 cups water**

1. Mix the first 9 ingredients in a small bowl to make a dry rub; set aside.
2. Place the pork shoulder on a large cutting board; blot with paper towels. Trim the excess fat from the meat with a sharp knife. Cut into even pieces, about the size of your fist. Place into an Instant Pot bowl. Pour the dry rub into the bowl, tossing to coat the meat.
3. Add the water to the bowl; set the bowl inside the Instant Pot. Check the ring on the Instant Pot lid to ensure it's in the proper place, then click it into the Instant Pot. Set vent to sealing.
4. Cook at high pressure for 115 minutes (1 hour, 55 minutes). When the Instant Pot is done cooking, it will come down from pressure naturally in about 40 minutes. (Natural release ensures tender, juicy meat!)
5. When the pressure is released, open the lid; use a large, slotted spoon to transfer the meat to a large bowl. Use two forks to shred the meat. Season with additional salt and/or cayenne pepper.

Watermelon Basil Feta Salad

Refreshing salad for warm weather.

- 1/2 large seedless watermelon, cut into 1-inch cubes**
- 4 oz. feta cheese, crumbled**
- 1/2 cup basil leaves (about 10), cut into thin strips**
- 2-4 Tbsp. balsamic glaze**

1. In a large bowl or platter, arrange the watermelon; sprinkle with feta and basil ribbons.
2. Gently drizzle the balsamic glaze over the salad in crisscross lines. Serve immediately.

Bonnie Butter Cupcakes

From my 1st birthday and made each year for my kids' birthdays!

Batter:

- 2/3 cup softened butter**
- 1 3/4 cups sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla**
- 2 3/4 cups flour**
- 2 1/2 tsp. baking powder**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 1 3/4 cups milk**

Frosting:

- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- 1 32-oz. bag powdered sugar**
- Food coloring, if desired**

1. *For batter:* Preheat the oven to 350 F. In the main bowl: Mix butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla until blended and smooth. In a separate bowl: Mix flour, baking powder and salt. Alternate adding milk and the dry

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ingredients to the main bowl until blended. Batter will be thick like pound cake batter.

2. Fill the muffin tin with cupcake liners 3/4 full. Bake at 375 F for 15 minutes, or until a cake tester comes out clean.

3. For frosting: Mix ingredients until blended. Add food coloring if desired. Place in a piping or Ziploc bag to decorate.

Golden Bread

Made for each major holiday and for neighbors.

1/2 cup 2% milk

3 Tbsp. sugar

2 tsp. salt

3 Tbsp. butter

2 1/4-oz. pkgs. active dry yeast

1 1/2 cups warm water (105-115 F)

5-6 cups flour (divided use)

1. Heat the milk, sugar, salt and butter in a saucepan over low heat until the butter and sugar melt/dissolve. Cool to lukewarm.

2. Dissolve the yeast in warm water in the

bowl of a stand mixer. Add the lukewarm milk mixture and 4 1/2 cups of flour on speed 2 with the spiral dough hook; mix 1 minute.

3. Add the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, until the dough is smooth and elastic. It will be sticky to touch. Place in a greased bowl. Cover with a thin kitchen towel. Let rise in a warm place for 1 hour or until doubled in bulk. Punch down dough; divide in half into 2 loaf pans. Cover again with a towel; let rise for 1 hour.

4. Bake at 400 F for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove immediately from the pans; cool on wire racks.



Jordan Pond Popovers

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THE LOCAL TABLE

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- Virginia Woolf



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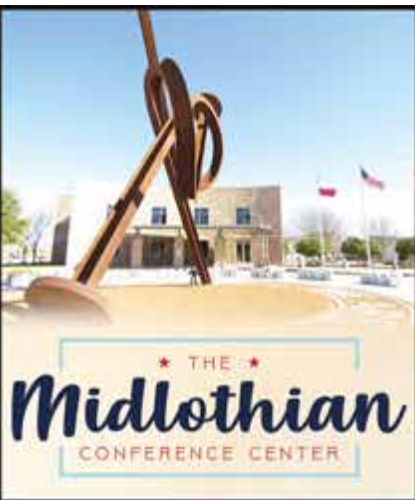
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Philadelphia is the birthplace of American independence. This city is where history, culture and a vibrant urban atmosphere reside. From iconic landmarks to diverse neighborhoods, a trip to Philadelphia offers a rich tapestry of experiences for travelers. Let us explore some of the must-visit sites that make Philadelphia a unique destination.

This journey comes alive at the Independence National Historical Park, which includes a variety of historic sites. Inside Independence Hall, the guest may stand in the place where The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were signed. Next, marvel at the Liberty Bell, an enduring symbol of freedom, displayed in the Liberty Bell Center. This park provides a venture into America's early history. As you walk to the President's Hall, you will find the contradiction of freedom as the narrative, while slavery is depicted outside before entering the building where George Washington and John Adams once lived during their presidencies. Surrounding the area, there are gardens and numerous classic historic structures, adding to the fascination of the location.

As the tour continues, art lovers will find The Franklin Institute and Philadelphia Museum of Art to be paradises. The Franklin Institute ignites a person's curiosity by combining education with entertainment while allowing tourists to engage with interactive exhibits, explore Fels Planetarium and enjoy hands-on science and technology. In the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a vast collection spans centuries and cultures recreating stories many have read or may learn soon. This museum offers a visual treat for visitors, not just a building only reflecting the past. The museum highlights current items and things in history. Remember to run up the famous "Rocky Steps" to see the stunning view of the city skyline as you take pictures and record your discoveries.

Revealing America's PAST AND PRESENT

— By Sandra Walters



Now that you have exercised and created an appetite, visit the Reading Terminal Market for a taste of Philadelphia's diverse culinary scene. Arrive early since parking can be challenging in the heart of downtown Philadelphia. The bustling food market, established in 1893, features a wide array of vendors offering everything from traditional Philly cheesesteaks, Amish, Dutch and Pennsylvania food to international cuisine. It is a perfect spot to satisfy your taste buds and experience the city's culinary diversity.

As you conclude, enjoy unique places like the city hall, prison turned into a museum, zoo and Boathouse Row. The dominating cityscape features Philadelphia City Hall, which is an architectural masterpiece. Take a guided tour to learn the history and experience the grandeur of the iconic building. Allow your thoughts to run wild as you gaze at the statue of William Penn atop the tower while appreciating the panoramic views of the city. Then, take a step back in time at the Eastern State Penitentiary, a former prison turned museum. Tours reveal the history of this imposing structure and its notorious inmates, while capturing the criminal justice systems' past. However, for a family-friendly adventure, visit the Philadelphia Zoo, America's first zoo. Encounter various animals from majestic big cats to playful primates. The zoo combines entertainment with education, making it an ideal destination for visitors of all ages. Finally, stroll along Boathouse Row by the Schuylkill River. The historic boathouses are beautifully illuminated at night, creating a picturesque backdrop. It is a tranquil spot to unwind and admire Philadelphia's natural beauty.

Philadelphia beckons travelers with a blend of history, art and culinary delights. Whether you are exploring the birthplace of American democracy or immersing yourself in the city's vibrant cultural scene, this city offers a memorable experience for every visitor. Plan your trip, embrace the spirit of brotherly love and discover the charm of the city. NOW

Sources:

1. nps.gov.
2. nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/benjaminfranklinmuseum.htm.
3. youtube.com/watch?v=EZozuJQZ7Q0.

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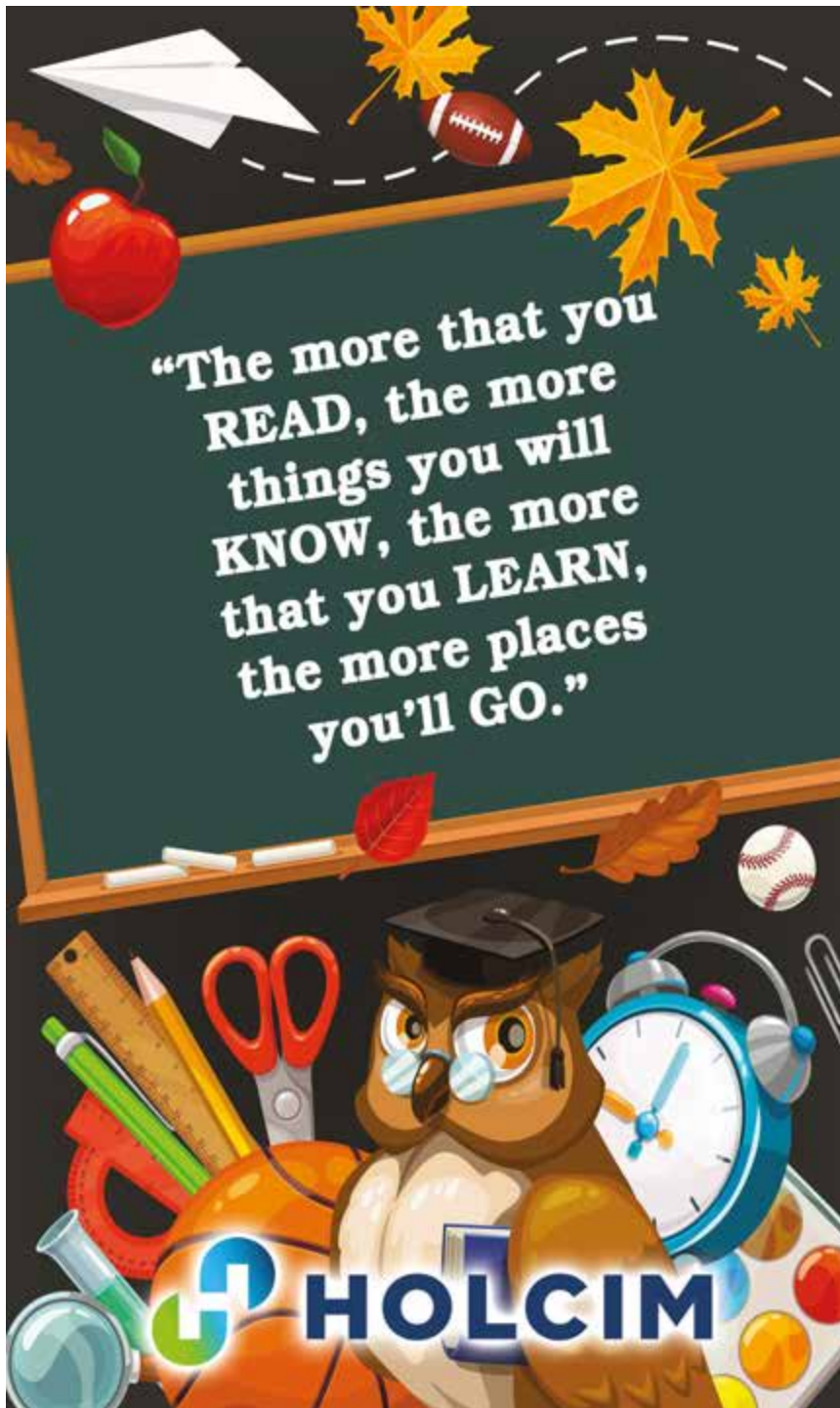
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The **GREENEST** LAWN in TOWN

— By Bill Smith



That beautiful green lawn is not going to water itself! Or is it? Sure, you can choose to pull the sprinkler across your yard, changing its position every few minutes, but today, many homeowners are opting for automatic sprinkler systems. Perhaps you have already had one installed that needs a little repair, or the home you purchased came with one that needs to become functional again. Parts for your system are available online or perhaps at your local hardware store. With a few basic tools and some DIY labor, watering the yard will no longer be the manual chore it once was.

Depending on the problem, you may need a combination of any of the following supplies and tools:

- Small shovel
- Spade
- Easy-out pipe removal tool
- Toothbrush (for cleaning parts)

- Gloves
- Cup
- Riser
- Sprinkler heads
- Replacement pipe
- Plumber's tape
- Screwdrivers
- Hacksaw
- Slip joint pliers
- Spade
- Wire stripper/cutter
- Band clamps
- Multimeter
- Waterproof wire connectors

If your issue is a malfunctioning sprinkler head, the first step is always to turn off the water supply. Since you are potentially working with both water and electricity in a sprinkler system, it is best that you also make sure the electricity is turned off. Then, begin by digging carefully around the head with a small shovel. Avoid damaging any of the buried pipes by doing the final soil removal with your hands. Use a small cup if there is water to be removed.

Remove the sprinkler head and riser. This is where the “easy-out” pipe removal tool may be necessary. Inspect the parts, and replace any that are damaged. Damage to the riser may occur because

someone accidentally stepped on the sprinkler head. Make sure your replacement parts will spray the same pattern as the part you are replacing. If replacing the riser is called for, wrap the ends with plumbers' tape for a secure fit.

Before replacing the head, purge the system of debris that might otherwise clog the heads. After all of the broken risers and heads are replaced, turn the water back on and test all of your watering zones.

If a water line is broken, it can be a DIY repair also. Carefully dig down to the broken section, and cut out the damaged section of line with a hack saw or pipe cutter. Place a clamp on one of the line ends, insert a slip coupling, then tighten the clamp. Place a clamp on the second section of pipe, then place the coupling through the clamp to join the sections together. Tighten the second clamp.

If you have repaired all of the heads and fittings and a zone is still not functioning, you may have an electrical issue. Turn off the electricity before dealing with any electrical problems. Check to be sure the zone wires are firmly connected to the terminals in the controller. With the power back on, use a multimeter to test for voltage to the nonworking zone. Refer to your owner's manual to see if the voltage reading falls within the required range. If not, you probably need to replace the controller.

You can also test the transformer with the multimeter. If it is faulty, it will need to be replaced.

The other electrical items that can fail include the sprinkler solenoid, which is located on the control valve. To replace it, disconnect the wires and unscrew the defective solenoid. Insert the new one and turn it until it is finger-tight, then reconnect the wires using waterproof connectors.

Finally, check for damaged wires across the system. If only one zone is not working, the field wire is damaged, but if none of the zones are working, the common wire is bad (although the field wires could also be bad).

While care must be taken to avoid further damage to the system or personal injury, repair of your sprinkler system is a project that many DIYers can handle. Your lawn will be the envy of the neighborhood! **NOW**

Sources:

- <https://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/landscaping-and-hardscaping/how-to-repair-your-lawn-sprinkler>.
- <https://www.familyhandyman.com/project/fixing-sprinkler-systems/>.



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Serenity Advanced Dentistry

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.”

“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.”

Serenity Advanced Dentistry has all the newest technology to make your experience convenient. “We have hospital-grade blood pressure machines, so we can do sedation. We also have intraoral scanners, so I can see inside your mouth, from every angle, before I ever go in for your procedure. We print dentures and place implants right here in the office. With our skills and strategies, most patients don’t even feel our injections. We have TVs in every room to keep you entertained while we work. It’s all about efficiency — working smarter, not harder. That’s why I designed the floor plan of the office myself. And we’re really big on sanitation and sterilization. It’s important to maintain a sterile environment, which is why we’re closed every Friday for deep cleaning the office and training.”



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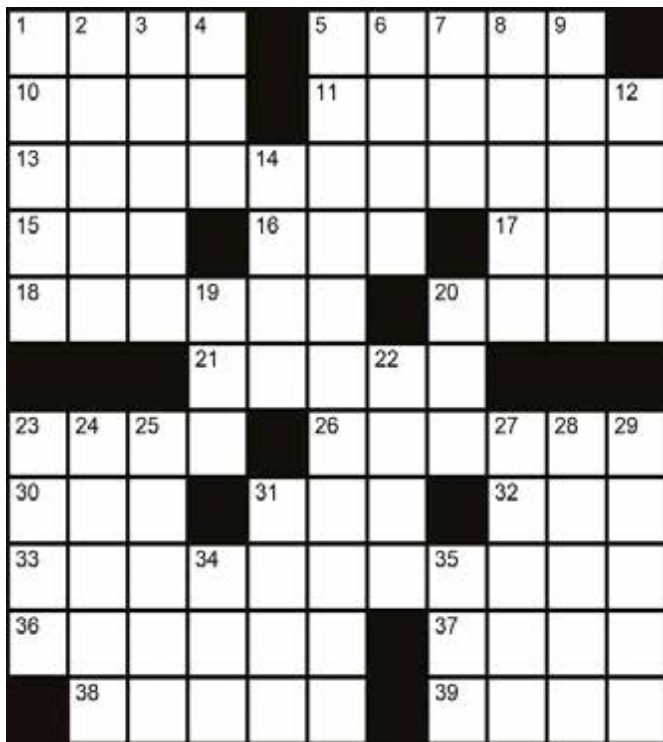
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Crossword Puzzle



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Across

- 1 Dance movement
- 5 Galley drudge
- 10 Libya neighbor
- 11 "Stranger Things" actress --- Ryder
- 13 Constraining
- 15 Ingested
- 16 Seek to know
- 17 --- bono (who profits?)
- 18 French aperitif
- 20 Football Hall of Famer, "Old Indestructible" Mel ---
- 21 They built Machu Picchu
- 23 Honshu seaport hit by earthquake in 1995
- 26 For a while, part of the world revolved round his Axis
- 30 Stock market launch
- 31 Dart board section
- 32 "Call him drunken --- Hayes ..." (Johnny Cash)
- 33 On which disorganized dancers rely for their clothes
- 36 They're dressed for dinner
- 37 Above
- 38 Equivocate
- 39 Consecrated

Down

- 1 Fragment
- 2 8th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 3 Relaxes
- 4 San Fran setting
- 5 Food renowned for its holes
- 6 Attack a popsicle
- 7 Hill dweller
- 8 Express
- 9 Boredom
- 12 Opposed, in Dogpatch
- 14 Drops from the sky
- 19 Railroad track element
- 20 Atomic bomber, briefly?
- 22 Opera set in Memphis
- 23 Young goats
- 24 Kosciusko's most famous daughter?
- 25 Gas law pioneer Robert ---
- 27 Remain stationary at sea
- 28 Elderly Harry Potter owl
- 29 Hoarse
- 31 Edifice, briefly
- 34 Scoundrel
- 35 Pass

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Sudoku Puzzle

Easy

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

Medium

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

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"Dr. Ola-Peters and her team were amazing! Very thorough and efficient on time. Everything was seamless, and both she and her staff were attentive and open to answer any questions or listen to any concerns I had." - *Katrina*

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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.

8/1

Ellis Christian Women's Job Corps' Fall Classes:

Register now for free courses ranging from computer training and money management to setting boundaries, résumé writing and interviewing. Classes begin 8/26 and run 12 weeks with morning and evening times available, **Monday-Thursday**.

Learn more at <http://elliscwjc.life/> or by calling (972) 937-6620.

8/1-8/2

MHS Kids Theatre Camp:

Students who have completed kindergarten through fifth grade are invited to participate in theater-based games, crafts, singing and dancing. \$100 per student includes camp T-shirt, take-home crafts and props.

Students must bring a sack lunch. Snacks will be available for purchase. Space is limited. 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. with a 3:30 p.m. performance presentation on day two. MHS Black Box Theatre, 923 S. 9th St. Register and pay at <https://l.lead.me/WonkyFun>.

8/3

Mayor's

Back-to-School Bash:

Open to all MISD students, activities include face painting, rides, water slides, games, candy cannon, talent showcase and more. Elementary school supply packets available while supplies

last. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Frank Seale Middle School, 700 George Hopper Rd. For more details, email info@mannahouse.org or call (972) 775-1800.

Movie in the Park:

Free showing of *The Super Mario Brothers Movie*. 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 8/10.

8/11

POP-UP Sunday:

Backpack Blessings during each worship service, Sunday School promotions for children and youth and a carnival featuring games, face painting, balloon artist and carnival food. Services are 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 11:00 a.m. and 12:30-2:00 p.m. Carnival begins after 11:00 a.m. service. FMC Midlothian, 800 S. 9th St.

8/20

All Booked Up Readers Club:

Adults are invited to read *Hello Beautiful* by Ann Napolitano and join the club for discussion. Free. 5:30 p.m., A.H. Meadows Library (inside of Midlothian High School), 923 S. 9th 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. Visit <https://midlothian.libcal.com> for schedules.

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 details.

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.

Second and Fourth Wednesdays

Jesus Feeds Us:

Free grocery distribution. 2:00 p.m. until supplies run out, Midlothian Church of Christ, 1627 N. Hwy. 67.

Thursdays

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.

Third Saturdays

Urban Well Food Pantry:

Everyone receives a large box of fresh foods while supplies last. 9:30-10:30 a.m., Creekside Church, 5491 E. Hwy. 287. Text (817) 944-0318 to volunteer.

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



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