MidlothianNOW

M A G A Z I N E

September 2021

The Extra MILE

Nikki Nix leads a new career and tech center

When Music Speaks

Libby Lane plays her passion

In the Kitchen With Teresa Prendergast

Also inside:

Crossword/Sudoku

Featured Business: Southern Star Foot and Ankle

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THE EXTRA MILE

Students are embracing industry training at the district's state-of-theart facility.

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A local student is poised to make her mark.



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ON THE COVER

MISD's innovative center continues trailblazing.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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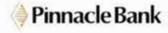


















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EDITOR'S NOTE

Remember the past ...

With the 20th anniversary of 9/11 this month, remembrance services nationwide will commemorate one of the most devastating moments in our country's history, the terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, on September 11, 2001. As many will remember, the date marks the hijacking of four commercial airplanes that were flown into the World Trade Center's Twin Towers and the Pentagon.

Passengers and crew of the fourth jetliner learned of the other three, and are credited with mobilizing against their hijacker pilot to stop a potential attack on the nation's Capitol, forcing a crash into a Pennsylvania field instead. Almost 3,000 lives were lost that day, making it the single deadliest foreign attack on America's homeland.

The events resulted in a surge of unity and patriotism, as well as a global conflict in which more innocent victims died, and more heroes were lost. Devastating is not strong enough a word to describe that day and the resulting trauma, which can still be felt to varying degrees by those who survived. If anything good came from this moment in history, it could be that many began to hold their loved ones closer, and some were called to do good works.

Much like our pandemic experiences, both during and after, an unprecedented event gives us cause to re-evaluate what's important and realign our values. Regardless of our personal or political perspectives on historical events that shape our world, it is difficult to disagree that they remind us of the importance of helping one another. Perhaps that makes this month the perfect opportunity to remember what we each have to give — not just in times of duress, but in big and small ways every day.

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By Angel Morris

Midlothian ISD is going the extra mile when it comes to innovative learning, just as its new facility, The Midlothian Innovative Learning Experience (MILE) suggests. Opened in August 2020, the state-of-the-art educational facility blazes trails in career and technical learning.

"The MILE provides flexible learning environments reflecting current industry and workplace atmospheres in six career and technical education pathways: culinary arts, video game design, cybersecurity, aerospace engineering, civil engineering and entrepreneurship," Director of Career and Technology Center Nikki Nix explained.

Located in the 700 block of West Avenue I, The MILE provides space for programs using not just industry standard equipment but also professional practices in a career path in which the student has interest. "Learning and coursework at The MILE is provided by a highly qualified, passionate teaching staff enhanced by regular mentoring and curriculum support from professionals in the correlating industries," Nikki said.

Replicating real-world workplaces, The MILE classes compliment a student's learning experience provided at their home campus, Midlothian High School or Midlothian Heritage High School. "Culinary arts students work in an industrial kitchen operating a bistro that is open to the public. Cybersecurity students hold class in a fully functional lab with routers and switches working to prevent hacking and practicing technical skills in securing data," Nikki described.

During the pandemic, culinary students opened the Bistro with curbside to-go orders only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. During the 2020-21 school year, the Bistro students served more than 270 customers, plus numerous special-order meals including a partnership with Methodist Midlothian preparing meals for every Midlothian Firefighter and making more than 1,300 cookies for MISD teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week. Cybersecurity students have had a guest speaker from the FBI and a monthly mentor with Microsoft share about his experiences with cybersecurity.

A student-centered maker space — complete with common and hightech tools and materials — greets aerospace and civil engineering students at The MILE. From industry standard Revit software skills, 3D printing capabilities, a large format printer and a CNC routing machine to standard drills, saws and clamps, students design and make everything from wind turbines and airplane gliders to architectural renderings for tiny homes and dragster cars.

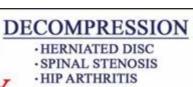
Students studying entrepreneurship experience the INCubatoredu curriculum, where they work to develop solutions to products and services missing from their community. "The students create a business plan and pitch their product to a board of investors, *Shark Tank*-style," Nikki enthused.

Students work with a business and industry professional who mentors them weekly. They develop a full business plan including identifying target markets, formulating a marketing plan, crunching financial projections and forecasting revenues — everything needed to actually launch a business.

"Partnerships like Buckley Oil, who have donated a total of \$100,000 (\$10,000 for 10 years) fund the startup revenues that our 'sharks' award to teams. At the







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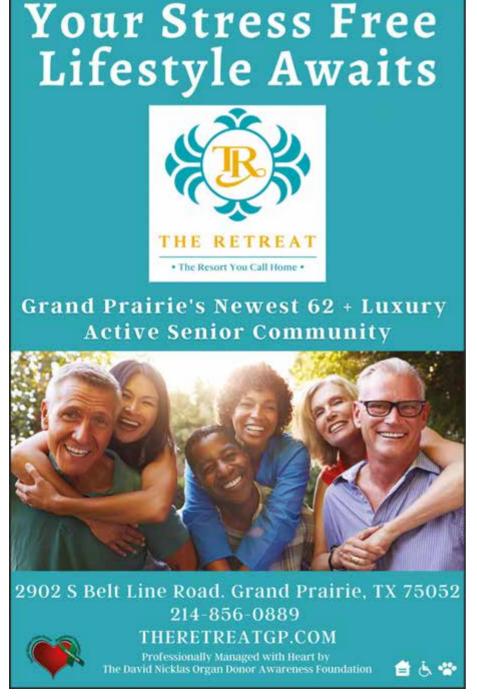
inaugural Final Pitch Night, SkateSites a team formulating an app designed to help skateboarders identify safe locations for skating, was awarded \$2.500, and Mallet Head, who designed an interchangeable percussion mallet was awarded \$7,500 to launch their businesses," Nikki explained. Mallet Head was also selected as the National Pitch nominee for MISD and has filed a patent application on their design.

"From marketing to manufacturing, time at The MILE introduces students to concepts not often covered in traditional classrooms. Junior and senior year, students try their hands at creating actual products and services where the goal is for students to take their ideas from the shark tank to the real world, selling online and in their local community," Nikki outlined.

After researching their audiences and potential products, students then pitch to a panel of judges to receive money for their minimum viable product, or MVP. They can use this money to create a prototype or fund further research into their product or service. Finally, at the end of the school year, student groups pitch to a shark tank to earn up to \$10.000 to launch their businesses.

While MISD is not the first district to implement INCubatoredu, it is the first to renovate a facility dedicated to the curriculum. Researching ways to utilize a vacant school building while aligning classes to meet needs of the local workforce resulted in MISD officials' discovery of the INCubatoredu program.

As MISD was in the process of identifying programs for The MILE, the district learned of INCubatoredu, which fosters the skills outlined in the district's learner profile. These skills include critical thinking, peer supporter, collaborator, empowered learner, purposeful explorer and innovative designer.





In addition to determining types of programs offered at The MILE, the district set out to create a learning environment reflecting the workplace and aligned the programs to the world of work. Touring many work environments, MISD established a design team to create spaces within the renovated building. After a year of careful planning, The MILE went from idea to architectural drawings.

From architectural drawings to reality where collaboration, innovation and creativity are fostered, students move from a learning setting mimicking the workplace to breakout collaborative areas for team meetings in huddle rooms for small group meetings.

The district spent more than a year visiting area industries asking what types of skills were needed and forecasting job trends. Based on this research, The MILE programs were purposefully identified. These programs allow students to receive certifications prior to high school graduation, so they may enter the workforce after high school or go to college with a part-time position that is in their field of interest.

Former MISD school board trustee and The MILE proponent, Todd Hemphill, called The MILE an example of "all that can be right and impactful in public education. This is what happens when people work collaboratively toward the defined goal of doing what is best for kids and providing opportunities for them to pursue their dreams and passions," he noted. "When adults get out of the way and simply assist where needed, kids have incredible creativity and capabilities that deliver amazing results. The future is bright!" NOW

Editor's Note: For information on attending or mentoring at The MILE, email nikki.nix@misd.gs.



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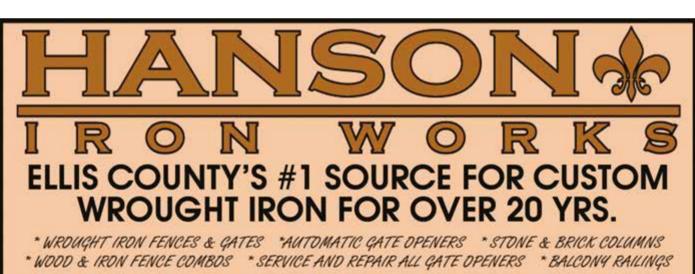
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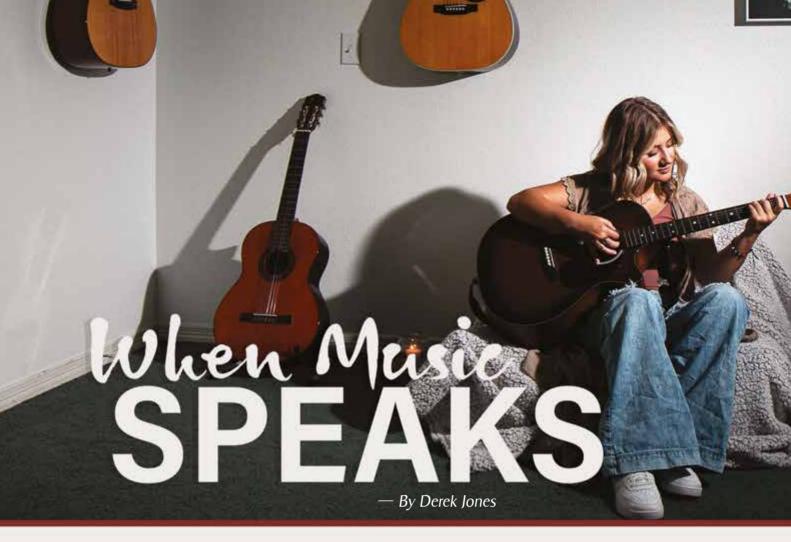
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Libby Lane knows exactly where her heart is, music. "My four older sisters are all musical," Libby related. "Some of my fondest memories are sitting on the porch with my sisters, listening to them sing and play. They inspired creativity in me."

Although Libby received piano instruction since she was in the third grade, it was when her father, Scott, introduced her to the guitar that she knew she had found her passion. With a love for country and soul music and her guitar in hand, Libby began pursuing both playing and writing music.

Libby, a junior at Midlothian Heritage High School, explained, "Starting high school, I was torn between investing in music or sports, but after visiting a small recording studio with my sisters to record some songs for my dad's 50th birthday, I was hooked."

It did not take Libby long to realize success. She was invited both her freshman and sophomore years to audition for the singing competition, *The Voice*. "Those two years of auditioning were filled with highs and lows," Libby said. "It was an honor to be asked to audition, allowing me to skip the first round and audition directly for the head producer. But during my first audition, the power went out right in the middle of my song."

Although Libby was disappointed to be eliminated right

before the TV round, she used the experience to deepen her drive to succeed. After her experience with *The Voice*, Libby competed at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Among stiff competition, she found herself advancing to the finals. Fate, however, would intervene. "I just found out I made the finals when I received a phone call stating that the entire rodeo was cancelled due to COVID, and just like that, the competition was over," she recalled.

As with *The Voice*, Libby used the experience to learn and push forward. "I was disappointed, but I also knew the best was still to come," she stated.

Libby knew she needed a new direction rather than simply competing. Her mother, Christine, had the answer. "My mom reached out to a restaurant, Beefmaster Steakhouse, and asked if I could play my music there. They agreed," Libby noted. "The manager told me I was talented, and this was the boost I needed to seek out other opportunities."

Libby has now played more than 40 gigs and has no intention of slowing down. Perhaps the accomplishment she is most proud of is writing and recording her own song. "I was hurting from breaking up with my boyfriend at the time, so one night, I got some ice cream, locked myself in a room and wrote a song," she remembered.

What came out of that night of inspiration was a song titled, "Call Me Babe." "My mom thought I was crazy when she found me writing music and eating ice cream at 3:00 in the morning, but once I put the lyrics to guitar, we knew this was a song that needed to be shared," Libby admitted.



Libby took "Call Me Babe" to Studio 516, a recording facility in Waxahachie, and began recording the song. She was surprised at the complexity of having a song professionally recorded, but the studio guided her through the entire process. "It took about three months to put it all together, and I am so proud I was able to pay for the sessions myself through the money I earned playing gigs," she explained.

"Call Me Babe" was released November 20, 2020, on platforms including Spotify, Amazon Music and Apple Music. "I wanted the song to release in November as a way to end the difficult year of 2020, and look forward to a better 2021," she explained.

Libby's prediction is holding true as "Call Me Babe" continues to rise in popularity on all music streaming platforms. Now, with the support of her family and friends, she seems poised to make an impact on the music industry. "I want to stay true to myself and my values," Libby promised, "... and let my music speak for itself." NOW



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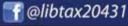
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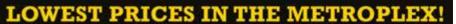
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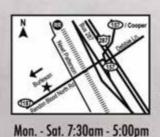
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Around Town



Midlothian native, Summer Stephens, settles in for her first semester at University

of Mary Hardin-Baylor.



Anna Hammonds with sons, Grayson and Hudson, and Midlothian Park Board Member Chris Ginapp's daughter, Isla, enjoy Parktopia.

Zoomed In:

By Angel Morris

Luke, Liam and Lily Baldwin

While shed shopping with their grandmother, Luke, Liam and Lily Baldwin spotted a giant wooden playhouse. After their mom explained they would have to earn the money for such a large purchase, the trio recalled seeing a lemonade stand. "They asked how to get started. We talked about planning, supplies and the fun part — making lemonade," Mom, Amanda Baldwin, recalled.

The one-day venture was so successful, it turned into four, and they earned about \$150. While that's not enough for the playhouse, the siblings, who all attend J.R. Irvin Elementary, don't regret it. "It was a fun experience! I've never done anything like it before. It was hard work," Liam noted.

Although Lily reminded them that it was hot, Luke admitted, "I want to do it again!"



The community welcomes Methodist Family Health Center — Midlothian and the MISD Express Care Clinic.



Charley Duncan, owner of A Oasis, hosts a grand opening celebration with family and friends.



Jennifer Law and Lauren Johnson enjoy the annual Midlothian Chamber Awards Party at Cassaro Winery.



Siblings C.J., Knox and Landry head to soccer camp.



Avery Kinnison plays the title role in the Ellis County Children's Theater production of Goldilocks on Trial.







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By Angel Morris

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If a foot or ankle injury is slowing you down, Dr. Christopher Schmitt is here to get you moving pain-free again. Located in Midlothian since 2013, Southern Star Foot and Ankle aims to be the premier source for evaluation, treatment and/or surgery. "I saw

that this area was under-served in my field of expertise and knew I could meet that need. Plus, it's an easy city and county to love," Dr. Schmitt recalled. "Not to mention, the people here are great!"

Officing behind InterBank next to Baylor Scott & White Family Medical Center — Midlothian, the Southern Star Foot and Ankle vision is "to provide quality foot and ankle care to all people seeking our service and to do so in a timely, caring and organized fashion, creating a highly regarded reputation," Dr. Schmitt promised.

Dr. Schmitt hails from Irving, Texas. He earned his Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine (DPM) in 2009 and then completed residency training at St. John Hospital and Medical Center in Detroit, Michigan, in 2012. "During my residency, I received extensive training in foot and ankle surgery, including minimally invasive surgery, arthroscopy, reduction of bunion deformities and flatfoot reconstruction," Dr. Schmitt noted.

Upon completing his residency, Dr. Schmitt joined the practice

of another physician for a year, then left to open his own practice. "That year working with another physician helped me immensely in learning the day-to-day operation of an office, including insurance and billing," Dr. Schmitt recalled.

Dr. Schmitt, of course, examines, diagnoses and treats patients. Some conditions he treats are pediatric deformities, such as club foot, as well as flat-footedness, ingrown toenails, puncture wounds, nail fungus, bunions, hammertoes, ankle sprains, fractures involving the ankle or foot, high arches, diabetic foot care, diabetic wounds, gout and many other conditions. "I also treat a high number of patients who have plantar fasciitis, which can be caused from excessive walking or running and poor foot gear," Dr. Schmitt cautioned.

Using a state-of-the-art digital X-ray machine, Dr. Schmitt can share images with patients instantaneously. "Having the picture there helps explain to patients why they are in pain and where exactly it is coming from," he detailed.

As an additional convenience, Southern Star Foot and Ankle offers a selection of diabetic shoes for those who qualify. "There is a choice of athletic, casual and dressy shoes for both men and women," Dr. Schmitt described. "This is especially helpful for my patients who are older or wheelchair-bound, so they do not have to travel across town to find the shoes they need."

Dr. Schmitt is Board Certified by the American Board of Podiatric Medicine and the American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry and Primary Care in Podiatric Medicine. He is on staff at both Baylor Scott & White Medical Center-Waxahachie in Waxahachie, as well as Methodist Midlothian Medical Center, where he was most recently granted health care privileges.

When not serving patients, Dr. Schmitt enjoys time with his wife, Bekki, and their four daughters, as well as gardening, beekeeping and playing guitar. "I want to care for patients like I would my own family — with the highest quality diagnosis and treatment in the most thoughtful manner," Dr. Schmitt promised. "Visit our website or phone our office to learn more, and let us help you get back on your feet again!" NOW







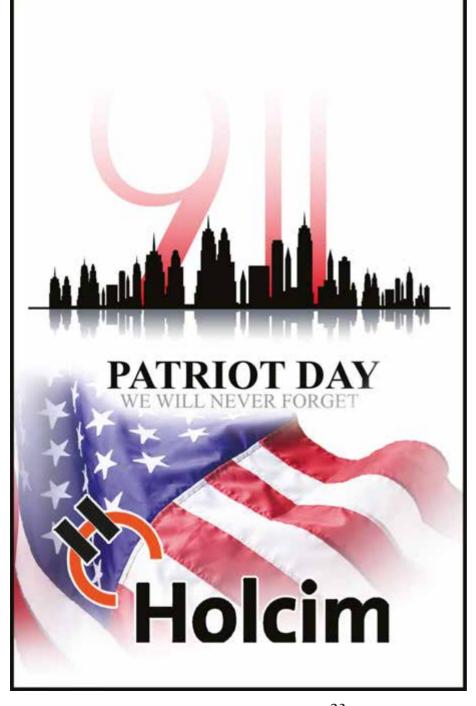
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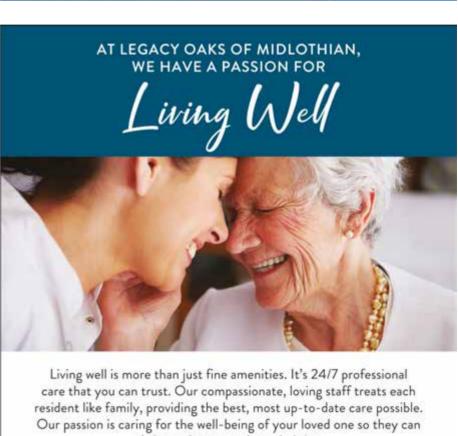












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When Teresa Prendergast first married, she wanted to impress her husband with a meal of pork chops, mashed potatoes and green beans. "Come to find out, he doesn't like mashed potatoes and green beans, and the pork chops burned because I forgot to set a timer," Teresa reflected. "Then I had a lot of dishes to wash, so I used the dishwasher. I put in the wrong detergent and the whole kitchen filled with suds."

Teresa's skill in the kitchen has come a long way, where she creates hybrids of recipes. "Now, I enjoy cooking Italian, Mexican and French — and baking with my daughters," she noted. "My grandmother, mother and I always enjoyed cooking and baking during the holidays, so that's a tradition that carried along with my children." Now

Sausage Cannelloni

- 1 lb. mild Italian sausage
- 2 cups shredded cheese (Italian, mozzarella, provolone and/or Romano)
- I box manicotti/cannelloni shells
- I pt. heavy whipping cream
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. garlic powder1 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded

- **1.** If using the Italian sausage with casings, remove them to cook sausage and drain. Put it in a separate bowl with shredded cheese and mix.
- **2.** Cook the pasta according to the box. (If it says 11-12 minutes, I always pick the

- minimum time. Set on a wire rack to cool.)

 3. In the skillet in which you cooked the sausage, put a few sausage pieces back into the pan; add the cream and seasonings.

 Bring to a boil. Stir often; reduce heat, allowing it to simmer for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, take it off the burner.
- **4.** Take the meat mixture and fill the shells; put them in a greased glass baking dish. Pour the cream mixture over the filled shells; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Cover with foil; bake for 30 minutes at 350 F.
- **5.** *Variation:* Using penne pasta, you can make this a casserole and just put the cheese on top.

Pepperoni and Pesto Sandwiches

2 Italian bread slices per sandwich Basil pesto (homemade or store-bought) Pepperoni slices, to taste (I like to get the big slices from the deli.)

Provolone slices, to taste Extra-virgin olive oil, to taste Italian seasoning, to taste

- **I.** Take two slices of bread and spread basil pesto on one side; add pepperoni and provolone. I microwave for 20 seconds just to warm up the pepperoni and cheese. On the outside of the sandwich, drizzle olive oil; sprinkle with Italian seasoning.
- **2.** Pan fry the sandwich in a skillet or a griddle until golden brown. I serve this with the Tomato Basil Soup.

Tomato Basil Soup

- 4 Tbsp. butter
- I small onion, chopped and diced
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper
- I clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour or Wondra Quick-Mixing Flour
- 32 oz. (4 cups) organic chicken stock
- 2 28-oz. cans whole tomatoes in juice 1/4 cup basil leaves, chopped
- Parmesan cheese, to taste
- I cup heavy cream
- Additional salt and pepper, to taste
- **I.** Heat a large pot over medium heat. Melt the butter; add the chopped onions. Add salt and pepper. Sauté the onions about 8 minutes until they turn translucent, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic; cook for 30 seconds, or until fragrant.
- **2.** Sprinkle in the flour; stir to cook the flour for 1 minute. It will look like a paste. Slowly stir in the chicken stock, whisking the whole time so the flour doesn't clump. Add the canned tomatoes and basil. Cook on the stovetop by bringing it to a boil; then cover and reduce heat to low. Cook for 20 more minutes.
- **3.** Remove the lid. Either use an immersion blender or stand blender. (Be careful when blending hot liquids in a stand blender!) I personally find using an immersion blender is the best. Blend until the soup is creamy. Then stir in the Parmesan cheese and heavy cream. Heat soup for another 5–10 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the soup is warm. Taste for additional salt and pepper.

Roasted Chicken

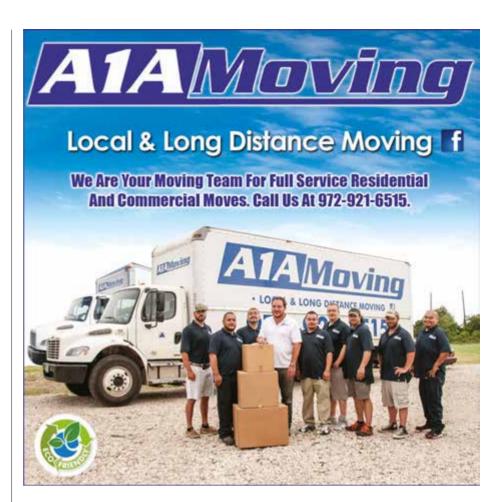
1 3- to 4-lb. whole chicken Salt, to taste

3-4 large carrots, cut in small pieces

1/2 lemon

1/2 white onion

Cotton twine found in the baking tools section of the store





- I bay leaf (optional)
- 2 twigs of fresh herbs (poultry blend or Rosemary, Thyme, sage and/or oregano)
- 4 Tbsp. butter (room temperature)
- 1 Tbsp. sage, chopped
- **I.** Preheat the oven to 400 F. Allow the chicken to come to room temperature before prepping. After you get all your ingredients together, clean the chicken by rinsing it well
- and patting dry. Season the cavity of the chicken with salt to taste.
- 2. Stuff the chicken with carrots, lemon and onion. Add the bay leaf and herbs. Tie the legs together with twine. This will help ensure even cooking throughout the whole bird. Mix the butter, sage and salt to taste.
- **3.** Cut the skin at the top of the breast on both sides; add the butter mixture under the skin. Salt the bird generously with salt. Place

it on a grate. (Or use a wire rack in a pan, so the bird doesn't sit in the pan. Usually, your turkey pan has a grate.) When you elevate the chicken on a grate, it allows for even cooking. Chicken gets a bad reputation for being too dry, so it is important to elevate the chicken in the pan, so the breast of the chicken doesn't dry out.

- 4. Roast in the center rack of the oven for 60 minutes, or until the internal temperature in the leg joint area reaches 165 F. Remove from the oven; cut the twine off. Move the legs out; let it rest for about 15 minutes.
- **5.** Take out the roasted carrots and onions: place them around the chicken and serve.



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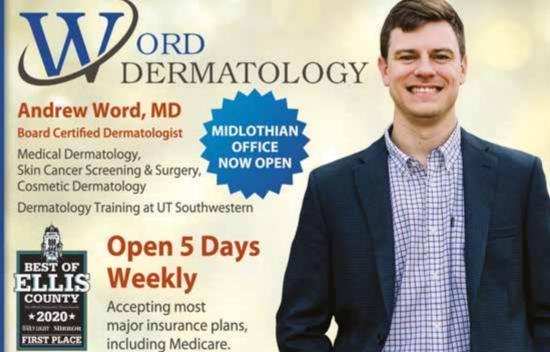
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Solutions on page 44

Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Across

- 1 Claptrap
- 4 Funds for the future
- 8 Quartet
- 9 Morticia, to Fester
- 11 Capable of
- 12 Overseas
- 14 Profit on sales
- 16 About
- 17 Jewish teacher
- 18 Consider
- 19 Hop named after a pilot
- 21 Temper
- 24 Squeals
- 27 Black cuckoos
- 28 Rip to pieces
- 30 Andean capital
- 32 One of the Three Bears
- 33 An island, according to John Donne
- 34 Jump --- the deep end
- 35 Biblical passage
- 36 National health watchdog

Down

- 1 Polling pioneer Elmo ---
- 2 "(If You're Not in It for Love) I'm ---Here!" (Shania Twain)
- 3 Annoying cocktail of obsolete rum
- 4 Right away
- 5 Tease
- 6 Relating to the study of moving air
- 7 Balloark figure
- 8 Controversial wear
- 10 Abate
- 13 Monk's title
- 15 Diamond statistic
- 20 Casino cube
- 21 Beater for mixing mortar with hair
- 22 Unknown
- 23 Leg of lamb
- 25 K
- 26 Tanning material
- 29 Small flat mass of a soft substance
- 31 Burden

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Sudoku Puzzle

Easy Medium

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Solutions on page 44





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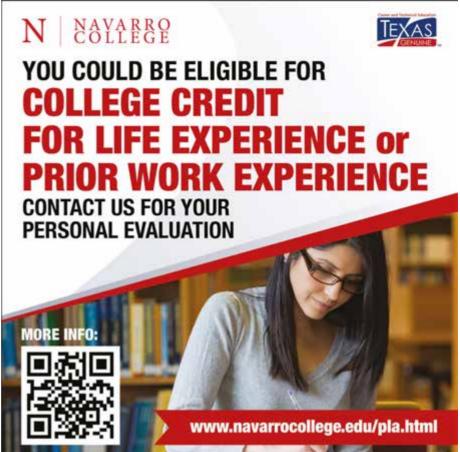
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9/7

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9/9-10/7

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E-mail Gail Harrell at
gharrell817@gmail.com, for class
times and to register.

9/9-12/9

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9/11

Heritage Day:

Event honors the history and community of Midlothian.
Events include barbecue lunch, 9/11 tribute, classic car show, games and dance. The National Night Out Kickoff, hosted by the Midlothian Police Department, will also take place at 3:30 p.m.
Free admission: 9:00 a.m.9:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 234
N. 8th St. View the full schedule at www.midlothiantxdba.com/heritage-day.

9/18

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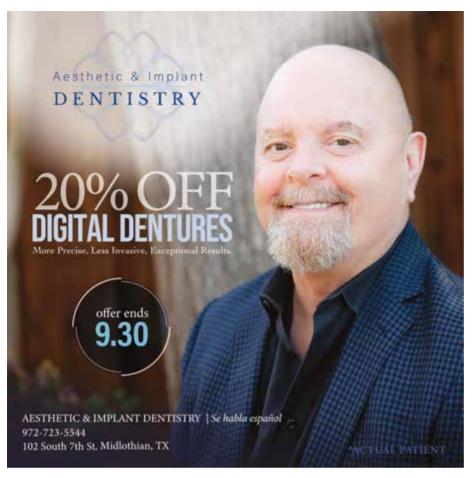


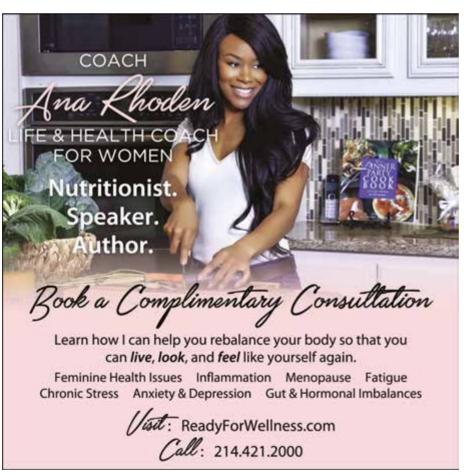












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Easy

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Medium

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