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SEPTEMBER 2023

# Nature's Bounty

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Postal Customer

## In the Kitchen With Eric Silver

Also inside: Scavenger Hunt

Featured Business: Ms. Frieda's Canine Boarding

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#### September 2023 Volume 13, Issue 9

#### ON THE COVER



Chris Thomas and Jacque Brock use their gardening experience to help others.

**Photo by** Sarah Brown.

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Amber

Amber D. Browne WeatherfordNOW Editor amber@nowmagazines.com (817) 613-1533

# EDITOR'S NOTE

#### I love fall!

The month of September marks the beginning of the autumn season — one of my favorite times of year. Cooler temperatures will soon make their appearance, and out will come the sweaters and blankets. Football season is officially underway, and many high school athletes who have spent countless hours on the practice field get the chance to enjoy some action under the Friday night lights. I plan to attend a few high school games not only for the sports competition, but to experience the tunes from the band members, the cheerleaders' spirited chants, the dance team's energetic performances and much more.

The nostalgia of high school games takes me back to my youth — a time of infinite possibilities. As our daughter prepares to graduate high school in 2024, it is unbelievable to me that my husband and I will both attend our 30th high school class reunions next year. Where does the time go? It moves on — just as we are meant to continue on our life paths, growing and learning from every experience.

September is also a special time for me as it marks the month of my birth. I will celebrate the satisfaction of conquering another year on this earth, and as my list of goals grows, I will choose to focus on attaining as many as possible this year. It takes time, determination and faith, but this world does not stop moving, so I must move with it. For those of you celebrating a birthday, anniversary, reunion or other milestone this month, I congratulate you and wish you the best! Here's to another year in the book of life!

Have fun out there!



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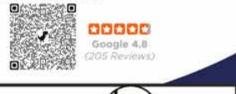
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# A CUPES – By Amber D. Browne

Fresh vegetables are chock-full of vitamins and minerals, and the benefits of healthy eating are abundant. However, this commodity is not always easily accessible, especially for those in need in the local community.

At the Saint Francis of Assisi Anglican Church Community Garden in Willow Park, volunteers grow and harvest organic vegetables for area residents in need. Head volunteers Jacque Brock and Chris Thomas, both past presidents of the Gardeners' Club of Parker County, work throughout the year to provide produce to Tarrant Area Food Bank West and others in the community.

The intention for the community garden initiated in June 2020 when Father Sam Wilgus and his family arrived at Saint Francis. He was looking for a way to serve and engage the community despite the pandemic. With the church's seven acres of land and established water well, Fr. Sam decided to develop the community garden to benefit local food pantries. He pitched the idea to the Gardeners' Club, which met at the church. "We came up with a plan and the design based on a crucifix form," Jacque said. "We worked with Fr. Sam to get grants and volunteers."

To help build the design, Boy Scout Troop 2001 jumped on board. "Over the past couple of years, we have had three garden-related Eagle Scout projects — one to dig a trench from the well house to the garden location, one to build the low beds and one to construct the fence," Fr. Sam said.

Others helped with the project. A Weatherford High School student built and installed the tall garden beds, and several Weatherford College students helped with the garden to fulfil community service hours. Parishioners constructed a compost bin, stained the fence, trenched water from the well and designed an irrigation plan. Gardeners' Club members helped them install the drip irrigation system to water the beds.

Grants were also instrumental in completing the project. Through the Gardeners' Club's membership at Texas Garden Clubs, Inc., they applied for and received grants for tools from AMES and organics and fertilizers from The Espoma Company. The Parker County Master Gardeners Association also provided a grant.

"Everybody's really chipped in," Jacque said. The first growing year in 2022 produced 250 pounds of food, which was donated to TAFB West. The community garden continues to provide produce to the food bank's grocery store.

Now that the garden is in its second year of production, Jacque and Chris are trying different seeds, many of which have been donated. Beets, garlic, potatoes, lettuce, kale and carrots are typically planted in late winter/early spring. Summer crops include tomatoes, okra, zucchini, squash, melons and green beans. The vegetables are harvested almost year-round due to the



multiple growing seasons in the local area. "If we are not growing food, we are growing cover plants to feed and improve the soil," Jacque said.

Worms and microbes in an organic garden "feed" the plants, bees pollinate the flowers, and lady bugs, wasps and praying mantises are a few of the predatory insects that feed on "bad bugs" in gardens. Flowers and herbs can be planted that draw in beneficial garden insects. Plants such as marigolds and chrysanthemums can be grown near the vegetables to repel unwanted insects. "At the church community garden, we use all-natural ways to deter bugs such as orange oil, neem oil, diatomaceous earth, fish emulsion and companion planting to keep the garden organic," Jacque said.

Jacque and Chris often pick the garden's bounty during the early morning hours before temperatures rise. "It really generates a lot of community interest when we're working out there. People will just stop in," Chris shared. They are in the process of coordinating volunteer hours to allow more locals to



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help with the gardening process.

Residents can learn more about gardening at Gardeners' Club of Parker County meetings and classes at TAFB. The Parker County Master Gardeners Association at the Texas A&M Agricultural Extension Office and the Native Plant Society of Texas are other resources.

Suggested starter crops for home gardeners are potted tomatoes or peppers. If yard space is available, locals can fence the area to deter deer and rabbits, have raised beds or create small soil hills to plant a vegetable garden.

The benefits of gardening are abundant — access to fresh vegetables, physical activity and stress reduction, to name a few. "You're out there breathing the fresh air, picking up the sunshine, the friendships you develop, the joy of seeing it produce and the disappointment of something that doesn't work. It's a life lesson," Chris said.

Chris gardened and canned as a child on a dairy farm in Wisconsin. "It was just part of my life, and I love it. It's challenging. It's discouraging. It's everything," she said. After moving to Weatherford about two years ago, she discovered the Gardeners' Club in the *WeatherfordNOW* calendar. She attended a meeting and served as president the following year. "This was such a joy to find because it gave me



something to do."

Jacque first learned about gardening through a neighbor during her childhood in Ohio's countryside. "I think we ate more than we picked for them, but that's how I got hooked on plants." Jacque owned a landscaping design business for about eight years and now has an organic garden at home.

Gardening is a priority for both Jacque and Chris, not only because of their love of food, plants and knowledge, but also to provide fresh produce to others. "It just feels wonderful to do something for our community," Chris said.

Regardless of what Mother Nature might throw its way, the Saint Francis of Assisi Anglican Church Community Garden will continue to provide organic produce to locals in need for years to come. The future might even involve an expansion of plots for area residents to grow and harvest their own plants. "Our prayer," Fr. Sam shared, "is that the local community will see the Saint Francis of Assisi Community Garden as an image of hope and the abundance of God's love."

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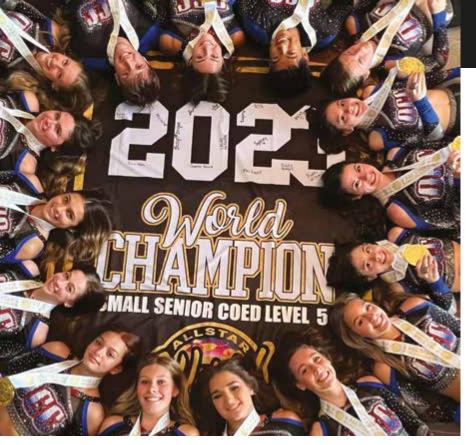
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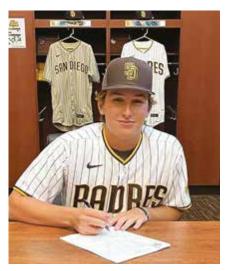
## **Zoomed In:** By Amber D. Browne Outlaw Cheer Company Mavericks

For the first time in the history of Maverick All-Star Tumblers in Weatherford, the Small Senior Coed Level 5 Outlaw Cheer Company Mavericks brought home the World Championship title. The team of 12- to 18-year-olds won gold at the Allstar World Championship in Orlando, Florida.

Maverick owner Shawn Brogan coaches the team with Gianna Hale. "We knew that they were the best in the world, and we had been telling them that for two years. So, they finally started to come around and believe it," Shawn said.

The World Championship banner will be hung on the wall for all to see. "It's been a fun journey along the way."

# Around Town



Weatherford High School 2023 graduate Kannon Kemp is selected by the San Diego Padres during the 8th round of the MLB Draft.



Rilei Blankenship, her mom, Meaghan, and friend, Bailey Taylor, paint her senior parking spot at Aledo High School.



Weatherford High School cheerleaders donate nearly 40 cases of water to the Weatherford Fire Department.



The Weatherford Art Association recognizes Jerry Buckner-1st, Doris Friddle-2nd and Michael McCarty-3rd as Artists of the Month for July.

# NOW



The Tarrant Area Food Bank West Peaches in the Warehouse event is a huge success, raising funds to combat food insecurity.



For his birthday, Elijah Parker enjoys ice cream with Madilyn Parker and Brittany and Jennifer Huggard at Dulce Panda Handcrafted Creamery.



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# BusinessNOW Ms. Frieda's Canine Boarding

— By Amber D. Browne

**Ms. Frieda's Canine Boarding** 2108 Farmer Rd. Weatherford, TX 76087 (205) 790-0482 fthanson@bellsouth.net msfriedascanineboarding.com

Hours: 7 Days a Week: 7:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

For most dog owners, their pets are not just furry companions, they are family members. At Ms. Frieda's Canine Boarding in Weatherford, dog parents can feel confident sending their furry family members to day care or leaving them for an overnight stay.

Owner Frieda Hanson's love for the animals is apparent. Her familiarity with animals began as a child on her



granddaddy's farm. In Alabama, she drove a school bus but spent her free time boarding horses and caring for friends' pets while they were out of town. When she made the move to Weatherford in 2014, she found the perfect 5-acre, fenced property on Farm to Market Road 3325, with enough room to open a boarding facility for dogs and care for her pets and horses, donkeys, chickens and ducks. After 35 years as a bus driver, Frieda retired in 2023 and now cares for animals full time.

Ms. Frieda's Canine Boarding is open from 7:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., which allows pet owners to pick up their dogs after work or after a long drive home after vacationing. "They have 24-hour care, and the dogs just stay in the house. They just sort of come in and make themselves at home," Frieda said. "They're thrilled because it's like a summer camp to them." Frieda might care for as many as 10 dogs at a time. "They're all running around and having a good time."

Dog owners are required to provide shot records, the dog's food for a consistent diet and any needed medication, such as insulin for diabetic pups. One room in the house offers a relaxing spot for Frieda to care for dogs with medical needs.

The garage has been converted into an executive suite with kennels and air conditioning for pups that might be too young, larger breeds or dogs that might not be well-behaved around other animals. "They're very comfortable in there." The dogs are allowed 30- to 40-minute time slots outside several times a day. Depending on the dog's temperament, or at the owner's request, the dog might spend outdoor time alone. Frieda may also pair up likeminded dogs to expend energy outside. "They have plenty of exercise time."

#### "They have 24-hour care, and the dogs just stay in the house. They just sort of come in and make themselves at home."

Frieda's furry clients include dogs up to 100 pounds, but some breeds are not accepted, like Rottweilers and Dobermans. If she cares for a Pit Bull, it will be kept separate from other dogs. Because of their jumping skills, German Shepherds and Huskies will be boarded on a case-by-case basis because they could possibly scale the backyard fence.

Frieda recommends the owner and dog visit the home beforehand, so the animal can get familiar with the property. During the pet's stay, she will provide photos to the dog parents to ease any potential concerns. "We give personal, in-home care because we are right here with them," she said. "I'm the one who makes sure everybody's happy."

Frieda's husband, Ron Woods, also cares for the animals and oversees marketing efforts. "We keep it simple. No funny fees," Ron said. The boarding cost is \$25 per night, per dog, and long-term boarding of three weeks or more is \$22 per night, per dog. Day care is \$16 per dog.

Because of the accessibility and her knowledge of animals and quality of care, Frieda wants pet owners to feel confident leaving their pups at Ms. Frieda's Canine Boarding. "I love having all the different breeds of dogs," she said, "and it's just so much fun because they're all so sweet." **NOW** 



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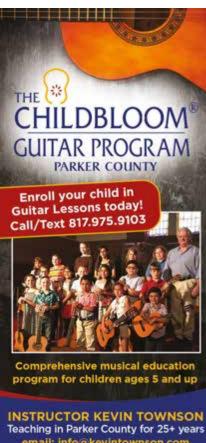
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Whenever the weather is nice, grilling is the go-to cooking method for Eric Silver and his son, Elijah. "We enjoy the process and the atmosphere and the joy of providing a tasty meal," Eric shared. "We have a great time figuring out what to cook next and trying new recipes."

Many of their recipes are found on the Traeger app, YouTube and Instagram. "We like things a little spicy, so we tend to add jalapeños or other peppers for our own flair," Eric said.

When Elijah is not spending time with his dad behind the grill or helping the family with outdoor chores, he attends Aledo High School, where he is a percussionist in the band. Eric said, "Teaching him the ins and outs of grilling has been a lot of fun." NOW

#### **Chicken Fajitas**

2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breast 1/2 bottle Claude's Fajita Marinating Sauce

3 large green bell peppers, julienned 1 medium white onion, julienned Weber Chicago Steak Seasoning, to taste 1 10-count pkg. medium tortillas

**I.** Place the thawed chicken breasts into a

resealable bag or container with Claude's Fajita Marinating Sauce. Refrigerate 2-24 hours. **2.** Preheat a grill to 225 F. Place the vegetables in a vegetable basket. Season with the Weber Chicago Steak Seasoning. **3.** Place the marinated chicken and vegetable basket on the grill. Smoke for 25-30 minutes.

**4.** Set the grill to 400 F. Cook until the internal temperature of the chicken is 165 F. Leave the vegetables on the grill to cook as

long as the chicken does, or until done to your liking.

**5.** Warm the tortillas on the grill grates for 2-3 minutes; remove. Slice the chicken. Add the chicken and vegetables to the tortillas.

#### **Smoked Turkey Breast**

#### 1-3 lbs. boneless turkey breast, rinsed and dried3/4 cup mayonnaiseMeat Church Holy Gospel Seasoning

**I.** Preheat the grill to 225 F. Coat the entire turkey breast with mayonnaise. Generously season the turkey breast with Meat Church Holy Gospel Seasoning. Place on the grill rack closest to the heat.

**2.** Remove from the grill when internal temperature reaches 165 F; serve.

#### **Smoked Burgers**

2 lbs. ground beef (80/20 or preferred ratio) Weber Chicago Steak Seasoning, to taste

#### 8 brioche buns Butter, to taste 8 Pepper Jack cheese slices (optional)

**I.** Preheat grill (Traeger Grill or similar) to 225 F.

Form 8 ground beef patties; season both sides generously with Weber Chicago Steak Seasoning. Place the patties on the grill. Close the lid; smoke for 25-30 minutes.
 Set the grill to 400 F; cook the patties until the internal temperature is 145 F.
 Open the buns. Butter each side; place them face down on the grill grates. Place the cheese on the patties. Close the lid; melt the cheese for about 3 minutes.
 Remove the buns and burgers. Assemble and enjoy.

#### Skillet Queso

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef (80/20 or preferred ratio)
Worcestershire sauce, to taste
4 oz. Pepper Jack cheese
4 oz. cheddar cheese
1 lb. American cheese
1 l2-oz. can evaporated milk
1 medium onion, diced
2 medium jalapeños, diced
1 large tomato, diced
Garlic powder, to taste
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
Onion powder, to taste
Tortilla chips, for serving

Preheat the griddle on medium heat.
 Add the ground beef to a cast-iron skillet; place the skillet on the griddle.
 Brown the beef.

**3.** Add the Worcestershire sauce, to taste. Add the cheeses; melt. Add the evaporated milk; stir. Add the diced onions, jalapeños and tomatoes; stir.

4. Add the seasonings; mix well.

**5.** Remove the skillet from the griddle; enjoy the queso with tortilla chips.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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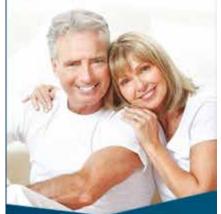
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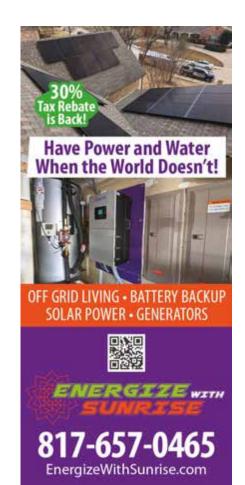
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#### Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

#### Through 9/16

Weatherford Art Association Summer Members Show: Enjoy works of art. Tuesday-Wednesday, Friday-Saturday: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Thursday: 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., Doss Heritage and Culture Center, 1400 Texas Dr. For more information, visit dosscenter.org.

#### 9/5 and 9/19

Food Park Lounge Night: Enjoy great food and live music. 6:00-9:00 p.m., Heritage Park Food Park, 317 Santa Fe Dr. experienceweatherford.com or (817) 598-4351.

#### 9/7

#### 5th Annual Gala and Celebration:

Presented by Children's Advocacy Center of Parker County. 6:00-9:00 p.m., Venue Nine-Twenty, 117 Cartwright Park Rd. Email kathryn@cacparkercounty.org for ticket information. cacparkercounty.org.

#### 9/8-9/9

#### 2023 Ranch Rodeo and Dance:

19th annual rodeo hosted by Parker County Sheriff's Posse. Various times and events located on website. Parker County Sheriff's Posse Grounds, 2251 Mineral Wells Hwy. For more details, visit pcsp.net/ranch-rodeo.

#### 9/18

Coffee, Tea and Connecting: Connect with others, and enjoy beverages and snacks. All ages are welcome. Free. 10:00 a.m., Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St. Call (817) 598-6168 for more information.

#### 9/22 and 9/29

Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure: Cooking school to help those concerned with high blood pressure prepare healthy meals. Cost: \$20. 10:00 a.m., Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St. Register by calling (817) 598-6168.

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#### 9/23

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Live and silent auction, barbecue lunch, craft items, bake shop and children's area. 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Couts United Methodist Church, 802 N. Elm St. coutsumc.org.

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





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