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Marvelous Miraele

Pedal to the metal, Kinzie Wilson is the coolest female drag racer In the Kitchen With Casey Sullivan

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ON THE COVER

Consumed with cars, Kinzie Wilson is also Legacy High School Varsity Cheer Captain.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (817) 477-0990 or visit www.nowmagazines.com. Kinzie Wilson learned to drive stick shift in a 2006 Ford Mustang that her family still has. "I would drive whenever I became old enough to reach the pedals," Kinzie said, smiling at the memory of her dad switching seats with her whenever they arrived inside the gates of their neighborhood. Well before that, he taught her the basics, whether from the vantage point of a Jeep or a Dodge Challenger. "For as long as I can remember, I'd sit in his lap and just drive through the neighborhood." She was also her daddy's shadow at all the races he took her to.

Racing at the Kennedale drag strip since he was 16 and a student at Arlington High School, Alan Wilson drove a 1970 Challenger in the Street Class, the same Kinzie's in now. He and his friends all have cars they take to racetracks and car shows, and Alan would always take Kinzie, too. "She was just one of the guys and thought she should be racing with us too," he said. Consumed with cars as long as she's been Alan's daughter, Kinzie sometimes reads magazines like *Hot Rod* or *Autocross*.

This in and of itself is a miracle, as Kinzie is about to celebrate her sixth year of life after recovering from an accidental fall off a horse. Though she has a steel plate in her forehead, she's neither afraid of horses nor the future. Her pretty face is set like flint toward the road ahead of her.

"The first time she ever drove by herself was kind of on accident. We were at a drag strip where they weren't familiar with her. She was so young at the time that I drove with her, yet they made me get out," Alan said. "She went around that drag strip at 100 miles per hour for 1/4 mile." His mini me was 14.

"That was right after I bought the 'vette," Kinzie recalled, explaining that after saving up birthday and Christmas money she happened to have the \$5,500 in her account when a deal too good to be true was offered. "My dad's friend found this Corvette with a check engine light issue. We found out what the part was to fix it, and that cost only \$100. We got really lucky."







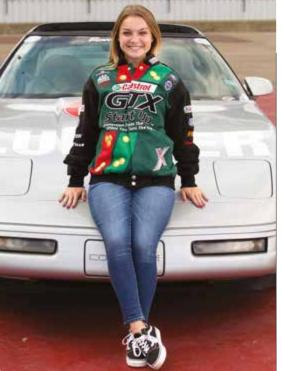
rounds, hangs out and talks. Once on the track, she strives for her target time despite the elements. "It's more to do with your reactions, and making sure you don't go too fast," she said. Her car usually will run 8.6s, but when hot it runs 8.7s. Though her car runs better in the cold, extreme cold results in tires not sticking well to the track. "You have to trust yourself and know your car."

"It's more about her driving skills, and it's fun," her mom, Kristi Wilson, said. Kristi and Zoe, the Wilsons' 12-yearold daughter, have been Kinzie's cheerleaders since she started racing in the Junior Street Class at Kennedale, a track which is no longer in operation. Now Kinzie and her family go all the way to Ennis' Texas Motorplex, where she races under her National Hot Rod Association #4241.

Zoe likes the fact that it's not just guys who go there. "When a professional comes to town, whether guys or girls, they all race at the Motorplex," said Zoe, who has learned to document Kinzie's races with her video camera.

"I go to other tracks to practice and get the experience of a new track," said Kinzie, who has gone to Ferris, but just for fun, since the track is not NHRA. "I've been once to Yello Belly in Dallas, which is crowded, so it makes it really tough not to hit anyone. North Star Dragway in Denton is a nice track, because of the people who go." She's also been to Texas Motor Speedway for their Friday night races.





"Most of the car guys are cool guys, no matter the track you're at," Alan said. He introduced Kinzie to an Arlington Top Fuel Dragster driver named Kebin Kinsley, who has turned into her mentor. Alan's company, Brass Key Custom Homes, used to sponsor Kebin before he got big.

This is Kinzie's third race season, and her fourth year of racing. "Once I started and people got more interested in me, I realized we can make a business out of this," she said. Starting with three sponsors, Kinzie Wilson Racing now has 12. Kinzie designed her T-shirt logo, and with Zoe's help, she keeps fans updated via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

Strong in math, Kinzie took precalculus as a sophomore and now is taking college math courses in order to get a jump on college. In 2020, she'll move to North Carolina, so that she can complete Belmont Abbey College's motorsports program. But for now, she's taking things slow and getting them done right, preparing for the upcoming season and trying to get her car to run faster.

Kinzie races against her own time in Autocross runs every month at Lone Star Corvette Club gatherings at Brookhaven College in Farmer's Branch. "My Corvette is a two-seater, so my dad and I will roll up there together and take five runs on the Autocross track." Kinzie said. What better way to enjoy fatherdaughter time while they've got it? NOW



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Photos courtesy of KinzieWilsonRacing.











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