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JUNE 2024

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ON THE COVER



A local educator shares an amazing account of a second chance.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Amber

Amber D. Browne
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Happy June, WeatherfordNOW Readers!

The sun is shining a little brighter and a little longer these days as the longest day of the year nears — the Summer Solstice on June 20. Many locals are making time to enjoy some fun in the sun participating in outdoor activities this summer season. In this month's issue of *WeatherfordNOW Magazine*, we present some delicious recipes, showcase a local business and highlight the journey of a Weatherford father and organ-donor recipient.

The month of June brings a time to honor our fathers and the father figures in our lives. This Father's Day, June 16, will be my first without my dad, who passed away in early 2024. He was a U.S. Army veteran who served in Vietnam and will be remembered as someone who worked hard and could make just about anybody laugh.

I read a blog recently that described my age group as the "sandwich generation" because we are not only raising our children, we are also caring for our aging parents. Luckily, our area has many resources for those who need a little extra guidance in these areas or fun activities for any generation to enjoy. Local veterans' organizations are there for support. Summer camps for kids are abundant. The Senior Center offers fun activities to keep participants engaged, and annual summer events bring in the crowds to make memories that will last a lifetime.

Make the most of whatever you choose to engage in this month. Whether it is sharing a picnic at a local park, watching the competition at the Frontier Days PRCA Rodeo or sunbathing at Lake Weatherford, fun is easy to find.

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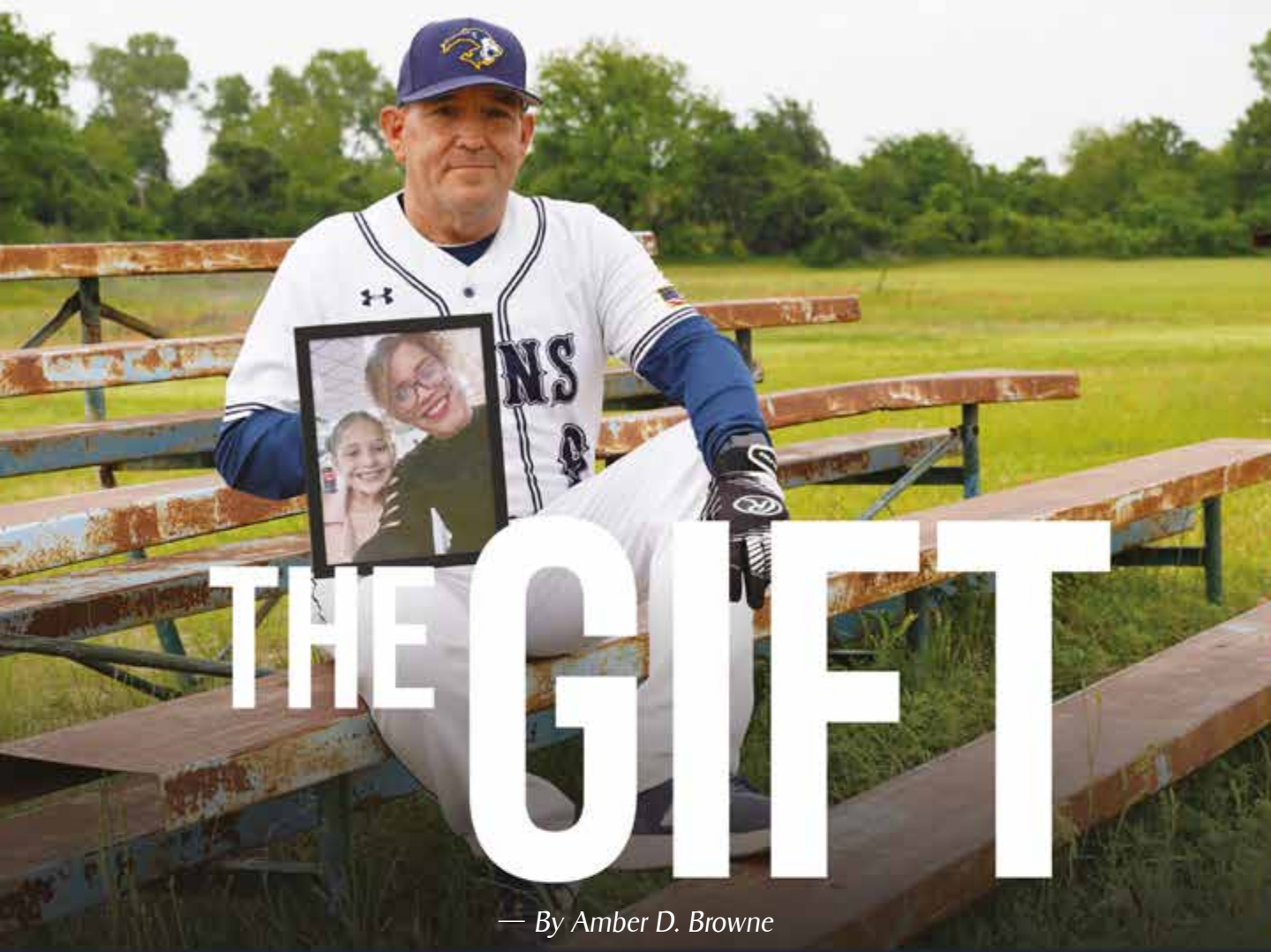
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On Staff



— By Amber D. Browne

“I’m here to tell you an amazing story.” Those words from Coach Rick Smith ring true. May 27, 2023, might not mean much to most, but for this Weatherford resident, the date signifies a renewed chance at life as the recipient of a donated heart.

Thousands in the community and on social media followed Rick’s journey toward heart transplant, and prayer warriors from across each of the 50 states and seven countries covered him with their words. As an ordained minister and licensed chaplain, the 57-year-old is confident those prayers worked.

His journey toward transplant began nearly two decades ago. Rick underwent multiple surgeries due to sports-related injuries and fell into an addiction to pain pills. In 2008, he lost visitation rights to his sons and suffered stress-induced cardiomyopathy. His ministry, Rock Bottom Outreach, birthed from his affliction and continues to mentor youth and others in recovery. In 2010, surgeons installed a pacemaker defibrillator, but 13 years later, Rick needed additional support.

There are seven status levels to receive a donor organ based on the severity of the patient’s condition with Level 1 being the worst. In early 2023, Rick steadily declined. “I honestly did not think I was going to make it.” Evaluations met requirements for transplant, and on April 25, 2023, Rick found himself on the potential donor recipient list. One month later while Rick was cared for in ICU, a doctor shared some positive news. “She said, ‘We’ve accepted a good, young heart on your behalf.’” For the donor process to move that quickly, Rick believes it was “God’s divine appointment.”

Twelve days after surgery, Rick walked out of the hospital. He had planned to return to coaching by August, and that he did. “I believe God gave me a heart to live, and I’m not going to live afraid.” He returned to his roles as head football coach and assistant athletic director at Grace Christian Academy in Perrin and as head coach for junior high baseball at Weatherford Christian School.

Although he must take medications on a regimented schedule and follow other requirements for physical activity, diet and to prevent the spread of germs, Rick did not suffer any complications from the transplant. “I feel amazing,” he admitted.

Curiosity about his heart donor and family often consumed his thoughts. Donor information is not shared through the Donor Alliance program. However, the recipient is allowed to write letters to the donor’s family through a mediator. Rick jumped at the opportunity.

Rick wrote a letter to the donor family shortly after leaving the hospital. He later discovered the letter was never delivered to its intended recipient. He rewrote the letter and sent it along with a Christmas card. He asked his social media following to join him in



prayer to find his donor. "It was really heavy on my heart." A few months later, Rick received an unexpected request.

All along, Rick assumed the donor was male. One Tuesday this past February, he woke with plans to present a plaque to Weatherford Christian School to thank them for their support. "They played a vital role in this journey as far as fundraising and prayer, the whole nine yards." That morning, he opened a friend request on social media, and it was from a man from Oklahoma by the name of Eduardo Terrazas, who shared that Rick had received his late wife's heart. "I didn't understand it at first," Rick said. He called Eduardo on the way to the school. To confirm, Eduardo read Rick his letter and Christmas card.

Rick finally knew the name of his donor — Miesha Shontae Terrazas. Eduardo and Miesha were high school sweethearts. "Two dumb kids that knew nothing about life that grew up together and made it work. We cried, laughed and loved. She left me two beautiful kids," Eduardo shared. While Miesha's



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brain was hemorrhaging in the hospital, Eduardo had to act quickly to donate her organs before her condition worsened. “I don’t know what drove me to make these decisions quickly, but it was something telling me we need to go,” Eduardo said. “Most people are just looking for another chance in life.” Miesha’s organs saved Rick’s life, as well as several others.

“I don’t regret knowing, I wanted to know, and I would have forever wanted to know,” Rick said about learning the identity of his donor. At times, he feels survivor’s remorse. Miesha, who was 34, left behind two children — Misael, 14, and Ellesandra, 10. “She was serving the Lord, so why did God see fit for me to stay and for her to go? I’ll never have the answer to that, but I still wonder, and I still struggle with that,” Rick admitted.

The entire experience has been extremely emotional and eye-opening for Rick, and he believes his second chance at life is an honor but also a huge responsibility. Through his ministry, Rock Bottom Outreach, Rick developed the Mimi Scholarship Foundation to recognize a student who has overcome adversity in memory of his donor, Miesha,

who was lovingly known as Mimi. “I want to honor her in all that I do and keep her spirit alive.”

Rick recently traveled to Oklahoma to meet the Terrazas family. “After getting to know Rick, it could not have gone to a better person. We both went through a lot in our own battles just to be aligned together. God is good to both of us. Rick is family now,” Eduardo stated.

Rick shared that he now has an amazing relationship with his adult sons, Tad, Toby and Ty, who live in North Texas. In the coming months, he plans to live life to the fullest with his emotional support dog, Bear, by his side.

Both Rick and Eduardo stress the importance of becoming a donor to save the lives of others. “I want to be a donor, too, and pass my heart onto somebody else. That’s a good heart,” Rick shared. “Because of her passing and her gift, I get to see tomorrow.” **NOW**

Editor’s Note: For information on becoming an organ donor, visit DonorAlliance.org.



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Zoomed In: Mollie Hopper

By Amber D. Browne

Although Mollie Hopper first moved to Weatherford in 1968, she remains proud of her Oklahoma heritage. In the early 1900s, her father, Carlton Weaver, was voted to represent his district in writing the Oklahoma State Constitution. As a widower, he remarried late in life, and Mollie was born in 1938. In 2007, she attended an Oklahoma centennial celebration where she met other descendants. Mollie is now the only surviving child of a delegate of the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention. "I'm an Okie, but I love Texas."

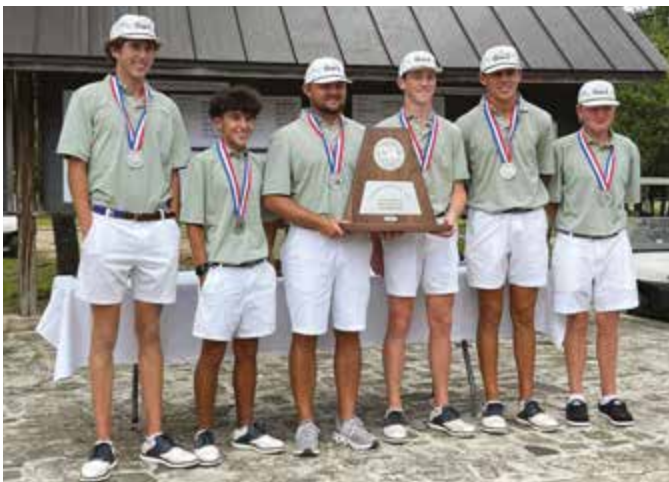
In the summer of 2023, Mollie moved to Harvest of Aledo. "What I really like is meeting new people and making new friends." Mollie is a member of the writing club at Harvest of Aledo and often shares stories of her past.



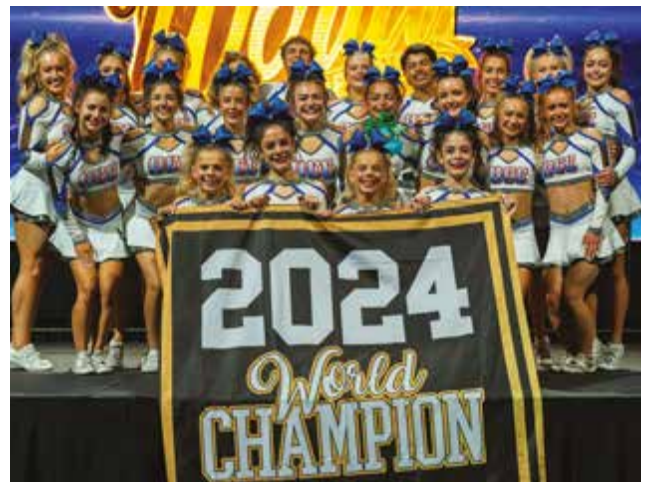
Aaron's Catering wins first place in the Best Overall category at the Weatherford College Foundation's 15th Annual Taste of Parker County.



Caitlin Mann and Whitney Guess help candidates check in for interviews at the Weatherford ISD Job Fair.



Members of Brock High School's boy's golf team bring home silver medals from the UIL State Golf Tournament.



Outlaw Cheer Company's Senior Coed Level 5 team, Mavericks, are back-to-back World Champions.



Delegates from Tajikistan serve at Tarrant Area Food Bank West as part of the Open World Program hosted in Parker County by the Rotary Club of Aledo.



These locals try to catch a glimpse of the total eclipse at Jakes Burgers in Aledo.



Aledo High School graduate Morgan Sehnem, valedictorian, smiles following the 2024 Senior Awards ceremony.



The Weatherford Art Association honors May's Artists of the Month including first-place winner Marla Grey Sheft, Jill Harper (2nd) and Karel Thome (3rd).



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— By Amber D. Browne

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“No one wants to go through this. No one wants to make these decisions. If we can take a little bit of that burden off by holding their hand through things and making them feel at peace with the decisions they are having to make, then that’s us doing our job,” said Misty Plowman Engel, James’ daughter and pre-planning advisor and marketing coordinator. Regardless of religious affiliation, culture, social or economic status, Galbreath Pickard will provide a safe space for people to grieve and pay their respects to departed loved ones.

The family-owned business serves community members at two Parker County locations. Robert Galbreath, John Galbreath and Lambert Pickard opened the original location on N. Elm St. in Weatherford on March 1, 1954. Exactly one year later, James’ father, JV Plowman, joined the firm. JV and his wife, Norma, purchased

Galbreath Pickard in 1975, bringing the business into a new era. James joined the family business in 1980 after graduating mortuary school, and in 1997, he took over as funeral director in charge. James' daughters, Misty and Angie Plowman Hernandez, who is responsible for accounting and human resources, are on staff. They opened the Willow Park location in 2016.

Galbreath Pickard is the only funeral service in Parker County to have an on-site crematory. More families are choosing the more economical option as part of a life celebration or as a traditional funeral service, with cremation completed after the ceremony. Cremated remains can be preserved in a variety of urns that can be displayed at home, placed in a columbarium or buried in an urn garden. Cremated remains can also be dispersed in a controlled scattering or planted in a seed pod that eventually grows into a tree. Another option is developing the cremated remains into parting stones, which can be gifted to loved ones, placed in a stone garden or left at approved destinations.

For more traditional burials, Galbreath Pickard can accommodate special requests. Some examples over the years include displaying a Harley Davidson motorcycle during the service and transporting caskets via heavy haul truck, bass boat and horse-drawn wagons. "We try to make every funeral as reflective of the person's personality as we can," James said. Other services include written obituaries, Life Videos, live-streamed funeral services and monuments.

Misty encourages locals to pre-arrange plans for funeral services to relieve the emotional and financial burden on remaining loved ones. "Make sure that everything is taken care of now, so that in the event that something tragic happens, there are no questions."

Galbreath Pickard hosts an annual butterfly release, which will be held on June 2 this year. The public is invited to make reservations to release a butterfly in memory of a lost loved one. The community can also honor their loved ones during the Holiday Memorial Program, which will celebrate 20 years on December 1, 2024.

At Galbreath Pickard, the focus is on the family during their time of sorrow. "We're going to do as much or as little as the family needs," James said. "We do everything we can to do it right." **NOW**



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CookingNOW In the Kitchen With MICHELLE ELLICHMAN

— By Amber D. Browne

Weatherford native Michelle Ellichman's true passion? Baking. Although she enjoys grilling and gourmet cooking, her favorite way to spend time is creating anything from cookies, cakes and pies to cupcakes, breads and candies.

This passion for baking began as a young girl alongside her mother in the kitchen and continued through Escoffier Culinary Arts School, where she received an associate degree in baking and pastries. Trial and error also taught her lessons, as well as cooking and baking shows such as *Cake Boss*. "Buddy Valastro is my favorite chef and cake baker," Michelle admitted.

She often shares her baking knowledge with others, including her daughter, Kira. Michelle consistently practices her "true calling" in order to share delicious sweets and treats with her family, friends and fellow church members at Friendship Baptist Church in Weatherford. **NOW**

Lemon Pound Cake

Cake:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**
- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 2 Tbsp. lemon zest**
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice**
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, softened**
- 2 1/4 cups sugar**
- 3 large eggs**

Syrup:

- 2 Tbsp. water**
- 2 Tbsp. sugar**
- 2 tsp. lemon juice**

Glaze:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice**

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Set an oven rack in the middle position. Spray two 8 1/2x4 1/2-inch loaf pans (or one Bundt pan) with nonstick cooking spray. Line the

long sides of the pan(s) with parchment paper and spray lightly again.

2. For cake: In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, baking soda and salt; set aside.

3. In another bowl, whisk the buttermilk, lemon zest and lemon juice; set aside.

4. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment or beaters, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 to 4 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl; beat in the eggs, one at a time. Continue to scrape down the sides of the bowl after each egg is added. With the mixer on low speed, beat in some of the flour mixture; then beat in some of the buttermilk mixture until all of it is incorporated; repeat until it has all been added.

5. Pour the batter into the prepared pan(s); smooth out with a spatula. Bake at 350 F for 55-65 minutes until the top is golden brown or a tester comes out clean. Cool the cake(s) on a cooling rack.

6. For syrup: Combine the water and sugar in a saucepan; bring to a boil. Remove from heat; stir in the lemon juice. Brush the warm syrup all over the cake(s).

7. For glaze: In a bowl, whisk the confectioners' sugar and lemon juice. Add

more of the sugar and juice if you want a thicker glaze. Spoon the glaze over the top of the cake(s), allowing it to drip down the sides.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup shortening
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 12-oz. bag chocolate chips
- 2 1/2 cups flour

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F In a large bowl, cream the brown sugar and the next 3 ingredients. Once combined, add the baking soda, salt and vanilla. Cream the mixture until well blended. Add the chocolate chips; mix well.
2. Add the flour to the mixture, 1 cup at a time. Mix well until all the flour is used.
3. Scoop out cookie balls; place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 F for 8-10 minutes.

Peanut Butter Cookies

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup shortening
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 to 1 cup peanut butter, to taste
- 2 1/2 cups flour

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F In a large bowl or stand mixer, cream the sugar and the next 3 ingredients. Add the salt, baking soda and vanilla; mix well.
2. Add in the peanut butter to taste until well blended. Add 1 cup of flour at a time until well incorporated.
3. Spoon the cookie dough onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Flour a fork; use the fork to mash down each cookie. Bake the cookies at 350 F for 8 to 10 minutes.

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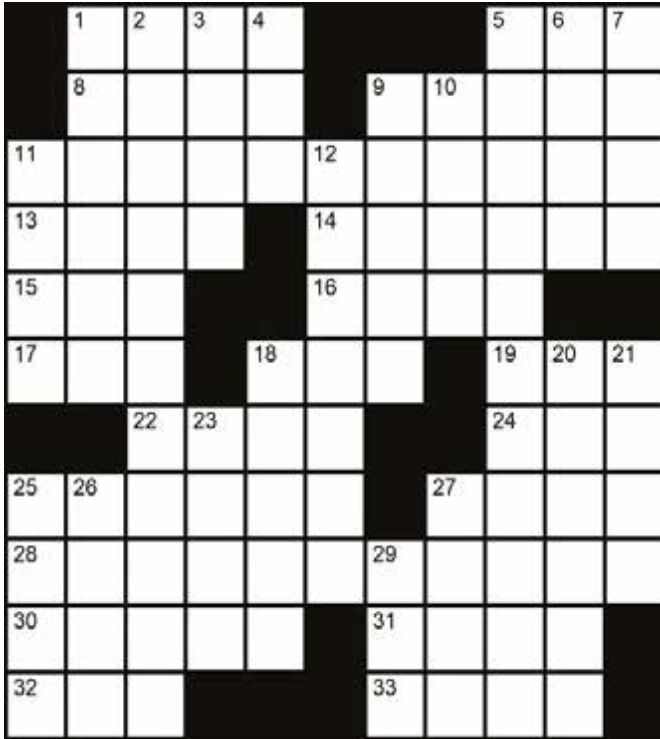



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Across

- 1 Poetical daybreak
- 5 Dove sound
- 8 Diva delivery
- 9 Not in silence
- 11 Put on
- 13 Slapstick ammunition
- 14 Stock car racing overseer
- 15 Arabic form of "Mac"
- 16 Suit shuffled: as found after leading in
- 17 Fruitcake
- 18 Fine hair
- 19 "Awesome!"
- 22 Opposite of nigh
- 24 Gun, at Indianapolis for example
- 25 Canny
- 27 Curve
- 28 Imitation diamonds
- 30 Dispositions
- 31 Cuzco valley dweller
- 32 Hankering
- 33 Leaves

Down

- 1 Pepperdine University locale
- 2 Alignment altered on iteration
- 3 Patch targets
- 4 Doze
- 5 Agreement
- 6 Eke --- living
- 7 Bad aroma
- 9 Legendary oilwell firefighter Red ---
- 10 Schindler had one
- 11 What dreidels do
- 12 Guarantees
- 18 Three goddesses of destiny
- 20 Virgil's Trojan hero
- 21 Movie media
- 23 Back financially
- 25 Major organization?
- 26 Card case
- 27 If it's pro, it's free
- 29 Welding technique

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HAPPY Father's Day

JUNE

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.

6/1

PCSP Frontier Days PRCA Rodeo Week Kick-Off:
Bringin' In The Herd Cattle Drive begins at Heritage Society Log Cabins at 208 Fannin St., Millsap, to the PCSP Grounds via Greenwood Rd.: 8:00 a.m.; The Frontier Days Street Dance Vendors: Noon-10:00 p.m.; opening band begins: 5:00 p.m.; and the Rodeo Parade begins: 6:30 p.m., Downtown Weatherford. pcsp.net/frontier-days-prca-rodeo/.

3rd Annual Secret Gardens of Parker County Tour:
Enjoy a self-guided tour of unique gardens. Tickets: \$12 in advance; \$15 day of event. 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., various locations. (817) 550-7762 or chandorgardensfoundation.org.

6/2

Memorial Butterfly Release:
The public is invited to attend this event to honor the memory of loved ones. Proceeds benefit Parker County Committee on Aging. 1:00-2:30 p.m. and 3:00-4:30 p.m., Chandor Gardens, 711 W. Lee Ave. Reservation is required at gpfcevents@gmail.com or (817) 594-2747.

6/4-6/8

Frontier Days PRCA Rodeo:

Enjoy rodeo events and bands. 7:30-11:55 p.m. nightly, Parker County Sheriff's Posse Grounds, 2251 Mineral Wells Hwy. Find tickets at pcsp.net/frontier-days-prca-rodeo/.

6/5, 6/12, 6/19 and 6/26

Yoga in the Vineyard:
Participate in a 60-minute therapeutic asana practice. Drop-in cost: \$20. 10:00-11:00 a.m., Dove Ridge Winery, 6000 Tucker Dr. RSVP at (713) 858-8595, conscioushealingnow.com/yoga.

6/13-6/16

As You Like It:
Enjoy this free performance, a comedy by William Shakespeare directed by James Brownlee. 6/13-6/15 at 7:00 p.m. and 6/16 at 2:00 p.m., Alkek Fine Arts Theatre, 225 College Park Dr. experienceweatherford.com.

6/15

Miss Parker County Peach Pageant:
View eight pageant divisions from Miss Baby Peach to Miss Peach Queen. 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Central Christian Church, 1602 S. Main St. parkercountypeachpageant.weebly.com or (817) 991-7760.

6/27

Safe Sitter Class:

Youth ages 11 to 14 will learn safety skills in caring for young children and basics of first aid and CPR. Cost: \$50. 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St., Ste. 200. Register at (817) 598-6198.

Fourth Mondays

Weatherford Art Association Meeting:
Join for an artist demonstration and more. 6:00-7:45 p.m., 60+ Senior Center, 1225 Holland Lake Dr. weatherfordart.com.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Storytime at the Library:
Toddlers enjoy books and activities on **Tuesdays** and preschoolers on **Thursdays**. 10:30 a.m., Weatherford Public Library, 1014 Charles St. weatherfordtx.gov/142/library.

Wednesdays

VFW Post 4746:
Join to support local veterans. Burger Night: Cost \$5. (Steak Night on **1st & 3rd Fridays**: Cost \$20.) 6:00-8:00 p.m., 224 Zion Hill Rd. (817) 594-7356.

Second Thursdays

Gardeners' Club of Parker County Monthly Meeting:
Each meeting includes a

speaker with information relative to local gardening. 10:00 a.m., St. Francis Church, 117 Ranch House Rd., Willow Park. (817) 919-6280.

Parker County Camera Club Meeting:

All photography levels are invited. 6:00 p.m., Barlow Hall, 125 S. Waco St. theparkercountycameraclub@gmail.com.

Third Thursdays

Quilter's Guild of Parker County:

Socialize: 6:15 p.m.; meeting: 6:45 p.m., Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church, 200 S. Lakeshore Dr., Hudson Oaks. quiltersguildofparkercounty.org.

Fridays

American Legion Post 163 Dinner:

Enjoy dinner for a nominal fee to support local veterans. Post opens: 5:00 p.m.; dinner: 6:00 p.m., 200 Cartwright Park Rd. Email for menu and more info at alpost163@gmail.com.

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