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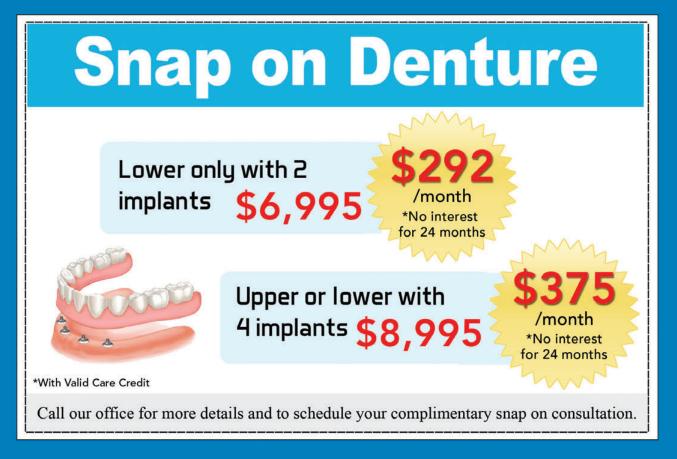
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Ferris ISD New Student Registration Dates

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ON THE COVER



The Texas Crush baseball team is heads above the rest.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Everyone!

Where did the summer go? I'm a grandma again, and the excitement isn't over yet. There are lots of new beginnings this fall. Everyone is on the move. As individuals and families are getting their last bit of traveling in, teachers are getting their rooms ready for new students. Some families have moved into new homes. As for me, I will be on the move as well — and heading to Africa!

Ten years of my life came and went with an annual invitation to minister in Africa. Circumstances deferred my travel, but not my hope. So, finally, I will meet a dear pastor friend and his wife. Their congregation has continually prayed for God to allow me to take part in the work there.

So, my dear friends and readers, you will soon enjoy meeting the new *North Ellis Ca.NOW* editor, Abby Rich, and I will enjoy doing God's work in Africa. Just a passing thought, as many of us are getting older. We see time speed by, and it seems like the seasons have become shorter each year. Live every day to the fullest, and put nothing off for tomorrow. For we are not promised tomorrow.

As always from my heart and pen,

Jo

Jo Monroe *North Ellis Co.NOW* Editor joanne.monroe@nowmagazines.com

P.S. Send your story leads to Abby at abby.rich@nowmagazines.com.

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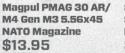


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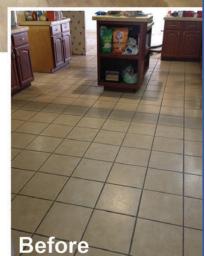
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When Roger Garcia and Oscar Morales were playing baseball together on the Ferris Rebels team during their youth, little did they know they would grow up to be fathers of sons and coaches for their sons' Texas Crush Baseball Organization. The friendships and memories are not just in the past, but are moving forward fast. 'We grew up together. It was almost like we were brothers," Coach Garcia recalled. 'We still enjoy the camaraderie."

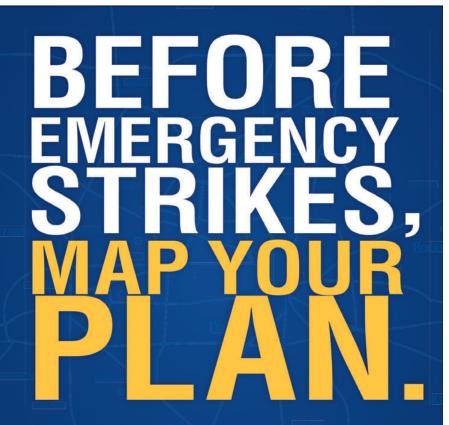
Matt Mayfield was also a co-founder of the team and is a very involved parent. Additionally, Lorenzo Garcia, Coach Garcia's grown son, and Alex Espinoza are coaches. "We started together when our boys were 4 years old, and they are now 10," Coach Garcia said. "We've just kept moving up in the age groups with a pretty solid core of players, coaches, team moms and families who are the fans and volunteers.

The team's first practice is now a comical memory, in light of the success the team has experienced over the years. "It rained that day, and we wondered, *OK, now what do we do with them?*" Coach Garcia remembered. With that question answered, the team plays in spring, summer and fall leagues in 12-15 select tournaments per season throughout the Metroplex and as far away as Waco and Clifton, Texas. Following the fall league, the team rests a month before indoor practice begins. "We usually play the first tournament in the middle of February. In 2014, we played in the snow. It was cold," Coach Garcia recollected.

The team plays in tournaments held under four youth baseball organizations — United States Specialty Sports Association, Triple Crown Sports, American Sporting Events and Pony Baseball. Often the team is No. 1 or No. 2 in national rankings for their age bracket, and they have the team trophies and personal rings to show for those







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wins. "The boys like to show off their bling every now and then," Coach Garcia said proudly.

With that kind of commitment and focus on baseball, the boys don't play other sports. "We have a group of boys who really love the game and play nearly every weekend, with practice twice during each week. Even when we have a weekend off, they'll play catch or go to the batting cages for fun," Coach Garcia said. The boys also have to find time for their schoolwork. "We have access to their teachers, and each boy is required to do well in school, or they don't practice or play," Coach Garcia explained.

Corporate sponsors, such as Jeff Love of US Assets, Inc., have provided the team with matching shoes, tournament fees, uniforms and drinks. "We play elite teams with indoor facilities and paid coaches, while we are trying to keep a low budget. We have to ask for donations and have fundraisers," Coach Garcia said. For practice and home games, the team rents fields in Ovilla.

The team holds tryouts before each season starts. "Knowledge of the game, speed and a willingness to make the effort needed are required. This isn't your usual recreational baseball at this level of play," Coach Garcia said. Becoming a team member is agreed upon through handshakes, which bind words of trust and commitment. The team has a written code of conduct.

"We want dedicated players who love the game, and we want parents who will be supportive," Coach Morales said. "It's a team effort to pull everything together. My wife, Lisa, serves as team mom. Being



a team mom is a full-time job, and behind every great coach there's a team mom," he said, quoting a saying on the team's Facebook page. Most of the players are from Ellis County, but players from Johnson, Tarrant and Dallas counties have made the team.

"We have great parents. Our success starts with them," Coach Garcia said. "Our parents are like one big family and are there, especially when we have nailbiting close games."

During practices, fundamentals and stretching are taught seriously, so the boys stay physically fit. "We tell players they will play the way they practice. We play aggressively and, sometimes, use unorthodox, unexpected plays," Coach Morales explained.

"We welcome challenges. We want to play the best of the best. It's the only way to show how hard everyone has worked and how much fun we have," Coach Garcia added. "We respect stiff competition. The boys step up and put it all together by outperforming themselves on the field. We don't concentrate on winning. We know how to lose, too. It becomes part of the boys' characters. We are teaching life lessons."

Kaden Mayfield plays shortstop and is friends and teammates with Rendon Garcia, center, and Isaac Morales who plays second base. Kaden is a straight A, fifth grade student at Red Oak Elementary School. His parents and siblings are Kaden's biggest fans. "I've played shortstop ever since T-ball because the shortstop really controls the game and brings the team up," Kaden said. "I know school comes first, but I



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want to go all the way and, eventually, play major league baseball." That goal is reachable, according to his coaches who cite Kaden as being the smallest but fastest player, while having the most power when cracking the bat. This results in Kaden having scored the most homeruns. As these young players head into their junior high, high school and college years, most aspire to play at all those levels and onward to professional baseball.

It's not all work for these young athletes, their coaches and families, however. "We celebrate birthdays throughout the year," Coach Morales said. "And at the end of each season, we go bowling or have swim parties." The coaches and players all agreed that at this point, coaching and playing baseball is really all about having fun.

"I enjoy coaching because I'm spending time with Rendon and his friends," Coach Garcia said. "I get to grow up with my son and have this unique relationship with him."

The Texas Crush Organization's Facebook page features a quote from David Wright, which reflects their philosophy: "Whether you have a great game or a terrible game, tomorrow's another day, and you've got to come out here and compete." Coaches Garcia and Morales both hope that, win or lose, these young athletes will remember their baseball days — the fun times and being out there with their buddies — just like they do. **NOW**

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AT HOME WITH James and Reva Boykin

A pristine, clean-cut lawn with lush, beautiful landscaping greets those who visit the home of James and Reva Boykin in Glenn Heights. The Boykins take great pride in maintaining the manicured lawn and beautiful flowering bushes, which create a lovely passage to the majestic stone entry. A small table and two chairs invite relaxation in an oasis of nature, shade and fresh air.

Losses

- By Debbie Durling

A three-car garage faces the front of the house and is evidence of James' passion for cars. The taupe garage doors blend with the home and only add to the curb appeal. Even though he has little time to rebuild cars like he did when he was younger, he personalizes all his vehicles and places a road runner logo on them to mark his work.

They moved in five years ago, but the home looks brand new. Each picture and piece of home decor has been perfectly placed. From the front door to the back, clean and neat is the rule with absolutely no clutter. The front entry continues the majestic feel of the porch with a high ceiling and beautiful formal dining room to the right. A traditional dark cherry dining room table, chairs and china hutch fill the room with elegant beauty. The crowning touch is the flower arrangement made by Reva herself.





Looking straight ahead, a long hallway leads to the back part of the home. A huge, diamond-shaped column sits adjoined to the kitchen wall to create two paths. One path leads to the living room and a turn to the left leads to the kitchen. Throughout the hallway, kitchen and bathrooms is ceramic tile in various shades of taupe and cream. Still in the hallway, looking back toward the front door, a niche has been created in the wall like a little built-in decorative shelf, and on the shelf sits another beautiful arrangement by Reva.



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The kitchen is cherry and granite. A perfectly sized island sits in the middle making a great flow while cooking. The tile backsplash coordinates with the floor in shades of cream and grey granite. A nice feature of the kitchen is how the refrigerator backs up to the wall that creates the hallway. Beside it is the wall oven and microwave. This makes them hidden from the rest of the house, even though the floor plan is very open. Three pendant lights grace the bar that divides the kitchen from the breakfast room. However, the real gem in this family bistro is the skylight. It's like a tunnel in the ceiling, reaching the roof and looking into the sky. The glass, which creates the window, is so clear it is difficult to see it's there. It looks as if the tunnel is open to the sky, and it's breathtaking.

The living room is their favorite place to relax. A cast stone fireplace adorns the far corner of this room, complementing the cream-colored carpet. Large windows are across the back wall overlooking the breakfast area, which is a cozy nook just off the kitchen. The wooden, high bistro-style table with iron accents, serves as a place for quiet reflection. Off the living room and breakfast nook is the door to the spacious backyard that looks just as manicured, neat and clean as the





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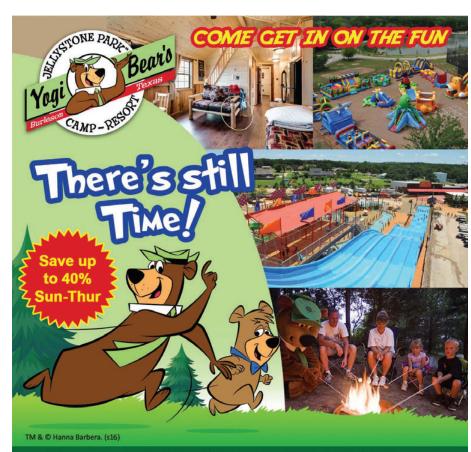


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house and the front yard. A sweet back porch has a grill and a patio set, which are perfect for entertaining in good weather.

The decor throughout the threebedroom, two-bath home includes iron wall hangings, many of them crosses; Italian bistro style pictures; and classic, European touches. Even the bed in the master bedroom is European with wooden columns and iron accents. It is a showpiece of style and elegance.

As beautiful as the house is, it fades in comparison to the couple that calls it home. These two have known each other since they were in first grade. "I used to pull on her pigtails and play with them in class, and she would just let me," James remembered. They even grew up in the same neighborhood in Oak Cliff. When they entered high school, they lost track of each other because they went to separate magnet schools. He was working at a Western Auto where her dad would drop by every day after work to visit his friend. He told James he was going to bring his daughter by to get a new set of tires for her car. When he did, they remembered each other. It did not take long to catch up, and soon they were dating.

Two years later, they were married. They have not only been in love, but also best friends ever since. "I'm blessed, because I married someone that I love to be with, and we do everything together," James confessed. They are deeply in love, even after 26 years together. "Our daughter says we are so immature because we still play and chase each other like we did when we were kids," James chuckled darting his playful eyes over to Reva.

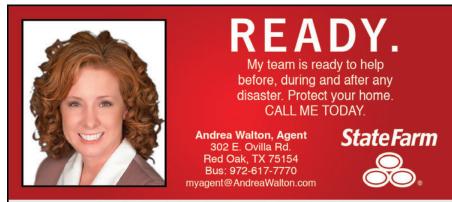




Even though their marriage is storybook, life has had its challenges. In 2008 when the country had the huge economy setback, they lost their Cedar Hill home in which they had planned to raise their family. Many couples in their neighborhood lost their homes and had to walk away from them due to payments almost doubling within a couple of years of buying the homes. James and Reva decided they must do everything they could not to walk away and decided to do a "short sale" on the home. They were successful, but were not allowed to buy another home for three years. Out driving one day, this neighborhood drew the attention of the couple and now they own a home again. They have also experienced layoffs several times when the company they happened to be working for at the time would relocate.

James' sister once asked if he worried about losing everything after all the layoffs. "No, I give it to God, and that is it," he shared. "Every time we have been at the end of our rope, something else has come along exactly when we needed it."

Living in the Heritage Lakes neighborhood has been wonderful for them. They believe they have something much better than they lost because of their faith in God. Surviving the difficulties was much easier when they had each other to lean on, too. NOW



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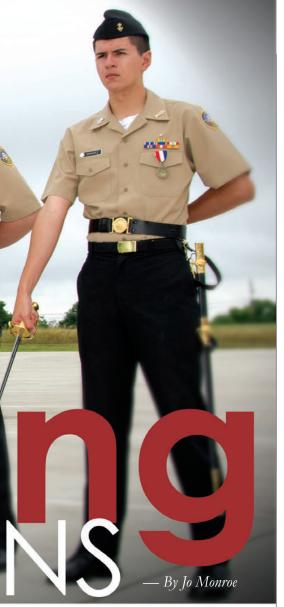




Lieutenant Commander James Snarr, Red Oak High School Senior Naval Science instructor, is dedicated to the leadership and development of Red Oak ISD students. True to his character, Commander Snarr works as an instructor for the ISD, having transferred from San Elizario ISD in El Paso, where he had the same duties. He and his wife were ready for a change when the opportunity to teach in Red Oak opened up, and he has seen excellent results. According to the Tuesday, April 5, 2016, online report by the Red Oak ISD newsletter, Commander Snarr was informed by inspecting officer, Commander Mike Hale, with regard to the unit's recent annual inspection, that all of the grades for ROHS NJROTC would range from above average to outstanding.

The Red Oak ROTC program began in 2009, and this September it will celebrate its seventh anniversary. The district sets high standards in the hiring process, so when Commander Snarr stepped in three years ago, he underwent the same process as any other teacher in the district. He provided a video of his classroom teaching technique, undertook a psychological exam, passed a background check and an assessment was made regarding how he would handle various scenarios. "Red Oak ISD is very thorough," Commander Snarr stated. Initially, Commander Snarr did not plan to change things. "I like to see how things go," he stated. "There were parts that I could have changed, but the program was running pretty well when I got here." Starting next year, however, there will be some changes in the cadet promotion process.







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Commander Snarr and Chief Lauren McGuinness revamped the promotion system. "We wanted the students to know more about the Navy and the other military services," Commander Snarr stated. Therefore, the promotion system is now structured to include more of those subjects.

A five-day field trip each March is also planned as part of the curriculum. Approximately 30 students travel once a year to places such as Corpus Christi, Houston or San Antonio in order to participate in hands-on training and some fun. "We choose the students who get to go on the trip by how much they have participated in the unit. But most students who want to go do get to go." According to Commander Snarr, the cost can be \$250-\$450. Each student has an account, and money earned from the two annual fundraisers goes directly into their accounts. So, there really is no reason for them to not go.

In March 2015, Commander Snarr was diagnosed and treated for cancer. In January 2016, he experienced two straight months of illness, but he is doing



very well now. "My chief stepped in, combined classes and ran the program for a couple of months. She later had knee trouble. Between the two situations, the field trip plans for last school year were ruined," Commander Snarr said. Needless to say, he is looking forward to the field trip this year.

"Our job in ROTC is to produce good citizens and provide them with leadership skills. We are not recruiters," Commander Snarr stated. However, he shared that if students do choose to go into the service, and they have been in ROTC for two years, the Air Force, Army and Navy will promote them one paygrade higher when they complete their basic training. If they have three years of ROTC, they will promote them to E3, which is two ranks higher than what they would be coming out of basic training. The Marines only promote one rank, to E2, and you have to have three years of ROTC for them to do that. While in high school, ROTC students learn how to march, wear a uniform, polish their brass and shoes and say, "Yes, sir!; No, sir!; Yes, ma'am!; and No, ma'am!" They learn quite a bit about military life, so if they choose to go in, they have a little bit of an advantage.

Commander Snarr served on five different aircraft carriers and was deployed seven times. The fun stuff was traveling, especially to Africa. "After being at sea for four months, our welfare, morale and recreation fund had gotten very large. I was able to go on a three-day safari for \$125." He has also traveled to Rome where he visited Trevi Fountain and the Sistine Chapel and visited castles in Germany. "You get to do a lot of fun stuff while in the Navy. Of course, the downside is being away from home." When on the East Coast, he was deployed to the Mediterranean



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and the Caribbean. Then when he was on the West Coast, he was deployed to the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans and he lived for three years in Japan. "I got to go to 28 different countries while in the Navy," he said. "On ship the days are very long, but the time goes by fast. The first two weeks, you miss your family very much, and then the routine kicks in."

Commander Snarr and his wife, June, met and married in Philadelphia. After a unique set of circumstances, love led them to the altar. On Lincoln's birthday, February 12, they celebrated their 28th anniversary. Commander Snarr gladly claimed June's two small children, and later they had one together.

The Snarrs fit into the category of a medical/military family, and they are proud of each of their children. Their daughter, Rachel, a dentist, and their sonin-law, Dave Lowery, an anesthesiologist for the Army, just blessed them with their first granddaughter, Lola. Jeremy is the oldest of the three and is a Major in the Air Force Reserve. He just completed survival training and is in training to be a hurricane hunter. He holds a master's degree in meteorology from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California. Timothy is an up-and-coming dental assistant, certified in January 2016 and soon to be looking for his career opportunities.

June is a registered nurse and works three days a week at the Kohl's E-Fulfillment Center in DeSoto and two days a week at the Kohl's Distribution Center in Corsicana. She serves as a plant nurse and a case manager for all Kohl's injuries in Texas. With two of their children living in San Antonio, and Rachel just having Lola, Commander Snarr and June will be marching to a few new tunes - nursery music - because Lola has their hearts. NOW

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Cool Freedom

Hector Gomez and Freedom Heating & Air will keep you comfortable as the temperatures rise. — By Jo Monroe

Hector Gomez officially opened the doors to Freedom Heating & Air on January 5, 2010. The company is celebrating six years of growth, providing quality service and up-front pricing with no hidden fees. Hector leads a team that is trained, certified and experienced in residential and light commercial installations and service.

In 2002, Hector left a past of making bad choices behind him and made two of the best decisions he would ever make. The first choice was dedicating his life to God before he stepped from behind bars. He has never looked back except to give honor to God for giving him his freedom in so many ways. His second decision was to follow his interest in learning all he could about refrigeration and air conditioning systems. From that day to this, he has been consistently engaged in gaining the knowledge of heating and air systems. In the beginning, it was as though he couldn't learn enough, and he continually sought training until he could offer his best.

Freedom Heating & Air is a company of integrity and one with a heart to provide what people need. Hector and his team trouble shoot system issues. If you are looking for high efficiency, Freedom Heating & Air offers Trane and Mitsubishi ductless units. Freedom also offers precision tune-ups and repair on existing air conditioning systems including: Carrier, Frigidaire and Lennox, to name a few.

Freedom means you, the customer, will be free from having to wait for new installation of equipment. You can apply

Business NOW

online today to qualify for special financing to get the system you are needing and wanting. In addition, Freedom Heating & Air offers a 15-percent discount to veterans.

Ever grateful for the opportunities that allowed him to consistently gain advanced education, training and his licensing, Hector passes this opportunity on to his team. The result is an advanced, educated and well-trained team. Hector has earned respect in the commercial and residential markets and sets Freedom Heating & Air standards high.

Because of his past and his commitment to God, he is equally excited about sharing his testimony. Recently, he has been asked to enter into the Federal Bureau of Prisons to talk to men about their choices. If it had not been for his good choices, he would not be where he is - enjoying and serving the community ---- today.

Freedom Heating & Air means freedom for Hector's family, as well. He and his devoted wife, Cindy, have five children ranging in age from 3 to 20. The two boys, Nicholas and Aaron, and the three girls, Samantha, Ashleigh and Madilynn, are his pride and joy. "I am the first generation in heating and air for my family. I don't know if my sons will choose this career, but it is best not to do something you're not interested in," Hector stated.

Hector Gomez is Freedom Heating & Air. "I started in 2010 and worked out of my home for three years. Then, two years ago, I moved the business to its current Lancaster location," he humbly stated. "I have to give God the honor, because it is not about building my riches. It is not about building a bigger house or having a better car. I believe in giving back to the kingdom of God, because it all belongs to Him." Hector is proud of the fact that Freedom Heating & Air can be found on the Good Contractors List, that he is a recognized Mitsubishi Diamond contractor since 2010 and a Trane Comfort Specialist since 2015. Winning numerous awards for his quality service is just another testimony that Hector puts his all into everything he does. NOW



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Around Town NOW



Red Oak Lions Club President Patricia Alturo and Secretary Melanie Peterson.



Elizabeth Coronado and daughters, Clarissa, entering 8th grade and Alina, entering 4th grade at Shields Elementary, get a head start on gathering school supplies.



In the cool of the morning, Tom Goza manicures his lawn at age 80.



Ferris High School band students attend a successful state solo and ensemble competition.



Gina Torres, of Texas KidSafe Program, visits Ferris PD Chief Eddie Salazar (right) and Officer Aarron Robledo (left).



David Griffin is proudly sworn in as an Ovilla City Council member.



Baylee Hawkins, Shari Alfaro and Caitlyn Cox energize the audience during Vertical Church's Elevate Explosion VBS week.



Children and families flock to the Red Oak Library for fun summer activities.



TSTC Student Recruitment Rep Blair Smith and Director Cory Gropp are available to talk tech.





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A Sick Tooth

- By Betty Tryon

With your hand gingerly laid across your cheek and a grimace of pain on your face, you've just made the universal signal of a toothache. In the course of a lifetime, most of us experience a toothache at one time or another, whether the pain is from early childhood when teeth are growing, sensitive teeth in adulthood, foreign matter lodged in teeth, trauma to a tooth and/or an abscessed tooth. One thing is for sure: an aching tooth will not be ignored!

If the origin of the pain is from growing teeth or objects that become stuck between them, the situation can usually be resolved without medical intervention. However, an infection or periapical abscess that occurs at the root of the tooth needs the attention of a professional. An abscessed tooth is an infected tooth caused by a bacterial infection. Tooth decay is a major cause of the infection. Gum disease or some type of trauma to the tooth can set up the scenario for an infection to develop.

The most overwhelming symptom is pain. The pain can be sharp, throbbing or persistent and gnawing. There can be swelling of the face, fever, a foul taste in the mouth, sensitivity to the touch on the outside of the face and a feeling of malaise. If you have any of these symptoms, you need to be treated. If you begin to have difficulty breathing or swallowing, go to an emergency room right away. An infection in your mouth needs to be treated, or it will just get worse and cause additional problems — even death. According to *Journal of Endodontics*, over 400,000 people have visited emergency departments because of infections in their teeth.

The first step in lessening the pain and beginning eradication of the infection is to drain the pus or the abscess. If the tooth can be saved, a root canal or endodontic surgery will be performed. If the tooth cannot be saved, it will be pulled. You may also be prescribed antibiotics for the infection.

Neglecting your teeth increases your chances of not only dental abscess but gum disease. Limit your intake of sugary foods and drinks and in-between meal snacks. Brush your teeth twice a day, and don't forget to floss! Replace that frayed toothbrush every three months. An old toothbrush cannot do the proper job of cleaning. A fluoride and/or antiseptic mouthwash may aid in giving you extra protection. Above all, visit your dentist regularly. It may add to your expenses, but having your teeth cleaned is a lot cheaper than treating an abscess and restoring your tooth. **NOW**

Sources:

http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0099239910007971

This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.



Calenda

Tuesdays Through August 23

Summer Reading Program: 1:30-3:30 p.m., Ronald Reagan Room, Red Oak Public Library, 200 Lakeview Pkwy., Red Oak.

August 6

Shields Elementary Moving-in Day & Community Celebration: 8:00 a.m. We are inviting volunteers to help us move back into Shields on Ovilla Road following a big thank-you lunch and celebration in honor of those who helped us survive the storm. Meet at Shields on Live Oak, where items will be loaded into moving trucks. Then everyone will be shuttled over to Shields on Ovilla Road to unpack and celebrate. For more information and to **RSVP**, please visit www.redoakisd.org.

August 7

Night of Worship: 5:30-6:30 p.m., Ovilla Road Baptist Church, 3251 Ovilla Rd., Ovilla. For more information, call (972) 617-8544.

August 8, 30

Ferris Crime Watch: 7:00-8:00 a.m., Ferris Public Library, 301 E. 10th. For more information, call (214) 801-0159.

September 10

Founder's Day: 9:00 a.m., Watkins Park, 101

Live Oak, Red Oak. Parade, food, live bands, vendors and games. For more information, call Shelley Martinez at (972) 617-0906.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Writing for Enjoyment: 12:30-2:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 600 Daubitz Dr., Red Oak.

Fourth Mondays

Blue Star Mothers of America meeting: 7:00 p.m., Ovilla Community Center, 1404 Red Oak Creek Rd. Blue Star Mothers of America is a patriotic educational, social and service organization. Contact Cheree at (972) 679-9425 or visit bluestarmothers.org.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Alcoholics Anonymous meeting: 7:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 600 Red Oak Rd. For more information, call (972) 617-9100.

First and Third Tuesdays

Red Oak Lions Club meeting: 7:00 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. For more information, call (214) 864-8014.

AUGUST 2016

Wednesdays and Thursdays

Red Oak Senior Citizens Club meeting: 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 207 W. Red Oak Rd. Games, exercise and activities. Call (972) 576-2777 for details.

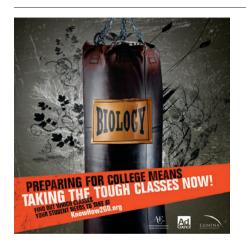
Thursdays

GriefShare meeting: 7:00 p.m., The Oaks Fellowship in Red Oak, Room E-104. This is a recovery group for those who have lost loved ones. For more information, call (214) 376-8208.

First and Third Thursdays

Senior Citizens' Luncheon: Senior Center. Pre-registration is required by the Tuesday before the lunch. No cost to resident seniors; \$5 for all who are non-residents. For more information, call (972) 617-5652 or (972) 576-3414.

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









Cooking **NOW**



In the Kitchen With Michele Andrews

— By Rachel Smith

Bristol, Texas, did not limit Michele Andrews to experimenting with different tastes in the kitchen. Cooking for large crowds is her specialty, and what better people to cook for than her beloved family. She treasures fond memories of her younger days in the kitchen. "I love having a big breakfast on Christmas morning like my Mama Pearl did when I was young," she remembered.

Her favorite pastimes entail reading books, watching cooking shows and sipping wine. Owning the Sugar Ridge Winery has helped her experiment with food and wine. "I am learning to cook with wine and it has been a real experience," she admitted. "Some dishes turn out great — others not so good." Either way, she is always open to learning new recipes.

Flammkuchen

Known as German pizza.

I cup sour cream
I/4 cup heavy cream
Pinch salt
Pinch pepper
Pinch nutmeg
I large flour tortillas
I 1/2 cups packaged chopped ham (can use bacon or pancetta)
I-2 cups white sweet onions, thinly sliced
Black pepper, to taste
I. Preheat oven to 375 E Mix creams

I. Preheat oven to 375 F. Mix creams together; pulse in seasonings to taste. Heat in a saucepan on medium heat until hot. (Do not boil.)

2. Place tortilla on baking sheet; cook until crisp.

3. Remove from oven; add half the sauce

mixture, ham, onions and top with remaining sauce. **4.** Bake 10-12 minutes. Garnish with black pepper.

Marinated Mushrooms

- 2 Tbsp. pecan oil
 2 Tbsp. butter
 2 tsp. garlic, minced
 1 Tbsp. Nature's Seasoning
 1 cup brown sugar
 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
 2 large pkgs. beef broth (64-oz.)
 1 bottle red wine (750 ml)
 4 lbs. mushrooms
- **I.** In a large pan, heat oil and butter. Add garlic; cook until brown. Add seasonings, sugar, Worcestershire, broth and wine.

2. Add mushrooms to garlic mixture on

medium heat for 1 hour; let simmer for 4 hours.

Special Peanut Butter Cookies

- I cup Karo syrup
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 3/4 cups crunchy Peter Pan peanut butter
- 4 cups Special K cereal

 Blend syrup, sugar and vanilla in a 2-quart pan. Cook on high for 4 minutes, until mixture boils and sugar dissolves.
 Stir in peanut butter; add cereal and mix well.

3. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper; let cool before storing. (Can store in refrigerator in the summer.)

Hot Cheese Dip

1/2 cup mayonnaise

- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups grated Monterrey Jack cheese
- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 16 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled (divided use)

8 butter crackers (preferably Ritz), crushed Your choice crackers and strawberry/ jalapeño jelly (optional)

I. Preheat oven to 350 F. In a medium bowl, mix first 5 ingredients; set aside 8 slices worth of bacon crumbles.

2. Transfer mixture to a shallow baking dish, such as a 9-inch pie pan. Top mixture with cracker crumbs; bake for 15 minutes. Remove pan; top with remaining bacon. **3.** Can serve with crackers and strawberry/

3. Can serve with crackers and strawberry/ jalapeño jelly if desired.

Mulled Wine

- 1 bottle Sangria wine
- 1 pkg. Red Hots candy
- 4 large cinnamon sticks
- I shot amaretto (optional)

I. Add first three ingredients to a large stock pot; let simmer until hot.

2. Serve in a coffee mug, which is great for cooler weather. Add a shot of amaretto for spicier flavor.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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Reminder: August 22 is the first day of school. **MOVING DAY & COMMUNITY CELEBRATION**

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