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ON THE COVER



Cole Tolleson

See page 8
to read about the
Tolleson Market

DOWN HOME

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Publisher's Letter

Welcome to the first of our four editions of Down Home East Texas Magazine. In each issue, we strive to bring you entertaining, educational, heart-warming and family-oriented stories happening here in beautiful Hopkins County, Texas.

I can't believe February is already almost over. I don't know about you, but 2022 flew by way too fast for me and now 2023 is following suit. Spring is coming soon and there are going to be so many fun things to do in and around our county.

Our cover photo for this issue is the adorable Cole Tolleson. Cole is my personal delivery boy each week. With his mom Jenna, he delivers to me a delicious loaf of sourdough bread, which he himself helped bake.

Check out the story in this issue and you'll fall in love with him and his family. They are just one example of the warm and wonderful people we have here in Sulphur Springs and Hopkins County.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Down Home East Texas and we'll see you again in May!

Dave Shabaz,
dave@ssnewstelegram.com





TEXAS MODERN
GASTROENTEROLOGY

Introducing Gastroenterologist,

Dr. Mena Milad



I have been honored to serve the Sulphur Springs community for the past four years. I am very excited to continue serving Hopkins County and the surrounding community with Texas Modern Gastroenterology. I love spending time with everyone who walks through my clinic door, and really try to understand any concerns they may have. My goal is to get to know you and figure out how my clinic staff and I can serve you to get you feeling your very best (and prevent you from ever having to deal with colon cancer). I love taking the time to make sure you are well informed about all aspects of your symptoms. I also make sure to explain everything that is being done so that you understand your treatment plan.

My parents were my role models growing up, but my dad, who was a physician himself, put the love of medicine in my heart. I spent the first eight years of my childhood living in Cairo, Egypt. Hoping to provide quality care for his community, my dad started a practice in an underserved area of Cairo. He was the one that taught me that what doctors do is a calling from God to serve as Christ has served. We moved to America in the mid-90's. One day, when my dad was on-call in the hospital, he felt sick. He went to go see a doctor, and the tests showed that he had stomach cancer. Over the next few months, I saw first-hand how important a doctor is during some of the most difficult times of our lives. Afterwards, I felt the calling to be a doctor who not only helps treat disease, but also tries to prevent cancer so that no one will have to go through what my family went through.

So what is a gastroenterologist and why do you need to see one? We help treat all kinds of gut issues as well as liver disease. Other things we treat include heartburn, difficulty swallowing, constipation, diarrhea, belly pain, hemorrhoids, as well as hepatitis C.

One of the most important procedures that we do is the 'screening colonoscopy'. Colon cancer is very common and it has no symptoms until it is very advanced. It is also one of the only truly preventable cancers. On top of that, it is so common that the guidelines were just updated to start screening for colon cancer starting at age 45 (you used to not have to worry about it until age 50). That's why we physicians push so hard to get a colonoscopy which is the by far BEST way to prevent colon cancer.

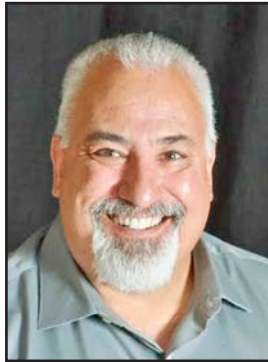
Texas Modern Gastroenterology is located at 1402 Medical Drive, Sulphur Springs, Texas, directly behind Sulphur Springs Imaging Center. We accept all major commercial insurances and Medicare. You can request your appointment online or by calling our office. Our phone number is 903-558-2222 and our fax number is 903-558-2225. You can also visit our website at www.txmoderngi.com to learn more about us.



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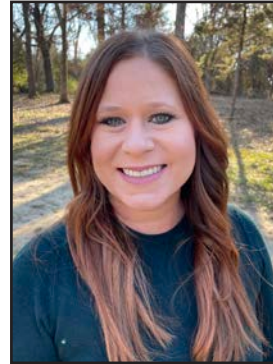
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Graphic Designer



DJ Spencer
Sports Editor



Don Wallace
Managing Editor



Faith Huffman
Assistant Managing Editor

Contributing Writers



Carey Gable

*Whitney
Vaughan*



Local Events

March 4th

Bowles Gun Show

12:00am – Sun, March 5,
11:59pm
Hopkins County Civic
Center – Entire Exhibit Hall

March 10th

Community Players Presents: ‘

Melodies of Broadway’

7pm – 9pm
Main Street Community
Theatres, 225 Main St,
Sulphur Springs
PERFORMANCES: March
10-12, 17-19, 24-26, 2023.
Fridays and Saturdays @
7:00pm and Sundays @
2:00pm.

*Love & Pain Comedy Tour @
Fulghams*

9pm – Sat, March 10 at 9pm,
March 11, 12am
1123 S Broadway St, Sulphur
Springs
Admission \$10.

March 11th

BBQ Brisket Cook-Off

11am – 5pm
Pacific Park, Sulphur Springs
\$5 admission to taste,
beginning at noon.
For more information, contact
Johnny Wright @ 903-335-
6646

March 18th

East TX DIY Wedding Expo

12pm – 5pm
Hopkins County Regional
Civic Center, 1200 Houston
St, Sulphur Springs
Helping brides to book, buy,
DIY, and Thrive.
\$5-purchase online
\$10- at the door
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April 14th

UPRA Spring Rodeo

12:00am – Sun, April 16,
11:59pm
Hopkins County Regional
Civic Center Indoor Arena,
1200 Houston St., Sulphur
Springs

April 22nd

Lights of Life Gala

Hopkins County Health Care
Foundation Office at
903-438-4799

April 29th

Claws for a Cause

Crawfish Boil

4pm – 9pm
Celebration Plaza, 100
Church St, Sulphur Springs

May 6th

Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Celebration Plaza, 100
Church St, Sulphur Springs

Tolleson Family Market

A God-Centered & Family-Owned Business

By Dave Shabaz



The story behind Tolleson's Family Market, like many others, began with a vision of a better future for their children and family on their journey to walk in God's truth. Their hope for the future was to become closer to God and one another, become self-reliant, teach their children where their food comes from, and be able to provide their family with healthy food and the skill set to produce such food themselves. The Tolleson family consists of Cory and Jenna, along with their daughter, Tristan, and son, Cole. Their new son, Connor, is expected to make his debut in early 2023.

This led the Tolleson family to purchase the home and farm that they have today. They now happily raise an array of farm animals and grow produce. They also hand make candles, bath salts and, more, while continuing to live by Biblical principles.

While building their family and farm in spirit and love, they decided to open a fresh market

and smoothie spot in Sulphur Springs to provide our community with wholesome, fresh, and local food. Tolleson Family Market is an agricultural cooperative that offers farm-fresh items, handmade goods, and artisan items from local families and farmers. At T's Smoothie Spot, they offer fresh and handcrafted smoothies, acai bowls, and fresh squeezed juices. They use fresh and seasonal ingredients from a range of local farms, including their own, while never using any added sugars.

One of their favorite items that they sell at their market is Mrs. Tolleson's handmade and traditionally made sourdough bread. Sourdough is a naturally leavened bread, meaning it does not use commercial yeast to rise. A fermented flour and water mixture containing wild yeast and good bacteria is used to rise the dough. This timeless traditional way of making bread produces a delightful tangy flavor and slightly chewy texture





paired with a crispy, flaky crust. Mrs. Tolleson tends to the sourdough starter weekly, ensuring the natural yeast cultures remain healthy and active. I can personally vouch for this bread, because I buy one loaf each week.

Mrs. Tolleson and their little helper, Cole Tolleson (2 years old), bake the fresh sourdough bread 2-3 times a week. Cole loves helping with measuring,

pouring ingredients, mixing and, of course, eating the bread that they set aside for their family to enjoy. Cole's favorite person to bake bread for is his Mimi, who adores it when Cole brings her their handmade sourdough.

Mrs. Tolleson and Cole start the two-day baking process together by making the leaven that will then be the base to make the dough 12 hours later. Once the dough has been made,

it must be left to slowly rise in the fridge overnight. Mrs. Tolleson then wakes up at 5 o'clock the next morning to begin baking their sourdough bread so their customers can have their bread as fresh as possible. After their bread has baked and cooled, Cole helps as they carefully load the bread, then, head to the market to begin the day serving our community.





When asked what brought them to Sulphur Springs, Jenna replied, “When looking for our farm and home, we spent months trying to find a good fit for our family. We quickly fell in love with Sulphur Springs and its charming downtown. Our love for this amazing town led us to decide that Sulphur Springs is where we wanted to launch our small family-run business. We hope to pass our fresh market onto many future generations of Tollesons to come.”

As for what they have planned for Tolleson’s Family Market in 2023, Jenna said, “We look forward to each new year. For the year of 2023, we hope to offer to our community high quality coffee beverages, an expanded section of meat and produce options, as well as all-natural and handmade laundry soap.”



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Prepare yourself for a long retirement

We all want to live long lives. We all expect to live long lives. But are we financially prepared for this longevity?

Before we get to the issue of preparation, let's look at a couple of interesting findings from a 2022 survey by Age Wave and Edward Jones:

- The surveyed retirees said, on average, they expect to live to 89, and they said the ideal length of retirement is 29 years.
- When asked if they want to live to 100, nearly 70% of the respondents said "yes." The main reason for this desire for long life? To spend more years with their family and friends.

Of course, none of us can see into the future and know how long we'll be around. But with advances in medical care and a greater awareness of healthy lifestyles, these aspirations have a real basis in reality.

However, if you're going to enjoy a longer lifespan, and the extra years with your loved ones, you need to ensure your finances are also in good shape. How can you make this happen?

Here are some basic steps to follow:

- Save and invest early and often. This may be the oldest piece of financial advice, but it's still valid. The earlier you start saving and investing for your retirement, the greater your potential accumulation. Consider this: If you began saving just \$5,000 per year at age 25, and earned a hypothetical 6.5% annual rate of return, and didn't take any early withdrawals, you'd end up with \$935,000 by the time you reached 65. But if you waited until 35 to start saving and investing, and you earned the same hypothetical 6.5% return – again with no early withdrawals – you'd only end up with \$460,000. And if you didn't start saving until 45, you'd end up with just over \$200,000, again given the same 6.5% return.
- Be mindful of debt. You may not want to be burdened with

certain debts when you enter retirement. So, while you're still working, try to reduce unwanted debts, particularly those that don't offer the financial benefits of tax-deductible interest payments. The lower your debt load, the more you can save and invest for the future.

- Keep reviewing your progress. It's important to monitor the progress you need to make toward achieving your goal of a comfortable retirement. Over the short term, your investment balances may fluctuate, especially in volatile financial markets such as we've seen in the early part of this year. But you'll get a clearer picture of your situation if you look at long-term results. For example, have your accounts grown over the past 10 years as much as you had planned? And going forward, do you think you're in good shape, or will you need to make some changes to your investment strategy? Keep in mind that, if you're 50 or older, you can make "catch-up" contributions to your IRA and 401(k) that allow you to exceed the regular limits. You may also want to adjust your investment mix as you near retirement to potentially lower your risk exposure.

Hopefully, you will enjoy many years of a healthy, happy retirement. And you can help support this vision by carefully considering your financial moves and making the ones that are right for you.

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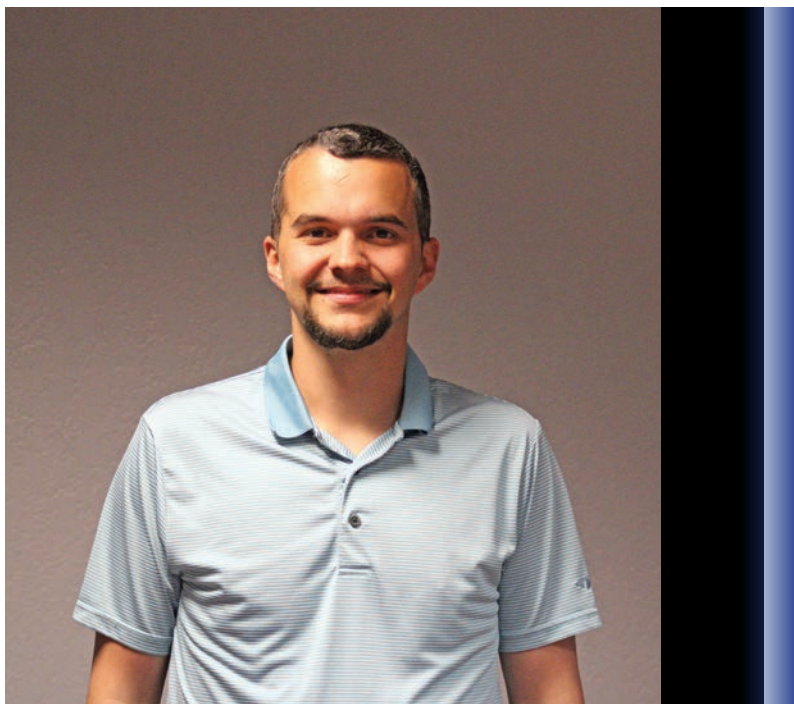
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Upton helps grow soccer's popularity in Sulphur Springs

Bringing new life to the program

By DJ Spencer

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world. In recent years, that popularity has made its way to Sulphur Springs.

A key reason for that is Alexi Upton, the head boys soccer coach at Sulphur Springs High School. A former collegiate soccer player, Upton has been involved with the sport all his life and has no plans to distance himself from soccer anytime soon.

Upton, a Mesquite native, was a four-year soccer player at Mesquite Poteet High School, playing two years on junior varsity and two years on varsity. During his time there, he played for two former Sulphur Springs soccer coaches – Casey Osborne during his freshman year and Colby Peek from his sophomore-senior years.

During his time on the varsity soccer team, Upton helped lead the Poteet Pirates to back-to-back appearances in the state semifinals.

After graduating high school, Upton attended Eastfield Campus of Dallas College for one year,

then transferred to Texas State University in San Marcos. Texas State doesn't field a men's soccer team at the Division I level, so Upton played for the club soccer team.

"Even though we were just a club program, we got to play big teams like Texas A&M, Texas, North Texas, Texas Tech and Tulane," Upton said. "We got to play a lot of good teams and travel to a lot of nice places."

Having been involved with soccer for most of his life, Upton always wanted to stay close to soccer when his playing days ended. He cited that as his main decision to go into coaching.

"Colby Peek, my high school coach, was a big driving force in my life, and I couldn't imagine a life without soccer," Upton said. "In my first year after I graduated high school, I served under him as a volunteer assistant coach at Poteet. I was able to learn the ins and outs of coaching and unofficially start my coaching career."

After graduating from college, Upton began his full-time teaching and coaching career at Bay City High School, where he worked from 2017-18 as an assistant soccer and football coach.

"After that year ended, I really wanted to return to the Metroplex area. That's what I did and I've been back ever since."

In the summer of 2018, while looking for a new opportunity, Upton initially accepted a job at Texas High School in Texarkana, but after a good interview with then- Sulphur Springs athletic director Greg Owens, he decided to take over the head boys soccer position at Sulphur Springs High School.

"I interviewed in Sulphur Springs on my way to Texarkana after a recommendation," Upton said. "I actually signed a contract with Texas High first, but after Owens called me back to have me come back, I ended up canceling my Texas High contact to take the job at Sulphur Springs."

SS SOCCER

In his first year as head boys soccer coach, Upton guided the Wildcats to a 10-10-3 record, which was their first .500 season in three years. He also guided them to the playoffs, where they lost to the Jacksonville Indians, who went on to play in the Regional Semifinals.

During Upton's second season the Wildcats improved, going 17-6-5. However, the season was cut short, with one district game left, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Wildcats had another winning season under Upton in 2021, going 17-11-1 and making the playoffs once again. In the playoffs, they defeated the Whitehouse Wildcats 2-1 in the Bi-District round, then defeated the Red Oak Hawks in the Area round, before losing to Longview Lobos 3-1 in overtime in the Regional Quarterfinals.

"We could've beaten Longview, because we were up 1-0 late in the game," Upton said. "However, we gave up a late goal so they could force overtime, and then they beat us."

The 2022 season was a tough one, as the Wildcats went just 8-15-2 in a season where they were hampered by injuries. Despite this, the Wildcats managed to make the playoffs, where they lost to Whitehouse in the first round.

"We tried out four different goalies last year, because our main goalie missed a lot of the season with a broken collarbone," Upton said. "It was an experience year for us, and helped us prepare for this coming season."

Beginning this year, Upton also began serving as the kickers coach for the Sulphur Springs football team.

"When new head football coach Brandon Faircloth came in, I was appointed to the football staff," Upton said. "It's a lot of fun, because

it allows me to be really close with my soccer players who serve as only the kickers and punters on the football team."

When asked about some goals he still wants to accomplish at Sulphur Springs, Upton stated that he has accomplished a lot of the original goals he set.

"When I first got here, I set goals of turning Sulphur Springs into a place known for soccer, to fully establish a program, and to win," Upton stated. "The first two goals were the most crucial, and we've done a great job of achieving those goals."

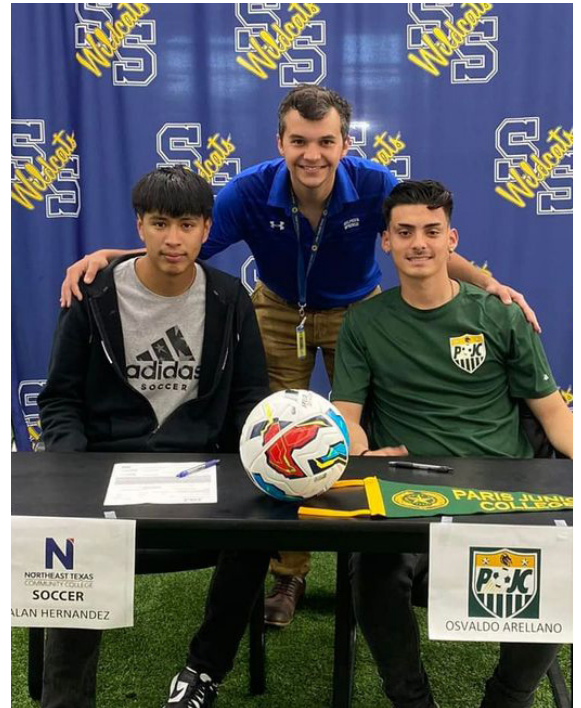
This coming season has brought big changes for Sulphur Springs, dropping down from 5A to 4A and also getting a new district, consisting of Chapel Hill Northeast, Liberty-Eylau, North Lamar, Pars, Pittsburg, and Pleasant Grove.

"With the new district, we've been instilling it in our players to not underestimate any of the teams," Upton said. "Though our district is less challenging than our 5A teams, it will challenge us if we get complacent. I do believe that we have a chance at winning our district this season."

Upton stated that because of the great set up he has in Sulphur Springs, he envisions himself being here for a long time.

"It's been really great here. I have really good job and a good support system here in the community," Upton said. "We've developed a great program here, and I wouldn't leave unless an opportunity I couldn't pass up was to arise. Sulphur Springs is my home and it's where I want to be."

The 2023 season is expected be another successful season for the boys soccer program, and Upton to carry the soccer team to even more success in the years to come.





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What does a typical day or week look like for you as an attorney, wife, mother?

Recently, God blessed us with a new bundle of joy! I do not get the luxury to sleep all night, but with the help of my husband, I am able to alternate to give each other enough rest. For the most part, I start my day very early. If I do not have a deposition, mediation, or a court hearing to attend, I am full mom duty in the early hours. With a cup of coffee in hand, I prepare breakfast and lunch for kids and my husband, wake the kids at about 6:40 a.m., get them ready for school, and then head off to carpool. My husband works outside on the farm, so he is usually the first out the door to feed the animals. Once I drop off four of my children at school, I am off to work. While I work during the day, my other two children are with a nanny.

COVID has been awful and caused us all to lose many loved ones but, with that, it has shown the importance of spending time with family. One of the adjustments I made during COVID that I continue to benefit from, is the use of my home office. In 2020, I upgraded the technology in my firm to allow me to work from home without skipping a beat. I am very fortunate to be fully accessible no matter where I go. I can literally see all my files from my phone, tablet, or computer. These days many hearings are still held via Zoom, and I try to be approachable with all my clients. I know many attorneys are very formal and will only send letters or talk to clients on the office line, but I try to treat every client like a family member so texting and quick calls for simple answers I do not mind at all. Most clients have

my cell phone number instead of my office desk line which I think benefits both of us.

Generally, I do not have a “nine to five” job mentality. My phone is available for work at all hours. I don’t think my approach is for everyone, but I am truly blessed in that my family and staff all assist me in allowing me to focus on what I need. They allow me to be available for my clients as well as my family. The afternoons and evenings are much like the morning in that my husband and I trade off on carpool depending on my schedule. We divide and conquer!

It can be challenging at times with after school events, but luckily everything has a schedule, so it is easy to plan around. Technology really has allowed me to be the best mom and lawyer I can be simultaneously.

How do you relate to your clients better than say your male counterparts?

Only 38% of attorneys in Texas are female and, an even smaller percentage of those are personal injury attorneys. I tried many types of law before specializing in personal injury. I worked at the States Attorney’s Office in Chicago in the Gang Unit. I was a clerk in the Felony Division in Dallas District Attorney Office. I relied upon my economics degree and worked as a transactional, research attorney at the Federal Reserve Bank in Dallas and spent most of my first years as a practicing attorney working at a boutique litigation firm where we worked on a wide variety of civil litigation cases and trials ranging from sexual harassment, insurance bad faith to personal injury.

I now specialize in personal injury law because I am passionate about helping people. It is so rewarding to help a family change their financial situation. In my line of work, I get to hand my clients a check for compensation and it is much more rewarding than handing a client a bill for services. Also, My dad was a doctor, and growing up around the medical field I enjoy working closely with medical professionals and diving into medical records and the science behind injuries.

I can’t speak for my male counterparts, but we empathize with our clients’ situation, pay close attention to details and fight to win – on every single case. We have high expectations of ourselves.

Tell us your philosophy for your McKay Law “team” or what would you say is the company culture at McKay Law?

I am an avid reader, and believe it is important to be open to new ideas and criticism. For this reason, I often seek out ways to improve myself. Recently, I read a book that explained WHO you hire is the success or failure of your business. It included an algorithm on the most important factors to consider. It stressed the importance of attitude not just experience when putting together a team. I have taken need to this advice and feel very blessed to have found people that have both experience and passion. My staff is not only well versed in the field, but also have the right personalities – all hard working, positive and passionate about their career and helping our clients. I, of course, am the captain of the ship but,

without my family and staff, I would not be able to steer the ship to land.

What kind of expertise does your staff have that stands out?

Because I am very passionate in what I do and have full faith in the law, I have made sure to seek candidates who are like-minded and share this same passion. There are many personal injury firms out there to choose from but only a few have drive and determination. I know many claim to help, but my team has gone the extra mile to truly become experts in their field. To begin with, one of our negotiators is a former litigation adjuster who evaluated claims for a big insurance company for 12 years. It was his job to fight and save the insurance money. He now bats for my team. His knowledge in knowing what the insurance is looking at, what resources the insurance has, and what strategies they use to cheat injured victims lets us be creative and strategic when fighting for our clients. In baseball terms – we have a switch hitter!

One of my case managers is also an ex-insurance employee. Fun fact, during her interview she mentioned how insurance companies train their employees to sound friendly and sympathetic to give off the perception of being understanding. This, then, discourages injured parties from seeking legal assistance as they feel the insurance company has them covered. So, the next time you are speaking with a claims representative and they are being really nice, don't forget this is part of their plan.

But, going back to your question, most of my staff have participated in courses for medical training. Some have even furthered their studies by partaking and completing paralegal studies, and some have completed courses to fully understand HIPAA and state regulations for medical records. Another advantage is my staff has attended trucking school, been members of the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys, incorporated drones to maximize cases, know when an expert is needed, and have even had one-on-one training with an actual accident reconstructionist. To be more straightforward, my staff – like myself – all have committed themselves to helping others. No one at the firm sees this job as a 9 to 5. We all take great pride in what we do, and we all take helping people seriously!

What differentiates McKay Law from a big advertising law firm?

It has been my experience that all competent personal injury lawyers – whether a big law firm or small – know what is needed to maximize their client's recovery. We all have the same access to hire the best experts, utilize drones, conduct legal research, etc. What differentiates my firm from another I think is that I do not bite off more than I

can chew. No two claims are the same and I fight each claim aggressively whether it's an 18-wheeler or a smart car. Even as my firm grows, I make sure that we are still operating under the same concept and culture. I strive to give each case the individual attention it needs so that I can maximize the results for each client.

Unfortunately, many firms out there do not take this same approach. I've noticed that a common factor in bigger offices is the standardized processing of cases. It's like the bigger the office, the more streamlined the processes have to be. There is not much room for a tailored approach to each case and the extra creativity to work up the damage model when there are thousands of cases being handled at a time.

I can confidently say we are small enough to care and smart enough to win every case. We take a very active approach with our clients. We want them to understand the process. We are not the type of operation to say okay here is this, we got what we got, come again. We want our clients to understand their claim so they can make informed decisions. A great example of this is a recently settled case, where my office was able to change this teacher's life by getting her a \$2.25 million settlement. Like many of my clients, she was a victim of a rear-end collision; and, like most of us, she had a busy life and getting in a wreck was the last thing she needed. Needless to say, the wreck left her with awful back pain and financially strapped. She is a very strong woman and initially wanted to "tough it out." She knew she needed help but she also knew she needed to get back to her day-to-day. From the day we got her case, my office went to work and investigated her incident. I advised her the same way I would advise my sister in her position. I explained to her what our investigation found and we had a very pleasant down to earth conversation in which I explained how "toughing it out" only saved the insurance company money. We came up with a couple of strategies for her case, we solved her short-term financial issues and I presented her with options so she can decide on how she wanted to proceed. In the end she decided her pain was too overwhelming and got the treatment she needed. The damage to her back was so severe she ended up requiring surgery. Today, I am very proud to have been able to recover \$2.25 million for her but I am more proud of her for allowing herself to get better. It is not easy rolling with the punches, but she did it and now she is reaping the benefit. I cannot explain the joy in my heart watching her go from barely being able to stand to now being 95% recovered. It is truly an honor to have been able to fight for her and get her this life changing result. Other firms may have overlooked her claim and settled prematurely for a small but quick settlement. With so many people in the door,

her claim could have easily been lost. Instead, we were able to advise her and help her solve her short-term issues for a long-term life changing result.

What is most important thing to do if you are involved in a wreck with an 18-wheeler?

Call me immediately! [Laughing] Call a lawyer right away because you want to preserve the evidence as soon as possible! Let me tell you, most trucking companies have their attorney or corporate representative come to the scene to assist their driver in the investigation. Most drivers are required to report the wreck within a few hours of it occurring or else their job is on the line. These companies do this because they need to move quickly in hiding evidence. So, unfortunately, victims do not have time to waste and must act quickly too. 18-wheelers and trucks have a lot of equipment such as ECM, black box, cameras, dash cameras and more, that store information relevant to the wreck, but if you don't get that stuff preserved quickly, the information is gone.

Why is preserving evidence so important? Does it really make a difference in the case?

Think of it as an iceberg. We can see the top but, usually, there is much more at the bottom. Most wrecks could have been avoided, meaning that the wreck was not the original problem, but the result of many other issues. The more information we gather at the beginning of the case, the better we are able to understand why this incident happened in the first place. No one wakes up and says let's go get in a wreck... Well, I hope no one does anyway. But understanding why this happened in the first place is very important. Many times trucking companies or other businesses make decision that are not safe in order to cut costs. You'd be surprised how many trucks are out on the road with bad tires, bad breaks, busted mirrors and overworked drivers who have been threatened to continue driving instead of taking their break. For this reason, preserving evidence is important. The more we gather at the beginning, the more we are able to reconstruct that iceberg and see why we became a victim in the first place. Just now, we have a death case that another prominent law firm released because they could not locate the truck that was responsible as it was a hit and run situation. Luckily, I was called early on and with my team we were able to jump in and investigate. We were even able to pull actual footage surveillance that captured the incident. Thanks to my firm's expertise, we are now holding the driver and company responsible for the death a teenage girl!



Vera Mae Burks and James Weldon Glossup



Love Story

By Enola Gay Mathews

Vera Mae Burks and James Weldon Glossup married on October 8, 1944. She was 16 and he was 17 years old, and they began their life together late in World War II. Weldon was ordered by the Draft Board to appear for a physical, but he was not called to military service. Getting married at an early age was not uncommon at that time, Vera noted.

Vera met the love of her life after her family moved from Sulphur Bluff to Peerless, where Weldon was already attending school.

He recalled, "I noticed her that first day at school, and I knew right then."

Their courtship would include country-style activities, like riding horseback to get together in the community, as well as church. Weldon asked her to marry him in an offhand manner. According to Vera, he just said, "I don't see why we need to go back to school for another year. I'm gonna be working, and you won't need any more schooling. Let's get married before we're too old." Last October, the couple celebrated their 78th wedding anniversary.

"We had a simple wedding, not at the church, but at the parsonage of Peerless Assembly of God Church. Reverend Helm was a holiness preacher and he married us, and Roy Sims and Modene Burks stood up with us. Modene was my sister and, after we got married, she and Roy got married 3 weeks later."

Their wedding night was spent with Weldon's brother, Martin, and his wife, Gladys. At first, the couple lived

and farmed at Sunny Slope, about 3 miles south of Peerless on the Bailey Ranch, which was later known as the John Bailey Champagne Ranch.

In 1945, the Glossups set up housekeeping in the Posey community in southwestern Hopkins County. Along with the chickens and cow they received as wedding gifts, they raised a garden, preserved their food, and had plenty in store. Vera shared a memory of the early years.

"When our friends came over to play dominoes, I'd ask them to stay and eat. Weldon would bring in some ham from the smokehouse. I'd cook some shelled beans we'd canned and I'd fry some potatoes, and with cornbread or biscuits, we ate good. I could put a meal on the table in no time!"

They also had milk, butter and eggs, and rarely went to a store. In fact, that first year, the Glossups only spent \$10 on groceries. There were no water or electric bills to pay, and no insurance or car payments because they didn't have a car. They had what they needed.

Weldon was the family breadwinner from the start. He farmed cotton with his dad and had a side job at the hospital. Later on, he and his brother bought a tractor together and went into cotton farming on their own. Weldon worked for a time for Pratt Packing Company. Then, in 1958, he went to work for Red Ball Motor Freight; it was warehouse work in the shipping department, so he was home every night. Later, he bought a herd of Holsteins and became a dairy farmer.



Vera Mae Burks and James Weldon Glossup's daughter, Sherri Spradlin was unable to attend the group photo.

Today, he still has a few head of beef cattle.

Between the years of 1947 and 1960, Weldon and Vera became parents. They have a son, James Ronald "Ronnie" Glossup, and three daughters, Mary Lou Glossup Wright, Sherri Jean Glossup Spradlin and Joyce Ann Glossup Van Winkle. Growing up, the children attended the North Hopkins school, had chores and lessons to do, and they went to church as a family. Today, all four siblings live in Hopkins County and have produced a great crowd of descendants, numbering 41 at last count. Most attend Posey Baptist Church. Vera has been a member there for 72 years and Weldon for almost that long.

In 2020, a big 75th wedding anniversary celebration for the couple was held at Posey Baptist Church.

Ronnie Glossup said his parents' health has remained pretty good.

"In early 2021, Mother was hospitalized and in isolation with COVID, but back home, she regained her health and strength. Then, last autumn, due to an injury from a fall, Mother was hospitalized and then received care at home for a short time," Ronnie acknowledged. "But, otherwise, at ages 95 and 94, Mother and Daddy

stay close to home and enjoy their retirement.

See, every Sunday after church, we all gather at their house for lunch. There are usually at least 20 or 30 of us, and the tables are set in three different dining rooms to accommodate everybody. The girls help, but Mother still does all the cooking most of the time."

In almost 8 decades of marriage, the couple has seen a lot of change, yet some things remain the same.

Weldon explained, "I bring Vera Mae coffee in bed every morning. I always have, and we talk things over before we start the day. Then, I go out and check on the place and bring in some wood to get a nice fire going in the fireplace. By then, Vera Mae's got our breakfast cooked. We eat bacon and eggs with her homemade biscuits or, sometimes, she fixes pancakes."

Vera added, "Every night we lie in bed and hold hands. We talk about our many blessings. It's just something we've done all these years. God has blessed us so abundantly. The Bible says to raise your children up in the way they should go, and we tried to do that. We thank God for the days he has given us."

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The Podiatry Peer Pressure Problem

By Carey Gable



It is a rare thing for an adult to wake up with nothing to do! No kids to feed, no deadlines to meet, no work, no school, no chores, no laundry, and the list could go on. Being an adult is hard work! Yet, somehow, I found myself in this situation on the last day of my summer break.

I always like to plan something special for that last day. Maybe it is from a vacation, maybe it is just the long weekend, but that last day always seems special somehow.

Unfortunately, this year, I was instead faced with the abyss of nothingness. No plan, no work, nothing. I had failed myself, I did not plan adequately and was faced with a final day of summer that was jam packed with television sitcom reruns (hello Three's Company) and staring out the window at the garden. I was

disappointed in myself.

Then my phone rang. I answered in a disinterested tone fully expecting it to be a work-related question. Instead, I was greeted by an overly chipper voice that was more excited than I had been prepared for.

"Hey, what are you doing today?" She asked in an exaggeratedly friendly manner.

"Absolutely nothing," I replied, manner of fact.

"Let's go do something. We have to report back tomorrow. Don't need to sit at home all day." I, honestly, agreed with that sentiment. I needed to get out of the house.

"Sounds great to me. I am up for anything." With that small, unanalyzed statement, my fate was sealed.

I was to meet my friend mid-morning. She had instructed me

that she had a plan and that I would "love" but had then turned cagey with details. My natural skepticism was on high. This was further exacerbated when I pulled into the given location and noticed that the only store open was a nail salon/spa.

When she arrived, she was relaxed, too relaxed. She wore flip flops and shorts. The sly, almost sadistic, smile betrayed her intentions but I was too naïve. Greeting me, I followed her to the door of the nail salon. Figuring that I had been duped into keeping her company during her manicure, I was resigned. Wrong once again.

We were greeted by a group of men, which felt strange to me for some reason. Two of them smoked thick cigars, the other two chatted in quick Vietnamese. They welcomed my friend while

casting skeptical gazes my way. I could feel the vibe tensing around me, although I was most likely the one casting off that aura.

As we approached the check-in station, my friend pronounced in an exaggeratedly loud and commanding voice, "Two pedicures please."

I was confused. Do you have to pay for pedicures by the foot? To get both feet done, do you have to pay for two?

I was still looking around the room when I was beckoned over to a faux leather mechanical recliner. I was met there by a lady who was putting a liner in a foot basin. She filled the basin with water. I sat down on the end of the chair, facing my friend, ignoring the lady as she worked. Maybe she was cleaning it.

That was when I was awakened with a finger snap. A literal snap of the fingers by one of the former cigar-welding men. He pointed at my boots.

My friend began to laugh, harder than I expected. "Take your boots off. You can't get your feet done with your boots on!"

And it dawned on me... I was the second pedicure. They expected to work on my feet! I was not prepared. I hesitated.

One of the other men, half laughing, asked me if it was my first time. I responded in the affirmative. He laughed harder. My friend was trying to keep herself under control but failing. Evidently, I had a look of terror that was hysterical to everyone except me.

I sat my boots to the side, placed my socks inside them, rolled up the pant legs of my jeans. Before fully committing, I

scanned the room. I was looking for a friendly face, some bit of reassurance.

Alas, I was spurned at every turn. The friendliest face I found was an elderly lady sitting diagonal from me. She glanced up, smiled, and then diverted her eyes, intent to watch the remaining scene play out for everyone. My friend smiled deviously.

Spinning my feet into position, I decided that I had no other option but to relent. I was there, my boots were off, and now there was an expectation of submission on my part. I surrendered my man card as I dipped my feet into the warm water.

The warm bubbling water hit my parched heels first. The strong currents created waves of relaxation that slowly massaged into the deep recesses and crevices.

That first twenty seconds of warm water was one of the single most relaxing moments I had ever experienced. It soothed my toes and calmed my spirit. It was like the warm belly of a puppy cuddling your toes. The vibe of anxiety did not dissipate, but I was somehow less aware of it. The rhythmic beat of the water pump found just the right buttons on the bottoms of my feet, it touched my soles and soul.

Then, the hand patted the foot stool and the spell was broken. I was in the chair, the pedicure commenced! My face turned red with embarrassment. Oddly, mostly I was embarrassed about having someone work my toe nails when I was capable. I felt like a teenager pulling up to the full service gas pump

and expecting someone else to pump my gas. It was an odd, uncomfortable tension.

Then she went to work on my toes. The cutting was normal and did not cause too great of a distress. Although my friend was caught in a constant chuckle at the oft grimaces she insisted I was making.

I was fine... until the brushing started. I had no idea that a brush was even going to be used! Why must they brush my toes? Was this for the nails? I have no answers. What I do know is that it hurt! The brush of steel was brought down on my poor, tender toes in such a fashion that my feet twitched inward in retreat. They fought the good fight, they attempted to stand their ground, but alas, the battle was lost and they retreated in rapid secession into curled baby fetal phalanges. Unable to say anything from the sheer shock of the assault, my friend laughed in hysterical guffaws.

That was when the real torture started! A hard scrubbing pad was brought to bear on the heels of my feet and then manipulated into the middle arch. That was when the twitching started! Just like when a doctor taps your knee with his reflex hammer test, my foot reacted to the scrubbing pad and jerked back and forth with each stroke. My foot began popping out of the water uncontrollably like a fish on dry land. Many times I came close to striking the pedicurist, yet she held up the assault.

Each twitch brought another wave of laughter and joy to the audience that had now gathered to watch the display. My friend

joked, "My word, I can't take you anywhere."

The twitching was a continuous jerk by this point. The sensation was so overwhelming that I was only sitting in a strict definition since I was leaning so far forward. My back had stiffened, my neck was tense, my feet twitched to the point of violence. I was a tree being uprooted, I despised my friend and her snickering laugh.

Then she discovered the remote control to my faux leather chair. Evidently, it was a massage chair and I was caught unaware as the "pulsation", began to punch my back beneath the shoulder blades. Honestly, this could have felt good if I knew what was coming and I was relaxed but, instead, I was assaulted by the sudden onslaught of mechanical hands rotating on tense flesh. If it was possible to stiffen any more, I did.

Confused as to what uncomfortable torture on focus, the podiatry assault or the lumbar machinations, I sat motionless instead. My face contorted into increasingly distraught, gnarl faces that caused all of

those around to double over in hysterics.


Finally, mercifully, the pedicure ended with a quick drying of the feet and a towel snap into the air closest to my big toe. Retrieving the remote for the massage chair, I slowed the undulations to a steady pace on my lower back. For a brief moment, I leaned back and relaxed. I settled. I became at peace. I did not focus on my total humiliation. Then, just like that, it was over done. The crescendo of palpitations had quickly fallen into the silence of completion.

My friend rose from her chair. I scrambled to get my boots. Departing, "spa" day complete, she asked, "So how do you feel."

"My feet feel the freshest they have ever felt. Sincerely," I replied.

My ego, pride and manhood may have been a little worse for the wear, but my feet, they felt good! My friend's cheeks hurt from the laughter. I would do it again.

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The Best Spring Activities & Things to Do for Your Bucket List

1. Attend the Opening Day of a Baseball Game

Many baseball leagues across the world start their seasons around April – on April 1st specifically for MLB – making spring the perfect season to sit through a game. And is there any better game to check out than one on the opening day?! You may not become a regular baseball watcher, unless you already are one, but trust me, you'll have loads of fun even if you go just the one time.

2. Bake a Seasonal Pie

Each season has their own pies perfect to bake that season and your options for spring just may be the most diverse of them all! From apricot to cherry, Taste of Home has a lot of excellent recipes for seasonal pies for the spring season. Meanwhile at Delish you'll find over a dozen options for pies to bake for that Easter feast.

3. Climb a Tree

Along with spring comes warmer weather and greener scenery. Therefore it makes some great time to go out climbing trees as they are returning to life. Climbing a tree is one of those spring activities that is fun no matter how young or old you are. Just make sure you do it safely!

4. Dine Al Fresco

Dining al fresco essentially just means dining outdoors, the term deriving from Italian language. It's an especially popular activity during the summer season, but actually you can (and should) start your al fresco dining a wee bit early. In the spring time, the air is wonderfully crisp as you dine outdoors and it's much easier to find a restaurant without a crowded terrace area to dine in.

5. Eat Strawberry Shortcake

Strawberry shortcake is a delicious and easy to make

yourself dessert that's perfect for the spring! It's already a classic among desserts for the summer season, but berries like strawberries actually make spring taste a whole lot fresher and sweeter, ergo you shouldn't let your spring season heat up into summer without shortcakeing it up first.

6. Feed the Ducks

With spring comes along warmer weather, walks and picnics at the park, and the ducks also begin emerging into the lakes, ponds and rivers at said parks and other areas. Feeding the ducks – doing so with putting much care into what and how much you feed them, of course – can be a happy activity especially for the little ones in the family, though I imagine us adults find plenty of enjoyment in it as well. However, instead of bread, try feeding the ducks with oats and seeds, rice or grapes cut in half.

7. Fly a Kite

Another one of the outdoor things to do in spring is to fly a kite in the park. The shops and online stores are filled with different kinds of kites for you to choose the one that's most to your liking – or you can even make your own!

8. Go Berry Picking

Up until now many of us may have likened berry picking season to be solely from late summer to mid-fall. But berries can actually be picked during the spring as well! You can pick blueberries and strawberries from late spring season, which just so happen to be some of the tastiest berries out there.

9. Go Bird Watching

Spring is a migration season for birds, when birds return to the Northern hemisphere after spending the winter in somewhere warm. That makes spring an amazing season to go bird watching because they're gathering in large groups and will therefore be easier to see. You can even buy a bird watching book to see how many you can see.

10. Go Kayaking (or Paddle Boarding)

Once snow clears out and the warmer weather is upon us, a huge, diverse range of outdoor activities becomes available to us. Among them are both kayaking and paddle boarding which are perfect ways to spend the late spring days where it's sufficiently warm but not too hot for enjoying. Plus, even if the water temperatures aren't high enough for swimming yet, that's no obstacle for kayaking and paddle boarding.

11. Go on a Spring Break Vacation

Taking place somewhere from end of February to early April depending on where you're based, spring break is a popular vacation period in the spring season. It may typically be likened to as a holiday when college students hit the beach for scandalous partying, but your spring break vacation can be widely different from that if you wish; doesn't quite matter how you spend it as long as you do commit to one of the most quintessential of spring activities. Maybe you'll want to take your family to Disney World or maybe you'll want to go chill in Maui by yourself?

12. Hang a Bird Feeder

Bird feeders are not beneficial to hang in your backyard simply for our own amusement of watching as various birds come for feeding, but during the nesting season specifically it helps parent birds collect more food – or at least more easily – for their baby birds than if they have to fly far from the nest to get the food.

13. Have a Garage Sale

Garage sales can actually be an insanely great way to get rid of some items you no longer need, with surprisingly little effort as you don't need to leave your house to commit to it. You can also use it as a chance to network and socialize with people living in your neighborhood plus you'll make some money on the side.

14. Throw a Garden Tea Party

If you have a garden or access to anything resembling one, throwing a gorgeous garden tea party—even if it's just for a small crowd—can be a major highlight for the spring season. Get inspired dreaming and planning of your own garden tea party by checking out this gallery. Although outdoor garden parties are often seen as a summer activity, there's really no reason why you couldn't add it to your bucket list of things to do in spring!

15. Have a Picnic

When you go to the park to feed the ducks, by all means make a day out of it! Put together a basket of strawberry shortcake, your freshly picked strawberries or blueberries and/or whatever else that you liken to be in your perfect picnic, plus a blanket, and find the perfect spot at the park to lay down and enjoy some warm but cool spring weather along with delicious snacks and fresh nature.

16. Hike a New Trail

Each season of the year offers something different for your hiking experiences, from the nature around you

to the trails that are best to be taken. Spring offers amazing landscapes with the flowers and the returning greenery, though in some destinations there may still be some snow lingering! But, because of the freshness and “coming back to life” after winter hibernation, spring can be inspirational for you to try and hike a trail you’ve never tried before.

17. Make a Dandelion Wish

Of wildflowers, dandelions seem to be simultaneously ones that receive the least and the most love. Yes, they may not be the most beautiful flower that grows by the side of the road, but when a big enough of a group of them grows in the same spot, they create a gorgeous field to marvel at. But the best part about dandelions are that, after their bloom, they turn into seeds that look like puffballs, which will fly away if you blow on them—and you ought to blow on them and make a wish as you do so; it just may come true!

18. Paint Rocks

This is a great activity that combines both the outdoors and the indoors, plus works great for home décor and as something to give out as a gift. You can even leave them in various spots to serve as a random act of kindness!

All you need to do is find rocks that are flat—or mostly flat—and then let your colorful and creative side flow.

19. Pick Wildflowers & Make a Bouquet

Besides dandelions, a variety of other wildflowers, many of them absolutely beautiful, pop up and bloom around the same time in the spring. They can make for a great DIY bouquet if you spend an afternoon in the nature soaking in the beauty you’re surrounded by, then picking a couple of your favorites for said bouquet.

20. Plan the Ultimate Summer Vacation

Spring is also an excellent time to prepare for the upcoming summer, when many of us are on an extended break from school or work. When you start your planning early enough, you’ll have the time and opportunities to create your ultimate summer vacation, including booking whatever accommodation, activities or flights are needed to make it happen, before prices soar or everything gets sold out.

Provided by:

<https://bucketlistjourney.net/spring-bucket-list-ideas/>



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By Don Wallace

Gary Clem, 41, is an Asst. Vice-President at Alliance Bank. He is active in the community, serving as president-elect at the Sulphur Springs Kiwanis Club.

Clem is a military veteran, serving in the United States Army after his graduation from Sulphur Springs High School in 1999. He joined the Army in October 2000 and served six and half years a Military Police with two combat tours in Iraq, earning the rank of Sergeant. He earned a Bronze Star on his second tour for locating roadside bombs on the main supply routes.

"I used the Montgomery G.I. Bill to pay for my education at Texas A&M-Commerce," Clem said.

He has a bachelor's degree in finance and master's in accounting.

He is also a member of the City of Sulphur Springs Zoning Board of Adjustments and Appeals.

"At the bank, I am a commercial lender, I am able to help our local businesses be successful," Clem said. "It is a great feeling to watch those that you assist succeed and make an impact on the community."

Clem and his wife Shaunda have been married for 10 years. They have two daughter, Carlie, 13 and Allie who is seven.

"I am an avid sports fan and love the Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers," Clem said. "I also help coach our daughter, Allie's softball team during her seasons."

15 THINGS ABOUT GARY CLEM

1. Are you the youngest, middle or oldest child?

I am the oldest child of two in my family and my sister, Jennifer, is five years younger than I am.

2. What is your favorite quote?

“You have to make sure the juice is worth the squeeze.”

Whatever you are doing in life, you need to ensure that the results produced/receiving are worth the effort that you are putting in to them.

3. What is number one on your bucket list?

To be debt free! That freedom would allow for more adventures and experiences on its own, without having to prioritize hopes and dreams.

4. What's your biggest pet peeve?

When you are at a four-way stop and the other drivers do not know the order of right of way.

5. What skill would you like to master?

I would like to master the skill of investing. The ability to generate an additional revenue stream from this activity intrigues me.

6. If you could trade places with anyone for a week, who would it be?

Jerry Jones. I would fire the General Manager and put Jimmy Johnson in the Ring of Honor.

7. Who is your hero?

I don't have a particular hero, per se, but I have always looked up to those who can stay composed in a stressful environment.

Those that can lead others to safety or victory are the ones that I admire.

8. Where do you see yourself in five years?

I see myself being a better person in five years. God has provided me with a life that has taken me on a lot of different paths.

Within each path, He has opened my eyes to opportunities to serve others more. He has blessed me far more than what I deserve, and I try every day to not waste His gift!

9. What is something you've always wanted to do but have never tried?

Play the guitar! I love music, and the only thing I can play is the radio or a streaming app.

10. Would you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert?

I am mostly an introvert. I would like to be more outgoing, but only my family and closest friends get to see the true me.

11. What is your proudest accomplishment?

I am proudest of my family! They are better than any award or achievement.

They provide me a purpose, and they support me in all that I do. We

love God, each other and helping others!

12. What do you think is the most essential professional skill?

Integrity. Doing the right thing when no one is watching. Having someone's trust is an unbelievable feeling.

13. If you had a warning label, what would it say?

Warning: Actions are louder than words.

I was blessed with a good work ethic by my father and the military. Their teachings have allowed me to succeed and out-perform a lot of expectations.

14. If money was no object, what would you do all day?

I would full time RV with my wife and kids. We have a great and beautiful country. It would be awesome to experience it all with them.

15. If you could share a meal with four individuals, living or dead, who would they be?

- Jesus, to tell him thank you!
- Warren Buffett, to learn how to stay humble.
- Troy Aikman, to learn to lead champions.
- Betty White, to learn to stay youthful.





Hearty Chili

By Whitney Vaughan

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. ground turkey (93/7)
- ½ medium yellow onion, peeled & diced
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 2 bell peppers, seeded & chopped (1 yellow, 1 red)
- 2 cans fire roasted tomatoes (14 oz. can)
- 1 can tomato paste (6 oz.)
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 can chili beans
- 4 tbsp. chili powder
- 1 tbsp. cumin
- Salt & Pepper to taste

1. Brown the meat together in a large stew pot. While the meat are cooking, chop all the vegetables.
2. Once meat is brown, add chopped veggies and garlic. Stir
3. Add fire roasted tomatoes, tomato paste, beans and chicken broth. Stir.
4. Stir in chili powder and cumin. Bring to a boil then reduce to a simmer.
5. Simmer until ready to serve. (I recommend 30 minutes to 1 hour to give flavors a change to release.)
6. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serving size: 350g
Servings: 5-6
Macros: 28P/5F/18C

Recommended side(s) per serving:
24g shredded cheese
5 saltine crackers

Macros per serving: 6/5/14



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