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WARM UP WITH WINTER SOUPS

EDUCATION/ENRICHMENT DIRECTORY INSIDE

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PARENTING MEDIA ASSOCIATION

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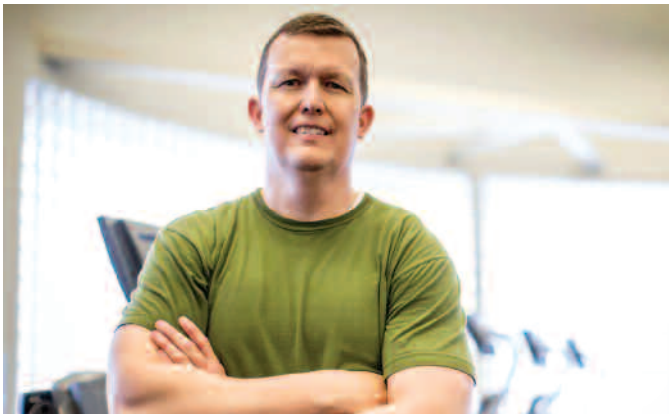
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All jumpers are required to complete a liability waiver for the specific SZ location they are visiting. Participants under 18 must have a waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian.



Gracelynn
& Kylee S.

bonded at birth.

Labor of Love Program

You are invited to join the *Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center* Labor of Love program for access to fun pregnancy perks such as free parenting classes and in-hospital amenities. We will even help you find a health care provider and insurance if you don't currently have a health plan.

To sign up or learn more about the *Helmerich Women's Center* Labor of Love program, visit LaborofLoveOK.com, call 918.579.8085 or e-mail LaborofLove@Hillcrest.com



Kylee has had brain surgery, so when she learned she was pregnant, her excitement quickly turned to caution. After speaking with her doctor, she learned a c-section would be the safest option for delivery. Although disappointed she couldn't have a natural childbirth, she understood it was for the best. Fortunately, the *Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center* at Hillcrest Medical Center offers gentle c-sections, allowing Kylee and daughter, Gracelynn, to bond immediately after birth. She remembers the moment Gracelynn was laid on her chest; it is a memory she will never forget.

To learn more about Kylee's life-changing experience at the *Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center*, visit Hillcrest.com.



tulsakids
January 2016
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Volume XXIX, Number 1

www.tulsakids.com

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2016 Education & Enrichment Guide

Impacting the Schools

In January or February we usually do an education-themed issue because we know that parents already are making plans for the fall. Many transfers, applications, school visits, entrance tests, etc. are done early in the spring semester for both public and private schools. Some deadlines are even as early as this month.

The good news about education for area parents is that there are a lot of choices: public, private, special programs, magnet, charter. The bad news is that the Oklahoma Legislature has already cut public school funding to the bone, and the state will be facing a projected deficit of over \$900 million next year. So, it's not just schools that will be hurting even more, but every other core service as well. It only makes Oklahoma less safe, less healthy and less educated. What will that mean for your children in school? Bigger class sizes? Fewer offerings? More inexperienced teachers and higher staff turnover?

The fact is, while many parents can make choices for their children, most parents can't, especially parents living in poverty. And that negative impact for those children follows them through life, thus impacting the state's workforce, economy and its ability to support new businesses.

According to ImpactTulsa, a nonprofit dedicated to finding ways to provide all children with a high quality education, 63 percent of economically disadvantaged children who participate in pre-k are reading at or above grade level compared with 44 percent of disadvantaged children who have not been in pre-k. As those students approach high school and beyond, ImpactTulsa found that only 53 percent of area high school graduates complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), leaving millions of dollars in college funding on the table. Read Julie Wenger Watson's article about the importance of the FAFSA in this issue.

Oklahoma does a good job with early childhood, but so much more needs to be done. We have generous foundations in our city, and extremely hard-working and caring people. But for every child being helped by a program, there are many, many more waiting in line to be helped. The best programs and practices are site-based and focus on the specific needs of a school community; have qualified, well-trained and supported personnel; and have the ability to adapt to shifting demographics. This is true of all schools, whether they have high poverty populations or not. Top down, test and drill, one-size-fits-all reform has been a failure, which is one of the primary reasons No Child Left Behind failed. We'll see what the new federal law has in store for us.

ImpactTulsa is currently focusing on kindergarten readiness, early literacy and graduation rates (according to www.impacttulsa.com, 20,000 Tulsa-area students will drop out over the next 10 years). Take a look at the website and see where you might be able to make an impact.




If you like to read TulsaKids, you may not know that you can watch us, too! Every Thursday morning on Tulsa's Channel 8, the local ABC affiliate, join Editor Betty Casey on Good Day Tulsa for tips to plan your family's weekend and more. Watch Good Morning



Oklahoma on Tuesdays for tips on timely topics and family information you'll want to know.



ON OUR COVER:

TRUE BLUE NEIGHBORS ANA WILSON, FIRST GRADE, EDUARDO PEREZ, 5TH GRADE AND NOAH SWAFFORD, 3RD GRADE.

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READING PARTNERS RECEIVES GRANT FROM LIFE.CHURCH

Last month at a Winter Reading Celebration at Park Elementary School, Life.Church honored Reading Partners, a Tulsa non-profit that places volunteers in schools to provide one-on-one tutoring to children, with a \$20,000 grant. Last year, Life.Church chose Reading Partners as one of their local missions after learning about their goal of providing one-on-one tutoring to improve literacy skills in Tulsa Public Schools. Now, more than 50 volunteers from Life.Church Jenks and Life.Church Broken Arrow are serving as tutors in Tulsa-area schools through Reading Partners.

CASH FOR CREATIVE WRITING: ENTER TCCL'S WRITING CONTEST

One thing is missing from the bookshelves of the world: your perspective. Write your own story. Be your own author.

Local wordsmiths are invited to enter the 39th Annual Adult Creative Writing Contest for a chance to win cash. The annual event is sponsored by The Friends of the Tulsa City-County Libraries.

The contest is open to any person 18 years or older who lives, works, attends school in Tulsa County or has a nonresident Tulsa City-County Library card. **The deadline to submit entries is Jan. 31, 2016.**

Submissions of unpublished original text are welcomed in these categories:

- Poetry** – with a 400-word limit
- Informal Essay** – with a 5,000-word limit
- Children's Fiction** – with a 3,000-word limit
- Short Story** – with a 5,000-word limit

A \$100 cash prize and a certificate are awarded to the best works in each category. Second-place winners receive a \$50 cash prize and a certificate. Certificates are awarded to those receiving honorable mention. Individuals may submit one entry per category. Each entry must have a separate entry form and a \$6 entry fee.

All winners and participants are invited to the awards during a ceremony at 2:30 p.m. on April 9, 2016, at Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 N. Hartford. The keynote speaker for the ceremony is Jay Cronley, a Tulsa World columnist and author of the novels *Quick Change*, *Funny Farm*, *Good Vibes* and *Fall Guy*. Cronley became a member of the Oklahoma Writers Hall of Fame in 2002 and entered the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame in 2014. First-place winners from each category will have the opportunity to read a short selection from his or her winning entry.

Entry forms, with a complete set of rules, are available at all TCCL locations or online at www.tulsalibrary.org/friends. For more information on the Adult Creative Writing Contest, call Gretchen Hannefield, Friends liaison and library volunteer coordinator, 918.549.7408.

REGENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL EXPANDS

Regent Preparatory School of Oklahoma is making room for the future.

In December, the classical Christian school broke ground on the new part of its campus at 8621 South Memorial Drive.

Phase I of the \$8.5 million expansion will include new football and baseball fields, as well as improvements to the existing library and fine arts facilities.

Currently, 470 students in grades pre-K through 12 attend Regent, which opened in 2000.

TULSA MAGNET AND LOTTERY SCHOOL DEADLINES APPROACH

Tulsa Public Schools is now accepting magnet program (K-12) applications for the 2016-2017 school year. All applications must be completed and submitted online. Tours for elementary magnet programs are mandatory. To schedule your tour, you must call the school directly.

TPS has a long tradition of magnet schools. Students are required to complete an application process to be considered for acceptance into a magnet school or program. Some magnet schools have a competitive entrance process requiring an entrance examination, interview or audition. Other magnet schools use a lottery system. Admissions to the three types of magnet programs are as follows:

Interest Magnets: Student interest is the determining factor for admission to four high schools offering a wide variety of specific programs. Interest magnet schools include:

- Central
- Hale
- McLain
- Webster High Schools.

Lottery Magnets: Students are selected based on a random drawing from each geographic quadrant of the city to fill available spaces. The lottery schools include:

Elementary schools:

- Dual Language Program
- Eisenhower International School
- Mayo Demonstration School
- Zarrow International School

Middle/junior high schools

- Monroe Demonstration School
- Thoreau Demonstration Academy
- Will Rogers College Junior High School

High schools

- Will Rogers College High

Academic Magnets: Students are selected on the basis of grades, test scores, attendance, and teacher recommendation. Academic magnet schools include:

- Carver Middle School
- Edison Middle School
- Booker T. Washington High School
- Edison Preparatory High School
- Tulsa Engineering Academy at Memorial High School

Applications for TPS magnet schools for 2016-2017 will be accepted November 9 - January 15. You can find the online application and more information at tulsaschools.org.

Tulsa Charter Schools

Charter Schools are publicly funded schools that operate independently from some of the regulations of the city or state imposed upon regular public schools, but must maintain state accreditation. They are open to all children, do not have special entrance requirements and do not charge tuition.

For information about the schools and how and when to apply, contact each individual school. For a complete list of Oklahoma charter schools, go to sde.ok.gov.

Tulsa schools include Discovery School of Tulsa, 4821 S. 72nd E. Ave., 918.960.3131, www.discoveryok.org; Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences, 3441 E. Archer, 918.828.7727, tsas.org; Dove Science Academy, 280 S. Memorial Dr., 918.834.3946, dsatulsa.org; KIPP, 1661 E. Virgin St., 918.794.8652, kipptulsa.org; Deborah Brown Community School, 2 S. Elgin, 918.425.1407, www.dbcschool.org; Tulsa Legacy Charter School; College Bound Academy, 2424 S. 101st E. Ave., www.collegeboundacademy.org; Tulsa Honor Academy, 2525 S. 101st East Ave, 918.833.9420, www.tulsa-honoracademy.org; Collegiate Hall, 1142 E. 56th St, 918.202.8526, collegiatehall.org;

continued next page

ARTS ALLIANCE TULSA ANNOUNCES 2015-2016 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Arts Alliance Tulsa (AAT), a new organization established to support the arts, announced the 39 local non-profit arts member organizations it will serve in its inaugural campaign season.

The organizations, both large and small, represent more than \$40 million in annual budgets and serve more than 1 million people every year. According to Americans for the Arts economic impact calculations, these numbers produce more than \$62 million in revenue for the local economy, create more than 2,000 jobs, and produce more than \$6 million annually in state and local tax income.

The 39 charter member organizations are: 108 Contemporary, American Theatre Company, Arts & Humanities Council/Hardesty Arts Center, Chamber Music Tulsa, Choregus Productions, Circle Cinema, Clark Theatre, Fab Lab, Gilcrease Museum, Greenwood Cultural Center, Heller Theatre, Living Arts, Philbrook Museum, Pocket Full of Hope, Oklahoma Performing Arts, Sherwin Miller Museum, South Asian Performing Arts Foundation, Spotlight Theatre, The bART Center for Music, Theatre North, Theatre Pops, Theatre Tulsa, Tulsa Artists Coalition, Tulsa Ballet, Tulsa Botanic Garden, Tulsa Camerata, Tulsa Children's Chorus, Tulsa Children's Museum, Tulsa Girls Art School, Tulsa Glass Blowing, Tulsa Historical Society, Tulsa Opera, Tulsa Oratorio Chorus, Tulsa Performing Arts Center Trust, Tulsa Project Theatre, Tulsa Symphony, Tulsa Youth Symphony, Water Works, and Woody Guthrie Center.

"We are thrilled with the response to our first year's application process and the participation and excitement it is generating," said AAT Executive Director Todd Cunningham. "We are already working to promote and raise money for these outstanding 39 organizations. Tulsa should take great pride in the quality and diversity of its incredible creative arts community."

Arts Alliance Tulsa joins a national network of similarly-organized arts alliances that function to receive funds from individuals, corporations, and charitable foundations and, after considerable independent review and due diligence, distribute to local arts institutions and provide support to the cultural community. AAT's Board seeks to raise money to provide ongoing support to arts groups by consolidating cultural fundraising efforts into a single organization, and use its deep and diverse knowledge of the cultural community to disperse the funds broadly and strategically. For more information, visit artstulsa.org.

ACT TO PROVIDE LOW-INCOME STUDENTS WITH FREE ACCESS TO NEW ONLINE PREP

ACT will offer low-income students free access to the new version of its ACT Online Prep™ program.

"This new benefit is part of ACT's commitment to helping increase college access, opportunity and success for low-income students," said Jim Larimore, ACT chief officer for the advancement of underserved learners. "We want to make sure these students have access to the same resources as their peers."

Students who register for the February 2016 ACT test or any subsequent test date using a low-income fee waiver will automatically receive free access to ACT Online Prep for a year. To qualify for a fee waiver, students must be enrolled in 11th or 12th grade; be either a United States citizen or testing in the U.S., U.S. territories or Puerto Rico; and meet one or more selected indicators of economic need.

ACT Online Prep is designed to build students' understanding of the ACT® test and provide them with the opportunity to evaluate their academic strengths and areas for development. It is available for purchase on an individual basis by students and on a group basis by schools and districts. It is one of many tools—both free and paid—that ACT offers to help students prepare for the ACT.

The new version of the program will provide enhanced learning content, including lessons to help students review subject-area content, and a game center where they may choose from several learning games and compete with other students.

The standard price for individuals for the new ACT Online Prep will be \$39.95, which provides a year of access.

ACT offers a variety of free test prep materials and information on its website, including free practice tests, test taking tips, complete test descriptions and a test-day checklist.

Information on eligibility requirements for the ACT test low-income waiver is available at www.actstudent.org/onlineprep/. Students and parents also may contact their high school's guidance office for more information.

advertiser in the news



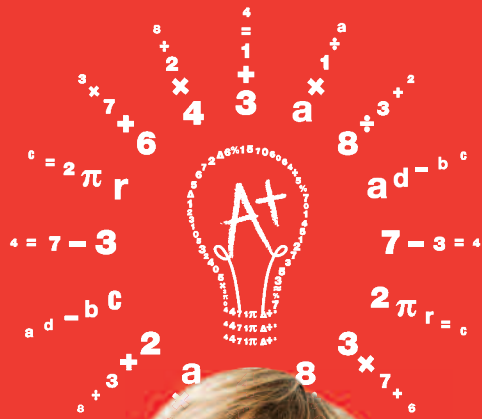
MADE IN OKLAHOMA JEWELRY LINE HAS INTERNATIONAL GROWTH GLEEFUL PEACOCK 1913 WEST TACOMA STREET, BROKEN ARROW WWW.GLEEFULPEACOCK.COM

Artist Nikki Halgren, owner of Gleeful Peacock in Broken Arrow, began designing hand-painted jewelry five years ago. Beginning by showing her work at local craft shows, Halgren eventually entered the Dallas Market where she gained strong momentum and extended market presence.

Sales reps took notice and her line of custom-painted designs gained international attention. Gleeful Peacock is now in over 2500 retail locations in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

"It's amazing to me that in such a short time period, I've gone from small craft shows to major markets and have 250 sales reps," Halgren said. "I wanted to create pieces that invoked memories and that really spoke to the free-spirited girl or woman. There was such a lack of color and inspiration in my own life at the time, and this line is a direct result of that. I had no idea the message would resonate in such a big way, but I'm thrilled that it has and now we're expanding into our own apparel line as well."

Gleeful Peacock can be found locally in Ida Red, Dwelling Spaces and other local retailers.



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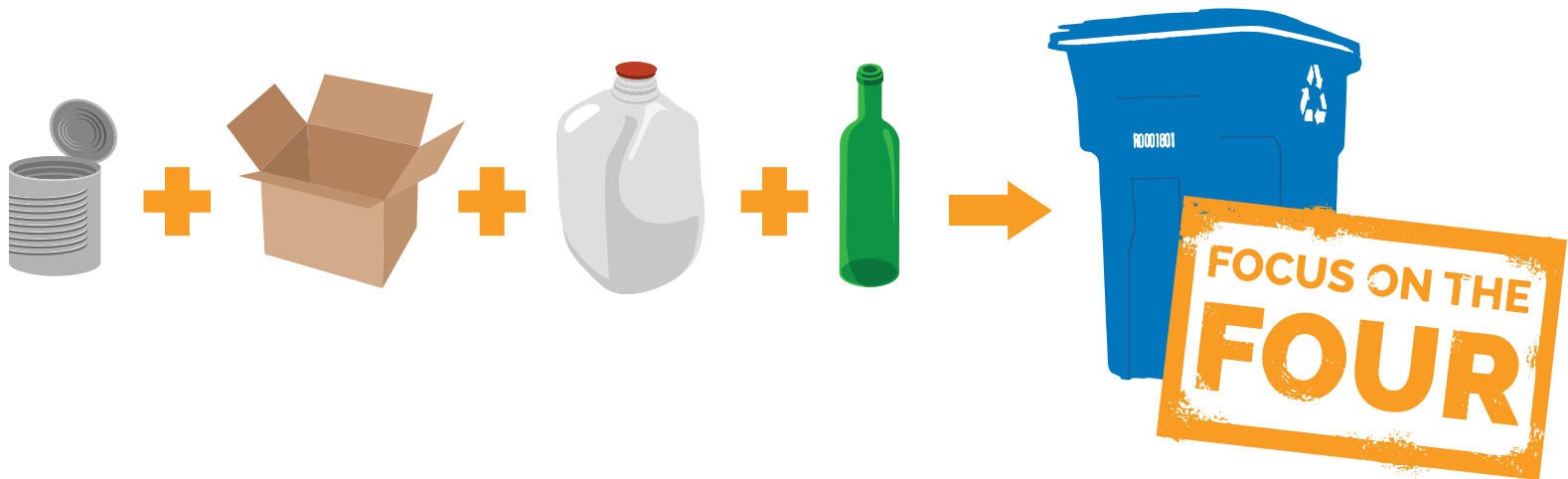
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BY KILEY ROBERSON



navigating playdates

You've taught your kids to share and play nicely with others, but when it comes to playdates, did you prepare yourself for the same? As crazy as it may sound, playdates are not as simple as they once were. Once upon a time, playdates consisted of a few kids spending a few hours together playing while mom checked in from time to time and refilled the snack bowl.

This is not the case today. Parents are expected to plan activities to entertain the kids instead of letting them use their imaginations, and you might be shunned if anyone finds out you served chips instead of edamame. Sending your child to someone's home isn't exactly worry-free either. Is the parent paying attention to the kids or Facebook? Are they letting them watch age-appropriate television? Did they remember the peanut allergy?

So how do you navigate these new-age playdate puzzles and make sure everyone has fun? Here are some tips for playdate preparations.

Keep Numbers Low – At any age, the least risky move is to host a one-on-one playdate. This way there is no fear of anyone getting left out, and you only have to worry about the rules of one other parenting group.

Stick Around – Plan on



PRESCHOOL PLAYDATES USUALLY WORK BEST ONE-ON-ONE.

hanging around for the playdate if your child is under three. At

this age, playdates are social events for both kids and parents.

You can get to know the other parent better and find out what her parenting style is like before you try to host or attend a drop-off playdate.

Don't Overstay – The smaller the child, the shorter the playdate should be. An hour is ideal for toddlers, but most preschoolers can handle two or three. When in doubt, leave them wanting more.

Be the Best Guest – Always drop off and pick up on time, offer to bring snacks, insist on helping with cleanup and make sure your child says, "Thank you for having me."

Be a Good Host – Ask if your guest has any food allergies or other health issues, make sure to get emergency contact information and check the other parent's comfort level with TV and computer use. On everything else, if you're not sure...just ask.

Crowd Pleasers – Have some activities ready in case free play gets old. Throw a dance party, have a scavenger hunt or do arts and crafts.

Perfect Treats – Always ask about food allergies before serving a snack. Try the healthier option first and then you can follow up with a sweet or salty treat. Turn the treats into fun by letting the kids help. They can make a yogurt parfait by layering in yogurt, fruit and granola. Let them

continued next page


spread peanut butter or cream cheese on crackers, then make silly faces with raisin or shredded carrots. The possibilities are limitless.

Be Fair – Make a good faith effort to alternate locations. If you find yourself taking your kid to friends' homes a lot, you might want to offer to host the next one.

Report as Needed – Nobody likes a tattletale, so let the small stuff go. But most parents want to know if their child hurt someone, intentionally broke something, or had a major meltdown. If that's the case, give the other parent a brief explanation of what happened, but try to stay positive.

Know Your Place – Disciplining another child is simply not your job. That should be left to the behaviorally challenged kid's parents. If there is an issue, you can get involved with a statement like, "Hands to yourself. We have a rule against hitting." If things get out of hand, call the other parent and let him take care of it.

It may seem like a lot, but when it comes down to it playdates should really be about having fun and socialization. As long as both sides keep an open dialog, everything should go off without a hitch and your kids will be begging for the next visit.



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BY JUDY M. MILLER

9 ways to ring in the New Year with your kids

Celebrating the New Year was an adults-only evening, until I had kids. Upon becoming a parent, I had no desire to leave my kids at home with a babysitter -- if I could get one -- so I decided to make New Year's Eve family-friendly and still have a good time. Here are some ways in which we have rung in the New Year.

1. Get Gussied Up or Dress in Theme

Why wear holiday clothes only once or a few times? Put the special clothing on, along with some added bling for the evening. Our sons have worn suit coats and bowties; our daughters have been bedazzled with sequins, boas and lace in addition to their dresses.

Tired of the holiday clothes? Decide on a theme. Perhaps it will relate to your dinner cuisine, perhaps not. It does not matter since it is your party. One year we ate Italian food and wore Halloween costumes.

2. Recap the Year with a Photo Scavenger Hunt

My kids love to pore through pictures, especially if they are the subjects. As they have gotten older, they also take pictures during vacations, special events, and

of everyday moments with their siblings.

Select, print and hide the pictures around your home. Send your kids off to find them and then gather the family to reminisce. Place the photos into a photo album designated by the year, or in a larger New Year's photo album segmented by year to hold the memories. Add notes in colored pens or markers around each picture.

3. Make a Special Meal Together

We have created our New Year's Eve dinner in two ways. We have chosen a cuisine—Indian, for example — and cooked a multi-course meal. We have appetizers, vegetable, meats, starches, desserts, etc.

We have also asked our children what they want for each course, their favorite, and then put it to a vote. There are six of us, so we always have at least six options during the meal.

4. Create a Family Time Capsule

Kids change quickly. Have or help your child fill out a series of questions about his or her year, such as a favorite book, movie, activity or friend. Ask about new discoveries made, plans for the near and distant future, and favorite times during the year. Don't forget to ask about goals and dreams for the New Year.

Make a template on your

computer or have your children create their own with decorative paper, clip art, stickers, and markers. Consider adding your children's art or writing; copies of a few of their favorite pictures (take a New Year's picture and add it to the contents); their handprints or footprints, if younger; a newspaper recapping the year in review; and a note to themselves to read when they are older. Ask if there is anything else they wish to add.

Place all items into a time capsule or a sealed container or box. Place the time capsule year and the year to be opened on the outside of the capsule or container. Decide where the time capsule will be kept.

5. Have a Progressive Feast

We love a movable meal. Each course is served in a particular room of our house. Some years we get the china out; other years we mix it up. My kids love to picnic all over the house, so we have beach blankets set up in the rooms we will eat in.

Candles are an "always." They add ambiance and specialness to this last evening of the year. They are lit throughout our home.

My children help shop, prepare, and cook. Younger children can assist you by setting tables or getting ingredients.

Be sure to go over the

recipes ahead of time. Some ingredients may prove challenging to find.

6. Bubbles and Glow for Everyone!

My husband and I celebrate the New Year with a glass or two of champagne. Our children get glasses of sparkling apple or grape juice in champagne flutes.

Glow stick necklaces, along with whatever else you decide to dress up in, are fun. We buy glow stick necklaces in bulk, something we began doing when our children were very young. They still love to wear them, even fashioning crowns and bracelets out of them.

We fill balloons and hang them in each of the rooms we are dining in. Some years we go with specific colors; other years we fuse the leftover decorations from years' past.

7. Play Games

We are passionate about our card and board games. Any night at home is an excuse to sit down and play games. Consider getting a new game or two to play, or teaching your kids how to play Bridge or Euchre if they are old enough.

8. Dance and Sing

Create a playlist of party songs to listen to or go with music that resonates with the theme you have chosen. One year

continued next page

we listened to NSYNC and the Backstreet Boys; that music unearthed a lot of memories and reminiscing.

9. Celebrate Early: Cheat on the Time Zone

Do you have younger kids? Why not celebrate New Year's as it happens in another time zone? This is something I did when my children were young. Staying up through midnight was difficult for them (and their exhausted parents).


Perhaps you might celebrate with England or Japan. Consider learning about that country's culture and make traditional recipes.

Another idea is to throw a "Noon's Eve" party for your young child. Invite his friends. Create a balloon drop out of paper tablecloths. Seam two square pieces of the paper tablecloth with yarn. Leave enough to pull it out when you wish to release the balloons. Duct tape the edges of the tablecloth to the ceiling. Allow the tablecloth to hang loosely, but out of the way of young hands. Fill it with balloons and, for more excitement, add confetti. Make it extra special by serving sparkly drinks, kid-friendly and kid-favorite snacks, and a few crafts.

Ring in the New Year with your children can be fabulous. Celebrating New Year's with your children generates a new family tradition in the process of creating a memorable evening, one that is sure to be passed down by your children to theirs.

BIO:

Judy M. Miller is a freelance writer living in the Midwest with her husband and four children. She looks forward to celebrating another New Year with her family. She is a Certified Gottman Educator and the author of What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween and Writing to Heal Adoption Grief: Making Connections & Moving Forward.





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BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

FAFSA links students to financial aid

The applications are done, and your high school senior has plans in place for his or her post-secondary education. Just as a huge sigh of relief begins to escape your lips, it turns into a gasp of horror. How will you pay for it? The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, can help you find the answer.

The FAFSA is a document that colleges, trade and technical schools use to determine the amount of financial aid to award students. Completing the FAFSA can be done online and requires the same information necessary to file your federal income tax return. In the past, it was recommended that the FAFSA be filled out in January. A recent change now allows families to fill out the FAFSA as early as Oct. 1, using 2015 completed tax returns for the 2017-18 academic year. While families still have until the end of June to fill out the FAFSA, it doesn't pay to procrastinate. Once the limited amount of financial aid money is awarded, it's gone, and it's a first-come, first-serve game.

While many parents and students are familiar with the FAFSA, only an estimated 52 percent of high school seniors actu-

ally complete the application. Some families assume they make too much money to qualify for aid, others have concerns about privacy, and many simply lack adequate information about the process. As a result, millions of dollars in potential financial aid are left unclaimed each year. Fortunately for Tulsa area high school students and their families, a number of local organizations are working hard to change this.

ImpactTulsa partners with leaders from education, business, philanthropic, nonprofit, civic and faith communities to improve education for students living in and around Tulsa. On Jan. 8, ImpactTulsa will kick off a campaign to increase the number of students who complete the FAFSA with the goal of connecting stu-

“On Jan. 8, ImpactTulsa will kick off a campaign to increase the number of students who complete the FAFSA with the goal of connecting students with the financial support they need to pursue further education after graduation.”

qually complete the application. Some families assume they make too much money to qualify for aid, others have concerns about privacy, and many simply lack adequate information about the process. As a result, millions of dollars in potential financial aid are left unclaimed each year. Fortunately for Tulsa area high school students and their families, a number of local organizations are working hard to change this.

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Monroe Nichols, COO of ImpactTulsa, noted that while existing programs like Tulsa Community College's Tulsa Achieves and Tulsa Technology Center's Accelerating Independence Scholarship provide a way for students to cover the cost of tuition, they are "gap-filler" programs. "What they essentially do is see all the things you qualify for and then the scholarship kicks in to cover the balance, so you're not eligible for those unless you complete a FAFSA form to get an assessment of what you qualify for," he explained.

"If we look at our community from an economic development standpoint, we know that about 60 percent of jobs are going to re-

quire some form of post-secondary education. We think about the FAFSA form as being the gateway to getting that education from a financial standpoint. Given that half of those kids aren't completing it, it becomes a really, really important deal as you look at having a workforce that is prepared to take the jobs on today and in the future."

For those families that decline to complete the FAFSA because they believe their income level would preclude them from any type of aid, Nichols stressed the fact that FAFSA connects students to more than just federal need-based scholarships. Work-study programs and scholarships specific to individual universities are also part of the mix.

"The big thing I always tell students, the thing we'll continue to harp on, is that it doesn't cost a dime to fill out the FAFSA form. It costs a little bit of time. It hurts you none, but it has the potential to benefit you a great deal. I don't think people realize that," Nichols said.

"We'll begin by providing that broad level of community education around the FAFSA form, the benefits of filling it out, what it means for your student, and then what it means for the community," Nichols said of Impact-

continued next page

Tulsa's effort to raise awareness about the FAFSA.

ImpactTulsa will also partner with communities of faith, high school college and career counselors, and even recent college graduates to reach high school students and their families.

Bixby Public Schools are also taking steps to increase FAFSA completion rates within their own community. For several years, the Bixby Public School system has provided high school juniors the opportunity to take the ACT college entrance exam for free during school hours.

According to Dr. Kyle Wood, superintendent of Bixby Public Schools, helping students complete the FAFSA is the next step to ensure students have the chance for further education after graduation.

"The other impediment to going to college has to do with 'How do I pay for it?'; the ACT part is 'Can I get in academically?'; and then the FAFSA form part is 'Can I afford to go,'" Wood explained. "One of the things we're going to do is bring it into the school," Wood said. "The unfortunate part of the FAFSA is that it certainly requires a lot of information from the parents who are predominantly the ones who have to fill it out."

To overcome the resistance of parents who may be unfamiliar with the FAFSA, Wood said that Bixby students will learn how to fill out the FAFSA at school. Faculty and administrators will also impress upon them the impor-

ance of the FAFSA for getting financial aid, grants, scholarships and waivers in college. Wood hopes that the students will then go to their parents and encourage them to fill it out. Students will be taught what information is required to complete the forms.

While Wood noted that some financial aid resources have income limits, they are not the only form of aid available. "There are specialized grants for health professionals. There are specialized grants for education if you want to be a teacher. There are specialized grants for fire, police and public safety. There are a wide variety of those that filling out the FAFSA will tell you in general what you might qualify for."

When it comes to paying for higher education, this is clearly a case of "what you don't know can hurt you." Fortunately, with resources like ImpactTulsa and Bixby Public Schools' initiative, families and students living in and around the city of Tulsa should find it easier to finance a post-secondary school education.

"The FAFSA and the ACT ought to be a part of the everyday, normal package of a high school graduate," Wood said. "We need to get to that point where everyone is doing it, and everyone is completing it regardless of what their post-high school plans are."

To complete the FAFSA, visit www.fafsa.ed.gov. For more information on ImpactTulsa, visit www.impacttulsa.com.

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BY JOHN FANCHER, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR, TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY

Oklahoma author on Sequoyah list

Each year the Oklahoma Library Association presents the Sequoyah Book Award, honoring the best books for children, as well as intermediate and high school students.

A combination of public and private school librarians throughout Oklahoma choose the masterlist for each age group: children, grades 3 through 5; intermediate, grades 6 through 8; and high school, grades 9 through 12. The masterlists, each containing 15 selections, are created to appeal to students in a variety of situations, interests and reading levels.

First presented in 1959 to Fred Gibson for his timeless tale, *Old Yeller*, authors have cherished receiving the state-wide award because it is voted on and chosen by young readers.

Now through the end of March, students are encouraged to read at least three selections from the list before casting their vote. Follow this link to see the masterlist for each age group: <http://www.oklibs.org/?page=01Ssequoyah>.

Among the authors on the intermediate masterlist is Oklahoman Tim Tingle, selected for his book *How I Became A Ghost*. He is the first Oklahoma Choctaw to be selected as a masterlist author. *How I Became A Ghost* was published by The RoadRunner Press, an Oklahoma book pub-

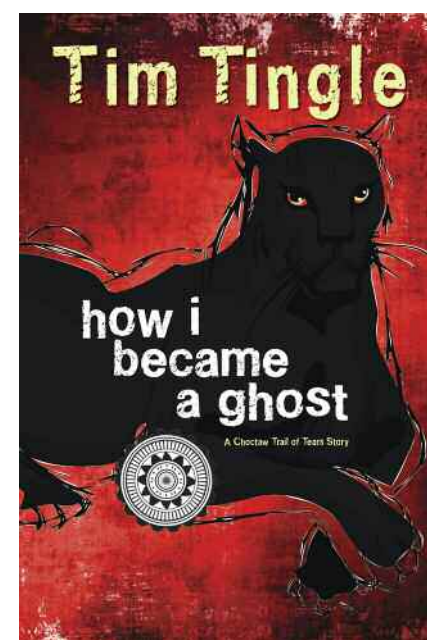


SEQUOYAH BOOK AWARD MASTERLIST FEATURES OKLAHOMA CHOCTAW AUTHOR TIM TINGLE.

lisher.

How I Became A Ghost is the first in a planned trilogy told

through the perspective of a young Choctaw boy, Isaac. He recounts his tribe's removal from



the only land its people have ever known, and how their journey to Oklahoma led him to become a ghost – one with the ability to help those he left behind. Isaac leads a remarkable group of Choctaw comrades: a tough-minded teenage girl, a shape-shifting panther boy, a lovable 5-year-old ghost who only wants her mom and dad to be happy, and Isaac's talking dog, Jumper.

Tingle is a storyteller and award-winning author of books for children, teens and adults. In 2005, he was selected as the featured author for Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma, for his book, *Walking the Choctaw Road: Stories From Red People Memory*.

continued next page

This book features 12 stories with a mix of historical accounts, traditional lore and tales from everyday life. Tingle collected stories through interviews with Choctaw tribal elders. Told in chronological order, the stories range from the days when most Choctaws were living in Mississippi to the Trail of Tears.

"My dad and his brothers and sisters told story after story of our family surviving the Trail of Tears," recalled Tingle. "John Carnes, my great (x4) grandfather was 10 years old when his town was burned to the ground and the journey began. It seemed every weekend we children were treated to various versions of John's story."

His first children's book, *Crossing Bok Chitto*, earned more than 20 state and national awards, including Best Children's Book from the American Library Association. It also was named an Editor's Choice by the New York Times Books Review.

Writing Choctaw-themed books for nearly 20 years, Tingle is fulfilling a lifelong dream of writing.

"To be included on the Sequoyah Masterlist, and the first Choctaw to achieve that honor, is a humbling and encouraging truckload of logs upon the fire of my work," he said. "As the logs tumble to the ground, I hope to survive and complete 20 books in the *How I Became A Ghost* series; that's my goal. I'm 67. Possible? My mom is 94."

Book two in Tingle's new series, *When A Ghost Talks, Listen*, is set for publication by The Road-Runner Press in February 2016.

To read any of Tingle's books, and other Sequoyah Book Award Masterlist selections, visit any Tulsa City-County Library location. TCCL and libraries throughout the state feature special displays to encourage students to read and vote for their favorite Sequoyah Book Award finalist.



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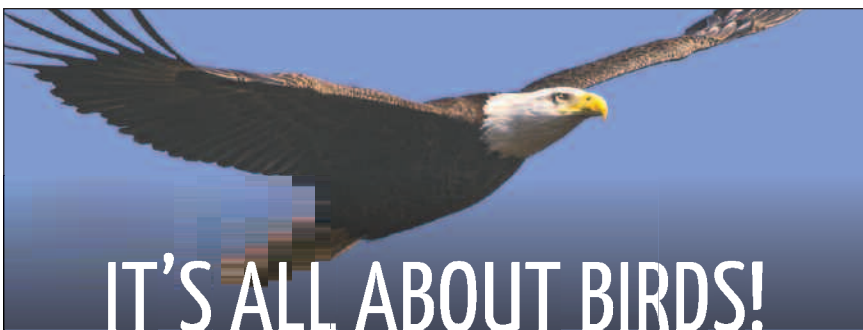
- After graduating from Cascia Hall, Dr. Heath Evans attended Villanova University where he played football while pursuing a chemistry degree.
- He continued his studies at the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry and pursued his passion for Oral and Maxiofacial Surgery at Nassau University Medical Center in New York.
- Dr. Evans is currently a physician with Eastern Oklahoma Oral and Maxiofacial Surgeons.

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MENTORS MATTER: EVERY SCHOOL NEEDS A TRUE BLUE NEIGHBOR

BY BETTY CASEY

Five days a week, Monday through Friday, 140 Kendall-Whittier Elementary students participate in a high quality afterschool program, the True Blue Neighbors Youth Mentoring Program (TBNYMP). Another 106 children are currently on the waiting list.

The program has improved academic outcomes for students, especially those who have been enrolled for multiple years.

Once students are enrolled in the TBNYMP program, they and their siblings remain in it throughout elementary school. End-of-year literacy data (May 2015) showed that 88 percent of third-grade students who had participated in TBNYMP for two years or more were reading at a “proficient” level for third grade compared with 35 percent for all Kendall-Whittier third-

grade students.

At a time when educators and policymakers are looking for what works to improve academic outcomes for students, TBNYMP has found a successful model for Kendall-Whittier’s predominately Hispanic population. A high percentage are English Language Learners (ELL) and are on Individual Education Plans (IEP).

The TBN Youth Mentoring Program was established at Kendall-Whittier in 2011, serving 70 students, but it really got some muscle when it was awarded a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant in August 2014. The \$1.2 million grant (over five years) provided space for twice as many children and gave organizers the ability to hire seven certified teachers, one art teacher and two substitutes. The funds enabled TBNYMP to hire seven teaching assistants and to contract with outside youth-focused programs and partners.

“We don’t want to mirror the school day,” said Olivia Landrum, program director for TBNYMP. “We show the kids opportunities and offer a lot of hands-on activities.” We have a good mix of reading, art, community gardening. TU faculty [offer] photography, Spanish.”

Children experience enrichment through fine arts instruction, they learn about nutrition and have access to healthy foods through a community garden, and take part in character-building experiences. Each student also receives a healthy snack and a complete dinner every day. Teachers and mentors also provide instruction and support in literacy and core academic subjects.

Landrum coordinates partnerships with FAB Lab, the Tulsa Regional STEM Alliance, social services and, recently, with COX Communications, allowing TBNYMP to provide 70 Chromebooks to families.





(L to R) DANIELLE HOVENGA, MIKE MILLS AND OLIVIA LANDRUM.

“It’s a way to bridge the digital divide for low-income families,” said Danielle Hovenga, director of community engagement. In addition to the Chromebooks, the families receive in-home Internet and on-going technology training. “Our hope is that families really use it [for things such as] resume writing or finding the nearest doctor. They can use it to get on Power School.”

“Parents love the (TBNYMP) program,” Landrum said. “They bond here.”

Some parents are so attached to the program that they’ve become assistant teachers.

“We provide support for the entire family,” said Mike Mills, associate dean for community relations in the Office of Public Affairs & Economic Development at The University of Tulsa. “One of the successes is that Olivia is bilingual and Danielle is bilingual. Families connect with them and feel safe.”

As part of the partnership with The University of Tulsa, Mills coordinates outreach for TBNYMP and encourages TU students to intern or volunteer at Kendall-Whittier.

“It’s transformational for college students,” Mills said. “One student athlete changed his major [after mentoring through TBNYMP] because he wanted to work with kids. He felt empowered to continue this type of work. Another student was incredibly shy until we brought him to work with

the kids at Kendall-Whittier. He just opened up.”

Mills said that TBNYMP underscores the University’s commitment to providing real-life experiences that align with students’ career goals.

TU Spanish Professor Elsa Plumlee requires her higher-level conversational Spanish students to work with Spanish-speaking children who are in the mentoring program. “This is the practical application of community,” she said.

TU student Grace Heaberlin volunteers with second-grader Ivan Perez every Tuesday and Thursday at Kendall-Whittier. “It’s important to be well-versed in many different cultures,” she said, “because America is such a cultural mecca.”

Recognizing that children do not live in isolation, TBNYMP uses “whole child” engagement, offering year-round programming, family dinners and enrichment events that reflect and support the unique needs of the Kendall-Whittier population. The university/school partnership is also unusual and has garnered national attention.

“This is a model that could be replicated,” Mills said. “21st Century holds us up as an example to the state.”

Despite its success, TBNYMP depends on grant money and community partnerships, which means there is no guarantee that it can continue in the same form after the grant runs out. Those involved hope to renew the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant.

“We could easily have another program,” Landrum said, noting the 100 plus children who are waiting at Kendall-Whittier.



TU SPANISH PROFESSOR ELSA PLUMLEE WORKS WITH A STUDENT.

BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

Bixby's Corey Kent White plays benefit concert at Cain's

Bixby native and rising country star, 21-year-old Corey Kent White returns to Cain's Ballroom Jan. 23, 2016. White first stepped on that historic stage over a decade ago as a young member of Oklahoma Stomp, a Western Swing band pulled together for a performance at the Bob Will's Birthday Bash celebration. Ten years later, White has performed with Willie Nelson and toured with Tobey Keith. Last spring, he was the final country artist on the eighth season of NBC's hugely popular vocal competition "The Voice." White's honky tonk homecoming this month will not only be a special night for fans, family and friends, it will also be a chance for the young musician to fulfill his dream of using his music to help others. Proceeds from the concert will benefit Folds of Honor, an Owasso-based non-profit foundation that provides educational scholarships to the children and spouses of fallen and disabled military personnel.

"I'm just honored to be a part of this. Folds of Honor is such an amazing organization, and it was a no brainer for me to be a part of this partnership," White said.

The Cain's show kicks off a series of five benefit concerts, culminating in a show at the Folds of Honor/QuikTrip 500 NASCAR



COREY KENT WHITE

PHOTO CREDIT: CONNOR WADE PHOTOGRAPHY

race held at the Atlanta Speedway in Hampton, GA in February.

"Our goal is to raise \$50,000 on this concert series in under a month," White explained. "That's going to change 10 kids' lives forever. They're going to be able to go to college and not have to go into debt to do so."

White lives in Nashville now where he's finishing his last semester of college online and working on songs for an upcoming album, a follow up to his 2014 EP, *Make Noise*. "We just started narrowing down songs and also started talking about how we want each song to sound, and

how we're going to bring it to life and give it an identity of its own. I'm really excited about that."

White may play some of those new tunes at his Cain's show. If you listen closely, you might just hear those early Western swing roots. "Like anything that you grow up seeing, hearing or experiencing, it becomes part of who you are. My music is a big part of who I am as well," White commented. "I think there are definitely Western swing influences in my music. It might not be apparent to the average listener. Just because of how much I was around the scene, it's defi-

nately influenced my taste in music and what I listen to."

White is looking forward to his return to Oklahoma and to the Cain's stage. "It's going to be a really cool thing. It's going to be filled with family and friends. We're going to get to educate a lot of people about Folds of Honor, and I think once people hear the cause and the heart behind it, we're going to really gain some momentum and raise some money for these soldiers and their spouses and their kids."

For more information on Corey Kent White, visit www.coreykentwhite.com. For more on Folds of Honor, visit www.foldsofhonor.org.



COREY KENT WHITE, WITH OKLAHOMA STOMP ON OUR MARCH 2007 COVER.



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warm up with Winter Soups

The recipe for a cozy winter begins with a pot of soup.

You'll also want to throw in hot drinks, a quilt, favorite books and movies. The snuggling and warmth of winter is what makes it bearable – or wonderful – depending on your perspective.

We all instinctively teach our children about the rhythms of the year by following the traditions of the seasons. But, once Christmas has passed, it can be difficult to show and share the beauty of winter with children. Snow days are one way, of course. But when it's blistery cold and we're spending most of our time indoors, it's nice to find ways to bring joy to winter. For me, it starts with food.

My children and I spend many winter days in the kitchen, making everything from cookies to homemade play dough. They beg for their turn to stir the batter, and I fill their mugs with cocoa and spiced tea.

Often, the best part of a busy day with moms and dads at work and kids at school is when everyone is back home. Start a fire, let the big kids set the table and the little ones butter the



bread, and ladle warm soup into bowls. It's those small comforts that mean so much and make memories for children.

Here are some of my favorite soup recipes.

A sweet friend, Nadia Rosales, shared this simple soup recipe with me years ago. She says each time you make it, consider how much money you're saving with this inexpensive dinner. Then, send \$15, or whatever you think

the savings is, to a charity that helps the hungry or needy. Be sure to involve the children in figuring how much you saved and to whom you will give.

HOPEFUL BEAN SOUP

- 1 bag black beans
- 1 whole medium onion
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 cup rice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Parmesan cheese or limes

Rinse beans, and cover with water overnight.

Follow instructions for cooking beans on the back of the bag. Then, 35 minutes before the beans are cooked, add the onion and garlic. Cover, and continue cooking.

In a different pot, bring 2 cups water and 1 cup rice to a boil. Cover, and simmer for 20 minutes or until all the water has evaporated. Do not stir.

Fifteen minutes before the beans are ready, add olive oil. When beans are completely cooked, add salt, and stir.

Serve rice and beans in bowls, and add cheese or lime juice, as desired.

This soup is perfect for babies as young as 6 months. If the baby is 12 months or older, you can use low-sodium broth in place of the water. This recipe, from "Weaning and First Foods" by Nicola Graimes, makes enough for two children and two adults.

PEA SOUP

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 leek, finely sliced
- 1 stick celery, finely chopped
- 2 Yukon gold or white round potatoes, diced
- 4 cups water
- 2 cups frozen peas

continued next page

Heat the oil in a large, heavy saucepan. Add the leek, and saute over medium heat for 5 minutes or until softened. Add the celery and potato, and cook for another 5 minutes.

Pour the water over the vegetables, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat, and simmer the soup for 15 minutes. Add the peas, and cook for another 5 minutes or until the potato is tender.

Using a handheld blender or food processor, blend the soup until smooth. Reheat the soup, if necessary, before serving. For the adult servings, season to taste with salt and black pepper.

Note: This soup freezes well for up to 3 months. You can freeze in convenient child-size portions.

I've never actually made this soup. But I've eaten it plenty of times when my mom makes it and shares with me. It's great for dinner or for people who like heartier soups.

STUFFED PEPPER SOUP

Serves 4 to 6 as a main dish

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans petite diced tomatoes
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 1 (32-ounce) carton beef broth
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup uncooked long grain white or brown rice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Heat a large soup pot over medium heat. Add the olive oil and ground beef, breaking the meat apart with a wooden spoon. Cook until browned and mostly cooked through, about 5 minutes.

Add the onion, bell peppers and garlic, and saute until tender, about 5 more minutes.

Add the diced tomatoes, tomato paste, beef broth, basil,

oregano, salt and pepper, and bring to a boil. Then, lower the heat to low, and simmer for 30 minutes.

While the soup is simmering, cook the rice according to the package directions. Stir the parsley into the soup.

To serve, divide rice among bowls, then ladle soup into each bowl.

We like this lightened-up version of potato soup, adapted from Cooking Light magazine.

BAKED POTATO SOUP

- 4 baking potatoes (about 2 1/2 pounds)
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 6 cups (2 percent reduced-fat) milk
- 1 1/4 cup (4 ounces) reduced-fat shredded extra sharp cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 3/4 cup chopped green onions, divided
- 6 bacon slices, cooked and crumbled

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Pierce potatoes with a fork; bake at 400 degrees for 1 hour or until tender. Cool. Peel potatoes; coarsely mash.

Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Place flour in a large Dutch oven; gradually add milk, stirring with a whisk until blended. Cook over medium heat until thick and bubbly (about 8 minutes). Add mashed potatoes, 1 1/4 cup cheese, salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper, stirring until cheese melts. Remove from heat.

Stir in sour cream and 1/2 cup onions. Cook over low heat 10 minutes or until thoroughly heated (do not boil). Ladle 1 1/2 cups soup into each of 8 bowls. Sprinkle each serving with 1 1/2 teaspoons cheese, 1 1/2 teaspoons onions and about 1 tablespoon bacon. Garnish with cracked pepper, if desired.

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BY BETTY CASEY

building a Blue Ribbon school

Adilene “Addy” Rios’s bright smile fades and her shoulders hunch forward as she talks about spending her seventh-grade year in a special education class at a Tulsa middle school.

“I was stuck in Special Education for a whole year, and they wouldn’t let me out. We just sat there.”

In eighth grade Addy, an English Language Learner (ELL), was promoted out of Special Education because of higher test scores, so that year was better for her, but Addy said she didn’t feel



ADDY RIOS.



TSAS STUDENTS AND TEACHERS WITH THE BLUE RIBBON FLAG.

that her teachers cared about her. She had little interest in school and was fearful of moving on to the high school where fights in the hallways and talking back to teachers were common. For Addy, dropping out of school was a clear possibility until her English teacher encouraged her to apply to Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences (TSAS), a charter high school. Addy took the teacher’s advice and was admitted to TSAS through the lottery in ninth grade.

Now a junior at TSAS, Addy has gone from reading at a

fourth-grade level when she entered TSAS to taking AP English.

“It was stressful my freshman year because there was so much work,” she said. “But my mindset changed. In middle school, I thought it was cool to talk back to teachers. Here (at TSAS), the sense of community is great. You can talk to the teachers like they’re your friends, and they will not give up on you. Teachers will help you before or after school. They won’t let you give up. It’s amazing.”

Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences was established in 2001 by

a group of four Memorial High School teachers who dreamed of teaching at a high school based on the educational model of liberal arts colleges. The new charter school law opened the door, and TSAS began its first year in an office building at 51st and Yale. Today, it is located in a previously unused TPS building just north of Admiral and Harvard. Next year, the school will move to a larger TPS building located at Owen Park, and a seventh grade will be added.

Under the law, TSAS is a public school that operates on 95 percent of the state funds that TPS receives, with TPS keeping a five percent administrative fee. As a charter, TSAS is not eligible for local or bond dollars.

This year, TSAS was one of five Oklahoma schools honored as a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. For Eric Doss, TSAS director, the award helped validate the school’s vision of providing students with a college prep education in a small, collaborative environment. The administration and board purposely limit enrollment to approximately 300 in grades nine through 12, so TSAS has small class sizes (most have 18 students). The school operates on a trimester system, allowing for 70-

continued next page

minute class periods. The longer class time gives teachers an opportunity to provide in-depth project- and inquiry-based instruction.

Addy says the small class sizes and longer class periods allow teachers to give her individual help, and to show her different ways to find success. "My AP English teacher writes all over my paper," she said. "I get lots of feedback. I love every class."

Addy's experience is not necessarily unique, but because students come from throughout the TPS district, each one has his or her own story. Doss said that this year's freshman class represents 25 different public, private and homeschool experiences.

And, despite its reputation as a college prep school, Doss said that is not the number one reason most young people give for applying to TSAS. The majority of students list their primary reason as safety, not just physical safety, but the safety of acceptance from teachers and peers.

Teacher Daniel Sharples, who is in his second year at TSAS, teaches AP European History and World Studies, a freshman class that he co-teaches with Ellen Stackable. Sharples said that creating the school culture takes work from teachers, parents and administrators. He and Stackable spend time at the beginning of each year indoctrinating a new group of freshman, many of whom are not used to the level of work and responsibility required at TSAS.

"We treat students like adults. We talk about what it means to be a human at TSAS," Sharples said. "What does it mean to be a human being? What does it mean to be a better person?"

For Addy, the collaborative school culture makes all the difference. "I had zero friends when I came here, but my friends now are all great," she said. "They're accepting of everything. They don't judge you, and they're so understanding."



DANIEL SHARPLES, TSAS EUROPEAN HISTORY AND WORLD STUDIES TEACHER.

Next year, two of Addy's younger siblings will be entering TSAS at her urging. One is going into ninth grade and the other will begin in the new seventh-grade class. She said her parents understand English, but don't speak it well, so Addy made sure that her siblings applied.

"They're really excited," she said.

Critics of charter schools often argue that administrators can pick and choose students and expel them at will. Doss says that is not the case with TSAS, noting that the school has very little attrition. As a charter school, students apply with only a name, address and contact information and, if too many students apply, names are drawn from a box.

"We're non-selective," Doss said. "We have students who have incredibly diverse backgrounds. Some come in extremely prepared; some come in unprepared and really not ready (for

high school). Forty-three percent are on free and reduced lunch. A little over 15 percent are on an IEP (Individual Education Plan). We don't ask for grades or recommendations, whether you've been suspended. It doesn't matter."

TSAS also must adhere to state testing requirements, which for high school means EOI (End of Instruction) tests. But the school doesn't focus on standardized testing or test preparation. Doss said TSAS doesn't use a lot of extra standardized testing, preferring that teachers create the tests for their classes. Teachers also create their own curriculum based on state standards. High-level and critical thinking are valued over standardized test preparation.

"If we do use standardized tests, we do it pointing to our number one goal, which is to get kids to college," Doss said. "They

take the ASPIRE test to be ready to take the ACT, and they take the PSAT so they're ready to take the SAT. Preparatory tests help prepare you as you go on that journey to college."

Doss said students have had problems when the state tests don't align with the state standards or when the cut score is moved, as happened with the state biology test. "Hopefully this is fixed in the future," Doss said. "The past four years, (the state) just ramped the cut score up, and we had a lot of students not pass that test. But if you looked at the PLAN, you would see that most of our students actually knew that content so they were excused from taking that test because their PLAN score was so high."

While certain state standards must be met, Doss says the difference between TSAS and a regular public school is that decisions are made on site, and they can be made quickly. "You could do the same things we're doing at every public school," he said, "but what you can't do at regular public schools is you just don't have the autonomy to make those decisions at the classroom level. It would be helpful for Legislators to believe that there are people in schools who know what they're doing, if they would just trust people. I think there are a lot of great people working very hard in public schools, but there are a lot of handcuffs."

Principal Leisa Smith said that trusting their faculty is critical. "We believe we have highly trained teachers who are professionals, and they can be trusted to make decisions for student success, and that is something that has really been threatened over the years. We get to decide what we're aiming at. We're nimble; we're small, and we can be responsive in ways that you can't be if you think teachers can't be trusted to make some of those decisions. We want our students ready for the common good, for civic engagement, in addition to

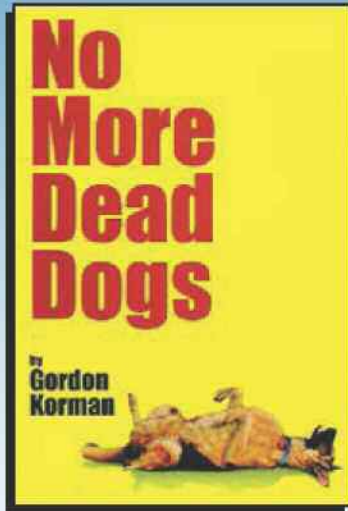
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Mr. Henry's Books is a program of the Tulsa City-County Library, sponsored by the Tulsa Library Trust, made possible by a grant from the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation.



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college readiness."

Sharples said that the level of discourse among the faculty and the way teachers interacted with students drew him to TSAS. He had transitioned from the mental health profession to teaching through Teach for America in Kansas City, a difficult assignment that had him rethinking his decision to teach. Sharples said he felt under pressure at the Kansas City school to change quickly and to see results quickly.

"Here, we're trying to build something that lasts and takes time," he said. "When I wanted to start teaching, this is what I imagined."

TSAS parent Shelley Faust, who spends countless volunteer hours at the school, has two children at TSAS, a junior and a freshman, whom she previously home-schooled.

"I was so pleased," Faust said. "There was an atmosphere of respect from the beginning. Parents and teachers want kids to succeed, and they don't put them in a box. Teachers listen to the kids. Problems are handled quickly and well."

Faust also likes the 70-minute class periods and individualized instruction. "You can really get into a project or a deeper discussion with more time in class."

While TSAS only has one sport, cross country, Faust said her children have many choices that interest them. Besides Key Club and National Honor Society, and a robust jazz band and fine arts program, students establish their own clubs such as knitting, social justice, Anime or robotics clubs. Teachers work to get to know what interests each student, feeling that it is important for adolescents to find and pursue passions.

Above all, Faust emphasized that students have the freedom to ask any question and to be accepted. "I come from a Christian conservative background," she said, pointing out that she has learned to be less judgmental since her children have been at-

tending TSAS. "I want my kids to learn how to get along with all kinds of people. Whether they have blue hair or whatever, you need to remember to respect them because they're human beings, and don't just judge them by how they look. They've made good friends, and it's made my kids more assured about who they are."

TSAS faculty also helps students navigate their high school years with college in mind. Each student is paired with an advisor his or her freshman year through graduation.

Addy says her TSAS advisor has helped guide her through planning for college, and she is looking forward to a bright future.

"I've never been this excited about graduating, about going to college," Addy said, a big smile lighting up her face, her voice full of enthusiasm. "I want to help people. I want to be something in this world."

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program is a United States government program created in 1982 to recognize public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Every year the U. S. Department of Education seeks out and celebrates great American schools, schools demonstrating that all students can achieve to high levels. In 2015, 285 public schools were honored. Oklahoma schools included Carnegie Elementary in Carnegie; Flower Mound Elementary in Lawton; Harding Fine Arts Academy in Oklahoma City; Schwartz Elementary in Oklahoma City; and Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences, Tulsa.
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BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

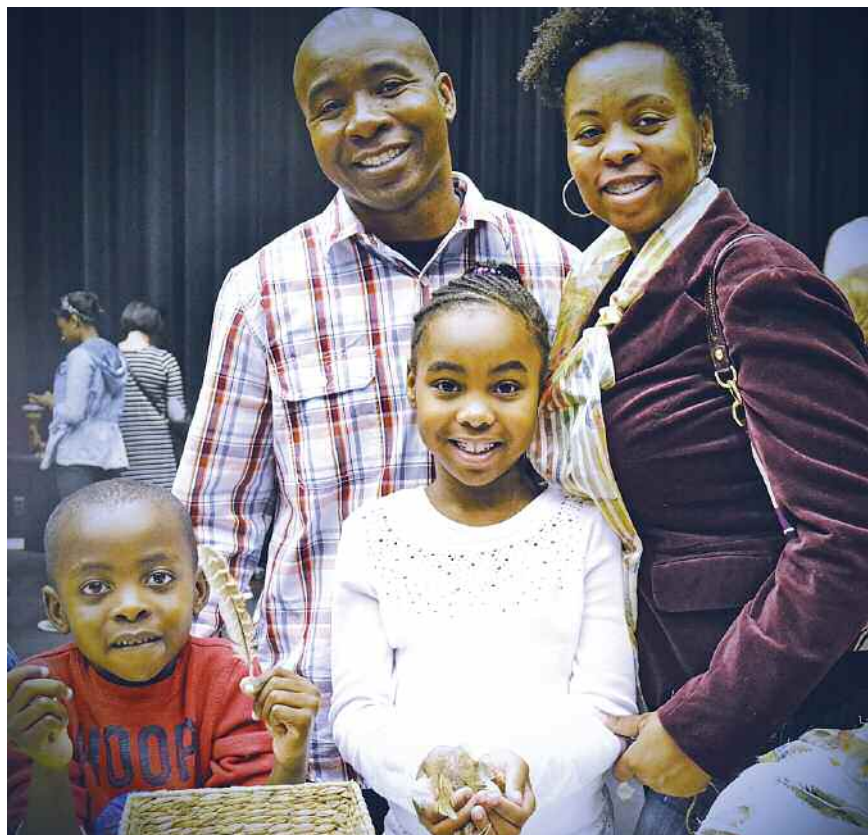
TCM presents a Ragtime Concert with Donald Ryan

Tulsa resident Donald Ryan has a lifelong love of music. As a 3-year-old boy growing up in the West Indies' twin country island of Trinidad and Tobago, the burgeoning musician would sneak into the church where his father was the pastor and pluck at the congregation's piano. A lifetime later, Ryan is a noted professional pianist who has performed for audiences across the world. An Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame inductee and Steinway Artist, Ryan is a master of every style from classical to pop.

On Sunday, Jan. 17, 2016, Ryan shares his love of Ragtime music during two, all-ages, afternoon performances in the John H. Williams Theater of the Tulsa Performing Arts Center.

"I grew up in a music-loving family. My father played just about any instrument he could get his hands on," Ryan recalled. "I was always fascinated by the piano. My mother also played. She was my first teacher."

African American composers such as Scott Joplin and James Scott brought Ragtime's syncopated rhythms to the public in the late 19th century with songs like "Maple Leaf Rag" and "The Entertainer." This new, energetic genre of music had broad cross-cultural appeal at a time when the United States was a racially segregated country. According to Ryan, Ragtime is important historically both because it was a



CHILDREN ENJOY HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES AT THE TULSA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM CONCERTS. THE NEXT EVENT IS A RAGTIME CONCERT SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, JAN. 17 AT 2 AND 4 P.M. AT THE TULSA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER.

uniquely American form of music and because it subtly impacted societal norms and barriers.

"Ragtime helped to break down at least a few social norms because the music was so infectious," Ryan explained. "The heyday of Ragtime was in the 1890s to about 1920, and the Jazz Age took over. Ragtime is considered to be the parent of Jazz, and that broke down even more social barriers."

This concert is part of the Tulsa Children's Museum ongoing Family Concert Series. According to TCM volunteer Tobey Ballenger, who was instrumental in creating the concert series in 2009, "The mission of both the museum and the Family Concert Series remains to inspire children, connect families and build community through exploration, exhibits, programming and play."

In keeping with those goals,

Ryan's performance will be a multi-media event that includes music, narrative, photos and dancers. There will be free, hands-on, educational activities relating to the material before and after each of the 2 and 4 p.m. performances.

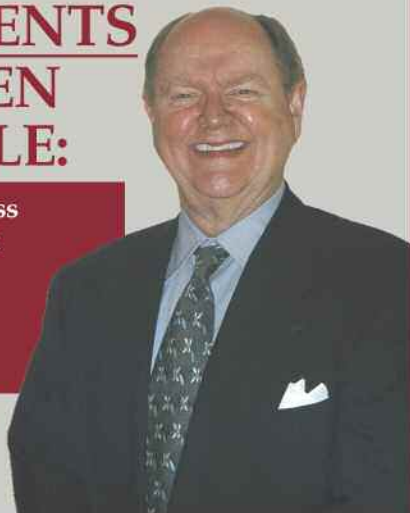
Ballenger has four children of her own and values the role music plays in their lives. "I think it's important for kids to experience different kinds of music with their families for several different reasons," Ballenger said. "Like a good book, good music is a window into another world. Each genre of music has its own cultural background and its own historical context. Listening to and learning about music from another culture can spark curiosity and help kids ask important questions about other cultures and time periods in history as well as think about their own culture, background and the time they live in."

Ryan would agree about the importance of music in everyone's life. "It brings an expression that just talking or writing won't do. It's an added dimension to communication and to self-expression," he said. "We don't live without music, no matter if the music is highly sophisticated, processed, skilled, or if it's just singing a lullaby to quiet a crying child."

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DAY-BY-DAY

Friday, January 1

The Tulsa Shootout

The Tulsa Shootout is the largest event for micro sprint racing in the country. It's a five-day event that encompasses 9 different racing classes including Winged and Non-Wing 600cc Outlaw Micros, A-Class 600cc Micros, ASCS ECOtech Midgets, Restricted Micros, 1200cc Winged Mini Sprints, 1200cc Non Wing Mini Sprints and the exciting Jr. Sprint class for the kids from 6-12. You'll see drivers from all over the country attending this event ranging from amateur to professional, ages 6 to 60. River Spirit Expo Center, 4145 E. 21st St.

Dates: Dec. 29 - January 2, times vary
www.tulsashootout.com

First Friday Art Crawl (FREE)

This year-round monthly event features all of the galleries, studios and museums as well as the part-time galleries in various shops opening their doors to show art. Families can find many options from kid-friendly gallery shows to live music in the park. The Art Crawl is held on the first Friday of the month and open from 6-9 p.m. in the Brady District.

Saturday, January 2

Saturday Morning Birding at Oxley

Bring your binoculars and join other bird lovers at Oxley Nature Center in Mohawk Park. For all ages. 8 a.m.-9:45 a.m.
www.oxleynaturecenter.org

Monster Jam®

Monster Jam® roars into the 2016 season with a points-based series, showcasing the best lineup of Monster Jam vehicles that deliver more trucks, more racing, more freestyle, more donuts, more wheelies and more action. BOK Center, 2 and 7 p.m. www.bokcenter.com

Sunday, January 3

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Monday, January 4

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Tuesday, January 5

3-D Printer Orientation (FREE)

Explore the emerging world of 3-D printing and carving. For all ages. Librarium, 1110 South Denver Ave. 3:30-4 p.m.

Wednesday, January 6

Homeschool Art Class at Philbrook (5-8)

Each homeschool class offers gallery tours led by qualified art educators, an in-studio art-making project, as well as resources to guide parents through that week's class into a month-long learning opportunity. Please arrive at 12:45 p.m. Class begins promptly at 1 p.m. \$10 per class, Philbrook Members only. Philbrook Museum of Art, 2727 S. Rockford Rd. www.philbrook.org

Puffy Paint Snowflakes (FREE)

Make and take home a puffy paint snowflake that clings to your window. Wear old clothes as the paint can be messy. For ages 9-12. Registration is required. Class size is limited: 918.549.7590. Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett Rd., 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Basket Guild at Oxley

Join in for a basket-making class that meets once a month at Oxley. Experiment with different techniques and materials. This is for all skill levels. Ages: 13 to adult. www.oxleynaturecenter.org

Thursday, January 7

Safe Kids Car Seat Check Up Event (FREE)

Get your car seat checked by trained professionals. Broken Arrow Fire Department Station 6, 3151 N. 9th St. 1-3 p.m.

Minecraft Gaming (FREE)

Put your imagination to the test building your own world in the popular game Minecraft. For ages 12-18. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E 93rd St. 6-8 p.m.

January							2016	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
					1	2		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		

Friday, January 8

Tangles for Teens {FREE}

Transform your doodles into works of art! Enjoy snacks and hot tea while exploring Zentangles – a great way to clear your mind and exercise your creativity. All supplies will be provided. Related books will be available to check out for inspiration. For ages 12-18. Broken Arrow Library- South, 3600 S. Chestnut; 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 9

Write On! Local Authors Book Fair {FREE}

Meet 40 local authors, buy their books, get them signed, and support library programming; 10 percent of all sales will be donated to the Tulsa Library Trust. A wide variety of genres will be represented. For adults. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St. 1-4:30 p.m.

Second Saturday at Philbrook {FREE}

Bring out the inner artist in each member of the family and experience Philbrook in a whole new way! Visit on the second Saturday of each month for free family-friendly art activities, tours and scavenger hunts for kids of all ages. Philbrook Museum of Art, 2727 S. Rockford Rd.; 10 a.m.

Lego Lab {FREE}

Learn new building ideas, partner with other children during team building and explore free building. For ages 6-12. Registration is required: 918.549.7590. Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett Rd. 2-3 p.m.

Sunday, January 10

Open Tables Potluck Dinners

To meet Tulsans of varying faiths and learn about different religions, consider attending Open Tables, a series of three potluck dinners over the coming months. These dinners are aimed at sharing a meal and dialogue, and will offer presentations about traditions and celebrations of various faith groups involved. A casual atmosphere, participants will be seated at tables with people from other faith groups. Raindrop Turkish Center. 4444 W. Houston in Broken Arrow; 5:30 p.m. Call 918.232.5332 for more information.

Monday, January 11

'It Looked Like Spilt Milk' at Oxley

Students will learn about different types of clouds and how they are formed. Walk and watch for different shapes in the clouds, then recreate them in the classroom. Ages: 1-5 years with caregiver. Oxley Nature Center in Mohawk Park; 10:30-11:30 a.m. www.oxleynaturecenter.org

Tuesday, January 12

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Wednesday, January 13

Teen Time {FREE}

Tweens and Teens are invited to come and take advantage of the library's free Wii games after school. For ages 10-18. Martin Regional Library 2601 S. Garnett Rd.; 4-5 p.m.

Thursday, January 14

ZACH: Teen Time

Experience a new art class designed especially for homeschooled teens where a consistent concept of the month will be presented such as Landscapes, Portraits, 2D/3D, Realism/ Abstraction based on the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design. The three basic objectives of each lesson will be art exploration, formal concept and media/technique introduction plus a "how to draw" component in each lesson. Materials and gallery discussions for each lesson will be taught by qualified art instructors and designed to be age appropriate to create a targeted learning experience. For ages 13 - 18. \$10 /Gilcrease members, \$15/ not-yet members. Pre-registration is required: 918.631.4402. Henry Zarrow Center for Art and Education, 124 East M.B. Brady St.; 10 a.m. www.gilcrease.utulsa.edu

ZACH: Zarrow Art Classes for Homeschool

Discover the world of art at the downtown Zarrow Center for Art & Education through this exciting program designed especially for the homeschooling community. Students will enjoy an arts enrichment experience as they create their own works of art in this engaging approach to arts education taught by qualified art instructors. Once-a-month classes held January through May are offered at three different times each month. Ages 6–12 years old. Henry Zarrow Center for Art and Education, 124 East M.B. Brady St.; 1:30-3:30 p.m. www.gilcrease.utulsa.edu

Minecraft Gaming {FREE}

Put your imagination to the test building your own world in the popular game Minecraft. For ages 7-11. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; 3:30-4:30 p.m.

TARC Kids "Connections" Group

This is a social skills group for children with Asperger's and high functioning autism. Ages K-5th grade. TARC Office, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A; 4:30 p.m. Find more information at www.autismtulsa.org.

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in Tulsa: Monday, January 18**

11 a.m. Martin Luther King Jr. Parade: The MLK, Jr. Parade will begin at MLK Jr. Blvd. & John Hope Franklin Blvd., proceed east to John Hope Franklin Blvd. to Greenwood, south through the Greenwood business district to Archer, then west on Archer to Elgin.

1-4 p.m.: Drop-in Family Art Day @ Zarrow: Celebrate MLK, Jr. Day with fun art activities for the whole family at the Zarrow Center (124 East M.B. Brady St.). Free and open to the public.

Friday, January 15

Mini Masters: Tiny or Tall, Perspectives of the World

Kids explore different works of art from different perspectives, up high, down low, sideways and more to discover a new way to look at the world. After exploring in the galleries and gardens, create your own work of art based on the particular perspective you experienced. For ages 3-6, who must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration is required: 918.596.2774. Free for members; free with museum admission for not-yet members. Gilcrease Museum, 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd.; 10 a.m. www.gilcrease.utulsa.edu

Saturday, January 16

Winter Bird Feeder Survey at Oxley

Join Oxley volunteers for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Winter Bird Feeder Survey. Data collected help scientists learn more about some of the 52 species of birds that frequent the feeders. It's a great way to learn about birds. Oxley Nature Center in Mohawk Park; 9 a.m.-noon. www.oxleynaturecenter.org

Radical Home Economics: Healthy Frugal Meals {FREE}

Learn how to make easy, satisfying meals that everyone will love. Make sure to come hungry because we will make and taste test a few meals. For adults. Owasso Library, 103 W. Broadway; 10 a.m.

Saturday, January 16 (cont.)

Safe Kids Car Seat Checkup Event

Get your car seat inspected by trained professionals. Jenks Fire Department Station 2, 1115 W 121st St.; 10 a.m.-noon

Sleep with the Sharks at the OK Aquarium

Ever wonder what it would be like to snooze alongside sharks? Enjoy a dive show, scavenger hunt, flashlight tour and movie, then spend the night alongside the Aquarium exhibits. Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr. Find out more at www.okaquarium.org.

Sibshop January Workshop

Sibshops are opportunities for brothers and sisters of children with disabilities and special health care needs to obtain peer support and education within a recreational context. These workshops are open to siblings 5 to 13 years old. There is a small cost of \$6 for each session which covers a provided snack. This month's workshop is geared toward children ages 5-8. Pre-registration required: 918.227.1797. Happy Hands Education Center, 8801 S Garnet; 1-4 p.m. www.autismtulsa.org

Saturday, January 16 (cont.)

Imagination Days at AHHA (FREE)

AHHA invites families to learn about the art of our time and experience it first-hand. Inspired by current AHHA exhibitions, this program fosters the development of lifelong learning skills through gallery explorations, open-ended discussions, films, demonstrations and individual and collaborative hands-on art activities. Gallery exhibitions represent visiting artists from diverse cultures around the world. Visitors meet the artists and experience performances that feature a variety of music, dance, spoken word, and storytelling. Hardesty Arts Center (AHHA), 101 East Archer St.; 1-5 p.m. www.ahhatulsa.org

Sunday, January 17

Fun Day Sunday at Gilcrease (FREE)

It's an afternoon of museum fun for the whole family. Visitors can enjoy various art-making stations in the museum, each offering different materials and themes as well as teaching artists to help guide and inspire. An art hunt is available to explore in the galleries, with a prize at the end. Families also can enjoy our interactive space, Kravis Discovery Center, exploring the extensive gardens and special featured activities. For families with children ages 3-15, who must be accompanied by an adult. Gilcrease Museum, 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd. noon-4 p.m. www.gilcrease.utulsa.edu

Monday, January 18: MLK Jr., Day

See MLK, Jr. Day activities on previous page sidebar.

Scout Day at Oklahoma Aquarium

The Oklahoma Aquarium hosts Scout Days to honor all youth organizations and their members (such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, 4-H, FFA, etc.). There are special activities offered from noon to 2 p.m., but the discounted rate is available for the entire day (remember the last ticket is sold 1 hour prior to closing). \$7 per student / \$10 per adult. Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr. www.okaquarium.org

Tuesday, January 19

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Wednesday, January 20

Homeschool Art Class at Philbrook

Ages 9-12, third Wednesday of each month. See previous description, 1 p.m.

Thursday, January 21

Safe Kids Car Seat Checkup Event (FREE)

Get your car seat inspected by trained professionals. Tulsa Fire Department Station 22 7303 E. 15th St.; 2-4 p.m.

Friday, January 22

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Saturday, January 23

Botany Walk at Oxley (FREE)

Get some fresh air at Oxley Nature Center during a winter Botany walk. You can also warm up and enjoy the nature center. Oxley Nature Center in Mohawk Park; 10:30 a.m.-noon.

Sunday, January 24

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Monday, January 25

Mad Science Monday (FREE)

Learn new science experiments. Will they work or explode? Or were they supposed to explode in the first place? Join in for all the messy excitement! For ages 5-12. Schusterman-Benson, 3333 E. 32nd Pl.; 4-4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 26

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Wednesday, January 27

TARC Teens Connection Group

This is a social skills group for middle and high school students with Asperger's and high functioning autism. The Teen "Connections" group meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 4:30 to 6 p.m. TARC Office, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A. www.autismtulsa.org

Thursday, January 28

ZACH: Zarrow Art Classes for Homeschool

See previous description, 10 -11:30 a.m.

Safe Kids Car Seat Checkup Event (FREE)

Get your car seat inspected by trained professionals. Bixby Fire Department Station 2 8300 E. 121st St.; 2-4 p.m.

Minecraft Night (FREE)

Put your imagination to the test building your own world in the popular game Minecraft. For ages 10-18. Seating is limited. Zarrow Regional Library, 2224 W. 51st St.; 6-7 p.m.

STORYTIMES

Bixby Library (20 E. Breckenridge, Bixby)

- Preschool Storytime: Monday, Jan. 25 • 11-11:30 a.m.

Broken Arrow Library (300 W. Broadway, Broken Arrow)

- My First Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26 • 10:30-10:50 a.m.
- Preschool Storytime: Mondays, Jan. 4, 11, 25 • 10:30-11 a.m.
- PAWS for Reading: Wednesday, Jan. 13 • 4-5 p.m.

Broken Arrow Library/South (3600 S. Chestnut, Broken Arrow)

- Preschool Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 10:30-11 a.m.
- My First Storytime: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10:30-11 a.m.
- Stay and Play Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 19, 26 • 11-11:30 a.m.
- PAWS for Reading: Friday, Jan. 15 • 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Brookside Library (1207 E 45th Pl.)

- Preschool Storytime: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10:15-10:45 a.m.
- My First Storytime: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 11-11:20 a.m.
- PAWS for Reading: Friday, Jan. 15 • 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Hardesty Regional Library (8316 E 93rd St., Tulsa)

- My First Storytime: Mondays, Jan. 11, 25 • 10-10:20 a.m. and Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 10-10:20 a.m.
- Toddler Time: Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 11-11:20 a.m. and Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 11-11:20 a.m.
- Mr. Paul's Family Storytime: Thursdays, Jan. 14, 21, 28 • 6:30-7 p.m.
- Mr. Paul's Preschool Storytime: Mondays, Jan. 11, 25 • 11-11:30 a.m.

Herman and Kate Kaiser (5202 S. Hudson Ave., Suite B, Tulsa)

- My First Storytime: Thursdays, Jan. 14, 21, 28 • 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Preschool Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- PAWS for Reading: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 27 • 3:30-5 p.m.
- Sensory Storytime: Saturday, Jan. 30 • 10:30 a.m.-noon

Jenks Library (523 W B St., Jenks)

- My First Storytime: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10-10:15 a.m.
- Preschool Storytime: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10:30-11 a.m.

Librarianium (1110 S. Denver Ave., Tulsa)

- PAWS for Reading: Saturday, Jan. 9 • 1-2 p.m.

Martin Regional Library (2601 S. Garnett Rd., Tulsa)

- Bilingual Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 19, 26 • 11-11:45 a.m.

Nathan Hale (6038 E. 23rd St., Tulsa)

- Mrs. Cindy's Storytime: Thursdays, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 • 10:30-11 a.m.
- Bilingual Storytime With Señorita Brenda: Thursday, Jan. 14 • 10-11 a.m.
- PAWS for Reading: Saturday, Jan. 16 • 2-3 p.m.

Owasso Library (103 W. Broadway, Owasso)

- My First Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 10-10:25 a.m. and Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10-10:25 a.m.
- Preschool Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 10:30-11 a.m. and Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10:30-11 a.m.

Pottery Barn Book Club Storytime (Utica Square)

- Tuesdays at 11 a.m.

Schusterman - Benson Library (3333 E. 32nd Place, Tulsa)

- My First Storytime: Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20, 27 • 10-10:20 a.m. • 10:30-10:50 a.m.
- Preschool Stay and Play Storytime: Tuesdays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 • 10:30-10:50 a.m.
- PAWS for Reading: Monday, Jan. 11 • 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Tulsa Toy Depot (101st & Sheridan, Tulsa)

- Thursdays at 11 a.m.

Zarrow Regional Library (2224 W 51st St., Tulsa)

- PAWS for Reading: Saturday, Jan. 16 • 2-3 p.m.

SHOWTIMES



Photo courtesy of Riverfield Rocks

Monster Jam

Saturday, January 2 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; BOK Center
 Monster Jam® roars into the 2016 season with a points-based series, showcasing the best lineup of Monster Jam vehicles that deliver what fans want to see most...more trucks, more racing, more freestyle, more donuts, more wheelies, more action! www.bokcenter.com

A Chorus Line

January 15-16, 21-23 at 8 p.m.; January 16, 23-24 at 2 p.m.; Tulsa Performing Arts Center
 One of the longest-running shows in Broadway history comes to Tulsa for the first time in more than a decade! Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, this musical event tells the poignant story about the struggles and triumphs of life on Broadway. Parental guidance suggested. www.tulsapac.com

Family Concert featuring the Ragtime Music of Donald Ryan

Sunday, January 17 at 2 and 4 p.m.; Tulsa Performing Arts Center
 Ragtime was popular at the turn of the century made famous by composer Scott Joplin. Introduce a new generation to this classic American genre of music with a performance by Donald Ryan. www.tulsapac.com

Riverfield Rocks

Sunday, January 17 at 6 p.m.; Cain's Ballroom
 Riverfield Rocks, from Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa, is one of the most unique and progressive school band programs in the country. It uses modern and classic rock music to teach the fundamentals of musical performance, theory, and expression in an environment that is both supportive and moderately competitive. This performance is for all ages. www.cainsballroom.com

Marvel Universe

Thursday, January 21 - January 24, times vary; BOK Center
 MARVEL fans, assemble! Characters including Spider-Man, Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, Loki, Captain America, Wolverine, Black Widow, Captain Marvel, and so many more. www.bokcenter.com

Mickey & Minnie's Doorway to Magic

Saturday, January 23 at 1 and 5 p.m.; Expo Square, 4145 E. 21st St.
 Join Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse and the comical duo of Donald and Goofy as 25 of your favorite Disney characters surprise and captivate at every turn of the knob! www.disneylive.com



Thursday, January 28 (cont.)

TARC Moms & Dads Support Group

This a support group for parents of children with developmental disabilities. The purpose is to nurture and support families dealing with challenges and share in the joy of raising children with developmental disabilities. The group meets on the last Thursday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. at the TARC office, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A. For more information call 918.582.8272.

Friday, January 29

See sidebars for on-going activities.

Saturday, January 30

It's All About Birds!

Enjoy the exciting live bird presentation, "It's All About Birds!" from the George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center, offered in conjunction with the special exhibition Birds in Art. Trained birds will fly from the stage over the audience in this inspiring educational show for families and adults of all ages. Come learn about the impact birds have on our environment and be awed by their beauty. Tickets are available online at gilcrease.utulsa.edu. For more information, call: 918.596.2774. There will be two performances: 11 a.m.-Noon & 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 31

See sidebars for on-going activities.

On-Going Activities

Family Studio Saturdays at Philbrook

Each month, Family Studio Saturdays explores one big idea through art, making art in the studios and exploring in the galleries. Both studio and gallery activities are specially designed to engage families with children in creative thinking, idea exploration, and collaboration. Philbrook Museum of Art, 2727 S. Rockford Rd. Drop in from 12:30 - 3:30 p.m. - each Saturday (excluding the 2nd Saturday) of the month. www.philbrook.org

Tulsa Winterfest

Skate under the skyline on the 60' x 150' frozen ice rink this season on Third Street in downtown Tulsa. Bring your own skates or rent them at the festival. The rink is open to the public daily through January 17, including New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Spectators can watch all the action from the climate-controlled warming tent adjacent to the ice rink. Times vary. Find them on Facebook.

Fitness on the Green @ Fly Loft (FREE)

Location: 117 North Boston Avenue
 Zumba: Every Sunday at 10 a.m. Get involved in a high-energy cardio blast that will leave you invigorated, refreshed and full of life. For all ages.
 Yoga: Every Monday at 5:30 p.m. Focus on physical posture (asana) and conscious breathing (pranayama) in combination with mental focus and utilized to develop awareness, strength, flexibility and relaxation.
 For more information: www.guthriegreen.com

THERE'S MORE! www.tulsakids.com/calendar

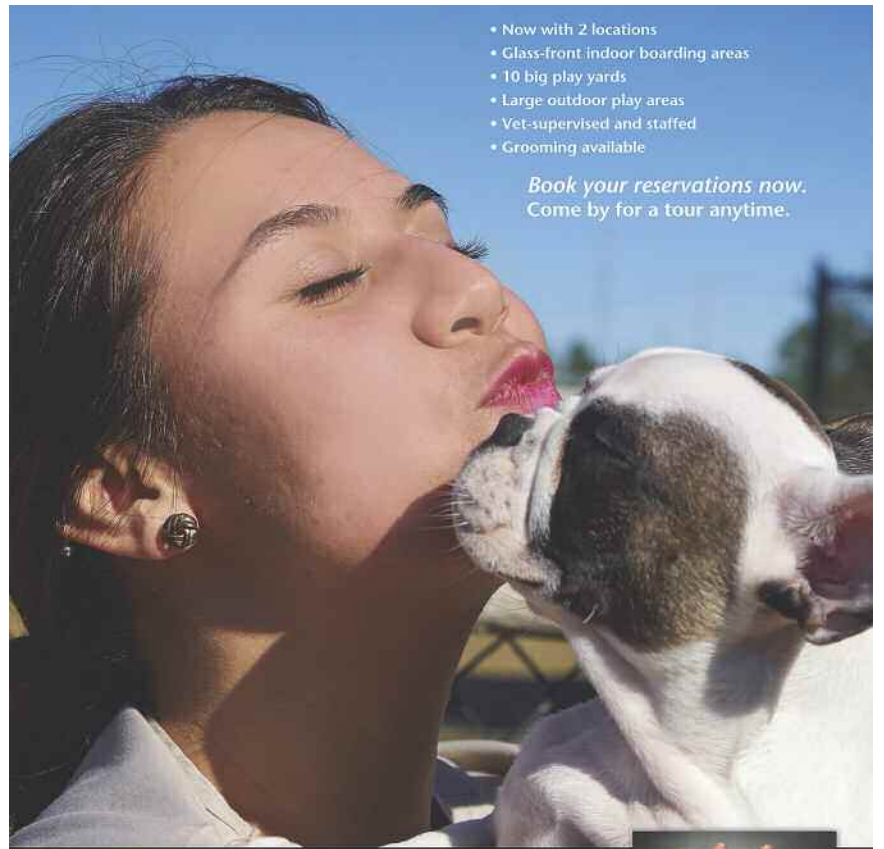
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BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

so you want to be a rock 'n' roll star

What do you want to be when you grow up? An astronaut? A fireman? A vet? Or maybe, a ROCK STAR? For those Tulsa teens whose reveries are filled with guitars, amps, drums and a killer soundtrack, the Woody Guthrie Center's (WGC) "Youth Rocks Afterschool Program" may help make those dreams a reality.

Beginning January 14, aspiring young musicians will meet each Thursday from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the WGC in the Brady Arts District. Under the guidance of local musician Cody Clinton, students will learn the basics in everything from songwriting to setting up sound systems for live performance. The program culminates in a concert at neighboring Guthrie Green.

Clinton, who started his first band when he was 13, has been a full-time professional musician for the last seven years. He and Becky Hawkes, education and public programs manager at the WGC, developed the afterschool program together. Last spring, approximately 18 middle and high school-aged kids participated.

According to Clinton, there are no musical prerequisites for the course. Last year's group included a diverse mix of boys and girls with a wide range of skill levels. "The main thing we focus on is the practical foundation for what it takes to be in a functioning band," Clinton explained.

In addition to writing songs, practicing vocals and instru-



CODY CLINTON TEACHES MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO WRITE AND PERFORM MUSIC, IN ADDITION TO LEARNING A LITTLE ABOUT THE BUSINESS SIDE OF BEING A MUSICIAN AT THE WOODY GUTHRIE CENTER.

ments, and rehearsing together, the students learn to set up the sound system and do their own sound checks.

"Everybody is interested in

something different, and you need all different types to make the whole thing go, so it's good to have one person in each group that's interested in various differ-

"Last year's group included a diverse mix of boys and girls with a wide range of skill levels. The main thing we focus on is the practical foundation for what it takes to be in a functioning band"

ent things so you have a good synergy for the group." Clinton said.

For a generation that grew up with *American Idol* and *The Voice*, instant fame and success can seem like the norm. "I try to show them other possibilities," Clinton said. "Everybody gets something different from it. I hope what they take away is the importance of music and how cathartic it can be and how enjoyable it is... Hopefully, they get the band experience and maybe they'll go start their own band, or at least get involved in high school band or music somehow."

Growing up in a musical family, Clinton's own love of music started early. "My dad and my uncles were musical," he recalled. "We used to have big family get-togethers where everybody would sit around in a circle. You might hear 'I'll Fly Away' and these old gospel tunes one minute, and the next you might hear The Eagles or The Rolling Stones, so I was lucky to grow up in that environment."

Clinton enjoys sharing his knowledge with the young musicians. "You get into the music business side of things, which I touch on a little bit because I try to teach them and warn them about it," he laughs. "But, it's rejuvenating, and it makes me feel less jaded."

For more information about the program, visit www.woodyguthriecenter.org.

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FROM THE HIP

9 Hip Reasons to Shop South

BY JILL VANTREASE

Did you ever stop to think what a lousy time of year January is for a mom to make New Year's resolutions? You've just survived the holiday season, and while I'm sure you have many lovely, touching, warm and poignant memories of your darling children celebrating, all that memory-making was undoubtedly grueling. Then you have to endure that week between Christmas and New Year's, where the presents are losing their luster and the weather outside is frightful, and children are starting to climb the walls and drive you to top off your 10 a.m. coffee with a shot of Bailey's. Then New Year's rolls around and you are facing down at least a couple more months of snot and puke - the tide of sick kids won't stop rolling until early April. Amidst all of this unpleasantness, you're supposed to lose weight? Exercise more? Be more cheerful and patient? Whatever your resolution is, this is NOT a good time!

So take my advice, dear Mom, and just try your best to enjoy January, despite the gray and sick days. Postpone those resolutions until spring break, at least, when you'll be happier and more apt to actually want to smile at people. For now? Just try to get out of your house and have a little fun! And guess what? Quite fortuitously there is a lovely shopping area near me - romantically called "The Vineyard on Memorial." It is a relatively new



URBAN COUTURE

retail area right around 106th and Memorial, and is full of fantastic mom diversions.

Now, before you Broken Arrow and Glenpool and Sapulpa and Midtown and Owasso moms protest that this is too darn far for you to drive, might I remind that in a few short months, you will ALL be right here. Why? Because Costco, the poshest of the warehouse clubs, will be landing right at 103rd and Memorial in just a few short months. So, yes, you will be in the 'hood - possibly every two weeks.

The Vineyard has been touted as "the Utica Square of South Tulsa," and it's easy to see why: It's a big, airy, walkable expanse with patio seating and lovely gathering places. It's close to full occupancy, and hopefully it will become another bustling shopping outpost. Here are the

many tenants you need to check out:

First of all, **Urban Couture** is a hip boutique filled with all kinds of clothes for moms - and their daughters. It was born after its owners, two sisters and their mom, were discussing how difficult it was to find clothes in the same shop. Urban Couture has a wide variety of trendy clothing for

teenagers to old moms like me. There are accessories galore, and there are plus sizes as well. Some of Urban Couture's hip brands include Umgee (beautiful tunics), Mudpie (comfy and sassy), Elan (contemporary sportswear and loungewear), Blu Pepper (fun and bohemian), and Liverpool (cute and flattering jeans for all the mamas!). They also sell Volcano candles, which are gorgeously scented works of art: the Capri Blue, for example, is a blend of "tropical fruits, sugared oranges, lemons, and limes, redolent with lightly exotic mountain greens." You will definitely find something to keep you on trend and fashionable here!

Right next door is **Bella's House**, which is a delightful bodega full of trifles for the home, along with a large selection of jewelry and gifts. Bella's House has baubles from Rose Gonzales and Gemelli Jewelry; there is also plenty of Kendra Scott! Lampe



continued next page

Bergere is a French company that makes gorgeous air diffusers to fill your home with ambrosial scents; I love the "Ocean Breeze" scent wafting around! And, I'm smitten with some gorgeous be-dazzled Nikes and FitBit covers studded with Swarovski crystals for the fitness buff/diva in your life.

dishes list ingredients and calorie counts, and it all sounds fabulous: selections include Ancho Pollo and Egg Tacos, Oat Bake, or Spinach and Sundried Tomato Omelets. For lunch and dinner, there are tons of choices: Kombucha BBQ Sauce Chicken, Lone Star Chile Relleno, Turkey Pasta and Sriracha Chicken Wraps are



You must visit **Nothing Bundt Cakes**. It is a sunny and happy bakery filled with - you guessed it - bundt cakes! Now, I am not really a cake aficionado - I tend to just eat the frosting and leave the boring cake for someone else - but this cake is heavenly. I don't know what it's made out of -- I don't WANT to know -- but you must try one of these delights. Or buy one as a gift -- they stick a whimsical flower in the hole. You can also buy adorable Bundtinis -- bite sized bundt cakes -- and feel somewhat virtuous. There are nine flavors, from Chocolate Chip to Pecan Praline to Red Velvet, and 40 different designs. Perfect for gifts, showers, parties, or for you after a long day with a teething baby.

To counteract those bundt cakes -- or if you just enjoy good, clean, healthy food -- you must visit **My Fit Foods** (there's also a branch on Cherry Street in mid-town Tulsa). My Fit Foods is a grab-and-go deli with the healthiest, tastiest dishes you'll find for breakfast, lunch, dinners and snacks. All the dishes are made fresh, gluten-free, without added preservatives or hormones. Produce is fresh and the spices are filled with antioxidants. All

but a few of their entrees. You can drop in the store, order online, or you can have a Nutrition Coach create a complementary meal plan, customized to your lifestyle. Plus, My Fit Foods offers a 21-day challenge, which can help you lose weight and improve your eating choices. (But don't worry about that until April, right?)

And then the fabulously successful **My Rustic Cuff** by Jill Donovan was opened up an outpost at the Vineyard. You've probably heard about Jill's appearance on Oprah, where she was a bit humiliated and called a "regifter." Well, Jill started designing bracelets, and after a few years of hard work, Oprah herself wore one of Jill's Rustic Cuffs on



the cover of her magazine! The cuffs are beautiful and come in all shapes and sizes; you may even have a personalized one, or a cuff from a school fundraiser. You can have them personalized; I love the idea of having my kids' names engraved on one. There is no limit to Jill's styles and imagination!

Well, with all that shopping, you are probably hungry. Time to stop for lunch or dinner at **La Crepe Nanou** - a delightful French bistro with "a touch of New Orleans flair." Its decor evokes a Parisian bistro, and its menu is delightfully Gaelic: crepes (bien sur!), escargot, mussels, Beef Bourguignonne, and beignets for dessert! Brunch is served on weekends. When I was there the food was sublime, but the service was a bit lackadaisical -- maybe they are working on cultivating a bit of French snobbishness? I am not sure, but I will return again to investigate -- the food and ambiance are that good.



Right next door to La Crepe Nanou is **The Wine Loft**. Alas, I have not actually been myself -- I have either been pregnant or nursing my little appendage -- and it is a bar, so I can't just bring her in. But my girlfriends tell me it is great, and it looks like so much fun: there are signature cocktails, one of the largest "wine by the glass" selections in Tulsa, and a little tasting menu of gourmet tapas like Duck Crepettes, Wagyu Beef Sliders, and Baked Brie. There's a full-service bar, a lounge area, an upstairs event space, and a gorgeous patio for

when the weather warms up again. My friend dubs it the "south version of Brookside!" Her only gripe -- the wine list is categorized by country and region, instead of varietal and/or red and white -- which strikes me as confusing. The service is attentive and efficient. So I can't wait to go with some girls and have a cocktail or three -- once I wean my little succubus!

I talked last month about **Learning Express Toys** -- this is a great store with high-quality and educational toys for all ages. It is perfect for grabbing a birthday gift that not everyone will already have!



And finally, right around the corner from the toy store is **Trey's Bar and Grill**. This is a great, fun spot for the whole family. I bring my whole crew, and of course the boys are immediately mesmerized with the many huge TVs on with all kinds of sporting events for them to drool over. There're pool tables too, which are a fun distraction! The menu is typical pub fare: excellent starters like stuffed jalapeno peppers and smoky salmon dip. There's a bunch of great burgers, sandwiches, wings, and something called the "Bixby Cheesesteak," which sounds very masculine. Our server was friendly and efficient. It's a great spot to hang out with the kids -- or without!

Whew! So there you go! Check out this budding little mall out south. You might find you have a favorite new haunt -- or at least somewhere to go after all that grueling Costco shopping.

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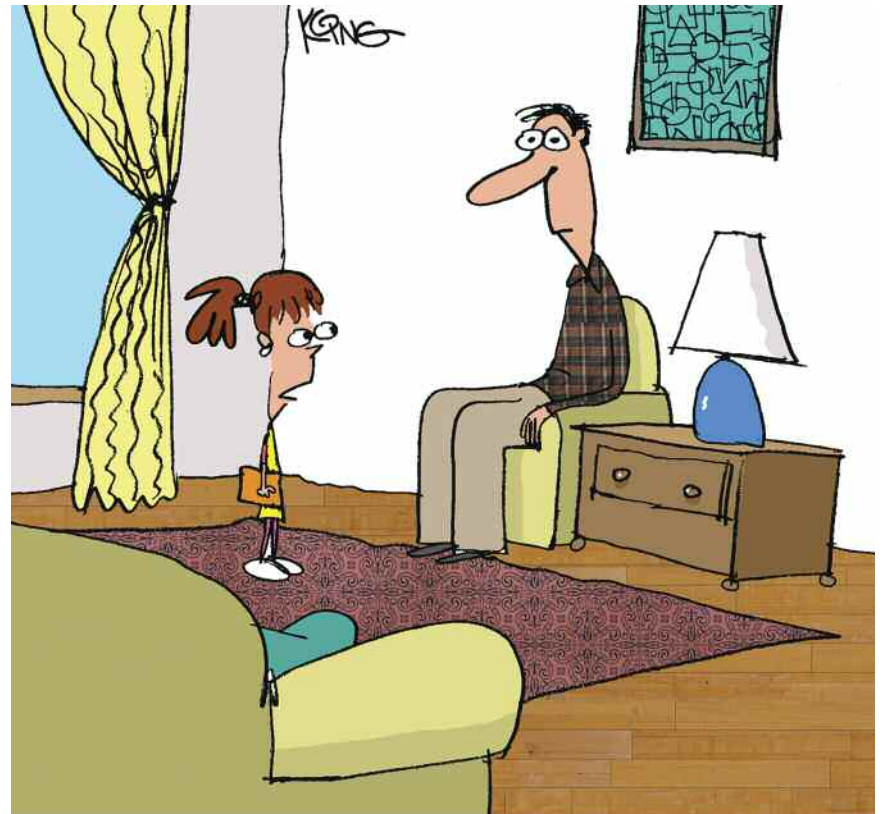
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BY DIANE TRITT EATON

Boston breathes history and charm

Boston is one of my favorite cities! Maybe it's the New England air and European architecture, or the seaside wharf and Boston Harbor, the authentic Italian cuisine and famous creamy clam chowder, or the cultural and intellectual vibe resonating from the more than 100 colleges and universities in the vicinity. Above all, it's likely the unique combination of historic treasures and old world charm — all housed in a compact city that makes it simple to get around and enjoy.

Take It from the Top

On foot, by bike or via the subway system, you can see a lot of the steeple- and café-laced metropolis with such ease. Whether you're a newbie or repeat visitor, get your bearings and see much of Boston's beauty from the Prudential Observation Tower, the highest skyscraper in New England. From 50 floors up, acclimate to the city's layout and soak in the panoramic view. Admire the boats in the Charles River, Cambridge's Harvard and MIT in the distance and the bustling Financial District, which punctuates the skyline. To maximize this



time, use audible equipment, which explains Boston's many neighborhoods. Once back at street level, prepare to explore three-and-a-half centuries of history, (but wear comfortable shoes — many of the streets are cobblestone or brick).

Haven of History/Freedom Trail

Over an evolution spanning hundreds of years, Boston has several historical nicknames, including The City on a Hill and The Cradle of Liberty. Originally, she was named Trimountaine for her three prominent hills. Beacon Hill is on the National Historic Register and consists of federal-style row houses, brick sidewalks and narrow, gas-lit streets. Boston is also known as the “Cradle of Liberty” due to events, including the Boston Massacre and the model document written for the United States Constitution in 1787.

For a first-timer, a thorough way to uncover Boston's roots is to walk the Freedom Trail, a 2.5-mile brick path that weaves through many iconic neighbor-

OLD SOUTH MEETING HOUSE.

continued next page

hoods, such as Beacon Hill, and passes 16 historic Revolutionary War sites including Paul Revere's House, Old North Church and Faneuil Hall Marketplace. The trail goes through Little Italy, where you'll find Italian fare and scrumptious cannoli at one of many bakeries. Download a map to easily manage the Freedom Trail at your own pace. Or take a guided tour led by a costumed professional, who will give you a real-life history lesson.

City of Firsts

Not surprising, given its age and long-standing reputation as an innovative place, Boston is a city of many firsts. Just to name a few, be sure to check out:

Boston Commons/Public Garden. Boston Commons became the first public garden in 1634 and is practical for walking across town and admiring the city views. The Victorian-style Public Garden, the first botanical garden, is connected to it and was designed with more elegance in mind. The magnificently manicured grounds feature the Public Garden Lagoon. Be sure to take a leisurely Swan boat ride (to honor "Make Way for Ducklings," the classic children's story).

Harvard. America's oldest university is an essential player in the field of education and research worldwide. See Harvard Yard, a 22-acre spread enclosed by 27 gates, for great people-watching. You will find folks from all corners of the world. On campus, you will also find excellent museums and Harvard's Memorial Church, which was dedicated on Armistice Day 1932 in memory of the fallen from World War I.

The Union Oyster House. With doors opened since 1714, this restaurant is our country's oldest and is still operating under its original name.

The Boston Public Library. In 1848 this palatial structure became the first publicly supported free municipal library worldwide. It features world-class murals and has an arched courtyard, featuring flowing fountains. The library is located in Copley Square, which is also home to Romanesque-style Episcopal Trinity Church, founded in 1733, and is near Newbury Street, an upscale shopping and eating district.

Fenway Park. Whether you like baseball or not, visiting baseball's beloved first stadium is almost obligatory in- or off-season. Situated right in the heart of Boston and home to the Red Sox, this site featured the first modern World Series in 1903. Stadium tours are given year round and operate at the top of the hour.

The T. Boston's underground metro opened in 1897 and is considered one of the most efficient subway systems around. It's also an inexpensive way to get from point A to point B. There's no need to cab it or set foot in a car. Traffic is often really heavy in the city limits.

Take the family to sights we all read about in history books. After all, Boston is the birthplace of the American Revolution and spawned our independence. Spring and fall are fine times to visit when the weather is comfortable. Or if your vacation can be stretched beyond a weekend trip, once summer hits, consider extending your stay to include Cape Cod or Martha's Vineyard. Boston and its surrounding area weave so much history and charm together that it is sure to leave you desiring more!

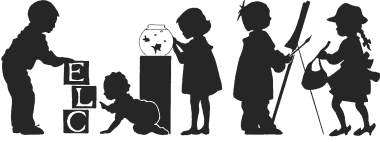


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skin care tips from the AAD

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) wants to set one thing straight: you don't need expensive skin care products to have glowing, healthy skin. In fact, wearing a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher before going outdoors is one of the most effective ways to maintain healthy skin.

"Every good skin care routine should follow three simple steps: cleanse, treat and prevent," said Amy J. Derick, MD, FAAD, clinical instructor of dermatology, Northwestern University. "Sunscreen prevents wrinkles, sun spots and even skin cancer, making it the most effective skin care product you can buy."

Beyond sunscreen, Dr. Derick says it's important to identify your skin type before starting any skin care routine:

- Sensitive skin may sting or burn after product use
- Normal skin is clear and not sensitive
- Dry skin is flaky, itchy or rough
- Oily skin is shiny and greasy
- Combination skin is dry in some areas and oily in others

"Expensive skin care products are not necessarily better," said Dr. Derick. "Instead, it's more important to buy skin-care products that are formulated for your skin type."

For additional ways to save, Dr. Derick recommends the following tips:

To select the most effective products, pay attention to product ingredients. For example, if you have acne-prone skin, cleansers that contain either benzoyl perox-

ide or salicylic acid can help clear some people's skin. If you're concerned about fine lines and wrinkles, look for products containing retinol.

Consider using dual-function products, such as a moisturizer with sunscreen. Make sure the sunscreen is broad-spectrum and has an SPF of 30 or higher.

Cleanse your skin before applying skin care products and before going to bed. Cleansing removes dirt, oil and debris, and helps prevent clogged pores and breakouts.

Get the most from your moisturizer by applying it to damp skin as soon as you get out of the shower to lock in moisture.

Limit the number of skin care products that you use. Using too many products on your skin, especially more than one anti-aging product, tends to irritate the skin and make signs of aging more noticeable.

Apply sunscreen before going outside and reapply sunscreen every few hours or immediately after swimming or sweating.

Consider using petroleum jelly. This inexpensive product can have several uses, including moisturizing dry skin and nails and treating minor injuries. However, avoid using petroleum jelly on the face, as this may cause acne in some people.

"With so many products on the market today, the skin care aisle can be an overwhelming – and expensive – place," said Dr. Derick. "If you have questions about how to take care of your skin, or if you aren't sure what type of skin you have, ask a board-certified dermatologist."

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admissions@casciahall.com

www.casciahall.com

Cascia Hall Preparatory School is a Catholic, Augustinian School for students of all faiths in grades 6–12. Students are prepared for college and for life in a supportive, Christian community with a well-rounded and challenging program of academics, extra-curricular activities, and community service. With an enrollment of less than 525, students are related to as individuals resulting in stronger motivation and achievement. One hundred percent of Cascia Hall seniors matriculate to college following graduation.

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Laurie Pearn
3515 S. Harvard
Tulsa, OK
918-743-7673

www.cumctulsa.com

Our program is a Monday, Wednesday, Friday pre-school program. Hours are 9:30 to 2:30. There are several options as to how many days and the times children can attend. In the afternoons, we

offer enrichment classes in gymnastics, music and "Bible Buddies." Our staff members are chosen for their early childhood experience and training as well as sensitivity to the individual needs of each child. We use a hands-on approach so children learn by doing. Classes are arranged in learning centers and areas of interest where the daily theme is carried out throughout the room. Parent participation is encouraged.

CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Ami Chapman or Mollie Heaberlin
3702 S. 90th East Avenue
Tulsa, OK

918-628-6524

www.montessorilearning.org

Cookie-cutter molds don't fit everyone, nor do traditional classrooms. For 20 years, Christian Montessori Academy has offered metro Tulsa students innovative, progressive, and individualized opportunities using the Montessori Method of instruction in a non-denominational setting. For over 100 years, Montessori education has been a proven method for excellence in education. CMA students have a strong sense of citizenship, community involvement, and values. Students are encouraged to excel to their full potential in a non-stressful manner. Our advanced core curriculum available for ages 3-15 (preschool through 8th grade) includes: Mathematics, Language, Science, Geography, History, Life Skills, Sensorial Development, Spanish, Art, and Music. Extra-curricular activities include: art, piano, swimming, computer, and home economics. Summer camp is also available to students in the community. If you feel your child would benefit from a non-traditional setting, please give us a call. Tours are given Monday through Thursday, 918.628.6524 or www.montessorilearning.org.

FIRST STEPS PRESCHOOL

403 South Cincinnati Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918-594-5028

HAPPY CAMPERS ACADEMY

1819 E. 15th St.

Tulsa, OK

www.happycamperacademy.com/

Two Locations:

Happy Campers: 1819 E. 15th St., Tulsa
918-584-2779

hcatulsa@gmail.com

7:30am - 5:30pm

Happy Campers at Temple Israel:

2004 E. 22nd Pl.

918-747-3122

www.happycamperstemple.com/

israel@gmail.com

7:00am - 6:00pm

Ages: 6 weeks through Pre-K

Enrollment: year round enrollment as space allows

Happy Campers Academy offers Tulsa and surrounding community's quality child care while families are at work. We accept children ages 6 weeks to five years of age, and provide parents an opportunity to view their children in the early learning center through a closed circuit internet connection. At both of our midtown Tulsa locations, Happy Campers utilizes a child-centered philosophy and partners with our families to provide a quality educational experience in a nurturing environment. Our highly trained staff works to get to know each individual child and his/her cognitive and developmental needs, while seeking input from families to make the home and school transition smooth and communication open for the success of the child. Through a balance of developmental play and planned educational activities, our students learn best through doing—all while having fun and expressing themselves creatively. We start the foundation for learning when our students are infants—bonding and connecting. When they become toddlers, the focus is self-help and self-recognition and then during the twos, we build upon independence and language skills. The three-year-olds start making cognitive connections and experience the beginnings of social skills. Finally, in PreK, students start connecting all the tools from every stage to form a strong foundation for early reading preparation to build confidence for kindergarten.

Our teachers conduct conferences twice a year in order to build a strong home and school team. We want to keep parents informed about what their child(ren) is learning, developmental

continued

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www.millerswimschool.com

Purple Glaze – Perfect for Parties or Individual Art

For 20 years Purple Glaze has served all of Tulsa's pottery painting and mosaic making needs. With two locations in Tulsa, Purple Glaze Studio offers a totally unique birthday party experience for all ages. Bring your cake, ice cream, and gifts and have your next birthday celebration at one of the Purple Glazes. It will be the quietest party you have ever attended and, best of all, you get to make your mess at their studio and leave it for their staff to clean up!

The Purple Glazes are the area's only paint-your-own-pottery and mosaic-making studios. Each guest typically gets to choose a pottery shape to paint or a mosaic project to create. The Purple Glaze artists work closely with your party to get those creative juices flowing. Every guest will have a cool, personalized party favor to remember the occasion.

"The most popular pottery shapes for kids' birthdays are the hundreds of animal figurines to choose from," said Jeff Stunkard, co-owner of Purple Glaze.

Frames, plates, cups, boxes, and vases are among the other popular items to decorate. The birthday party fee is \$50 and includes invitations and a big balloon for the guest of honor. There are several packages to choose from, and the additional cost is broken down for each guest. The most common packages range from \$6-\$10 per guest and include all the materials and instruction needed to make everybody look and feel like Picasso. You don't have to wait for your next party to visit the Purple Glaze. Drop in any time – no appointment necessary.

Locations: 91st & Sheridan, 491-6900; 33rd & Peoria in Brookside, 592-6900.



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milestones that are being achieved, and suggest skills that can be practiced at home. We believe that our child-centered philosophy will foster a love for learning in these ever-important early childhood years.

HOLLAND HALL

J.P. Culley, Head of School
5666 E. 81st Street
Tulsa, OK
918-481-1111

www.hollandhall.org

Grades: Pre-school – Grade 12

Holland Hall is an independent, coeducational, college-preparatory, Episcopal day school recognized as a community that educates, nurtures, and empowers the individual student for lifelong learning. With an outstanding faculty, an innovative curriculum, unparalleled facilities on a 165-acre campus, and a student-to-faculty ratio of 9:1, Holland Hall ensures educational excellence and a very personal education. Holland Hall is acknowledged for superior college preparation by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS).

KIRK PRESCHOOL

Denise Rock
4102 E. 61st Street
Tulsa, OK
918-494-8859
11420 S. James Ave.
Jenks, OK
918-494-7088
drock@thekirk.com
thekirk.com

For 50 years, Kirk of the Hills Preschool in Tulsa has been dedicated to providing a stimulating and creative educational environment for children. We are excited to announce that in the fall of 2016 this tradition will continue as we expand to Kirk Crossing in Jenks. This allows us to provide the greater Tulsa area with two top quality preschools serving ages 9 months through Transitional Kindergarten. Enrollment for both campuses begins February 10th. Visit TheKirk.com for more information. Classes offered: Toddler I, 9-15 months; Toddler II, 16-24 months; 2 year olds; 3 year olds; Pre-K Transitional Kindergarten (EXCEL) available at Hills Campus Only.

LAKE HILLS MONTESSORI

5130 E. 101st St.
Building #3
Tulsa, OK
918-296-9936
www.lakehillsmontessori.com

Lake Hills Montessori is committed to providing quality care for children ages 2-6 years in a safe, loving, and stimulating environment. Each child's day is organized to ensure successful experiences that will foster self-esteem and a love of learning. LHM offers a tra-



ditional Montessori curriculum that allows children to learn through exploration and play. In addition to providing an atmosphere of discovery, LHM offers healthy lunches, dance classes, Spanish, soccer, music and yoga. Serving grades Pre-K & Kindergarten, ages 2-6 years. Accredited by the American Montessori Society School.

MARQUETTE SCHOOL

Pete Theban, Principal
1519 S. Quincy
Tulsa, OK 74120
918-584-4631
www.marquetteschool.org
Grades: Pre-Kindergarten – Middle School

Since its founding in 1918 as Sacred Heart School under the direction of the Ursuline Sisters, Marquette has a long tradition of academic excellence. That tradition continues today as we educate our children for the world of tomorrow. Combined with outstanding academics, Marquette students receive an education that nurtures their spirit and heart. Participating in weekly Masses as well as mission projects in and out of school, our children develop empathy and compassion for the less fortunate. These experiences will enable them as future leaders to govern not only with their minds but also with a conscience. As a service to the Parish of Christ the King, Marquette Catholic School teaches Catholic values and offers a comprehensive curriculum to preschool, elementary, and middle school students in an atmosphere that promotes the growth of each child's mind, body and spirit.

METRO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Jana Annett, Admissions Director
6363 S. Trenton Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918-745-9868
www.metroca.com

Metro Christian Academy is a state accredited, college preparatory, inter-denominational Christian school serving P3-12th grade students. Metro provides an education founded on biblical principles, which cultivates Christian character. With a student-teacher ratio of 18-1 and an average graduating class of 95 students, Metro offers challenging academic programs and a wide variety of co-curricular activities. Academic services range from AP and honors courses, and foreign language studies, to programs assisting students with diverse

learning needs. As a member of the OSSAA, activities include state recognized fine arts and athletic programs, honor societies, and leadership organizations. For more information contact our admissions office at 918-745-9868 ext.164 or email dclark@metroca.com.

MISS HELEN'S PRIVATE SCHOOL

Jayne Wingo-Martin
4849 S. Mingo
Tulsa, OK
918-622-2327
www.misshelens.com

Grades: Pre-Kindergarten - Elementary Miss Helen's Private School is a family-owned, family-focused business celebrating 60 years. Teachers are college degreed, caring and dedicated. All pre-kindergarten classes offer music, Spanish, art, stories & science, pre-reading skills, math and dance through small group and independent activities. Small class sizes in grades K-5 enable students to have more individualized instruction and work beyond traditional grade levels. In addition to basic academics, we offer Spanish, fine arts, and community service and charitable projects, as well as, health, nutrition and fitness. After-school activities include computer tutorial, swimming and more. Serving ages 3 years through 5th grade.

MIZEL JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Lillian Hellman
2021 E. 71st St.
Tulsa, OK
918-494-0953
www.mizelschool.org

Founded in 1975, and located on the beautiful Zarrow Campus, Mizel Jewish Community Day School provides hands-on learning for students of all faiths in preschool through fifth grade. Our highly experienced, talented staff provides a nurturing environment with small class sizes, individualized instruction and innovative General and Judaic Studies. Hebrew is taught as a modern, living language and our strong Character and Values Education Program complements our overall curriculum. Specialists conduct classes in Fine Arts, Music, Physical Education and the Computer Learning Lab with Smart Boards and iPads. Educational field trips, student-to-student mentoring, an enriched after school program, and multi-age interaction round out our program. Mize students also have the unique opportunity to experience multigenerational activities with the Tulsa Jewish Retirement

and Health Center. Art appreciation classes are conducted at the Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art and students participate in planting and harvesting at the Community Garden, all located on our unique campus.

MONTE CASSINO

Vicky Adams, Interim Director
2206 S. Lewis Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918-742-3364

www.montecassino.org

Founded in 1926, Monte Cassino is a traditional Catholic school that focuses its efforts on outstanding instruction of reading, writing, math and the sciences. As a school, Monte Cassino classes rank between the 98th and 99th percentile when compared to all schools, public or private, across the United States. Our programs serve students from three years of age to eighth grade and encourage social and moral development within a strong community. In addition to the academic, community and social connections that Monte Cassino students develop, a myriad of opportunities exist for art, computer education, foreign languages, language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, reading, religion, social studies, and individualized approaches for gifted and talented learners. Accreditation: North Central Association AdvancEd and the State of Oklahoma.

REGENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL OF OKLAHOMA

Andrew Shapleigh
8621 S. Memorial Drive
Tulsa, OK 74133
918-663-1002

www.rpsok.org

Grades: Pre-Kindergarten - Elementary Regent's mission is "to provide academically able students with a challenging education designed to help them know, love, and practice that which is true, good, and beautiful and to prepare them to live purposefully and intelligently in the service of God and man." Regent uses the classical model to immerse students in a Christian worldview. Students will appreciate the cultural impact of Western civilization, studying ancient history, languages, and culture in light of Christianity. Regent's classical approach maximizes learning throughout each student's academic growth. It is designed to provide each of them with the tools of learning that will make them successful, life-long learners. Students are taught to seek Truth in all matters, to appreciate the Tradition that has shaped who we are today, and to Train their minds and hearts as they follow Christ throughout their lives. Distinctive aspects of Regent include: Latin in Grade 4 and up; 13:1 student/teacher ratio; strong family environment, classical art studies and reproductions, accelerated mathematics, logic instruction, rhetoric

continued next page

skills development, and classic literature studies. Also offered: athletics, theatre, band, and other extra-curricular activities.

REJOICE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Heather Koerner (Registrar)

10701 N. 129th East Avenue

Owasso, OK

918-272-7235

www.rejoiceschool.com

Accreditation: Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

The right school will change a child's future. At Rejoice Christian Schools (RCS), our experienced faculty provides for your child's best future through Christian nurturing, educational challenges, and small class sizes. Year after year, RCS continues to rank as one of the top academic schools in the country with a student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1. Our God-given ministry is to lead young people to know Christ and train them in Biblical principles, Christian character, language and traditional subject matter. RCS offers a complete curriculum from Pre3 - 12th grade, including college preparatory, AP, and honors classes, a vibrant arts program and a dynamic sports program.

At Rejoice Christian Schools, our experienced faculty provides for your child's best future through Christian nurturing and educational challenges. The God-given ministry of Christian schools is to lead young people to know Christ and train them in Biblical principles, Christian character, language, and traditional subject matter. Rejoice offers a complete curriculum from Pre3 to 12th grade, including college preparatory training, AP classes, and honors classes.

RIVERFIELD COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Britton Fox

2433 W. 61st St.

Tulsa, OK

918-446-3553

www.riverfield.org

Riverfield provides a student-centered approach to education to students 8 weeks through 12th Grade with an innovative program of authentic, experiential learning in which individuality is valued and the needs of the whole student are honored. Small class sizes, along with the collaborative nature of our classrooms, provide the opportunity for students to cultivate leadership, interpersonal skills, and the confidence needed for success today and tomorrow. Personalized programming and flexible scheduling offer Middle and Upper School students the opportunity to develop talents and explore interests in a college prep setting. The 120-acre campus encompasses a barnyard, hiking trails, gardens, freshwater system, outdoor classrooms and athletic fields. Accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS),



National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and Oklahoma Private School Accreditation Commission (OPSAC).

ST. DUNSTAN'S PRESCHOOL

Lauren McGuire

5635 E. 71st St.

Tulsa, OK

918-494-6654

www.stdunstanspreschool.com

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Preschool is a developmental program that strives to provide activities and learning experiences to build each child's self esteem while stimulating cognitive development and socialization skills. We want the children to feel self-confident as well as capable of meeting new challenges, both social and educational. Classroom activities are varied to provide a balance between free-choice and teacher-directed activities, with a large variety of options that meet needs in all developmental areas - large/fine motor, cognitive, social, emotional, and self-help skills. St. Dunstan's Episcopal Preschool is open Monday - Friday, from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm for children ages three months - five years. There is an optional before-care hour each morning beginning at 8:30 am. Children may attend full time or any combination of days on a customized part-time schedule.

ST. PIUS X

Lisa Bell, principal

1717 S. 75 E. Ave.

Tulsa, OK

918-627-5367

www.spxtulsa.org

St. Pius X School promotes personal responsibility and academic excellence within a Catholic community. Students receive a well-rounded education that focuses on academic success, as well as spiritual growth and character development. Students experience art, music, computer and foreign language as part of our curriculum. Opportunities for extra-curricular involvement include Academic Bowl (as part of our award-winning team), Robotics, MathCounts, volleyball, basketball and more. St. Pius X School employs tutors on staff to help students with special needs. SmartBoard technology at every grade level enhances learning. Come tour our new child-friendly Early Childhood Elementary Center (ECEC) serving grades Pre-K through 5th grade, featuring a state of the art storm safety shelter. Our new middle school classroom wing, with an

additional storm safety shelter, will be open in spring 2016.

SUMMIT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

200 East Broadway

Broken Arrow, OK 74012

918-251-1997

SCA-Eagles.com

Founded in 1987 with a vision to offer great education based on God's truth, Summit Christian Academy, a ministry of the Assembly at Broken Arrow, serves 375 students in grades K-12. A student-teacher ratio of 16:1 allows our teachers to focus on the whole child while preparing students spiritually, academically, and physically to impact their world for Christ. Summit realizes there is nothing more important than the spiritual development of children. Students are taught biblical principles that instill character, service, and a personal relationship with Christ. Academic excellence is also a high priority. A challenging curriculum and highly qualified teachers provide the basis for our students to consistently score above the state standards on achievement tests. Fine arts performances and competitive athletics allow our students to develop their God-given gifts and talents. Contact SCA at 918.251.1997 for an educational consultation. Accreditation: Advanced Ed, ACTS, and the State of Oklahoma.

UNDERCROFT MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Nancy Davis

3745 South Hudson

Tulsa, OK

918-622-2890

www.undercroft.org

With a 50-year history in Tulsa, Undercroft Montessori school is the first Montessori school in Oklahoma accredited through the American Montessori Society and AdvancEd. Undercroft provides an authentic Montessori education, which is uniquely effective for children from age 3 through 8th grade. Undercroft students are diverse in interest, personality and learning style. Our approach supports development of individual capacities and our students are well prepared for high school with academic skills as well as life skills. Instruction is individualized as children take a more active role in their own learning and our graduates thrive in a variety of both public and private high schools. Most importantly, our students love to learn. Call for a tour at 918.622.2890 or visit www.undercroft.org for more infor-

mation.

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

Debra Price

326 S. College Ave.

Tulsa, OK 74104

918-631-5060

http://utulsa.edu/academics/university-school/

University School strives to provide a challenging, yet nurturing environment for gifted students ages 3 through 8th grade. Our program is well-rounded and includes art, music, physical education, foreign language, and computer classes for all ages. Located on The University of Tulsa campus, our beautiful facility provides a unique setting and resources that few schools can match. University School students benefit from a rich variety of learning opportunities and interactions with college professors and students as they endeavor to maximize their potential, develop creativity, and become responsible citizens.

ENRICHMENT

BENCHMARK IN-HOME TUTORING

Emily Quinn

P.O. Box 766

Tulsa, OK

918-850-5363

www.benchmarktutors.com

Benchmark In-Home Tutoring is dedicated to empowering students through one-on-one, individualized instruction. We are locally owned and operated by certified teachers who have years of experience helping students be successful. Benchmark In-Home Tutoring was founded in 2006 to offer a wide range of educational opportunities for families throughout the state of Oklahoma. Our customers recognize that Benchmarks' individualized one-on-one tutoring is the best approach to learning. Our highly-qualified tutors are degreed professionals who understand what it takes to achieve success. We are flexible and work with your schedule in the comfort of your home or a public location of your choice. Your student's team creates a customized plan and matches your student with an appropriate tutor, who teaches to the specific needs of your student.

BRAIN BALANCE ACHIEVEMENT CENTER

6022 S. Yale Ave.

KingsPointe Village

Tulsa, OK

918-488-8991

www.brainbalancecenters.com

Brain Balance of Tulsa offers a comprehensive, drug-free program that helps kids overcome their behavioral and learning difficulties enabling them to reach their social and academic potential. If your child suffers with behavioral issues, ADHD or a learning disability then you've experienced their painful frustration and lack of confidence both

continued next page

academically and socially. At Brain Balance Achievement Centers, we can help your child achieve success behaviorally, socially, and academically. We are specialized achievement centers that utilize a drug-free, whole-child approach to address the underlying issues in many of the behavioral, developmental and learning disorders that plague so many children today. Call us today to schedule your free consultation!

HUNTINGTON LEARNING CENTER

**Tulsa: 7116 S. Mingo Rd., Suite 105
Tulsa, OK**

918-252-1200

**Broken Arrow: 2554 E. Kenosha St.
Broken Arrow, OK**

918-893-5500

www.huntingtonhelps.com

With two convenient Tulsa area locations, Huntington Learning Center helps students achieve success by offering tutoring in reading, writing, study skills, math, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, and related areas. We work with students in grades K through 12, as well as college and adult students. Huntington has built its tutoring methods on scientifically based instructional methods coupled with more than 30 years of experience of tutoring thousands of students. Our experienced tutors are passionate about helping your child raise his or her grades and level of confidence. Let our experts take the weight off your shoulders. Pick up the phone and call 1 800 CAN LEARN to speak with a caring educational consultant today.

KUMON

Multiple Locations

Tulsa, OK

www.kumon.com

Four locations:

1876 Utica Square

(Utica Square, Tulsa) 918-292-8417

9168 S. Yale

(91st & Yale, Tulsa) 918-523-6284

8228 E. 61st

(61st & Memorial, Tulsa) 918-254-5437

2017 West Houston

(81st & 145th E. Ave., BA) 918-251-5384

www.kumon.com

Ages: 3 and up

For more than 55 years, Kumon's after-school academic enrichment program has helped children achieve success worldwide. We strive to instill in children the desire to achieve and the motivation to learn on their own. Whether your child is seeking enrichment, needs help catching up or is just beginning his or her academic career, Kumon is designed to help him or her develop a love of learning. Students advance through the program at their own pace. Our emphasis on individualized learning helps your child become focused, motivated and self-reliant. We monitor each child's progress to ensure comprehension before moving on to a new concept. With a strong academic foundation, critical thinking and problem solving abilities,



your child has the potential to achieve whatever he or she desires.

Call today to schedule your free placement test.

Quick Facts: Kumon has over 25,000 centers in 49 countries and more than 4 million

students studying worldwide. The Kumon Math Program is a comprehensive curriculum that develops the necessary skills to help children progress from counting through calculus.

The Kumon Reading Program begins with basic phonics and progresses all the way through advanced reading comprehension.

SOCCERCITY TULSA

Dustin Knight

5817 South 118th East Ave.

Tulsa, OK

918-249-0044

www.soccercitytulsa.com

Ages: 18 mos. – 9 yrs.

Step onto the field during any Lil' Kickers class and you will find it transformed into a world created just for your child. Our well-trained coaches will thrill your child with 50 minutes of highly creative, high energy and age-appropriate activities that serve as a great introduction to soccer, and help children master developmental milestones, appropriate for their age. Because Lil' Kickers is first and foremost a child development program, our purpose is really to help children mature on all levels. Our program focuses on helping children build strong physical, intellectual and emotional skills that will help them be successful on and off the soccer field. We believe in teaching children in ways that suit their developmental level. So, you won't see adult-like skill drills in our classes, but you will see teaching methods specifically designed to create an atmosphere that is effective and fun. You will also see happy, confident and sweaty kids who are eager to learn and want to keep coming back for more. Whether your child is new to soccer or has already developed a love for the game, the progressive nature of Lil' Kickers offers a place for children at every level. Our convenient class times provide families options to accommodate multiple children and busy schedules. Spring session will start March 21st. For Summer Camps enrollment visit our website in April.

SYLVAN

Alexandra Arias-Galban

6808 S Memorial Dr

Tulsa, OK

918-250-7323

http://locations.sylvanlearning.com/us/tulsa-ok

Sylvan Learning Center of Tulsa uses a personal approach and interactive technology to help students achieve academic success. Whether you want to see your child catch up to grade level, build confidence or jump ahead, Sylvan is the right fit for your family. Programs are offered in Reading, Math, Writing, Study Skills, GED Prep, ACT/SAT Prep, ASVAB, and Homework Support in any area. Our new program, Edge, allows students to come for tutoring twice a week for just \$150 per month. Robotics and Coding Camps are available throughout the year. Spanish/English classes are held weekly. Please call our learning center for more details.

THE TUTORING CENTER

Lisa Smith

2044 W Houston St

Broken Arrow, OK

918-455-3276

918-45LEARN

www.tutoringcenter.com

The Tutoring Center, Broken Arrow, specializes in helping children master academic skills and increase their concentration, attention span, and focus. Before you enroll in one of our programs, we conduct a FREE Diagnostic Assessment that quickly and accurately pinpoints your child's strengths and weaknesses and the skills needed for improvement. We develop a personalized program then give your child the finest instruction possible in a positive, fun, and caring environment. The Tutoring Center uses a unique system of instruction called "The Rotational Approach to Learning" which, combined with our direct one-to-one instruction, will improve the targeted academic area one full grade level in 40 hours of instruction.

TULSA ZOO

6421 E. 36th St. North

Tulsa, OK

918-669-6600

www.tulsazoo.org

Let the Tulsa Zoo inspire your young animal enthusiasts. The zoo offers year-round educational experiences for individuals, schools, groups, and entire families — from kids to grandparents. For individuals, check out our seasonal camps and classes. Our school and out-

reach programs offer unique ways for you to explore the zoo or bring the zoo to you. Spend the night at the zoo — look for scheduled Snooz-a-pa-Zoo-za family events or schedule your own L.U.N.A. group outing. Each day brings new opportunities to learn about our animals through chats and demonstrations led by staff and volunteer docents, and about the wonders found in nature through our COX Nature Exchange. Visit tulsazoo.org to learn more about educational opportunities at the Tulsa Zoo, the region's largest daily attraction. Tulsa Zoo: Inspiring passion for wildlife in every guest, every day.

THE WOODY GUTHRIE CENTER

Deana McCloud

102 East Brady Street

Tulsa, OK

918-574-2710

www.woodyguthriecenter.com

The Woody Guthrie Center is more than a museum; instead, it is a center of investigation for inspiration. By providing examples of Woody's ability to use his creativity as a way of expressing the world around him, we hope to encourage others to find their voices and the power that lies within the creative process. The Center exhibits historical artifacts as well as many state-of-the-art interactive displays as a way of connecting to visitors. These resources can have a positive impact on all learners, regardless of age, socio-economic background, or learning styles. We share a message of empowerment and encouragement, and our programs are developed with a focus on Woody's work for social justice and arts in education opportunities. Our young visitors who simply need a little encouragement in order to, in the words of Woody Guthrie, "take pride in yourself and in your work" are able to explore their creative talents and are given the opportunity to write, draw, and sing during our tours. Pre-made lesson plans from our education manager are posted on our website for teachers to use as they prep their students for tours or reinforce concepts after the tours. Throughout the year, the Center hosts youth programs as well as public programs and workshops that allow attendees to work with professional musicians or simply enjoy the positive energy that singing and working together creates. This Land, in the heart of the revitalized Brady Arts District, is truly meant for you and me.



1 out of 4 Oklahoma children is at risk of going to bed hungry.
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With your generosity, families can have food on the table, seniors
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I'M A TULSA KID

Photo Credit: OH Snap! Photography



Madison Johnson

Madison Johnson, a recent Tulsa Memorial High School graduate, was elected in June to lead the nation's future teachers as the 2015-16 Educators Rising National President. The organization was formerly Future Educators Association (FEA). While at Memorial, Madison served as the school's FEA president. Madison is currently a freshman at the University of Oklahoma majoring in Special Education.

TK: When did you decide you wanted to pursue teaching as a career?

Madison: The second semester of my freshman year in high school I was given the opportunity to try out Peer Tutoring, where I would have a class period dedicated to working with children with developmental disabilities. I had never worked with students before, so I had no idea what was in store for me. On the first day of Mrs. Karen Martin's History class, I fell in love with the students and the profession.

TK: Your mother, Stephanie Johnson is a teacher with Tulsa Educare. How has she inspired you to pursue teaching?

Madison: Some summers, my mom would bring my sister and me up to school with her and show us how her class would run and the activities they would do. I loved being the helper! I didn't realize it at the time, but it had a subconscious effect on me. My mom never forced the profession onto me, but once I decided that teaching is what I wanted to pursue, she was very supportive and mentored me.

TK: You were elected the National President of Education Rising, an organization in which students explore the teaching profession and gain authentic, hands-on teaching experience. What is your role as student president?

Madison: Being elected National President of Educators Rising is certainly one of my biggest achievements, and I would not be the National President of Educators Rising without Ms. Shawna Mott-Wright. I did not have the confidence in myself to even apply, but because of her never-ending support, I did. As an organization, we have one president and two vice-presidents. Being a National Officer in general, you are expected to be a passionate ambassador for Educators Rising, participate in conference calls, travel, attend and speak at conferences, and help plan the next National Educators Rising Conference. As president, I hold a lot of responsibility and am held to higher expectations. As National Officers, the three of us focus heavily on collaborative working, the name of "president" and "vice president" are just the title we have.

TK: What would you say is the foremost issue facing education in Oklahoma today?

Madison: I would say that children in the higher poverty parts of our state are facing classrooms without teachers that remain in the profession. We have a definite teacher shortage in certain geographical areas and subjects like elementary education, science, math and history. Recruiting people into the noble profession of teaching in high poverty schools and remaining in the field are very important issues today in Oklahoma.

TK: Is there a particular type of teaching that you want to pursue once you graduate from college?

Madison: When I graduate from college, I would love to teach high school Special Education, with a focus in job training. A huge goal for students with autism is to be able to have a job and make a living, and nothing would make me happier than to help them reach that goal.

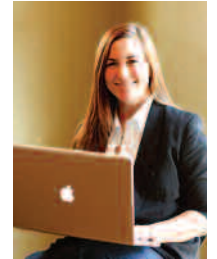
what's going on(line)?



I'll admit it. I used to make fun of Fitbits. But since Santa delivered my shiny new one on Christmas morning, I'm embracing the challenge (and competition with my Fitbit community). Although it's a cliché, starting off the new year with health goals is always a good thing, right? Health is the theme of our January giveaways (see below). You'll also see some new faces on TulsaKids.com/blog, but we're sad to say goodbye to the amazing Honeybee Mama. You can keep up with her at www.honeybeemama.com.

We hope 2016 is off to a great start for the TulsaKids community and, as always, we want to hear from you! Give us a shout out on social media, or email me at abbyrodgerst@gmail.com.

Abby, web editor



giveaways



3-Month Family Membership to Sky Fitness & Wellbeing



\$50 gift card to Iloff Salon & Day Spa

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

1-Year Family Membership to YWCA Tulsa



#MyTulsaKidsForce

We had so many fantastic entries in our #MyTulsaKidsForce Instagram photo sweepstakes. Thank you to all who entered. The winning entry is from Stacey D. with her Jedi in training and R2D2. Also, we'd like to thank Warren Theatres in Broken Arrow for hooking us up with a family-4-pack of passes for the winner. Be sure to follow us on Instagram for more fun contests and giveaways.

May the force be with you!



is your baby the cutest?

Well, of course he/she is! We are searching for a baby to be on the cover of our annual Baby Guide. The child must live in the Tulsa metro area and be between 0-12 months at the time the submitted photo was taken. The winner will be selected based on popular vote.

Photo submission: Sunday, January 3- Saturday, January 16, 2016

Voting Period: Sunday, January 17 - Saturday, January 30, 2016

You can find more details and contest rules at www.tulsakids.com/contests.



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out this winter with
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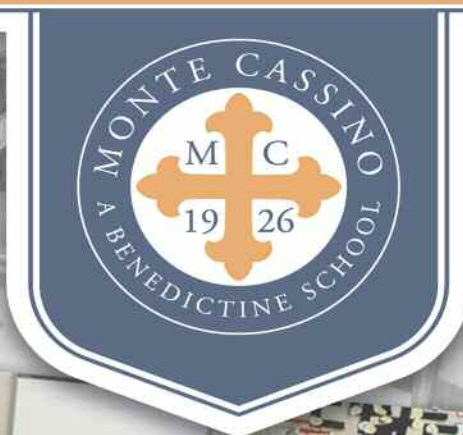
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