May 2017 Oklahoma's Award-Winning Magazine for Parents & Families www.tulsakids.com

tulsakids

FOR PARENTS. FOR FAMILIES. FOR LIFE.

CAMPING FOR EVERYONE:
LOCAL FAMILIES TAKE IT OUTSIDE

A "HOT" TOPIC:
PARENTS ENGAGING IN CLIMATE ADVOCACY

SAVING SCIENCE:
CASCIA STUDENTS' CAMPAIGN TO SAVE STATE SCIENCE FAIR

+ YUMMY CAMP FOOD

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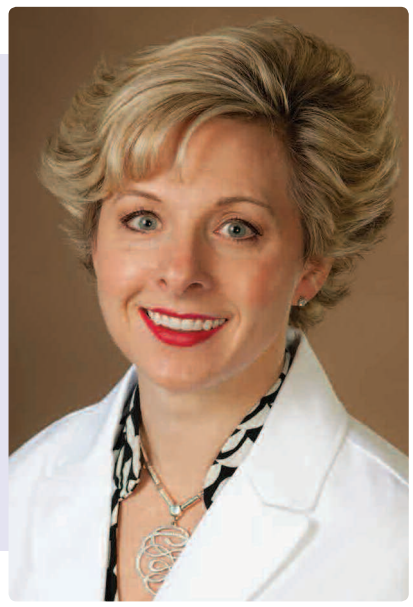
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May 2017

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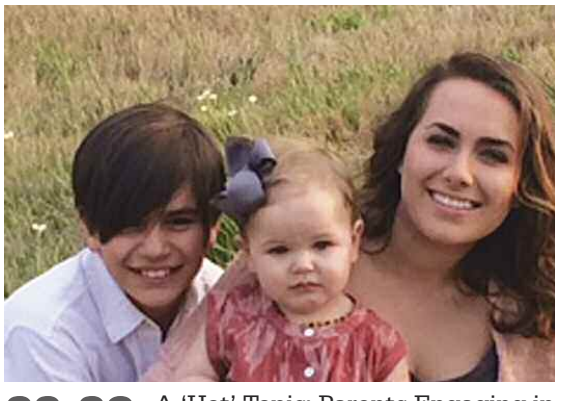
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CAMPING FOR EVERYONE: local families take it outside

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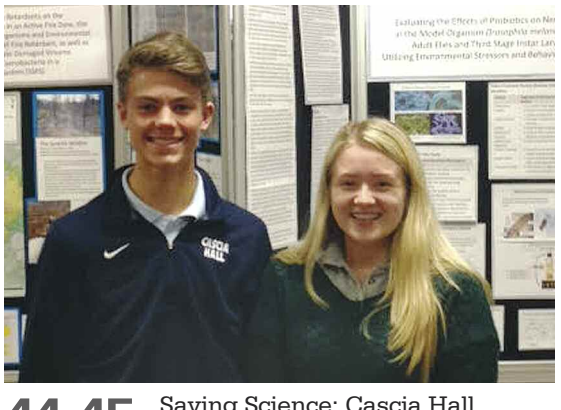
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editor's note

A Mothers Day Thank-you

As your children are going through the cracks in the sofa cushions looking for spare change to buy you a Mothers Day gift, remember – it will be that peanut-buttery-handed little person who's also eating the stale Skittles under the cushions that is our future.

I know this is a time when we're supposed to be thanking and honoring our mothers (and I thank and honor mine, because she was a wonderful mom, and I love her and she reads this Editor's Note every month, too), but I want to thank my children.

Despite my mistakes, the times that I yelled or said something in anger that I shouldn't have, the bad advice I gave, my inability to help you with math homework, you all turned out to be pretty great people. (By the way, Mary. I have to confess. Your bunny didn't run away. He died. You were so sensitive. I was just trying to protect you from the hurt. I knew you could imagine him playing with the other bunnies in his freedom.)

I can say that I see that, as adults, you absorbed the values of kindness, social consciousness, humility and the ability to call me on a regular basis that I so appreciate. I find you intelligent and interesting. The fact that only one of the three of you owns an iron does not in the least factor into my admiration for all of you.

Many times I felt guilty being at work and leaving you home on summer days to fight over a frozen pizza for lunch, but I can see that it also made you resilient people and talented negotiators.

And down time kept you from being boring people. You built a treehouse with your grandmother. Connor, you started a dog treat business and made your little sister an "associate" who had to do a lot of the mixing. And you all started a neighborhood newsletter with the kids down the street.

For a time, our backyard had a shanty "clubhouse" that Mary built from scraps of wood with a corrugated metal roof. It was painted in hideous rainbow colors, and it killed the grass underneath, but you and the neighbors had a secret hangout for a few months. The grass has grown back, and I've replaced part of that spot with a raised garden.

So, on this Mothers Day month, I want to thank you. Thank you for being such amazing young adults that I enjoy so much. I feel fortunate.

Happy Mothers Day to you all!





ON OUR COVER:
THE DIXON FAMILY WITH THEIR AIRSTREAM

PHOTO BY: OH SNAP PHOTOGRAPHY

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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.

LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON AWARDED 2017 ZARROW AWARD FOR YOUNG READERS' LITERATURE



New York Times best-selling author Laurie Halse Anderson is the winner of the Tulsa Library Trust's 2017 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature. **She will accept the award at a public presentation at Hardesty Regional Library's Connor's Cove, 8316 E. 93rd St., Friday, May 5, 2017 at 7 p.m. She also will present awards to winners of the 2017 Young People's Creative Writing Contest at the ceremony.**

Anderson is being recognized for writing more than 18 books of fiction and nonfiction for "children of all ages" that address life's challenges with honesty, humor and sensitivity.

Speak, her first young adult novel published in 1999, won the Edgar Allen Poe Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and was a finalist for the National Book Award for Young People's Literature. Actress Kristen Stewart starred in the film of the same name in 2005, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. Anderson has a cameo in the film as the lunch lady.

Chains, a book in her trilogy of the American Revolution, was awarded the 2009 Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction and chosen as a 2008 National Book Award finalist. *Forge* and *Fever*, 1793 complete the Seeds of America trilogy.

Wintergirls was selected as an American Library Association Best Books for Young Adults. Readers and reviewers welcomed its honest portrayal of anorexia.

For her 2013 book, *The Impossible Knife of Memory*, Anderson details the challenges of post-traumatic stress disorder and the long-term effects it can have on a family.

The American Library Association presented her with the Margaret A. Edwards Award in 2009. This award recognizes an author for his or her lasting achievements in young adult literature.

The Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature gives formal recognition, on behalf of the Tulsa County community, to a nationally acclaimed author who has made a significant contribution to the field of literature for young adults. The award, presented by the Tulsa Library Trust, consists of a $7,500 cash prize and an engraved crystal book.

Past winners include: Gordon Korman (2016), Sharon Draper (2015), Jack Gantos (2014), Jim Murphy (2013), Jacqueline Woodson (2012), Kathryn Lasky (2011), Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (2010), Christopher Paul Curtis (2009), Louis Sachar (2008), Kate DiCamillo (2007), Sharon Creech (2006), Avi (2005), Susan Cooper (2004), Russell Freedman (2003), Richard Peck (2002), E.L. Konigsburg (2001), Jerry Spinelli (2000), Jane Yolen (1999), Cynthia Voigt (1998), Gary Paulsen (1997), Walter Dean Myers (1996), Lois Lowry (1994), Katherine Paterson (1993), Madeleine L'Engle (1992) and S.E. Hinton (1991).

For more information on the Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature or Mr. Henry's Books Teacher Workshop, call the AskUs Hotline, 918.549.7323, or visit the library's website, www.tulsalibrary.org.

FAMILY FUN AT TULSA BOTANIC GARDEN'S ANNUAL DIG

Tulsa Botanic Garden will host its fifth annual **DIG: Day In the Garden on Saturday, May 13, from 4 to 8 p.m.** This family-friendly picnic includes train rides, balloon artists, face painters, crafts and more. Children can decorate a pot and plant it with flowers for a Mother's Day gift. Live music will be provided by Tulsa duo **Desi and Cody**. Tickets also include food and drinks for the entire family. Select silent auction items will be also be available.

In addition to the festivities, the **Children's Discovery Garden** offers two acres of hands-on fun! The young and young-at-heart will enjoy exploring this wonderland garden with the iconic **Spring Giant**, a one-of-a-kind 15' tall fantastical carved face, which feeds the adjacent Stream Valley with Spitting Animal Fountains. All ages can channel their inner artist for water painting on the Art Wall or making music on instruments behind the Spring Giant. Kids can transform into birds and butterflies with dress-up costumes in the nearby Tree Fort and look for animals "hidden' in the carved Oak Thrones.

General admission tickets for the DIG event are $60 per adult. Garden member discount tickets are $40 per adult. **Children are free with a paid adult**. Ticket reservations can be made by calling 918.289.0330 or online at tulsbotanic.org. Tickets must be purchased in advance; no tickets are sold at the door. Proceeds from ticket sales and select silent auction items benefit the Children's Discovery Garden.

FIT TO PLAY: FREE PARENT WORKSHOP

Children who play sports or participate in dance or cheer are having fun, but may also experience injuries. Incorrect repetitive movements that occur while playing sports can increase risk and cause injuries, but how do parents identify potential risks, and what can be done to minimize those risks? TherapyWorks is holding a free parent workshop to educate parents about repetitive risk injuries. Parents will learn what repetitive movements are incorrect in their children and retrain them to help reduce the risk of potential injury. The seminar will focus on the prevalence of injury to children and young athletes, the importance of correct movement, and the Fit to Play evaluation process and individualized training. The workshop is May 18, 7 p.m. at TherapyWorks, 7608 E. 91st St., Tulsa. Seating is limited. To reserve a spot, call 918.633.2203 or email scott@therapyworkstulsa.com.

continued next page

TULSA ARTS ALLIANCE KICKS OFF CAMPAIGN

Last year the Tulsa Arts Alliance (TAA) bought a van and provided transportation for school children to attend A Pocketful of Hope's after-school program, which helped grow attendance. Students who participate in A Pocketful of Hope's arts programming have a 100 percent graduation rate.

That's just one of the things that Tulsa Arts Alliance is doing in the community. Tulsa Arts Alliance, a non-profit comprised of 40 local arts organizations kicked off its 2017 fundraising campaign last month. By joining forces, the arts programs can do more with their funds, including beefing up their education components.

Phil Lakin, CEO of the Tulsa Community Foundation, pointed out that he and he wife believe that the arts are critical to economic growth, education and quality of life. Before the TAA existed, his family would give to three large community arts organizations. Because of TAA, they are able to give more and help out 37 additional arts groups.

This year the BOK Center has partnered with TAA to raise awareness and to provide financial support. Visitors to the BOK will see the TAA logo displayed, and those who buy tickets via Ticketmaster will have the opportunity to donate to TAA.



(L TO R) JEFF NICKLER, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE BOK CENTER PRESENTS A CHECK FOR $5,000 TO AAT CAMPAIGN CHAIR ROBERT PURGASON; PHIL LAKIN; REBECCA MARKS JIMERSON, AAT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER; AND TODD CUNNINGHAM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AAT.

Individuals, groups and businesses are invited to donate to TAA. All operating costs have been covered this year, so any new funds will go directly to the arts organizations. An event is planned for Saturday, May 20 to celebrate the member organizations and to honor their education volunteers. The "Play Your Part" brunch will be from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency, 100 E. 2nd Street. Actress, model and Miss USA® 2015 Olivia Jordan will be the keynote speaker. To donate or for reservations to the brunch, call 918.289.0222 or visit artstulsa.org.

MAYFEST INVITES THE FAMILY DOWNTOWN

Tulsa International Mayfest is a family friendly tribute to the arts and music. This year's event is set for May 18 through 21 with the usual art, food and music throughout downtown Tulsa. The Kidzone will be at Centennial Green Park, which is the southern edge of Mayfest. Kids can create their own free art projects and enjoy live entertainment on the Kidzone stage. To encourage art collecting, children can also pick out a piece of art to buy for $5. On Saturday and Sunday, kids can participate in "The Art of Movement," a free 20-minute natural movement class offered every hour. Classes are limited to 20 kids. To register for the class, go to the instructor at the Kidzone.

For complete information, go to Tulsamayfest.org. A schedule of events is available on the Kidzone page.

MR. NICE GUYS NEW AT GUTHRIE GREEN

Mr. Nice Guys will take over the on-site café at Guthrie Green, formerly occupied by Lucky's. Food choices include their signature mac and cheeses and tacos in addition to new items like smoothies and wraps.

CORRECTION:

The correct title of a book edited by Tulsan Jeff Martin is *The Customer Is Always Wrong: The Retail Chronicles*



MATILDA THE MUSICAL COMING TO TULSA PAC

If your kids loved the Roald Dahl novel, now you can take them to see *Matilda the Musical* coming to the Tulsa Performing Arts Center from June 20-25 for its first U.S. National Tour.

Winner of 70 international awards, *Matilda the Musical* is the story of a little girl with extraordinary gifts who dreams of a better life – and takes action to change it.

For information, go to www.celebrityattractions.com. Tickets go on sale May 1 at 10 a.m.

SAINT FRANCIS AUXILIARY GIVES BACK

The Saint Francis Volunteer Auxiliary presented $100,000 to the Margaret Hudson Program in support of the agency's work to provide academic and comprehensive family support services to teen mothers. The program had lost funding from the Tulsa Area United Way and was seeking to raise over $200,000 in donations to help make up for the loss.

The Saint Francis Volunteers are committed to helping the patients of Saint Francis Health System, as well as giving back to the community. After learning of the Margaret Hudson Program's financial challenges, the volunteers wanted to help support the agency, recognizing the alignment of the program with the mission of Saint Francis Health System.



FRONT ROW L TO R: MELISSA BATES,VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR, SAINT FRANCIS HOSPITAL-SOUTH AND LAUREATE, SAINT FRANCIS VOLUNTEER AUXILIARY (ALL IN PINK) LINDA LARSON, SUSAN HALE, IRIS CHANDLER, JO ANN O'BRIEN AND CAROL GRAHAM; REBECCA DARROW, DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES, SAINT FRANCIS HEALTH SYSTEM; TOM NEFF, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CORPORATE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, SAINT FRANCIS HEALTH SYSTEM; AND BETINA TILLMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARGARET HUDSON PROGRAM, MHP.
BACK ROW L TO R: JOHN KLOS, SAINT FRANCIS VOLUNTEER AUXILIARY; MELVIN GILLIAM SR., MHP BOARD MEMBER; SCOTT REEVES, MHP BOARD MEMBER; AND DR. JOHN NETTLES, MHP BOARD MEMBER.

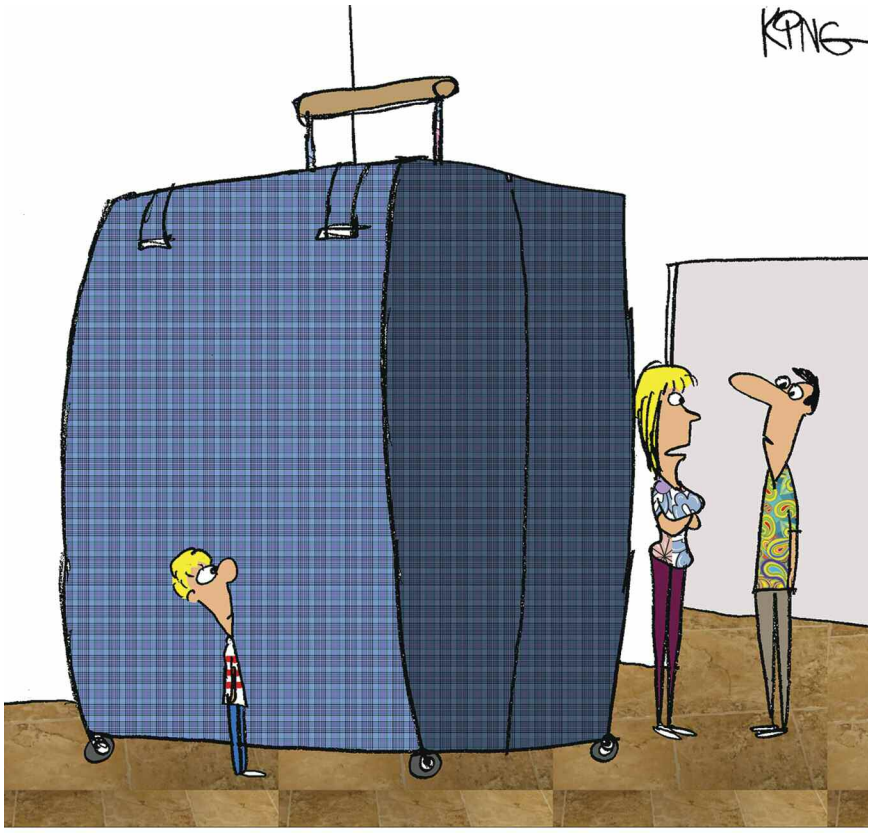
MORE TO LOVE AT THE TULSA ZOO

The Tulsa Zoo recently opened the St. John Family Den, a quiet space that will make it easier for families to enjoy their visit to the zoo. The Family Den is a 900-foot facility with a private space for nursing mothers, a quiet room where families affected by autism or sensory processing disorders can take a break, and a family restroom with child-size toilets as well as an adult changing table to accommodate those with disabilities.

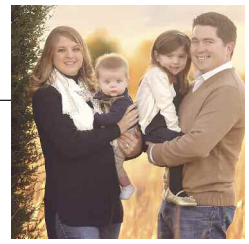
"Offering amenities like the St. John Family Den helps our zoo provide a welcoming, relaxing environment for families to unplug, relax and learn about the natural world. The new St. John Family Den will improve the experience for guests who might otherwise have to cut short their visit," said Tulsa Zoo Management, Inc., President and CEO Terrie Correll.

The St. John Family Den is open daily during regular zoo hours.





"I see you elected to go with one big suitcase, instead of going with a bunch of smaller ones."



BY KILEY ROBERSON

is Pre-K important?

Summer time is almost here and for parents that means it's time to think about…next school year! In all seriousness, while I love summer swimming, vacations and outdoor fun, entertaining kiddos and stressing over summer camps is not my favorite activity. By August, I'm more than ready to get back to routine.

This school year will be even more exciting because my youngest is starting pre-k! Watching his sister scoot out the door to kindergarten each day and hearing her talk about all the "big kid" fun has my son itching to join the world of formal education. I couldn't be happier to see his joyful anticipation for school. Another thing I'm happy about is our state's free universal pre-k that gives kids like my son this early learning opportunity.

Oklahoma has caught a lot of flak lately for its lack of educational funding, but, as a parent, I'm thankful that this is one thing it's gotten right. In fact, Oklahoma is one of just three states that offers free universal pre-kindergarten. However, leaders with a local community partnership called ImpactTulsa say not every parent takes advantage of this hidden gem or understands the importance of a pre-k curriculum.



"Research shows children who attend pre-k read at higher levels, have better attendance, are less likely to repeat grades, and are more likely to graduate high school than kids who do not attend pre-k," says Kathy Seibold, ImpactTulsa executive director.

Seibold also has the numbers and science to back her up. With studies showing that 90 percent of brain development occurs by age 5, she says it's important for children to start gaining academic and social experiences early. One of the best roads to start on this journey is pre-k.

An in-depth report published by ImpactTulsa notes that children who attend pre-k gain literal brain-shaping knowledge. Research shows that both academic and formative experiences influence and shape brain development in the early years. This is especially important for low-income children who may not have access to pre-k without the state's free programs.

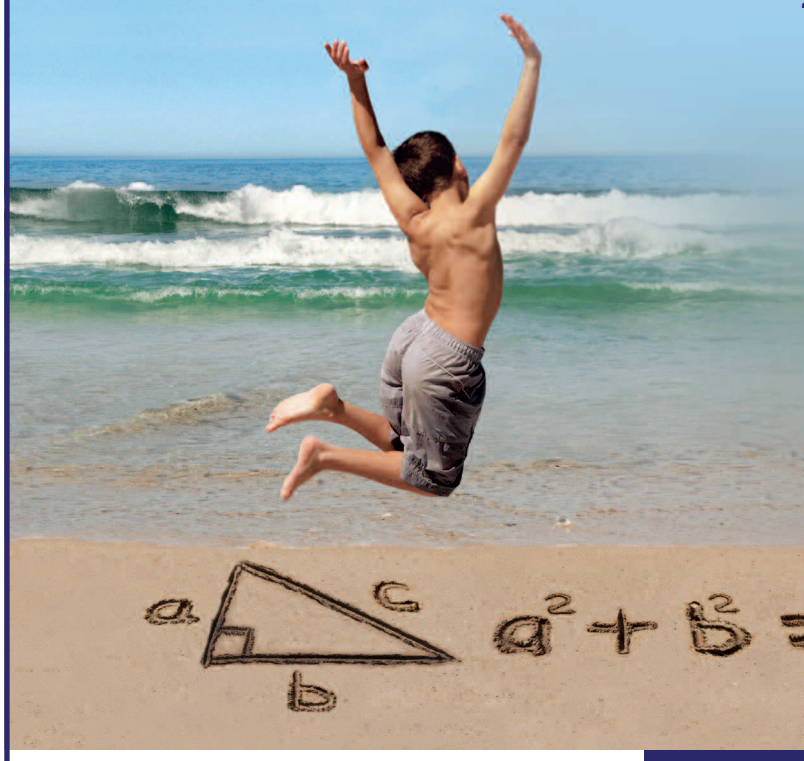
"Through data measurement and the close relationship we have with Tulsa area school districts, we know learning spans a pipeline from early childhood to postsecondary education," explains Seibold. "Through our most recent research, we found that 46 percent of low-income kindergarten students who completed pre-k were reading-ready compared with 41 percent who did not. Pre-K truly makes a difference in the preparedness for our kids to be ready to learn and succeed."

ImpactTulsa says the main message of their research is short and sweet – students who enroll in pre-k outperform those who do not. It's a message Tulsa Public Schools says it echoes to parents.

"We see firsthand that children who complete pre-k are better prepared for long-term academic success," says Devin Fletcher, TPS chief learning officer. "Despite the many challenges facing public education in Oklahoma, our early childhood education programs give kids a head start on learning that has lifelong benefits. We encourage all parents to take advantage of the excellent pre-k programs that are available for Oklahoma children and families."

Come fall, my son will be joining the pre-k crowd, and I hope it's the largest crowd of early learners that our state has ever seen. Because pre-k is more than important, pre-k is crucial — not only to the individual success of our children, but to the future success of our state.

To find out how to enroll your child, visit impacttulsa.org to find your district.



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enjoy Spring with your child:

TIPS ON GETTING YOUR FAMILY OUTSIDE & ACTIVE

Spring is here and it's a great time for families with children to spend time outdoors and together. The Episcopal Center for Children (ECC), a nonprofit organization providing mental health and special education services to children ages 5-14 in the greater Washington, DC area, offers tips to help families.

Being active as a family can benefit everyone. Adults need at least two and a half hours a week of physical activity, and children need 60 minutes a day.

"Several studies have shown that being outside and staying active improves health and well-being for adults and children," said Dodd White, president and CEO of ECC. "For families supporting children with unique needs, doing activities together outside can promote positive behavior, relieve stress, improve focus, and help everyone in the family be mentally and physically healthier."

Tip #1 –Set specific activity times for your family. Find time slots throughout the week when your whole family is available. Devote a few of these times to physical activities together outside. Try doing something active after dinner or begin the weekend with a Saturday morning walk.

Tip #2 – Get outside and get moving. Take your dog for a walk. Play "I spy" while walking



somewhere. Play in the park or go to the community center. Play tag, hopscotch, or jump rope.

Tip #3 – Cope with any anxieties. If a child is anxious about going outside, bring along a favorite snack and anything familiar and comforting that can help extend "safe" feelings into the outdoors. Take a Teddy Bear Hike where each child brings a favorite stuffed animal along for the adventure.

Tip #4 – Use technology as a supportive tool. Technology can help children coping with special needs transition from indoors to outdoors and help them explore nature. For example, encourage them to use a digital recorder (or your cell phone) to record bird songs, a babbling stream and other pleasing sounds in your yard, the park, or along a trail. When you are back indoors, your child can use these recordings to calm herself and reduce anxieties.

Tip #5 – Use tech gear to focus. Smartphones, digital cameras and binoculars are a great filter for children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder or autistic spectrum disorders. These items can help them focus on a single feature being observed and remove the extraneous visual stimulation around them.

Tip #6 – Start small. Begin by introducing one new family activity and then add more when you feel everyone is ready. Take the dog for a longer walk, play another ball game, or go to an additional exercise class.

Tip #7 – Use school activities as a jumping board for family activities. Talk about what your children learned at school in gym or physical education class. Ask them to show you what they learned. Help them practice.

Tip #8 – Build new skills. Try yoga, mindfulness practices or dance as a family. Find free resources on the internet or special classes in the community designed for families and for individuals with special needs. Enroll your children in classes they might enjoy such as gymnastics or other sports. Encourage them to practice, and go to their activities as a family.

Tip #9 – Plan ahead. Write your activity plans on a family calendar. Let your children help plan the activities. Allow them to check it off after the activity is completed.

Tip #10– Plan for all weather conditions. Have some ideas for indoor activities on standby in case the weather does not cooperate. Try mall walking, indoor basketball, or active video games or board games.

"Once you start getting outside regularly with your child, you will begin to see the results. Symptoms of anxiety, depression and acting out can lessen," said White. "Self-esteem, focus and participation in social settings may improve too. And hopefully, you'll be feeling better too."





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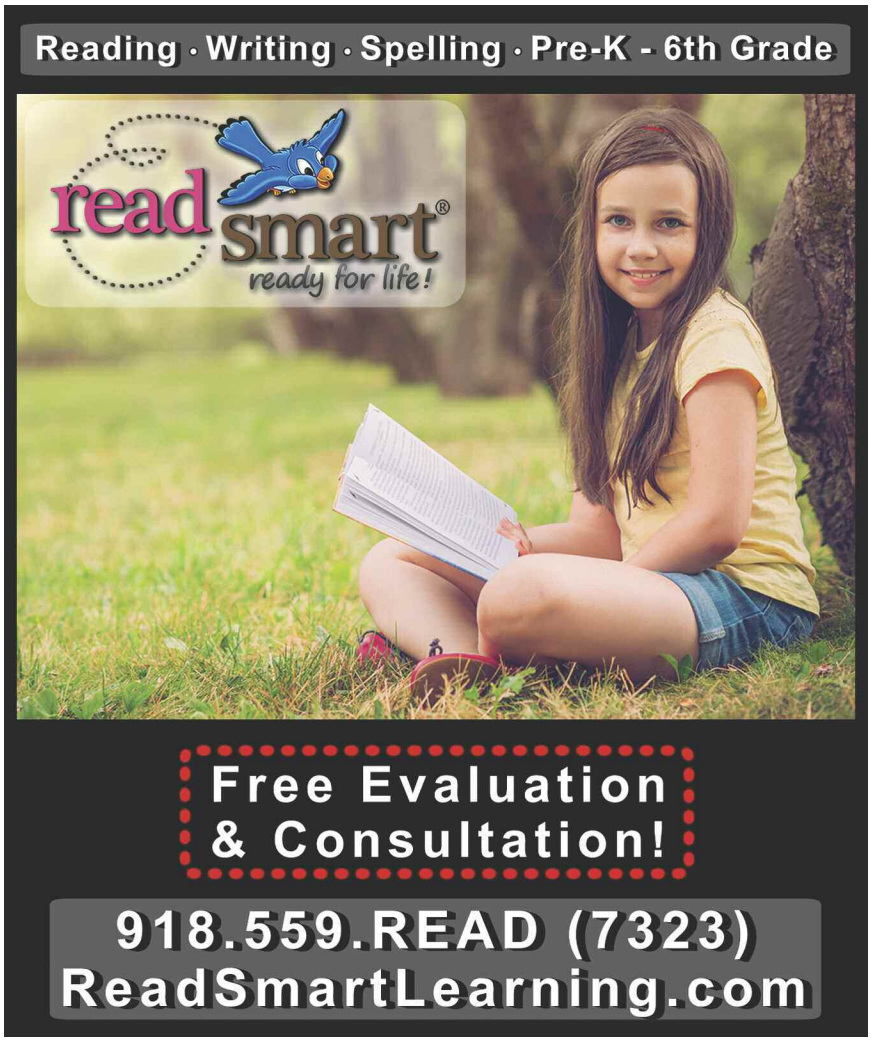
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BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

home alone

Anyone with infants or young kids is well aware of the vast tactical maneuvers required for a trip to the grocery or a run to the dry cleaners. Sometimes, just getting out the front door with a small child takes serious logistics. Parents often long for the day when they can make a quick, unaccompanied trip to the market for a gallon of milk with just keys, cash and a license. But when will that day arrive - at what age can a child be left at home alone?

While some states have legal regulations or public policy requirements governing this issue, the majority, including Oklahoma, does not. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics and numerous child welfare organizations recommend adult supervision for children younger than 11 or 12. Of course, every child is different, and ultimately, parents need to do what is best for their own child and their own family when making this determination. Fortunately, there are some guidelines that can help.

General Recommendations

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) states that infants and children under the age of 6 should never be left alone without adult supervision. Grade school children who are demonstrably responsible and mature may be left by themselves (not caring for younger children) for one to two hours during the day, as long as there is access to a responsible adult.



According to OKDHS, middle school children who are self-sufficient may be left alone for up to four hours during the day or evening. They may even be left in charge of one or two younger children, as long as they have easy access to a responsible adult.

Is Your Child Ready?

But how do you know if your child is mature enough or self-sufficient enough to be left alone, or left alone caring for a younger sibling? The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) offers some guidance. OSBI suggests parents assess their kid to decide if that child has the personality, self-confidence and judgment skills necessary to accept the responsibilities of being home alone. For example, is the child capable of following directions and solving problems on his or her own?

In addition, it's important to talk to the child to determine how he or she feels about being left alone. Some kids feel fear, loneliness, stress and anxiety when left at home without supervision. Some may not even want that responsibility.

Before You Leave

Once it's decided a child is responsible and mature enough to fly solo, it's best to have a plan in place before heading out the door. Of course, the child should know basic facts like his or her full address and how to reach a parent or other responsible adult. In addition, he or she should know how to place a 911 call in the event of an emergency. Reminding the child not to open the door for or talk to anyone who comes to the home unless that person is a trusted family friend or relative is also a good idea. Similarly, instruct the child to tell callers that the parent is not available to come to the phone and to take a message, rather than letting people know that he or she is home alone. Letting the child know that he or she can go to trusted neighbors or call them and also letting those neighbors know that your child will be home alone can help your child feel more secure.

Clearly discussing rules and expectations is also important. Are friends allowed? If so, how many and is it limited to same-sex friends only? How often do you expect your child to check in with your via text or call? Parents should also communicate what activities are off-limits or if certain chores or homework needs to be completed.

Leaving a child alone for the first time can be a stressful experience for all involved, but with proper planning, it can also be a great opportunity for learning and growth. Clear expectations, adequate safeguards and reliable resources go a long way toward avoiding any Macaulay Culkin-like mishaps and ensuring a safe and rewarding experience for all.

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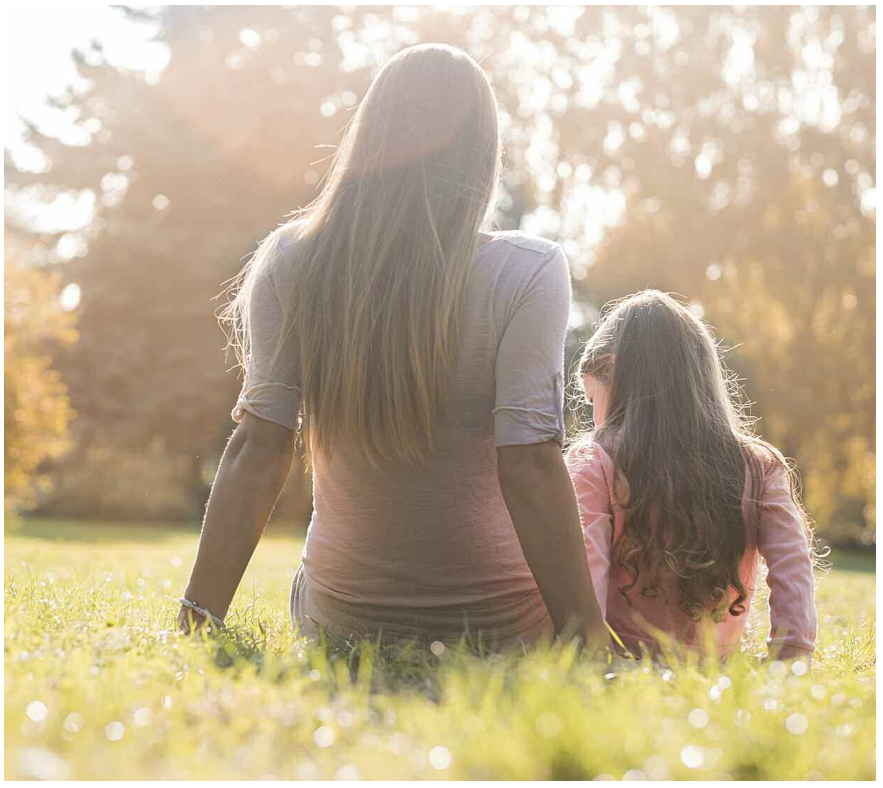
BY SUSAN SOLOMON YEM

please don't call me a **single mother**

A colleague and I were chatting the other day about workplace challenges. He mentioned some conflicts he is having with a perpetually cranky co-worker and said, "well, she's a single mom and I know that's hard."

Wait a minute! I'm a single mom, and I am rarely cranky.

Eighteen million children are being raised by single mothers. That's a quarter of all children residing in the United States. Interestingly, in the research I did for this article, I could not find a common definition for the term "single mother." The most comprehensive, and logical, is: an unmarried woman raising children. But some commentators said, it could mean women whose children were born out of wedlock or widows who do not have the assistance and support of a husband. In fact, I read a posting on one website which stated that a woman who is divorced is not a single mother, because she is co-parenting with the children's father.



I am divorced

Although I am a single mother, I hate to identify myself that way. My five children were not born out of wedlock, nor am I a widow. I am divorced. Even in this day and age when more than 50 percent of American marriages fail, the label, single mother, especially when it is associated with divorce, is perceived negatively. It makes me think of the scorned women of 1930s movie melodramas, like Stella Dallas. Even in the 1970s no good mothers on television were divorced. Lucille Ball was a widow in every incarnation of her sitcom. In the original storyline for The Brady Bunch either Mike or Carol Brady was divorced, but when the show aired, both were widowed. And even though Mary Tyler Moore was a divorced mother in real life, her character, Mary Richards of the Mary Tyler Moore Show, was a never married career gal. Today's TV moms are still rarely divorced. Those who are divorced are struggling or working hard to reconcile with separated spouses.

My friend, Lynn, is a widow. People in her world are solicitous and gracious. They offer to clean the leaves out of her gutters, paint the trim on her house, and mow her lawn. I remember sitting with a group of Lynn's friends discussing how we could support her. Although everyone knew I was alone, no one offered to help me. There is a perception that widows are more deserving than divorcees. And Lynn agrees. Her first marriage ended in divorce. "People treat me so differently now as a widow than they did when they found out I was divorced," she said. "That's why I was reluctant to let people know."

Less than supportive friends

The day my husband moved out, I sought solace from the woman I thought was my closest friend. We had known each other for more than a decade. Our children, constant companions, were close in age. We spoke on the phone daily, sharing the intimate details of our lives. We took power walks every evening after dinner. But the day I told her my marriage ended was the last day of our friendship. She did not speak to me for six months. When we finally reconnected, I asked her why she cut me off. "I think that's when I started a new job," was her response.

Like the co-worker I mentioned earlier, sometimes people just don't realize what they are saying. (I'm changing some names in this next story.) As a family, we have always been active church-goers. My children

continued next page

attended Sunday school and youth group weekly. When the pastor asked for help organizing an ice cream social, I was one of the parents who volunteered. At the end of the evening he acknowledged all of us: "I'd like to thank the Smith Family, the Wilson Family and Susan Yem for organizing this event."

I was really hurt that he did not recognize my children and me as a family and I let him know, "we're a family, too."

Just a few weeks prior to this event, I overheard a mom in that same church's lobby telling a friend, "We're taking John home with us tonight to sleep over. After all, we are the two-parent household." John (again, not his real name) is being raised – quite admirably – by his single mother.

A universal snub

The snub is deeper, almost universal. I just read this headline on nbcnews.com : Auto Insurers Charge Single Women More. NBCnews.com quotes an actuary with the Insurance Information Institute who says, "married people are less likely to be in an accident."

And even when communicating good news about great accomplishments, that reference to being a single mother or being raised by a single mother gives the news the air of this happened against all odds.

When I am asked to describe what it feels like to be divorced, I usually use this example: Take two pieces of construction paper, glue them together and let them dry. Now try to pull them apart. They may come apart, but they will not look the same as they did before you glued them together. Add to this insensitive comments made by friends and colleagues and it is difficult to not feel diminished. And this is why I am reluctant to call myself a single mother.

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CAMPING FOR EVERYONE:
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BY SHEEBA ATIQI
PHOTOS BY OH SNAP!

Spending just 20 minutes a day in nature can increase vitality, boost your mood and increase your overall well-being. Camping forces us to step away from technology and social media, and helps us come back to the basics of human relationships. Leaving the hustle and bustle behind and spending some quality time with the kids sounds pretty sweet. But let's be honest. Not all of us are made to be "one with nature" in the get down and dirty sense. Thankfully, there are many types of camping that are able to suit everyone's needs, whether it be classic tents, vintage Airstreams or glamping.

Streamline It

The Dixon family considers their style "trailer glamping." Heather Dixon, mommy blogger of www.5goforth.com, states that trailer glamping is "an increasingly popular vacation style. Travel trailers, especially ones that are customized, can provide a level of luxury that you would never expect while camping."

The Dixons began as typical "tent campers" when their children were toddlers. "As [our children] got older, we introduced them to sleeping under the stars in hammocks," Heather said. "We chose to renovate an Airstream trailer in order to extend our camping season, which is limited in Oklahoma by extreme heat in the midsummer and cold in the winter. We still use the hammocks occasionally, but it is nice to be able to escape the elements and wildlife."

Heather says one of her favorite parts of camping is that "in today's new media age it is easier to become distracted and more difficult to genuinely connect. Many of the places we camp have limited connectivity or are completely off grid. As a result, the way we interact as a family changes drastically when we camp."

Heather's family prepares meals and dines together, encouraging "far more serious and silly conversations." Togetherness also syncs the family members' sleeping and waking time with the natural rhythms of the sun as well as creating new, shared experiences.

The Dixons also love the slower pace that is intrinsic to camping. "Most all the available activities are about interacting with nature: waking to the sounds of turkeys as they pass through our campsite and realizing a turkey gobble sounds more like a gurgle; or camping in the high desert during a drought and discovering that in the

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absence of a campfire we can see more stars in the night sky than ever before."

The Dixons have taken their Airstream to many places, but so far their favorite places have been Yosemite and Arches National Park. When closer to home, they love to frequent Cedar Lake in the Ouachita National Forest and Buffalo Point Campground on the Buffalo River in Arkansas.

Being outdoors, the Dixon family has discovered that their favorite activities include hiking, kayaking, fishing, and playing cards around the campfire. Heather remembers "this past summer the children discovered bouldering at Pinnacles National Park. Now if there are rock formations off the beaten path, our hikes turn into climbs."

As often as they are on the road, someone in the family inevitably must plug into the working world on occasion, especially during the longer trips, sometimes giving them material suitable for a sticom. Heather reminisces that her husband Dave had to work remotely last summer at Yosemite National Park. "We left Dave in the early hours at a picnic table by the Merced River with his MIFI and laptop so he could have a conference call with an East Coast client," Heather explained. "During his second call of the morning, he had an unexpected visitor in the form of a bear. The bear was very curious about his gear, which he left on the table when he made a hasty retreat. The bear eventually continued on but not until after it slobbered all over his MIFI."

The Dixons look forward to taking their giggles and adventures to many more destinations. They dream of visiting Acadia National Park on the coast of Maine. "We want to be the first to see the sunrise in the US from the top of Cadillac Mountain."

How About a Pop-Up?

If you don't have access to a trendy vintage Airstream trailer, but still want to explore the outdoors, you might try something smaller. The Doyle family recently made a transition to pop-up camping. A pop-up is a pull-behind "box on wheels." Chuck Doyle, who, along with his wife Jana, owns Kiddlestix Toy Store in Tulsa, says, "When we get to the campsite, all we have to do is raise the roof and extend the ends, which pulls the beds out. Inside there is a stove, sink and a dining area, a couch that both ends lay down and convert to beds as well. It will comfortably sleep up to six adults."

Chuck explained that he and his wife wanted a way to camp year 'round, regardless of weather. "Summer camping with the AC in the pop-up is going to be a game-changer," he said, "and a space heater for the cooler months is cozy as well."

Plugging into a campsite or operating off of the battery and propane offers so many new luxuries that the Doyles didn't have when they were car camping with a tent. Chuck and Jana are "backpackers at heart" and enjoyed camping when they lived in Montana.

"When we had our daughter, we bought a two-room, 20 or so poled tent," Chuck said. "Both of our kids absolutely love sleeping on the ground under the stars."

The Doyles love breaking up the daily routine of life while camping. They enjoy making lists, meal planning and packing up

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all the supplies. "The kids love to pack their own bags," Chuck said. "The essential/non-essential ratio is pretty balanced. Also, just getting into nature and out of town is key. The kids need to experience other places that are within a day's drive and bust out of their Tulsa bubble."

Oklahoma's state parks are a draw to the family. "It's a good feeling to support an invaluable entity that, hopefully, we will not lose in the future," Chuck said, adding that they "love anywhere with a lake."

He explains the allure of camping that comes from having a stationary set-up placed in the midst of ever-changing scenery. "Boats motoring by, Blue Herons cruising just above the water, fish rising at dusk; the motion of the lake water is calming and peaceful," Chuck said.

But with every peaceful moment there's always something silly waiting to happen. Chuck recalls that they are usually conscientious about cleaning up the camp, but one night they left out the marshmallows and graham crackers.

"Jana thought for sure that she heard 'boots' outside of our camper," Chuck said. "Turns out it was a couple of fat raccoons that made off with our marshmallows and graham crackers. We had to make a trip into town to replenish our supply because we had one more night out there!"

Chuck and Jana love the time they get to spend with their little ones hiking, taking pictures and riding bikes. Chuck says while camping they do "some fishing, taking turns on the kayak and exploring along the way, playing games like Uno and Quirkle, throwing the frisbee, and the kids play on playgrounds in the campgrounds and meet other kids."

He does admit that their favorite part is that they "enjoy the journey! Driving through small towns and stopping at Shake Shacks! Setting up camp, making a fire and the primitive-ness of camping and cooking is a super-fun change."

The Doyle family frequents Greenleaf State Park, Great Plains State Park, Lake Tenkiller State Park, and Keystone State Park. Next for the Doyle family Chuck says is a roadtrip to Montana. Chuck plans to camp with his kids at the place where he and his wife got married 10 years ago in Swan Mountains in Montana.

Or Tent Glamping Might Be Your Style

Now if you enjoy the outdoors but also enjoy the finer things in life, Tulsa's Homma Camp Co. has the best solutions for you. DeAnna Cooper and Jessica Brent are the adventurous duo behind Homma Camp Co. "We like to call it Damn Fine Camping! But most people would call it glamping and that's perfectly fine," DeAnna said. "We try not to go too over the top with the frills, but



we want to make sure that people are comfortable so we provide real beds, heated mattress pads if it's a bit chilly, French-pressed coffee, of course, and record players to name a few things"

DeAnna and Jessica are moms to Jay, age 7, and are in the process of adopting foster children Anthony, 6, and Dakota, 4. The couple started Homma Camp Co. "after living a year in Spain and then coming back to the US and camping in our VW camper-van. We sort of felt that we had nearly perfected the art of adventuring with kids efficiently and comfortably. We wanted to make it easy for other people to get outside, enjoy nature and have adventures. "

The couple knows that "family camping is hard! There's so much that goes in to preparing for camping, it can be extremely stressful. Organizing all the gear, packing for the kids, planning meals, not to mention the set up and break down - a good campout takes effort and coordination," DeAnna said. "Once everything is set up, camping is truly relaxing. It's one of the few times in our busy lives when we're okay just sitting by a fire and doing nothing! And, with space to explore, the kids never have trouble entertaining themselves."

DeAnna reminds us there's just so much to do within our very own Oklahoma. "Cedar Lake in southeast Oklahoma is absolutely beautiful," she said. "We did a fall break campout there and the weather was just perfect. It was the perfect place to introduce the kids to fishing and to do some light hiking."

There are places nearby to explore as well. One place they enjoy camping is Osage State Park. "They have built some fabulous platforms with Safari tents and we love to go out there and outfit them with all of our amenities," DeAnna said. "Sequoyah State Park has a wonderful staff and were one of the first state parks to reach out to us about our services. It's a great place to go if you want to hike, horseback ride and spend time in their newly renovated lodge. Oh, and Devils Den in Arkansas is definitely one of our favorites too!"

We all know sometimes it's hard to just pack up and be spontaneous with kids. DeAnna tells us to "try to go out for just one night. We did a campout at the Westside YMCA in Tulsa and families were there camping with their small children for the first time. Based on what they said, they liked that they were also camping close to home. That way if things start to get a little too hectic, then you can always abort the camping mission and head back home."

As a professional camper, DeAnna also offers this bit of advice to novices. "If you are not really interested in investing a lot of money (camping stuff can be expensive), then it may be best to borrow equipment from friends or family or you can also use our fully outfitted pop-up camp service!"

No matter how you camp, whether it is roughing it or staying in style, just remember to grab the family and get outdoors. Experience nature, explore while taking a hike or just drive through a small town to find a local burger joint. The outdoors and sleeping under the stars not only recharges your batteries, but gives your little ones memories they'll remember forever.

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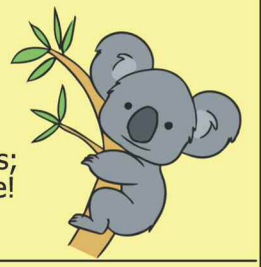
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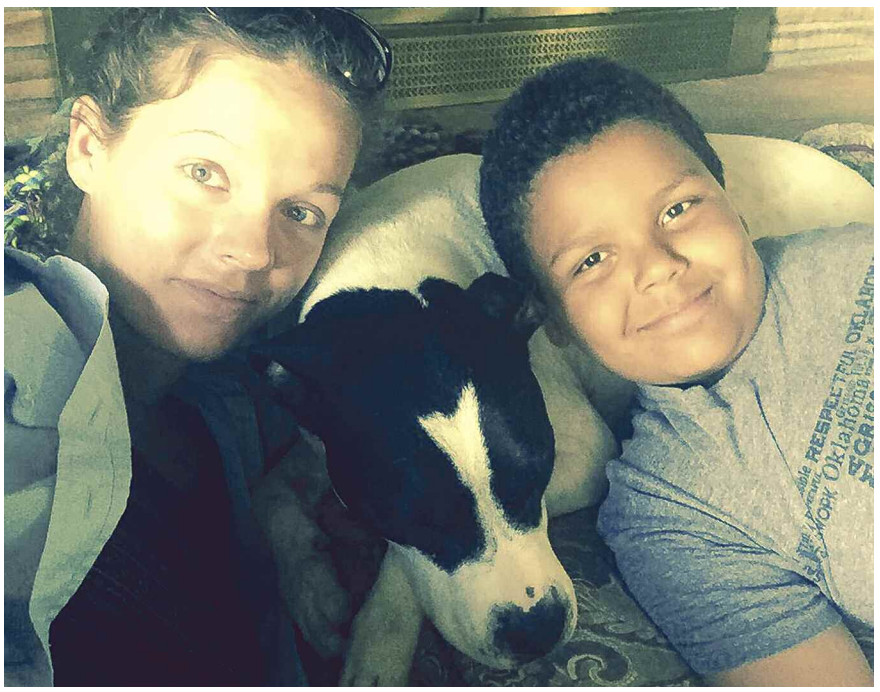
a 'hot' topic: parents engaging in climate advocacy

If you've been tuned in to the news over the last couple of months, you have likely heard a lot of buzz about climate policy. For some, the news can seem overwhelming; but for others, recent headlines have become a sort of catalyst for a new wave of activism.

Lisa Hoyas is the national director of Climate Parents, a group that advocates for clean energy and climate education. In Lisa's case, hearing climate change projections on the radio had a profound impact. She remembers listening to a news story when her youngest son was an infant and her oldest son was three.

"I was listening to this person talking about what the world would look like in 2035 if we didn't radically cut carbon pollution," Lisa said. "When I heard the year 2035 [my first thought was that] my kids, in many respects, will just be starting out their adult lives."

Lisa says that families can be a powerful moral and political force in driving progress on climate topics. "Even though I personally had been concerned about the environment for many years, I really heard that story through the ears of a mom, and I felt more protective on that level," she explained. "It made me want to take action."



LEAH SUTTON, SHOWN WITH HER SON LEV, IS HELPING ESTABLISH A TULSA CHAPTER OF CITIZEN'S CLIMATE LOBBY.

Climate 101: Unearthing the facts

To begin to understand the complexity of the issue, it's important to define what scientists mean when they talk about climate. While they are very closely related, climate is not a synonym for weather. According to the National Science Foundation, "Climate is the weather of a particular region, averaged over a long period of time." To illustrate a key difference between the two, consider that "while most species can survive a sudden change in the weather, such as a heat wave, flood or cold snap - they often cannot survive a long-term change in climate."

The National Air and Space Administration (NASA) publishes what it calls 'vital signs' for the planet. The data paints a not-too-pretty picture:

• 9 of the 10 warmest years on record have occurred since 2000.

• 2016 was the warmest year on record.

• Globally, average sea levels have risen nearly 7 inches in the last 100 years.

• September Arctic sea ice is declining at a rate of 13.3 percent per decade.

For some, those numbers may come as a surprise. That's because there is a widespread perception among Americans that the realities of climate change are debatable when actually, the facts are quite consistent and straightforward. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that scientific evidence of climate change is "unequivocal." In addition, over 95 percent of climate scientists agree that climate-warming over the past century is very likely due to human activity.

The intersection of parenting and activism

Like Lisa, a group of Tulsa parents said they felt a new sense of the urgency about climate change and global warming once they had children.

Nancy Moran is a public health nurse and mom of two adult sons. She has been involved with the Sierra Club and is working to build a Climate Parents group in Green Country because

continued next page

she identifies closely with the mission of the organization. "So much of what I have done as an activist is because of my children," Nancy said. "We teach our kids to be compassionate, but I see that climate change has the potential to bring great human suffering."

Tulsa mom and engineer Leah Sutton agrees that her perspective as a parent has informed her climate advocacy work. "I think when you have children, it's so much easier to think about your legacy for the people that you will leave behind."

Leah says that in the past, raising her young son and building her career took a lot of time and focus. Now her son is 10 years old, and she has reached a stable point in her career, which has created space in her life for advocacy work, including working to build a Tulsa chapter of Citizen's Climate Lobby (http://citizensclimatelobby.org). "I was looking for volunteer opportunities. I found [Citizens' Climate Lobby] and I started listening in on the national calls every month, doing my own research and learning more about it."

The non-partisan organization focuses on policy changes that address climate. She said that the 2016 election made her want to get more involved. "Unfortunately climate change is too often seen as a liberal cause," she said. "From my perspective, it's an everyone problem."

Theresa Goughenour, a local mother of four, said that she doesn't want her children to live with the results of climate change crisis, and she is actively showing them how to live with "environmentally responsible values."

She recently traveled to Oklahoma City with her youngest child, whom she is still nursing, to speak to a Legislative committee against SB 393, a bill that is opposed by Citizen's Climate Lobby, Climate Parents and science teacher organizations, among others, as unnecessary, and might lead to teaching inaccurate



THERESA GOUGHENOUR WITH HER CHILDREN.

scientific information.

"I believe my voice, along with the voices of all parents, are capable of change," Theresa said. "But, most important, is leadership, which is essential for our children. I am motivated by my core beliefs that renewable climate energy, effective and impactful climate laws and funding for innovative science are what will ensure a future for our children's children."

Simple ways to make a difference

Whatever your experience level or personal motivation, there are a few easy steps that anyone can take to make a difference.

Decrease your family's environmental footprint

Leah's first piece of advice is to start by simply using less. Instead of buying cases of disposable water bottles, consider a filter to reduce cost and plastic waste. When you do generate waste, recycle it. Families within Tulsa city limits can take advantage of the curbside recycling program which accepts aluminum and steel cans, paper and cardboard, plastic labeled 1-7, and glass jars and bottles.

Another easy way to make an impact is to limit the amount of energy your family uses. Oklahoma summers can cause air conditioners to run practically non-stop, but turning your thermostat up just a couple of degrees can make a big difference. Investing in a programmable or "smart" thermostat takes the hassle out of syncing the temperature inside your home with your family's schedule.

The Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO) offers a program called WindChoice, which allows PSO customers to opt-in to Oklahoma wind-generated electricity. According PSO, the cost to choose wind energy is $.0042 per kWh used which gets added as a line item to your monthly bill.

Encourage your children to be environmentally aware

A visit to a Green Country lake or a trip to a neighborhood park are great opportunities to foster an appreciation for the environment and the ecosystems that surround your home by investigating the plants and animals that live there. Helping kids appreciate everyday biodiversity is often the first step in understanding the ways in which different habitats are connected to our own.

It's also important for parents to remember that even though the scientific community is near-unanimous on the realities of climate science, there is still a lot of inaccurate information in circulation on the internet. Parents can help their children find fact-based resources and encourage discussion at an age-appropriate level.

Climate Kids is a website produced by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the California Institute of Technology. The site offers videos, games, and crafts to engage elementary-aged children in climate science topics ranging from weather to animals. The Alliance for Climate Education (ACE) works to educate teens and support high school teachers with climate education curriculum. ACE also offers training programs and access to campaigns for teens who are interested in more hands-on involvement.

Get involved and advocate for environment-friendly policies

The first Tulsa-area meeting of Climate Parents of Green Country will take place at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 13 at The Yoga Garden, located at 826 E. Admiral Boulevard, Gateway Building. Children are welcome and there will be activities for them. Citizens' Climate Lobby will host a group-start workshop at 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 6 at Rudisill Regional Library. The local chapter of the Sierra Club meets at 7 p.m. on the last Thursday of every month at the Tulsa Garden Center.

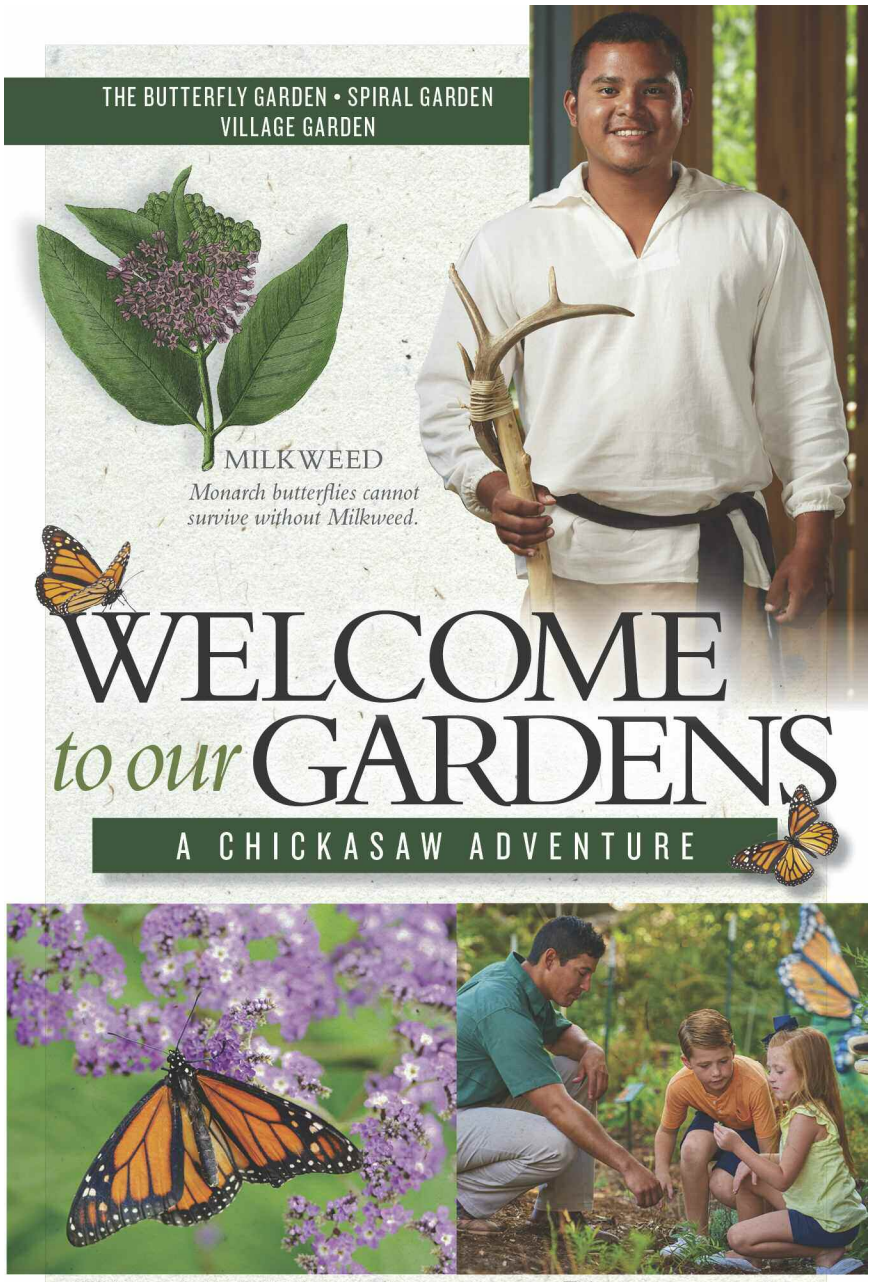
For those who prefer independent advocacy, the Find my Legislator tool at www.oklegislature.gov is an easy way to look up contact information for Oklahoma elected officials. "I have the contact information for my elected officials saved in my phone," says Nancy. She says it's inspired her to reach out more regularly, because the information is at her fingertips.

She also points out that it's important not to get discouraged. "We have brilliant minds working on this issue, so I know change is possible. We can be hopeful. We have such great access to clean, renewable energy in Oklahoma."

Climate Parents Mission Statement

Climate Parents is a national organization of diverse parents and families mobilizing for climate and clean energy solutions. We harness the grassroots power of parents to influence policymakers for bold climate action. We work for solutions at the local, state, national and international level. We are motivated by love and concern for our kids, and all children. And we believe that parents and families, by the millions, must be a moral and political force to stop fossil fuels, to achieve 100% clean energy, and to build the livable, thriving communities our kids deserve.


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Festival season is here! Find all the fun your family can handle at www.tulsakids.com/festivals.

1 | MONDAY

PARENT/CHILD YOGA AT THE TULSA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
With music and movement, you and your child are bound to have fun during this short yoga practice together. Learn breathing practices and poses you can do as a family at home. Tulsa Children's Museum, 560 N Maybelle Ave.; 10:30 a.m. www.tulsachildrensmuseum.org

2 | TUESDAY

JENKS PLANETARIUM - HOW TO USE MY TELESCOPE {FREE}
Explore the night sky with engaging, awe-inspiring shows at the Jenks Planetarium. The 50-foot dome provides the ultimate screen for seeing planets up close, flying to distant galaxies, and even rediscovering our own earth in ways never thought possible. At How to Use My Telescope, discover everything you need to know about using your telescope. If weather permits, we will stargaze on the rooftop deck. Jenks Planetarium, Dr. Kirby L. Lehman Center for the Study of Math Science Building 3rd Floor, Jenks High School, 1st and B Streets, Jenks.; 8:30 p.m. Visit jenkscommunityed.com

3 | WEDNESDAY

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. Class begins promptly at 1 p.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Philbrook Museum, 2727 S Rockford Rd.. www.philbrook.org

4 | THURSDAY

MAY THE 4TH BE WITH YOU {FREE}
Join in to play games and make crafts that celebrate all things "Star Wars." For elementary school-aged children and teens. Bixby Library 20 E. Breckenridge; 1-7 p.m.

MINECRAFT GAMING {FREE}
Put your imagination to the test building your own world in the popular game Minecraft. For ages 10-18. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; 6 p.m.

BA SIDEWALK ASTRONOMERS: HEAR OUR SUN {FREE}
Listen to our star's electromagnetic emissions and use an itty-bitty radio telescope (weather permitting). A Plan B solar activity will be in place if the weather is inclement. For elementary school-aged children. Broken Arrow Library/ South, 3600 S Chestnut Ave.; 6:30 p.m.

5 | FRIDAY

ADVENTURES IN STEAM: AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH AMERICAN ART {FREE}
This presentation chronicles American history from the prehistoric period to the modern era using artifacts and representations of portraits, history paintings, landscapes and genre paintings. Presented by the Gilcrease Museum. For ages 9-12. Registration is required. Register online or call 918.549.7323. Broken Arrow Library, 300 W. Broadway; 2 p.m.

MEET AUTHOR LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON {FREE} Laurie Halse Anderson is the author of more than 18 books of fiction and nonfiction for "children of all ages." Her works address life's challenges with honesty, humor and sensitivity. Anderson will receive the 2017 Zarrow award and then speak about her life and works, answer questions from the audience and sign books. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; 7 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY WITH GILCREASE {FREE}
Begin your First Friday Art Crawl at Central Library. Gilcrease staff will help us explore artists featured at the museum while your young artist creates a masterpiece of his or her own. For ages 5-10. Central Library, 400 Civic Center; 4:30 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY ART CRAWL {FREE}
The First Friday Art Crawl was established in 2007. 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. Brady Art District in Tulsa; 6 - 9 p.m.

6 | SATURDAY

MOM & ME NATURE HIKE
Come spend the afternoon with mom, grandma, or both at the Ray Harral Nature Park. Build a craft to remember this special moment, then head out on the trails for a one mile guided tour. Stop back into the Nature Center after your adventure to enjoy light refreshments. Ray Harral Nature Park, 7101 S. 3rd St.; 2 p.m. www.brokenarrowok.gov

KITE DAY {FREE}
Come and make a kite, and then have fun flying your kite high in the sky! Materials are provided. For all ages. Kendall-Whittier Library, 21 S. Lewis; 2:30 p.m.

7 | SUNDAY

NATURE'S GRAND ADVENTURES: BIRDING BLITZ
Share the wonder of nature with your grandchild in this choose-your-own-adventure style series! Grandparents and grandkids will rediscover nature in a way that brings old-school exploration together with today's tech. Adventurers will enjoy hands-on learning experiences at the zoo while choosing which path their journey will take next. During Nature's Grand Adventures: Birding Blitz, get ready to go BIRD BRAINED AND explore the lives of our avian friends. Grandchildren must be 5 to 12 years old. Grandparents can be any age! Registration if for one grandchild and one grandparent for all three classes in the series (May 7, 14 and 21), $30 for Zoo Friends members and $40 for non-members. More information and registration at: tulsazoo.org/classes/ or education@tulsazoo.org. Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E 36th St. North; 1-4 p.m.

8 | MONDAY

MOM'S SPA NIGHT AT BROKEN ARROW LIBRARY/ SOUTH {FREE}
Treat yourself to a little pampering. Experience a brief spa retreat at the library; relax and get to know other hard-working moms in the community. Registration is required. Call 918.549.7323 to register. Broken Arrow Library/ South, 3600 S Chestnut Ave.; 6:30 p.m.

9 | TUESDAY

FIND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON TULSAKIDS.COM.

10 | WEDNESDAY

FIND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON TULSAKIDS.COM.

11 | THURSDAY

TARC KIDS CONNECTIONS
This social skills group is designed for children, grades K-5th grade, on the autism spectrum. Autism Center of Tulsa, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A; 4:30 p.m.

DIY FLOWER CRAFTS AT TULSA BOTANIC GARDEN
Bring out your inner floral princess. Stop by the Tulsa Botanic Garden for a walk through the Garden and some fun DIY flower crowns and crafts. Great for all ages. This event is free with Garden admission. Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr.; 5 p.m. www.tulsabotanic.org

CONFIDENT PARENTING: FAMILY EXERCISE AND ACTIVITY {FREE}
Calling all families! Want to learn easy ways to get your family active with little or no time? Join Brooklyn Perez from Play Hard/Learning + Fitness as she presents quick fit tips. This program is for the whole family. Martin Regional Library, 2601 S Garnett Rd.; 6:30 p.m.

12 | FRIDAY

MUSEUM BABIES AT GILCREASE
Museum Babies is designed to nurture the needs of both parent and infant/toddler. Parents will enjoy a casual experience in the galleries, learning about the art of Gilcrease Museum, then it's "baby time" with activities to stimulate the five senses and refreshments.For ages Birth to not yet three years old, accompanied by caregiver. Space is limited and advanced registration is required: www.gilcrease.utulsa.edu. Gilcrease Museum 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd.; 10:30 a.m.

13 | SATURDAY

NALC STAMP OUT HUNGER
The National Association of Letter Carriers' (NALC) present the 25th Annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, benefitting the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma. Leave a bag of non-perishable food items near your mailbox by 7 a.m., or stop by any Reasor's to make a donation through May 16.

TULSA PUBLIC GARDENS DAY
The Tulsa Zoo is celebrating Tulsa Public Gardens day with other local organizations. During this event, guests are invited to check out the gardens while taking part in fun activities.
The second annual Pollinator Plant Sale will be happening at the zoo's gift shop. Go on a self-guided safari plant tour of exotic and native vegetation, available on request at Admission and Membership windows. General admission is required to partake in this event. More information at:tulsazoo.org/event/tulsapublicgardensday. Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E 36th St. North; 9 a.m.-6 p.m.



BE SMART-DON'T START ANTI-TOBACCO DAY
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma (BCBSOK) invites you to Be Smart-Don't Start Anti-Tobacco Day on Friday, May 12, 2017 at Science Museum Oklahoma in OKC. The event features hands-on educational activities emphasizing the dangers of tobacco use. Be Smart-Don't Start partners and BCBSOK's Mobile Assistance Center will also join in on the fun with interactive activities, trivia and prizes for children to enjoy. BCBSOK's mascot, Blaze the Braggin' Blue Dragon ®, will be there to meet kids and share his message of how great it can be to be tobacco free! The annual Be Smart- Don't Start program is an initiative to help teach school-aged children the dangers of tobacco use, and how to make smart choices to live a healthy life. Museum guests will receive free admission, courtesy of BCBSOK.

SECOND SATURDAY AT PHILBROOK
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. This month, children through the 8th Grade are invited to build their "Fantasy Art BoxCar" at the Living Arts Art BoxCar Workshop. Bring your ideas and they"ll supply the box to build the most outrageous Art BoxCar possible to enter in the Box Car Parade. Philbrook Museum of Art, 2727 S. Rockford Rd.; 10 a.m.

BUCKET GARDENING {FREE}
Get started gardening with a no-cost, upcycled container garden. The Seed Library will show you how to grow tomatoes, green beans, sweet potatoes and more in upcycled containers. Supplies and space are limited. Registration is required: 918.549.7323. For all ages. Central Library, 400 Civic Center; 11 a.m.

IMMIGRATION FORUM AT LIVING ARTS
{FREE} Living Arts will organize and host a panel discussion with leaders in the immigration social service agencies, legal council on immigration and artists who believe that Art can be a Vehicle for Social Change. Living Arts Tulsa , 307 East Brady St.; 2-4 p.m. www.livingarts.org

CLIMATE PARENTS OF GREEN COUNTRY
{FREE} Organizational meeting for families motivated by love to mobilize for clean energy and climate solutions. The event will include kid- friendly activities. The Yoga Garden, 826 E Admiral Blvd.; 2-3:30 p.m.

5TH ANNUAL DIG: DAY IN THE GARDEN AT TULSA BOTANIC GARDEN
Bring family and friends to enjoy the Children's Discovery Garden! Food and drinks, music from Desi and Cody, and activities for children of all ages including face-painting, train rides, crafts and more. Select silent auction items will be available.To purchase tickets online, visit: http://www.tulsabotanic.org/content/5th-annual-dig-day-garden.

14 | SUNDAY: HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

LIVING ARTS ART BOXCAR WORKSHOP AT GUTHRIE GREEN
{FREE} Children through the 8th Grade are invited to build their "Fantasy Art BoxCar" at the Living Arts Art BoxCar Workshop. Bring your ideas and they"ll supply the box to build the most outrageous Art BoxCar possible to enter in the Box Car Parade. Guthrie Green, 111 E. Brady; 11 a.m.-3 p.m.



ARTCAR WEEKEND
The kids can get in on the fun of ArtCar Weekend by attending one of the Art BoxCar events. Children through the 8th Grade are invited to build their "Fantasy Art BoxCar" at the Living Arts Art BoxCar Workshops.
Workshops: Saturday, May 13; 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. at Philbrook and Sunday, May 14; 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Guthrie Green.
Bring your ideas and they'll supply the box to build the most outrageous Art BoxCar possible to enter in the Box Car Parade at, Saturday, May 20, at the Blue Dome Arts Festival. For the Box Car Parade, meet and register at 2:30 p.m. at Dilly Deli, 2nd & Elgin . Art Boxcars will then parade thru Blue Dome Festival and end at the stage at about 2:40 pm. Find out more at www.livingarts.org.

15 | MONDAY

FIND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON TULSAKIDS.COM.

16 | TUESDAY

MINI MASTERS AT GILCREASE
Continue the exploration into the five senses as children investigate the galleries and gardens of Gilcrease Museum using sight, sound, hearing, taste and touch. Children will learn to look at the world in new ways, which will inspire their art creations. For ages 3-6, who must be accompanied by an adult. Because of the age-specific activities, only children ages 3-6 may participate. Alternative arrangements should to be made for younger siblings. Space is limited and advanced registration is required: 918.596.2774. Gilcrease Museum, 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd.; noon.

17 | WEDNESDAY

HOMESCHOOL ART CLASS AT PHILBROOK (AGES 9-12)
See previous description, 1 p.m.

18 | THURSDAY

FIT TO PLAY: INJURY PREVENTION FOR YOUTH ATHLETES {FREE}
Injuries are common in sports at all ages. Incorrect repetitive movements that occur while playing sports can increase risk and cause injuries.
This seminar will focus on:

- Prevalence of injury in kids and young athletes
- Understanding the importance of correct movement patterns
- Explaining the Fit to Play evaluation process and individualized training

TherapyWorks, 7608 E 91st St.; 7 p.m.

ORIGAMI WITH EMILY AT THE TULSA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
Learn the art of origami! Fold paper into something simple like a sail boat or try a more complicated creation like the Milennium Falcon. Tulsa Children's Museum, 560 N Maybelle Ave.; 4 p.m.
www.tulsachildrensmuseum.org

19 | FRIDAY

MINI MASTERS AT GILCREASE
See previous description, 10 a.m. & noon

20 | SATURDAY

CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY GARDEN BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
The Tulsa Botanic Garden's Spring Giant is having a birthday! Come celebrate with story time, music, crafts, and games.The celebration will take place on Saturday, May 20; 10 am. - 2 p.m. and on Sunday, May 21; 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Find more at www.tulsabotanic.org.

CAMP BANDAGE
Children's safety fair, hands-on learning of First Aid, safety and health for children of all ages. Chisholm Trail South Park, 21101 E. 101st St.; 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. www.brokenarrowok.gov

CHANDLER PARK NATIONAL KIDS TO PARKS DAY {FREE}
Bring your family and enjoy a day at Chandler Park! There will be sports demonstrations, organized games, arts and crafts projects, face painting, a cake walk, inflatables, nature hikes and lunch! All ages. Chandler Park, 6500 W. 21st St.; 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

IMAGINATION DAYS AT AHHA
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 handson art activities. Hardesty Arts Center (AHHA), 101 East Archer St.; noon-5 p.m.
www.ahhatulsa.org

TEEN SUMMER STUDIO ARTS WORKSHOP: SCREEN PRINTING {FREE}
Release your artistic side! Come and make a design to place on a T-shirt or tote bag. Register online to save your spot or at the ASK desk on the library's second floor. The Teen Summer Studio Arts Workshop series continues throughout the summer. Attend only a few of the classes or take them all. Each class introduces you to a new artistic medium. The last day of the program will showcase the students' great works in a three-hour exhibition for the public to view at Hardesty Regional Library. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; noon - 3 p.m.

21 | SUNDAY

FUNDAY SUNDAY AT GILCREASE
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. Gilcrease Museum, 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd.; noon-4 p.m.
www.gilcrease.org

22 | MONDAY

TOMMY TERRIFIC'S BUILD A MAGICAL WORLD {FREE}
Tommy's show features magic tricks representing great architectural structures from around the world, like the Great Pyramids, Eiffel Tower and the Great Wall of China.
With the help of the Magician's Handbook, children guide Tommy Terrific through a worldwide, magical adventure where these great structures are explored. Brookside Library, 1207 E 45th Pl.; 3:30 p.m.

23 | TUESDAY

TOMMY TERRIFIC'S BUILD A MAGICAL WORLD {FREE}
See previous description. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

24 | WEDNESDAY

TOMMY TERRIFIC'S BUILD A MAGICAL WORLD {FREE}
See previous description.
Broken Arrow Library, 300 W. Broadway at 2 p.m.
Broken Arrow Library/ South, 3600 S. Chestnut at 4 p.m.

TARC TEEN "CONNECTIONS" GROUP
This 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. at the TARC office, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A.
www.autismtulsa.org

25 | THURSDAY

MINECRAFT NIGHT
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 p.m.

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. Autism Center of Tulsa, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A ; 7-9 p.m. www.autismtulsa.org

26 | FRIDAY

FIND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON TULSAKIDS.COM.

27 | SATURDAY

FIND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON TULSAKIDS.COM.

28 | SUNDAY

FIND ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON TULSAKIDS.COM.

29 | MONDAY

SCOUT DAY AT THE 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 11:00 a.m. to 1 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 (age 3 and over) and or; $10 per adult (cost includes full Aquarium admission)
To receive discounted prices, youth organization members must be in uniform or carrying organization membership cards.
Adults must accompany a youth organization member, maximum of one adult per child admitted at discounted price.
Find more at www.okaquarium.org.

30 | TUESDAY

ZOO INSIDER WORKSHOP: EXHIBIT DESIGN
During this 4-day Zoo Insider Workshop, teens will examine what it takes to design a modern zoo exhibit. Learn about all the factors that make a successful exhibit; from animal needs to visitor experience there are a lot of aspects that go into getting an exhibit built. Then, put your skills to the test by constructing your own model exhibit. Zoo Insider is a program that aims to give teens an inside look at what it's like to work in a zoo while being fun and interactive. Each session will have an in depth focus on one of the many careers available in the zoo field. Middle and high school students 13 to 18 years old are welcome to attend. Cost is $160 for Zoo Friends members and $170 non-members per class and pre-registration is required. More information and registration at: tulsazoo.org/classes/.

MR. STINKY FEET RETURNS {FREE}
Mr. Stinky Feet will get the whole family rocking! With a healthy dose of clever fun and a whole lot of heart, Jim Cosgrove's music inspires the childlike nature of kids and adults. The songs in his set list give a nod to his folk-rock roots with hints of blues and country and an occasional kick of Cajun and Jamaican spice. His hit tunes "Stinky Feet" and "Ooey Gooey" tickle the whimsical spirits of kids of all ages. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

TOMMY TERRIFIC'S BUILD A MAGICAL WORLD {FREE}
See previous description.
Owasso Library, 103 W Broadway St. at 2 and 3 p.m.

31 | WEDNESDAY

MR. STINKY FEET RETURNS {FREE}
See previous description.
Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 N Hartford Ave.; 10 a.m.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM KICKOFF PARTY {FREE}
Join library staff and local community groups to celebrate the start of the Summer Reading Program with fun games and activities! For all ages. Martin Regional Library, 2601 S Garnett Rd.; 1 p.m.

* We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of this information. However, you should always call ahead to confirm dates, times, location, and other information.



LET'S PLAY BALL!

The Tulsa Drillers' are back in action at OneOk Field. Find out promotional plans for individual games at www.milb.com/drillers.

MAY HOME GAMES
Monday, May 1 at 11 a.m.
Saturday, May 6 at 7 p.m.
Sunday, May 7 at 1 p.m.
Monday, May 8 at 11 a.m.
Tuesday, May 9 at 7 p.m.
Friday, May 19 at 7 p.m.
Saturday, May 20 at 7 p.m.
Sunday, May 21 at 1 p.m.
Tuesday, May 22 at 11 a.m.
Tuesday, May 30 at 7 p.m.
Wednesday, May 31 at 7 p.m.





BLUE DOME ARTS FESTIVAL

GERMANFEST

When: Friday, May 5; 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, May 6; 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, May 7; Noon to 5 p.m.
Where: 15th & Terrace Dr.; the lawn and in the Great Hall of the German American Society Center.
Authentic German entertainment by the German American Society of Tulsa choir, folk dancers and Blaskapelle together with outstanding Polka bands, food, drink and activities for the children make this a family affair. The crowning of the German-American Society of Tulsa's Maikonigin (May Queen) is a centerpiece activity which occurs during the event.

OKLAHOMA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL

When: Every Saturday and Sunday, April 29 - June 4; Gates open at 10:30 a.m. and close at 6 p.m.
Where: The Castle of Muskogee, 3400 W Fern Mountain Rd in Muskogee, OK
Journey to an age of kings, queens, and knights in shining armor. Be mesmerized as magicians, jugglers, musicians, dancers, acrobats, and jousters thrill and delight you on one of their many stages. For the kids: Take the wee ones to the Children's Realm for games and hands-on demonstrations and then pick a side English or Scottish in the Royal Quest! For a full schedule and list of kid-centered activities, go to www.okcastle.com/renaissance. HuzzaH!

ROOSTER DAYS

Festival Days & Hours:
Thursday, May 11; 4-10 p.m.
Friday, May 12; 4-11 p.m.
Saturday, May 13; 10 a.m.-11 p.m.
Sunday, May 14; noon-6 p.m.
Rooster Days Parade:
Saturday, May 13 at 10 a.m.
Where: Central Park, 1500 S Main St. in Broken Arrow
Returning for its 86th year in Broken Arrow, Rooster Days will be packed with adventure and fun! This year's festival will feature carnival rides, amazing food, live entertainment, shopping, the Rooster Days Run and, of course, the Rooster Days Parade! For more information, go to www.roosterdays.com.

TULSA INTERNATIONAL MAYFEST

When: Thursday – Saturday, May 18-21; 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sunday, May 21 11 a.m.- 6 p.m.
Where: Downtown Tulsa
Mayfest has something to offer everyone. The outdoor areas of Mayfest includes fine arts, crafts, four stages of performing artists, KidZone – a children's hands-on art activity area, and of course, great festival food. In addition to the outdoor space, Mayfest also features three indoor galleries. For more information, go to www.tulsamayfest.org.

BLUE DOME ARTS FESTIVAL

When: Friday, May 19 & Saturday, May 20; 10 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sunday, May 21, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
Where: Blue Dome District at 2nd and Elgin, Tulsa
The Blue Dome Arts Festival is a family- and dog-friendly festival where everybody in the family has fun. While the kids enjoy the Chalk Circle, Art Play Center, face painting, henna tattoos, and the Children Parade/ArtBOXcars, parents can enjoy some Yoga, Zumba, Art-Cars, Belly Dancers, great performances and great food. For more information, go to www.bluedomearts.org.

HOP JAM BEER & MUSIC FESTIVAL

When: Sunday, May 21; Noon - 9 p.m.
Where: The Brady Arts District, Tulsa
The Hop Jam Beer and Music Festival celebrates the convergence of craft beer and music in a dynamic downtown environment. The unique urban environment and the extensive brewer selection in the craft beer area, alongside the dynamic all-ages free live concert, sets The Hop Jam apart from any other event in the region. The event space is divided into two areas, the 21+ craft beer area and the all-ages area, which features the main stage, as well as the new second stage at the Hop Jam Family Park, along with a variety of all-ages activities. To find out more, go to www.thehopjam.com.

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Where: Guthrie Green
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Find out more at www.guthriegreen.com.

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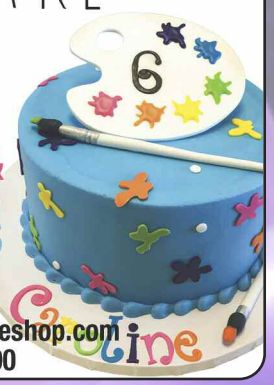
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Hip Mom Eats Local

BY JILL VANTREASE

I'll admit, it took me a long time to become intrigued with the whole organic, "eat local" food movement. For a while, my objection was the price: yeah, yeah, those strawberries might be coated with arsenic and give me 10 kinds of cancer, but if I bought $8 strawberries my husband would hire a hit man, so I'd be dead anyway! And then later, I'd be happy if my kids ate any kind of fruit, let alone organic — at least some non-organic broccoli wasn't an Oreo. But, as I became a bit more educated, I realized that organic, particularly local, produce really is good for you. It hasn't had to travel far, so it retains much more nutrients, and it tastes better too.

So, when I go to a mom's luncheon for my son's high school, I'm delighted to find it's hosted by Ashley Neale of Local Farm OK, a company which delivers fresh, healthy, local produce right to your doorstep. Ashley is lovely and warm; don't be intimidated by the fact that she is tall, blonde and gorgeous (She says she's in her 40s, but doesn't look a day over 30 - reason enough to investigate this farm to table stuff!) She makes us moms a delicious salad from her family's farm in Glenpool, Sage Farms, where they grow lettuce using technology called "aeroponics" and other produce. Perhaps you've seen those cool plant-growing towers? That's aeroponics , and it's how Sage Farms grows lettuce, herbs and leafy greens that contain more nutrients than traditionally-grown products. Think healthier vegetables with a much better taste! There is no use of traditional fertilizers such as animal manure, so less risk of diseases like E. Coli. Plus, with aeroponics, there is dramatically less water used, a great win for the environment.



LOCAL FARM OK.

Now, a confession. I first tried Local Farm OK last summer. And, while I was duly impressed with the quality produce, it seemed like so much lettuce! All that foliage made me want to cry, because I didn't think anyone else would eat it except me, and I would have to watch this beautiful green loveliness rot. It was also a crazy time in my life. We thought we might be moving (we didn't), my son was starting high school, my other kids were their usual ornery selves, and my husband was working a lot, so, in the end, I cancelled my subscription and just kept up my usual depressing Walmart rotation.

But, when I see what a scrumptious meal that I can make with all this great produce, I am re-inspired. Ashley makes a salad with a balsamic, citrus vinaigrette (the recipe is on the website localfarmok.com). Well, now I know what to do with all that lettuce — it is the best salad I've ever eaten.

And now Local Farm OK offers other from local ranchers and producers. We try a filet of "kobe-style" beef from the prestigious Wagyu species of cattle from Prime Plus Cattle right here in Oklahoma. I've never been a huge steak person, but I am the first to sneak back for seconds. We also have a heavenly assortment of cheeses from Lovera's market in Krebs, this authentic pocket of Italy serendipitously placed in southeast Oklahoma. We round out the meal with some delicious Kombucha (surely you've heard about this fermented tea which is supposed to promote healthy gut bacteria) from Big Oak Kombucha in Oklahoma City. Big Oak Kombucha is the creation of Matthew Zitterkob, a longtime kombucha-brewer and advocate for sustainability and local ingredients. He has been home-brewing many varieties of kombucha for years, and uses organic or locally-sourced ingredients like prickly pear, ginger and lime. These drinks are sublime - naughty me can't help but think what great mixers they would be - cocktails with probiotics! Win-win!

My lunch is so ambrosial I restart my subscription right when I get home. You can chose from the farm bag subscription - weekly (just $15.99) or every other week ($17.99). That is a lot

continued next page

of produce bang for your buck! Your bag always comes on the same day of the week — straight from the farm — so you can plan accordingly (something that eluded me during my tough summer). The produce comes in a sturdy, insulated bag; you simply remove the plastic liner and place it in your fridge. The produce should last up to two weeks. But besides the farm bag, I order all kinds of local deliciousness: the Wagyu beef, some bacon, jalapeno and cheddar bratwurst, the fabulous Kombucha sampler, cheese from Lovera for my cheese-crazy son, salsa, honey -- all sorts of locally-sourced delights.

Everything arrives on a Thursday, which is perfect because by that point in the week I usually have no food. And everything both looks - and tastes – sublime. The steak is fabulous (somehow I don't wreck it), the bacon perfect (of course), and the butter meltingly lovely (although two of my kids deem it "too yellow" and won't go near it - oy!). And now that I know what to do with the lettuce, we all enjoy different salads for over a week. Leslie also posts recipes to the website that use the week's offerings. It's almost like I have a farm right outside my door (thankfully with no animals, manure or work I have to do).

Another big player in the farm-to-table movement here in Tulsa is Scissortail Farms. Scissortail Farms, located in west Tulsa, also uses aeroponics to grow lettuces and herbs. Scissortail Farms supplies local restaurants such as Doc's, Stonehorse Café, Tallgrass Prairie Table, and La Villa at the Philbrook. You can also buy directly from the farm, but you have to call and schlep out there — which I did! I forced myself out of my comfortable little two-mile radius and enter a surprisingly bucolic stretch of west Tulsa farmland -- I even pass a vineyard! Scissortail's CEO, John Sulton, shows me the luscious aeroponic greenhouse. It both looks and smells gorgeous, sort of like stepping into a verdant Jo Malone cologne. You can find their beautiful herbs and produce at Reasor's. Look for the Scissortail Farm label and know you are getting the real deal.

Of course, you can always go to a farmer's market to get comparable produce and locally-grown delights, but I suspect for most of you - like me - it's hard to squeeze in a trip like that very often when you have 7000 kiddie things to do in any given day. With all these local opportunities to eat organic, healthy local produce for a good price, I really don't have any more excuses. Now to convince my lovely children that they really do like Swiss chard...I'm sure Leslie will help with a recipe to fool them!



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BY NATALIE MIKLES

yummy camp food

My kids have been begging to go camping.

We bought a tent and lantern, gathered the sleeping bags and have been planning. For weeks, we have talked about where to go, when to go and what we'll bring with us.

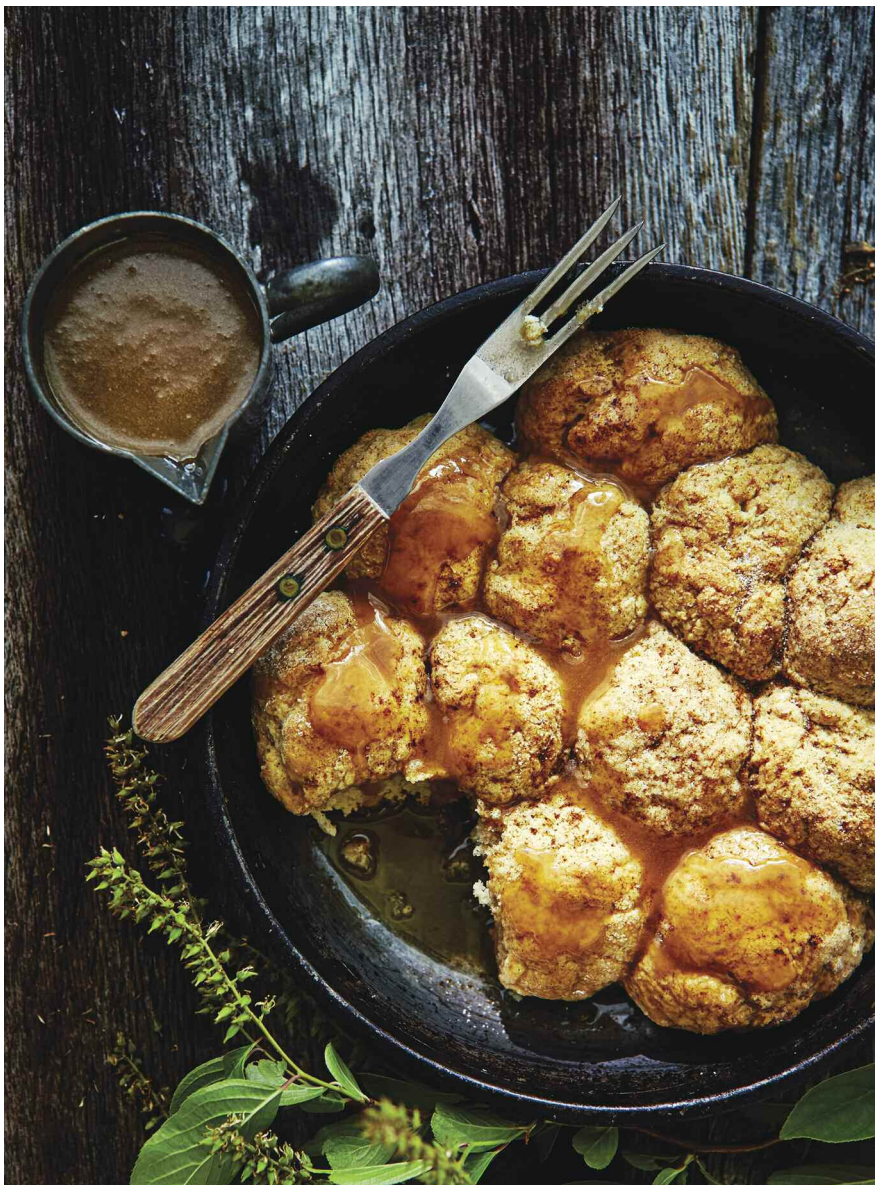
This is such a contrast to my friend, Maggie Penny, who at any moment can load up with her husband and four children and camp anywhere. She's gone fly fishing with her youngest on her back, she's set off for the Grand Canyon with just a few days planning. And, miraculously, she feeds her family well while doing it.

I wish I had more of Maggie's adventurous spirit and ability to take a few ingredients and make them taste great over an open fire.

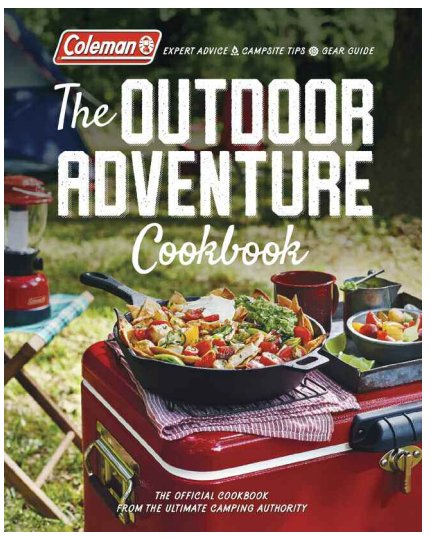
Unlike me – who has planned a camping trip since March and will likely end up packing nothing better to eat than a package of hot dogs and buns.

Or not. I have been pouring over the book *The Outdoor Adventure Cookbook*, which romanticizes the great outdoors enough to inspire even those who have never seen the inside of a tent.

Some of the recipes in the book are elevated versions of classic camp food – like a s'mores cookie cake. Others seem impractical to pull off for novice campers like myself…. Cast-iron skillet gnocchi with pesto? It sounds fabulous to me, but I think my kids would actually prefer hot dogs.



CINNAMON BISCUIT BITES WITH BROWN SUGAR–CARAMEL SAUCE



Here are a couple of recipes from the *The Outdoor Adventure Cookbook* (Oxmoor House, 2017) to try on your next campout.

Consider this a campfire twist on monkey bread. It would be great as a late-night dessert under the stars.

Cinnamon Biscuit Bites with Brown Sugar–Caramel Sauce

Serves 6

- 10 tablespoons salted butter, melted, divided
- 2 cups all-purpose baking mix (such as Bisquick)
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 5 tablespoons granulated sugar, divided
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided

continued next page



GOOD MORNING CHEDDAR DROP BISCUITS AND SAUSAGE GRAVY

• 1/2 cup whole milk, divided
• 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar

1. Heat a camping stove to medium (about 350° to 375°F), or fit a grilling grate over the direct heat of glowing embers. Cut 6 (18-inch) squares of aluminum foil; crumple each square into a 1 1/2- to 2-inch ball. Arrange the foil balls on the bottom of a 7 1/2-inch quart cast-iron Dutch oven. Cover with the lid, and preheat on the camping stove or grilling grate directly over the heat source 10 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, grease a 9-inch round cake pan with 1 tablespoon of the melted butter. Stir together the baking mix, egg, 2 tablespoons of the granulated sugar, and 1 1/2 teaspoons of the cinnamon in a bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of the melted butter and 6 tablespoons of the milk; stir until a soft dough forms. Combine the remaining 3 tablespoons granulated sugar and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon on a plate. Shape the dough into balls, using about 1 heaping tablespoon of dough for each. Roll in the sugar mixture on plate, coating all sides. Place the coated dough balls in the prepared cake pan.

3. Using tongs, lower the greased cake pan onto the foil balls in the preheated Dutch oven. Cover with the lid, and bake until the biscuit bites are done, 25 to 30 minutes.

4. Stir together the brown sugar, remaining 7 tablespoons butter, and remaining 2 tablespoons milk in a saucepan. Bring to a boil on the camping stove or grilling grate, and cook, stirring constantly, 2 minutes. Serve the warm sauce with the biscuit bites.

Start the morning with something delicious. Doesn't it sound so much better than an energy bar?

Good Morning Cheddar Drop Biscuits and Sausage Gravy

Serves 6

• 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted, divided
• 2 cups all-purpose baking mix (such as Bisquick)
• 2 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (about 1/2 cup)
• 4 1/4 cups whole milk, divided
• 1 pound pork breakfast sausage
• 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
• 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
• 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
• 1/8 teaspoon dried sage

1. Heat a camping stove to medium (about 350° to 450°F), or fit a grilling grate over the direct heat of glowing embers. Cut 6 (18-inch) squares of aluminum foil; crumple each foil square into a 1 1/2- to 2-inch ball. Arrange foil balls on the bottom of a 4 1/2- to 5-quart cast-iron Dutch oven. Cover with the lid, and preheat on the camping stove or on a grilling grate directly over heat source 10 minutes.

2. Grease a 9-inch round cake pan with 1 tablespoon of the melted butter. Combine the baking mix, cheese, 3/4 cup of the milk, and 2 tablespoons of the melted butter in a medium bowl, stirring just until combined. Drop the dough by heaping tablespoonfuls into the greased cake pan. Place the pan on top of the foil balls in the preheated Dutch oven; cover with the lid. Bake until the biscuits are browned on bottom and done, 30 to 35 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, place a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium on a camping stove or on a grilling grate directly over the heat source. Add the sausage, and cook, stirring until the sausage crumbles and is no longer pink, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in the remaining 1 tablespoon melted butter. Sprinkle the flour over the mixture; stir to combine, and cook 1 minute. Slowly stir in the remaining 3 1/2 cups milk until combined. Cook, stirring often, until the mixture begins to thicken, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in the salt, pepper, and sage. Serve the gravy over the biscuits.

5 Ways to Make Campfire Cooking Easy

1. Mix up pancake batter at home, then store in a glass jar in the cooler. That way, it's mixed and ready to go for early risers.

2. Foil packet meals are super easy and, a bonus, great for picky eaters. Everyone can make their own foil packet with sausage or fish, carrots, potatoes or green beans. Use your imagination – and simply leave out anything your kids don't like.

3. Banana boats carry major "wow" factor for kids. Slice an unpeeled banana from top to bottom, leaving the bottom peel intact. Gently open, then let the kids fill them with mini marshmallows and chocolate chips. Wrap loosely in heavy-duty aluminum foil, and cook over hot coals for about 5 minutes. Eat with a spoon. Yum.

4. Mini pizzas are as popular on a camping trip as they are at home. Pack English muffins or pita bread, then top with a little marinara sauce and your favorite pizza toppings. Loosely wrap in aluminum foil and heat until cheese is melted and crust is crisp.

5. Don't forget the ingredients for s'mores. It's a camping classic for a reason. When a bad mood strikes anyone from toddlers to teenagers, you can pull out your arsenal of marshmallows, chocolate and graham crackers. Or, get creative and add new fillings, like Rolo candies, peanut butter or bacon.

BY LAURA RAPHAEL, CHILDREN'S SERVICES COORDINATOR, TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY

the rule of all new rules:

HOW (& WHY) TO PLAY WITH YOUR SCHOOL-AGED CHILD

Calvinball & the Rule of No New Rules

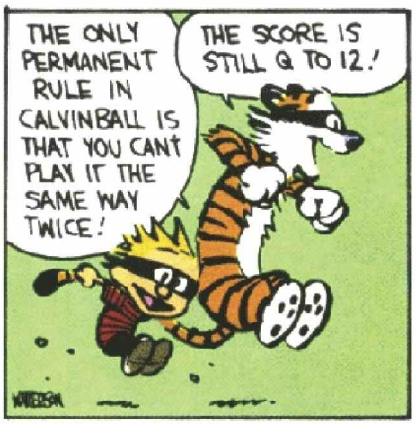
Welcome to our third and final installment of exploring the role of play in children's development: your school-aged child. This is the really fun, rule-bending, all-bets-are-off part! Because while playing with babies, toddlers, and young children are excellent brain-stretchers and imagination builders for them, playing with school-aged children will often be intellectually challenging for you.

When you're planning your play with school-aged children, use "Calvinball" as a guide – the made-up game in the long-running comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes." Calvinball's only rule was that you could never have the same rule twice. They used a variety of unrelated items in bizarre ways: wickets, volleyballs, flags, trees, buckets, masks and mallets.

This free-for-all spirit is just the thing to make playing a rich and rewarding experience for your explorers as well as yourself.

Play Has No Age Limit

Your school-aged children may say that they are too old to play, but don't believe them. This is when play can be deeply involved and involving, a cornucopia of imagination that reaps cognitive rewards in ways you can't anticipate.



5 Tips for Playing With Your School-Aged Child

What are some ways you can make sure your school-aged child is getting quality playtime with you?

1. A Ball, A Goal, and You! Take your inspiration from "Calvinball" and make up a game with your child, who will likely have many ideas about rules to get a ball in a goal. The sillier the rules the better – if you forget to touch your nose when you run around the couch, you have to sing "I'm a Little Teapot"; to earn five points, use the ball to represent something else (a cell phone, a puppy, an octopus).

2. Board Games & More. Use the power of game-creators to lead you and your child to interesting and engaging play. Has it been a long time since you played "Monopoly"? "Uno"? Throw in some newer games ("Balderdash" and "Scattergories") and see what your family likes best.

3. Take a trip to Lacipor. One of the benefits of playing with school-aged children is that you don't always need to move or have objects to play a game: your imaginations are enough. Personally, one of my favorite games to play as a school-aged child was creating a made-up land called "Lacipor" ("tropical" spelled backwards and without the "t") and spinning tales with my parents and teachers about who lived there, what the Laciporians did and how they handled the magical flying coconut-monsters who terrorized the other side of the island. (Turns out, I dreamed the world of "Moana" 35 years before it came to fruition in the Disney movie.) Help your child create a similar made-up land as an ongoing game.

4. Enlist them as baby/toddler "Play Engineers". If you have smaller children or babies, ask your school-aged child to lead the play with them. Teach them some of the easy games outlined in the earlier articles in this series, and let them know how important they are as "play engineers" in helping the little ones.

5. Let them take charge. Finally, another positive feature of playing with your school-aged child is that you don't always have to lead the activities. Make a regular habit of asking your kid to be the "play planner" and decide what to do. This helps children develop what cognitive scientists call "executive functions" of the brain, which is a higher form of thinking and logic.

Go Forth and Play!

Now that you have the whys as well as the hows to play with your baby, toddler, young child, and school-aged child, it's time to put all of that knowledge in action. Go forth and play!



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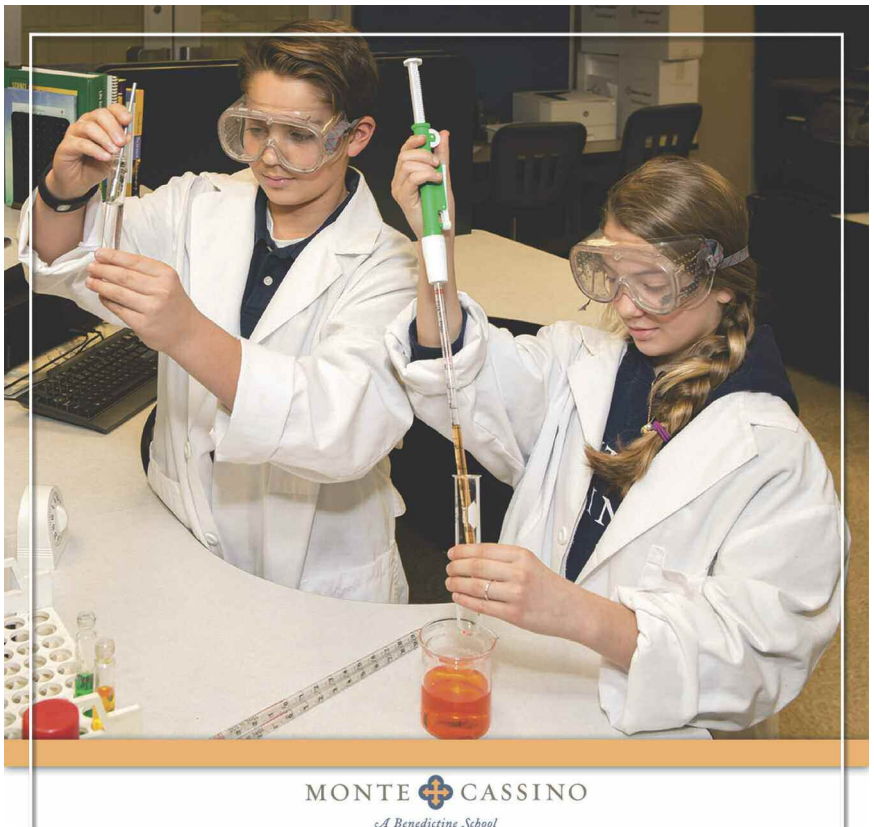
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BY DIANE TRITT EATON

PHOTO CREDIT: LAUREN EUSTIS PHOTOGRAPHY

standing tall in Muir Woods National Monument

As part of a trip to California's San Francisco, don't miss the chance to experience Muir Woods National Monument, only 12 miles outside of the city. In stark contrast to the cement and glass-clad monoliths downtown, these natural skyscrapers, with canopies that gently touch the heavens, soar to heights of 270 feet and have deep roots in history, typically ranging in age from 600-800 years old. One giant native to Muir Woods recently celebrated its 1200th birthday!

These signature evergreens are an important part of the world's most incredible natural wonders and are among the oldest trees on Earth. National Geographic describes Muir Woods National Monument as "one of the best urban escapes anywhere." Thanks in part to influences by famed naturalist John Muir, the forest was officially dubbed Muir Woods National Monument by the Federal government in 1908 and has been protected and preserved ever since. This region is ripe for the redwoods' survival because of unique topographical characteristics such as the rolling fog, which offers an ample water supply for them to thrive. In fact, the Northern California/Southern Oregon coastline is the only place on the planet where you'll find these gorgeous green giants.

Follow the Golden Gate Bridge

Getting over to Muir Woods is pretty easy. After crossing the iconic Golden Gate Bridge, you take a short drive into Marin County, and, after a few miles of winding along a twisty road, you'll arrive at the Visitors' Center, stocked with maps and trail information to enhance your exploration of this natural city. In all, there are about six miles of relatively easy to moderate walks/hikes to enjoy.

Trails For All Types

The Main Trail Loop, which starts at the Visitors' Center, is the simplest trek. It is part boardwalk and part paved and is fit for all. It hugs the aptly named Redwood Creek, with banks of green groundcover including various species of fern. The creek itself is abundant with fish including native steelhead salmon (particularly in the winter months). This leisurely walk includes various educational stops with fun facts and figures about the animal and plant species that live harmoniously with the redwoods. The kids will love encountering banana slugs, which are prevalent.

For the more adventurous trekker, there are several opportunities that branch off of the Main Trail, taking you on slightly more challenging hikes. These trails range from two to six miles and, depending on which one you choose, can require a full morning or afternoon to complete. My personal favorite, the Ocean View Trail, includes sweeping vistas of the Pacific Coast that take your breath away.

"Too Cool For School"

A really cool thing about learning in Muir Woods' "outdoor classroom" is that kids can become Junior Rangers. The Visitors' Center



continued on next page

offers a free activity book to complete while exploring. At the end of the journey, each child is awarded with his or her own wooden badge, and is "officially" sworn in. I love this program because it encourages our children to have fun while learning. It is also teaches the importance of protecting nature and hopefully incentivizes them to want to protect and preserve our parks.

Easy and Enjoyable Access

To maximize the quality of your time at Muir Woods, be aware of the parking situation. Lots fill up quickly. If you drive your own car, head up early in the morning (between 8 and 9 a.m.) or pay a late afternoon/early evening visit (after 4 p.m.). Some suggest parking at Pohono St. Park and Ride to catch a shuttle. As an alternative, there are operated tours leaving San Francisco each day, some combining visits to Alcatraz or Napa Valley.

Another option is The Route 66 Muir Woods Shuttle, which departs from Sausalito, across the bay from San Francisco. Kids will love taking a ferryboat from Fisherman's Wharf or the Ferry Building. Sausalito is a picturesque waterside village with darling shops and restaurants that is sure to delight.

Regardless of how you get there or when you go, you'll discover what John Muir meant when he called Muir Woods "...the best tree-lovers monument that could possibly be found in all the forests of the world." It's genuinely a spiritual sanctuary where these amazing trees humble and connect us with a power greater than ourselves.

Park Entrance Fee/Hours

Muir Woods is open 365 days per year from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The entrance fee for adults is $10 while kids 15 and younger are free. For more details, see www.nps.gov/muwo. Also, read more about tours at **www.viator.com/tours/sanfrancisco.**



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PHOTO CREDIT: OH SNAP!

Jennifer Sollars Miller & the Autism Center of Tulsa

With Mother's Day being this month, we want to highlight one exceptional mom who is making a difference - not only in her own family, but for many families around Tulsa. Jennifer Sollars-Miller, co-founder of the Autism Center of Tulsa (ACT), recognized the need to provide a community resource shortly after her son was diagnosed with autism. Since starting the center, she has seen firsthand how the resources and programs offered by the ACT have significantly benefitted local families. The center is funded through private donations which are running short. Currently, they are looking for financial donations in order to continue to provide crucial support and care to those families and community members affected by autism spectrum disorder.



TK: What prompted you to start the Autism Center of Tulsa?

Jennifer: Helping individuals and families affected by disabilities became my passion and purpose after my first child, Josh, was born. Having a child with special needs kept me crazy busy with doctors' appointments, hospital stays, therapy and research. In 2005, Josh, who is diagnosed with autism, had just started kindergarten when I met another mother, Michelle Wilkerson, who was on a similar journey as mine. Between the two of us, we had gathered a library of information pertaining to autism. The stacks of paper around my house were insane. Physicians started referring families to us (separately) when they diagnosed a child with autism. We decided there was a great need for an organization in Tulsa to help families navigate the maze of autism.

TK: What resources does ACT offer?

Jennifer: When we started the ACT, state agencies did not provide autism services in the Tulsa area. We provided a resource library, parent workroom, parent consultations, workshops and special events. As our boys have grown, so have the needs of our families. We currently focus on the national program we created in 2014 – Autism Friendly Locations (AFL/A-OK). This program offers the I'M A-OK™ autism safety identification for individuals with autism, sensory sacks/toolkits for families and businesses, training for emergency responders, and consulting to make businesses and organizations autism-friendly.

TK: Why do you feel it is an important resource in our community?

Jennifer: According to the Centers for Disease Control, one

continued next page

in 68 children is affected by autism. The significant safety concerns must be proactively addressed to help this vulnerable population.

Families affected by autism face many challenges, but one of the most debilitating is the process of taking their loved one out in public. A simple trip to the grocery store, a nearby restaurant, or ball game is never simple for families affected by autism. With proper identification (wearing the I'M A-OK logo™), individuals with autism will be recognized as having a disability and will be treated with the same understanding and respect as others. In addition, it will add a layer of protection in situations where people may misinterpret their behavior.

AFL/A-OK helps to create environments that foster teachable moments and allow families to prosper. We help families resume activities that improve their quality of life, preserve the family structure, and create independence for individuals with autism.

AFL/A-OK bridges the gap between families in need and the community where they live. This creates a supportive environment in which they feel welcome. With proper identification, repetition, and support, these outings become part of a family's routine – each outing becoming easier and more predictable.

TK: What is your involvement with collegiate and professional sports teams?

Jennifer: Sporting venues have become one of the most sought-after autism friendly locations. We have forged partnerships with many local sports organizations such as Oklahoma State University Athletic Department, Tulsa Drillers, and Tulsa Oilers.

On a national level, the Seattle Seahawks became our first professional football team to launch the AFL/A-OK program in October, 2015. Since then, we have been in the process of implementing similar programs for other professional teams. NFL Headquarters contacted us this year and invited us to partner with them for the 2017 Pro Bowl in Orlando. The launch was so successful that they are already talking about making the 2018 Super Bowl autism-friendly!

The partnership entails providing complimentary I'M A-OK Sensory Sacks to individuals with autism to distribute at home games. The teams make the Sensory Sacks available at Guest Services for easy pick-up prior to the game. The team organizations promote the program through their media channels and run a PSA during the game. We (ACT) contact local emergency response agencies and stadium security to educate them about the meaning and purpose of the I'M A-OK logo.

TK: Can you share a success story about how someone benefitted from Autism Friendly Locations?

Jennifer: Just one? I have two that stand out in my mind. 1) When launching Autism Friendly Locations at a Seattle Seahawks game, a father came up to us, with tears in his eyes, and said he had always dreamed of taking his son, diagnosed with autism, to a Hawks game. Now, with the right support and tools (provided by the partnership between AFL and the Seahawks), his dream is reality. It was a true heartwarming moment – a typical father who wanted to make life-long memories with his son. 2) At a Drillers game last summer, two children wandered away from their caregivers. Much like individuals with Alzheimer's disease, children and adults with autism have a tendency to wander. The children were found within minutes of disappearing by security officers who recognized their I'M A-OK™ safety identification. Autism is an invisible disability which means there are no physical characteristics. Without identification, the children would have looked like any typical child. Both examples show how AFL/ A-OK is positively impacting families by providing a layer of safety protection for individuals with autism and providing supports/tools to make outings more meaningful and successful.

TK:How can people get involved?

Jennifer: We would love to increase the number of corporate donations we receive annually. ACT is funded exclusively through private donations. The Autism Center of Tulsa is seeking funds to support the demand for our services that far outweigh our resources at this time. Donations received are used to provide much-needed autism safety identification, sensory sacks, and training for various agencies, groups, and businesses.

TK: What would like to share about your family?

Jennifer:I love my family dearly and am proud of the way each member has handled circumstances that are beyond our control and can be challenging at times. We are far from a typical family and my daughter, Reagan, has been a trooper. It's not easy for a teenage girl to live with a 19-year-old brother who is developmentally 7 years old. My husband and I are proud of the way she has already become an advocate for individuals with disabilities and has a heart of gold for those in need.

Much like other teenagers with autism, anxiety is one of Josh's biggest challenges. He deals with anxiety by asking questions and needing answers. Sometimes I look at other families (at restaurants) and wonder what it would be like to sit through dinner without having to answer a hundred questions from Josh about which words are appropriate and which ones are not, consequences for bad behavior, and his endless requests to be sent to Dr. Phil if he misbehaves. Yes, Dr. Phil is one of his heroes. He loves rules and loves testing his boundaries. He's funny, smart, and inquisitive. To be honest, I don't know what I would do at someone else's table, nor do I want to know. I feel I have the best seat right where I am. This is my "normal" and I can't imagine it any other way.

TK:What activities does your family like to do together around Tulsa?

Jennifer: With the heightened awareness of the I'M A-OK™ autism identification, the increasing number of autism-friendly businesses and organizations, and the frequent sensory-friendly events in the Tulsa area, our family activity list has grown significantly. Thank you, Tulsa! Josh enjoys routine, so our family tends to do many of the same things over and over. We love going to sporting events where Josh can watch the scoreboard and clock, going to our regular restaurants where Josh knows the staff, and going to the park where Josh loves to swing and climb. We can't wait to add the Gathering Place to our list of regular activities! His favorite activity of all is going to church on Sunday morning. Reagan understands our limitations as a family and often gets special one-on-one time with my husband and me. Her favorite spots include Barnes and Noble, Guthrie Green, 5K's, Turkey Mountain, and the Melting Pot.

TK: Anything else you would like to share?

Jennifer: Individuals with autism can learn more appropriate behaviors, especially from families who view these outings as teachable moments. This effort requires the patience of family members, staff, patrons, and the public. We want to encourage and empower families to participate in life!

AND…For parents of children with autism…humor is required! We must laugh when we can and appreciate the small gains as they come. It is not a sprint, but a marathon. Enjoy the view and be mindful in the present. Take lots of notes pertaining to your child's developmental milestones. One day, you'll look back and realize just how far your child has come! Website: www.aokautism.com; Twitter: @aflocations @jksolla

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BY BRANDON SCHMITZ

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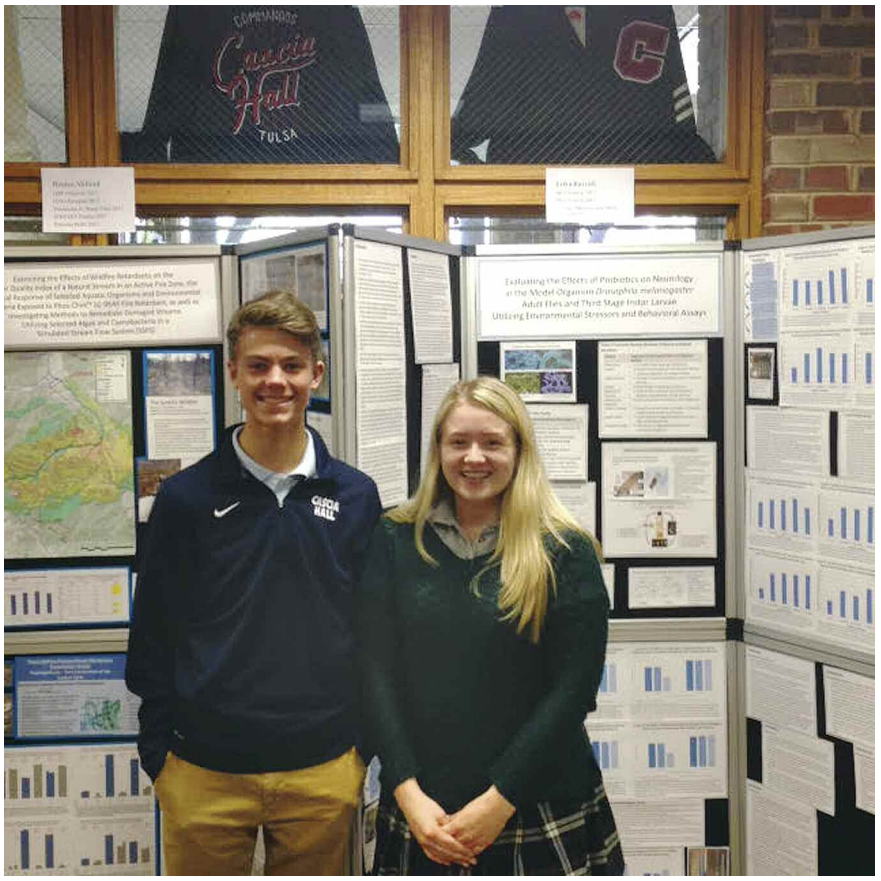
Oklahoma's Science and Engineering Fair is among the myriad victims of the state's budget crisis.Virtually all of the system's funding has been cut, singling Oklahoma out as the only state in the country without a science fair program.

That said, a handful of Cascia Hall Preparatory School students have refused to idly watch the program disappear into memory. In comes Oklahoma Students Advocating for Statewide Science (OSASS), a student-led organization centered on not only gaining funds, but also promoting science across the state.

"When we learned there weren't any plans to bring the funding back, we decided to go the corporate route," Cascia student and OSASS member Braden Milford said. "We're searching for some corporate sponsors and then we're connecting them to potential sources of funding for the science fair."

Braden argues that the fair is crucial for any student who is passionate about exploring science and technology.

"In the classroom itself, you might do a lab here and there, but you're really just getting the facts in the textbook," he said. "The research aspect really lets you explore what's actually possible in the scientific community."



CASCIA STUDENTS BRADEN MILFORD AND ERIKA RAVITCH.

Cascia student and OSASS Financial Director Erika Ravitch says that this kind of hands-on approach naturally leads students to being more inquisitive about their own work.

"It has helped kids like myself get into the mindset of 'when I go to college, I am going to need to think and problem-solve for myself,'" she said. "A lot of those skills are really embedded in the research process."

The statewide program serves as an opportunity for students who may not otherwise get the chance to participate in these sorts of project-oriented activities.

"It's not just us in Tulsa or some people in Oklahoma City," Braden said. "There are kids in Poteau and Wilburton and Idabel – it really provides an outlet, and it can be the only outlet for these kids who live out in rural communities to get involved in science in a more in-depth way than you would in just your normal classes."

With aspirations of becoming a doctor, Braden maintains that his involvement in science fair research projects shaped most of his passion.

OSASS itself has some fairly ambitious goals, too, not the least of which being the implementation of some form of mentor program. Erika says the organization has begun putting together a list of students who have been involved in science research projects – students who "have quite a bit of experience and would be willing to mentor younger children."

Simply getting the word out about the lack of funding is considered to be its own victory, too.

"We're trying to get the message across that there's a big need for science in our community," Erika said. "We hope that if we get a huge support base, then it will encourage corporations and families to get more involved in supporting the science fair system."

Additionally, the organization aims to challenge the percep-

continued next page

tion that Oklahomans – and Oklahoma students, especially – don't value scientific curiosity.

"I think a lot of times, we just hear about all of the budget cuts and how Oklahoma isn't really far up there in national education rankings," Braden said. "But we've had first-place, second-place award winners at the international fair with 76 countries; this is just something that we really need to support if we want Oklahoma to keep contributing to the scientific community."

The Oklahoma State Science and Engineering Fair held its last pre-budget-cut awards ceremony this past March. Beyond its ability to serve as an outlet for students to express their passion, the state fair also provides winners with tangible benefits in the form of college scholarships.

Dr. Tiffany Neill, Oklahoma's director of Science Education, applauds the OSASS campaign for its sheer ambition.

"You see these particular students taking this initiative on their own to really support something that they have been a part of and that they love and they want to continue to see happen across our state and be available for other students," Neill said. "I think you just have to commend students who are willing to do that."

The student organization has begun development on a fundraising event for the $50,000 required to maintain a science fair program. Additionally, OSASS launched a page on crowdfunding website GoFundMe in January. As of April 11, the group has raised nearly $3,000.

Erika says that all funds donated to OSASS will go directly to the East Central University Foundation. The state science fair is held on East Central University campus.


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The Oklahoma State Department of Health estimates that approximately 3,300 children under the age of 18 will become new smokers each year, setting them up for serious health risks throughout their lives. To help educate children about the dangers of smoking, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma (BCBSOK) initiated the Be Smart – Don't Start program in 2004, impacting thousands of Oklahoma students each year. The program features kid-friendly mascot Blaze the Braggin' Blue Dragon®, a smokeless dragon who makes healthy choices.

Children and their parents are invited to meet Blaze and learn more about the dangers of tobacco at the annual Be Smart – Don't Start Anti-Tobacco Day on Friday, May 12 at Science Museum Oklahoma in Oklahoma City. Admission to the museum is free that day courtesy of BCBSOK.

To help parents understand the dangers of tobacco use, TulsaKids asked Joseph R. Cunningham, M.D., Divisional Senior Vice President of Health Care Delivery and Chief Medical Officer for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma to answer some questions about smoking and tobacco use.

Q: BCBSOK's Be Smart-Don't Start program encourages children and youth to not start smoking. What are some of the ways parents, teachers and the community in general can support that message with our youth?

A: Educating youth about the dangers of smoking and tobacco use is imperative, and one of the most valuable prevention tools we have is parents setting a good example by not smoking themselves. Programs like Be Smart Don't Start are imperative to our company and the community, so we can teach the next generation of Oklahomans the dangers of smoking at a young age. By having a dedicated event at Science Museum Oklahoma, we are able to reach thousands of school-age children from across the state, while providing free resources and teaching tools for parents and teachers.

Q: What are the dangers of parents using tobacco around children?

A: It is proven that the use of tobacco around children increases their risk for serious health problems. Children of smokers are likely to suffer from the effects of secondhand smoke which can trigger severe asthma attacks and cause ear and respiratory infections. It can also affect the development of a child's lungs, increasing the risk of contracting bronchitis or pneumonia.

Q: What are the long-term effects of smoking both for individuals and communities?

A: Smoking is Oklahoma's leading cause of preventable death and it's a serious problem. The use of tobacco affects virtually every organ in the body, not just the lungs. It causes an increase in heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), stroke, diabetes, asthma, cataracts and blindness. It also causes cancers in the bladder, esophagus, colon, liver and cervix. In pregnant women, smoking can cause premature births and intrauterine growth retardation, along with higher NICU admissions. Smoking takes a toll on the entire community in multiple ways, from higher health care costs to productivity in the workplace, by smoking employees or coworkers being out sick.

Q: What about chewing tobacco, or smokeless tobacco products? Are they dangerous too?

A: Yes, smokeless tobacco is also dangerous and it's associated with many health problems. Chewing tobacco contains harmful chemicals that are linked to oral diseases that can cause cancer inside the mouth, esophagus and pancreas. The use of smokeless tobacco can also cause gum disease, tooth decay and tooth loss, while also leading to an increased risk for heart disease and stroke.

Q: What about e-cigarettes and vaping?

A: The use of e-cigarettes and vaping has become a trendy alternative to smoking among Oklahoma teens, who are using them at more than double the national rate, according to the Oklahoma State Department of Health. There is a common misconception that using e-cigarettes or vaping is safer than smoking cigarettes, but in most cases that is false. Just like smokeless tobacco, many vaping and e-cigarette alternatives still contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and detrimental to one's health.

Q: If someone wants to quit smoking, what resources are available to support that?

A: If you want to stop smoking, talk to your primary care physician. There are numerous resources to help you successfully give up smoking cigarettes and using tobacco altogether. Your health insurance company may also cover the cost of counseling and medications to help you quit. Programs like the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline offers free services to provide tools and support at no cost.

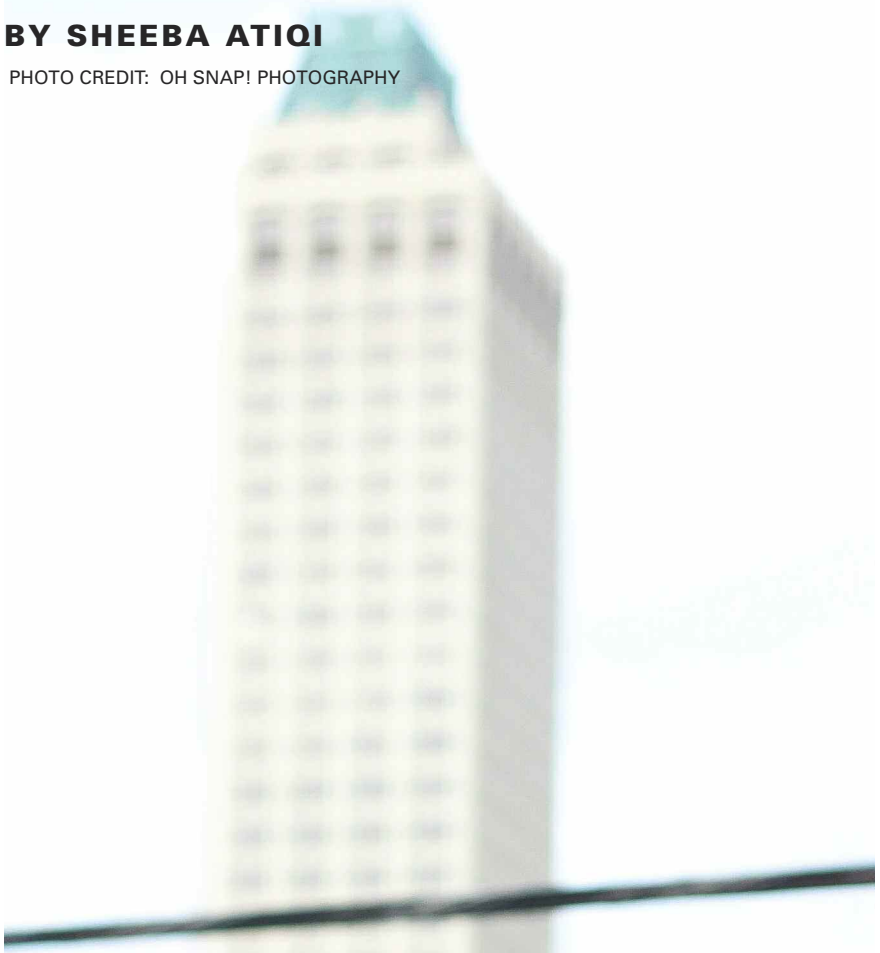
Q: How do you feel about the cigarette tax being considered in the OK Legislature?

A: As a physician, parent and Oklahoman, I personally support the legislation. Smoking remains a major health issue for our state. Oklahoma consistently scores low nationally in terms of health rankings, and tobacco use greatly contributes to our poor health statistics. In addition, Oklahoma has one of the highest populations of adult tobacco users in the country at 23 percent with 7,500 tobacco related deaths reported each year, according to the Oklahoma State Department of Health. It's a problem we must all work together to resolve.

I'M A TULSA KID

BY SHEEBA ATIQI

PHOTO CREDIT: OH SNAP! PHOTOGRAPHY





Jaelyn Jackson: Running for a Win

Jaelyn Jackson, a 16-year-old sophomore at Sand Springs' Charles Page High School, had an idea and ran with it. As an avid runner (and lover of drones), Jaelyn came up the idea of using drones to help competitive runners pace themselves, especially when running on their own. Chasing this idea, Jaelyn developed the concept of a Runners Drone, which would allow an athlete to set the drone to whatever pace he or she wanted to run. Jaelyn's idea brought him to the finish line in the K-12 StartUp Series, which invites young people to pitch their entrepreneurial ideas to a panel of judges at Tulsa's 36 Degrees North. As the winner, Jaelyn received $2500 to use to advance his idea, as well as consultations with a mentor.

TK: What is "Runners Drone"?
Jaelyn: Runners Drone is essentially a flying running partner that paces you when you run so that way you can hit your ideal race times and perform better all of the time.

TK: What inspired you to come up with the project?
Jaelyn: My love for running, technology and drones!

TK: How did it feel to win the Tulsa StartUp Series?
Jaelyn: Amazing! it really boosted my hopes in this project. It's great knowing people believe in you and your idea!

TK: What do you plan to do with your awarded prizes?
Jaelyn: My dad, honestly, provides the best mentorship! However, the money will be used to buy a drone and to start developing my app as it is important to get this done as soon as possible, so runners can begin using it next track season.

TK: What are your hobbies?
Jaelyn: Computers, running, exploring and building things.

TK: Who inspires you?
Jaelyn: My father. If I grow up to be half the man he is, I would be completely satisfied and successful in anything I do.

TK: What are your plans and goals for the future?
Jaelyn: I want to make a million dollars before I graduate. I want to own a large company one day. I want to go to win state in track. And I want to be overall successful. I want to give back to everyone who helps me get there and put money back into my track program so that way our coaches don't have to spend out-of-pocket money.

TK: Can you tell me a fun fact about yourself?
Jaelyn: Parents have always thought of me as an entrepreneur. I used to be able to sell rocks to kids!

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Months before Laney Kate Daniels was born, doctors learned that she had a congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH), a life-threatening condition that prevents the diaphragm from forming properly and affects the development of the stomach, intestines and lungs. “Because of Laney Kate’s condition, she wasn’t expected to cry at birth,” said her mother, Carrie. “But when she was born, she let out a big cry. The doctor said it was a cry of hope.” After several critical months in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)—part of that time on a heart-lung bypass system called ECMO—and surgeries to repair her diaphragm, Laney Kate went home from the hospital with no need for further medical support. Over the years, she has grown into a happy, healthy young girl. “Her fighting spirit inspired everyone in the NICU,” said Carrie. “And the tenacity and skill of the staff at The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis inspired us. We left there with a bigger family.”

Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals Champions 2016-17

Laney Kate Daniels

2016–17 Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals
Champion for Oklahoma

The Children’s Hospital at Saint Francis

saintfrancis.com/childrenshospital