Find your seat at the
Chairy Orchard

See for yourself the
spooky side of Denton

Find out about the WASPs
and their fight to be
recognized

Plan your next getaway at:
discoverdenton.com
Denton's making moves, and now's the time to be part of this growing city. Start here and find out what Li’l d has for you.

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   Find out how these brave women fought for their recognition

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   This Dentonite is all about good times and giving back

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   Denton goes to the dogs for one day every fall

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   One Denton Live writer discovered wassail and decided to craft his own
Denton: where original meets independent

Denton. Original. Independent. Mull it over for a minute. Look at the image, think about the words. What does it mean? What is it saying? This is our brand. It conveys in a single image the essence of this place:

Denton, Texas. Understanding our brand is the first step to understanding our vibe. And tuning to our vibe is the key to unlocking your own uniquely-customized, Denton-centric adventure.

The word original is a broad application. It’s more a description of spirit than physical attribute, though the spirit is manifested in the physical fabric of our city. The creative energy fueled by our universities, arts community, music industry, small business community, the North Texas Horse Country – it drives originality. Another example of our originality is our vibrant downtown. It’s the real thing, nothing faux about it. We hold fast to our history while progressively moving ahead. We hold originality in high regard.

Independent is more of the same spirit and springs from the same attributes as original. Consider our burgeoning music scene, for instance. Denton is known around the world for the music movement that’s been organically evolving here for many years. Interestingly, though, there is not a specific “Denton sound” that anyone can identify in a word. That is the result of original and independent.

The sound is a combination of individual sounds where writers, musicians, poets and venues have their own messages, rhythms, tunes and atmospheres. Listeners get the entire breadth, as varied or not as they choose. And again, in the surrounding horse country, we have the most diverse equine population and disciplines in one area than anywhere else on planet Earth. That’s independent, and it results in a lively, energetic culture.

The weathered appearance of the brand is quite intentional. Think about your favorite pair of jeans. They’re likely a bit worn-looking, because they are your favorite. They fit you perfectly, comfortably. And they wouldn’t fit anyone else in just the same way. Our brand says that’s how Denton fits too.

Denton is a place where people come to pursue their passions, and we’ve shared their dreams and journeys for more than 150 years. You’ll see it in our year-round festivals, museums, galleries and shops. You’ll taste it in the delectable art of local chefs and unique dining. You’ll feel it in our vibe.

Welcome to Denton. Now get ready for something different, an experience no one has had before, because this one is yours: Original. Independent.

Vice President
Denton Convention and Visitors Bureau
Kim Phillips
The spring 2017 Denton Live class on the rooftop patio of LSA Burger on the Square.

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Are you dentoning?

Join the dentoning craze by using the #dentoning hashtag on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. We’ll publish our favorites in the next issue of Denton Live and you could win a cool #dentoning t-shirt.

Want to take home a piece of Denton with you? Local shops like @vintagebleu_tx have wares made by local makers, ready to adorn your walls.

Even young Dentonites get in the Halloween spirit, like this tyke in a pumpkin in front of the Courthouse, courtesy of @andrea.espinoo.

What a beautiful sight to see every morning that @brightneighborhood captured from her corner of Denton.
The Chairy Orchard is the project of Judy Smith and Ann Pearson, who own the houses on either side of the orchard. The pair collects chairs from garage sales, thrift stores and from the side of the road to add to their marvelous collection. Since it’s become a Denton “thing,” people have started donating chairs. A special part of the Chairy Orchard is the entrance. It is like a person. It attracts visitors to be creative and enjoy themselves. It’s a point of interest. It’s not a big lot, but when you put your imagination to work, a patch of grass can hold your wildest dreams...if you’re dreaming of furniture.

About 275 chairs fill the lot: big chairs, small chairs, dining room chairs with tables, a Papa Bear chair complete with a stuffed bear family. Wheelchairs, high chairs, hammocks, benches, and toy chairs.

The entrance is marked with a tall metal chair arch. Past the entrance is a sight one might expect to see in Alice in Wonderland, a sight so fantastic that it could only live in a storybook. But this isn’t a story. This is Denton, home of the Chairy Orchard.

The Chairy Orchard is a place to unwind. Children run around and play, trying out every chair. Residents of Denton love the undercover nature of the Orchard. At art galleries, there’s a look-don’t-touch policy; but not here. The Chairy Orchard is a place to unwind. Children run around and play, trying out every chair. Adults adopt a child-like attitude, taking silly photos and relishing the reality of this wild idea.

A backdrop of chairs makes for interesting photos. The wacky, original scene attracts parties, photo shoots, Easter egg hunts and even weddings.

The Chairy Orchard is another wonderful Denton quirk, a creative expression found only in Denton. Each chair has its personality,” Judy says, “Because, to me, a chair is like a person.”

WHERE MUSIC MEETS TECHNOLOGY
DentonRadio.com DJ Kind Beats creates his tunes with the help of his computer

DentonRadio.com DJ Kind Beats creates his tunes with the help of his computer.

Listen to Kind Beats on DentonRadio.com

Sunday Brunch: Sundays from 1-2 p.m.

Sound Values: Mondays from 7-8 p.m.

Listen on the DentonRadio.com app
Story by Kayla Davis and Anastasia Moncado

”You don’t tell a WASP ‘no.’ You don’t tell their family ‘no.’”

So says Kimberly Johnson, director of special collections at Texas Woman’s University (TWU) about a special group of women warriors and their very unique challenges.

Decades before female pilots were officially allowed in the military, there were Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), civilians who left their homes and ordinary lives to serve their country during World War II, becoming the first women to fly for the United States military. Because they were classified as civilians working with the United States Army Air Forces, the 38 women killing their service received no proper military burials, nor were they honored for their courageous actions. And while the WASP program disbanded in December 1944, these pilots went unrecognized by the United States government. WASPs were not granted any benefits awarded to their counterpart servicemen, nor were they given medals acknowledging their combat duty. In 1976, when the Air Force officially allowed women to join as pilots, the policy change for enlisting the nation’s supposed “very first” group of female military pilots was announced as “historic.” The former WASPs and their families realized that the government was still overlooking their combat service. They were fading from U.S. military history. Now, TWU is honoring these women, promoting their achievements and preserving their stories in an extensive WASP archive. The collection includes more than one million photographs, documents, artifacts and uniforms from the time serving in World War II and their lives after it was over. The WASP exhibit, housed in the TWU library, displays only a portion of the artifacts such as uniforms, photographs and a replica gold medal. The virtual collection on the TWU library website features nearly 15,000 scans of original documents, military records and additional artifacts. The rest of the collection is stored in the university’s archives, where visitors can request to see specific items. In total, TWU has the largest collection of the artifacts such as uniforms, documents, artifacts and uniforms more than one million photographs, documents, artifacts and uniforms from the air force service pilots (WASPs) July 1, 2009 at the white house. (Photo by Pete Souza/Official White House photo)

The WASP collection found its home at TWU in 1992. Its archivists not only care for the documents, but also help bring awareness about these heroes. And it’s already working. In 2013, filmmaker Jill Bond produced an award-winning documentary on these brave ladies.

“The had to be advocates for their story, for why it’s so important that their story be told – and be the instrument to do that,” Kimberly says. TWU’s collection for the Women Air Force Service Pilots of World War II takes you back in time and into the lives of these courageous women. It reminds us of how much these pilots did for our country at a time when women weren’t seen as capable enough to do a “man’s job.”

“When it comes to telling the story, it will never be done,” Kimberly says. “We’ll always have the next generation to tell the story to.”

Take a tour through the storied history of Denton’s heroic firefighters!

Learn about the amazing history of triumph, tragedy and true local heroes. Explore the museum as you honor our brave firefighters both past and present.
FOOD FIGHT

THE QUEST FOR VEGETARIAN AND MEAT-LOVING EDIBLES FOR EVERY MEAL

Denton is a city full of diversity. From the different storefronts on the Square to the people who walk about every day, the uniqueness of everything and everybody makes Denton original.

One of Denton’s most tantalizing attractions is its food. From vegan burgers to bacon-centric breakfast options, variety is a staple of Denton cuisine. Whether you’re craving breakfast, lunch, dinner or dessert, local Denton restaurants offer both vegetarian and meaty options of some well-known favorites.

Breakfast
The most important meal of the day

Migas is a traditional Tex-Mex dish in which corn tortillas are fried, with eggs and typically chorizo, in a skillet, in which corn tortillas are fried, making the dish layered and textured. Rice, beans and tortillas are also served on the side.

The vegetarian variety of migas is typically served with tofu, avocado, jalapenos, tomatoes, onions and soyrizo, an all-natural alternative to chorizo.

For a quick lunch on the go? Denton’s various pizza places offer a variety of options. Whether between classes or on your lunch break, sometimes grabbing a quick bite to eat is the best option – and Crooked Crust provides you with just that.

Crooked Crust has its similarities to Pizza Snob, but in a less-structured way. While you get to pick and choose which toppings you want, the popular pizza place also offers new vegetarian options. The build-your-own-pizza setup allows for a customized experience.

Dinner
End the day with a bang (or a burger)

Everyone loves a good burger. Now it seems even vegetarians can enjoy a take on this dish.

The barley & Board Burger is every-thing you would think of in a tradition-al burger – a juicy double patty, American cheese, pickles, grilled onions and a signature sauce that will leave you wanting more. It’s special,” Barley & Board manager Kelbie Day says.

While the term “falafel burger” may sound confusing, it’s indicative of Shadan Price making herself at home. The owner of vegetarian food truck Leila’s made her way from Iran to Denton, bringing along with her a unique culture and new food options.

Falafel is a deep-fried or pan-fried patty made from ground up chickpeas or fava beans. The texture is a little mushy compared to hamburger, but packs an abundance of nutritional value. The falafel burger comes with herbs, cream cheese, feta, sauce, lettuce, tomatoes, radishes and Persian pickles, which together add another level of freshness and crunch onto the burger.

Lunch
Did someone say pizza?

Looking for a quick lunch on the go? Denton’s various pizza places offer options.

The variety that Denton restaurants offer through their culinary creations is what this city is about. Every Denton restaurant gives people the opportunity to try and experience something original and exciting, just like the city of Denton does every day.

For the sweet finish to this food fight, go to discoverdenton.com to read all about the Dessert War!

VIGAS VS. MIGAS: A SPANISH-STYLE START TO THE DAY

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B&B VS. LEILA’S: NEW TWISTS ON AN AMERICAN STAPLE

Did someone say pizza?

Crooked Crust vs. Pizza Snob: Make your perfect pie

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Vigas: Seven Mile Café
(529 Bolivar St)

Migas: Mi Casita
(110 N Carroll Blvd)

Crooked Crust
(101 Ave A)

Pizza Snob
(321 W Hickory)

Diner
Leila’s Food Truck
(100 W Oak)

Lunch
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Diner
Leila’s Food Truck
(100 W Oak)
Serving up great beer & good deeds

Story by Kayleigh Bywater and Kevin Ryan
Photo by Kevin Ryan

It’s a relaxed Wednesday afternoon as people, conversations and craft beer make their way around Eastside.

Some patrons mill about, sharing drinks with friends, while others try their luck at the dartboard in the corner. The line to belly up to the bar is full of people, but they don’t mind. Instead, they share drinks and crack jokes with the staff behind the bar. They’re okay with waiting at Eastside.

Through the commotion of clinking glasses and jumbled conversations, a man with a big red beard and an even bigger personality. He strolls in wearing a baseball cap, grey jacket, shorts and flip-flops even though it’s chilly outside.

“Just living the dream,” the big man says, embracing the bearded man. “Nothing much, man. You?”

“Just living the dream, baby,” the customer says.

“Living the dream,” the big man echoes as he turns his baseball cap backwards. “Living the dream.”

The moment John Williams walks into the building, he starts mingling among local regulars and newcomers, making sure they feel at home with a beer and a friendly face. Between checking on customers, running drinks out to patrons and just having a good laugh, John wants to make sure everyone inside Eastside’s doors gets a big Denton welcome.

To some, 36-year-old John is one of the kings of Denton’s bar scene. He owns both Eastside and Oak Street Draffthouse, as well as a couple bars in Florida with his brother, one in Austin, another in College Station and his newest in Deep Ellum. To many others, John is the friendly face you can usually find around the Denton Square.

Whether he’s behind the bar, sharing a drink with his buddies or bussing tables in the city, John is always immersed in and giving back to Denton. Born and raised here, it matters to him that the city stays its unique self. As John is the friendly face you can usually find around the Denton Square, he always ready to help anybody out. “He’s just there, helping in every way he can,” Christine says.

While it may be John’s dedication to helping others, Christine says that growing up in Denton brings out the community is just a big part of my business model,” he said.

Although owning a single bar may be more than enough for one person, John thrives on having a lot on his plate. His employees back him 100 percent.

“He’s involved in the community when it comes to giving,” says bartender Aaron “Catfish” Antilla.

Catfish has learned a thing or two from John. He’s involved in the community with which he volunteers share the same mission: keep Denton, Denton. John is a volunteer member of the Denton Main Street Committee for the Denton Main Street Association (DMSA). He puts on various charitable events in order to raise money for these and other organizations. John hosts Monday Night Charities at Oak Street, where he picks a different local charity each Monday to give 10 percent of the night’s proceeds. John also plans and takes part in crawfish boils, food truck events and more. “Some [events] have been for local charities and some for folks down on their luck and in need of some cash,” John says.

Despite owning two popular Fry Street destinations, while being around those guys and being involved in the day-to-day operations of what’s going on in Denton, what makes Denton cool, is great.
the main events

 światy Mossman has competed in every Chalk Fest since she was 15, but last year, she took a risk.

In a race against the clock, she decided to change her design at the last minute. Just a few hours before the competition was supposed to begin, Aislynn stayed up late into the night, sketching a new variation of the skull she first planned to change her design at the last minute.

Adding a galaxy background to give the illusion of the drawing floating in space, she finally settled on a design that still incorporated her initial skull inspiration, but deviated from her final product from the previous year—a skull surrounded by Texas flowers. She ended up winning first place for her age category, reinforcing her decision to participate again the next year.

Aislynn is one of dozens of local artists and chalk enthusiasts who take part in the annual Arts & Autos Extravaganza. Formerly known as Arts, Antiques & Autos Extravaganza, the festival is in its 18th year as one of Denton’s largest events. DMSA Board Member Robin Huttash re-introduced Chalk Fest to the event three years ago after her election to the board.

“Not enough ‘art’ in the Art part [of the festival] and I thought the Chalk Fest would be a great way to bring that in,” Robin says. “People love watching the artists and seeing how their creations turn out. It’s become a favorite part of the event.”

Robin coordinates the event every year by appointing judges and setting up entry criteria. Participants are divided up into age categories with a cash money prize for the third, second, and first place winners. With a four-hour time frame to complete their drawings, the artists are judged on the overall content, the execution of the original decision, and the use of value. The DMSA orchestrates the festival, incorporating local music, car enthusiasts from near and far, the creativity of Denton’s young artists, and the fun of competition.

Dentons’ autonomous community has a rich history and a love of the arts. The main roadway is US-377 and US-77. The inspiration behind the festival is tied to a 1999 event: The History Channel Great Race. Denton was a 15-minute pit stop on this coast-to-coast event, which was a race across the country using the routes that would have been taken before the interstate system. Before I-35, the Square was the main roadway as the intersection of US-377 and US-77.

This Great Race pit stop attracted thousands of spectators hoping for a glimpse of the cars, Christine Gossett, event coordinator for the DMSA, says, leading the association to create a car show right on the Square.

“Always try to adjust with what is popular and fun and we try to keep it focused on the community so that anyone who is a hobbyist can feel welcome at our show to come and try out their car at a car show,” Christine says.

Local car enthusiast Wayne Purser can attest to this, as he has been attending Arts & Autos for 10 years. For the past few years, Purser has entered his red Chevrolet pickup attached to an antique Shasta camper. His vehicle has won several awards, including best of show truck and popular pick.

Wayne has traveled to places such as Tennessee, Indianapolis and Arizona and has participated in many other car shows around the country, but there’s no place like home. “I like this car show because it’s local and I enjoy helping out the programs down here,” Wayne says. “You can park near the Square and there’s all kinds of shopping, food and beverages and other things that you can do besides the car show.”

Wayne spent a large portion of his life in the rodeo, until one day 10 years ago, he decided to hang up his cowboy hat and turn his attention to cars. Since that time, he has been building cars and now owns 10, valued between $20,000 and $50,000.

Wayne is not married to any of his cars. If offered the right price, he would be willing to sell any one of them.

“I’m looking forward to another great car show,” Wayne says. “The volunteers are exceptionally helpful, which is nice because I know it’s not an easy job. “I’ve never had a bad experience at Arts & Autos.”

The auto and art characteristics of the event continue to thrive. The DMSA typically registers 200 vehicles to attend the show, if not more. Enthusiasts from all over the Texas region, and even as far out as southern Oklahoma secure slots in the event to show off their cars.

“Arts and Autos has grown as Denton has grown,” says John Cartwright, chairperson of the Arts & Autos committee and VP of promotions for the DMSA board. “We’re looking at having to take the perimeter out because of the increased number of cars that are registering for the show. Not only that, the Chalk Fest has grown significantly as well.”

Much like other festivals, Denton Arts has a knack for creating community events that exceed expectations and grow rapidly with continued praise and popularity. With the apparent love and growing scale of Arts & Autos, the festival is a unique showcase of how different forms of art come together in a local marriage.

Story by Jillian Salser and Cierra Edmondson
Photos by Tammi Paul Photography

from HIGHWAYS to hues

Arts & Autos Extravaganza

When: September 9
Where: Downtown Denton Square
Time: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
More info: dentonmainstreet.org
Mean Green Football Schedule

- 09/02/17 vs. Lamar
- 09/09/17 at SMU
- 09/16/17 at Iowa
- 09/23/17 vs. UAB
- 09/30/17 at Southern Miss
- 10/07/17 at UCLA
- 10/14/17 vs. UTSA
- 10/21/17 at Florida Atlantic
- 10/28/17 vs. Old Dominion
- 11/04/17 at Louisiana Tech
- 11/11/17 vs. UTEP
- 11/18/17 vs. Army
- 11/25/17 at Rice

Home Game: Away Game
* Conference USA Game

A little Tuscany in Denton County

TASTING ROOM HOURS
Thursday and Friday 5-9 pm • Saturday 1-9 pm
Live Music Friday and Saturday Nights

2297 FM 2931 • Aubrey, TX 76227
940.440.9463
FortunataWinery.com
As she talks, the scenery around you begins to transform. Paved streets and red lights fade away, even as the buildings remain the same. Bright neon is replaced by carved and painted wooden signs. Mesmerized by her stories, you follow her around the corner, as the parking spots and vehicles disappear and the smell of horses and smoke fill the air.

Shelly Tucker, better known as the Ghost Lady, has been a professional storyteller for 27 years. Her red, pixie-cut hair has a unique patch of white at the peak, setting off her vibrant blue eyes that can send chills down your spine – or maybe the chill is from her tales of Denton's fascinating past in ghostly collaboration with the present.

"I've been telling stories since I was little, but momma called them lies," Shelly laughs.

The 2008 National Endowment for the Arts' American Masterpiece Storyteller captivates her audiences with imagery and even historical proof that she's gathered on her own or from people who have lived around the Square.

She grew up not far down the road in Grapevine, where she graduated from high school. For the next 13 years, Shelly commuted to Texas Woman's University, where she received her degree, while having children and holding multiple jobs. She was a nursing home administrator for years until one day in Denton changed all that.

"I honestly thought I would be doing what I was doing forever," Shelly says. After having her first child, Shelly began teaching herself how to weave and spin on a spinning wheel. She got good enough to teach a spinning class at the Patterson-Appleton Arts Center in Denton. There, children would come up to her in groups and she would tell them stories that kept them on their toes.

As the day progressed, Shelly noticed one man staying for three sets of stories. He finally approached her to shine light on a gift that she never knew she had.

"He came up to me and said 'you're a storyteller,'" Shelly says.

She never thought she would end up in Denton either. Living her life circling around the town and sometimes in it, Shelly never had a reason to reside here until she got married.

Though Shelly's never been able to predict much of what's happened in her life, her one constant has been her love of history. In fact, she likes to say her Ghost Tours are filled with "history and a whole lot of mystery."

There's also no denying her interest in ghostly encounters. She has her vast imagination to blame, and just like almost everyone else, the adrenaline and excitement of being scared is addicting. One of her first encounters was back in 1981 when she saw a woman in old nurse clothes at Denton's Flow Hospital, which later closed in 1986. At the time, Shelly assumed it was the medication she had been prescribed, but about 20 years later, she stumbled upon the story of Nurse Betty and the hospital's many other haunts.

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During her tour, she talks about the many encounters she has had on the Square. Some of them have even occurred during tours, which, she says, is because the spirits know they're getting attention.

When asked what her favorite story is, Shelly quickly answers, "the one I'm telling in the moment." Verbally painting pictures about incidents that occurred around Denton long ago, Shelly always remembers the "people who never left."

For decades, Denton has been a town that has refurbished its history along with its buildings. Few people know what else still lingers. But the Ghost Lady knows.
T

he air is cold and harsh against your skin. It’s pitch black, the only light coming from your cell phone. Suddenly, there is a rustling in the bushes beside you. In your hand, a paranormal investigative meter starts to flutter, alerting you that there is a spirit nearby.

Old Alton Bridge, or Goatman’s Bridge as it’s most infamously known, is a paranormal hotspot. This bridge is the most infamously known bridge in Denton County. The legend has it that Washburn made a living by selling meat, milk, cheese and yarn that was spun by his wife. Washburn is said to have been a reserved and quiet man and so, because of this, not many people knew his real name. The name “Goatman” was given to him because of his occupation.

Since he worked out of his home, Washburn painted a sign stating, “This way to the Goatman’s” and placed it on the bridge so that buyers would know where to find him. For a time the sign was beneficial to his business, but eventually it caught the unwanted attention of the Ku Klux Klan. During the 1920s, when the Washburn family is said to have lived, it was not desirable to see an African-American family doing well economically. This was the sole reason they became targets of the KKK.

“IT’s like all urban legends because there are actually legends similar to it all over the country.” Ghosts of Denton tour guide Shelly Tucker says. “For the last several years I’ve given ghost tours on the Square, usually on the weekends. I don’t bring people out to Goatman’s Bridge very often but people always ask me about it. It just seems to be the story that captures everyone’s imagination.”

According to legend, in 1938, after learning Washburn was not out of his home, the Klansmen kidnapped him, tied a rope around his neck and threw him over the side of Old Alton Bridge. Anticipating his death, they looked over the bridge but were met with an empty noise.

Goatman’s Bridge
Address: Old Alton Road
Argyle, TX 76226
Constructed: 1882

Oscar Washburn was gone. Stories speculate that he either escaped or was cut down and buried by a sympathetic town resident. Disgruntled and confused, the Klansmen set their sights on Washburn’s family, killing them by burning them alive inside their home. Washburn was never seen again, but is said to haunt the area around that bridge ever since.

Satanic rituals, séances, and other strange phenomena are rumored to have occurred in the location since then, making Goatman’s Bridge a hot spot for those who are interested in the paranormal. The television series Ghost Adventures, presented by the Travel Channel, featured an episode specifically about Goatman’s Bridge.

Four ghost hunters investigated the satanic and supernatural phenomena around the bridge. The episode can still be viewed today on YouTube. Not only is the bridge a paranormal hot spot, but it is also a popular place for fishing and photography shoots. Many people sit alongside the creek with their family and friends to fish, while others may walk the trails or take formal photos. There is something about how the sun glisters off the red iron trusses of the bridge and the fresh spring greenery of the trees that makes it so attractive to locals. Not to mention the incredible view of the stars that can be seen while standing on the bridge and looking up over Old Alton Road. We (the writers) arrived at the bridge one Saturday night, just as the sun was setting. The new bridge, just a few feet away from Old Alton Bridge, was still busy with cars. The parking lot and entrance were packed with cars on the white gravel rocks. As the sun set and the area grew quiet, we waited for Becky Vickers, head of Lake Cities Paranormal Investigations, to arrive from a cemetery not far from the bridge. The cemetery is a final resting place to many young residents and children of Old Alton. According to Becky, the main cause of death in the area was the bad water that many were forced to use and drink. The town had only one doctor who did not live in the area, so many who were sick relied heavily on only what older generations knew.

After going out to visit the bridge for so long, Becky feels a very personal connection, and has studied the history and the phenomena there. She is writing a book about the bridge that chronicles hers and other people’s experiences at the bridge called “The Bridge of Secrets.”

Losing her grandmother when she was 17 sparked Becky’s desire to start ghost hunting, a passion that she still has almost two decades later.

Becky leads ghost tours one weekend a month and says that she has had many paranormal experiences with her group at the bridge. She and her team’s experiences include hearing voices, seeing orbs, and some people even being scratched.

“I like a lot of people, I struggled to deal with death. I started reading, researching, and experimenting how to communicate with my grandfather. I just struggled with letting go. And I have never given it up. It’s my passion. It’s in my soul. It’s what I want to do.”

Becky handed out mini flashlights as we headed on our way into the darkness of the surrounding woods. Immediately, we started picking up activity on their detection devices. The investigation team had several cold-spots.

As we walked along the path, Becky would occasionally stop and experiment by asking the spirits questions, looking to the devices to give her validation of ghosts being around. She then turned off into a small opening to show the group what she believed to be a sacrificial altar of sorts, possibly involved in satanic rituals.

The next-looking object, which was crafted out of sticks, was clearly hand made with mesh-netting and the inner stick was burned on all edges. It rested almost invisibly just off the trail, but was indeed unsettling.

“I’ve spoken to police and they have confirmed that satanic rituals have and still do take place out here,” Becky says. “They sometimes come out here just to check around and make sure nothing is going on, and they have seen people out here with fires going and robes on.”

After spending some time trying to communicate with spirits on the bridge, we moved to the other side of the woods. Becky told a tale of how the KKK would often wait for African-Americans and women to pass by and attack them in the dead of night. She spoke of a low growl that could be heard in the ears of women and lantern lights that could sometimes be seen hanging low to the ground. Although the Ghost Adventures cast confirmed these phenomena, neither of us saw any lights or heard any growling.

As the night went on and the woods grew darker, the activity that once looked promising at the start of the tour eventually died down. The spirits seemed willing to communicate only with those on the team and, after another short communication session on the bridge, we trudged back to home-base, officially ending the tour with a Protocols process in your mind but that really happened.”

Maybe next time.

PARANORMAL IN DENTON COUNTY: A NIGHT AT GOATMAN’S BRIDGE

Story and photos by Jesse Priest and Cierra Edmondson

In 1938, the Washburn family was forced to leave their home in Old Alton because of this, not many people knew where to find him. Eventually, they threw him over the side of Old Alton Bridge. Disgruntled and confused, the Klansmen set their sights on Washburn’s family, killing them by burning them alive inside their home.

Washburn was never seen again, but is said to haunt the area around that bridge ever since.

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Maybe next time.
Courthouse-on-the-Square celebrates 120th anniversary

Story by Natalie Martinez & Samantha Morrow
Photos courtesy of the Denton County Office of History and Culture

Over the past 120 years, horses and carriages have given way to cars and buses, businesses have come and gone, and generations of people have lived here, proud to be Dentonites. While time has transformed this city into something much different than the frontier town it was back in 1897, one thing has remained at its center: Denton County’s Courthouse-on-the-Square.

Since its completion 120 years ago, the courthouse has stood watch over the Courthouse-on-the-Square. This one started falling apart by 1895, its fate sealed when it was struck by lightning that year.

After the first two attempts to build a courthouse that would last, officials scrapped that second courthouse and, in 1896, began construction on the current courthouse-on-the-square. "The courthouse is built of mainly local Texas materials and it has stood the test of time," Kim Cupit, the Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum’s Curator of Collections says. "It was the county’s oldest courthouse from 1896 to 1897, when the county outgrew it and built a second courthouse on the east side of downtown.”

The Courthouse-on-the-Square is visible on the horizon. "You rarely see it when driving through Denton, the iconic limestone building on the north side of the Square. It burned to the ground in 1875 on Christmas Eve. Arson was suspected, but no one was ever charged or tried. Learning their lesson, city leaders built the second courthouse in 1876 out of brick, right in the center of the Square. This one started falling apart by 1895, its fate sealed when it was struck by lightning that year."

After the first two attempts to build a courthouse that would last, officials scrapped that second courthouse and, in 1896, began construction on the cornerstone for the current courthouse-on-the-square. "The courthouse is built of mainly local Texas materials and it has stood the test of time." Kim Cupit, the Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum’s Curator of Collections says. "It was the county’s oldest courthouse from 1896 to 1897, when the county outgrew it and built a second courthouse on the east side of downtown.”

The Courthouse-on-the-Square lawn is his third, and hopefully final, resting place. "Driving through Denton, the iconic limestone courthouse is visible on the horizon. "You rarely see an ad for the city of Denton without the Courthouse-on-the-Square. It’s kind of like seeing a symbol for the city and the county that people recognize," Kim says.

John B. Denton was a traveling minister, Indian fighter and part-time lawyer. He was killed in the Indian Battle of Village Creek in Tarrant County. The courthouse lawn is his third, and hopefully final, resting place. "But for those who want to explore who we are and how we became Denton, the Courthouse-on-the-Square’s walls do talk.

"At the beginning, they just had a few antiques and displays that had lived here for years,” John says. "They had a transportation exhibit for a while, including an antique wagon. They had to take it apart to get it in here, so they just decided to leave it as a permanent exhibit.”

Carpenter is one of many volunteers serving as docents for the museum. Even at 83, Carpenter said he is still discovering new things about the town. "You get to learn a lot by being here. If you’re gonna live here and make it your home, you need to know something about it," John says.

The Courthouse-on-the-Square is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the grounds are home to the remains of the town’s namesake, John B. Denton, who is buried on the front lawn. John B. Denton was a traveling minister, Indian fighter and part-time lawyer. He was killed in the Indian Battle of Village Creek in Tarrant County. The courthouse lawn is his third, and hopefully final, resting place. But that’s a whole other story. Driving through Denton, the iconic limestone courthouse is visible on the horizon. "You rarely see an ad for the city of Denton without the Courthouse-on-the-Square. It’s kind of like seeing a symbol for the city and the county that people recognize," Kim says.

Dentonites walk past its century-old walls every day. Some may stop to admire its beauty. Fewer will stop and read its plaque or walk in and ask its keepers to tell them a story. But for those who want to explore who we are and how we became Denton, the Courthouse-on-the-Square’s walls do talk.
Denton's Day of the Dead Festival started with the need for a creative outlet and an obsession with all things scary. Local composer David Pierce knew he wanted to make a piece of art for himself, but also wanted a family-friendly event to bring the community together. Using lines of poetry provided by his uncle, he created Cirque du Horror, a yearly Halloween-themed musical staged at Dan’s Silverleaf, a popular music venue just off the Denton Square. But what began as an off-beat show of oddities and spooky stuff’s great. I gravitated toward that as a kid, too. I loved reading scary stories. It’s fun and creative as other holidays,” Wendy says. “It’s a mix of all of that.”

“Think in my mind it can be just as fun and creative as other holidays,” David says. “It can be just as light-hearted. It can be just as scary, and that stuff’s great. I gravitated toward that as a kid, too. I loved reading scary stories. I loved being scared, so it’s supposed to be a mix of all of that.”

After pitching his idea for the festival to the Industrial Street Guild in 2011, David’s Cirque du Horror transformed into an outdoor street party with 25 vendors, 500 festival-goers and a single stage in its first year. Now, the festival attracts thousands of Dentonites and out-of-towners for the city’s most popular fall event – all manned by locals wanting to show people a good time. “When I was creating this festival, I didn’t want it to be, and I never want it to become commercial,” David says. “I can’t stand that. I always wanted it to feel like the people from the community come out to make it work.”

David’s inspiration was his upbringing in a mostly-Latino Texas community, with a Hispanic mother who celebrated both Día de los Muertos and Halloween. The annual change in weather and the emergence of cardboard cutouts of Halloween figures signaled the approach of David’s favorite time of year. That love for the fall season carried over into his conception and creation of Cirque du Horror and, eventually, the Day of the Dead Festival.

Festivalgoers enjoy a huge array of activities like the Twilight Parade, where the attendees wear costumes, build their own lanterns and puppets, and parade around the square. There is also a salsa tasting competition, exhibits dedicated to Día de los Muertos and, perhaps the most popular of all the coffin races.

For Wendy Haun, Digital Marketing Coordinator for the Denton Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and driver for the Discover Denton coffin in 2016, the coffin races are the ultimate showcase in Day of the Dead, capitalizing on the originality David has gone to great lengths to execute.

Competitors from Denton and far beyond spend weeks building a themed go-kart, or “coffin,” for the exciting derby race just off the Square.

“It’s unique,” Wendy says. “It’s one of those things when people ask, ‘What’s living in Denton like?’ Well, just take this for example: on Halloween, we like to coffin drive one of our creative streets in the middle of town. That is Denton. It allows for creativity. It allows for expression.”

With Dan’s Silver Leaf, Little Guy Movers, and Seniors in Motion as some of the key local stakeholders, David has successfully constructed an event that defines Denton. Another motivation behind Day of the Dead is the focus on giving back, with all proceeds donated to a charitable organization every year. This year, Day of the Dead will be contributing a scholarship to the Tri-County Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

“I haven’t heard of any other place that has done a festival quite like Denton’s Day of the Dead, where they have so many different elements,” Wendy says. “Here it feels so organic. Businesses and people line up to be a part of it.”

After seven years in production and no signs of slowing down, the Day of the Dead festival continues to perfectly execute a balance of Halloween and Día de los Muertos. And David’s childhood love for autumn festivities continues to shape Denton’s community.

For David Pierce, it’s a creative outlet, and for participants like Wendy Haun, it’s what makes Denton home.
A Dog’s Howl-Iday

TREAT YOUR PUPS AT DOG DAYS OF DENTON

Story by Tiffany Ditto and Anastasia Moncada

Photo courtesy of the Denton CVB

He walked on the stage next to Lauri, eager to win. His usually scruffy, gray-white hair was slicked back. Though he looked his Sunday best, he was nervous about his performance, and worried about all the people watching.

The judges began reading his backstory and, with Lauri’s help, he started his performance.


Finally, after a few excruciating minutes of waiting, it was announced that Cody had won. He was the 2017 Dog Days of Denton festival’s Spokesdog of the Year.

After the announcement, the paparazzi rushed the stage to take pictures with other fellow four-legged and two-legged friends. Brian hopes to continue this tradition with Sherlock.

The Dog Days of Denton festival, held at the North Texas Fairgrounds, is free to attend, and contains many charity booths, pet supply booths, a dog agility course, and the Spokesdog pageant. If anything can be certain, Dog Days of Denton will have your pet’s tail wagging by the end.

Cody has been a favorite among the children at the Cumberland Children’s Home. He’s a very laid-back dog,” Lauri says. “He loves Nylabones. He has literally 10. He’s a very laid-back dog, which is good because sometimes kids can be very energetic.”

Cody had severe kennel cough when the pair met. A week later, it progressed into pneumonia. She got Cody the medical attention he needed, and as he got better the two forged an unshakable bond.

“He’s a great dog,” Lauri says. “He loves Nylabones. He has literally 10 and they’re all different flavors — cheese, watermelon, and ice cream. ”

When Brian and Baltic attended Dog Days, they liked to walk around the grounds and take pictures with other fellow four-legged and two-legged friends. Brian hopes to continue this tradition with Sherlock.

The Denton Fire Department’s arson dog Sherlock stands by a find at a crime scene. Meet Sherlock and hear about his work at Dog Days of Denton. (Photo courtesy of Brian Gilmore, Denton Fire Department)

Brian has attended Dog Days ever year that they haven’t had Baltic as a part of the event.

“Baltic arrived at the Denton Fire Department in 2010. Since then, he has helped find accelerants at an average of 10 scenes every month,” Brian says. “He has found accelerants, like kerosene, gasoline, or diesel fuel on the stage. Baltic, a rambunctious black Labrador retriever, knows that if he sniffs out the accelerants, he gets a treat and if not, he won’t.”

Baltic stands at the ready. Though his handler is nervous, Baltic is not. His one-track mind is focused on one thing: the food reward when he is done.

The demonstration teaches eventgoers about the unique things dogs can learn.

“I think that it’s a very fun event. We focus a lot on the fun, but we are very much an organization committed to providing an educational aspect,” Kevin Lechler, the event director says. “We stress responsible pet ownership.”

Dog Days of Denton promotes awareness to pet owners by providing demonstrations like pet CPR, and presentations such as how to determine what type of dog would be good for your home. But not all of these presentations are meant to educate. Some are just for fun, like the one put on by the Denton Fire Department’s arson dog, Brian Gilmore, fire investigator and canine handler for the Denton Fire Department.

Brian’s dog, Baltic, is one of only two departments in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex with an arson dog.

This year, the Dog Days event will see a new arson dog, another black lab named Sherlock, who took over for Baltic after he retired in December 2016. When Brian and Baltic attended Dog Days, they liked to walk around the grounds and take pictures with other fellow four-legged and two-legged friends. Brian hopes to continue this tradition with Sherlock.

Detective Kevin Lechler explains, “Baltic is a really good dog. He is a food reward canine, so he has to work to eat.”

The Denton Fire Department’s arson dog Sherlock stands by a find at a crime scene. Meet Sherlock and hear about his work at Dog Days of Denton. (Photo courtesy of Brian Gilmore, Denton Fire Department)

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North Texas Fair and Rodeo

When: August 18-26
Where: North Texas State Fairgrounds, 2217 N Carroll Blvd
What: Nine nights of rodeo action, including PRCA and Bull Blowout, with concerts every night
Headliners: Josh Abbott Band, Travis Trit, Cody Johnson, Ryan Bingham, Tracy Byrd
Tickets: $20 (Fri-Sat), $15 (Sun-Thurs), $5 (Children 7-12)
More info: ntfair.com

For the Sorrells, rodeo runs in their blood.

“Our mom was Miss Rodeo Oregon,” Taylor said. “So she’s been rodeo queening for a long time. So whenever we were old enough to start doing rodeo pageants, she said, ‘Okay, well, do you want to try it?’ And we liked it.”

Jena, however, is the first of her family to enter the rodeo arena.

“I never of my family have ever rodeoed before, but one of my first loves was horses,” Jena said.

“They love of horses inspired all three women to barrel race, an event where a competitor has to turn their horse around three barrels and then sprint as quickly as possible back to the starting gate.

For these women, the most important component to barrel racing and the rodeo world are their horses. Taylor has been riding her horse for 10 years, Brandy, for five and Jena for just three months.

enough to understand the importance of looking the part. Taylor, the older of the two Sorrells, is the first person ever to win all three North Texas Fair and Rodeo titles: Queen, Teen Queen and Princess. Brandy has been the Princess twice and won her first Teen Queen title in 2016, when Jena won the Princess title.

The main events

the main events

A DIFFERENT KIND OF Royalty

Story by Carmen Stewart and Rachele Blick

hree young women race around the living room, trying to find earrings to match the 2016 Princess’s outfit. When the earrings are on, the 2016 Teen Queen runs off to put on her boots, and the 2016 Queen asks her mother where her sash is. Their hair is slightly disheveled, but smoothed down before pictures. Shoes are misplaced, but quickly found, crowns are placed, and sashes are put on and straightened. It’s an organized mess in which these three young women seem to shine. Five minutes later, the three young women are seated on the couch and posing for the camera with a smile. Glittering crowns sit proudly atop black cowboy hats and gleaming white sashes cross their chests, official attire for the North Texas Fair and Rodeo.

Taylor Sorrells, Brandy Sorrells and Jena Sparks have been rodeo royalty long enough to understand the importance of looking the part. Taylor, the older of the two Sorrells, is the first person ever to win all three North Texas Fair and Rodeo titles: Queen, Teen Queen and Princess. Brandy has been the Princess twice and won her first Teen Queen title in 2016, when Jena won the Princess title.

The queen contest is one of many events at the North Texas Fair and Rodeo. The fair is a nine-day event that holds six different competitions: a Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association (PRCA) rodeo, 21 and under rodeo, Invitational Ranch Rodeo and bull blowout with a cowboy protection match.

North Texas Fair & Rodeo Teen Queen Brandy Sorrells competes in goat tying during the 2015 21 and Under Rodeo. In addition to royal duties, the fair royalty frequently competes in the rodeo competition. (Photo by Todd Brewer)

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“ace is — I’m not going to say he’s automatic — but he definitely knows what he’s doing. As long as he’s having a good day, were pretty good,” Taylor said.

Brandy and Jena, however, have an entirely different training regimen. Jena’s horse is very young and needs an entirely different training regimen. But more than that, rodeo life has taught all three women important lessons.

“It’s taught me respect, not only for people but animals as well,” Taylor said. “And also responsibility — you have another animal you have to take care of.”

Brandy echoed this sentiment and added her own take.

“If teaches you to be confident, that you get out what you put in,” Brandy said, “if you’re not working hard on memorizing your speech then you’re going to go out there and stutter. If you’re not working with your horse then you’re not going to get the first barrel you want. It teaches you that you have to work hard in order to get what you want.”

It’s with that confidence that the young women are excited to compete in this year’s North Texas Fair and Rodeo. Though Taylor will be focusing on barrel racing, she will still be there to cheer on her favorite rodeo royalty, Brandy and Jena.
**BRINGING PUERTO RICO TO DENTON**

My personal wassail quest led me to question others who came before me. A survey of wassail makers on the Square reveals some common advice for the newbie: have patience (First People’s Jewellers’ Kelsi Sadberry); experiment (Atomic Candy’s Tim Loyd and Azure Ducie Mexican Kitchen’s Ryann Reid); don’t go overboard (Eastside’s John Williams); and use fresh ingredients (West Oak Coffee Bar’s Ali Stevens).

The Denton Main Street Association estimates last year’s event had 3,000 tasters out of the 15,000 attending the festival. Christine Gossett, event coordinator for the Denton Main Street Association, says the attendance is better represented in how many wassail cups were served.

“We had 10,000 sampling cups made last year,” Christine says.

In 2015, Palm Tree Boutique owner Colin Grunewald, new to Denton and wassail, thought 1,000 cups would be enough. By the end of the night, he’d borrowed 1,000 more from neighboring businesses.

The businesses make from 25 to 50 gallons of wassail for the weekend and it never seems to be enough. Every year gains a new crop of wassailers but the old guard remains faithful. Some, Grunewald says, even bring their own designated mugs.

Brandi McDiff is a loyal wassailater, and she enjoys the challenge.

“My best year, I made it to 15 places,” she says proudly.

**WHY WASSAIL?**

Much of Wassail Weekend’s success can be attributed to the breadth of people the Holiday Lighting Festival brings. But what is it about wassail that’s kept businesses competing for the crown since 1998? How does this Old European cider remain a staple in the land of vegans, hipsters, and sorority sisters? Would Fanta Friday have the same ring to it?

Dana Lodge, who won Queen of Wassail for the Discover Denton Welcome Center last year, says wassail taps into cultural threads that tie us together as Americans.

“It’s apple. There’s nothing more American. It makes you feel warm and fuzzy – takes you back home.”

However, Ben Esely, co-owner of the Bearded Monk, says it’s Denton’s “quirky vibe” that keeps the event alive.

“It’s not the drink, but the entire night. It could be Coca-Cola night and we’d all dress up like polar bears.”

Who can give us a definitive answer? Who is so enraptured by wassail that their cheers can be heard across the Square?

The Town Crier. Jackie Reed earns her namesake out of sheer power. Dressed in a fierce elf shirt, she’s the marketing muscle for the First People’s Jewellers team, calling out “Come get the wassail!” and “Best wassail ever!” for everyone to hear.

“Wassail makes people forget things in life at that moment,” she says.

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**What life has made you forget?**

Let’s go back to that Denton Live writer, crafting his own brand of wassail as the gentle breeze of the Puerto Rican hills blows behind him. The smell of cinnamon fills the house, from porch to backyard. Crispy fried tostones, made from the greenest plantains, cook on the stove, sharing a space with arroz con gandules (rice with pigeon peas and pork) and wassail. He tosses in the rest of his cider, and decides some more cloves may make it spicier. Adding in a monster-sized tamarind wouldn’t hurt, right?

The writer doesn’t think about his deadlines or the thousands of words he’ll have to write before the week is over. What matters are the spices, the laughter, and the stomach growing in intensity. What matters are the knowing glances the father gives the writer, a look that says, “Don’t worry, you’ll get it.”

And those moments are when wassail makes the most sense. Wassail helps people remember what life has made them forget. And whether that takes place in the glowing Denton Square in December or the sun-kissed Puerto Rican hills in March, the effect is medicinal – it takes you home just when you need it.

Happy holidays, felicitaciones, and wassail.

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**Recipe: Puerto Rican Wassail**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 gal. apple cider
- 2 c. rum
- 1 c. pineapple juice
- 1 c. coconut milk
- 10 cinnamon sticks
- 1 tsp. whole cloves
- 1 1/2” piece fresh ginger, cut into sticks
- 1 apple, sliced
- 1 orange, sliced
- 1 mango, sliced
- 1 tamarind, divided

**Directions:**

Place all the juices in slow cooker, mix, and place on medium heat, making sure the juices stay at a simmer, not boiling. Set the fruits in the cooker, balancing the number of slices for each fruit. Sprinkle spices (cinnamon sticks, cloves, ginger) in cooker, spreading evenly. Cover and let sit for 3-4 hours. Check every hour, stirring and adjusting heat.

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**Recipe (cont.):**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Place all the ingredients in a large pot on medium heat. Stir and let simmer for 1 hour.
2. Remove the pot from the heat and let it cool for 30 minutes.
3. Strain the liquid through a fine mesh strainer into a slow cooker.
4. Add the remaining fruits and let simmer for 3-4 hours or until the desired consistency is reached.

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**Toga Party:**

Story by Daniel Berrios

**Toga Party:**

When does the holiday season officially start? Is it the second the turkey hits room temperature? The moment Walmart’s doors open against business and stomach against Dentonites, one tradition pits business résistance: a colossal tree, seemingly through the streets or perform on stage. A gathering of musicians serenade the surrounding the courthouse, trees, and businesses give off a warm glow. The lights on the rooftops, the Square resembles a Christmas Village. The lights in Denton, the businesses compete for a festival. Christine Gossett, event coor- 

**Cost:** Free

**More info:** dentonmainstreet.org

**Hours subject to change**
T
here’s a crisp almost winter chill in the air on an early December evening on the Square as a woman and her family walk through crowds of mourners and carolers, searching for the perfect place to give her man the best Christmas present ever.

“I brought him right under the huge Christmas tree and whispered in his ear that I was going to have a baby,” festival-goer Amy Calderon says. “I had just found out. I was so excited that I wanted to tell him right away. So I thought this was the perfect time to do it, with the Christmas spirit and happy people. That moment was so perfect. He was so happy.”

The Denton Holiday Lighting Festival is an event where many people gather with their friends and loved ones for live Christmas spirit and happy people.

The Holiday Lighting Festival means so much to me because it’s when Christmas really begins for me,” festival-goer Darien Orr says. She often volunteers at the festival because she likes supporting the event.

“I don’t decorate or shop much before that weekend and I feel like it’s too early for Christmas cards and everything until after that night,” Darien says. “At the festival, you see all sorts of people wish each other Merry Christmas, and sing along to carols.”

For the past several years, the Denton Holiday Lighting Festival has also partnered with First Baptist Denton for “Elves Shelves,” a drive which collects gifts and gift cards to distribute to Denton families who are not able to provide Christmas gifts for their children.

“In 2016, we collected around 130 high-quality gifts and helped 451 families,” Kate says.

Jessica Price, another fan of the Holiday Lighting Festival, says she originally came to the festival to get to know Denton better. The festival was her first true opportunity to invite her friends who live outside of Denton to check out the city that she called home.

“My friends love the festival and still try to attend when they can,” Jessica says. “I continue to bring my friends and family out to enjoy the festival while shopping at all the shops on the Square, enjoying the local eats and drinking more than enough wassail.”

Known as GreenFest, the festival was founded by the Greenbelt Alliance of Denton County in 2012 to showcase recreational hobbies with the purpose of raising funds and awareness for preservation. Activities range from a bicycle rally, foot races and an equestrian obstacle course, with live bands and wild animals in between.

The Greenbelt Alliance was formed in 2009 to ensure that Denton’s outdoor treasures were preserved. The organization is entirely community-based, made up of loyal volunteers who strive to generate support and promote outdoor education.

Eric Nguyen, the social media manager for GreenFest, recognized the great potential of the event the first time he attended in 2016.

“GreenFest, as a whole, is a community getting together to appreciate what natural beauty there is left on Earth,” Eric says. “Our goal is to preserve that beauty and show others what they may be missing out on by ignoring nature.”

Families with young children can have a blast in the jump houses and slides, or explore the Denton Fire Department’s fire trucks. If you’re hoping to make a new friend, baby kangaroos, reptiles and birds from Blackland Prairie Bird and Raptor Center are eager for you to pet them.

If you’re not quite ready for the equestrian obstacle course, you can sign up for a pony ride around the Greenbelt. Nearby, there’s archery target practice, or you can watch rock climbers determined to get to the top of the wall while you convince yourself to give it a try. And if it gets too warm, you can head to the river for kayaking, lessons or take in the view from the scenic bridge.

“My favorite part is that I get to bring my dog,” Michael Stewart, a veteran volunteer, says. “I’m always so busy with school and work that I don’t really have much time to play with her, so this event is especially important because she loves exploring.”

Michael has helped GreenFest for four years now. He began volunteering to help fulfill his Multicultural Scholastic Award, and has since grown fond of the outdoor festival. He and his dog have also made some amazing memories there.

“My dog was about to give birth and I had no idea!” Michael says, laughing. “Several years ago my wife said, ‘I want you to take my car and my dog delivered her puppies right there in the parking lot at GreenFest. It was the craziest thing!’ A couple passing by saw what was happening and helped out with some towels and water.

At Greenfest, everybody plays during the day and parties at night as local Denton bands take the GreenFest stage. Last year’s musical guests included Denton favorites Boxcar Bandits and Beave-Creep. Grab a seat on a picnic blanket and enjoy delicious bites from Denton food vendors such as LSA Burger.

It’s a great relaxing day. And when the night finally winds down, your mom will gladly let you back in the house.

The Great Denton Outdoors
Y’all come back now, ya hear?

Here are some fun events to look for from January through June.

**FESTIVALS**

- **July 4:** Kiwanis Fireworks Show, Apogee Stadium
- **Aug. 18-26:** North Texas Fair & Rodeo, North Texas Fairgrounds
- **Sept. 9:** Arts & Autos Extravaganza, Downtown Square
- **Sept. 16-17:** Denton Blues Fest, Quakertown Park
- **Sept. 30:** GreenFest, Greenbelt at Lake Ray Roberts
- **Oct. 4:** Dog Days of Denton, North Texas Fairgrounds
- **Oct. 21:** Industrial Street Pop Festival, Downtown Denton
- **Oct. 28:** Denton’s Day of the Dead Festival, Downtown Denton
- **Nov. 16:** Beaujolais, Denton Civic Center
- **Nov. 17:** Turkey Roll Bicycle Rally, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
- **Dec. 1:** Denton Holiday Lighting Festival, Downtown Denton
- **Dec. 1-2:** Wassail Weekend, Downtown Denton
- **Dec. 5:** Planner’s Zone, UNT Gateway Center

**ARTS**

- **Campus Theatre**
  - Aug. 11-25: Bonnie & Clyde
  - Oct. 20-29: Big Fish the Musical
- **Patterson-Appleton Arts Center**
  - June 10-Aug. 26: Texas Watercolor Society presents the 68th Annual National Exhibit
- **UTD Murchison Performing Arts Center**
  - Nov. 3-11: UNT Opera, TBA
  - Nov. 21: One O’Clock Lab Band Fall Concert
- **UNT Library Mall**
  - Dec. 23: North Texas TUBACHRISTMAS

**MARKETS & OTHER EVENTS**

- **April-Nov:** Denton Community Market, every Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Denton County Historical Park
- **First Friday of every month:** First Friday Denton, offering special shopping deals at several Square locations, 7-10 p.m.
- **Dec. 15-16:** TWU Graduation, Kitty Magee Arena
- **Dec. 15-16:** UNT Graduation, UNT Coliseum

For more calendar events in Denton, visit discoverdenton.com
Texas Woman's University alumna Carissa Laitinen-Kniss, owner of a popular Denton Pilates and yoga studio, has a passion for dance, family and personal fitness. Her pioneering spirit drives her success. Like Carissa, our university graduates enrich Denton in a myriad of ways — from its creative culture and innovative education to its thriving business community and high-quality health care facilities.
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