

# 380 Guide™

Aubrey • Celina • Cross Roads • Krugerville • Little Elm

Oak Point • Pilot Point • Prosper • Providence • Savannah • Tioga

**GET BACK TO NATURE AT  
THE HAGERMAN NATIONAL  
WILDLIFE REFUGE**

**MAGNIFICENT METEORA -  
THE MIRACLE OF GREECE**

**DENTON COUNTY AGRILIFE  
EXTENSION CELEBRATES A  
SUCCESSFUL 2024**

**KASCIE BLOUGH SELECTED  
AS FIRST PRINCIPAL OF  
HILL ELEMENTARY**

**DENTON ISD GETS  
CONNECTED**

**LOVING OUR LAKES**

**FORT SO-WORTH-IT**

**IS SPRING 2025 THE RIGHT  
TIME TO SELL?**

## TEXAS-TULIPS

Texas-Tulips offers a dazzling array of colors and shapes, guaranteed to charm everyone.



# DR. RANI ANBARASU

Board Certified • Internal Medicine



**STAR MEDICAL ASSOCIATES**  
COMPASSIONATE, COMPREHENSIVE AND EXCEPTIONAL CARE

## **Aging and Wellness**

- Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement and Testosterone Therapy for Men and Women
- Physician supervised weight loss treatment

## **Chronic Disease Management**

- Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- High Cholesterol
- Heart Disease including Heart Failure
- Allergy & Asthma
- Thyroid Disorders
- Depression & Anxiety
- Sleep Disorders
- Bone & Joint Disorders

## **Preventative Screening**

- Annual Physicals
- Well-Woman Exams (Pap Smear)
- Well-Male Exams (Prostate Exam)
- Skin Cancer Screening
- Breast and Colon Cancer Screening
- Vaccination Counseling
- Pre-Operative Evaluation & Clearance

## **Minor Procedures and Diagnostic Services**

- Skin Biopsy & Pre-Cancerous Mole removal
- Cryo Therapy • Spirometry • EKG • Bladder Scan

- ✓ Open on Saturdays at Frisco Location
- ✓ Most Insurances including Medicare are welcome
- ✓ Same day appointments

*~Two Locations~*



**Denton 940-382-6900**

**Frisco 469-301-2300**

4206 North I-35  
Denton, TX 76207  
Fax: 940-382-1005

2440 Timber Ridge, Ste. 104  
Frisco, TX 75034  
Fax: 940-382-1005



## PUBLISHERS

Jodie Linton-Prickett & David Prickett

## EDITORIAL

EXECUTIVE EDITOR  
Jodie Linton-Prickett

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT  
David Prickett  
214-564-6693

## ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

ART & CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
Gina Wiklund

## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Texas-Tulips, Jodie Linton-Prickett,  
Justin Henery Real Estate Advisors, LLC,  
David Prickett, Denton County AgriLife  
Extension, Gina Wiklund, The Hagerman  
National Wildlife Refuge, Denton ISD,  
Steven Baringer

## ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

Texas-Tulips, David Prickett, Justin  
Henery Real Estate Advisors, LLC,  
Jodie Linton-Prickett, Denton County  
AgriLife Extension, Gina Wiklund,  
Denton ISD

## HOW TO REACH US MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 399, Aubrey, TX 76227

## WEBSITE

[www.380Guide.com](http://www.380Guide.com)

## GENERAL SALES

972-658-2033  
[info@380Guide.com](mailto:info@380Guide.com)

Readership 90,000  
Copyright 2024

North Texas Media Group, LLC  
DBA 380Guide and Pilot Point Guide™

380Guide™ is a bimonthly publication reaching over 90,000 readers every issue. Opinions in 380Guide™ do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the publisher. 380Guide makes every attempt to ensure the accuracy of the information it publishes, but cannot be held accountable for any consequences arising from inaccuracies or omissions. 380Guide™ is mailed free to the communities in the 380 corridor. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited without expressed written consent from the editor.

## PROUD MEMBER OF:



## LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHERS



## LOVING OUR LAKES IN THE 380 CORRIDOR!

### Plan a Visit to Lake Lewisville and Lake Ray Roberts

Good things happen in the spring! Springtime in Texas brings with it endless sunshine, blossoming bluebonnets, Texas Tulips, lakeside get-togethers, scrumptious barbecues, the smell of honeysuckle, mouthwatering berries, and long days that end with fireflies greeting us throughout the evening!

Speaking of lakes, how fortunate we are in the 380 Corridor and the surrounding areas to have beautiful Lake Ray Roberts and Lake Lewisville in our backyards? These great escapes allow us to remove ourselves from the hustle and bustle of the traffic and the construction. With tranquil and scenic environments, we rejuvenate our senses. By living near the water's edge, we can indulge in a range of experiences full of delightful benefits. Most of the corridor is just a short drive away from nature; lush green areas, roads canopied with trees, and hiking and riding trails abound. To make it even more special, we have ample shopping and area conveniences bringing the benefits of both worlds together.

Living in communities with easy lake access and camping opportunities easily exposes us to an amazing array of natural splendor. Imagine waking up to the sound of water gently cascading on the shoreline. The mood created by the shimmering reflections is calm and peaceful. The breathtaking sights that come with water views are unmatched in their capacity to induce mental calmness and serenity.

Residing near two lakes promotes a special sense of community. In contrast to the transitory character of metropolitan neighborhoods, lakeside neighborhoods and towns frequently exhibit closer-knit community ties. The interconnectedness of residences promotes social interaction and a strong sense of community. On summer days, it's not unusual to see friends and neighbors coming together for spontaneous picnics or water activities. A lakeside community is a truly exceptional place for families to bond and friendships to form.

Unfortunately, as the area grows and more people move to the region, big box stores will inevitably attempt to take over the entire landscape. It is imperative that we remember the locally owned and operated restaurants and shops in our neighborhood. They are the foundation of our community. They are the first to help out with community events, teams, and fund raisers.

380Guide goes above and beyond to make sure that our clients' marketing campaigns are successful. Please tell them that you learned about them via 380Guide Magazine! We are able to provide our readers with current and pertinent information thanks to our advertisers. They are greatly appreciated and essential to our community.

Sincerely,

*Jodie & David Prickett*  
PUBLISHERS

# contents



**940-365-9940**  
400 S. HWY 377, AUBREY, TX  
LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE SLAY FAMILY



**A PLACE OF Comfort and Remembrance**

- Traditional
- Cremation
- Veteran
- Memorial & Heritage Service
- Monuments
- Life Tributes
- Pre-Planning
- Aubrey Florist
- Slay Bloomfield Jones Cemetery

**Terri Slay**  
Owner & Funeral Director

400 S. Highway 377  
Aubrey, Texas  
**940-365-7529**  
**940-686-2277**

**SLAY MEMORIAL FUNERAL CENTER** | Serving Families Since 1986  
SlayMemorialFuneralHome.com



**Ty Belger**

**Artists EDGE HAIR DESIGN STUDIO**

**\$20 OFF CHEMICAL SERVICE**

**\$10 OFF CUT AND STYLE NEW CLIENTS ONLY**

**972.740.8132**

8000 Highway 380, Suite 700, Crossroads, TX

3

**Letter from the Publishers**

Loving our Lakes

5

**Get Back to Nature**

Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge

7

**Fort So-Worth-It**

8

**Texas-Tulips**

Enjoy a daycation in Pilot Point

10

**Magnificent Meteora**

The Miracle of Greece

12

**Denton Country AgriLife Extension Celebrates Successful 2024**

14

**Kascie Blough Selected as First Principal of Hill Elementary**

14

**Denton ISD Gets Connected**

15

**Is Spring 2025 the Right Time to Sell?**

## ON THE COVER

Texas-Tulips in Pilot Point is a charming, family-owned flower farm that brings a touch of Holland to North Texas. Known for its vibrant, sprawling fields of tulips in a variety of colors, this seasonal attraction is perfect for a peaceful stroll or capturing stunning photos.



## RETRACTION

In our Dec./Jan. issue of 380Guide, we incorrectly identified Justin Henry on our feature article. We sincerely apologize for this error and any confusion it may have caused.

We are committed to accuracy in our reporting and regret this oversight. Thank you for your understanding.

Sincerely,  
The Editorial Team  
380Guide







# Get Back to Nature at the Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge

Are you looking for a one-of-a-kind adventure that is almost right in your backyard? The Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge on the southern coast of Lake Texoma is one of my favorite hidden jewels in the area, though there are many others. It's a great spot to explore nature, with plenty of hiking paths, places to launch your kayak or canoe, and areas for bird watching and fishing. Located at 6465 Refuge Road, Sherman, TX 75092, the Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center is easily accessible from both North Texas and Southern Oklahoma due to its strategic location. Because of this, it's a great day excursion for groups and individuals of all ages.

Bring binoculars and a picnic, and take advantage of everything HNWR has to offer. Additionally, now is the best time of year to see a variety of species in the Refuge, including bald eagles that are nesting from now until March.

The Friends of Hagerman sponsor several events for the public to attend. We would like to share some of our upcoming favorites with you. The following occur at the Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, unless stated otherwise.

## ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS:

**Refuge Rocks for Kids:** Saturday, February 15th, at 10 am. Refuge Rocks - Scat Tracks and Signs. The wild animals at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge are rarely seen. So, how do we know they live here? On Saturday, February 15, come out to the refuge to develop your tracking skills by examining and interpreting the indirect evidence animals leave behind. We will be exploring scat and tracks. We'll learn how to get started identifying tracks, scat, and other animal signs when hiking on our trails. We'd love to see what you find while exploring the outdoors today! Studying what an animal leaves behind is a great way to learn about the lifestyle and habits of local wildlife.

Let's learn about scat, tracks, and signs with a short lesson, some fun games and activities, as well as a fun craft! Come join us on February 15 for a free class for youth ages 5-10.

Free and open to the public, registration is required at <https://www.friendsofhagerman.com/event-6035394?CalendarViewType=1&SelectedDate=2/20/2025>. Donations are accepted to support this and other events and programs sponsored by the Friends of Hagerman NWR.

**Photo Club Workshop:** Saturday, February 22nd, at 10 am. Workshop: Editing with Lightroom by Nancy Miller. Please join us for the February workshop of the Friends of Hagerman NWR Nature Photography Club. Everyone is welcome to attend—members and non-members, beginners and experienced.

**Editing with Lightroom by Nancy Miller:** Learn how to edit your photos by using the tools and masks. Even if you don't use Lightroom, a lot of these basic tools are available in most of the editing software. I will show you ways to possibly save a photo you might throw away. Keep in mind, this does not apply to a photo that is out of focus.

If you have a photo you would like for Nancy to use as an example, you can email it to her at [n-miller@msn.com](mailto:n-miller@msn.com), and she will be glad to see what can be done. If you plan to attend this workshop, please register by emailing Nancy Miller at [n-miller@msn.com](mailto:n-miller@msn.com).

## Tram Tours every Saturday and Sunday at 2:00pm

Enjoy a 60-90-minute tour along Wildlife Drive at the Refuge. Enjoy learning about the history of the displaced town of Hagerman while watching for wildlife. Lots of stops for birdwatching and photography. Reservations required. Standbys are accepted if space permits. Free and open to the public. Funded by donations. <https://www.friendsofhagerman.com/Tram-Tours>.

**Butterfly Garden Stroll:** Restarting Spring 2025. The garden is free of charge and open to the public from sunrise to sunset every day of the year.



**Annual Meeting:** Save the date to attend the annual meeting of the Friends of Hagerman NWR Foundation. The event will be held on March 16th at 2:00 pm at the Visitor Center. The 2024 Board of Directors will present their activities and accomplishments of the past year, and board members for the next term will be elected. The public is invited to attend, but only current Friends of Hagerman members may vote for board members.

## HIKING TRAILS:

**Hiking Haller's Haven Trail** is a favorite. This 2.7-mile partial loop trail offers a great view of the refuge at the top of an easy hill. Along the way you'll first pass Picnic Pond, then Dead Woman's Pond, which is often teeming with wildlife. This trail is relatively easy.

**Crow Hill Trail** is a ¾ mile, quick, and moderate-level excursion that is shady, short, but a bit steep, offering a fabulous view of the lake.

**Harris Creek Trail** is a great trail for bird lovers. It offers a 0.25 ADA Trail, plus 1.25- and 2.25-mile loops. This is the most popular trail, with several ponds and a photo blind.

As spring break approaches and the weather warms up, Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge has a number of enjoyable and cost-free activities the whole family may take part in. It is an excellent method to reconnect with nature and provides a simple vacation.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

**Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center Greeters:** Meet and greet people from all over the world while giving out information about the refuge and wildlife. Hand out maps and make sales in the Nature Nook. Come and join our team! For more information, please email [friendsofhagerman@gmail.org](mailto:friendsofhagerman@gmail.org).

**Butterfly Garden:** Like digging in your garden? Want to learn about native plants? Come join our Master Naturalists and Gardeners in maintaining the Butterfly Garden. For more information on volunteering, please email [FriendsofHagerman@gmail.org](mailto:FriendsofHagerman@gmail.org) for details.

**Outdoor Crew:** Do you enjoy working outside, mowing, sprucing up hiking trails, trimming and removing brush, and general cleanup? Join the Outdoor Crew at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge. The Outdoor Crew meets on the first Tuesday and fourth Saturday of every month. Please email [friendsofhagerman@gmail.org](mailto:friendsofhagerman@gmail.org) for details and to join our team. Scouts welcome!





# • RUSTIC FURNITURE DEPOT •

Quality Furniture at a Very Affordable Price!



Largest Selection of Rustic In the Metroplex  
Serving the Metroplex since 2002  
Solid Wood Furniture & Quality Construction  
Multiple Beds from \$299 Queen and \$349 King  
Bedroom Sets from \$999 and up  
Table Sets from \$649  
Family Owned



11901 US HWY 380 • Cross Roads, TX 76227

940.440.0455 • rusticfurnituredepot.com

RETAIL / OFFICE SPACE

## FOR SALE



SPACIOUS



CLEAN & MODERN

Offered At  
**\$149,900**

- Amazing retail space in Historic Downtown Ardmore
- In the city center
- Building is currently being utilized as two separate spaces but can easily be changed to one single space
- Seller will entertain a conversation regarding lease with purchase option as well.



Storefront  
or Office



6 West Main, Ste. A  
Ardmore, OK



2025  
Sq. Ft.

**FACADE GRANTS AVAILABLE!**

**CALL 580-630-2272 • 972-658.2033**



# FT. SO-WORTH-IT

by Jodie Linton-Prickett

If your plans are behind schedule, don't worry; spring break and long weekends are coming up. You are well-served in Fort Worth. A short drive away can provide you with a romantic retreat, a long weekend for the kids, a quick day trip, or simply a little alone time.

Despite being one of the biggest cities in the US, Fort Worth has a welcoming and approachable vibe. It strikes a powerful balance between culture and fun, history and modernity, and affordability and luxury.

The vicinity surrounding Sundance Square is one of my favorite places to stay. It's simple to park your car, reserve a room at one of the many hotels, and travel around by foot or public transportation. They provide Molly the Trolley, which is enjoyable, practical, and cost-free. It brings you to the majority of the square's attractions and stops in front of the majority of the local hotels. For just \$4.00 per day or \$2.00 one way, you can take the inexpensive Trinity Metro's Orange Line bus to the Stockyards, the Historic Northside, and other attractions. Ride share companies are plentiful, fast and affordable as well.

The Ft. Worth Cattle Drive, Trinity Trails, the Water Garden, Heritage Trails, the Molly Trolley, and numerous other green areas, parks, and activities are all free, so vacations don't have to be costly.

Over the years we have enjoyed several attractions with our friends and family, including the Ft. Worth Zoo, where my youngest son developed a lifelong adoration for elephants. There are over 500 other species of animals to fall in love with there and hands-on learning experiences as well.

The Ft. Worth Stockyards are a must-see and a great place to bring your out-of-state guests that really want to have a truly Texas experience. Once home to cowboys, cattle barons, and, of course, outlaws, today this historic district still celebrates its heritage, and you can still watch the Fort Worth Herd Cattle Drive twice a day, every day, at 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. for free.

One of my favorite areas in Ft. Worth is the Cultural District home to the Kimbell Art Museum. Its permanent collection boasts some of the greats: Rembrandt, Goya, Monet, Cezanne, Picasso, Velazquez, Bernini, and Matisse, as well as art from all over the world. They have several exhibits each year and events for people of all ages. Throughout the city, there are more than 15 museums covering everything from modern art to aviation, as well as galleries to satisfy every taste.

If you are looking for a romantic weekend, there are several interesting restaurants, clubs, performances, bars, cigar lounges, and my favorite, speakeasies.

Whatever your age, interest, or budget, you can find it in this vibrant city. Although it's only a short drive, the experiences will last a lifetime.







# TEXAS-

Enjoy a daycation with a visit to the tulip field at Texas-Tulips, located at 10656 FM 2931 in Pilot Point, Texas. Depending on the weather, you can begin picking tulips in the middle or end of February and continue picking until the end of March or the beginning of April. Follow Texas-Tulips on social media or visit their website for up-to-date information.

There are roughly 100 different types of tulips available overall (early, mid, and late-flowering varieties). Throughout the picking season, varieties become available at different times. Texas-Tulips has an enormous selection of hues and forms, so there is something for everyone. Plan to fall head over heels in love with these gorgeous tulips because they are just too good to resist!



## HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

- On the field, there is a picking basket that you can use to gather your tulips to purchase.
- Create your own gorgeous bouquet of tulips by selecting the ones you wish to buy.
- Bring your tulips to the stand, and they will wrap them up for you in lovely tissue paper and apply a special gel to the stems to keep them fresh until you can bring them home or take them to your next appointment.
- The gel will keep your tulips fresh for the duration of the day, so take them home or enjoy the rest!



## STYLING ADVICE

The tulips remain fresh throughout the day, thanks to the gel. After relocating your tulips, give them a quick rinse and submerge them in water. When decorating your home, use your favorite vase. Alternatively, use a bucket to arrange your tulip flowers to display outside on your porch or terrace. Just make sure it's somewhere you can enjoy them!

Fresh tulips, which are available in an array of colors, have an unparalleled springtime feel. Texas-Tulips offer an amazing selection of tulip varieties, some of which are as follows: fringed, parrot-shaped, striped tulips, Texas Gold, Texas Flame, and American Dream.

## PICKING TULIPS

What could be better than walking in a field with thousands of tulips and the people you love?

Imagine your children picking tulips for you and your partner, or for their grandparents. Come visit Texas-Tulips and make memories that will last a lifetime! Or perhaps you just want to treat yourself to a bouquet of tulips and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

Nothing expresses "I love you" more than a stunning bouquet of tulips from Texas-Tulips! They're thoughtful and wonderful gifts for all the people you care about. All your beautiful tulips will be wrapped with love and covered with a special gel to preserve them for as long as possible.



# TULIPS



## CREATE BEAUTIFUL PICTURES AND WELCOME IN THE SPRING SEASON!

Our expansive property offers a wealth of chances for stunning landscape and portrait photography. It's time to visit Texas-Tulips as soon as spring arrives! Capture stunning, one-of-a-kind photos amid our magnificent tulip varieties. It would be hard to find better pictures anywhere in Texas. The tulips dance in the sunlight as the sun rises over the undulating hills of Texas; row by row, they open up to reflect the brilliant rays of the early morning sun. Many different types of unusual tulips change dramatically in color as the sun rises to its zenith, offering new photo opportunities.

You can use the natural illumination angle to hone your photography skills. Alternatively, take some beautiful and treasured pictures to share these fleeting moments with loved ones. Feel free to share these happy memories on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook, #Texas-Tulips!

## HAY MAZE FOR THE KIDS

Texas-Tulips even offers a hay maze set up for your little ones, who might not be quite ready to pick tulips. Children can explore and learn through play in this maze while taking in the fresh air. This allows you some time to enjoy some tranquility while you explore the tulips.



## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

### Operating Hours / Entrance Fee

- Entrance fee: \$7/person,
- Veterans discount entrance fee: \$10.00/person (includes three tulips) (only during the week on business days)
- Seniors discount entrance+tulips fee: \$10.00/person (includes three tulips) (only during the week on business days)
- Field trips/ large group pricing entrance fee: \$10.00/person (includes three tulips) (only during the week on business days)
- Free entrance for children 12 months and under
- Operating hours: Monday – Sunday, 7 days a week, 10.00am – 8.00pm
- Free parking
- Concessions available (snacks, chips, candy and sodas)
- Professional photographers do not need to make appointments. A day pass will be provided for you when you pay the 25 dollar entrance fee.
- We hold the right to change entrance fees at all times
- Enter at your own risk

### U-Pick

- U-pick, \$3.00/stem (tulip flowers will be wrapped in pretty paper and stems will be put in flower gel)
- Picking baskets available on the field

### The Field

- There are picnic tables and restrooms
- Dogs are not allowed in our field or in the parking lot/car (for service dogs, please call us)
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the field conditions
- Wheelchairs are only possible when the weather conditions are good. And always under guidance of someone.
- No drones allowed
- Enter at your own risk

# MAGNIFICENT ETEORA

## MONASTERIES SUSPENDED IN THE CLOUDS

*by Jodie Linton-Prickett*

I was enthralled with the beauty and felt thankful for everything as I gazed out over Meteora's magnificent landscape. Somehow, I felt like I was suspended between two realms, gazing at the otherworldly landscape while surrounded by a serene, peaceful atmosphere. Like a youngster witnessing something for the first time, drinking in the energy and digesting the feeling of awe and wonder, it was truly a memorable experience.

The word *Meteoro* in the Greek vocabulary translates into something that remains suspended in midair or a thing that floats in the sky. Perhaps that is what drew the hermits originally to the area. Solitude, closeness to God, and safety.

Meteora is a magnificent fusion of spirituality and the natural world. On my visit, the air was filled with a fine mist, and the enchanted, needle-like rock formations erupting out of the ground were contrasted by the soft fog partially obscuring them. Undoubtedly, I had entered a magnificent snow globe environment, enhanced by rocks covered in long-growing lichens and lush green moss, which was a fascinating juxtaposition to the glistening snow that continued to blanket the area.

The extraordinarily perched monasteries scattered across the peaks of the vertical rock formations enhanced the already wonderful environment and created an incredibly stunning sight. Without divine assistance, it is nearly hard to believe that ordinary people could have created such marvels.

Monks and hermits built the monasteries to be closer to God. The first small chapel was constructed in 1160 AD by hermits that lived in naturally formed caves. On Sundays they would come down to worship, enjoy fellowship, and gather supplies. Then retreat back to their solitary caves. It wasn't until the 14th century that the first monks arrived and built 24 Eastern Orthodox monasteries between the 14th and 16th centuries.

Today six of them are still in use and can be visited, including the Monastery of Great Meteoron, Roussanou/St. Barbara, Varlaam, St. Stephens, St. Nicholas Anapausas, and the Monastery of the Holy Trinity. During our visit we viewed all six of them but entered Roussanou/St. Barbara, St. Nicholas Anapausas, and St. Stephens. The monasteries are all part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the region is part of the Natura 2000 Ecological Zone.

The monasteries were relatively unknown until the area was featured in the 1981 James Bond movie "For Your Eyes Only" and then in the 2014 hit "300: Rise of an Empire. But if you think it looks recently familiar, it was featured in "The Game of Thrones" as the kingdom of Dorne.

Prepare to be amazed by the vibrant frescoes that adorn the churches' interior walls as you enter. Spend some time appreciating the beautiful intricacies, some of which are the finest examples of Greek post-Byzantine art.

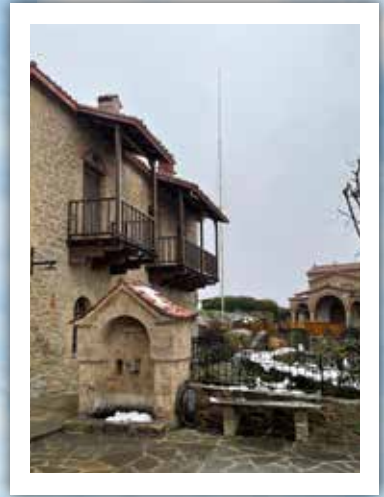
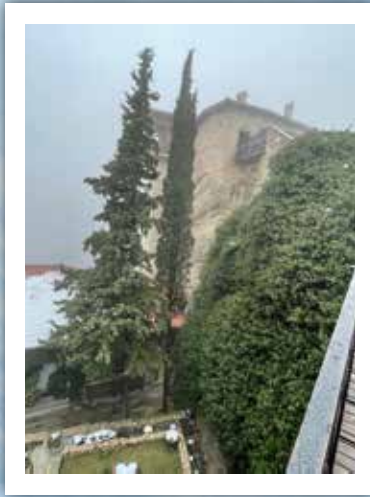
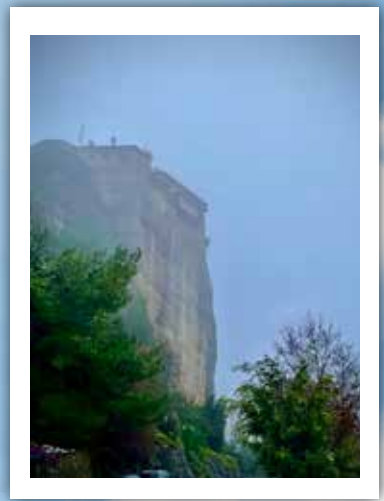
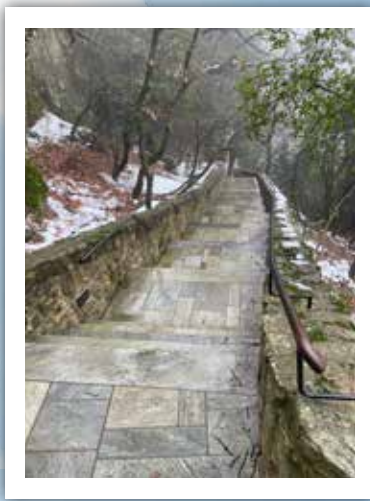
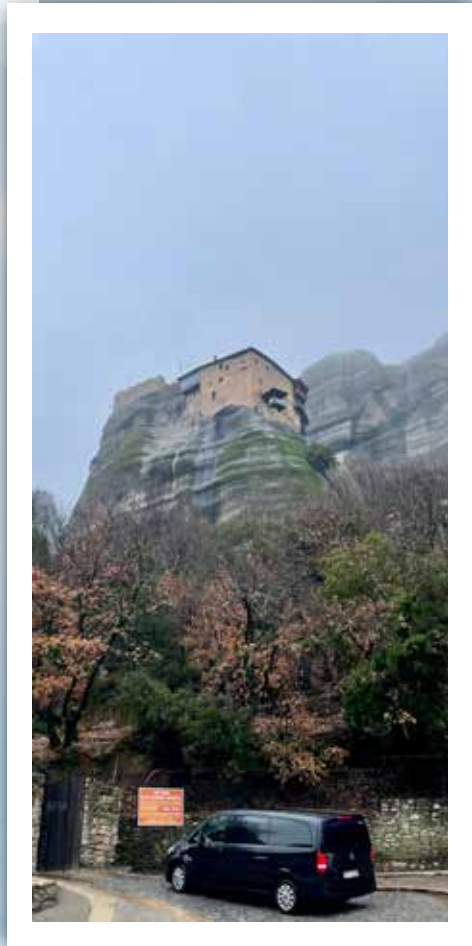
When you visit, wear sturdy walking shoes, and be prepared to climb between 150 and 300 steps per monastery. There are several inclines along the way as well. Once you enter the monastery, be prepared for even more stairs. There are no elevators or any type of easy access for disabled people or people with limited mobility.

The weather can vary due to the altitude, so layers are recommended. Women must wear skirts and cover their shoulders. I wore a skirt, but it was easy to borrow or rent skirts before entering. Men are not allowed to enter wearing shorts or exposing their calves or sleeveless shirts, so dress appropriately. Each monastery cost €5.00 to enter and needed to be paid for in cash. They do not allow photography inside the monasteries, but you can purchase books with images in the small gift shops.

While there are several ways to get to Meteora, we chose a tour from Athens. It was the most straightforward way for us and met our needs the best. Be prepared for a long day. The bus ride is four hours in each direction. We left around 7:00 in the morning and arrived back at our drop-off point around 10:30 that evening. A rustic but delicious lunch was included, as well as all transportation. Our tour guide was very knowledgeable and was able to answer all of our questions.

You should consider visiting Meteora if you want to experience adventure, spiritual awakening, a return to nature, a demonstration of human perseverance, architectural wonder, or any combination of these. It is enthralling, fulfilling, and breathtaking. Meteora itself is a place that insists that we remain enthralled and alive with everything we look at and appreciate.





*The miracle of Greece*

# Denton County AgriLife Extension Celebrates a Successful 2024

by Steven Baringer



## Growth, Education, & Volunteer Impact Shine Across Programs

In 2024, Denton County AgriLife Extension continued to make a profound impact on the community, showcasing remarkable growth, successful programs, and exceptional volunteer contributions. With over one million residents in the county, AgriLife Extension's dedicated staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to reach as many individuals as possible, leaving a lasting mark on the lives of youth, families, and agricultural producers.

## 4-H Program: Empowering the Leaders of Tomorrow

Denton County 4-H grew to 372 members and 82 volunteers across 10 active clubs this year. Representing the county year-round, 4-H youth excelled in livestock competitions and developed skills in Food & Nutrition, STEM, and more. Through strong partnerships with local schools and volunteers, nearly 14,000 students were impacted, learning essential skills in agriculture, horticulture, food preparation, and nutrition.

The dedication of 4-H members, staff, and volunteers exemplifies the organization's motto: To Make the Best Better.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources: Educating Traditional and New Producers

The Agriculture and Natural Resources department engaged a diverse audience this year, from seasoned agricultural producers to first-time landowners. A key highlight was the 2024 **Small and New Landowner Conference**, which attracted 87 participants eager to learn about government agency partnerships, cottage food law, and North Texas land trends.

The department also achieved record participation at the 2024 **Hay Clinic**,

where more hay samples were tested than ever before. Additional Continuing Education Unit (CEU) programs included Feral Hog Control, Wheat Field Day, quarterly private applicator training, and the annual CEU Recertification event—helping landowners safely and effectively use pesticides.

## Better Living for Texans (BLT): Promoting Health and Nutrition

The BLT program, designed for SNAP-eligible adults and children, empowered participants to make healthier choices while maximizing resources.

- The **Walk N Talk** program, hosted at Flower Mound and Pilot Point Libraries, graduated 38 participants who learned about physical activity and better eating habits.
- The **Learn, Grow, Eat, and Go** program, in partnership with Lake Dallas and W.S. Ryan Elementary, taught 38 students gardening skills and healthy eating practices.
- The **Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities Garden Course**, hosted with Emily Fowler and Little Elm Libraries, trained 55 participants on essential gardening techniques.

## Family and Community Health: Supporting Wellness Across Denton County

The Family and Community Health unit welcomed 3 new Master Wellness Volunteers in 2024, bringing the active total to 6. Together, these volunteers logged 110 hours, delivering 34 nutrition education programs to 375 residents—a contribution valued at \$3,684.

Key achievements include:

- **Walk Across Texas!**: In partnership with Denton County HR, 192 employees collectively walked 30,417 miles in just 8 weeks.
- **A Matter of Balance**: Three series were held at THRIVE and Flower

Mound Senior Center, helping 30 seniors improve balance, flexibility, and prevent falls.

- Two **Home Food Preservation Workshops** focused on water bath canning for 16 participants, with plans to expand into pressure canning in 2025.

## Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists: Volunteers Drive Impact

The Denton County Master Gardener and Master Naturalist programs reached incredible milestones in 2024. Combined, volunteers contributed over 59,000 hours of service—with Master Gardeners logging 31,000 hours and Master Naturalists 28,000. These programs reached 19,866 residents, including 6,880 contacts by Master Gardeners and 12,986 by Master Naturalists.

Recruiting and training new volunteers remains central to both organizations. Nearly 80 citizens completed rigorous 12-week intern training to become Master Volunteers, strengthening outreach and education across Denton County.

## Recognizing Volunteer Contributions

In total, Denton County AgriLife volunteers contributed 76,707 hours of service in 2024. When valued at the Independent Sector's rate of \$33.49 per hour, this equates to an astounding \$2,568,917.43 given back to the community.

Volunteer groups included:

- Master Gardeners
- Master Naturalists
- Master Wellness Volunteers
- Denton County Ag Committee
- Family and Community Health Committee
- 4-H Leaders





## 380 Family Dentistry

*Going the Extra Mile for Your Family's Smile.*

# 972-203-6977

## FREE Teeth Whitening\*

**\$199 Value!**

\*Take home kit with complete exam, x-rays and cleaning. New patients only. Coupon must be presented at time of service. Not valid with any other offer.

## FREE Initial Exam and X-Rays\*

**\$207 Value!**

\*New Patients only. Not valid with any other offer. Coupon must be presented at time of service.

*Most Insurances Accepted*

*Zero % Interest & No Credit Check Financing*

*Open Tuesday through Friday 7 am to 4 pm*

*Monday & Saturday by appointment only*



1361 E University Dr., Suite 10  
Prosper Texas 75078  
[www.380dental.com](http://www.380dental.com)

# Little Elm Eye Care, P.A.

*Diagnosis & Treatment of Eye Disease  
and Vision Disorders*



**Leslie Bubela, O.D.**

**Bert Bubela, O.D.**

**THERAPEUTIC OPTOMETRISTS  
OPTOMETRIC GLAUCOMA SPECIALISTS**

# 972-292-0900

1200 E. Eldorado Pkwy, Suite 100  
Little Elm, TX 75068

[www.littleelmeyecare.com](http://www.littleelmeyecare.com)

## Red Hot Fire Shop

Fireplaces & Accessories

**Creating Lasting Impressions**  
Indoor and Outdoor Fireplaces, Kitchens, Pizza Ovens



1212 West Sherman Drive, Aubrey, TX  
940.365.3675 [aubreybrick.com](http://aubreybrick.com)



# Kascie Blough Selected as First Principal of Hill Elementary

Articles and Photo Provided by Denton ISD



Denton ISD has selected Kascie Blough as the first principal of Hill Elementary School, which is slated to open August 2025 in the Braswell High School attendance zone.

Ms. Blough has most recently served as the assistant principal of Ashley Elementary in Frisco ISD since 2020. She has more than a decade of experience in education and will assume her role at Hill Elementary after Spring Break.

"Opening a new school in my community, one that will serve my neighborhood and my own children, is a dream come true," Ms. Blough said. "I will work tirelessly to build a learning community that finds joy and discovery every day. The opportunity to cultivate excitement from the first day we open is amazing."

Hill Elementary will be the 27th elementary school in Denton ISD and was funded from the 2023 capital improvement plan that was approved by district voters. The school is named for Fred Hill, who was the first African American male to serve on the Denton ISD Board of School Trustees.

Ms. Blough began her career in 2013 as a teacher in Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD. From 2014-2020, Ms. Blough was a teacher in Frisco ISD. She has spent the last 12 years in Frisco ISD, and she was the Teacher of the Year in 2020.

While a teacher in Frisco ISD, Ms. Blough wrote, developed and implemented International Baccalaureate curriculum. In addition, she also led initiative-focused committees aimed at enhancing student experience, performance and community involvement.

As the assistant principal at Ashley Elementary, Ms. Blough developed and oversaw the campus' safety and security plan. She also developed and implemented a first year and new-to-campus teachers mentoring program ensured at successful transitions into new positions.

Ms. Blough received her bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary students from the University of North Texas. She later received her master's degree in educational leadership from the University of North Texas.

Ms. Blough lives in Oak Point with her husband, Daniel. They have two children – a 3-year-old daughter, Eleanor, and a 1-year-old son, Walker.

"We are extremely excited to have Ms. Blough join our team as the first principal of Hill Elementary," said Dr. Jeff Russell, Area Superintendent of the Braswell High School zone.

"Ms. Blough's leadership and instructional acumen will be a tremendous asset for the future students, families and staff at Hill Elementary."

## DENTON ISD GETS CONNECTED

### Denton ISD Receives \$9 Million Grant to Provide Devices to Students with Limited Connectivity

Denton ISD was one of only two public school systems in the United States to receive a multi-million-dollar grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

The \$9,027,400 grant will provide students with limited or no internet connectivity access to devices with internet access. In addition, these devices will also include browsing security protections, similar to those on the district network.

"I am very proud of the work that the Technology Department, in collaboration with the Grants Department, has done to pursue this opportunity," said Robert Pierce, Chief Technology Officer. "One of my top priorities is equity – I want all students to have the same technology-based opportunities, and this grant is a tremendous way to help us achieve that goal."

Denton ISD was one of only 24 entities from across the United States to receive the grant, and the district was one of only eight educational organizations to be awarded. This funding comes from the \$1.25 billion Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

"Our partnership with NTIA aligns with our district's commitment to equitable opportunities for all students and helping to prepare them for success in higher education, workforce readiness or military service," said Dr. Susannah Holbert O'Bara, superintendent of schools. "While the addition of these funds will not defray any of our current budget deficit, they will ensure a safe and reliable learning environment for students who may not have had access to digital learning and resources previously."

**Hello Spring!**  
Come get everything from your spring outfits to your garden seeds...  
We have it all at Pilot Point Feed!

More than just a feed store!

SHOP LOCAL @

PILOT POINT PPF FEED

1156 N. Hwy. 377, Pilot Point, TX 76258  
PPFEED.net (940) 686-3333



# The 380 Corridor Expert

## SPRING 2025: To Sell or Not To Sell

As the weather heats up, so does the real estate market along the 380 corridor. Deciding whether to sell your house involves financial, emotional, physical, and even spiritual considerations. The most important step is staying informed.

As we enter the spring selling season, you'll notice increased activity from both buyers and sellers. Two key factors shaping our market are affordability and inventory.

Currently, inventory is at an all-time high in our marketplace due to a record number of homes available. With more options for buyers than ever before, it's critical to get your real estate listing right.

In neighborhoods like Paloma Creek and Providence Village, the absorption rate, or "days on market," exceeds six months. While this doesn't guarantee your home will take that long to sell, the competition is significant. With both new construction and pre-existing homes available, buyers have plenty of choices in 2025.

New construction homes attract buyers with perks like lower interest rates from builder buy-downs and closing cost assistance. To compete, home sellers must focus on showcasing the value and unique features of their property.

Every home and area is different, but offering a great experience for potential buyers is key. As we move through 2025, inventory levels and interest rates will continue shaping home prices. Selling sooner rather than later may be wise, depending on your situation.

Working with a local expert is essential. Our team goes beyond the standard realtor process. We offer a 90-point marketing plan and help prepare your home for sale through our bulk trash trailer service. Need repairs? Our partnership with JH Repair and Remodeling ensures your home is ready quickly and affordably with subcontractor pricing.

If you're considering selling, we'd love to help you navigate the process and maximize your home's value. Contact us today!



**24/7 Home Buying  
& Selling Assistance**

**Free Home Valuation Report**

**Experts in Little Elm, Aubrey,  
Cross Roads and all of D/FW**

**Justin Henry  
Real Estate  
Advisors, LLC**

**972-757-6273**

justin@justinhenryhomes.com

26875 US Hwy 380 # 112

Aubrey, TX, 76227, United States

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSSEDDM

Local Postal Customer

PRSR.T. STD.  
ECRWSS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUBREY, TX  
PERMIT NO. 6

ECRWSS



# PREMIER CREDIT CARD\*



AS LOW AS  
**11.99%**  
Annual  
Percentage  
Rate

**4.99%**

APR for 9 Months on  
Balance Transfers, after  
which the 11.99%  
APR (or prevailing  
rate at the time)  
will apply

Apply today to find out why  
It's not just banking.



200 S Hwy 377, Pilot Point plus 8 other convenient locations  
(940) 686 - 7000 (972) 434 - 3200

To compare the features of all our cards: Visit [www.pointbank.com/creditcards](http://www.pointbank.com/creditcards)

\*Subject to credit approval. Terms and Conditions are subject to change. The APR is accurate as of 01/27/2025



AS SEEN IN  
**Fortune | Forbes**

