Meet Reveille IX, the highest-ranking member of the Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets. But she’s not a student. She’s a collie, and she’s Texas A&M’s mascot.

Reveille IX became the mascot in 2015. The role dates back to 1931, when the first Reveille became the school’s mascot, establishing one of the most admired — and adorable — school traditions in the country.

The mascot is always cared for by a sophomore cadet — a mascot corporal — who takes the dog everywhere he or she goes, including to class. There is even a tradition that states if Reveille barks at any point during class, the rest of that class is canceled for the day.

The biggest appeal of cities is simply that there are an infinite number of activity options. From restaurants and farmers markets to parks and concerts, you can fill every moment of your vacation with something exciting. On the other hand, when you want a relaxing afternoon with nothing on the calendar, aimlessly walking the streets is a joy in its own right.

An Outdoor Escape
On the other end of the spectrum, a nature-focused getaway can be just as exciting. Whether you have a family full of thrill-seekers or bird-watchers, there’s nothing like spending time in the great outdoors.

There’s nothing wrong with an all-inclusive trip to a resort for the sole purpose of unwinding, but a vacation can be much more than leisure. The next time you plan a family trip, consider these options tailor-made to delight teens and adults alike.

There is no shortage of vacation options tailored to families with young children, but what happens when your kids reach high school and college? You might think that vacationing with older kids is more hassle than it’s worth. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, an entire new world of vacation possibilities opens up once your children hit their teenage years. Dragging a 4-year-old through a national park tour might be a headache, but doing the same with a 14-year-old can be fun. The best part of vacationing with older children is that it’s a lot easier to pick a destination that appeals to the entire family.

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An Urban Adventure
If you’re the type of family that enjoys an activity-centric vacation, a major city is the perfect destination for you. Trips to cities offer a lot more flexibility and personalization than one-size-fits-all cruises or resorts.

Mom and one child may want to spend time at a museum while Dad and another child catch a baseball game. Cities allow you to account for a variety of interests rather than forcing everyone to spend all their time together.

Visiting a city also cuts down on the aspects of traveling that most people detest. With robust public transportation and the explosion of ride-sharing services like Uber, you won’t need to rent a car. You’re also far less likely to encounter the fifth-day fatigue that sets in when you’re stuck at a resort and run out of things to do.

On the other end of the spectrum, a nature-focused getaway can be just as exciting. Whether you have a family full of thrill-seekers or bird-watchers, there’s nothing like spending time in the great outdoors.

Ask anybody for their bucket-list sights, and you’ll likely hear about the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone National Park. Why wait to knock these breathtaking, one-of-a-kind destinations off your list? You may have been hesitant to bring a small child on a trip into the wild, but there’s no excuse not to once your kids hit their teens.

As with city travel, you can craft the perfect outdoor vacation for your family. Some people may prefer settling down in a comfy cabin, cooking dinner every evening. Others might want to rent an RV and visit as many parks as they can. You can also calibrate the adrenaline level to fit your family members, and whether that entails peaceful walks or whitewater rapids is entirely up to you.

Another draw for teens is the fact that everyone in their class has posted a selfie at a beach on Instagram, but hardly any will have one in front a geyser!

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After spending a winter cooped up inside with your family, there might be a little tension between everyone. Fortunately, it’s spring, and the warm weather, melting snow, and blooming flowers offer a good way to ease restlessness. This season, why not bring your family closer together by starting a family garden?

**A LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

Nearly every step in the gardening process can be a learning experience for kids and parents alike. Begin by discussing where you should start and why, what supplies you’ll need, and the types of plants you want to grow. Gardening also offers opportunities to learn about science, ecology, and nutrition.

**COLLABORATION**

Gardening gives your family a chance to collaborate. When you’re stuck inside for long periods, you may be spending time together, but it’s usually not quality time. Working in a group to create and maintain a garden is a hands-on experience for everyone. It’s a chance to get the whole family involved with a single project, and you can literally share the fruits of your labor.

**DECIDING ON PLANTS**

When it comes to deciding which plants you want in your garden, there are many variables to consider. Do you want to grow edible plants, ones that have magnificent blossoms, or ones that are easy to care for? Flowers are a good start if you want a plant that grows a little faster; plus, they lend a pop of color to your garden. Growing vegetables is also rewarding, as the kids will take great pleasure in eating what they’ve grown. Other possibilities include sunflowers, blackberries, peas, and lettuce. You might be surprised at how willingly children eat their greens when they’ve had a hand in growing them.

Family gardens can bring something new and fresh to your home. So, get outside, enjoy the sun, and discover the joys of plants and gardening.

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**PASTA WITH TURKEY AND BROCCOLI**

This simple, delicious recipe only takes 20 minutes from start to finish. It’s also a good way to encourage kids to eat their broccoli. The next time you make pasta, leave the canned sauce in the pantry and make this instead!

### INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 pound pasta (shells or orecchiette)
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound ground turkey
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- Salt
- Parmesan cheese

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook the pasta according to package directions. Add broccoli when pasta is 1 minute from done. Drain both and return to pot.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the turkey, garlic, crushed red pepper, and a pinch of salt. Cook while breaking up meat with a wooden spoon for 3–5 minutes.
3. Combine turkey with pasta and broccoli mixture, adding the remaining olive oil as you stir. Serve in bowls topped with Parmesan cheese.

(Recipe inspired by recipes.com)

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**EYES ON YOU**

The Insurance Company and Your Social Media Accounts

Social media has become one of the most popular ways to communicate with loved ones and friends. It’s how a lot of people keep up to date and informed. However, much of what you and others share on social media is readily available to the public. Depending on your account settings, virtually anyone can search for you and find your posts, including attorneys and insurance companies.

We generally advise our clients to stay off social media following their accident — no exceptions. This keeps the opposing side from monitoring your personal life and using publicly posted information against you. For example, if you’re in a wreck and claim injuries one week, then post pictures from the beach the next, this becomes evidence the insurance company will use against your claim. The reality of your condition outside of the moment the photo was taken won’t be accounted for.

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**TESTIMONIALS**

Don’t Just Take Our Word for It

“I highly recommend services with this law firm. They helped me with medical, rental, getting back what I deserve, and more. They won’t stop fighting until you get what you deserve.”

— Andrea M.

“Excellent, outstanding, and on top of the legal profession! I cannot say enough about the Herrman & Herrman Law Firm. I would highly recommend them to any family and friends that have been injured and need a lawyer. The lawyers are very accessible and walk you through every step of the legal process.”

— William L.

“I had a good experience dealing with Herrman & Herrman. Will and Gayle helped me through the process and were very nice and patient with me. I would refer my friends and family over to Herrman & Herrman.”

— Savannah L.

“Great injury lawyers! I appreciate everything they did for me and my kids. I highly recommend them to anyone needing an injury lawyer.”

— Marilyn S.

“You thank you, Herrman & Herrman, for all the help with my accident. Mr. Staha, Naomi, and Kell took good care of me and handled my case excellently. Very helpful and personal. They helped a lot and were there to answer any questions I had. I would always recommend my family and friends to this firm.”

— Sammy L.

(Graphics purchased from www.canstockphoto.com)