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| Blueberry | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Cherry | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Orange | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Peach | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Raspberry | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Strawberry | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Vanilla | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
| Yeast | 1/2 dozen | 1/2 dozen |
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MEAT KOLACHES

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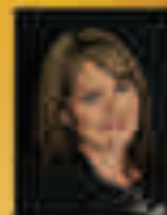
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Publisher, Connie Poirier

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they've created together.

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 875-3299 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.



Editor's Note

Happy Thanksgiving!

I can already smell the turkey roasting, the green beans simmering and the pumpkin pies resting on a cooling rack. I know, the pie will be considered cheating based on my new eating habits, but I don't care. I hope I can stop with one piece and not gobble up the whole pie! Easton's 5th birthday falls on Thanksgiving Eve, so I will *have* to eat another scrumptious slice of sugary goodness. You

wouldn't want me to disappoint the little guy, would you?

Once the gatherings are complete, it will be time for me to work off all the "extras" I devoured. As I begin the process of Christmas decorating, I will make numerous trips up and down the attic steps. I'll drag the big tree to the living room, while the smaller trees will take their places in other rooms throughout the house. I will lose my patience more than once, but by Sunday night, I will be sitting on my heating pad enjoying what I've, once again, been able to accomplish.

Let the decorating begin!

Sandra

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— By Virginia Riddle

November marks the final push for the special warmth that's about to spread across Ennis during the month of December. No, it's not the memory of hot days from the summer gone by — it's the warmth of the community spirit that comes together to bring the special moments of the Lights of Ennis to people, young and old alike. "Throughout every weekend in December, people will come to downtown Ennis and Minnie McDowal Park to experience all the events," said Amelia Valdez, Lights of Ennis president and board member.

Last year's event brought over 10,000 folks to the Lights of Ennis events. "There are so many special times planned," Amelia said. "Every one of them is another opportunity for great memories to be made, especially for the kids."

Nora Puckett, another board member, echoes those sentiments. "Seeing Santa in the parade and getting their photos made with him lights up kids' faces. He's such a Christmas classic," Nora shared. "The kids also love all the lights in the trees because they're really cool."

Crowd pleasers include the block party and parade, with food trucks available to satisfy every hunger and thirst. Church and school carolers and musical groups provide entertainment throughout the evening hours, and there are plenty of photo opportunities with Santa and Mrs. Claus, the Grinch, the Elf on the Shelf and Shrek. Kids enjoy crafting special Christmas treasures. "Last year, we offered

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Kline McCarty, Meg Sullivan and Amelia Valdez help make special times possible through the Lights of Ennis.

four different crafts, from clay to twigs, to about 200 kids. Parents sat down with their kids and spent awhile to create," Nora recalled. "Families were so excited!"

"People come and stroll our downtown streets the whole evening," Becky McCarty, another Lights of Ennis board member, stated.

Other events spread throughout the month are the New Hope Christmas Celebration, a car show and toy drive and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Procession from downtown to St. John Nepomucene Church. The procession is another full night of fun, including food trucks, dancers and musical groups.

Friendly competitions include the popular downtown merchant holiday window display, the home decorating contests and art contests. "The merchants, nonprofits and even some individuals really step up in a big way, as well as whole neighborhoods," Nora said. "Over 1,200 people cast ballots last year for their favorite decorations. Our contests are very competitive, and the results are beautiful."

The focal points of all these events, however, are the millions of lights that create the spectacular display of "mega trees" — one that reaches 50 feet in the air and the downtown lights that sparkle from the many smaller trees, as well as the lit 12 Days of Christmas boards. "The brains behind the three huge pixelated trees wishes to remain anonymous," Becky admitted, "but I can tell you he works on the display all year. I can personally vouch for that!"

"Kids who are part of the 12 Days of Christmas displays change in looks from one year to the next, so they return to take updated photos each year," Nora said.

Founded 17 years ago by Harriet Adams, some of those "kids" are now grown, with their own children who have lights in their eyes when they meet Santa and experience this wonderland of lights. Three years ago, with Harriet's blessings, the Lights of Ennis

board was formed and the festival became a nonprofit charitable organization. Amelia has served as president all three years. "Everyone is really dedicated to bringing this celebration back every year," she said. "We each take a function and the job just gets done. Dr. Meg Sullivan, another committed board member, knew what she was doing when she put us together to make this all happen. She is also instrumental in fundraising for the month-long event." Other volunteers include Linda Calvert (block party and photos with characters), Dennis Zembela (advisor and 12 Days of Christmas), Marty Nelson (advisor supreme with every component), Jeanette Patak (parade), Gina Rokas (promotions and wherever-is-needed person) and Stephanie Reese (block party and pageants). Amelia and Becky line up musical groups and are always on hand to help anywhere a need arises.

"Harriet got us to the point where the Lights of Ennis was three years ago. She was in charge of everything and was very persuasive in hiring contractors to help," Amelia said.


"We saw the vision of what the Lights of Ennis could become with more help," Becky added.

"We thought this would be a real challenge because we have been expanding and adding something more every year, but everyone has stepped in to help," Amelia said. "One year, Becky climbed a tree in 20-degree temperatures to put up decorations. Gina and I were below and were afraid she would fall. Becky will do anything for Lights of Ennis. We all are dedicated."

Planning for the next year's celebration begins right after the decorations are taken down and stored, and doesn't come to a stop until the first Thursday following Thanksgiving. "This is really an all-year-long process because we have a wrap-up following each festival," Becky explained. "We work on it gradually from then on but really get into gear in September, and we work diligently throughout the month of November to finalize everything we have planned."



The Lights of Ennis provides magical times for families.



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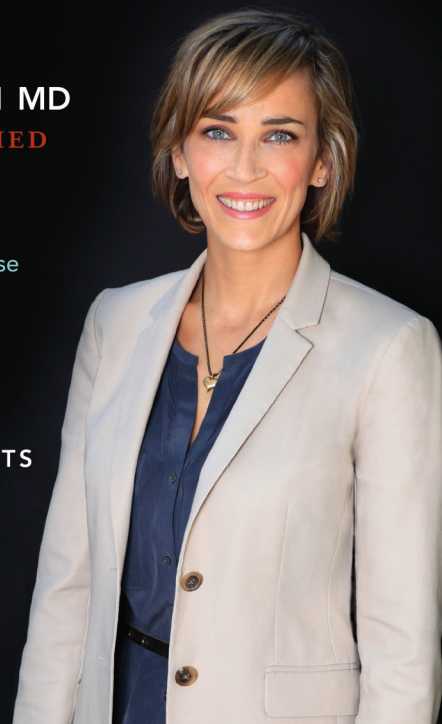
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The volunteers are busy with their professional, family and community lives that occupy their time beyond the time spent on Lights of Ennis. Meg is a cardiologist, Amelia is a Realtor, Becky is Ennis' Main Street coordinator and Nora works in her husband's medical practice and is involved in numerous other civic projects. "Working on Lights of Ennis is very time-consuming, but we all want to see this community enjoy Christmas in this very special way," Amelia admitted.

"We've learned to do our personal Christmas shopping early because none of us can get much of that done during December at the last minute," Becky explained. "The festival gives Ennis a very 'Norman Rockwell,' small-town feel where families really enjoy coming together. It's very magical."

Former residents come back home and bring their children, and many times, their children's children. "Ennis is a place for all kids. Meg's kids and my kids just started talking and playing and are friends," Nora said. "Other groups, like the local garden club and school PTOs, may have a different interpretation of the theme, but everything relates to the Lights of Ennis."

The economic impact on the community is a positive by-product. "Restaurants, retail and motels are very active," Becky added.

Lights of Ennis events, all open to the public during the weekends of December, are free of charge. "Only acts of God will keep this celebration from happening," Amelia stated. "Weather is always a concern."

"Our business sector and community have grown to expect this traditional celebration," Nora said. "It's a chance for all of us to give back and draw together as a community. With this celebration, we can hope for anything."

"It's always been our hope, as a committee," Becky said, "that Lights of Ennis makes people realize Ennis is an awesome place to be." **NOW**

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Cool, crisp fall days bring Texas' hunting season into full swing. It's a much anticipated time. After all, getting one's first deer is a rite of passage kids remember, including Ellis County's Texas Game Warden Jeff Powell. "I grew up in the outdoors, hunting and fishing with my dad and brother. My dad loved that life so much," Warden Powell recalled.

While citing his dad as his first mentor, Warden Powell remembers being about 10 years old and observing a game warden in action for the first time. "That meeting left an impression on me and my

— By Virginia Riddle

tion

brother. Later, after college, I introduced myself to our local game warden, who allowed me to come on ride-a-longs for several years and observe. I learned a lot from him and became hooked. I knew I wouldn't be happy unless I was doing this job," Warden Powell said.

But becoming a Texas game warden isn't easy. Less than 10 percent of applicants are accepted each year into the Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden Training Center located in Hamilton County. All applicants must have a bachelor's degree — a unique requirement since a degree isn't required to become a commissioned officer for other types of law enforcement. Playing football on a scholarship helped pay Warden Powell's way through Northwestern State University in Louisiana. Even with a degree in wildlife management, Warden Powell applied several times before he was hired into the game warden training center. "I worked on a GM assembly line many years before I was hired," he recalled. Perseverance is

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an attribute that comes in handy. "I once received information from a source about a group of hunters who were illegally hunting deer at night. I sat and waited for seven nights straight until I caught that group who poached and killed a deer the last night!" Warden Powell stated.

Since 1895, when Texas game wardens were first commissioned as state police, they have earned reputations as can-do men and women. Their training is intense. New Texas game wardens become part of one of the best-trained corps of conservation officers in the United States. "Our training is longer than any other and lasts almost eight months. We have to learn what all police officers learn, and on top of that, the parks and wildlife code, hunting and fishing laws, intensive swim training, boat operations, search and rescue and so much more. Having integrity, facing adversity and being able to work without set hours and direction are important attributes game wardens have," Warden Powell stated.

Border patrol duties are also a part of the job description, so Warden Powell, who has been Ellis County's game warden for 13 years, periodically spends time in South Texas. "We have boats where we patrol the Rio Grande River, but we also work in the rural areas where illegal aliens and drug crossings occur. There are lots of kids who are coming over by themselves. They hop on top of trains from Central America to Mexico to get here. Some don't make it across the river. We also have to watch out for drug cartel members who are bringing illegal drugs over. It can become very dangerous," Warden Powell stated.

Texas game wardens serve at the direction of the governor, and their duties include enforcing all state laws, with an emphasis on hunting, fishing and water safety regulations. Game



wardens are fully commissioned police officers who also work with other law enforcement agencies. Texas, with its diverse terrain, is challenging, and game wardens are able to handle any situation involving any of those ecosystems. "We log hundreds of hours of boat patrol in the spring and summer throughout all bodies of waters in the state, including the Gulf of Mexico, enforcing our fisheries. We're the primary agency that works drownings on state lakes and rivers. We have specialized sonar on our boats to help locate drowning victims much faster, and we have specialized teams, such as our dive team, that assist. His work can be dangerous since game wardens are often working alone and back up by fellow officers from other agencies can be as far as 20-30 minutes away, in some remote locations.

Beginning in 2015, Warden Powell has been followed on the job by a film crew from Animal Planet's popular show, *Lone Star Law*. "I wanted to represent the over 500 game wardens around the state. The show isn't about me but what we all do as game wardens. This is a docuseries, not a reality show. Everything you see is in real time, just like the episodes of COPS. The camera crews are very professional and know how to mingle into the surroundings while filming us on patrol," he said. Recognized often, especially by fans of the show, Warden Powell grants autographs and photos with a smile. "It's flattering but, also, a little surreal. Some folks look at people who are on television differently. I'm just doing my job, but the difference is, I have a camera crew following me." The family show is getting good reviews, and there are lots of young kids who enjoy it.

"Everyone's always intrigued and loves to hear our stories. Texas is the biggest hunting, fishing and recreation state," Warden Powell stated. One of his most

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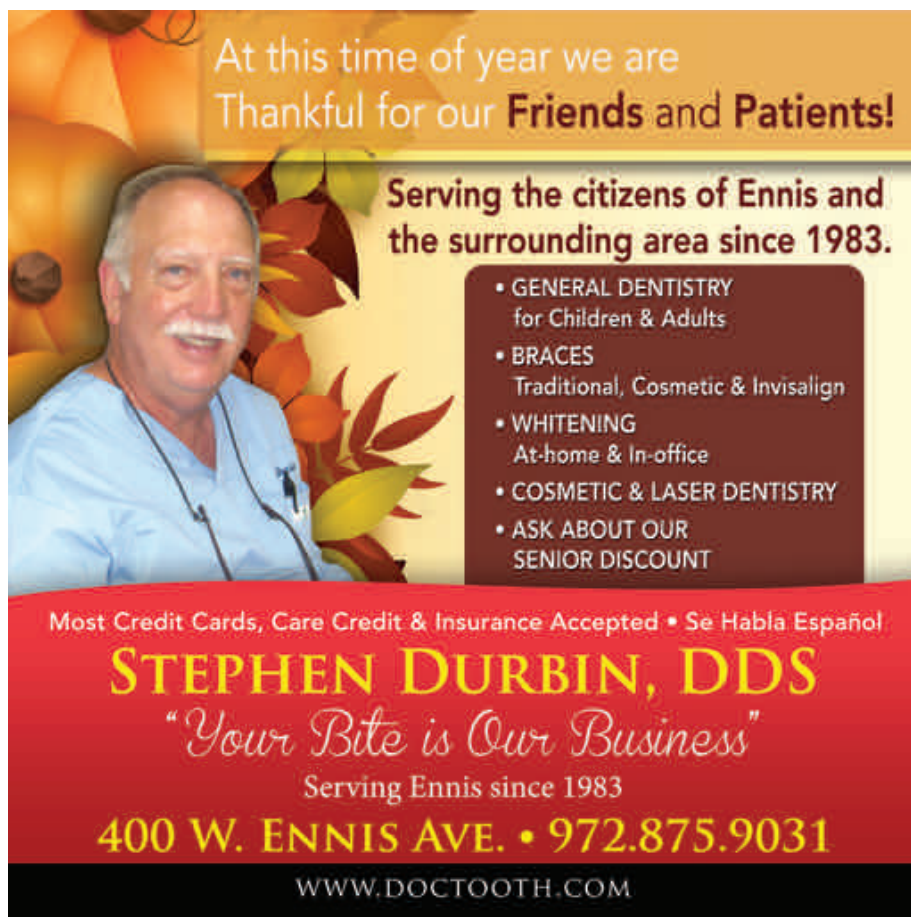
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memorable stories occurred in 2008. "I was lucky enough to do a private conservation program in Ellis County for the former President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush, guests from Cornell University and the ranch owners. The program was on injured raptors and their rehabilitation. I released numerous recently rehabilitated hawks and owls, and I related the presentation to an illegal wildlife case I had made that same morning on an individual who had shot and killed numerous hawks just north of Ennis. President Bush, being an avid outdoorsman and conservationist ... let's just say his remark on what should be the individual's future punishment was priceless! I was invited to stay for dinner and was able to visit with President Bush in a casual setting. It's a day I'll never forget."

Game wardens live where they work, and working with the citizens of their community is vital. Ellis County's population is booming and changing, demographically, from its rural roots to a more urban society. "My job has become more contextual. I meet new folks and explain about wildlife in the area. Urbanization is a people problem, not an animal problem. People have to learn to adapt, too," Warden Powell explained. "Also, we want people to be involved and report problems to us. Half the cases we make began with people calling in to report a violation."

When on vacation, Warden Powell loves the mountains, hunting, fishing, playing golf and traveling. "I advise kids who want to become a game warden to stay in school and go to college," he said. "And if you love the outdoors, hunting and fishing and law enforcement, then this is the best job, hands down!" **NOW**

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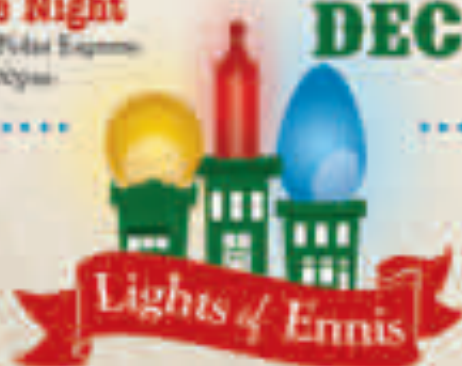
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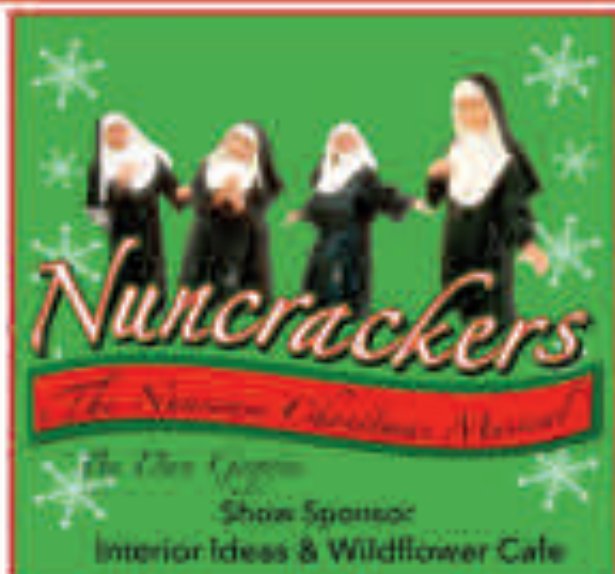
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Figure 4—continued with discussion
(continued on page 1000)

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— By Sandra Strong



At Home With
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Clayton and Pat Budai were married on November 7, 2000. They will soon be celebrating 16 years of marriage, and they couldn't be happier about the way things turned out. You see, Pat initially moved into the three-bedroom, two-bath home with her first husband, Buster Callaway, in 1976. After his untimely passing, she made a comment that she would never remarry. Clayton also felt the same way following his divorce. God's plan for these two was much bigger than they imagined. "I was married to Buster for 27 years," Pat said. "After his passing, I just knew I was going to live alone. My mind was set. I was not going to get married again."



Well, obviously, that isn't how the story went. Clayton had always been good friends with the Calloway family, so when he felt the timing was right, he asked Pat out to the movies. She quickly accepted. "I thought it was a friendship-date," she admitted. "I never dreamed it was a date-date."

It wasn't long before she realized it was much more than friendship for both of them. The couple dated from March to November before deciding they didn't want to waste any more time. They both knew firsthand how precious life can be. "She is my angel on earth," Clayton said as he smiled at Pat. "We laugh a lot and enjoy life."

As soon as the wedding vows were shared and blessed by the family and friends, Clayton moved in, and the next chapter in their lives began. Clayton wanted Pat to be happy, so staying in the home she had shared with Buster didn't pose a problem at all. "We did talk about moving, but we love it here," he said. "Over the years, we've remodeled several times. These remodels have made it ours. It's home to us, and we love it!"

The remodels started as most often do — with a single DIY project. But, as soon as one project was complete, they decided on another and another. The remodeling projects were initially centered on the kitchen, dining room and den area. When the home was first

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built in the early 1970s, there was a step down from the kitchen and den areas to the dining room. That step down is no longer evident. The floor was leveled and new flooring that looks like whitewashed wood, but in reality is a durable tile, was added. Local carpenter Ronnie Zmolek added the extra cabinets she had always wanted, while also adding some extras that many only dream about. "We added an invisible

has been stained to match the kitchen cabinets. Decorative molding was added above the cabinetry found throughout the home, some more detailed in one room than in another. The dark stain complements the shades of linen and almond paint, allowing for a serene place to relax after a long day at work, regardless of which room they choose. And they both work at strenuous jobs, so rest and relaxation are welcomed. Clayton has been in the concrete business for 44 years and currently works as the shop manager at Potter Concrete. Pat is the buyer for Fort Hood, having taken over that responsibility from Buster when



table in one of the smaller kitchen walls," Pat shared. "It's a lifesaver during the holidays." The back wall in the kitchen is now an oversized, built-in hutch that serves as the couple's coffee bar. "I wanted more storage, and I wanted to get rid of the back wall," she explained. The result is not just pleasing to the eye but, also, quite functional. Add in the dark granite countertops, and the result is beyond stunning.

All the doors in the home have been replaced, and each



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he passed. She experiences the ease of working from a home office by day and enjoying the space she and Clayton have created by night.

The most recent and extensive interior remodel was completed by Pat's son-in-law, Jason Bentley. Pat wanted larger, more modern appliances, and the only way to get them was to make the available spaces fit the appliances. "He is very much a perfectionist," Clayton said. "We laugh about it now, but the wall where the refrigerator is located was not plum, so Jason had to take a claw hammer to the wall. It was fun to watch." During this remodel, Jason also added a beam that serves as reinforcement between the kitchen and den areas, thus adding an eating bar, while also opening up the area with the "great room" look and feel Pat was hoping for.

The wet bar that was once located between the dining and living rooms is gone. In its place is another very unique serving center. The see-through fireplace between the living and dining rooms adds warmth on cold winter days, and the double mantels are perfect for the holiday decorating Pat enjoys doing. "Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas are my favorite holidays to decorate for," she confessed. "After Halloween, I remove the scarecrows and leave the pumpkins."

Each room has its own special story to tell. The living room picture paneling wasn't removed. It was updated with a coat of paint. Pat's angel collection has a place in her bathroom, while Clayton hopes one day to have the guest



bathroom redone to include a walk-in shower where the tub currently sits. Pat took great care in making the built-in cabinets in both bathrooms look like furniture, when making decisions before, during and after the remodels.

The couple's favorite place is the backyard, and they enjoy it year-round. The area beyond the backdoors with all its wonderful amenities was a four-year project that started with a binder and many hours on the internet. "Pat started a wish book that, by the end of the four years, was filled with ideas and possibilities," Clayton stated. "We saved the money we needed for the project during this time, too. Pat had a plan, and it worked out beautifully. She's good like that."

"The grandkids love the putt-putt mini golf course," Pat added. "We find enjoyment just standing at the backdoor, looking out at the serenity we were able to create."

Needless to say, Clayton and Pat are two very sentimental people who found each other following some very tough times. When Pat first moved into the neighborhood, there were only three houses on the street. Not so anymore. "You can't throw a watermelon across the back fence anymore," she laughed. But when Texas weather permits, they can do something much better now — they relax in the hot tub as the waterfall spills over into the pool, play putt-putt with their grandchildren or grill a meal for family and close friends. The choice is up to them. **NOW**

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**State Farm
Agent Cara Castellow**

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cara.castellow.prfw@statefarm.com

Hours:

Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
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on weekends.



Cara Castellow and her dedicated staff view each day as a new playing field where success is the main goal.



Cara's Crew

Like a good neighbor, the team at State Farm is there.

— By Sandra Strong

Vince Lombardi once said, “Coaches who can outline plays on a blackboard are a dime a dozen. The ones who succeed are those who get inside their players and motivate them.” State Farm Agent Cara Castellow brings the same motivation Coach Lombardi spoke of to her “players” on a daily basis. “We have strategy meetings each morning on how to ‘win,’” Cara stated with a great deal of enthusiasm. “Winning means we’ve had a successful day.”

Although Cara is the “coach” within the office, she’s also proven time and time again that she is a team player. She will never ask her crew — Oriana Brown, Brittaney Morris and Rosie Chavez — to take on a task that she, herself, is not willing to also

tackle, if needed. “As the coach, it’s up to me to make sure they experience success,” Cara shared. “We look at the day before us as the playing field.”

Cara opened her office in Ennis on February 1. She came with years of valuable experience. She had been going to college and living in Austin when she made the decision to become a young entrepreneur. “I was inspired by Jack Farris, the NFIB president at that time, to open my own business,” she explained, referring to the retail business she bought that was located by The University of Texas at Austin. Her career with State Farm began in February 2006, when she became an agent in the Austin area. As a first-time agent, Cara found her niche, and success

soon followed. “I was named number 67 out of 1,200 new agents nationwide,” she humbly admitted.

Her father, Ron Castellow, also had ties to State Farm during this same time as an agent in Hallettsville, Texas. When her father passed unexpectedly in July 2007, she realized it was time to go back home and take care of her father’s State Farm office. “I took over in March 2008,” she remembered. “I did well there, earning the Chairman’s Circle Award.”

By 2011, Cara was recruited by State Farm as a consultant to agents in the Katy, Texas, area. She was promoted to Houston/Victoria State Farm Territory Sales Leader in 2013. While traveling, training and teaching other agents her secrets to success, Cara soon realized something was missing. “I had a strong desire to be an agent again,” she confessed. “I missed the direct contact with customers.”

Although deciding on a location to open an office and live offered some challenges early on, Cara and her then fiancé and now husband, Jake Shockley, chose Ennis for several reasons. “The small-town feel reminds me of Hallettsville,” she said, “and since Jake is a State Farm Territory Sales Leader over the agents from Kaufman, Corsicana to Tyler and all the way to Waco, Ennis proved to be the perfect spot.”

The confidence Cara instills in her staff is proof positive she’s back where she belongs. The good business acumen they each possess makes them valuable players. Throughout the workday, they “huddle” several times as a way to refocus on the goals for the day. “I pull them out of the whirlwind, so we can regroup and reset our priorities,” she said. “We begin the day with the best laid plans, but they must be executed to make the most out of our time.”

As the coach of a winning team, Cara understands that someone has to be willing to ask the hard questions pertaining to the overall quality of life. And in doing so, she and her staff are living lives of heroic significance. They are committed to helping their customers live confidently every day. **NOW**

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Charlene Ballard, Daurice Shine, Jeanette Lawrence and Gloria Haupt oversee the gift basket during the Friends of the Library annual book sale.



Zane Robinson celebrates his 3rd birthday with his cousins, Brighton Hickerson and Allison Alvarado.



Ennis High School students gather for the annual See You at the Pole event.



The Cancer Erasers from NOW Magazines participate in the fifth annual Ennis Pink Power Walk.



Jennifer Valdez, George Foreman IV, Candace Davis and Director Andrew Souza smile for the camera after the final day of production on Andrew's film, BarAbba.



Jordan Haskovec, Annette Zapata and Terri Miller with Lanyer's Title celebrate police officer's appreciation week with cookies.



Guest speaker Bobby Dowell sings praises during the Bright & Morning Star Church's 150th anniversary celebration.



Raymond Lawrence is a dedicated member of Friends of the Library.



Betty Stubbs rides the bull at the Chamber auction.



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Are You On Track to Meet Your Financial Goals?

This is a good time of year for financial planning, so why not take the opportunity to determine if you're on the right path toward meeting your financial goals? Consider taking these steps:

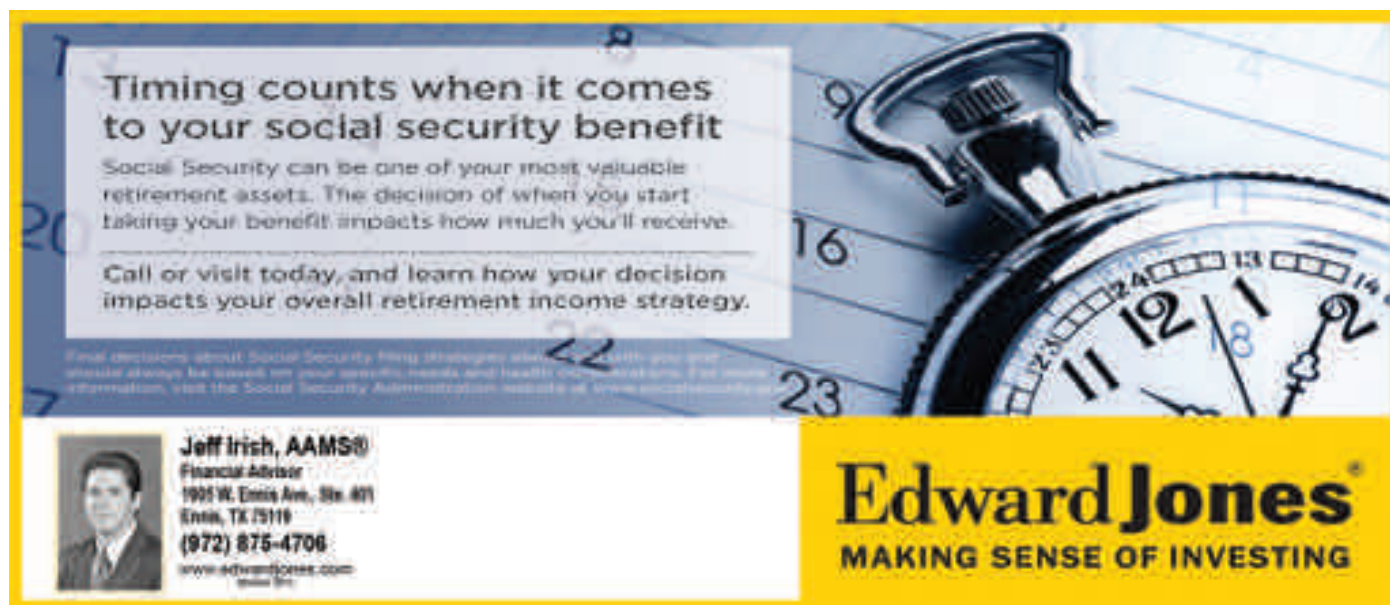
- **Identify your goals.** To know if you're making progress toward your goals, you first have to identify them. Of course, you'll have a variety of goals in life, such as helping pay for your children's college educations. More than likely, though, your most important long-term financial goal is to build enough resources to enjoy the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned. But we all have different ideas for how we want to spend our retirement years. Some of us may want to stay close to home, volunteering and pursuing our hobbies, while others want to visit the vineyards of Bordeaux or explore the pyramids of Egypt. So, name your goals and, as much as possible, put a price tag on them. Once you know about how much your retirement is going to cost, you can create an investment strategy that may ultimately provide you with the income you will need.
- **Don't underestimate your cost of living.** Even after you've identified some of your retirement goals, and estimated their costs, you still haven't developed a complete picture of your future cost of living. You also need to take into account other potential major expenses, such as health care. Once you're 65, you'll get Medicare, but that won't cover all your medical costs — and it might cover only a tiny portion of those expenses connected with long-term care, such as a nursing home stay or services provided by a home health aide. A financial professional can help you explore specific methods of dealing with these types of long-term care costs.

- **Locate gaps — and work to fill them.** After you've had your investment strategy in place for a while, you may see that some gaps exist. Is your portfolio not growing as fast as it should to help you reach your goals? If not, you may need to review your asset allocation to make sure it is aligned with your risk tolerance and portfolio objective. Do you find that you own too many of the same types of investments? This overconcentration could be harmful to you if a downturn affects one particular asset class, and you own too much of that asset. To help prevent this from happening, be sure to diversify your dollars across a range of investment vehicles. Keep in mind, though, that diversification can't guarantee a profit or protect against all losses.

- **Protect yourself — and your family.** Saving for your ideal retirement is certainly a worthy goal, but you have other ones, such as providing for your family in case you aren't around, or if you become ill or incapacitated and can't work for a while. That's why you will need adequate life insurance, and possibly disability insurance, too. Your employer may offer you both these types of coverage as an employee benefit, but it might not be enough — so you may want to explore private coverage as well.

By following the above suggestions, you can create some strategies that will bring you a lifetime of benefits. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Jeff Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.



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November 3 — 6

Theatre Rocks! presents *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde: For more information, visit www.phoenixreperatoryplayers.com.

November 4, 11

Fast Friday: Texas Motorplex, 7500 W. Hwy. 287. For more information, call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

November 5

3rd Annual Rookie Rumble: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., CrossFit Ellis. This is a two-person team event for new athletes looking to have some fun or the athletes that are not ready to participate in a RX competition. For more information, email crossfitellis@gmail.com.

November 6

Import Face Off: Texas Motorplex, 7500 W. Hwy. 287. For more information, call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

November 12

Smackdown: 8:00 p.m., 85 Speedway, 3118 E. FM 85. Men, women, stock and modified cars compete on the dirt race track for cash, belts and bragging rights. For more information, call (972) 875-8500.

November 12, 13

Gun Show: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., **Saturday**; 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., **Sunday**, Sokol. General admission: \$8. For more information, contact Charles Montgomery at (817) 929-1816 or by email at whipp.events@gmail.com.

November 13

Kolache Class: 2:00-5:00 p.m., hosted by Jennifer Williams. Come learn the art of making Czech Kolache. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/events.

November 14 — 21

Operation Christmas Child, Shoebox Ministry of Samaritan's Purse, National Collection Week: two drop off locations at Farley Street Baptist Church, 1116 Brown St., Waxahachie and East Ridge Baptist Church, 732 E. Ovilla Rd., Red Oak. For more information, contact Burt Lyon, Ellis County Operation Christmas Child Area Coordinator, at (310) 413-8716.

November 19

Lantern Fest: gates open at noon, lantern release before sundown, Texas Motorplex. For more information, call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

November 20

Gallery Schloss Adult Coloring Event: 2:00-4:00 p.m., 204 W. Knox St. All materials will be provided. For more information, visit www.juliaschloss.com.

December 1

Ennis Parade of Lights and Block Party: 7:00 p.m. parade begins in downtown Ennis.

December 3

Lucky's C.C. Car Show & Toy Drive: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. Awards will be presented at 3:30 p.m. Registration: \$10 and one unwrapped toy. All vehicles including trucks, hot rods, rat rods, customs, lowriders and bikes. For more information, contact Chubby at (469) 774-5692.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to sandra.strong@nowmagazines.com.

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In the Kitchen With Amanda Grant

— By Virginia Riddle

Amanda Grant taught herself how to cook family dinners when she was 11 years old. These days, this busy wife, mother and reading intervention paraprofessional at Carver Early Childhood Center cooks healthy meals by rarely using processed food. “My family and I try to live a holistic, real-food lifestyle with an emphasis on nourishing our bodies, not just filling our stomachs,” Amanda said.

Traditional family recipes will dress Amanda’s table during the holidays, but she also likes to create new recipes and “tweak” recipes that she finds in food blogs or on Pinterest. “I’ll try a recipe the way it’s printed first, but if we like it, I’ll add spices or protein sources to make it my own,” Amanda explained. She and her family love cookouts and entertaining friends. **NOW**

Oatmeal Breakfast Bread

- 3 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup old-fashioned oatmeal, not instant
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 apple or pear, diced (or 1 cup blueberries)

1. Preheat oven to 425 F; stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients.
2. Fold in fruit; pour batter into a greased 8x8-inch pan.
3. Bake for 20 minutes, or until the top crust bounces back when given a slight poke; slice and enjoy!

Spicy Sausage & Spinach Soup

- 4 strips nitrate-free uncured bacon, diced
- 1/2 white onion, diced

- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2-3 links pasteurized Italian sausage links, crumbled
- 1 32-oz. carton organic chicken broth
- 1 white potato, diced
- 1-2 carrots, diced
- 1/2 lb. whole grain, organic pasta (cavatappi pasta, macaroni or shells)
- Sea salt and pepper, to taste
- Sprinkle crushed red pepper
- 1 large handful organic baby spinach, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup raw milk or half-and-half

1. Cook bacon in a Dutch oven; remove. Set aside.
2. Cook onion, garlic and sausage in bacon renderings over medium heat.
3. Add the crispy bacon back into onion/sausage mixture; pour in the chicken broth. Bring soup to a light boil.
4. Add potatoes and carrots followed by pasta and spices.
5. Bring soup to a simmer. Cook for 30 minutes to an hour until pasta and veggies

- are cooked though; add spinach.
- 6. Stir carefully; pour in milk or half-and-half.

Sweet and Sour Chicken With Brown Rice

Serves 2.

Sauce:

- 1 20-oz. can diced pineapple, reserve juice
- 1 1/3 Tbsp. tamari or soy sauce
- 2/3 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. rice vinegar
- 2 tsp. arrowroot powder or cornstarch
- 1 pinch dried chili flakes

Chicken:

- 2 servings cooked brown rice
- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil or olive oil
- 1/2 red onion, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 2 chicken breasts, diced into bite-size pieces
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/4 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, diced
- Sea salt, to taste
- Green onion, chopped, to taste

1. *For sauce:* Whisk the pineapple juice, tamari or soy sauce, honey, vinegar, arrowroot and chili flakes in a small bowl; set aside.
2. *For chicken:* Cook rice according to package instructions.
3. Heat oil on medium high. Sauté onion and carrot for 2-3 minutes. Add chicken; season with ginger, and cook for 5-7 minutes until chicken is cooked through.
4. Add red and green bell pepper and zucchini; cook for another 4-5 minutes.
5. Add garlic and sea salt; sauté until garlic is fragrant. Toss in pineapple; cook for another 2 minutes.
6. Add the sauce mixture to chicken and vegetables; bring to a slight boil, stirring constantly. Cook for another 1-2 minutes or until sauce thickens.
7. Top a bowl of rice with a serving of sweet and sour chicken; garnish with green onion.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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