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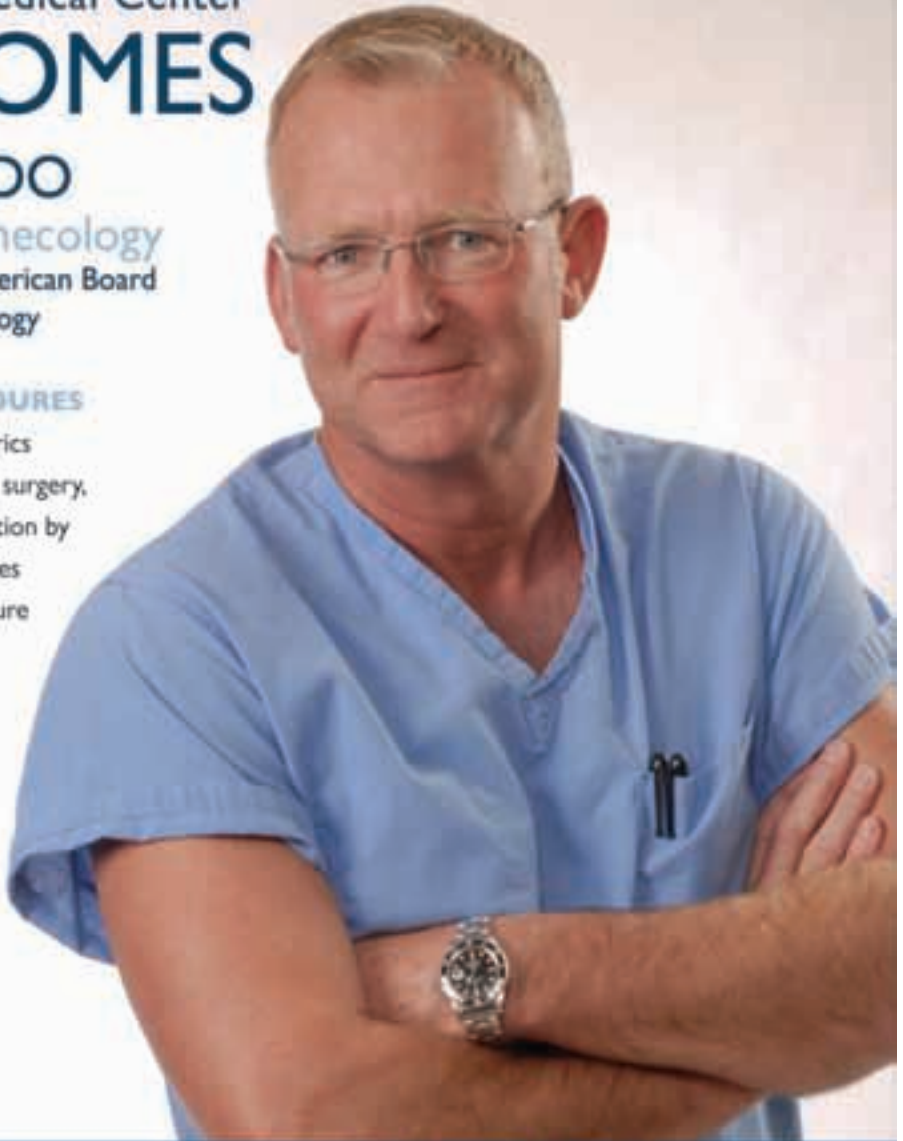
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On The Cover



The Beakley family
is ready for the
coming New Year.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Happy New Year!

Looking back over 2011, I realize we all have a "year in review." We just have to take the time out of our busy schedules to sit back and remember — both the good and the bittersweet. As I reminisce, I realize the good far outweighed the bittersweet.

My grandson, Easton Rider McIntosh, came into this world. He's handsome like his daddy and easy going like his mommy. It's true what they say. Being "Granny Strong" is the most awesome appointment in the world. It's a huge responsibility, but I'm up to the task, or at least I think I am. I'm also very happy to have my parents living so close. I've come to understand they are filled with so much wisdom — the kind I've really been able to use lately. I guess I had to reach a certain age myself in order to see and appreciate it.



Sandra

Sandra Strong
EnnisNOW Editor
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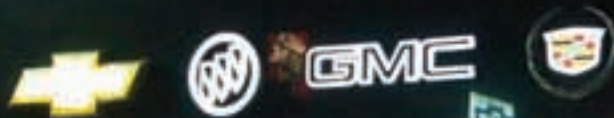
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No Regrets

— By Sandra Strong

Birthdays are very special days. First birthdays are filled with photos of cake-smeared faces, while gold bells and streamers mark a 50th birthday. But turning 100 is the ultimate milestone, just ask Richard Clark. “I’ll be 100 on January 3,” he said. “I’ve seen a few old people in my time, but I never imagined I would live to be 100.”

Living a long life means the memory bank within is filled to overflowing. Most of the memories are wonderful, but the ones that bring sadness are the losses. “I’ve had some losses in my life,” Richard admitted. “I lost my first wife to cancer in 1971 after 43 years and 3 months of marriage. I’ve also outlived two of my children.”

When he was just a tender boy at the age of 7, he promised his mom he’d never drink, smoke, gamble or curse, and he’s held strong to that promise for nearly 100 years. “I made that promise before my mom left to go to the hospital,” he remembered, also sharing that she never came home from that visit.

As Richard grew to adulthood, his father gave him advice he has also lived by. “He told me to never raise a hand to a woman, especially my wife,” Richard said.

“Living a *godly* life has been the one thing that’s helped me to live a long *life*.”

“If you can’t say something good about someone, then it’s best to say nothing at all. I’ve never been a gossip. I was reared in a Christian home with Christian values.”

No doubt these Christian values have caused Richard to be the patient, caring, unselfishly giving husband he is to his second wife, Margie, for the past 37 years. Richard and Margie knew each other from childhood. Their families were entwined early on. Her father worked for his father on the family farm between Bristol and Palmer, Texas. “She was born on my dad’s farm in 1918, although her birth certificate was dated 1919,” Richard said with a smile. “That’s how I first knew her.”

After several years passed, Richard was reintroduced to Margie. One Saturday evening, Richard was at his sister’s beauty shop in Ennis. He was going to take his sister and brother-in-law out to eat. They asked him to call Margie. He did, and she accepted. A week and two days later, Richard dated her a second time. That date took them to the Texas State Fair. “I wasn’t going to date her because of the seven-year age difference,” he confessed. “Three to four months later, the time came for us to decide if we were going to marry or just date and remain single.”

Richard asked her to marry him in October of 1974. He and Margie were married on January 17, 1975, as the New Year started. Both families took to one another almost immediately. “My kids loved her, and her kids loved me,” he said. “It was a good deal.”

Life was really good until the affects of Alzheimer’s



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Whiplash is a common ailment after a rear-end car collision. Even low-speed car accidents can result in whiplash, which is the result of a sudden jolt that causes unnatural movement of the cervical spine located in the neck. The result is often painful, stiff muscles and an inability to move the head in certain directions without discomfort.

Though every whiplash case is as unique as the patients who suffer them, chiropractic care to treat whiplash is a proven way to restore mobility, reduce pain and help you move on with your life.

What symptoms of whiplash appear within 24 hours of the injury? Every whiplash case is different, but usually the symptoms are as follows: headache at the base of the skull, painful bending or moving of the neck and/or spasms of the neck muscles.

How does a chiropractor treat whiplash? Diagnostic X-rays to pinpoint the cause of the pain and identify any other damage to the cervical area and the joints, nerves and muscles around it. Specialized spinal adjustments can realign the vertebrae and restore mobility. Targeted massage will soothe strained muscles around the injured area.

Whiplash usually takes us by surprise, but don't let a sudden, unexpected injury like whiplash derail your life. Seek qualified medical care and diagnosis by a professional, and remember chiropractic care is the safe, effective way to treat whiplash and not just mask the pain it causes.

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started to rear its ugly head in 1990. "I had taken her to a department store," Richard explained. "I waited outside on a bench



for what seemed like a very long time. I went back in to look for her. When I found her, she said she was lost."

Six years later, the disease had taken its toll. The only place in Richard's memory that she didn't become agitated or confused was at the couple's church home, Tabernacle Baptist Church. In February 2005, Richard had to make a most difficult decision. "I admitted her to the I.O.O.F. Nursing Home," Richard said. Just three short weeks after admittance, Margie got to where she no longer knew who



Richard was. But, that didn't stop him from being the husband his parents' had reared him to be.

Richard and Margie could easily be compared to the couple in Nicholas Sparks' book, *The Notebook*. He goes to visit Margie straight from church


*He finds enjoyment
in baking for Margie,
as well as other people
who have had the
pleasure of enjoying
his cakes and pies.*

on Sundays, but tries his best to get to the nursing home between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. the rest of the week. "I feed her lunch, and then she goes right back to sleep," he stated. "I sit with her until I know she's really asleep. I love Margie dearly. We've had a good life. I don't ever remember a cross word between us. Margie is my responsibility, but I do what I do because I care for her deeply. She also gives me a reason to get up in the morning."

Richard is grateful for his good health. "I'm in good health. When I get up on my feet, I sometimes get unbalanced, but otherwise I'm doing pretty good."

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doesn't begin to describe the man he still is today. As aforementioned, he still drives, but no highway driving since his 90th birthday. "I've been driving since I was 11," he quipped. "I've never had a speeding ticket, and I've never had an accident, not even a fender bender." The only ticket he did receive was for parking in a slot that was designated as "No Parking" at the time. "You weren't allowed to park in that slot until after 1:00 p.m.," he explained, stating it was after 1:00 p.m. when he parked the car. "My watch was right, but the police officer's watch must have been slow." Richard paid the \$5 ticket the very same day.

Richard still resides in the same home he and Margie built in 1977. He still cleans the house and prepares most of



his meals. He finds enjoyment in baking for Margie, as well as other people who have had the pleasure of enjoying his cakes and pies. "Cake without icing is much better than pie," he said, referring to what he bakes for Margie. "They're not so messy, and it's easier to transport them to the nursing home." His chocolate pie has been a good witnessing tool on more than one occasion.

Richard noted several changes over the past 100 years. "The advances in medicine are great," he said, "and it's very rare to find a gravel road. They're all 'hot-topped' now."

Each day for Richard begins with a drink of water, getting dressed and reading Scripture. "I have no regrets," he confessed. "Living a godly life has been the one thing that's helped me to live a long life. I've heard some really good preaching over the years, and I've learned from that good preaching."

Richard has definitely set the bar high when it comes to living a complete and full life. "Living long means an awful lot of good memories," Richard said. "Life isn't over just because you age." **NOW**

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Country STRONG

— By Randy Bigham

At Home With Steven and Amber Beakley



For more than a century, members of the Beakley family have delighted in the freedom of rural living. Steven and Amber Beakley and their daughters, Audrey and Mattie, want for nothing on their 175-acre estate near Ennis where heritage, hard work and love of family sustain them. “I grew up just a half mile down the road,” Steven said. “My family has owned this land for over 150 years. My great-grandfather was even born on the property, so it has a history I’m proud of.”

Amber is also proud. “I never appreciated farmers until I saw how hard people like my husband work,” she said. “And his attitude is so positive. In the face of the drought he never flinched.”

Life on the farm centers around the new home the Beakleys built 18 months ago. The sprawling stone dwelling equipped with modern comforts evokes the past in its bucolic style. “This house has been like a third child,” Amber admitted. “I poured all my energy into it.”

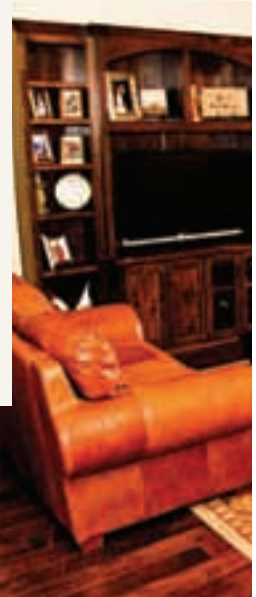
The attention to detail shows in every nook and corner, from the choice of wood trim to the large patio, and the whole house was custom-designed. “We pretty much laid it out, going by a plan we picked,” Steven explained, “but we added on a lot, so it’s nowhere near the original plan.”

The couple tweaked here and there, switching rooms around,




increasing the size of the front entrance, until the house became their own conception, a realization of their dreams. Steven and Amber enjoyed the artistic independence of creating their home the way they wanted it. “It was important for it to fit who we are and the life we have,” Amber pointed out. “It wasn’t just going to be a house. It would be the home we would raise our girls in and live in forever.”

The most conspicuous feature of the house is the stone used to build it. A Texas beauty called Lueders, after the town it comes from, the rock’s cream-hued, craggy texture blends well with the pastoral surroundings of the Beakleys’ land, which is set within 100 yards of the Navarro-Ellis County border. The





special limestone also figures in the interior where it enhances the knotty, alder wood trim, cabinetry and furniture the couple have selected. "We wanted a more rustic, unfinished wood that wasn't consistent and felt more casual," Amber said. The pair is pleased with the effect of the house inside and out, and reserve kudos for the fine workmanship of Ennis




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contractors at Slovak Construction and its subcontractors, also locally based.

For Steven and Amber, married now for 12 years, the peace of country living was the greatest inducement to building on the Beakley family land. "You can go out and sit on the porch and never hear a car," Steven said. Amber added that escaping traffic noise was one reason for setting the house back as far from the road as possible.

Although power and water supply was a hurdle, the added work involved in planning a home in the remote reaches of Ellis County was worth it for the couple who insist it's the house they always wanted. For their daughters Audrey, 11, and Mattie, 9, it's an ideal playground, and their school friends concur, often visiting to ride horses and four wheelers. "The girls love the outdoors and are always roaming around the farm," Steven



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said. "They spend very little time on the Internet or playing computer games."

Amber agreed that while her daughters are "girly girls" when it comes to decorating their bedrooms, they love sports and are as rough and tumble as any boy. "They even like deer hunting more than I do," Steven laughed. Mattie and Audrey, in third and fifth grades respectively, are involved in the Ellis County Youth Expo, showing the two goats they each have. Mattie attends Sam Houston Elementary and Audrey went there, too, though now she goes to Dorie Miller Intermediate. Their mom has high praise for Sam Houston, where she's on the PTO. "The school is the only exemplary-rated campus in Ennis," Amber enthused, "and deserves all the credit they can get for the great work the teachers do. They are the cream of the crop."

The Beakleys know something about a good crop. Despite the heat and drought of the past season, their farm has prospered. Last year marked Steven's 20th crop, and he played a significant part in the eradication of the boll weevil menace of which this region of the state was the last to stave off. His wife lauds the leadership role Steven took on. "Steven was on several boards and headed up the effort to rid the area of the boll weevil," Amber said. "It's so crucial to cotton production, and the campaign has been very beneficial."

The Beakleys have also flourished because of a new crop they recently instituted — sunflowers. The family maintains its own storage for the flowers



as not all granaries handle the product. "They are so beautiful," Amber said, "and they have helped us branch out." Steven concedes his sunflowers have been a boon for publicity, attracting tourists and nature lovers who drive by his land to snap photos of the bright, swaying plants at the height of the season.

Having a house in the country, knowing their kids have a secure place to play and entertain friends, gives Steven and Amber the peace of mind of which many only dream. "We know we are blessed to have a place where our kids have the freedom to explore the land," Amber said. "They love the farm and are always outside it seems, checking on the ducks, jumping hay bales." Steven added that since most of their neighbors are relatives, including his own parents who live less than a mile away, he and Amber don't experience the fear in letting their children play outside. "There's a feeling of safety," he said. "If you don't see the kids, chances are somebody in the family knows where they are. So they're never really out of sight."

The Beakleys host parties for their daughters and their friends and sometimes joke that parents leave their kids with them at their own risk. "Of course, the girls are always safe here," Amber qualified. "It's just they get to have adventures on the farm that they can't have in the city." The Beakleys are so thankful for the house of their dreams, the kids they get to watch grow up on a revered homestead and the tranquility that comes with embracing the simple things of life. **NOW**

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MIND *Over* METAL

— By Randy Bigham

One Ennis High School student is proving academic success can involve brawn as well as brains. When Dillion Hornik, son of Dale and Stormy Hornik, first enrolled in wood and metal shop it was because he thought it would be an easy grade. The 14-year-old was familiar with aspects of welding and mechanics from growing up on a ranch, where he helped his family build and maintain structures, as well as feed and herd cattle. Dillion not only found the class more challenging than he expected, but he discovered through hard work and determination that he had a talent for construction, design and engineering. “I like the creative part and the technical side,” Dillion said. “Welding is my favorite. It was hard at first, trying to figure out what everything is and where it goes. Now, I think I have the hang of it.”



That’s an understatement, considering his junior high project last year — a 14-foot utility trailer — won three major state competitions for Ennis’ 4-H Ag Mechanics Showteam. In a tournament in San Antonio, he placed First in Class; at a match in Houston, he came in third; and in San Angelo he pulled off two successive wins — First in Class, as well as Reserve Grand Champion in the contest’s overall Trailer Division. “We are so proud of him,” Stormy said. “And the reserve grand champion

award was exciting because it was practically unheard of for a bumper-pull, utility trailer to win against cattle trailers and vehicles with hydraulics.”

Dillion’s back-to-back wins are also a feather in the cap for Ennis Independent School District’s wood and metal shop. Since the inception of the program a decade ago, no other junior high student has achieved as many top awards as Dillion did in his latest round. His instructor, Alan Linson, was impressed. “It’s the only time I’ve had a junior high kid bring home the big prizes at San Antonio, San Angelo and Houston,” he said. “It’s a big first.”

For Dillion, it meant a lot to make his teacher proud of him, and he credits Alan for inspiring him to do the best work he can. “I have pride in what I do,” the young welder said.

Continuing his passion for welding



under Ennis High School’s Brian Harlan, Dillion has high hopes for future wins with the high school showteam. He enjoys the craft and the camaraderie, noting his gratitude to classmates — Ramsey Dodd, Chris Valek and Scottie Morrow — and others who have helped him on his projects.



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Stormy is proud of her son's accomplishments, but even prouder of his humility and desire to share his success with his friends. "They are all



deserving," Stormy said. "Dillion and the other students put so much time into these projects. They work during class and then for hours after school, four to seven days a week."

Team work, and the experience and knowledge Dillion has gained from his good fortune, has instilled confidence in him. He said he used to "get butterflies" before a show, but now feels poised and optimistic when he stands before the judges. "After you do it once or twice, the nervousness goes away," he explained.

This self-assurance is what most impressed the judging panel at the Ag Mechanics contest in San Angelo. "They were really taken with his showmanship," Stormy enthused. "The judges thought he was a high school student already."

Dillion has shown so much promise,

both locally and at the statewide level. As more attention is given to all areas of extra-curricular academics, Stormy feels the accolades will also increase

in number. One of the first to congratulate Dillion was Ennis Junior High principal, Kristin Cantrell. "She sent him a personal note acknowledging his championship wins in 4-H competition," Stormy explained.

Stormy also applauds Dillion's current shop teacher, Brian, for his diligence in posting online all his pupils' awards and distinctions. "It's important to promote Ag Mechanics because it's a valid career opportunity for students," Stormy said. "The work kids do in wood and metal shop is just as important as the work these same kids accomplish in English and math."

Dillion appreciates his mother's efforts to see his feats celebrated, but for himself, he only cares about the work. "I just like doing our projects," he said. "Making sketches and seeing it all come together is fun." He has won several welding machines as prizes in the two years he has competed, and he's thankful for them, but he insists it's

the craft that motivates him. Whether building a barbeque grill or a trailer, he is committed to the process of creativity and production.



"Dillion also is really getting into the presentation of the items he shows," Stormy pointed out. "You have to learn to sell it, and he does."

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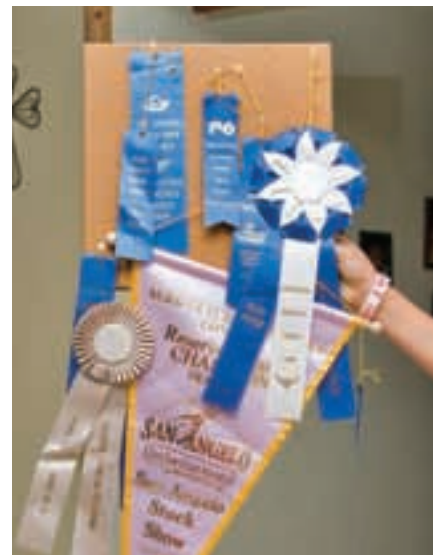
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His parents enjoy watching the progress Dillion is making in other courses that he didn't particularly care about before his interest in welding. His enthusiasm for shop projects has elevated his desire to make good across the board, and a sense of responsibility has carried over into life at home. Even after a long day at school he always does his homework and chores around the house. "These shows have given him the attitude he needs to succeed in class and in his personal life," his mother confirmed.

The new-found belief in himself Dillion derives from the competitions he's won has convinced him to pursue higher education. "After graduation, I'm thinking of going to San Angelo State University," he said. "I nearly won a scholarship, and that made me think I could get a full degree in the agriculture program there or maybe in engineering."

Dillion may also consider business management in college in order to join his father in the natural gas pipeline construction business. His ambitions please his doting mom and dad, although they stress they have applied no pressure on Dillion to attend college. "As his mother," Stormy said, "I can say that if he stopped his building projects or decides not to go to college, it wouldn't matter to me. The decision is up to him."

For Dillion that decision is still four years away, and his mind is on his metal. Right now, preparing for competitions is more relevant for the teenage welder. Whatever the future holds, his parents know their son has what it takes to make it. "Dillion is looking to achieve more than I ever imagined, and I know there will come a day when he'll surprise us again," Stormy said. "I couldn't be more proud of the man he's becoming." **NOW**

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— By Sandra Strong

Richard Watson is no stranger to the world of automobile mechanics. His experience dates back to his days in high school. “I started mowing the yard at the John Deere dealership in town,” Richard explained. “That job turned into the job of mechanic’s helper.” After graduating, Richard moved to Ennis because of the small-town atmosphere. He felt leaving his home in Rising Star, Texas, afforded him more opportunities.

He found work at several different companies before finding his niche at an Ellis County car dealership. With 25 years of experience as an automotive mechanic, Richard decided it was the right time to spread his wings. “My wife, Leah, and I talked at length about opening a business here in Ennis. I wanted to be sure that her job as a CPA would pay the bills in the house if the

new business didn’t allow me to take a paycheck. She said she could handle it, so I left to do my own thing.”

Avenue Automotive opened its doors in August of 2010. All the positions Richard had held while working for others prepared him for the journey he finds himself on today. He is the first to admit owning a business is not easy, especially an automotive repair business. “Fall is the slowest time of the year,” he admitted. “In my mind, the Texas State Fair marks the drop off point. It’s also the same time people realize the holidays are upon us. This drop in business usually lasts about four months.” Richard has always worked on commission, so putting money aside in the good times to meet the needs in the lean times is something he’d already been accustomed to doing.

Business **NOW**

Richard knew he was going to need experienced help if the business was going to prosper. "That's when I came along," Wade Gardner laughed. "We had worked together for years."

"I needed a second-in-command," Richard stated. "Wade was the man for the job."

"And we're very fortunate for the strong women in our lives," Wade said. "They're both very supportive." The part-time accountant and cleaning crew the new business needed were found in Leah and Kim Matous, Wade's fiancé. "We couldn't do it without them," Wade reiterated. "We fix cars, we don't do paperwork."



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Many changes have taken place in the automotive business in the last 30 years. Richard and Wade have learned about each one as it comes. "We've gone from repairing a basic carburetor to working on the first computer-controlled vehicles," Richard said. "We've gotten to see technology as it's grown." **NOW**

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Al Svehlak loads plywood onto a flatbed trailer at Blackland Building Supply.



Amanda Sublett picks up flowers for a friend from Shannon Hartzel at Ennis Flower & Gift Shop.



Enigma Electronics employees George Martinez and Joe Robles install headrest screens in a car.



Jose Lopez is hard at work repairing the foundation of a local home.



Faith Clemons and Elliott Puckett at Starbucks.



Jacob Houston, Kiera Seymour and Rodney Pechal enjoy lunch at Sam's Pizza & Pasta.



Stephanie Mikel and Ashleigh Snipes pose in the Gypsy Tent at Stevi Loren Salon.



William and Florence Young enjoy lunch with Hazel Bullard.



Allen Morris welcomes Valaree Hathaway with Peek in the Attic to the Ennis Chamber.



Doves are released at Legend Oaks for its Waxahachie Chamber ribbon cutting.



Granny Sandra Strong looks at Christmas lights with her new grandson, Easton Rider McIntosh.

What You Can Do to Prevent Falls

— By Kim Loflin, RN

Did you know that one in five people over the age of 65 will sustain a hip fracture? The risk of falls increases with age and is greater for women. Two-thirds of those who fall will fall again within six months. Many falls can be prevented by making a few small changes in your home. Here are some basic tips to help keep you safe and free from falling, especially during the cold winter months:

1. Begin by looking at your floors and things that may cause you to trip and fall. Have someone help you move furniture and always keep objects off of the floor.

2. Look at the stairs you use on both the inside and outside of your home. Have a light at the top and bottom of the stairs. Make sure carpet is attached and flat on all steps. Fix all loose rails and have rails on each side where possible.

3. Place a lamp close to the bed where it is easy to reach and use a night-light so you can see where you are walking when it's dark in your home.

4. Put a nonslip rubber mat on the floor of the tub or shower and on the floor just outside of your tub or shower. Don't use the soap or towel bar for a handrail. They were not designed to hold the weight.

5. Move items in your cabinets to lower, easier to reach shelves. Keep the things you use the most often on lower shelves (above waist level). If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

6. Both prescription and over-the-counter medications can cause side effects, which can make you drowsy or dizzy and cause you to fall. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist about the side effects you can expect from your medications. Make sure if you see more



than one physician that each one knows all the drugs you are taking.

Other things you can do to prevent falls include:

- Getting up slowly after you sit or lie down.
- Wearing nonslip shoes both inside and outside of the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.
- Keeping a phone where it may be reached if you fall and need to call for assistance. Use of a Lifeline can expedite EMS services.
- Exercising regularly. Exercise makes you stronger and helps you improve your balance and coordination.
- Having your vision checked at least once a year by an eye doctor. Poor vision can increase your risk of falling.
- Being aware of where your pet is and being careful when visiting others who have pets. Not meaning to, pets can get under foot and cause you to fall.
- Being sure to avoid uneven or broken sidewalks or areas under construction, if at all possible. **NOW**

Kim Loflin, RN, Trauma Coordinator
Ennis Regional Medical Center

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Time to Re-examine Your Retirement Plans?

— By Bob Irish

As a nation, we appear to be getting nervous about retirement. We aren't sure if we'll have enough money, and we don't know if we'll be able to retire when we had originally planned. That's why you may want to review your financial strategy both before and during retirement.

Before we look at some actions you might take, let's get a sense of how concerned many Americans are about their future:

- **Less confidence**

The percentage of workers who are “not at all confident” about having enough money for a comfortable retirement is now at 27 percent, according to the 2011 Retirement Confidence Survey, sponsored by the Employee Benefit Research Institute. This figure is the highest level measured in the 21 years of the Retirement Confidence Survey.

- **Later projected retirement age**

Back in 1995, over half of those surveyed in a Gallup Poll said they expected to retire when they were under age 65, while about 15 percent thought they would retire after age 65. But in 2010, the same Gallup Poll showed that just 29 percent of survey respondents expected to retire before they reached 65, while 34 percent planned to work beyond 65.

This lowered confidence and the expectation of having to work past 65 are due in part to the Great Recession and the housing market collapse, which combined to reduce the savings of many future retirees. You can't control these types of factors, but you can do a lot to boost your prospects for a comfortable retirement — both before and after you retire.

Before You Retire:

- **Estimate your expenses.**

Try to estimate about how much money you'll need each year of your retirement.

- **Contribute to your retirement plans.**

Put as much as you can afford into your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 403(b) or 457(b) plan. Each time you get a raise, boost your annual contribution to your retirement plan. Also, try to fully fund your traditional or Roth Individual Retirement Account (IRA) each year.

After You Retire:

- **Evaluate your employment prospects.**

You may have retired from one career, but that doesn't mean you can't work part time, do some consulting or even open your own business. If you think you'd enjoy doing some type of work, the added income can obviously be quite helpful at this stage of your life.

- **Decide when to take Social Security.**

You can start taking Social Security at any time from 62 to 70, but the longer you wait, the bigger your monthly payments. Your decision on when to take Social Security should be based on the amount of income you can expect from a pension or your investment portfolio, plus any income you might receive from employment.

- **Determine your withdrawal rate.**

You'll need to calculate how much you can safely withdraw from your various retirement accounts each year. Your withdrawal rate will depend on several factors, including your lifestyle, your estimated longevity, your other sources of income and the level of inflation. You may need to adjust your withdrawal rate periodically.

These aren't the only factors involved in preparing for, and living in, retirement, but they should give you a good idea of what you need to do to enjoy the lifestyle you've envisioned. **NOW**

Bob Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.

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January 7

Answering the Call screening: 10:00 a.m., ShowBiz Cinemas, 108 Broadhead Road, Waxahachie. The documentary represents the time Chuck Norris spent visiting the troops in Iraq. Mr. Norris will personally be introducing the film and participating in a question-and-answer time following the screening. Tickets are \$25/person or \$15 for active military personnel. Group pricing is also available with proper identification. Tickets are now available at the box office or online at www.showbizcinemas.com. Total proceeds from the box office will go to KickStart Kids. For more information, call (469) 517-0394.

January 11

Relay For Life of Ennis Kick-off: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Dorie Miller Intermediate School.

January 12-16

Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration.

January 13

Student Holiday.

January 14

10th Annual Unity in the Community Health Fair and Community Fest: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., G.W. Carver Early Childhood Center, 600 E. MLK Drive. Free mammograms and prostate cancer screenings available, but registration is required. Other screenings available include: cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure, chiropractic, HIV, WIC, vision, hearing, dental and more. (Do not eat prior to prostate, cholesterol or blood sugar screenings.) Free information and consultation with physicians on-site. The event will also feature Kid's Wonderland including: face painting, arts and crafts, finger printing and storytelling. For registration or more information, call Mary at (972) 875-5909.

Ellis County SPCA Volunteer Training: Noon-1:00 p.m., 2570 FM 878, Waxahachie. Meeting for new volunteers with the ECSPCA or current volunteers who would like to be more involved with the organization. E-mail coordinator@elliscountyspca.org for details.

January 16

Martin Luther King Holiday, Ennis ISD Holiday.

January 27-February 4

The Last Romance: Warehouse Living Arts Center, Corsicana. For more information, call (903) 872-5421 or visit www.warehouselivingartscenter.com.

January 28

Flapjack Fever: 7:00-11:00 a.m., Jack Lummus

Intermediate School. Adult tickets are \$6. Student tickets are \$4. Raffle tickets will be available for \$1.

Month of February

Till Beth Do Us Part is playing at Ennis Public Theatre, North Ennis Business Park, 2705-C N. Kaufman Street. Call (972) 878-7529 for more information on specific dates and show times.

February 4

Annual Mission Sale: 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church gym, 505 West Marvin, Waxahachie.

February 11

Ennis Czech Music Festival: 1:30-11:30 p.m., at SOKOL Hall, 2622 E. Hwy. 34. \$5 per person; ages 14 and under are free. Visit www.ennisczechmusicfestival.com for detailed information.

Share the Love Gala 2012 Dinner and Auction benefiting CASA of Ellis County: 6:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center, 1950 North Interstate Highway 35 East, Waxahachie.

Valentine's Jazz Night: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Maypearl High School, 500 Phillips Street. Three bands, including the Maypearl Jazz Band, will perform. For more information, call (972) 435-1020.

Ongoing:

Mondays and Wednesdays

Sign Language Class: 4:00-5:15 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Avenue. Classes are free and available for all ages. No sign-up required.

Third Mondays

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m. at Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin, Waxahachie. For more information, visit www.elliscountyyaggiemoms.org.

Fourth Mondays

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meeting: 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Avenue.

Third Tuesdays

Skyblazers of Waxahachie R/C Club meeting: 7:30 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Building in downtown Waxahachie.

Third Wednesdays

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club. For more information, contact Kay at (972) 935-2054 or Margaret at (972) 937-1016 for reservations. Cost is \$13.

Thursdays

Chess for Kids: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Avenue. This is for children elementary-age and above. No sign-up required.

Open mike night at Lighthouse Coffee Bar, 1404 N. 9th Street, Midlothian. Sign up: 6:30 p.m. Start time: 7:00 p.m. Anyone can come and play as long as it is family-friendly.

Celebrate Recovery meeting: 7:00 p.m., 408 Water Street, Waxahachie. The purpose of this group is to help people live free from addiction, compulsive or dysfunctional behavior. For more information, contact Brandon Jones at Brandon@thefrontiercommunity.org or (214) 949-5725.

First and Third Thursdays

Mom's Connected: 9:30-11:30 a.m., Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1200 Country Club Rd. Free fellowship for moms of all ages. Contact ennismoms@sbcglobal.net for more information.

Third Fridays

Veterans Networking Group: 6:00 p.m., Zula's Coffee House, 1804 West Highway 287 Business. For more information, contact Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378 or vetsnetgrp@att.net.

Second and Fourth Saturdays

Songwriter Saturdays: 6:00 p.m. social time, 6:30-7:15 p.m. dinner and fellowship, 7:30-8:15 p.m. opening act, 8:30-10:00 p.m. featured artist. For more information, contact Randy Tredway at (972) 938-9990 or e-mail him at randy@inthemusicroom.com. Bring beverages for yourself and a covered dish to share. Seating is limited.

Third Saturdays

Covenant Treasures Institute college-level classes: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Refiner's Fire Ministries International, 1611 W. Ennis Avenue. Call (972) 765-3530 for more information.

Fourth Saturdays

Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., featuring local singers and musicians. Sponsored by Bristol Cemetery Association and Caring Hands of Bristol. For more information, contact Jim Gatlin at (972) 846-2211.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your event details to sskoda.nowmag@sbcglobal.net.



In The Kitchen With Donna Baumgartner

— By Sandra Strong

Cooking is a wonderful way for Donna Baumgartner to nurture her family. “The first thing I ask when I know the kids are coming home from college is, ‘What would you like me to cook?’” Donna said. “It’s how we celebrate.” Cooking also offers Donna an outlet for creativity. “I like the challenge of making whatever I prepare tasty, pretty and healthy all at once,” she added.

Lately, Donna’s inspiration for cooking has come from a newfound desire to be healthy. Cooking healthier meals may mean tweaking old recipes, while creating some new ones for her husband, Herb. “I may never be skinny,” she confessed, “but by golly, I’m going to be healthy! And I want Herb healthy, so he’ll be around for a long time, too.” **NOW**

Potage Crecy

8 cups chicken stock (I use 8 cups water and 2 Tbsp. Tone’s Chicken Soup Base)
1/2 cup raw brown rice
4 large carrots
1 large onion
1 or 2 green onions with tops, optional
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1/2 cup skim milk, more or less
1 Tbsp. butter
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. In large pot bring chicken stock and rice to a boil. Turn down to simmer uncovered. Set a timer for 55 minutes.
2. Slice carrots and chop onions to medium pieces. Sauté these vegetables in olive oil in a large skillet just enough to bring out

the sweetness, making sure not to brown them. Add sautéed carrots and onions to the simmering stock and rice. Continue to simmer until the 55 minutes are up.
3. Using a hand plunge-type blender, blend all until smooth. Add milk as needed to reach desired consistency. If you don’t have a hand blender, carefully ladle into a regular blender to process.
4. Stir in butter for a little richness. Salt and pepper to taste.

Tomato Basil Soup

1 large onion, chopped
1 tsp. olive oil
2 14-16-oz. cans whole plum tomatoes
2 Tbsp. fresh basil or 1 Tbsp. dried (in a pinch)
2 cups vegetable or chicken broth

Salt and pepper, to taste
2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
1/4 cup fresh Parmesan cheese, shredded (divided use)
Fresh basil leaves

1. Sauté onions in olive oil in soup pot. Add tomatoes and basil.
2. Puree with hand plunge-type blender or ladle into regular blender to process. Add tomatoes and broth; bring to boil, and season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Remove from heat. Stir in spinach and Parmesan cheese.
4. Garnish each bowl with more Parmesan and a sprig of basil.

Crockpot Kowloon Chicken

3 to 3 1/2 lb. chicken, cut up, skin removed
Salt and pepper
1 8-oz. can pineapple slices, drained (reserve juice)
1 4-oz. can sliced water chestnuts, drained
1/4 tsp. ground or fresh ginger
1 clove minced garlic
1 cup chicken broth
4 green onions, sliced diagonally
1/4 cup cornstarch
1/4 cup soy sauce
1 Tbsp. vinegar
Brown rice, cooked

1. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Place in crock pot. Cut pineapple slices into fourths. Arrange pineapple and water chestnuts over chicken. Combine ginger, garlic, broth and juice from pineapple. Pour ginger sauce over all.
2. Cover and cook on low for 3 to 4 hours or until chicken is tender.
3. Add green onions. Dissolve cornstarch in soy sauce and vinegar; stir into pot.
4. Cover; cook on high for 10 to 15 minutes or until slightly thickened. Serve with prepared brown rice.

Creamy Salsa

1/2 cup Fage Total 0-% Greek yogurt
1/2 cup Pace mild salsa, stronger if you like hotter
1/2 cup cilantro, chopped

1. Mix all ingredients together.

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