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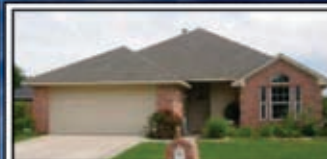
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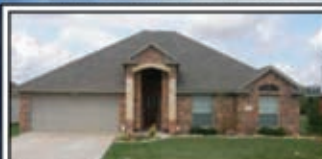
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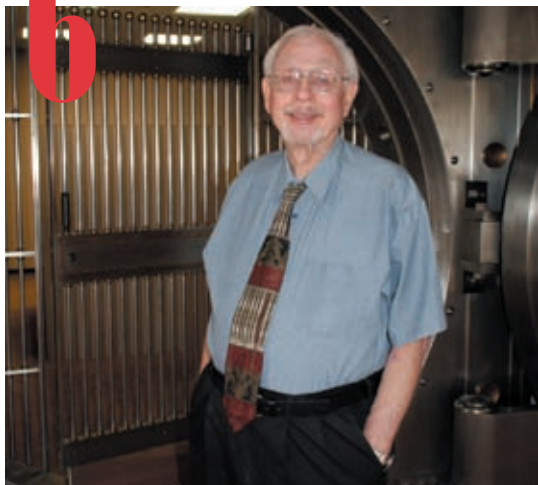
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Editor's Note

Season's Greetings, Readers!

I went Christmas shopping today. Getting that done a little early enables me to enjoy the crowds and the decorations without feeling rushed. There are always so many places to be in December — office and school parties, nativity plays, musicals, home tours, open houses — some are obligations and many are joys.

We each have our own holiday traditions. I like to go to Holiday in the Park at Six Flags Over Texas, take in a performance of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, and watch Irving Berlin's *White Christmas*. My very favorite place to be at this time of year is gathered around my own Christmas tree, with my children around me, and Bing Crosby, Dean Martin or Elvis singing in the background. While we read the old, old story from the Gospel of Luke, I will be thinking of you. Merry Christmas!

Kelly Kovar
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and a
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F. E. Hoefer enjoys working with the other New Accounts representatives, Jeanie Liska, Denise Keeney and Cindy Kubena and with ESB CEO Bramlet Beard.



— By Kelly Kovar

As Ennis State Bank looks back this year on its 75-year history in Ennis, F.E. Hoefer Jr. is also celebrating a milestone — 60 years as an ESB employee. This momentous achievement spans a period from the post-WWII year of 1948, through the Korean War, during which F.E. took time out to serve his country, and on into the modern era of computer banking. “When I first came to ESB, the bank president was Mr. W.B. Rider Sr.,” F.E. recalled. “The bank started in 1933, so it actually had only been in existence 15 years when I started. Mr. Rider was a fine person and an excellent banker. It was a nice experience working for Mr. Rider; he was well-respected in the community. Everyone who has had anything to do with the bank on that level has been respected, and it is nice to work for that kind of place.”

In 1948, F.E. was living in Austin, Texas. He came up to visit his parents, who lived in Ennis. “I got a temporary job as a bookkeeper at the bank, which at that time was in the old Kucera building on Ennis Avenue. I was just supposed to be there for two or three weeks. I have been here ever since.” He liked his bookkeeping job, staying in that position for eight years. “Everything was slow back in those days,” F.E. reflected with a smile. “I moved up to teller, which I liked because I worked with the public more. It was fun to see people I knew every day. We have always had good customers, I mean really nice people.”

“The building on Ennis Avenue was adequate for us for a long time,” F.E. said. Eventually, the bank outgrew it. “We

moved to a building on Dallas Street in 1953.” ESB had the first drive-in bank window in Ellis County, and it was manned by F.E. “I became an assistant cashier, and it was pleasant to have the daily contact with the customers.”

“Mr. Rider’s son, W. B. Rider Jr., who went by Bill Rider, became president (in 1963) and later Chairman of the Board (in 1972),” F.E. commented. F.E. was promoted to cashier and began to work at a desk. “I was still out with the public. A cashier is responsible mainly for getting all of the reports together. At certain times of the year, different reports have to be turned in to the government. The third president under whom I worked was Phil Newsome.”

During the time the bank was on Dallas Street, F.E. went from being a cashier, to vice president. “It was exciting to go from a temporary job to vice president,” he remembered. “I have had a nice career in banking. We were on Dallas Street for a long time. It was necessary to build another adequate-sized building.” In 1983, ESB moved to its current location at 815 W. Ennis Avenue. “We are still an independent bank; there are really very few left, and we are the only one in Ennis.” F.E. works now in the Certificates of Deposit and New Accounts department. “A lot of my customers are people who just want to sit down and get advice about retirement accounts.”

Over the years, the banking business has changed considerably. “Everything used to be done by hand, and that is not possible anymore. You have to have computers because business has gotten to be so complex. I could see the need to switch over to



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computers, but I'm still pretty good with a ball-point pen," F.E. said with a grin.

When asked his favorite thing that he did at ESB over the years, F.E. had to laugh. "Going to lunch was the thing I enjoyed the most! There weren't many places to eat in Ennis at that time, so most of us went home. My wife, Cathryn, had lunch waiting for me when I got home. We were married almost 50 years and we had two daughters, Margaret and Barbara, whom we raised in Ennis."

Over the years, F.E. has been friends with many other employees at ESB. "You get to know other employees because they are here for a long time," he said. "We don't have a large turnover

**"I think a bank
 has an obligation to
 reach out and
 be available for the
 community."**

of employees. I think that is always an indication that it is a good place to work."

In 1993, Bramlet Beard was named president and CEO of Ennis State Bank, and still holds that position. "I enjoy working under Bramlet," F.E. said. "Bramlet is a good banker and he is super community-oriented. I think everybody in Ennis knows that. He gets involved in everything that is worthwhile in Ennis."

Bramlet's banking philosophy emphasizes a relationship with the community. "It is important to establish a relationship with a customer that is based on trust," Bramlet said. "The simplest way to do that is to satisfy his/her expectations; give him what he needs. Our customers expect a lot from ESB. They value personal relationships with their bankers whether it's with the teller who services their account daily or the loan officer who



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Over the years, ESB has been involved in many efforts to benefit the community. The bank has taken on its own Meals-on-Wheels route now. "There have been a lot of community activities over the years that bank associates have participated in, particularly through some of the local clubs, like Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Club," F.E. pointed out. "This bank has always been heavily involved in community activities, as they should be. I think a





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bank has an obligation to reach out and be available for the community, as much as is possible to be. This one has always been like that, and I am proud of that.

"At Christmastime, the Christmas Club accounts are very popular. They go [for] 50 weeks, and people can put aside money in an account and they can withdraw it toward Christmas. A great many people use those Christmas Club accounts to pay their taxes. It is a good way to set aside money." During the holidays, ESB is decked out for the season. "They make it look very festive." F.E. mused. F.E. enjoys the annual bank Christmas party. "We have it in a different place nearly every year."

"I do like Ennis; it is a nice place," F.E. said of his 60-year tenure here. "It is important to enjoy what you are doing. I really like working at the bank. I enjoy coming in, I look forward to coming. I hope I never retire. This is something that is important to me." **NOW**

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At Home With..... *James and Jennifer* **Robinson**

— By Sandra McIntosh

Many who pass the Atwood/Burden family home on Preston Street have wondered what lies beyond the home's massive, yet inviting, front entrance. The secrets of the three-story, six-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath home, which dates back to the early 1900s, are finally revealed, thanks to a holiday invitation from James and Jennifer Robinson. "The home was originally built in 1925," James said, referring to the historic marker on the front porch.

When the Burdens purchased the home in 1951, it underwent a complete overhaul. "They spared no expense in the remodel," James added. "In fact, the home is really over-engineered." Records show that the Burdens stripped the walls bare and redid all the plumbing, electrical and heating and cooling systems.

Before James, who at the time was single, bought the Georgian Revival-style home in 1999, it had sat empty for several years. When he decided to move out of his parents' home, he never dreamed he would buy this particular property. "I had a persistent real estate agent," he laughed, "who kept bringing me back to this





property." He lived in the home for two years before he and Jennifer were married on August 4, 2001. "During that 24-month period," James admitted, "not much had been accomplished."

Once Jennifer took her rightful place as "lady of the manor," updates and needed improvements began almost immediately. Progress was usually made one room at a time since she and James did most of the work themselves. "I guess you could say I added a woman's touch," Jennifer noted. She holds a degree in home furnishing merchandising, and the warmth and flow of the home



with its rich colors, antiques and wall decor are proof positive of her talent and natural eye for design. Along with a great deal of help from James' mother, Betty Glaspy, Jennifer has successfully blended the young couple's two styles into one that suits both of them perfectly.

Their first home update was repainting the smooth plaster walls on the first and second floors and adding plush carpeting to the bedrooms. They had all the original hardwood floors refinished and repaired and the exterior woodwork

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was repainted. The central heat and air conditioning system was also reworked. "It was so old and big that it had to be replaced," James explained. "I understand that the Burdens only ran the industrial-sized system for a few years before turning it off and adding window units."

Over the years, the couple has added two little ones to their family. Aaron is 5 and Addie is an active, inquisitive 22-month-old. The architectural additions to the home have been few, but they do include the kitchen remodel that took place in the mud and laundry rooms, not only to modernize the kitchen, but to utilize all the available space. The story behind the color palette is priceless and well worth the retelling. James thought it all began

with a dress Jennifer was wearing, but in reality a rug which once belonged to James' father was the inspiration for the robin egg blue in the formal living room.

A visit to the downstairs guest bathroom immediately reveals what colors were used throughout the home — they are all found in the wallpaper. The sunroom is palm-tree green and the kitchen is a deep cranberry. The bedrooms, home office and hallways



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are painted a soft butter cream. The walls in the formal dining room were not touched. The same wall covering, a hand-painted wallpaper mural of New Orleans chosen by Mrs. Burden, is still in place today. It wraps around the room, telling its own story and serving as a conversation piece during holiday family gatherings.

The same colors chosen in 2001 serve as the backdrop for the Christmas decorations on display throughout the home. Each year, they add to the Christmas ornaments they have purchased themselves or acquired as gifts from family members. The silver tree with its vast collection of Reed and Barton silver crosses, bells and balls is always placed in the dining



room. "The glass ornaments are gifts from James' maternal cousins," Jennifer expressed. "Last year, we added green bird cages with pink balls inside each cage. We also added lots and lots of ribbon."

What Jennifer refers to as the "fun trees" can be found in the sunroom. Two small trees are adorned with *The Wizard of Oz* ornaments which her grandmother started giving to her in 1994. The stockings date back to a time when James and Jennifer were children. The Nativity scenes are plentiful and include an intricately carved one from Jerusalem and another, the Fontanini, to which the couple adds each year. Antiques add to the warmth of the holiday decorations. The crib in the sunroom dates from the late 1700s. "It was the perfect resting place for the children," James said, "but now it's filled with blankets." With the addition of the pitcher collection Jennifer acquired from her maternal grandmother and the many antiques handed down from his mother's side of the family, you have a home steeped in rich history.



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All of Aaron's ornaments are on the tree in the upstairs playroom. "Some of them he made," Jennifer explained, "and some were given to him as gifts. The Hallmark ones are part of another collection we have." The tree in Aaron's bedroom is fiber optic. Aaron is mesmerized by the constantly changing colors. Addie's tree is pink with fairies and butterflies.



The main tree stands regally in the formal living room. The decorations on this tree are predominately glass and include 78 hand-blown glass balls in pink, green and blue, clear crystal ornaments, beads and lots of "big" ribbon. Elaborate table decorations adorn the antique tables scattered downstairs. Garland and ribbons are wrapped around the curved black



wrought iron banister leading to the second floor. Nutcrackers are placed among the garland in the kitchen windows. "It's a busy, but fun time," he explained, "with gatherings throughout the holidays with friends and family."

After several years in the making, James and Jennifer are comfortable in their new home. "I couldn't pry her away now," James laughed. "We live in a great central neighborhood where everyone cares about one another. We're walking distance from anything we could ever need." **NOW**

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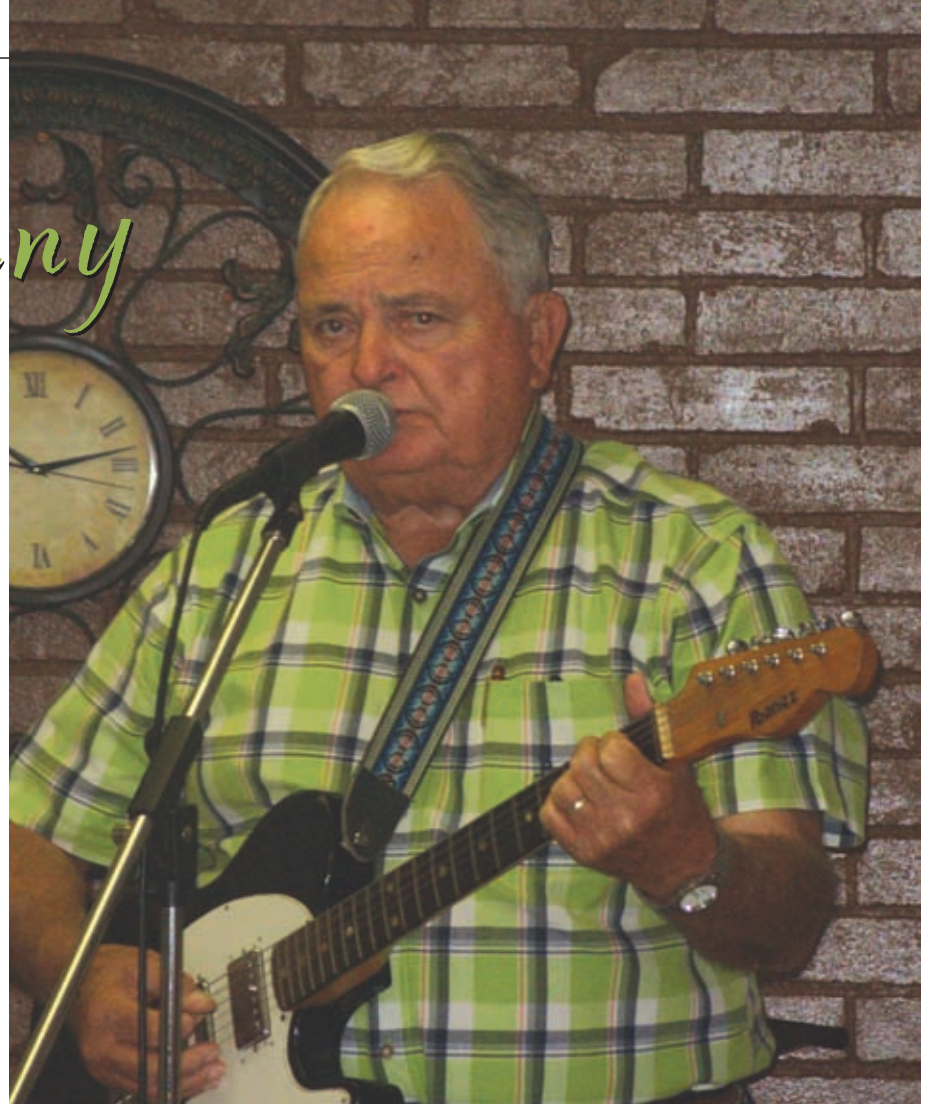
The Sunny Side of the Street

— By Kelly Kovar

Every phase of life goes a little better with music, and Charles Newman and Walter McNutt have teamed together to make sure that senior adults are still enjoying the sunny side of the street. Armed with guitars, amps and picks they head for Ennis nursing homes two or three times a week to entertain with their unique brand of uplifting music, which includes old pop songs, country western songs and country gospel. “We try to sing funny songs, like the ‘Hole Song’ or ‘Grandma’s Lye Soap,’” Charles said. “Grandma’s lye soap is good for everything on the place,” state the lyrics. The music of Charles and Walter can make the same claim.

“I play the guitar, and Charles plays piano and sings when we go to the nursing homes,” Walter said. “We play a lot of religious songs and a lot of songs from The Sons of the Pioneers. They really enjoy that.” If a piano is available at the venue, Charles will spend half the time on the piano, and then he will join Walter on guitar.

They sing and play at Odd Fellow & Rebekah Nursing Home (IOOF). They also bring their show to Claystone Healthcare Center, Ennis Care Center



and Alterra Sterling House, and have also played at Golden Circle Activity Center. Charles also plays guitar and sings at area opries and local church gatherings in addition to playing piano on Sunday mornings at the IOOF church service.

Ten years ago, Charles’ friend, Bess McCarty, invited him to come and perform at one of the nursing homes. “She used to be the activity director at a nursing home,” Charles recalled. “She said, ‘Why don’t you come out and play and sing for the residents?’ When she left that nursing home and went to work at another one, I kept playing at the first one, and went to the second one, too. It wasn’t too long until I thought, *Well, I will just start going to all of them.*”

About three years ago, Charles went to a jam session at his friend, Robert

Stockton’s house. “I have known Walter a long, long time, but I didn’t know that he played,” Charles recalled. “I went over there, and Walter was there playing.” Charles invited Walter to join him on his nursing home visits, and they have been performing together ever since.

Walter had been playing on and off since he was about 14, ever since his dad bought him his first guitar from Sears and Roebuck. “I played in little groups around Ennis and at school,” he said. The band director at school invited Walter to join, and he took up the coronet also.

Charles, too, began playing guitar as a teenager. “I had a good friend, Frank Edrington, back in elementary school. I think that kid must have been born knowing how to play because when we

were just little ole kids in a country school over here called Central High, he would play his guitar in the school plays. I told him I sure wished I could play the guitar. He said, 'Well, you get you a guitar, and I will teach you to play.' So, I got an old guitar some place. I was 14 or 15, maybe 16. I went up to his house one night and we started on one song." After three or four hours, Charles' fingers were hurting, but they kept at it until he learned his first song. Over the years, Charles has been in some country and western bands that played locally, including the Crippled Creek band and the Westernaires. One of his most successful musical ventures was a traveling *Hee Haw*-style show. "That thing grew until we had 30 people in it." On one occasion, a performer from the Light Crust Dough Boys was in the audience at a *Hee Haw*-style show, and came up on stage to join Charles on guitar.

Both men agree that the nursing home residents are wonderful audiences. "They are real appreciative," Walter said. "They come up in their wheel chairs and ask us, 'When are y'all coming back?' The doctors that go out to the nursing homes tell us that we are really doing a great deed for the residents."

"I used to wish that I had a lot of talent and that I was a real good singer and musician. Then I would be off playing for big crowds and going on tour," Charles said. "I am a Christian and I do believe in doing things for other people. I finally decided that the Lord gave me a little bit of talent and He had a place for me. These people at the homes need some entertainment and uplifting, too, so I am satisfied that this is my place in life at this time."

If you happen to hear Charles say, "Mind if we play you a couple of songs?" Then be sure and say, "Yes," because you are in for a treat that will bring a smile to your face and direct your feet to the sunny side of the street. **ARTS NOW**

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Affirmation

— By Kelly Kovar

"The goal of Upward is for each child to be able to play half of each game."

Colin Colburn has a heart for kids, having two of his own, and he loves sports. As a former tennis pro, he has spent a lot of time on the court. However, it is the basketball court which is taking up his time this year. He is the league director for Upward Basketball in Ennis. "Upward is a sports organization that places a priority on children. We care about the kids," Colin said. "This is going to be the first year of Upward in Ennis. I am willing to do this because this community needs a program like this. Basketball is becoming so popular now, even with girls."

Upward offers basketball, soccer and flag football. There are 400,000 children involved in Upward sports around the country, and Colin is anticipating adding two or three hundred to that number this year. "In December, kids come in and go through shooting and dribbling drills. We evaluate their skill level, and then they are put into a draft and assigned to each team based on skill level, so it will be pretty well divided as far as talent goes. So, you don't have all the slam-dunkers on one team." Two or three cheerleading squads are also formed.

When kids sign up, they get a uniform and a practice shirt that come in a gym bag. "The uniforms are reversible. One side is silver with blue numbers. The other side is blue with silver numbers. So, teams can flip their shirts to play the other team."

Colin's league includes boys and girls from pre-K through sixth grade. Games are played for fun and for learning, but are low-stress and noncompetitive. "Especially for third grade and under; they don't even stress keeping score. They just run the clock. For the fourth- through sixth-graders, if coaches want to keep score, that is fine, but there is not a champion of the league. You play one team one week, and then next week you play another team in your grade level. At the end of the season, there is not a winner. There is no second, third place. They just get out and play and have a good time."

Fifth- and sixth-graders use a regulation 10-foot basketball goal. Kindergarten and first-graders have a seven-foot goal, and the goals are adjustable. "We take our full-size basketball court and divide it into two half courts," Colin explained. "They play sideline to sideline so you can have two games going on at the same time."

Practices start January 5; each team practices once a week. There will be two to three weeks of practice before the first game on January 17. All games are on Saturdays during the daytime. Upward basketball has an eight-week schedule. "The goal of Upward is for each child to be able to play half of each game," Colin mentioned. Games are 36 minutes, with a half-time program that includes an inspirational message. At the end of the season, Upward holds an awards night, where coaches can recognize players' athletic abilities and character qualities.

"Upward is very heavily volunteer-led," Colin said. "Under the league


director there are commissioners who organize different parts of the league. One of those is a referee commissioner, who is responsible for recruiting referees. Randy Stephens is going to be the advertising commissioner. He is going to be in charge of passing out brochures in the community."

Lonnie Struggs is the commissioner of coaches. Lonnie grew up in Ennis and played basketball. "Basketball is still a passion of his," Colin remarked. "He recruits the coaches, and then holds the coaches training for them. We will need women and men coaches. The goal is for each coach to bring along their own assistant coach, maybe a co-worker. It is a community opportunity, and we will draw coaches from all over the community." Community businesses can become involved by donating \$75 scholarships for children to play.

Colin played YMCA basketball and tennis in high school, eventually attending Navarro College on a tennis and music scholarship. "I transferred to Tyler Junior College, and I went through a two-year associates program for city recreation." His sports background and love of children have brought him full-circle back to basketball.

"Upward basketball is geared toward building self-confidence in the kids," Colin said. "Upward really emphasizes using the circle of affirmation." Coaches model positive attitudes about referees' calls. Parents and grandparents are encouraged to be positive with the kids, the coaches and the referees. "It is a good thing for children to see what is happening in that type of environment."

Founded by Caz McCaslin, Upward's motto is: Every child plays; every child learns; and every child is a winner. Upward delivers a sports experience for kids, which includes a value-oriented, Christian message. "Upward is about engaging kids in an activity that they are going to love and that is going to be fun for them," Colin said. **NOW**




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One-stop Shop for RV Fun

— By Kelly Kovar

Jerry and Charmaine Traylor own and operate Traylor Motor Homes Inc. After 27 years in a Cedar Hill location, their successful business had outgrown the location. “We bought a feed store in Palmer, and gutted and redid it,” Charmaine recalled. “It has been nice because there are no other RV places in the area.” The couple sells and leases recreational vehicles (RVs) and also sells propane. “We do repairs, maintenance and upkeep to RVs.”

If you are just exploring the idea of vacationing in a recreational vehicle, Traylor is the place to find out more. “RVing is a wonderful family vacation. You can prepare meals in the RV, which really saves a lot of money and, best of all, you have wonderful time together, playing cards and games in the RV. Popular RV destinations are Disney World, Disneyland and Colorado,” Charmaine said. Buying an RV may be down the road for you, but a good way to test the waters is a short-term lease. The Traylor family is leasing agents for El Monte RV, a nationwide RV rental company.

“We have a lot of rental customers who have become buyers,” Charmaine mentioned. “Once you have been on a vacation in an RV, you have a much better idea of exactly what you need in one, as to sleeping accommodations, seating, floor plan, kitchen appliances and storage.” There are various types of recreational vehicles available. “They are all automatic, and

require only a standard driver’s license.”

Choices include Gulf Stream Coach travel trailers, which are sometimes called “bumper-pulled,” and 5th Wheels, also referred to as a “tag-alongs,” which are designed to attach to a special hitch in a pickup bed. “The trailers and the 5th Wheels are great for touring national parks or going on vacation. People like to be able to detach the trailer from the pickup and go sightseeing.”

There are also van motor homes, bus-type fronts and the cab-over, which features a sleeping section over the driver’s seat. “A van motor home is a type of vehicle which appeals to a lot of retirees. It is easier to drive, and still has all the amenities of a larger RV, but with better mileage,” Charmaine said. Van motor homes offer a kitchen with a refrigerator, microwave and a two-burner range. They have a bathroom and shower, seat four to six and sleep two to four people. “Besides retirees, who are a big customer base, van motor homes sell to dog trainers, to take [their animals] to shows, and to drug-testers, who use them in their work. Hunters really like pre-owned units to take to the deer lease.”

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Never Too Late

— By Patricia Anthony



Mary Dowell started working for the Ennis Independent School District as a paraprofessional in 1985. Later that same year, she was asked if she would also like to drive a school bus; Mary agreed. After working with the school district for 17 years, she thought, *If I'm going to continue working in this environment, I might as well get my degree so I can teach and earn more money.* So, she worked toward that goal. "My family members and co-workers were very supportive of the idea," she added.

After being awarded several scholarships through the Association of Texas Professional Education (ATPE) and receiving financial aid through the Aids Assistance Program, Mary was able to take classes offered by Texas A&M University on the Navarro campus. In 2004, she earned her bachelor's degree in education. After obtaining the degree, Mary began teaching fourth and fifth grade at Ennis Intermediate School, while choosing to continue driving a bus. "This allows me to put a little away for retirement," she said with a laugh.

Following three years in this position, Mary learned of an opening for a community based instructor (CBI). CBI is a program designed for students who need intensive instruction in functional and daily living skills. "I applied," Mary stated, "and I got the job. I made the change because I actually prefer working with older students." Her job allows her to work with students in grades nine through 12. "This program helps them gain the confidence and self-esteem

they need to get a job and, hopefully, be productive in society after they graduate."

Mary has helped colead the program for the last two years and currently teaches CBI-related science, consumer math and computers. The classes she teaches each year are determined by the individual needs of the students. She rotates shifts with one other teacher, Kristi Adair, and one student aide, Booker Washington. Kathryn Goss is their teacher's aide. Booker rotates field trips with Mary.

Monday through Thursday, students who participate in the program during their sophomore, junior and senior years have the opportunity to work in local businesses. Instructional areas, such as domestic and vocational work, are also incorporated into the students' on-campus schedule. The students enjoy Friday, which is often designated as "cooking day," when students learn cooking skills.

The businesses that currently allow students to come in and work are: Ennis Regional Medical Center (ERMC), HEB, Family Dollar, Burger King, Quality Inn and International House of Pancakes (IHOP). At the end of the month, the school actually pays the students a small sum of money. "The students really enjoy getting paid," Mary stated. "For most of them, it's the first time they've ever been paid to do work."

At ERMC, students do kitchen chores, such as wash, dry and put away dishes, wrap flatware, bag bread and sweep and mop the floors. HEB allows students to bag groceries.

Education **NOW**

The students stock and straighten shelves and racks at Family Dollar, while Burger King allows students to wash tables, chairs and countertops and

“It’s not where you start; it’s where you finish.”

sweep and mop the floor. Students learn to make beds, maintain cleanliness, vacuum the floor and dust the furniture at Quality Inn. “IHOP is the student’s favorite place to visit,” Mary said. “When they arrive, they anxiously put on their aprons to clean tables, chairs and windows and wrap silverware. Their treats are popcorn shrimp, fries and a drink. That’s why they love going there.”

Mary confided that she really enjoys watching her students’ progress. Several were timid when they first came to class, but that is no longer the case. One student is now interested in becoming a teacher’s aide. One young lady has expressed a desire to either land a job at HEB or work in a daycare center. These students are just a few of the prime examples of the success of the CBI program.

At the end of the school year, a luncheon is held in honor of both the students and employers. Students receive recognition plaques for honors like: most improved, most helpful, highest average and friendliest, while the local business people enjoy a nice meal.

Mary really enjoys working with the students and feels a special bond with them, although sometimes they can be a real challenge. Today, Mary’s family and co-workers are very proud of her accomplishments. She has earned the respect and recognition she receives. She is an excellent example of the old saying, “It’s not where you start; it’s where you finish.” **NOW**

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Dec. 24 - 7:00 p.m. - Candle Light Service
Dec. 25 - 10:30 a.m. - Christmas Day Service
Dec. 31 - 7:00 p.m. - New Year's Eve Service
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or 10:30 a.m. (contemporary)
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Around Town

NOW



Julie Kelly, top left, was on hand at Autumn Days with tickets for Kelly Manor Haunted House. SPJST youth, top center, rode upon an election year-themed float during a recent parade. One little Ennis sweetie, top right, had trouble trying to open a bottle of bubbles. George Bunting Jr., Nancy Lane, Cory Rogers and Tim Haley, second row left, made good use of a sunny day to play "Farmer's Golf." Kaleb and Kaleigh Wilhite, second row center, were thrilled to participate in the pumpkin painting during the 7th Annual Autumn Days. Howard Callahan and Kevin Baker, second row right, joined forces to do some grilling. The EHS Band, bottom right, performed a marching number.





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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SAM AND JOANNE VENTURA

ARTICHOKE DIP AU GRATIN

2 cups, Hellman's Mayonnaise
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
2 14-oz. cans artichokes, chopped
1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
1/2 tsp. white pepper
3/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
1/4 cup parsley, chopped
1/4 cup pistachios, finely ground
Combine 1/4 cup mayonnaise with garlic; blend. Drain artichokes; chop in small cubes. Combine artichokes with garlic mixture; add remaining mayonnaise, peppers, Parmesan and parsley. Place in ovenproof baking and serving dish. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake for 20 minutes at 350 F. I like to serve this with celery sticks, crusty French bread or toasted tortillas.

GARLIC SAUTÉED SPINACH

1 1/2 lbs. baby spinach leaves
2 Tbsp. good olive oil
2 Tbsp. (6 cloves) garlic, chopped
2 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper, freshly ground
1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
lemon
sea salt (optional)
Rinse spinach well in cold water; make sure it is very clean. Spin it in a salad spinner, leaving just a little water clinging to the leaves. In a very large pot or a Dutch oven, heat olive oil; sauté garlic on medium heat for about 1 minute, but do not brown. Add all the spinach, salt and pepper to the pot; toss it with the garlic and oil; cover the pot. Cook for 2 minutes; uncover pot, turn heat to high;

cook spinach for another minute, stirring with a wooden spoon until all spinach is wilted. Using a slotted spoon, lift the spinach into a serving bowl; top spinach with butter, a squeeze of lemon juice and a sprinkle of sea salt. Serve hot.

HUMMUS

2 cups canned chickpeas, drained, liquid reserved
1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/3 cup tahini (sesame paste)
6 Tbsp. lemon juice, freshly squeezed (2 lemons)
2 Tbsp. water or liquid from chickpeas
8 dashes Tabasco sauce
Place all ingredients in a food processor; process until hummus is coarsely

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puréed. Season to taste; serve chilled or at room temperature.

MUSHROOM CLAM SOUP


1/2 oz. dried shitake mushrooms, soaked in water 1 hour, drained
1 lb. mushrooms, chopped
1/3 cup butter
1/3 cup instant flour
3 cups bottled clam juice
1 cup water
1 1/4 cups whipping cream
salt and pepper to taste
Chop mushrooms in food processor; reserve. Melt butter; add flour. Cook over medium heat stirring until golden, making a light roux. Add clam juice, water and mushrooms; simmer for 10 minutes. Add cream; simmer 5 more minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve piping hot.

SUCCULENT RIB ROAST

1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. coarsely ground pepper
1 Tbsp. virgin olive oil
1 6 to 10-lb. prime rib roast
rosemary sprigs
Combine salt, pepper and olive oil; rub evenly over roast. Place roast on a wire rack in an aluminum foil-lined roasting pan. Bake for 45 minutes at 450 F. Reduce oven temperature to 350 F; bake 45 minutes or until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest portion registers 145 F (medium rare) or to desired doneness. Remove from oven; cover loosely with foil. Let stand 20 minutes before slicing. Garnish with rosemary sprigs and Fluffy Horseradish Sauce (recipe below).

FLUFFY HORSERADISH SAUCE


1 cup whipping cream
4 Tbsp. prepared horseradish
1 to 2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
1/4 tsp. garlic salt
Beat whipping cream at medium-high speed with a heavy-duty stand mixer, 1 minute or until stiff peaks form. Fold in remaining ingredients. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate up to 8 hours.



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The Best of Times and the Worst of Times

— By Gary Hayden

Since writing this article, certain events such as the passage of emergency legislation may cause conclusions to be altered. That being said, the economy is in for some volatile and strange times. What started with a subprime housing meltdown has cascaded across the housing market and the financial systems worldwide. It highlights the impact of a very connected global economy.

Because global growth is relatively strong, the demand for energy and raw materials is high, pushing prices up. Many businesses are struggling to pass through higher raw material costs, so margins are being squeezed, impacting profitability. Where businesses can, they are passing through higher costs to their customers. When they cannot, they are looking to cut expenses, which is why we see unemployment growing. One of the most important long-term trends going on today is what has happened to the U.S.; we have gone from being the world's largest and most dominant economy to simply just the largest.

The U.S. has two huge addictions, foreign oil and "plastic"

— as a country we are borrowing to live beyond our means. We depend on foreign capital flows both to finance our government deficit as well as all of our spending. This is part of the reason the U.S. dollar has fallen in value relative to other currencies. In 2003, one U.S. dollar bought 1.43 Canadian dollars — today it buys one. Economists have been talking for years about this situation, saying that it cannot go on forever. It appears that this is true and the buck stops here — with the American consumer. The main focus of the adjustment will be that we will have to save more and spend less.

While there is plenty of bad news to go around, it is a testament to the underlying strength and diversification of

the U.S. economy that the U.S. is not in a more severe slowdown. Many U.S. companies are doing well, with strong cash balances and reasonable debt loads. The housing problem took at least five years to be created — by easy lending standards and overbuilding especially in markets with a lot of speculative activity.

To conclude, we can expect that the economic slowdown and accompanying market downturn will end later, rather than sooner. These are times in

which we all will be looking for stability and soundness. The



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resolution of the election will likely be a positive for the market sentiment — but in and of itself will not fix anything. There is no easy or quick fix other than time needed to clear up the excesses that built up in the housing market. Consumers' adjustments to the new reality of saving more and spending less will go on for many years. And let us not forget how fortunate we are to live in this great country and collectively join hands in praying, "God bless America." **ENOW**

Gary Hayden is a Registered Representative of, and offers Security, Investment Advisory and Financial Planning services through, MML Investors Services, Inc. Supervisory Office: 777 Main Street, Suite 2260, Fort Worth, Texas 76102 • (817) 332-4451. Hayden Financial Partners is not an affiliate or subsidiary of MML Investor Services, Inc.



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COPD: It is Preventable

— Ron Rodriguez, D.O.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States, affecting 32 million people. It is the fifth leading cause of death worldwide. COPD is a chronic lung disease in which the lungs are damaged, making it harder to breathe. Men are more likely than women to develop the disease, and it occurs predominantly in individuals older than 40. However, recent studies reveal that since the year 2000, the number of female deaths associated with COPD exceed the number of male deaths. Chronic bronchitis, emphysema and in some cases, asthma are commonly associated with COPD.

When breathing in, air travels down the trachea and into the bronchial tubes. From the bronchial tubes the air is carried through small air passages that branch off into each of the lungs. At the end of each of the branches are thousands of little air sacs known as alveoli. The airways and air sacs of healthy lungs are elastic, springing back to their normal shape after filling with air. With COPD, the airways and air sacs lose their elasticity and shape, making it harder for air to flow out of the lungs. The air sac walls are destroyed and the walls of the air passages thicken and produce an increased amount of mucus, blocking the airways.

There is no cure for COPD. The damage to the airways and lungs is irreversible. Fortunately, it is preventable. Smoking is the primary cause of COPD. Smokers are 10 times more likely to develop COPD than nonsmokers.

Exposure to secondhand smoke may also increase a person's chance of getting the disease.

Another cause is exposure to indoor or outdoor pollutants. A recent study found that 19.2 percent of COPD cases are connected to work-related exposure to toxic chemicals and pollutants. A rare genetic disorder called Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency and other respiratory infections may be causes as well.

Symptoms such as persistent cough, increased mucus production, shortness of breath (especially during exercise), wheezing and a tight feeling in the chest are warning signs of the disease.

COPD is often mistaken for other conditions, such as "smoker's cough." It is sometimes under-diagnosed and mistreated for several reasons:

- Symptoms are often dismissed as being related to aging. People often attribute reduced physical ability and shortness of breath to normal aging. Shortness of breath, wheezing and reduced stamina could indicate COPD and should not be ignored.
- COPD is commonly confused with asthma. Studies have shown that some people with COPD have been misdiagnosed with asthma. Shortness of breath, wheezing and chest tightness are symptoms of both conditions. However, it is vital that COPD is correctly diagnosed and treated.
- Symptoms can be misunderstood during the early stages. Smokers dismiss the shortness of breath and cough



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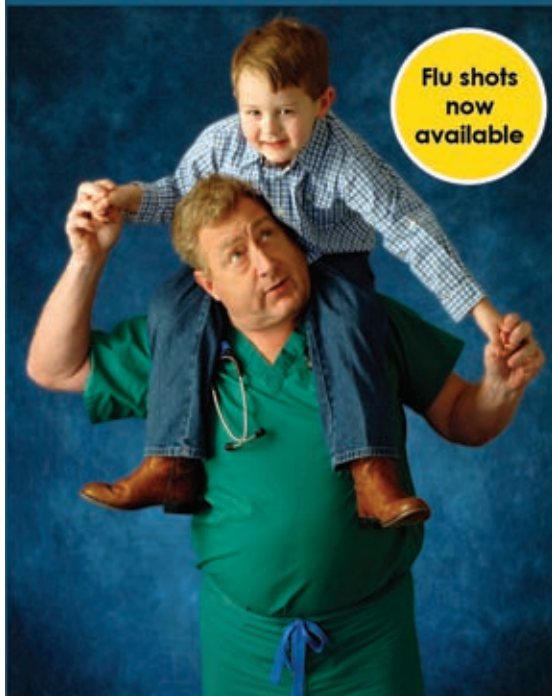
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associated with smoking. Quitting will not eliminate the symptoms of COPD once the condition is present, but smoking cessation can help slow the progression of COPD and is always advised.

Although there is no cure for COPD, the symptoms can be manageable. Lifestyle changes, such as smoking cessation, regular exercise and a healthy diet may improve shortness of breath and strengthen the body. Patients are encouraged to visit a physician to discuss medications and treatment options that may also be appropriate. If you are experiencing symptoms associated with COPD, seek medical attention early to reduce your risk of developing COPD. **NOW**

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December 2008

Community Calendar

All Month

Please visit the Ennis Railroad and Cultural Heritage Museum, located at 105 N.E. Main. Railroad Museum Hours: Monday - Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Saturdays: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Sundays: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (972) 875-1901.

December 4

Christmas Parade of Lights, 7:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. For more information, contact Ennis Convention and Visitors Bureau at (972) 878-4748.

December 5 - 22

A Christmas Story by Jean Shepherd, adapted by Philip Grecian, presented by the Ennis Public Theatre: 2705-C N. Kaufman St. Fridays and Saturdays: 8:00 p.m. Special December 22 Monday night showing: 8:00 p.m. December 14 and 21 matinees: 2:30 p.m. \$15 adults/\$12 students and seniors. (972) 878-PLAY.

December 6

Mosaic Madness Teen Event, 11:00 a.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave. Reservations required. (972) 875-5360.

December 7

Gospel Music Ministry show, First United

Methodist Church, 300 N. Sherman. Free. (972) 875-7491.

December 8, 9

Upwards Basketball Evaluations for boys and girls, Family Life Center Gym, 1200 Country Club Rd. December 8: Pre-K - 2nd grades. December 9: 3rd - 6th grades. Registration: \$75. Call Tabernacle Baptist Church office for times and details. (972) 875-3861.

December 11

Chick-fil-A's 12 Days of Christmas kick-off day, featuring 94.9 KLTY radio crew's live broadcast of Christmas Wish. Everyone making a donation to Christmas Wish will receive a free chicken biscuit.

The African Children's Choir performance at The Lighthouse, located at 1400 N. 9th St., Midlothian. The African Children's Choir's goal is to change Africa's future by providing education and hope for today's children. For more information, call (972) 723-6197.

December 17

Monthly luncheon of Ellis County Christian Women's Connection (affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries), Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W.

Hwy. 287 at I-35 East, Exit 401B, Waxahachie. \$13. Nursery vouchers available. Reservations preferred, walk-ins welcome. For reservations, call Kay at (972) 937-2807 or Mary at (972) 937-9984, or e-mail Kay at windchime@charter.net by December 14.

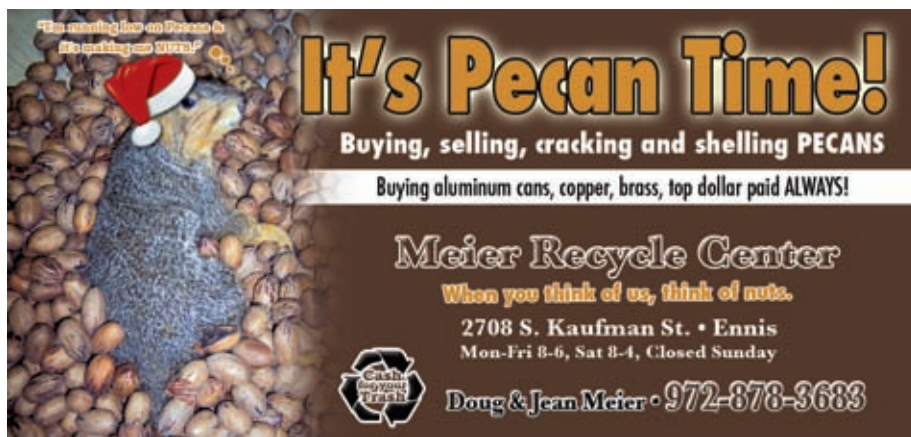
December 20, 21

Live Nativity at New Beginnings Bible Church, 1970 FM 983, Ferris. Live camels, goats, sheep and donkeys along with live actors and church choir. Showtimes: 6:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Free Hot Chocolate. (972) 842-2800. www.newbeginningsbiblechurch.com.

December 22

Chick-fil-A will be taking donations throughout the day for the Women's Resource Center. Anyone making a donation will receive a free entree of their choice. Recommended donations include receiving blankets, baby booties, pacifiers, bottles, onesies, diapers, etc.

For more community events, visit our online calendar at www.nowmagazines.com.



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