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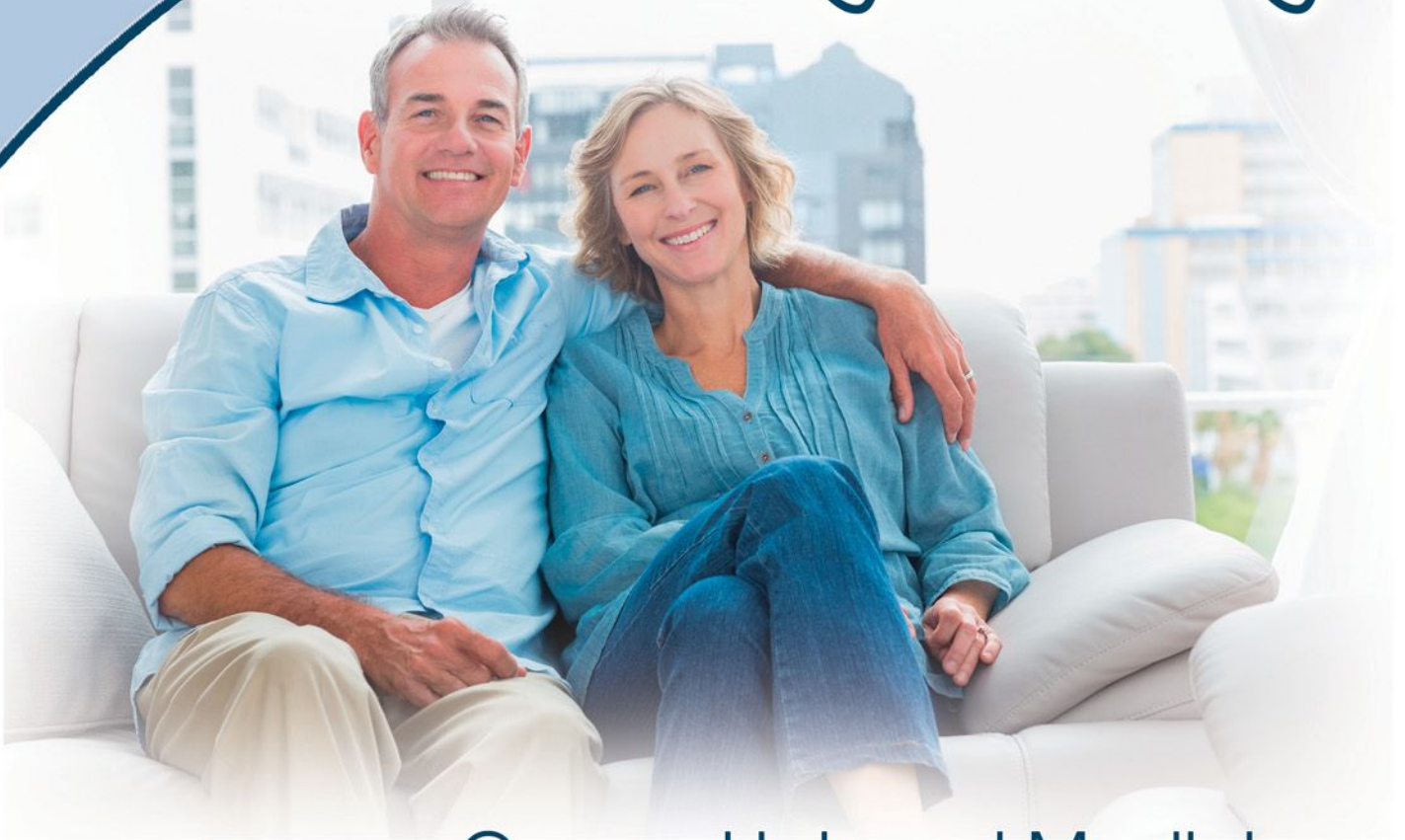
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ON THE COVER



Elijah and Patricia Wilborn's beautiful home reflects their romance.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

What's love got to do with it? ...

My answer is, "A lot," whether it's in February, the month of romance, or at any other time of year. And I bet Tina Turner, whose cynical song by that name was famous in the '80s, would agree. Although the legendary chanteuse was crooning about love gone awry, her own story reveals love has played a big part in her life. Because love isn't only for lovers, is it? It's more than red roses or sweethearts whispering sweet nothings.

Love belongs to friendship, too, although Valentine's Day doesn't address the fact as well as it should. After all, the purest, most enduring love is the love between friends. With the setback I'm overcoming, regaining my mobility and independence, I've never known such an outpouring of love as has come my way from family, friends and *EnnisNOW* readers and co-workers. So, yes, if you ask me, love has everything to do with it!

Randy

Randy Bigham
EnnisNOW Editor
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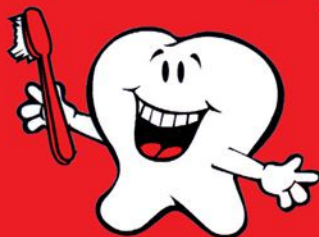


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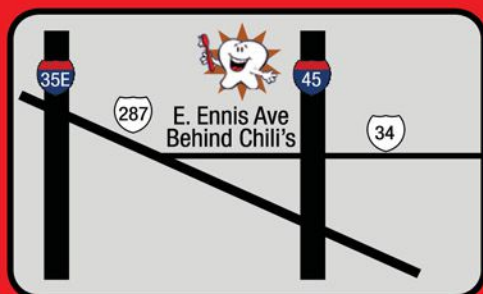
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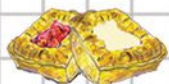


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Wild at H

— By Donnielle Tynes

Not everyone has crossed paths with a wild horse, much less attempted to train and compete with one. But Ennis natives Tricia Hambrick and her daughter, Autumn, have done that and more. The mother and daughter team adopted two wild Mustangs through the Fort Worth Mustang Heritage Foundation in April last year. Although it was their first attempt at taming wild horses, the pair excelled and won almost \$2,000 in the September 2013 Mustang Millions competition. "It's amazing how wild they were," Tricia explained. "You've never met a wild thing until you've tried to train a wild Mustang." Last year's Mustang "makeover" contest offered a grand prize of \$1 million dollars, the largest sum offered in this genre of competition ever.

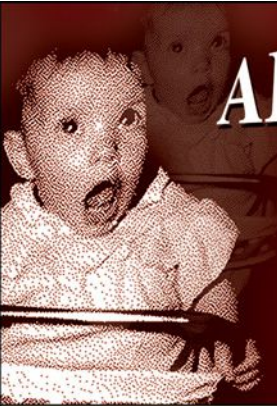
Both horses were completely wild — in fact they had hardly been touched by humans — when Tricia and Autumn adopted them. The Mustang Heritage Foundation receives its horses through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM and the Mustang Heritage Foundation then work together in order to remove the horses from the wild and ensure they are adopted. Once the adoption papers were filed, the Hambricks looked forward to training their horses, but they needed to catch them first. "Catching a horse sounds like an easy thing, but wild Mustangs don't want to be touched," Tricia clarified. The horses, Tricia's 2-year-old and Autumn's yearling, were characteristically less aggressive because of their youth. However, both were underfed and not at their strongest when they arrived at the Hambricks' farm.

east

Training started with Autumn's yearling, who, despite the young horse's sensitive, skittish nature, was surprisingly easy to catch. Tricia, the more experienced equestrienne, laid the foundation of proper training before Autumn took over, so the horse "wouldn't learn any bad habits." Once Autumn took the literal reins, Tricia decided to enter both horses in a few shows for practice. "The more shows we went to the better the horses got," Trisha said with pride. "Autumn gained confidence as well. It was amazing the difference between when she first started and now." Autumn, active in volleyball, gymnastics and cheerleading and Tricia, who works full time, had to train in their spare time. Since horse training isn't what the twosome does for a living, there were times when neither horse was worked with. But the Mustangs were always as lovingly cared for during these intervals of inactivity as they were while in training and competition.

Tricia's horse, however, was more challenging than Autumn's from the start, being very difficult to catch. Tricia used natural horsemanship techniques and at times, managed to get close to the frightened female Mustang, but touching spooked and stressed the horse too much. Eventually, Tricia had to recruit a friend to help rope the animal, and after some time and patience, her horse could tolerate the rope. But the Mustang still would not allow anyone to touch her. It wasn't an easy task. "Mustangs will strike at you, kick





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and try to bite — they can and will try to kill you,” Tricia cautioned. “You have to keep all those things in mind when you work with them.” With plenty of help to ensure a safe capture, Tricia finally got



her horse calmed down enough to work with her a little, and she really started to come around. Tricia and Autumn couldn't believe just how different their horses' personalities were.

Neither of the women had ever showed “in-hand” before. They pursued lessons everywhere and enlisted friends to help them train. In fact, as the pair insisted, anyone who would listen to them, and who wasn't daunted by the Mustangs, was sought out. “When people hear you have Mustangs, they don't want anything to do with them, because they are wild,” Tricia made clear.



Every weekend, Tricia and Autumn participated in a clinic or a local show in order to get the horses better trained. Before the Mustang Millions Competition, Tricia competed in the category of reining. "Reining is when the rider trains the horses to run patterns," Tricia pointed out, "such as big and small circles and sliding stops. The judges score you on how well you do the maneuvers, unlike a rodeo where your speed is your score. Reining is completely different than in-hand."



At the 2013 Mustang Millions Competition, Autumn won sixth place, an impressive feat since she was up against more experienced handlers in her age division of 8- to 12-year-olds. She competed in handling, trail and pattern. The different categories tested Autumn's ability to control her horse while walking

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through various obstacles, navigating cones and jumping barrels. "If you don't know horses, those things sound like a perfectly acceptable thing to do," Tricia acknowledged. "But horses think each one of those things is going to kill them because they're prey animals, and it's their job to look for everything that will eat them!"

Unlike Autumn, Tricia's classes didn't have an overall combined score. Yet for a first timer, she fared well in the three categories in which she competed. She won fifth in freestyle, second in trail and sixth in Mustang handling. Autumn and Tricia's wins are all the more inspiring as the majority of the other winners of the Mustang Millions Competition were professional horse trainers.

Autumn loved competing. "When I got to the show, I was really nervous, but then it went away," the young rider enthused. "Some of the older kids were intimidating, but not all of them." Eventually, she wants to compete again, but Tricia thinks it's best that Autumn find her yearling a home before adopting another. Autumn's yearling is currently up for adoption.

Tricia will show her Mustang again "under saddle" at the 3-year-old Futurity competition in September, and won't adopt another Mustang this year. "There is a lot of training to do in a short amount of time," Tricia expounded, "and there is the wild factor. It's not like someone hands you a tame horse to train."

To properly train a Mustang takes years, and the work is a huge commitment. Even so, Tricia hopes someday she'll have the extra time to adopt another wild Mustang and go through the exhilarating, rewarding process again. In her mind, and in her equally enthusiastic daughter's opinion, there's no question that owning a Mustang is well worth the effort. **NOW**

Merle Filecia

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Merle holds a Master's degree in nursing from Texas Woman's University and has practiced in Ennis since 2006. Prior to her experience here, she was an accomplished cardiac and emergency nurse in Houston, Texas where she was recognized with numerous specialty certifications. She is very well-trained to provide the full spectrum of family care from infants to older adults.



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AT HOME WITH ELIJAH AND PATRICIA WILBORN

— By Rick Herron

Once upon a time, on a windswept hill east of Ennis, in a beautiful stucco home with 28 windows, there lived a pair of high school sweethearts who found each other again later in life. They got a second chance at love.

Elijah and Pat Wilborn are that couple, and they are living a fairy-tale life on what they have appropriately named Magic Hill Ranch off of FM 85. “We dated all through high school,” Pat related. “After graduation, Elijah went off to the military, and I went to college in Fort Worth. We somehow lost touch with each other.”

After getting her nursing degree from Texas Christian University, Pat, who was born in Midlothian, reared in Ovilla and graduated from high school in Ennis, worked as an intensive care nurse and later in the home health industry in the Ennis area before retiring in 2000. In the meantime, Elijah, originally from Rice, went to work for the Southern Pacific Railroad in Ennis and then at Trac-Work, Inc. in Oklahoma after returning from military service. He too retired in 2000. “We had drifted apart after high school, married others and had kids,” Pat remembered. Elijah eventually returned to the Ennis area, and shortly afterward, his



RANCH



mother broke the news to Pat's sister that he was back in town.

"Elijah's mother was at my sister's beauty shop in Ennis, getting her nails done," Pat said. "I came into the shop while they were talking, and she told me he was back. My sister gave Elijah's mother my phone number, and he called me for a date."

The couple agreed to meet for breakfast in 1990. After that meal, the couple began dating. And after going out for five years, they married on July 29, 1995.

Elijah began scouting the area for property shortly afterward and found 40 acres east of Ennis that included a pond, something he definitely wanted so he could fish without going very far from home. "I bought the property in 1996, and we decided to build a house

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in 2001," Elijah said. "We designed the house ourselves and had an architect draw up the blueprints. Our goal was to live in a house that didn't require a lot of maintenance, had very few walls and a lot of windows."

The 2,700-square-foot, single-story home sits on the highest point in the property, which provides a 360-degree view that goes for miles, enjoyable from practically any place in the home. The home has an open living area, three

bedrooms, two-and-a-half bathrooms, a dining area, kitchen and den and features hardwood floors and stained concrete throughout in keeping with Elijah and Pat's requirement for low maintenance.

From the living area, an entire wall of windows along the north side of the room allows the couple to keep an eye on the entrance gate to their property and the fishing pond, not to mention any rain clouds moving in from the north. A built-in hutch, separating the living area

from the dining room, displays just a few of Pat's collection of colorful teapots behind glass. "I can't recall how the collection started," she confessed. "I love to drink tea, so I thought they were something to have."

A hallway off the formal living room leads to a guest bedroom, which is connected to the second guest bedroom by a Jack-and-Jill bathroom. All the doorways throughout the open and spacious home are extra wide, designed

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to accommodate wheelchairs. “I made sure the house would be built completely wheelchair accessible,” Pat said. “We’ve taken care of elderly relatives who were in wheelchairs, and we’re all set in case wheelchairs are in our future, too.” In addition to the large doorways, there are wheelchair ramps leading up to the front and back doors.

The kitchen is open to the den and eating area and features a Jenn-Air cooktop and an island, in addition to a walk-in pantry and two refrigerators, a standard-sized one and a smaller one built into the island. “We both like to cook,” Pat laughed. “I like to bake, and Elijah is your basic meat-and-potatoes type of man.”

More windows in the den display a vista to the north. A large wood-burning fireplace, flanked by built-in bookcases, a large television cabinet and pool table complement the room, which is crowned with an inset ceiling.

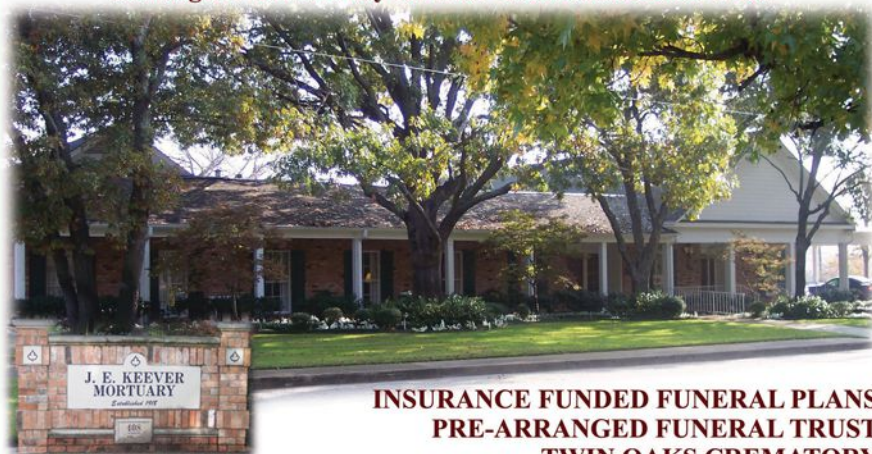
The master bedroom has a large screen television on one wall and a two-sided corner fireplace, also open to the master bathroom. The master bath has a shower complete with six jets and a rain shower head. There’s also a jetted bathtub next to a long countertop with two basins. A door from the bedroom leads to a small outdoor patio. From the patio, it’s easy to see the couple’s three-car garage and one of Elijah’s future projects — a 1953 Ford automatic shift classic car. “I plan to restore this car one day,” Elijah said, “when Pat and I aren’t on the road to another adventure.”

In the pasture behind their home, six horses graze. The couple’s menagerie



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also includes one dog, one chicken and one guinea hen. When they are at home, Elijah and Pat are active with Hopewell Baptist Church in Rice, where Elijah is a deacon and trustee, and Pat is a deaconess. "Elijah went to that church when he was just a child," Pat shared.

They are also involved with Unity in the Community of Ennis, a nonprofit organization Pat helped to create. According to the organization's website, Unity in the Community of Ennis "is a nonprofit organization that operates as a resource to bring medical and human needs awareness, events and activities to the elderly, underprivileged and the misinformed citizens of the Ennis community. The work of the organization is supported by tax-deductible contributions made by individuals, companies and organizations."

"When I was taking care of my mom and dad during their declining years, there was so much information I needed, but had no idea where to find it," Pat said. "My sister, a close family friend and I decided to create a clearing house for use by people who are in that situation."

When they aren't enjoying all the amenities of their hilltop home, the couple enjoys traveling to different states. They've been to almost every state in the country. "We have about 15 states left to visit. We travel by car or motorcycle," she said, as Elijah nodded in agreement.

Traveling to new and exciting places on another adventure is fun. But for Elijah and Pat Wilborn, coming home to Magic Hill Ranch is always the best part of the journey. **NOW**

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You're ENGAGED... Now What?

— By Shannon Pfaff



He finally popped the question, and you said, “Yes!” Now it is time to plan your wedding. When you sit down to plan, you may be overwhelmed trying to figure out where to begin. Several things should be considered: the date, the location, the cost, etc. But one of the major tasks to think about is finding the dress. No matter how long the engagement, it is never too early to start shopping for your wedding attire.

One of the first things to decide regarding the perfect dress is budget. A good rule is to budget 10 percent of the overall wedding fund for the dress, accessories and alterations. Wedding dresses can cost anywhere from \$400-\$4,000 depending on the store and brand. Larger bridal stores will have less expensive dresses, whereas the bridal salons will have pricier designer dresses with handmade details. If your wish is to have a custom-made dress, expect to pay more. When you decide what your dress budget will be, factor in the cost of alterations. Alterations for your dress can cost \$100 or more. Remember, most dresses don't come with a bustle, so you will have to pay an alteration fee.



Another thing to consider when shopping for a wedding dress, is your body type. Some brides make the mistake of planning to shop for a dress when they have lost weight or ordering a dress in the size they plan to be for the wedding. It is best to shop early and purchase a dress based on your current size. You can always have the dress altered later if you lose weight. Body type is more than just dress size, you need to think about your body shape as well. Are you shaped more like an hourglass? A triangle-or pear-shape? An apple-shape? Or a rectangle-shape? Knowing your shape can help you determine which dresses will accentuate your best features and mask the ones you like least.

Shopping for your dress may be stressful, but it should be fun and exciting as well. Consider bringing a close friend or family member with you while you shop. Second opinions can help when you are trying to narrow down your



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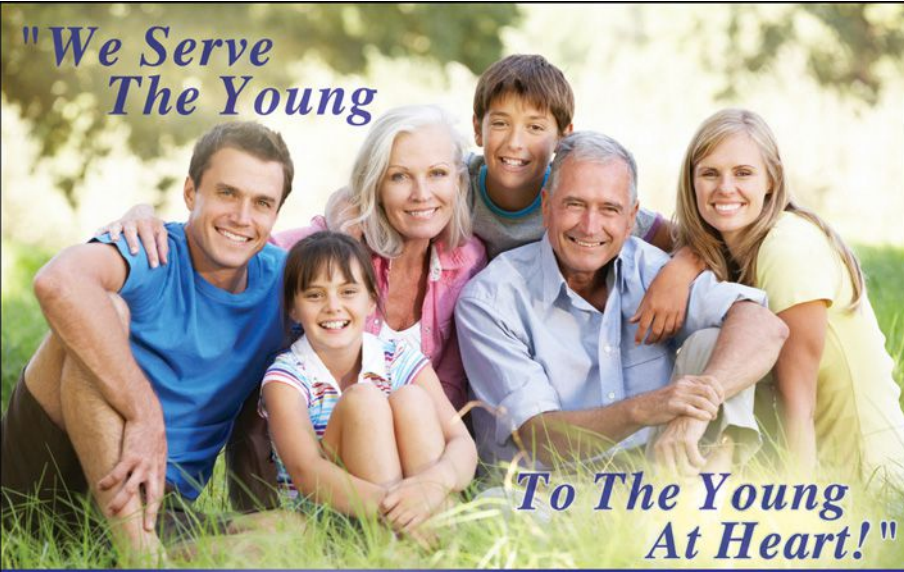
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choices. Then there is the added bonus of having someone who isn't working on commission tell you how beautiful you are. Of course, you can bring more than one person with you while you browse, but don't feel obligated to bring everyone who expresses a desire to go with you.

Whatever dress you decide to wear, make sure you love it. Begin shopping early to allow time to look at multiple stores with plenty of time for shipping your dress. With many bridal store options available, you are sure to find the dress that fits your budget and your body type perfectly. Don't be afraid to go back and try a dress on two or three times. After all, you will be gracing the aisle, and you'll want to feel good about how you look.

For more help with planning your wedding, here is a timeline to keep you on track:

12 Months Before:

- Select a date.
- Think about the wedding type — formal or informal.
- Set a budget.
- Hire a wedding planner, if desired.
- Reserve ceremony and reception sites.
- Select attendants.
- Select and book caterers, photographers, videographers, florists, musicians, etc.
- Begin compiling guest list.

- Shop for wedding dress and accessories.
- Start planning honeymoon.

Nine Months Before:

- Order your dress and accessories.
- Create a wedding website.

Six Months Before:

- Send save-the-date cards.
- Sign contracts and place deposits for wedding services.
- Reserve rental equipment — tables, chairs, tents, etc.
- Meet with officiant to go over ceremony details.
- Choose attendants' attire.
- Order wedding cake.
- Book honeymoon.
- Begin planning rehearsal.

Four Months Before:

- Schedule fitting.
- Schedule appointments for hair and makeup.
- Register for gifts.
- Purchase or reserve groom's attire.
- Book accommodations for wedding night.
- Choose and order favors.
- Choose gifts for wedding party.
- Order invitations, announcements and stationary.
- Arrange transportation for the wedding day.
- Compile a music list for your ceremony/reception.

Two Months Before:

- Go over final details with service providers — menu, flowers, etc.
- Address invitations and announcements.
- Make a list of readings for the ceremony.
- Complete the order of the ceremony and reception.
- Print programs.
- Purchase wedding rings.
- Send event schedule to the vendors.
- Shop for ceremony/reception accessories, such as a cake knife and the guest book.
- Schedule rehearsal and rehearsal dinner.

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Six Weeks Before:

- Mail invitations.
- Discuss wedding photo ideas with photographer and videographer.
- Send announcement to newspaper.
- Prepare all of the necessary name change documents.

Four Weeks Before:

- Obtain marriage license.
- Make final payments to vendors.
- Arrange for final dress fitting.
- Confirm times with all vendors, including hair and makeup.
- Assign seating for reception.

Two Weeks Before:

- Notify caterer or reception venue of the guest count.
- Address announcements.

One Week Before:

- Pick up wedding rings.
- Confirm details with all service providers, including arrival times.
- Verify that all attendants have picked up their formalwear.
- Delegate wedding day tasks — transporting gifts, bustling dress, etc.
- Make sure attendants know when to arrive for the rehearsal, rehearsal dinner and wedding.
- Pick up your dress.
- Set aside final payments for vendors.
- Pack for honeymoon.
- Advise caterer of changes to guest count.

The Day Before:

- Review seating arrangements with the ushers.
- Make sure groom's attire is picked up.
- Rehearse ceremony.
- Rehearsal dinner.

The Wedding Day:

- Eat something!
- Relax and enjoy your special day! **NOW**



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1 Medicare & You. National Medicare Handbook, Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (Revised 12/2011).

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Body of Work

— By Donnielle Tyner

Passion comes from a fire deep inside, and it's what usually drives those who have a vision for the future. For Brandon Everett, the flames of passion are not the only fire that pushed him to become an award-winning body builder. In the summer of 2011, the home where Brandon and his parents, Richard and Vicki Everett, lived for two years burned to the ground. "The fire forced me to realize just how quickly your life can change," Brandon shared.

Brandon's decision to become a body builder was founded on his desire for overall body wellness, as well as being inspired by the movie *Pumping Iron* and the lifestyle choices of many of his family members. "My dad was a body builder when he was 16," Brandon explained. "I want to show that if you have the right diet and exercise program, you can look great without using steroids or other unhealthy supplements. You just have to put in the effort and dedication of training hard and eating healthy."

His journey, which involved researching proper diet and exercise routines, began shortly after he completed his senior year in high school. He also gleaned knowledge from his cousin, Mike Radice, in Chicago, who has been a personal trainer for 13 years. Mike prepared all Brandon's workout schedules and taught him all he needed to know about diet. Once he discovered the balance between proper nutrition and exercise, Brandon began working out. His cousin taught him to train heavily, reaching the point where muscles fail after the sixth or eighth rep. And in order to stay in proportion for competition,





Brandon needed to work each muscle group evenly.

In the beginning, he didn't have a gym membership or access to any professional equipment, so he worked in his backyard. "I found out I loved working out, so I kept doing it and haven't stopped since," Brandon enthused. After he graduated from high school, the ambitious young man furthered his education in fitness by taking classes at Navarro College and is now working to become a registered personal trainer.

Two months into training, Brandon's parents were inspired by his level of dedication and the obvious results of his commitment to fitness. They, too, joined Brandon in his quest for healthy living. Through the loss of their home and the subsequent stress of rebuilding, the realization dawned on Richard and Vicki that neither of them was as healthy as they used to be. Once the house was rebuilt and his parents were ready, Brandon shared his understanding of proper nutrition with them and became their physical trainer. With their son's help, Richard lost almost 100 pounds, and Vicki lost 65. "It's motivating to see my parents achieve their goals after going through such hard times," Brandon admitted.

Brandon's first body-building contest, the Texas State Naturals, was in June 2013, just over a year after he began training. To compete in a Naturals match, each entrant is drug tested to prove they haven't used steroids in their training. At competition, Brandon was judged based on body symmetry, posture and how well he moved from one pose to another. "It was exciting," he recalled, "yet nerve-racking, to stand on the stage in front of



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Brandon's fan club includes his brother, Bobby; h
and his da

a crowd of people to show them what your body can become naturally, if you put in the hard work." He left that first competition with a second place trophy and motivation to work out even harder.

Brandon's initiation to competitive bodybuilding brought to light a few improvements he needed to make. One was buckling down on his diet by cutting out carbs and drinking more water in order to achieve better muscle definition. When the time came for his second competition, the National Natural Championship, in August 2013,



he had advanced well enough to take first place in the teen category and second place in the men's novice classification. "It was a life-changing feeling," he confessed, "achieving placement in the National competition." After winning, the president of the National Natural Championship offered him a place in the




his mom, Vicki; Bobby's girlfriend, Charity Pittman; d, Richard.



Olympia Competition, one of the biggest body-building matches in the country. It was an exciting offer, but without sponsorship Brandon couldn't afford to make the trip to California. He still hopes to be able to compete there someday.

The experience has taught Brandon that becoming a body builder not only takes dedication and hard work, it also takes a chunk out of the wallet. First and foremost, the expense of a proper, high-protein diet to encourage muscle gain and fat loss adds up pretty fast. On a typical training day for Brandon, he will consume three pounds of chicken plus rice, vegetables and two gallons of water. "It's very pricey feeding a body builder," he said. "My mom spends hundreds of dollars a week on meals." Secondly, without sponsorship, the cost to compete can be prohibitive. In order to compete in Olympia, Brandon will have to foot the bill for travel expenses, registrations for each individual competition and various other fees.



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Even without Olympia, 2014 will be a big year for Brandon. He is starting his own personal training company, Alpha Fitness & Health. Working with others will keep him motivated, and he plans to use that motivation to help him gain size for competition later in the spring.

No matter what, Brandon's regrets are nil. He and his family have found fulfillment in realizing health matters.



And Richard, Vicki, and Mike are proud of the success Brandon is enjoying. More than that, they're inspired by his devotion to living better and helping others to accomplish their own health goals. "Staying fit," Brandon said with conviction, "is something I'm going to do for the rest of my life." **NOW**

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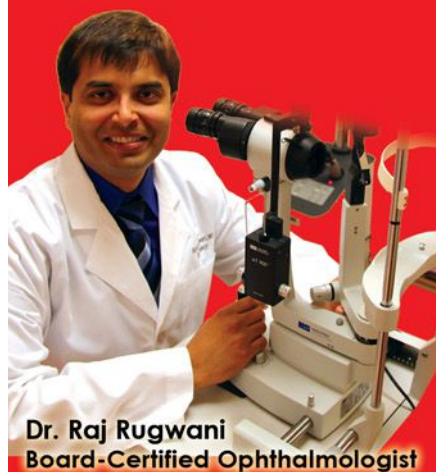
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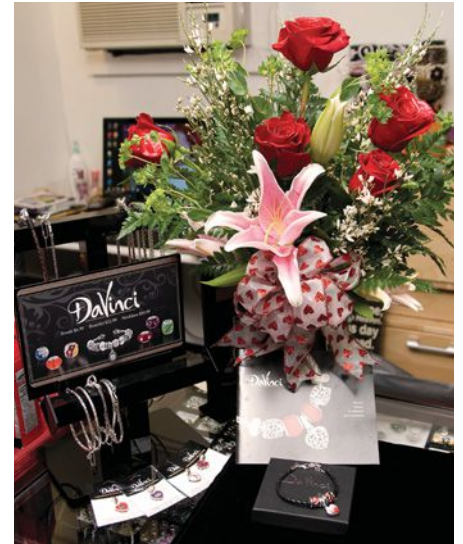
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The co-owners of Ennis Flower Shop and Ennis Gift Shop & Boutique sell unique gifts and flower arrangements. Shannon Hartzel (top left), with the help of her floral designer, Amy Davis (bottom left), runs the Flower Shop. Carla Phillips (top right) runs the Gift Shop side.

The Proverbial Bow

People are the real deal at Ennis Flower Shop and Ennis Gift Shop & Boutique.

— By Melissa Rawlins

Enter through either door at 402 Ennis Ave., and customers feel as though they've just come home. Sisters Shannon Hartzel and Carla Phillips, co-owners of the space shared by Ennis Flower Shop and Ennis Gift Shop & Boutique, will immediately put you at ease. Relaxing and enjoying the sights and smells is easy in both shops, since the sisters seemed to inherit similar talents and values from their childhood in a Waxahachie pastor's home.

Both ladies serve their customers in every way, trying to get to know them and giving them quality products and undivided attention. "We treat people with respect," Shannon said. "Even if they have experienced a problem, we've always fixed it, and they always come back."

People return, actually, because the distinctive designs in Carla's boutique and gift shop change as often as the flourishing displays in Shannon's flower shop. The one flower Shannon rarely has, but Carla always offers, is the bluebonnet.

"To honor the people of Ennis, I created a whole corner full of bluebonnet gift items, from hand-painted ceramic tiles to Christmas tree ornaments," Carla said. She pastors Covenant Life Church with her husband, John, every Wednesday evening inside Ennis Flower Shop. On working days, Carla fine-tunes her gift shop, rotating selections so that men and women giving presents will always find something unique for their special someone. Gift wrapping is always offered. Carla suggests unusual items handcrafted by local artists. She offers the

Business **NOW**

sought-after room fresheners from Poo-Pourri, displayed near boutique ladies' clothing and accessories.

At Ennis Gift Shop & Boutique, people can always select eye-catching gifts for teachers and students with Lion pride. Teens preparing for prom can find beautiful jewelry to match their gowns. Carla loves demonstrating the lockets and charm bracelets by DaVinci. One whole wall displays sturdy, yet glamorous crosses that tuck nicely into a flower arrangement for a funeral. Carla also offers vases that can be used in custom centerpieces created by Shannon and her right-hand designer, Amy, in Ennis Flower Shop.

Using high-quality flowers, Amy and Shannon create arrangements that make a lasting impression. "Amy is very artistic," Shannon said, beaming with pride. "It doesn't matter what our customer wants, whether traditional or cutting-edge, we'll create custom orders." They recently made a funeral arrangement for a WWII veteran's daughter. She asked that it look exactly like his Purple Heart medallion, and the duo at Ennis Flower Shop made it happen.

Shannon and her husband, Doug, are busy this month preparing and delivering specialty valentines: gift baskets filled with candy, fruit or snacks; large and small flower arrangements; even teddy bears with helium balloons tied to their wrists. Year-round, delivery prices are quite affordable, from \$3 in the city to \$10 for delivery to Waxahachie, Italy, Palmer or Corsicana. "We never say 'We can't.' Give us the opportunity, and we'll rise to the challenge," said Shannon, who has cried with people who have come in after losing a husband or a child.

"We're also happy with people who come in for celebratory gifts," Carla said. "We care about the person, not just making a sale." Offering all sorts of extra touches, Carla and Shannon know just how to tie the proverbial bow on every customer's package. **NOW**

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Cousins Sebastian Yanez and Sophia Dorado have fun on their photo shoot by the historic train station in Waxabachie.



Congratulations to the Lionette Elites on their Grand Champion win.



Children have fun playing Headbands at Skyler Phillips' 10th birthday party.



Sue Houriban celebrates her birthday with her granddaughter, Raegan Davis.



The cold weather didn't keep Ennis Lions fans from supporting their team.



Mia Mach and Aubrey Dolezalik show off their ribbons at the Dori Miller Nine Week Awards ceremony.



Members of the Ennis Garden Club spruce up the plants in Pierce Park.



Dana Dickerson and Alena Puckett show off their creations from Painting with a Twist.



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Are You Prepared for the Unexpected?

When you're working to achieve your financial objectives, you will encounter obstacles. Some of these can be anticipated — for example, you won't be able to invest as much as you want for retirement because you have to pay for your mortgage. Other challenges can't be easily anticipated, but you can still plan for them — and you should.

Obviously, the word “unexpected,” by definition, implies an unlimited number of possibilities. However, at different stages of your life, you may want to watch for some *expected* unexpected developments.

For example, during your working years, be prepared for the following:

Emergency expenses — If you needed a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These events are costly — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to 12 months' worth of living expenses, held in a liquid, low-risk account.

Investment risk and market volatility — Extreme price swings are unpredictable, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gyrations in the market, build a diversified portfolio containing quality investments. While diversification, by itself, can't protect against loss or guarantee profits, it can help reduce the effect of volatility on your portfolio. And here's one more thing you can do to cope with the ups and downs of investing: Maintain a long-term perspective. By doing so, you won't be tempted to overreact to short-term downturns.

Long-term disability — One-third of all people between the ages of 30 and 64 will become disabled at some point, according to the Health Insurance Association of America. Disabilities can be

economically devastating. As part of your benefits package, your employer may offer some disability insurance, but you may need to supplement it with private coverage.

Premature death — None of us can really predict our longevity. If something happens to you, would your family be able to stay in your home? Could your children still attend college? To protect these goals, you need adequate life insurance.

As you approach retirement, and during your retirement years, you may want to focus on these challenges:

Living longer than expected — You probably don't think that living longer than expected is necessarily a bad thing. However, a longer-than-anticipated life span also carries with it the risk of outliving your money. Consequently, you may want to consider investment solutions that can provide you with an income stream you can't outlive. Also, you'll need to be careful about how much you withdraw each year from your various retirement and investment accounts.

Need for long-term care — If you had to stay a few years in a nursing home, the cost could mount to hundreds of thousands of dollars. These expenses could jeopardize your financial security, so you'll need to protect yourself. You could self-insure, but as that would be extremely costly, you may want to transfer the risk to an insurance company. A financial professional can help explain your choices.

None of us can foresee all the events in our lives. But in your role as an investor, you can at least take positive steps to prepare for the unexpected — and those steps should lead you in the right direction as you move toward your important goals. **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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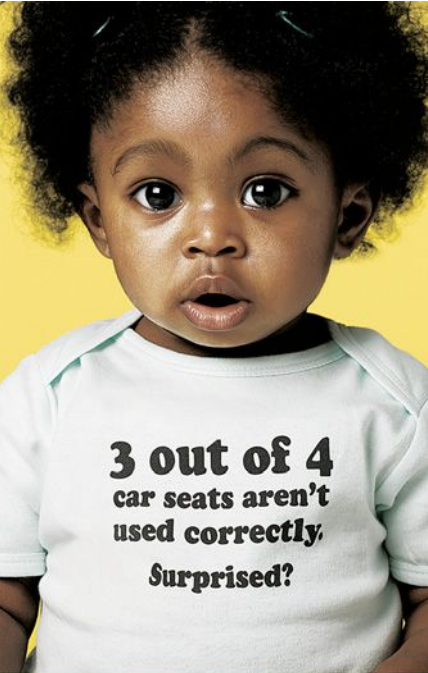
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Early Detection Is Key to Controlling Diabetes

Now that the holiday season is past us and we begin a new year, it is time to consider a medical condition for which as many as 79 million American adults are at risk of contracting: diabetes. Since February is heart health month, please consider discussing diabetes with your physician. If you aren't living with diabetes yourself, chances are that at least one of your friends or loved ones has been touched by the disease.

Diabetes is a condition that causes blood sugar levels to rise higher than normal. Our bodies break down the food we eat into glucose, or sugar, so it can be used for energy. A hormone called insulin helps the glucose to get inside our cells. When our bodies don't make enough insulin or the insulin we have isn't being used properly, sugar starts to build up in the blood. Complications from diabetes can include: blindness, heart disease, hearing loss, kidney failure, severe nerve damage leading to limb amputations and strokes.

More than 25 million Americans currently have diabetes. This number is on the rise, and more than one in three American adults suffer from prediabetes, which occurs when blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be considered diabetes. People with prediabetes who do not change their lifestyles usually develop type 2 diabetes, otherwise known as adult-onset diabetes, within three years.

Changing your lifestyle to incorporate regular physical activity, weight loss and a healthy diet with lots of fruits and vegetables can help maintain blood sugar levels. This can help prevent diabetes in those who have prediabetes and assist those who have diabetes in better managing their disease.

The worst complications from diabetes often occur when the disease goes unchecked. With the help of healthy lifestyle changes, insulin medication and blood sugar monitoring, we can prevent these complications from happening. Learn the signs and symptoms

of diabetes, understand their risk factors and establish a path for optimal health.

Symptoms of diabetes include:

- Urinating often
- Feeling very thirsty or very hungry even when you have just eaten
- Extreme fatigue
- Blurry vision
- Slow-healing cuts and bruises
- Tingling or numbness in the hands and feet

If this list looks familiar to you, talk to a doctor as soon as possible.

If you can detect your diabetes early, you and your doctor can help control it together.

Prediabetes, unfortunately, has almost no symptoms, so people should carefully assess their risk factors for type 2 diabetes. These include:

- Being 45 years of age or older
- Being overweight
- A family history of type 2 diabetes
- Engaging in physical activity less than three times a week
- Having had diabetes while pregnant (gestational diabetes)
- Having given birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds

If one or more of these factors describes you, talk to your doctor about your diabetes risks and get your glucose levels checked. **NOW**

Sources:

American Diabetes Association
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Felicia Lewis, MD
Internal Medicine
Medical Staff Member at Ennis Regional Medical Center

February 1

Ennis High School Band Banquet:
6:00-midnight, KJT Hall, 1216 S. Paris St. For
more information call (972) 872-3500.

February 7

Ennis Czech Music Festival Pre-Party and
Polka Jam Session: 7:00-11:00 p.m., Sokol
Activity Center, Sokol Clubroom, 2622 E.
Hwy 34. Sponsored by polkabeat.com, the
event features amateur musicians who are
encouraged to bring their own instruments,
a covered dish or snack. No cover charge.
Doors open at 5:00 p.m.

February 7 — 23

Clue: The Musical: 7:30-9:00 p.m., Ennis Public
Theatre, 2705 N. Kaufman St.
Based on the popular board game, *Clue: the
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to solve the mystery, runs every Friday
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(972) 878-7529 for reservations or visit
ennispublictheatre.com for more information.

February 8

Ennis Opry & Dance: 7:00-9:30 p.m.,
Ennis VFW Post 7106, 3100 N. I-45. The

event features the Gatlin Band, playing
classic country, bluegrass, polka and gospel.
Admission is \$5 for ages 16 and up. Proceeds
benefit the VFW. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
Concessions will be available. For more
information, call (972) 846-2014 or
(972) 846-2211.

Ennis Czech Music Festival: 1:00-10:30
p.m., Sokol Activity Center, 2622 E. Hwy
34. Six bands are featured including Czech
& Then Some (1:00 p.m.), The Moravians
(3:00 p.m.), Ennis Czech Boys (5:00 p.m.),
Czech Harvesters (7:00 p.m.) and the
Jodie Mikula Orchestra (9:00 p.m.). No
reservations. Tickets are \$7 per person; ages
14 and under admitted free of charge. Doors
open at noon. For more information, call
(972) 875-7959 or visit sokolennis.com or
ennisczechmusicfestival.com.

February 11

Sky Ranch Summer Camp Preview Night:
7:00-8:00 p.m., Canterbury Episcopal School,
1708 N. Westmoreland Rd., DeSoto. The
public is invited to learn about the Christian
day camp which is set for June. The event is
for parents and children (ages 5-11). RSVP to
CharlesE@TheCanterburySchool.org.

February 14 — 16

13th Annual Gingerbread House Chili Cook
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February 21

EHS Daddy Daughter Dance: 7:00-9:00 p.m.,
Ennis High School Bardwell Commons,
2301 Ensign Rd. Event is sponsored by
the National Honor Society. For more
information call (972) 872-3500.

February 22

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

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In The Kitchen With Ann Valek

— By Sandra Strong

The Czech influence was very strong in the small town of Penelope, near West, Texas, where Ann Valek grew up. “Cooking traditional Czech food was passed down from generation to generation,” Ann remembered. “I started cooking when I was a young girl. I enjoyed making kolaches, strudels, homemade egg noodles, bread, cookies, pies and cakes.” Ann still enjoys baking today. “I enjoy baking the most, because everyone enjoys eating a scrumptious dessert that melts in your mouth.”

During the Depression and WWII, Ann gave up using sugar in her coffee so she could bake cookies to send to the men in the military. “Receiving a care package of cookies meant so much to the men who were fighting for our freedom,” she shared. **NOW**

Chocolate Angel Food Cake

3/4 cup flour
1/4 cup cocoa
3/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
 (divided use)
12 egg whites
1 1/2 tsp. cream of tartar
1/4 tsp. salt
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

1. Combine flour, cocoa and 2 Tbsp. sugar; sifting 3 times. Set aside.
2. Put egg whites, cream of tartar, salt and vanilla in a separate mixing bowl. Gradually add remaining sugar, 2 Tbsp. at a time; beating continuously with electric mixer or wire whisk. Continue beating until meringue holds stiff peaks.
3. Gradually sift dry mixture over the meringue. Fold in gently until the mixture disappears. Push batter into ungreased tube center pan.
4. Gently cut through batter with a knife. Bake at 375 F for 30-35 minutes. When cake is done, invert. Let hang inverted until cold.

Orange Pecan Candy

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup white corn syrup
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
1 finely grated California orange rind
1 Tbsp. butter
Dash of salt
1 cup pecans, chopped

1. Stir sugar, corn syrup and milk thoroughly together. Cook over medium heat until a soft ball forms when tested in cold water.
2. Turn off heat; add orange rind. Add butter, salt and pecans. Beat until mixture is thick enough to drop by spoonfuls on waxed paper. Let cool before eating.

Orange Slice Cookies

Makes about 40 cookies.

1/2 cup shortening
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp. vanilla

1/2 cup coconut, grated
1/2 cup pecans, chopped (optional)
1/2 cup small orange slice candy, cut in small pieces
1 cup quick-cooking oatmeal
1 cup bread flour, sifted
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1 egg, beaten
1/2 cup milk

1. Beat shortening until light and creamy. Gradually beat in sugars and vanilla. Set aside.
2. Mix coconut, pecans, orange candy and oatmeal in large bowl. Sift flour with baking soda, baking powder and salt. Sprinkle 1/4 of dry ingredients over the coconut mixture.
3. Beat in remaining sifted ingredients with wet mixture in about 2 parts alternating with egg. Stir in remaining coconut mixture.
4. Pinch off small pieces of dough. Roll into 1-inch balls. Flatten balls using bottom of a cup dipped in milk. Bake cookies at 350 F for 10 minutes.

Chocolate Potato Cake

2 cups sifted flour
1/2 cup cocoa
1/4 tsp. nutmeg
3 tsp. baking powder
4 eggs, separated
1 cup butter
2 cups sugar
1 cup milk
1 cup mashed potatoes
1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup nuts, chopped
White frosting

1. Sift together flour, cocoa, nutmeg and baking powder. Set aside.
2. Beat whites with egg beater or electric mixer on cake mix setting until stiff, but not dry (just until they stand in peaks that lean slightly when the beaters are removed).
3. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with mixer until creamy, about 45 seconds. Gradually beat in sugar until blended. Add yolks, milk, potatoes; beating until well-blended.
4. Add flour mixture to batter in 3 parts. Stir batter until smooth after each addition. Beat in vanilla and nuts. Fold whites lightly into the cake batter. Bake in 3 greased 8-inch cake pans at 375 F for 20 minutes. Cool; cover with your favorite white frosting.

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