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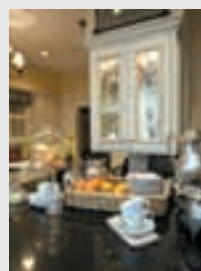
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Following a remodel, the  
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*Photo by Rod Cordsen.*

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# Waxahachie NOW

## Editor's Note

*Dear Readers,*

Waxahachie is filled with individuals who have a natural ability to make things better for those around them. Arlene Hahn turned her knitting into a ministry of many blessings, while Sharon Aday prepares to take to the track at Lumpkins Stadium on Friday, April 4, as a dedicated volunteer for Special Olympics, an event where there are no losers.

Maypearl High School student, Kirbie Day, the most-awarded junior in the United States when it comes to Polled Herefords, shares her plans for the future. Bryan and Beth Johnson mix the old with the new in the home feature, and the father and son farming team of Donald and Steve Pattman continue to conduct business as usual for the love of their land.

As the April weather starts to warm up, so will this issue warm your heart.

*Sandra McIntosh*

*WaxahachieNOW* Editor

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# For the Love of Their Land

— By Alex Allred

Donald and Steve Pattman are part of a dying breed. They are of a time and profession when a handshake was as solid as a written contract, when trust weighed heavier than collateral, and hard work was the rule rather than the exception. As farmers in Ellis County, they have watched the world around them change while they continued to conduct business as usual.

By the early 1930s, cotton had become a vital part of the economic growth of the state of Texas. At that time, 223 of the 254 counties in the state had turned to cotton farming and the Pattmans were a part of that trend. "Cotton was the crop that produced the most money per acre," Donald said. A fifth-generation resident of Waxahachie, Donald graduated from Waxahachie High School in 1949, where he was named

*Steve Pattman is following in his father's footsteps.*



*Donald Pattman is a longtime Ellis County cotton farmer.*

King of his graduating class. By the spring of 1950, he watched his first full crop come in and truly felt like he was a king. By 1953, they made a huge cotton crop, allowing the family to buy a tractor and the equipment they needed for a fully functioning farm.

Donald married his high school sweetheart, Mary, and they adopted their first child, Steve, in 1957. They adopted their daughter, Lori, in 1960. They were a happy young family, but the years between 1954 to 1957 had been difficult ones. Drought conditions had forced Donald to work a part-time job in addition to his farming. While most men would have abandoned the farm, as so many have over the years, he held strong. "I liked trying to understand what makes plants do what they do," Donald said, referring to farming. Beyond the actual crop, he said, there is a vast array of components in farming: "seeing the weather, how fertilizer works, and how everything comes together to produce a better crop."

One example Donald recalled was a storm front that moved into Ellis County in the late spring of 1964. He was having a bumper wheat crop that particular year, and desperate to save it, he moved it as the storm bore down on them. By the time he returned to his cotton field, he remembered, "You couldn't even tell it was once a cotton field. It was terrible."

For Donald, like so many other farmers, the struggle seemed endless, providing every reason to quit, but there was one little reason not to. "Steve followed me everywhere I

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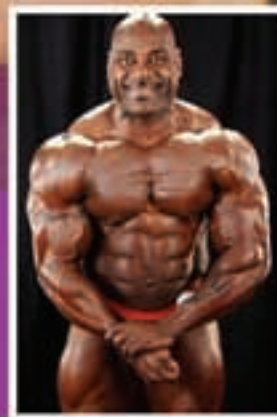
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went," Donald said proudly of his son. At an early age, Steve showed tremendous interest in the family business. "There is always something different," Steve said. "It is the most rewarding occupation. From when the crops grow to harvest time, I wouldn't do anything else." While he spins the philosophy surrounding the history of farming, he admits two things. "You won't get rich doing it, but you definitely get out what you put in." Even as a child, Steve knew this was his calling.



Steve Pattman works the controls of the machine used to strip the cotton from the plant.

Clearly, to listen to the father-son team talk, they were meant to farm. Both are honorable and humble men who crave small-town living, but through their passion for farming, have traveled the world. After graduating from Waxahachie High School, where he was the first to receive the National Honor Society Award and an American Farmer Degree, Steve met and married his wife, Joyce in 1981.

In 1983, he formed a professional partnership with Donald. Together, they now farm over 6,000 acres of land, raising soybeans, wheat, corn and cotton. Independently, they have made a huge impact on the agricultural community, and their love of the land is apparent. "We have some of the best land owners to work for," said Donald

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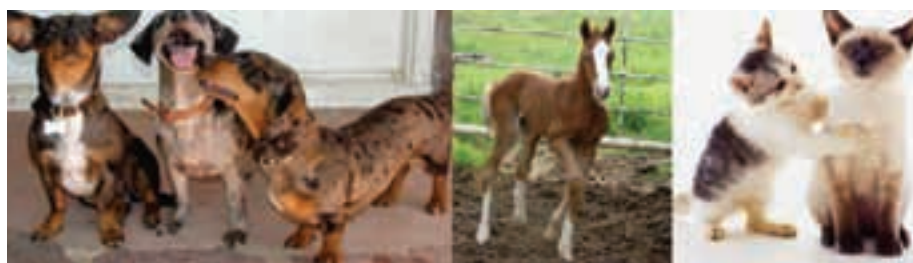


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of the land and owners from whom they lease. Of the large acreage they farm, they own several hundred acres and lease the rest. "Especially when we're dealing with the land of someone else, that is an honor," he added.

While Steve joined the Rancher Advisory Committee in 1982, educating children in the classrooms of Ellis County, Donald served as the state director of the Texas Farm Bureau, eventually becoming the vice president and president of the board. As a promoter of agricultural products, Donald has traveled to several countries, including Germany, Brazil, Finland and France. During a once-in-a-lifetime dinner, Donald was invited to dine with Fidel Castro [former President of Cuba] while visiting Cuba, noting, "Castro was really chatty."

Steve, who was the 1986 runner-up for Outstanding Young Farmer in the state of Texas, has also served as a statesman for farmers, traveling to Austin and to Washington, D.C. Both father and son have met with senators, state representatives, the governor and President George W. Bush to discuss genetically modified crops, taxation, exportation and the advancement of farming. Both father and son downplay their role in politics, noting that all they do is for their love of farming. "That's all it is," Steve said. Both are far more comfortable talking about the other. "He's one of the best farmers there is," Steve said of his father, "and it's good to learn from the best."

Steve has also become a leader in his own right. Perhaps it is no surprise that he has been a successful farmer for almost three decades, since he showed great talent with the FFA (Future Farmers of America). "I showed cattle in high school in the early '70s," Steve explained. Between farming and rearing three small children with Joyce, however, "I let it go," he explained. "When my kids got older, we got back in. There isn't a better way to teach responsibility than caring for animals."

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first family to win the Grand Champion Bred and Owned category two years consecutively, winning in Missouri in 2006 and Texas (Wichita Falls) in 2007. To achieve that level of success, however, Steve travels 170 days out of the year. "The day can begin at 4:00 a.m. and not end until 11:00 p.m.," he said, "but that's what it takes to win."

What is most remarkable about these men is their attitude. In our fast-paced world, they understand and appreciate the most basic rules of life. "Everything we do is materialistic," Donald said. "But when you go ... you can't carry anything with you except what you've learned."

"What else can you do?" Steve asked. "After you've done everything you can, when you've put in the hard work, sometimes all you can do is watch. One crop might get wiped out and another brings in double the pay." Or, so the saying goes, you reap what you sow. For the Pattmans, this can only mean great things for the future. **NOW**



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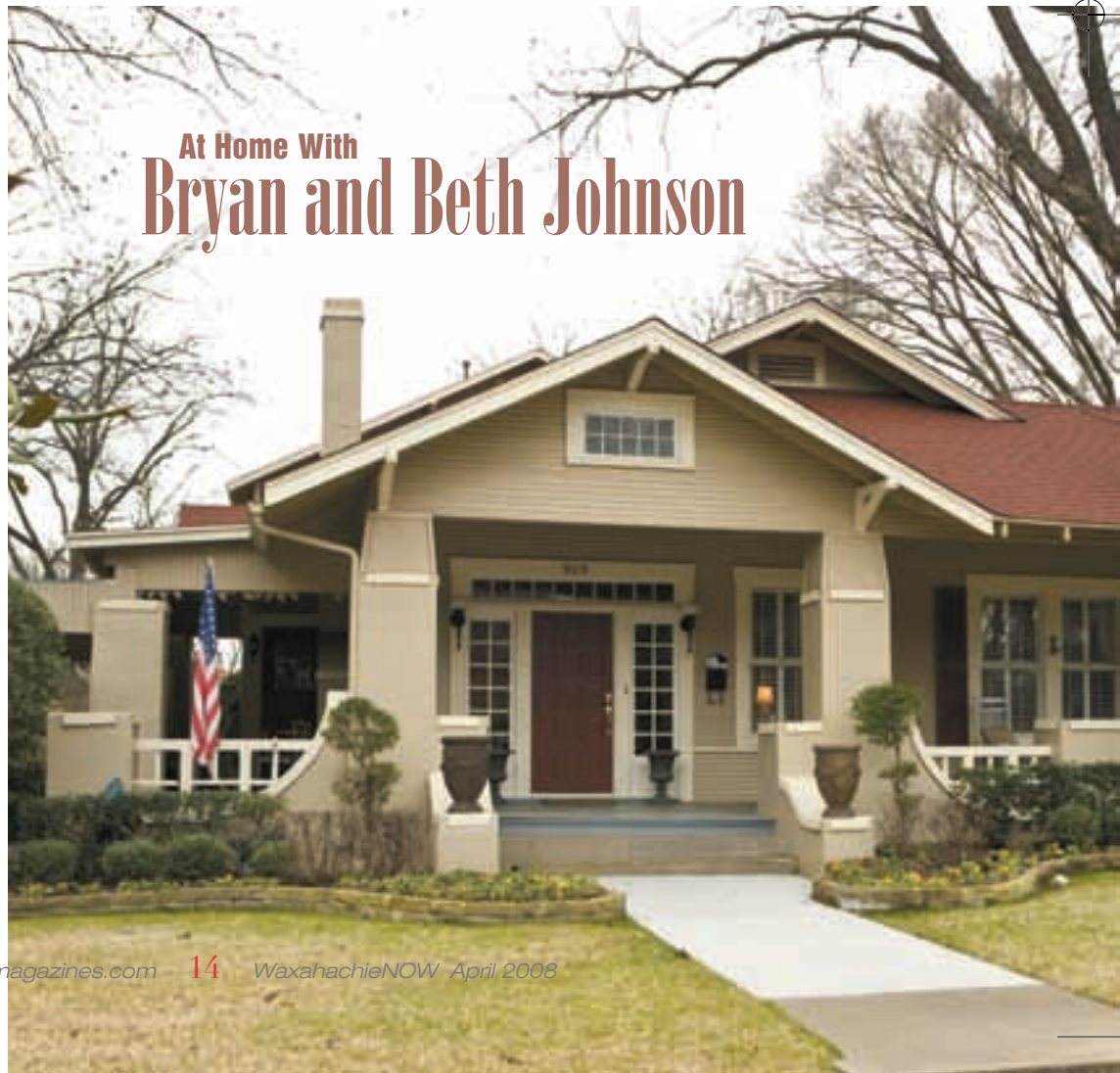


# Mixing the Old With the New

— By Sandra McIntosh

Some couples search for what seems like a lifetime to find their dream home. In the case of Bryan and Beth Johnson, all they did was spy a “For Sale” sign in the front yard. “We were literally driving down Marvin Street when we saw the sign. The first time we saw it we fell in love with it,” Beth said, referring to the four-bedroom, three-and-one-half-bath home they happened upon in 2002. The two-story, Craftsman-style house was built in 1910 by Dr. Robert Tennery, the home’s original owner. At the time, it boasted of a single story and only two bedrooms. With several room additions and an upstairs add-on, the home now offers 3,900 square feet of comfy, cozy living space for Bryan, Beth and their two children, Tyler and Megan, 12 and 9 respectively.

The Johnsons moved to Waxahachie in 1995, where they first lived in a quaint little home on Harbin Street. Even after an extensive remodel, which included the addition of a second-story attic, they felt a need to relocate to a



## At Home With Bryan and Beth Johnson



larger house that would more easily accommodate the needs of their growing family. Seeing the "For Sale" sign prompted them to make the move they had only been contemplating. Thanks to the upkeep and care of the home's previous owners, Fred and Cindy Gonzales, the Johnson family was able to move right in. "To personalize the home and really make it our own,"



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Beth said, "we had to live in it for a while before getting a feel for the changes we wanted to make."

It was not long before changes began to reflect the personalities of the Johnson family. "We painted, added wood shutters and refinished the hardwood floors during what we like to call the first remodel," Bryan said. "The following

year, we added the backyard grill and outdoor fireplace." During the first year, they also customized what they remember as a bare backyard by adding a swimming pool and a two-car garage.

The second remodel was structural to the interior. It involved changing the existing floor plan, making the overall job take longer. If Beth's memory serves

her correctly, "It was much messier, too!" This second time around, Bryan and Beth also became experts at hanging plastic. "We were able to successfully separate the home into three sections," she explained. "We learned to strategically hang plastic in one area so we could live in the rest of the home. We did this until the second remodel was complete."



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Looking back at what Brad Yates with Colonial Restoration was able to accomplish during the structural remodel still amazes the couple. "The 'man's room' is more than I could have hoped for," Bryan said, referring to the room that still has the knotty pine walls original to the home. Brad elected to paint the bottom section of the walls black in order to merge the original with the newly designed built-in desk and overhead cabinetry. Taking up the carpet and three layers of old linoleum took its toll, as well. "Brad took it one

step further," Bryan said. "He bumped everything up a notch."

The same holds true for Beth's new kitchen. When they purchased the home, the kitchen was galley style — long, slender and void of the open space needed when entertaining family and friends. "We had to tear out a portion of the kitchen before we were able to come up with a concept with Brad," Beth explained, also stating that her desire in the remodel was to be able to add an island. "I may not have my island, but I have a peninsula at the

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end of the counter. It's the best thing." After relocating the refrigerator, replicating the cabinets and matching the new wood flooring to the original wood flooring found in the living area and the "man's room," Beth could not be happier. Her kitchen is now open, airy and has proven to be the best place in which to display the majority of her vast collection of Adirondack-framed, motto cross-stitch samplers. "I love the ones with the Bible verses and words from the old hymns," she said, pointing to the wall above the peninsula. "When shopping, I always try to buy the ones that are stitched in English and that are already framed."

Other changes included making one of the guest rooms smaller so they could enlarge the guest bathroom that Beth uses for its ease and convenience. "We even added a new claw-foot tub," she said. Subway tile walls and hexagon tile floors are new to the bathrooms, as is the wallpaper in the powder room and dining room. All the updates only enhance the style with which Beth chooses to decorate her home. When visiting for the first time, it appears as if each piece of furniture, from the



chairs to the end tables, came from a time back in history. They look as if they are dated antiques, when in reality Beth has found a shop in Hillsboro that specializes in new items, which have the aged appearance she was looking for when furnishing her new home.

A few pieces do date back to a time long forgotten. "The Welsh dresser in the formal dining room is dated," she said. "It was used in the old days as a chicken coop until the chickens were ready to be eaten. At least that's what we've been told." The dresser is home to a large portion of Beth's Majolica, pottery and dishes, which she began to seriously collect when they moved into their new home. The animal vignettes, which Beth has amassed over the years, compliment the mixture of antiques and comfy furnishings. The living room is home to her collection of cow oil paintings, while sheep and chicken selections are hung in the family room.

Traveling to Roundtop, Texas, twice a year with her sister, Amy Leath, and friend, Laura Sanders, has opened up several other venues for further collecting. Not only will you find a multitude of black and white Polaroid pictures of family displayed throughout the house in "antique flower frogs," visitors will also be delighted with the Johnsons' use of bright red cricket balls, English biscuit barrels and athletic trophies that date as far back as 1896. "Most of the older ones [trophies] are displayed on the fireplace mantle in the family room," Bryan said. "We even have one from a potato sack race," Beth proudly added.

Taking the old and tastefully mixing it with the new is second nature to Bryan and Beth. "When we see it and like it," Beth said, referring to collectibles and such, "we incorporate it." **NOW**



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# ARTS NOW



While many knitters take two needles and use only one skein of yarn at a time to create beautiful works of wearable art, Arlene Hahn has mastered the use of not one, but several knitting machines to “crank out” her creations. “A knitting machine did for knitting what a sewing machine did for sewing,” Arlene said, further explaining that the knitting machines use hundreds of needles to work through several skeins of yarn in a shorter amount of time. The knitting machines, located in her upstairs workroom, have made it possible for Arlene to design and knit more sweaters in a week than most seasoned knitters could knit by hand in a single year. She knits sweaters, baby hats and booties in the smallest sizes imaginable, as well as several more unique items, such as big-foot slippers and neck gators used by the men and women serving in the military.

Her passion for knitting was rekindled soon after Arlene

**These squares were stepping-stones,  
so to speak, for the special-needs  
clothing she handcrafts today.**

## A Ministry of Many Blessings

— By Sandra McIntosh



and her family moved to Waxahachie from South Carolina in the fall of 1999. “The move here was the third one in a span of four years,” she said. “I was feeling lonely and unused. I knew I needed something more than Bible study, so I asked God to give me something where I could use my talent and education.”

With a bachelor’s degree in

home economics education and a master’s in textiles and clothing, it seemed like answered prayer when Arlene came upon a flyer in Wal-Mart for Warm-up America squares. These squares were stepping-stones, so to speak, for the special-needs clothing she handcrafts today. “When I was in college, I took all kinds of clothing classes,” she said. “Relating to the needs of preemies and newborns came easy for me.”

Arlene has been able to successfully merge her educational background with a vivid, colorful, God-given imagination,

## ARTS NOW

especially when it comes to picking and choosing just the right color palette for her sweater ensembles. As her ministry has become more known in the community, Arlene has received several donations of yarn, thread, flannel and fleece. "I can use just about everything," she said, referring to leftover materials and yarn. "Small scraps can be used as afghan squares or finger



puppets." Considering herself to be project-oriented rather than process-oriented, Arlene has a special knack for taking patterns and making them easier and more time-efficient. "I adjust the patterns to make the process easier," she said. "Then I adapt the changes on the knitting machines. My goal is to get as many items done in the fastest, most efficient way possible."

Her adaptations do not stop there. Arlene also streamlines the dressing process. Men's clothing buttons left over right, while women's buttons have always been right over left. Regardless of whether Arlene is making a sweater for a boy or girl, she makes each sweater button right over left. "Right over left began a long time ago because women were almost always dressed by someone else; a mother, a servant or a sister," she explained. "Since babies of both genders are dressed by someone else, it only made sense to craft the sweaters where they would button right over left."

Most of the items she creates in sizes 0-3 months are hand-delivered to the offices of Wise Responsible Choices Pregnancy Center (WRC)

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## ARTS NOW

right here in Waxahachie, while the smallest items are taken via a friend to Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas, or donated to the monthly projects Arlene is also involved in. "The items donated to WRC encourage the mothers-to-be and new moms to take the parenting classes offered," Arlene said. "They earn baby bucks for each class they complete to spend on items for their new baby." Arlene not only donates sweaters with matching hats and fleece blankets, she also creates full layettes, one-piece jump suits and outfits including not only a sweater and a pair of pants, but booties knitted to match the theme of the outfit. "There's a saving grace on the sweaters," Arlene added. "Trying to mix and match all the materials and colors is a big part of the fun. I take what I have and work on how to theme all parts together to create one complete ensemble."

The items that Arlene creates with extra-special care are what she likes to call "blessing" gowns, also known as burial gowns. "These gowns are designed similar to christening gowns," Arlene said, with humility in her voice. "I'm honoring life when I make these gowns. These babies are important and many times, the gown may be the only piece of clothing the baby will ever wear." The gowns offer parents a final picture of their little angel without the tubes and machines so commonplace with preemies.

Arlene hopes to keep creating baby items for years to come because of the great joy and satisfaction it brings. Thankfully, she has the time and materials to make more than one outfit a week, but even if she were only able to craft one, it would make all the difference in the world to the one receiving it. **NOW**

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As a single parent of four children, Kim courageously held down two jobs while continuing her education, receiving her RN degree in 1996. Kim always had a tender spot in her heart for the elderly. Wherever she is, the residents love her. Mrs. Walker has been AIDON for Corsicana Nursing Home, DON for Twilight Home and is currently looking forward to serving as DON for Trinity Missions of Italy. Kim's oldest child is married, residing in Ennis and is attending UT while the other three children are living at home and attend CHS.



Allthea Brown has been a nurse, not a super-nurse, at Trinity Mission of Italy for 35 years. She started her career not knowing that it was going to be her life's work.

Allthea is a single mom of two. Early in her career she worked split shifts in both the dietary and housekeeping departments. She would wash dishes one day and commodes the next but felt good at the end of the day knowing that she was on the first wrung of the ladder up. Minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour and she had chopped cotton in her teens for \$5.00 a day so she thought she was "RICH." Her "friend" base is wide, stretching across numerous cities in several counties. Allthea says, "I did not choose nursing, nursing chose me. I enrolled in every available class or in-service that was offered and I moved up. I consider my journey an American dream, making money doing something you love."



Bonnie Bennett, MDS Coordinator, graduated from nursing school in New York State and has continued in the nursing field for forty years. Bonnie has lived and worked in New York, Virginia and Tennessee prior to moving to Texas twenty-five years ago. She is married with two daughters and three grandchildren.

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**Sports**  
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# No Losers Here

— By Sandra McIntosh

Twenty-three years ago, Sharon Aday raised her hand, agreeing to volunteer for Special Olympics. The organization needed volunteers, so they came to businesses first. They asked if employees could come out to Lumpkins Stadium and work the day of the event. "I was employed at Owens Corning at the time," Sharon remembered. "I knew I wanted to be involved in something, I just didn't realize what I was in for when I volunteered for Special Olympics." She may have cried all day long, but Sharon has never once looked back with regret of her initial decision to serve.



*Amber Gonzales and Michael Settlemeyer proudly show off the medals they won at last year's Special Olympics event.*



*Sharon Aday and Kelly Prokof work hard all year long to make Special Olympics fun for everyone.*

Not long after her first experience, Sharon was voted onto the board. Some 10 years later, she became president for a two-year term, only to be locked in as the track meet coordinator for the past several years. "I keep participating because of the blessings I receive," she said, referring to her need to return in some active capacity year-after-year. "I don't seem to give them [the participants] near what they give me. I just can't seem to give them up." To say Sharon, Coach June Flowers, Area 10 representative Randy Foederer and all those volunteers from businesses, the community and the school district are just doing their part when it comes to Special Olympics would be a gross understatement. "We all have a passion for what we are doing," she explained. "The meet and the children competing

offer blessings beyond measure."

The popularity and growth of the event has escalated over the years to include 300 - 400 participants at the local track meet alone. Never has the event been limited to just Ellis County. "Everyone wants to participate. It is such a big day," Sharon said. "We've gone from sack lunches and goodie bags to T-shirts for every special athlete." In fact, the growth has been so enormous that this year Sharon had to recruit a co-chairperson for the event. She found her right-hand-girl in Kelly Prokof, a Waxahachie Independent School District special education teacher and 23-year veteran volunteer to the Special Olympic track and field event.

"As co-chair, I'm looking to gain more of the same," Kelly said, referring

## Sports NOW

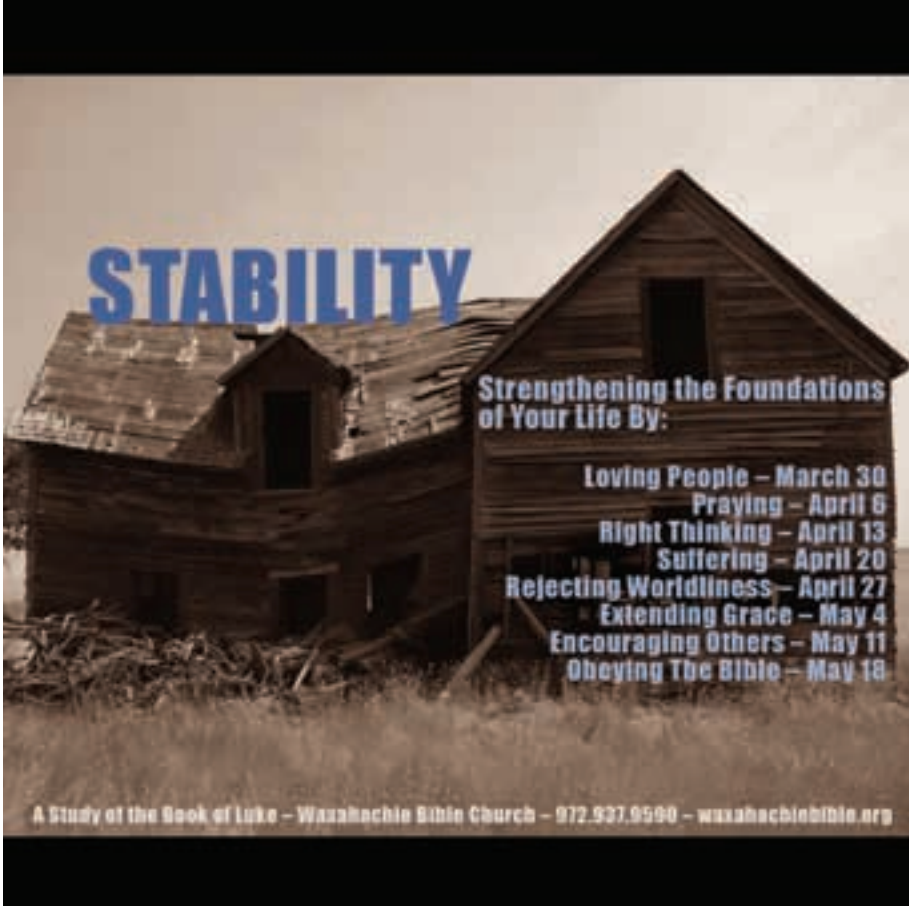
to the warm, fuzzy feeling she gets watching the athletes compete. "It's satisfying for the athletes because they've learned the entire day is all about them. It's great to watch them meet goals and recognize their own accomplishments."

Events over the years have remained the same. They include wheelchair races, individual track races, relay races,

### "The meet and the children competing offer blessings beyond measure."

running long jump, standing long jump and distance throws, which include a tennis ball, softball, shot put and discus. Throughout the day, participants, who by Special Olympic guidelines can range in age from 8 to 99, put their speed, distance and agility to the test. "And they all go home winners," Sharon said. "There are no losers here! Coming in last is just as triumphant as coming in first." In fact, Sharon has so many poignant stories she can tell when sitting down to recruit new volunteers. When asked to repeat one that has remained vivid in her mind, she holds back the tears as she tells the story of a young girl in a wheelchair. "She was stronger on her right side, so every time she would push off, she would veer to the left," Sharon recalled. "It took her over 10 minutes to finish the race because she had to keep adjusting her wheelchair, but the smile never once left her face."

Kelly said participants are allowed to sign up for two, and sometimes possibly three events, during local track meets. "They compete in one track and one




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## Sports NOW



field event," Kelly explained further. "The third event comes into play if they are part of a relay team." The local track meet in Waxahachie is one of the largest held in the area, bringing in and handling more Olympians than other local events held at Kaufman and Mesquite. Participants must compete in three local events to qualify for the annual state track meet held in different locales every year.

Sharon said the Waxahachie meet is only as big as its volunteer base. "We need huggers, people to man the awards tables and buddies who stay with their Olympian for the whole day," Sharon explained. "The event would be an impossibility without dedicated volunteers." There is a pep rally in their honor the day before the track meet, and athletes are lined up for heat races by Waxahachie High School (WHS) Coach Lonnie Gaylor, who dons a clown outfit for the day. "It's a successful day because of people who care," Sharon added.

The thrill of victory is found in the faces of so many, including the little girl who won first place, but opted for a fifth place ribbon because it was hot pink and to the young man who was not interested in winning the race as much as he was excited about waving at the crowd cheering him forward. "We can learn so much from these special Olympians," Sharon said, finding it hard to hold back the tears. "These kids are an inspiration. Even if they don't cross the finish line first, they are brave in the attempt." **NOW**

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# More Than Floor

— By Sandra McIntosh

Starting a business from the ground up is not an easy task, just ask Michael Law, president and co-owner of Lone Star Floorcovering, conveniently located at 3502 N. Highway 77. “Maintaining a successful business has certainly had its ups and downs, too,” said Kellie Law, Michael’s wife of 17 years and co-owner. “We’ve been in Ellis County now for 21 years.”

When Kellie and Michael first met, he was steadily developing his business while she was making a career out of nursing. “I believe this business is a calling for Michael,” Kellie said, explaining the business began to quickly grow over the years. Recently, they opened their second location in Ennis. Looking back, Kellie may miss her nursing job, but she is having a great time building something successful alongside her husband and friend. “I’d love to someday return to nursing,” she said, “but this is Michael’s passion. It takes both of us to make the business successful, and I think he appreciates the fact that I’m here for him.”

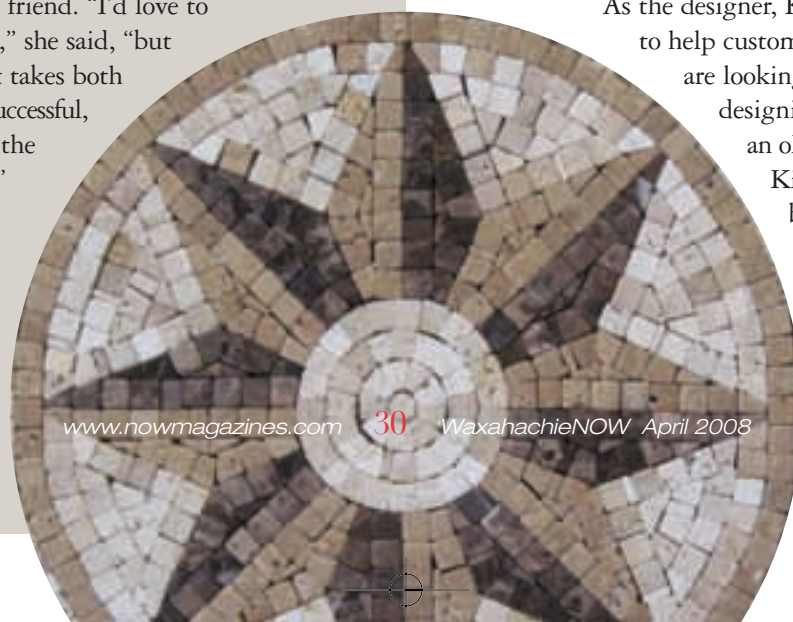
The Laws know the success they enjoy would not be possible without a lot of sweat and tears, exceptional customer

service and the work ethic of their dedicated staff. Jesse Law, the couple’s oldest son, and his wife, Amy, work side-by-side in the office, while Jon Law, Michael’s brother, is the company’s key salesman, making the business somewhat of a family affair. “Michael works from sunup to sundown. He measures, estimates and helps the installers get started,” Kellie said. “He is multitalented. He’s always involved in more than one job at a time.” Amy politely answers the phone and greets customers with a smile, while Jesse’s duties include scheduling for both stores. “It’s stressful,” Kellie said, “but he’s very good at his job, and it doesn’t hurt that he’s bilingual.” Marcy Stewart is the bookkeeper and Ross Taylor keeps the warehouse organized and in shape.

As the designer, Kimberly Crooks is available to help customers find exactly what they are looking for when it comes to designing a new space or giving an old space an updated remodel.

Kimberly would one day like to be kitchen and bath certified.

Kellie is the queen of customer service. “We take great pride in being honest and trustworthy,”



## Business NOW

she said. "It's important to treat every customer as a valuable person, no matter the size of the job — because no job is too small or too large."

Specializing in custom tile may be what they are best noted for, but Lone Star Floorcovering offers it "all" in floor coverings from the latest in



eco-friendly carpeting and laminates to hardwoods, tile and granite, as well as lighting and everything a builder or homeowner needs when it comes to kitchens and bathrooms. "These days, people are installing the flooring items that wear the longest," Kellie said. "Both of our major carpet mills are looking to do something with old carpeting so it can be kept out of the area landfills." In fact, carpet samples in the store include those that have "gone green" by using corn fibers and plastic bottles in the construction process.

Whether you are looking for carpet, hardwood, tile or lighting, look no farther. If Lone Star Floorcovering does not have it, rest assured, they can get it. Business hours at the Waxahachie location are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. For more information, call (972) 617-9229 and do not be surprised by the friendliness that will greet you on the other end. **NOW**

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## Education **NOW**



# Not All Show

— By Faith Browning

In the Hereford cattle community, the Kirbie Day name is well recognized. “She is the most awarded [high school] junior in the United States,” her dad proudly stated. Her notoriety is due to showing award-winning cattle in Junior Future Farmers of America, Future Farmers of America (FFA) and 4-H shows throughout the country. Her parents, Paul and Kay Lynn Day, and Colby, her older brother, are her biggest fans. Paul, known simply as Kirbie’s dad, accompanies Kirbie to all her shows. As Maypearl High School’s principal, Kay Lynn is not always available for the days leading up to a show, but she makes the greatest effort to attend the day of the show.

For over seven years, Kirbie has shown Polled Herefords on state and national levels. She competes and wins against other teens in junior shows, and against adult ranchers in open shows. She considers Polled Herefords the best cattle to show. “I think they look fancier,” she said. “They have more of a show-look to them.”



Showing cattle is not as simple as it may sound. On an average show day, Kirbie gets up around 3:00 a.m. to take her heifer for a rinse in the wash rack. Next, the heifer is dried with a giant blow dryer. After drying, sheen is worked into its hair producing a shiny, fluffy appearance. To generate a full, healthy look, the heifer is fed and watered. Ninety minutes prior to showing, the heifer is held in a shoot while her belly and legs are rubbed with glue, creating the illusion of having more ribs and bigger bones. The hair on the heifer’s back is shaped upward to produce the appearance of a flat straight spine. “All this is done before the judging at 8:00 a.m.,” Kirbie added.

After the judging, the glue is removed from the heifer’s hair using a certain product, which eliminates pulling out any hair. In the evening, the heifer is fed and tied outside to get a night of fresh air. The next day, the routine starts all over again. “Every time you win, you have to keep going back into the ring,” she said. “If you don’t win, you go home.”

## Education NOW

Kirbie's numerous awards have come in various shapes and sizes. Banners, trophies, belt buckles, plaques, plates, ribbons, sandblasted glass blocks and furniture are proudly displayed in the family's home. Kay Lynn commented, "We are running out of space to store her awards."



Scholarship awards are also big incentives. Kirbie has currently received five scholarships and is always working toward the opportunity to win even more before her high school days are over. "Scholarships are nice," Paul explained, "but what Kirbie is really trying to do is have top quality heifers so she can sell the calves to pay for college." Showing Polled Herefords is only a part of Kirbie's accomplishments. Her education in breeding show cattle is comprised of care and nutrition, flushes, artificial insemination (AI) and the cutting-edge science of embryo transplants. Kirbie's prized heifers, referred to as donor cows, are injected with estrogen to produce eggs. After seven days, the heifers are taken to the veterinarian to have their eggs removed by procedures called flushes. Kirbie examines the eggs under a microscope, determining which eggs are the healthiest. The selected eggs can be frozen, sold, traded and/or be transplanted into a recipient cow. "The main thing you are looking for in a recipient cow is if it will make a good mother," Kirbie explained. "The recipient can be any kind of cow,"



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## Education **NOW**

Kay Lynn interjected. "It just has a pretty little Polled Hereford baby."

The endless list of Kirbie's accomplishments includes being on the Livestock Judging Team for Maypearl FFA and Ellis County 4-H. She has held the crown of FFA Sweetheart



Princess for 2005 and 2006, as well as Texas Polled Hereford Princess for 2003 and 2004. She has served as class vice-president her sophomore and junior years and as an FFA Sentinel. Her academic accomplishments include National Honor Society, Maypearl Academic Student Government, Who's Who in Spanish and All-District Academic in athletics. Currently, she is enrolled in dual-credit and honor courses. She even has time to excel in softball, volleyball and track.

Kirbie's experiences have given her insight into what most young women her age have yet to see. "There's lots of politics you learn about at a young age," she said. "Not everything goes your way. Not everything is fair, but you learn to deal with the stuff."

Even with all she does, Kirbie finds the friendships made along the way to be the most rewarding aspect of what she does. She even includes her heifers as friends. "They have unique attitudes," she said. "If your heifer is nice, she is almost like your best friend." Even though Kirbie makes winning several Grand Champion awards look easy, she acknowledges raising and showing cattle is a lot of hard work. "You have to build yourself up," she encouraged. "You can't expect to walk in there and win everything," said the young woman who has practically won it all. **NOW**

## Great Outdoors **NOW**

# How Hardy are Your Hibiscus?

— By Nancy Fenton

Those glorious, big flowers in pots that grace patios and porches are often hibiscus, but not the “hardy” kind. The tropical ones come in assorted colors and go with the first freeze. Rose of Sharon is one of the hardy relatives, but there are a lot more, such as those known as Rose Mallows or Swamp Mallows.

These mallows survive temperatures down to minus 30 degrees. They come back from the roots up, when temperatures hit 70 degrees, to bloom throughout the summer until the first frost. The many varieties can have blooms up to 12 inches (dinner plate size). Even though each bloom lasts only about a day, the profuse blooming habit of these hibiscus gives you blooms all summer long.

Lord Baltimore and Flare are both Texas superstars tested by Texas A&M University for our area conditions. They stand four to five feet tall with 10-inch flowers. There are

even some new hybrids, which have been created by hybridizers Jim, Dave and Bob Fleming. Kopper King has bronze leaves with pink and red-streaked flowers and Blue River II has blue-green foliage with pure white blooms. Their lemon-colored Old Yella and purple Plum Crazy make it easy to create colorful combinations. You can even go for shorter plants with two new series named Carafe and Cordial. The varieties in these series top out at three feet.

Whatever the size of your hardy hibiscus, they need lots of sun, good soil, extra nitrogen to support the many blooms and regular water. Try them! Ask for them in local nurseries or go on the Internet. They will come back better and stronger year after year. No replanting needed! **NOW**

*Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.*





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# Around Town

## NOW



A ribbon cutting, top left, was held at Anytime Fitness. The Ark Country Store, top middle, was a very busy place during the Lifestyle Expo held at the Waxahachie Civic Center last month. Mardi Gras was celebrated with colorful masks, top right, at the Episcopal Church. A groundbreaking ceremony, second row left, was held for the Waxahachie Senior Center. Nettie McHone, bottom left, painted grapes on porcelain at the Ellis County Art Association's booth during the Expo. Ribbon cuttings were held at Cheaper Peepers, second row right, and Simplicity Salon & Spa, bottom right.



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## Around Town **NOW**



Ribbon cuttings were held at left, from top to bottom: ReMax Realty Group, Lights Galore and More, Sears and Catfish Plantation. The Oddfellows, top right, held a Mardi Gras masquerade ball where everyone dressed in costume for the occasion. KBEC radio personalities Barry and CoCo, bottom right, reported live from the Lifestyle Expo. They are shown doing a spot interview with Greg Compton.

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— By Stephanie Brewer

## IN THE KITCHEN WITH BETSY GROSSO

**B**etsy most enjoys rainy day cooking. “Rainy days bring out the Betty Crocker in me,” Betsy said. She started baking in high school and then realized her love of cooking. “Cooking is a creative outlet for me,” she said, “and brings a bit of comfort, too.”

Betsy’s inspiration and methods come from hearing great recipes from others while still enjoying the Food Network on TV on occasion. Thinking outside the box was defined when Betsy prepared an authentic Cuban Christmas dinner for her family, complete with fried plantains and pork roast. Betsy’s lasagna is always a hit. “It takes all day to make,” she explained. “Since we all have a sweet tooth at home, I bake quite a bit as well.” **NOW**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

### BETSY'S BAKLAVA

2 sticks melted butter  
1 lb. chopped pecans, toasted  
1 16-oz. package of phyllo dough  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 cup water  
1 cup white sugar  
2 tsp. vanilla extract  
1/2 cup Burleson's Honey

Preheat oven to 350 F. Butter the bottom and sides of a 9 x 13-inch pan. Chop nuts; toss with cinnamon. Set aside. Unroll phyllo dough. Cover dough with a dampened cloth to keep from drying out as you work. Place two sheets of dough in the pan and brush with butter. Repeat until you have eight sheets layered. Sprinkle 2 - 3 Tbsp. of nut mixture on top. Top with two sheets of dough, butter and nuts, layering as you go. The top layer should be about 6 - 8 sheets deep. Using a sharp knife, cut into diamond shapes all the way to the bottom of the pan. Bake for 50 minutes until baklava is golden

and crisp. Make sauce while baklava is baking. Boil sugar and water until sugar is melted. Add vanilla and honey. Simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove baklava from oven; immediately spoon sauce over it. Let cool. Serve in cupcake papers. Leave it uncovered to avoid getting soggy.

### GARLIC CHEESE BISCUITS

2 cups buttermilk baking mix  
2/3 cup milk  
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1/4 cup butter, melted  
1/2 tsp. garlic powder

Preheat oven to 450 F. Combine baking mix, milk and cheddar cheese in mixing bowl. Beat with wooden spoon until soft dough forms. Drop dough by spoonfuls onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 8 - 10 minutes until golden brown. Mix butter and garlic powder; brush over warm biscuits before removing from cookie sheet.

### COCONUT SHRIMP

1 egg  
1/2 cup all-purpose flour  
2/3 cup beer  
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
2 cups flaked coconut  
24 shrimp, deveined and peeled  
3 cups oil for frying

In medium bowl, combine egg, 1/2 cup flour, beer and baking powder. Place 1/2 cup flour and coconut in two separate bowls. Hold shrimp by tail and dredge in flour, shaking off excess flour. Dip in egg and beer batter, allowing excess to drip off. Roll shrimp in coconut; place on a baking sheet lined with wax paper. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, heat oil to 350 F (175 C) in a deep-fryer. Fry shrimp in batches. Cook, turning once, for 2 - 3 minutes or until golden brown. Using tongs, remove shrimp; place on paper towels to drain. Serve warm with your favorite dipping sauce.

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### CUBAN PORK ROAST

- 1 24-oz. bottle of Mojo Criollo Marinade (found in stores which carry Latin products)  
4 - 6 lb. pork shoulder roast

Place the pork in a large resealable plastic bag. Pour citrus marinade over meat; seal. Refrigerate 12 - 24 hours, turning the bag over occasionally. Preheat the oven to 325 F (165 degrees C). Transfer pork and marinade to a roasting pan fat side up; place in the oven. Roast for 3 - 5 hours (depending on size of roast), basting with pan juices occasionally, or until an instant read thermometer inserted in the center reads 145 F (63 C). Add small amounts of water to the pan if it dries out. Transfer the pork to a carving board, cover loosely with foil; let rest for 15 minutes. Carve and serve.

### BROILED PARMESAN TILAPIA

- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese  
1/4 cup butter, softened  
3 Tbsp. mayonnaise  
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice  
1/4 tsp. dried basil  
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper  
1/8 tsp. onion powder  
1/8 tsp. celery salt  
2 lbs. tilapia fillets

Preheat your oven's broiler. Grease a broiling pan or line it with aluminum foil. In a small bowl, mix together the Parmesan cheese, butter, mayonnaise and lemon juice. Season with dried basil, pepper, onion powder and celery salt. Mix well; set aside. Arrange fillets in a single layer on the prepared pan. Broil a few inches from the heat for 2 - 3 minutes. Flip the fillets over and broil for a couple more minutes. Remove the fillets from the oven; cover them with the Parmesan cheese mixture on the top side. Broil for 2 more minutes or until the topping is browned and fish flakes easily with a fork. Be careful not to overcook the fish.

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## Finance **NOW**

# To Fight Rising Prices, Invest for Income and Growth

— By Jeff Trojacek

Even if you do not typically follow economic news all that closely, the fact that oil prices are now hovering near the \$100-per-barrel mark has probably caught your attention. If not, it should, because stratospheric oil prices will almost certainly affect you as a consumer — and it may also cause you to review your investment strategies.

Of course, if you drive, you are aware of oil economics every time you fill up at the pump. But even if you do not own a car, you will find that oil — or at least petrochemical products made from crude oil — is leaving a big footprint in your life. From computers

to clothing, pens to paint brushes and shampoo to shower curtains, you use petrochemical products made from petroleum all the time, and every day. So, given the stratospheric prices of crude oil, do not be surprised to see the prices of many of these products start to climb.

You might be less concerned about the potential inflationary pressures caused by rising oil prices if your income were rising significantly. But that may not be the case; over the past several years, wage growth has been relatively low. Factoring in inflation, weekly wages were just 2.2 percent higher in September 2007 than in March 2001, according to research compiled by the Center for American Progress.

So, here is the situation in a nutshell: While prices may be going up, your wages may be stagnating. That is not a formula for achieving your long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement. To address this problem, then, you will need to look at another component of your financial picture — your investments. Consider these suggestions:

### • Invest for rising income.

Fixed-income vehicles, such as bonds and Certificates of Deposit (CDs), may well have a place in your portfolio, but they might not keep you ahead of inflation. That is why you may want to consider investing in dividend-producing stocks. Some of these stocks have

actually increased their dividends for more than 25 straight years. So, if you are seeking ways to stay ahead of inflation, here is one place to look. (Keep in mind, though, that even stocks with long histories of paying dividends are not obligated to do so in the future, and they may cut dividends, or not pay them at all, in any given year.)



### • Invest for growth.

To stay ahead of inflation for the future, you will want investments that provide the opportunity for long-term appreciation. That means you should have a certain percentage of your portfolio

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devoted to growth stocks. It is true that these stocks can be volatile; their prices will go up and down, and it is possible you could lose some or your entire principal. But you can reduce this risk, and increase the chances of staying ahead of inflation, by purchasing an array of quality growth stocks — those issued by companies with solid management, competitive products and strong balance sheets.

No one can really predict how high oil prices will rise, how long they will stay elevated and how much they will affect overall inflation. But you should not sit around and wait for these answers. Instead, work with your financial advisor to find income and growth opportunities. **WAX**

*Jeff Trojacek is an Edward Jones representative based in Waxahachie.*



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# Autism Challenges

— By Betty Tryon

A mother shopping with her son had dressed him in an unusual T-shirt. It read "I'm not a bad boy; I have autism." There you have it — the incredible challenge parents face as they integrate their autistic child into society. The cause of autism, a developmental disorder in the brain, has not been fully determined. It could be either hereditary or environmental or both. Part of the social stigma stems from the fact that although the child looks normal, by common social standards he or she behaves inappropriately.

The most defining trait of autism is social dysfunction, and poor social interaction is descriptive of one form of the disorder. The child's behavior does not result from lack of parental or personal discipline. He lacks control over his behavior, exhibiting characteristics such as: avoiding bodily and eye contact and resisting human touch like cuddling or hugging.

The autistic child also behaves in an awkward manner socially due to problems with verbal and non-verbal communication. The child may speak phrases repeatedly or may never speak at all. Autistic children demonstrate difficulties in interpreting facial expressions or cues that

others may be sending about a social situation. They also lack empathy — the ability to understand another person's feelings. As a result, many autistic children can initially make friends, but the friendships typically do not last long.

Another manifestation in their social behavior is repetitive movements, which appear purposeless, such as body rocking and flapping of arms. They may engage in the self-destructive behavior of biting themselves. Compulsive and ritualistic behavior are also a part of the disorder, and children afflicted with autism may become highly agitated if routines or schedules are changed. Stability becomes an anchor to them in their unstable world.

All children affected with this disorder will display symptoms differently and with degrees varying from mild to extreme. Consequently, the disorder can be a huge challenge for a family, but the autistic child can improve with treatment and with age. Treatment focuses on educational and behavioral interventions tailored to the child's needs. Medications are directed toward treating psychological problems such as



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anxiety, depression, hyperactivity and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Although there is no cure, there is hope that with intervention, the child can learn and gain a modest amount of independence. The earlier the intervention, the more positive the outcome. The amount of support needed to sustain people with autism as they grow into adults will be directly proportional to the severity of the disorder. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke conducts research in order to better understand the nature of this disorder and to find and provide relief.

You can find more information about this subject at [www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org), the Autism Society of America. **ADDD**

*This article is for general information purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician for questions regarding this topic.*



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# April 2008

## Community Calendar

### Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Waxahachie Business Interchange Networking is held from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Network with other professionals and promote your business. Bring \$1 entry fee and plenty of business cards. Coffee and pastries will be furnished. Call (972) 937-2390 for location of the next meeting.

### April 5

Keep Waxahachie Beautiful Trash-off will be held from 10:00 a.m. - noon between Broadhead Road and 813 (Brown) on 287 Bypass. This event is part of the partnership between Keep Texas Beautiful and the Texas Department of Transportation. To take an active role in keeping your community clean, contact Linda at (972) 937-2390 or e-mail her at lneedham@waxahachiechamber.com.

### April 12 and 13

Waxahachie Trade Days will open to the public on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. The event is held at the Ellis County Expo Center, located next door to the Cowboy Church of Ellis County at 2300 W. U.S. Highway 287. For more information, contact Les Clemons at (972) 617-8156, Gerald Huckabee at (903) 865-1385 or Dean Worley at (903) 286-0183.

### April 17

Rise and Shine Joint Chamber Networking meeting will be held at the MCM Grande Hotel Fun Dome from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. Bring \$1 entry free and plenty of business cards. Coffee and breakfast foods will be provided.

### April 18 - 20

The Ennis Garden Club will host the annual Bluebonnet Festival on Friday, April 18, from 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, April 19 and 20, from 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. For more information, visit the Ennis Convention and Visitors Bureau located at 002 E. Ennis Ave. or call toll free at (888) 366-4748 or metro at (972) 878-4748.

### April 19

Children's Earth Day Celebration from 10:00 a.m. - noon, hosted by the Pettigrew Academy, located at 806 E. Marvin St. The event is free to the public.

The Ennis Chamber of Commerce will host its 2nd Annual Bluebonnet BBQ Cook-off at the Knights of Columbus Hall, located at 850 S. Interstate Highway 45 in Ennis.

### June 7

Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-In will be held

Saturday, June 7, from 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. at Mid-Way Regional Airport. Breakfast tickets are \$6. One child under 8 eats free with a paid adult ticket. The event and parking for the event are free. The public is invited. For more information, call Tammy at (972) 923-0080.

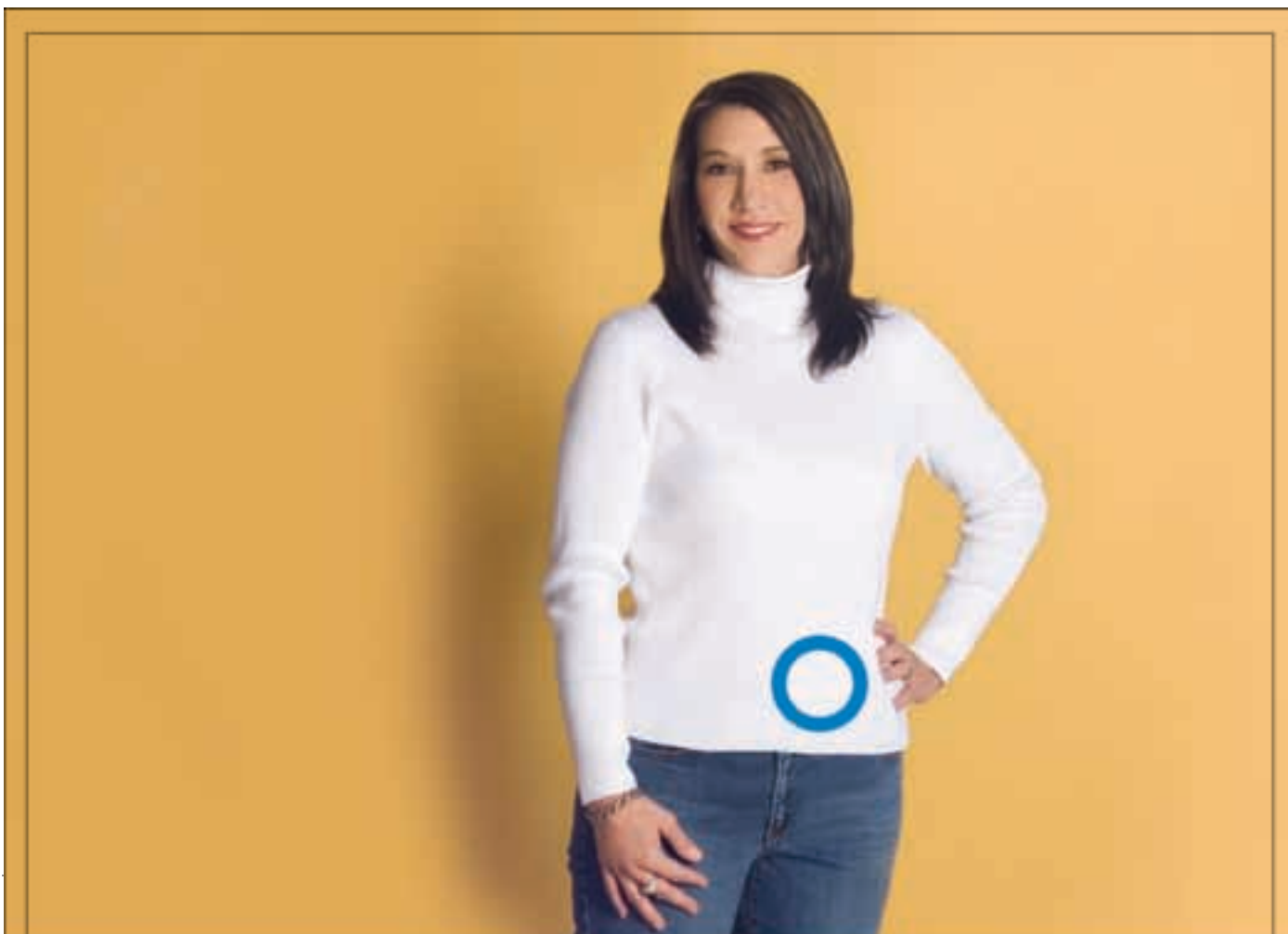
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