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APRIL 2011

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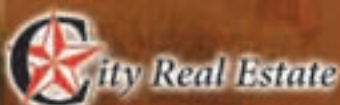
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## On The Cover



Easter bunnies abound at the Nichols home.

Photo by Amy Ramirez

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## Editor's Note

*Happy Easter, Ennis!*

Have you noticed how many new babies we have in Ennis? Well, I certainly have, and one thing that is prominent with the little girls is their "bigger than life" headbands and hair bows. Someone once said, "Everything is bigger in Texas." I guess that can go for headbands and hair bows, too. I look forward to shopping for the perfect Easter dress, minus the "bigger than life" headband or hair bow!

My excitement grows as the trees begin to bud with new growth, and flowers that have been dormant, once again show signs of fresh blooms. I am looking forward to purchasing new cushions for the front porch chairs, mowing the lawn and removing the cover from the backyard barbecue grill.

I love the changing of the seasons. By the time summer arrives, I am ready for the hotter days which lend the perfect weather for sunbathing, swimming or sitting outside sipping a tall glass of lemonade.

*Sandra*

Sandra Strong  
EnnisNOW Editor  
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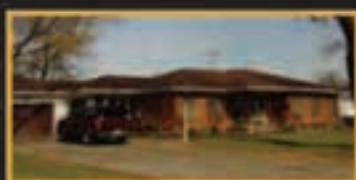




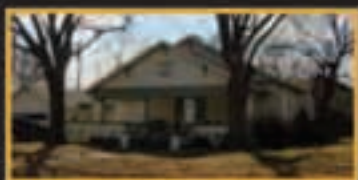
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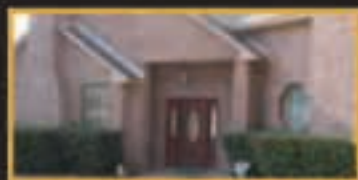
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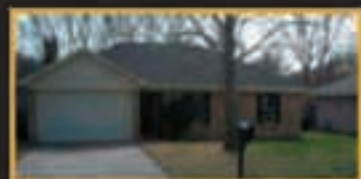
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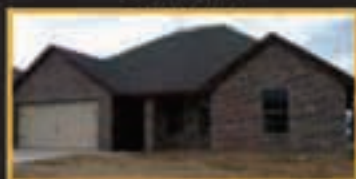
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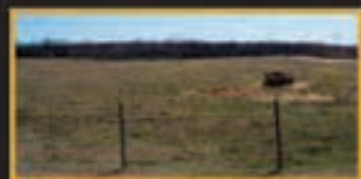
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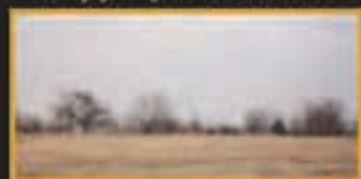
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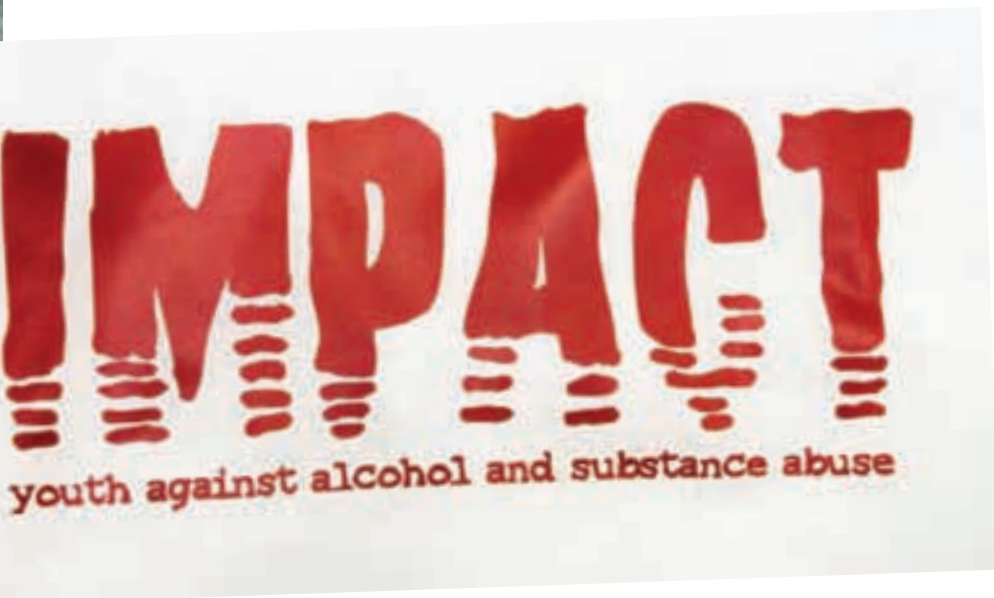
*“The community has supported the program from the beginning. Everyone has the same goals and have been wonderful.”*



# Making a STATEMENT

— By Virginia Riddle

*American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead once said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.” Josie Prachyl, coalition coordinator for IMPACT Ennis, has no doubts. “IMPACT is a statement. We want to make an impact in our community. By empowering youth and their parents we can come together to change the social drinking norm among teens,” she stated firmly.*



Members of the coalition include parents, teens, business leaders, as well as Ennis' Chief of Police John Erisman and Mayor Russell Thomas. Area school personnel are very supportive members. "Anybody can become a coalition member. We are consistently signing people up," Josie said. "Word-of-mouth is huge in a small town," she added. Josie also uses communication, public relations and networking skills she

fine-tuned while working previously for a local newspaper. Due to active promotion of several popular programs, IMPACT Ennis has enjoyed rapid growth during its two year existence.

Over 600 families have taken the pledge to become an Ennis Safe Home, which means the residents residing in that home will not serve alcohol or drugs to underage children. Super Hero Cards are traded and collected just like sports cards, but the super hero represented on the card expresses their powers against doing illegal drugs. The cards are sent home with all the elementary students in take-home packets. "The kids actually take everything home and educate the parents," Josie said. Billboards also portray the super heroes to the public. This highly successful program, as well as the

group's other campaigns and slogans, have been created from members' ideas.

The group's first year campaign was "Those Who Host," which educated the public about laws that govern serving alcohol to minors. For many Ennis residents underage drinking is an accepted cultural norm. "People didn't really know the legal trouble they could get into by serving alcohol to minors," Josie remembered.



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Jeannette Patak, of the Ennis Chamber; Josie Prachyl; and IMPACT Coalition board member, Pat Theisen.

Another cultural norm the group works to dispel is the belief that everyone thinks the “cool” kids do drugs. Changing long-held norms is difficult. As Josie noted, children today are reaching their teenage years with younger and younger parents in charge of them. “The parents’ age is a factor. So many parents want to be friends with their children. They just can’t understand the parent role versus the friendship role,” Josie noted. “This is a factor in many communities today.” Josie pointed out that parents find it easier to say “no” to children when the family is part of a network or coalition such as IMPACT, which includes friends, family and the community.

The coalition is represented at many community events, such as National Night Out, the Ennis Christmas Parade and Red Ribbon Week in the public schools. Although Red Ribbon Week is great, it lasts for only one week every year. Health education is no longer a required credit class in high school, so students do not always understand how damaging early-age drinking and illicit drug use can be. Brain research indicates that a human brain is not fully developed until the age of approximately 25 years. Early alcohol or drug abuse can result in parts of the brain, which are in the process of developing, becoming damaged. Once those parts are damaged they can stop developing and never start



doing so again. Cognitive thinking skills, such as reasoning, critical thinking and logical thought are usually developed during the teenage years. "It is a huge problem trying to get someone off alcohol or drugs, when their brain is not functional. It's like a damaged spider web," Josie lamented.

While there are many federally funded government programs, which address the same abuse problems, Josie noted that approximately 20 percent of those budgeted funds are designated for



programs, which stress prevention. The other 80 percent of the federal funds are directed toward treatment programs. IMPACT Ennis, which is affiliated with Drug Prevention Resources, Incorporated (DPRI), directs 100 percent of its private funds to prevention programs. DPRI is celebrating its 75th year of service to communities, which are assessed by their police departments to be at high risk for alcohol and drug abuse by teenagers.

IMPACT Ennis is currently funded on a five year grant. The group must show "continuing sustainability" at the end of the fifth year in 2013. At this point, the local group must match yearly grant funds. Monetary or like-kind contributions are welcomed, as well as food for events, discounts from merchants for packets or space for monthly meetings. "The community has supported the program from the beginning. Everyone has the same goals and has been wonderful," Josie said. "This has brought a lot of people together."



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Josie has four great reasons for having become a coalition volunteer a year ago and the groups' new coordinator: her children, Jerod, Jorden, Jennafer and Jenna. Josie, and her husband, Jeremy, have enjoyed their life in Ennis, which includes "great schools, lots of caring people and great community leaders." Most importantly she noted, "The schools really care about the kids." Josie grew up in Waxahachie where she graduated from high school. She and Jeremy moved their family to Ennis following Jeremy's service in the Marine Corps, so they could be near Josie's mom who had moved to Ennis. A busy mom and wife, Josie is also a pre-med student at Navarro College-Waxahachie, a member of the Ennis Lions Club and leads IMPACT Cedar Hill.

Josie puts a high priority on her four children and their friends' activities. "I like to read and go to the movies in my spare time, but I really don't have much of that right now," she acknowledged. Every year, the family enjoys traveling to Florida and Colorado.

Learning her new job has been a challenge made easier by her mentor, Alvis Reeves, the coordinator of IMPACT Navarro. Alvis has been impressed with the contacts Josie has in the area and her enthusiasm. "Josie was a quick start. She was the ideal person for the job. You really have to be able to build relationships, and she can do that job," Alvis stated.

Parents need a plan for raising their children to be responsible, healthy adults. IMPACT Ennis is working to provide parents with the information they need to be effective parents coupled with the support of the Ennis community, so that as Josie said, "Everybody is on board and the child stays on track." **NOW**



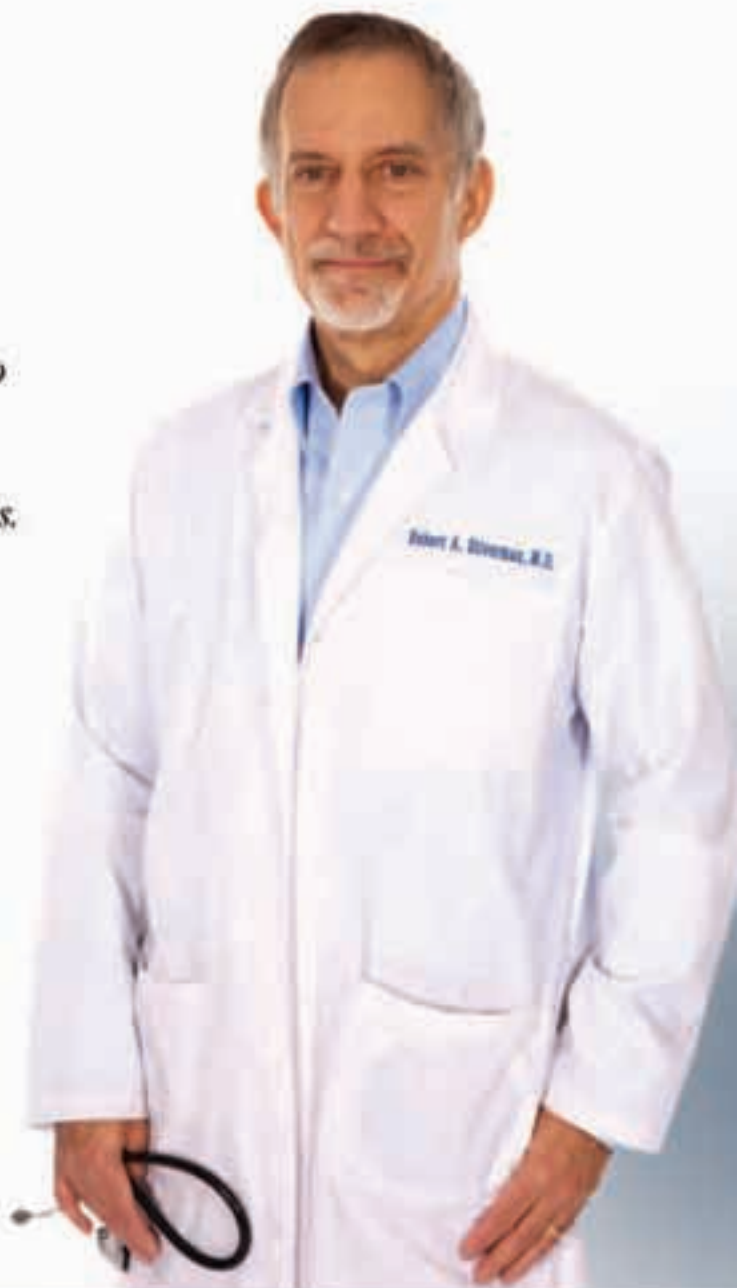
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*Dr. Silverman graduated from the Medical College of Virginia and completed his internship and residency at Wilford Hall U.S.A.F. Medical Center at Lackland A.F.B. in San Antonio. He has practiced in Ennis, Texas for the last 20 years.*

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# Just a Family of FOUR

— By Sandra Strong

*Nathan Nichols and Ashlee White were born and reared in Ennis. Nathan attended and graduated from St. John's Catholic School, while Ashlee is an Ennis Lion through and through. What is so amazing about their story is that they had to graduate from their respective high schools and move away before ever meeting one another. "We even graduated the same year," Ashlee said. "Our parents didn't even know each other."*

At Home With  
Nathan and Ashlee  
**Nichols**



They both made lots of friends when they ventured off to college. These friends are credited for bringing this young, very active couple together. "Mutual friends invited us to go out with them to a place in Dallas," Nathan remembered. "It was during the Thanksgiving holidays."

They looked at one another and laughed as they both agreed it was not love at first sight. "A relationship between the two of us didn't really start until a month later during the Christmas holidays," Ashlee added. It goes without saying, the couple





courted and married on July 17, 2004.

Once married, they made their home in Denton, at least until her first pregnancy.

"I was expecting Nash, and I wanted to come back home," Ashlee admitted. "I begged him to move us back to Ennis." In a very short while Nathan agreed to the move.

"Living in Denton gave us freedom," he confessed. "It was a tough move for me at first."

When the decision to move back to Ennis was finalized, the couple took up residency in Ashlee's grandmother's home. "We moved Grandmama Walker in with my mom and dad," Ashlee said.

Nathan, Ashlee and Nash, now 5, lived in Grandmama Walker's home for one



year. "The toys took over after Nash was born," Ashlee laughed.

Nathan agreed with a grin, adding, "It was a great starter home."

As they began house-hunting for a larger home, they kept coming back to this one. "Every other home we looked at didn't 'feel' like this one," Ashlee stated. "The first time I stepped into this house, I knew it was home. I think the arches add so much character."

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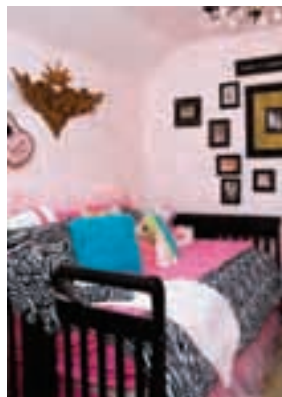
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child, NaLee, now 3. "Nash was a sweet surprise. He was and is our sweet little boy," Ashlee said as she lovingly patted his head. "NaLee is completely different. She is our Drama Mama Drama Queen." As Ashlee spoke, NaLee looked up, rolled her "innocent" little eyes and gave her mom a mischievous grin, which made

the whole room break out in laughter. "But we can't imagine life without them," Ashlee continued. "We're just a family of four."



on the market for approximately a year when the couple made an offer. The setup and layout remained the same after the purchase was complete, but new paint colors and the addition of lots of trim made it their own. Just a year into the move, the couple learned they were pregnant with their second

The last few years for the Nicholises seem to have flown by. Last year, as summer came to an end, Ashlee had an idea that made sense to Nathan, once he had a few moments to really think about it. "The backyard pool was Ashlee's idea," Nathan explained. "She's a teacher and she's home with the children all summer. A pool just made sense."

As 2010 was coming to a close, the pool construction with built-in hot tub and a tanning ledge in the shallow end was also nearing completion. "The little playground is just over there," Ashlee said, pointing to



the right corner beyond the pool's safety fence. "We have another sitting area on the far left side."

"Then we have the backyard kitchen," Nathan added, as he stood smack dab in the middle of the outside room he proudly dubs his own.

"As soon as the weather warms up," Ashlee said with excitement, "we're going to have Sunday Fun Day at the Nicholises' house. I can hardly wait."

That is of the utmost importance to Nathan and Ashlee — to have a child-friendly home, which is conducive to entertaining. Needless to say, as family-oriented people, that is what they have created from the very beginning. "We have friends who have children about the same age as Nash and NaLee," Ashlee said. "It's much easier and cheaper to all go to



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someone's house where there is no need for a babysitter?"

All families have things that make them unique. The Nichols family is no different. Nathan and Ashlee combined letters from their names when deciding



on the names they chose for Nash and NaLee. Nash's room is decorated with sports memorabilia from Nathan's days in high school and college, while a couple Longhorn items honor his mom's college



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of choice. NaLee's room is fit for the "princess" she is, with a large crown over an antique vanity, her very own chandelier and her Mimi White's baby shoes displayed on a shelf. "With NaLee being the first girl to her Poppy and Gigi Nichols," Nathan added, "they couldn't



wait to help in the design of her room.”

Ashlee’s passion for pictures and love for meaningful, decorative signage is apparent, no matter which direction visitors look or which rooms they venture into. The nook in the hall on the way

to the half-bath is home to the extended family photos, while another nook between the formal dining and living rooms showcases photographs of both families, all family members included. One wall in the living room is devoted to the Nichols children, as well as all the children’s cousins. “I just love pictures,” Ashlee admitted. “The frames are all the same, but the photos change with the seasons.” Although most change, four large portraits on the main wall in the living room remain the same. The vignette is their life in pictures — their wedding,


Nash, NaLee and their sweet family of four.

Special sentiments are noticed in each room, too, from “Are you ready for some football?” and “It’s All About Family” to the one that means the most to Ashlee — the one she received as a Christmas gift this past year from Nathan. “It simply reads, ‘My greatest blessings call me mom,’” Ashlee said. “I hung it in the master bedroom alongside pictures of the children.”

Looking back, Nathan can now say coming home to Ennis after being gone eight years was more than a good thing



— it was a blessing. “We couldn’t have done it without our parents,” Nathan said, referring to the help they receive from both sets of parents when it comes to the children. “The decision to move back home was definitely a good one.” **NOW**



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# Hunting and Finding LOVE

— By Virginia Riddle



*For the past three years, First Baptist Church of Palmer has celebrated the joys of Easter and the story of Jesus with area residents through their annual Easter Egg Hunt. Over 15,000 Easter eggs filled with candy are used in the hunt. “We want to communicate*

*with the community as to what Easter is all about, Pastor David Gradberg said. “Easter is another way to get the Gospel to more people. My dad had never gone to church until he wanted to see the longest banana split. There, at that church, he met Jesus.”*

The one-day event is now held at the Palmer High School football field due to the growth of the celebration, which now averages 400-600 attendees. As children are released to “hunt” the eggs, the field is quickly gleaned. “It’s mass chaos,” David shared. But it is not the activity that makes the difference. The difference is made through the giving of time and understanding by attentive volunteers. “People get to see we are just normal people. You don’t have to be perfect to be a Christian,” said the Easter egg hunt coordinator Reesa Corley, who has served as children’s director for 10 years.

Over the years, volunteers have come together to make the event memorable. “It’s a neat thing to see generations of

**“You just know that people understand what Easter is all about after coming.”**







a family — grandfather, mother and grandchild working together,” Reesa remarked. “The church’s youth are a lot of help. We have awesome youth,” she added. The Circuit Bike Riders help throw out the eggs and do airbrush tattoos, which are very popular. The costs are not great in monetary terms, but the costs are great in the volunteers’ time,” Reesa said.

The event is free and open to everybody. Word-of-mouth has spread news of the event, but the church also sends fliers home to students in the Palmer Independent School District. An Easter Egg Hunt banner is hung on a fence on the church grounds at 510 S. Dallas, and fliers are distributed through area businesses who help by donating food and drinks.

As if Easter eggs full of candy and food are not a big enough enticement to attend, over 18 children’s games and booths of all kinds are set up. “Face painting is a big draw. Kid’s love it!” Reesa exclaimed. This year’s hunt will be even better than previous hunts. There will be more games and exhibits for the family, and the experience the volunteers

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David shepherds an active congregation which obviously enjoys meeting in very creative settings. Weekly opportunities include a discipleship program for children called Awana, Thursday night visitations, the “Son” Shine Club, children’s and adult choir rehearsals, prayer groups, GMA, youth

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in Gary, Texas, and mission trips for the youth. "Camp is awesome!" Reesa recalled. The church also operates the First Baptist Palmer Christian Academy each weekday for children providing a before- and after-school program.

First Baptist Palmer only recently moved to its new location, having outgrown its original beautiful and historic facility, which was built during 1900-1901. "This year is the 135th year of this church in the community," David said. "The move was very hard, and it has made us cash poor but property rich. People understand that this mission has a high purpose with a lot of sacrifice," he added.

The church had originally grown with Palmer, a small town that was founded as a railway shipping point for the cotton and grain farmers in the area during the late 1800s. New growth in population is arriving

since the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is extending itself gradually across those former cotton and grain fields. "This year is going to be a great year for God. It is going to be a year of miracles, and an utterly astounding year," David stated emphatically. One new goal for the congregation for 2011 is to reach

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out more to single parent families. “The doors here are wide, wide open,” David stated. The church is affiliated with the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas (BMAT).

Reesa, whose full-time employment is as a supervisor for TransCore Fleet Compliance in Ennis, is also wife to David Corley and mother to a son and two daughters. “I also have two beautiful grandchildren,” Reesa said proudly. She has always worked in managerial positions, and she cited a great relationship with a loving mother as her main inspiration for her church work. She loves living in Palmer. “It truly takes a village to raise a child. People outside the family are watching my kids,” she stated.



**“This year is going to be a great year for God.”**

David was very pleased to receive the call three years ago to serve his wife, Rhonda's, hometown church, and this is his 25th year in the ministry. The father of two sons — Jordan, 18, who plays drums in church and Josh, 12 — attributes his experience of being married and becoming a father as instrumental to his ministry. Mission trips to Africa, Bolivia and Mexico “are my best learning tools. There is abundant ministry,” he stated, “and to be in a church that is ready to do the ministry is a privilege.”

Reesa is often asked why she does all this work voluntarily. She explains, “Every time I'm in Walmart and a kid sees me and throws up little hands to greet me, I know at that moment they know someone in this world loves them. It's worth it.” Kids looking for eggs can find love every spring at First Baptist Church of Palmer's Easter Egg Hunt. **NOW**

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# A Little Bit of Everything

*Eric's Garage: automotive care that has always been reputable, honest and fair.*

— By Sandra Strong

Eric Trojacek, owner of Eric's Garage, has been in the automotive repair business for a very long time. What began as a part-time job at the age of 15 turned into a lifetime career that has spanned 32 years. "I took a job at a local car dealership when I was in high school," Eric explained. "It was 'just a job' in the beginning." Instead of college or vocational school after graduation, Eric asked his boss at the dealership to send him to special training centers as they came available so he could grow in the field of automobile repair.

That job, so long ago, laid the foundation Eric needed to go into business for himself. He spent five years at his first location. "I give a great deal of credit for those first five years of success

to Clyde Gill, the owner of Ennis Muffler Shop," Eric stated. "I leased space behind his shop until I outgrew it and had to move to my second location not far down the road in Metro Park." Eric's Garage was in this second location for another five years, until growth caused him to make a major decision. "They [the owners of Metro Park] grew and needed the entire building, so that meant I either needed to find another location to work from or build a place of my own," he said.

Eric seriously considered getting out of the automotive repair business altogether. His strong faith in God, along with his many customers, helped change his mind. "When customers heard I was thinking about leaving, they told me I couldn't leave," Eric



## Business **NOW**

remembered. "I took a huge leap of faith when I decided to build. I told myself and my family, 'If God wants this to work, it will work.'"

Apparently, God agreed with longtime Eric's Garage customers. Ten years later, the Christ-based family business is still flourishing at its new location. In fact, when doing the math, it appears that Eric is now repairing third-generation automobiles. "The way people feel about what I do keeps me wanting to stay in business," Eric confessed. "They come to me for second opinions. So many customers are repeat customers. It's so nice to know they trust what we do here."

What they do at Eric's Garage is a "little bit of everything." Specialized areas of service include muffler and exhaust repair, custom muffler work and front end alignments. "We do just about anything when it comes to auto repair," Eric said. "The only thing we don't do is work that involves pulling the engine

**"The way people feel about what I do keeps me wanting to stay in business."**

totally out of the car." He also enjoys it when someone brings in an older model car, one without all the bells and whistles. "It takes me back to where I started," Eric added.

To remain updated and knowledgeable, Eric and his shop staff attend evening classes pertaining to parts and tools, as well as keeping current with certifications mandated by the state. "We really are a family here at Eric's Garage," he stated. Paula, his wife of 11 years, is the office manager, while his brother, son and son-in-law round out the group of five.

Whether you are a new customer or a repeat customer, you can be sure of one thing when using Eric's Garage. "When customers leave, they know they have gotten the best deal possible," Eric said. "We have always been reputable, honest and fair." **NOW**



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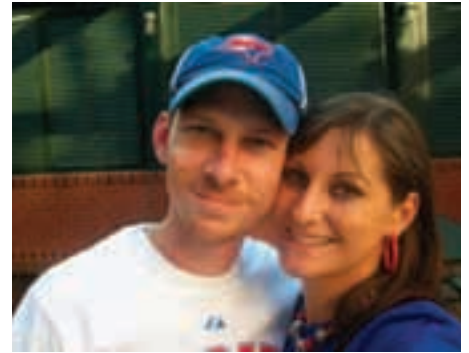




*Lydia Harper enjoys feeding the ducks with her great-grandson, Cooper Navarro.*



*Dr. Jinks and staff host an open house for their new Tickle Lipo procedure.*



*Chad Mach and Penny Wood support their favorite team, the Rangers!*



*Austin Elementary third-graders pose on their field trip to the Dallas Arboretum.*



*Jennifer Prunce and Brian Wooldridge grab a bite while out on their Harley.*

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Historically, it has been the Dart Foundation's preference to make grants in support of youth education programs (primarily science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Other areas of interest have included health and community services.



# Scabies: The World's Itchiest Rash

— By B.H. Davison, M.D.

Scabies is among the most common skin disorders that pediatricians see. Skin infection with microscopic mites, distant relatives of spiders and those red spider mites that can ruin a tomato plant in short order, causes the rash. Skin changes are secondary to a reaction to the body and toxic waste products of these tiny critters as they tunnel through the skin's upper layers, taking blood meals and laying eggs.

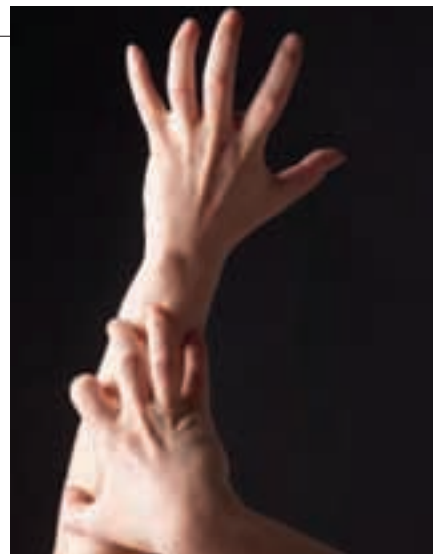
The rash of scabies is about the itchiest that pediatricians encounter. This symptom tends to be worse at night, when kids cover up and increased body warmth stimulates mite activity.

Skin lesions of scabies infestation usually lead to the correct diagnosis. Tiny red, crusty bumps occur in typical places: the undersurface of wrists; in the armpits; in between the buttocks, fingers and toes; about the ankles; around the navel; and in the genital area. Scabies also can cause

hive-like skin changes and blisters that are filled with clear or cloudy fluid. Intense itching may cause excessive scratching that can lead to bacterial skin infections. Infants and toddlers may have a rash over the entire body and many lesions that resemble firm, rather large nodules just under the skin's surface.

Scabies is spread by close, prolonged, skin-to-skin contact, therefore, the children and sexual partners of an infected individual are the most likely to become infected. Once a diagnosis is made, the prudent pediatrician treats every household member for scabies, even if they have not yet developed symptoms. Failing to do so often results in a never-ending cycle of reinfection.

Scabies responds well to a five-percent solution of permethrin (Elimite) applied over the entire skin surface, including the scalp, and left on 8-12 hours. Permethrin



kills the scabies mite and is safe for use, even on infants. It may take several weeks for the rash to resolve following treatment. The itching that usually accompanies the rash responds well to frequent applications (up to four times daily) of one-percent hydrocortisone lotion, which, like Elimite, requires a prescription. **NOW**

B.H. Davison, M.D., Pediatrician  
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# How to Choose a Financial Professional

— By Bob Irish

As you navigate the financial world, you'll most likely deal with a wide array of investment choices, constantly changing tax laws, estate-planning issues and other areas. And then, to make things even more complex, you'll have to consider your own risk tolerance, time horizon and individual goals. If you're like most people, you don't have the time and expertise to create, monitor and adjust your investment strategy by yourself, so you'll need to get some help. But how can you choose a financial professional who is right for you?

You'll need to do some research, possibly by interviewing a few candidates. Here are a few questions you may want to ask:

- Do you have experience working with people like me? Ideally, you'd like to work with someone who has experience in helping people like you — that is, people with similar income and asset levels, family situations, goals and so on. The more familiar a financial professional is with people like you, the better that person will be at helping you identify the appropriate investment moves.

- Do you have a particular investment philosophy? Look for someone with a thoughtful, reasoned philosophy on investing. As a general rule, be suspicious of anyone promising you big, quick gains. The best financial professionals seek to help their clients achieve positive long-term results through disciplined, persistent and sensible investment moves.

- How often will you communicate with me? If you're going to entrust your hard-earned financial resources with someone, you'll want that person to communicate with you regularly as to how you're doing and what changes you may need to make. How often will you receive investment statements? How many times a

year will you meet to review your progress? Can you have face-to-face consultations whenever you need them? These are the types of questions you'll want to ask any prospective financial advisor.

- Will you be my primary contact? If you seek a one-on-one relationship with a financial professional, you'll want that person to be your main contact, if not your exclusive one. You deserve the attention and expertise of a financial professional, so if you're interviewing someone who seems as if he or she might try to "pass you along" to subordinates in the office, keep looking.

- What services do you offer? If you want your financial professional to help you create a unified investment strategy, you'll also want that person to help you implement it — which means he or she needs access to a full range of investment and money management products and services.

How are you paid? Financial professionals are compensated in any of a number of ways. They may work on a fee-only basis, with the fee either agreed upon in advance or based on the level of assets under management. And some financial professionals work in a combined fee-and-commission arrangement. From an investor's point of view, one method of compensation may not be "better" than the others; nonetheless, it's important for you to fully understand how your financial advisor will be paid.

By doing your homework in advance, you can develop a solid relationship with a qualified financial professional — someone who will be with you far into the future. **NOW**

*Bob Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.*

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### Weekends in April

*Forever Plaid* presented by Ennis Public Theatre, 2705 N. Kaufman Street. Friday and Saturday shows all month. Call (972) 878-7529 for ticket prices and curtain times. Season tickets are also available.

### April 1-30

Bluebonnet Trails.

### April 1 and 2

Heart of Texas Arts and Craft Show: Friday, 2:00-8:00 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center. Admission: Adults, \$4; children 12 and under are admitted for free. Visit [www.heartoftexasshow.com](http://www.heartoftexasshow.com).

### April 4

Ennis High School Student Council meeting: 6:30-8:00 p.m.

### April 7 and 8

Ennis High School 2011-2012 Lionette Line Clinic: 4:30-6:30 p.m.

### April 8 and 9

Ennis Chamber of Commerce BBQ Cook-off: For more information, call (972) 878-2625.

### April 9

Ennis High School Lionette hopeful linetryouts: 8:00 a.m.-noon.

Ennis High School Lionette Officer Tryouts: 1:00-6:00 p.m.

Ellis County Republican Women Spring Art Show & Sale: 5:00-7:00 p.m., Ennis National Bank Event Center, 116 West Ennis Avenue. Call (972) 923-9208.

Navarro College Brilliance 2011, Realizing Educational Dreams: 6:00 p.m., Midlothian Conference Center. Tickets \$75. For more information or reservations, contact Lynn Pike at (972) 923-6439 or [lynn.pike@navarrocollege.edu](mailto:lynn.pike@navarrocollege.edu).

### April 9-May 30

Scarborough Renaissance Festival: 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie. For more information, call (972) 938-3247.

### April 14

Hope Clinic Grand Opening/Open House: 4:30-7:00 p.m., 411 East Jefferson Street, Waxahachie. Call (972) 268-1802.

### April 16

Texas Baptist Home Spring Craft Fair: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., 629 Farley Street. Call (972) 937-1321.

### April 16 and 17

60th Annual Ennis Bluebonnet Trails Festival: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Call (972) 878-4748 to find

out more about the event sponsored by the Ennis Garden Club.

NHRA Lucas Oil Divisional: Texas Motorplex.

### April 18-20

Lionette Spring Dance Clinic-Let's Celebrate: 5:00-6:30 p.m., Ennis High School at the Dance Studio. Girls ages pre-K through 12th grade may participate. Special performance at Relay for Life event.

### April 19

Leadership Ennis: Ennis Regional Medical Center. Call (972) 878-2625.

### April 23

Ennis United Pentecostal Church Easter picnic: Highview Park. Everyone is welcome. Contact JoLinda Yandell at (214) 728-4236.

### April 29

Ennis Relay For Life: Texas Motorplex.

### April 30

Youth M.A.D.N.E.S.S. Inc. Car Show Fundraiser: noon-4:00 p.m., 507 North Highway 77, Waxahachie, in the parking lot area.

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## In The Kitchen With Donna Miller

— *By Sandra Strong*

Donna Miller finds cooking to be “pure joy.” It is something she has done for most of her life. “As the oldest girl at age 13, it was just a necessity,” she admitted, “but I have absolutely loved cooking from the start.” Her children are grown, so cooking for large groups only happens now during the holidays and for family birthdays.

Down-home cooking and baking are her favorites. She laughed as she remembered her sister’s wedding cake. “It was before air conditioning,” she smiled, also mentioning that she was young and inexperienced at the time. “I made a three-tiered cake for her, but by the time I got it to Dallas in the heat, it had melted and toppled over. The wedding lasted; the cake didn’t.” **NOW**

### Slow Cooker Roast Beef

**1** cut roast beef your choice, enough to feed 6 people  
**1** pkg. ranch dressing mix  
**1** pkg. brown gravy mix  
**1** pkg. zesty Italian dressing mix  
**1/2** pkg. onion soup mix  
**2** cups water

**1.** In a slow cooker, combine all the ingredients listed above.  
**2.** Cook for 6 hours or until done.

### Oh-So-Good Chicken Casserole

**4** tsp. olive oil  
**1/2** cup sliced green onions  
**2** cups sliced fresh mushrooms  
**8** oz. diced canned green chilies, drained

**1 1/2** cups mild picante sauce  
**12** oz. chicken breast, cooked and shredded  
**2** cups brown rice, cooked  
**6** Tbsp. sour cream  
**4** oz. cheddar cheese, grated  
**Paprika**, if desired

**1.** Heat oil in skillet. Add onions and mushrooms, cooking until soft.  
**2.** Stir in chilies. Cook for 2 minutes.  
**3.** Stir in picante sauce. Cook, stirring constantly until thickened, about 5 minutes.  
**4.** Place chicken in bottom of a 10-inch baking dish sprayed with a non-stick, releasing agent.  
**5.** Reserve 1/2 cup of the picante mixture before pouring the remainder over the chicken.  
**6.** Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes.  
**7.** Combine rice, sour cream and reserved picante sauce.

**8.** Spread rice mixture over the top of the chicken.  
**9.** Sprinkle with cheese and paprika.  
**10.** Bake an additional 5 minutes.  
*Makes 4 servings.*

### Fresh Pear Cake

**2** cups sugar  
**3** eggs  
**1 1/4** cups oil  
**3** cups flour  
**1** tsp. soda  
**1** tsp. salt  
**2** tsp. cinnamon  
**1** tsp. vanilla  
**3** cups fresh pears, chopped  
**1** cup pecans, chopped (optional)

**1.** Mix sugar, eggs and oil; beat.  
**2.** Mix together flour, soda, salt and cinnamon.  
**3.** Add the dry mixture to the wet mixture one cup at a time, beating continually.  
**4.** Add vanilla, pears and nuts if desired, mixing thoroughly.  
**5.** Bake at 350 F for 1 hour in a tube pan or a 9x11-inch pan.

### Vanilla Wafer Salad

**2** sticks margarine, softened  
**2** cups sugar  
**6** eggs  
**4** cups vanilla wafers (equal to one large box)  
**1/2** cup milk  
**1 7 1/2-oz.** angel flake coconut  
**1** cup pecans, chopped

**1.** Cream margarine. Add sugar and beat.  
**2.** Add eggs one at a time and continue to beat.  
**3.** Crush vanilla wafers into fine crumbs with a rolling pin.  
**4.** Add wafers and milk alternately to egg mixture.  
**5.** Add coconut and pecans, folding into the mixture.  
**6.** Pour mixture into a greased and floured tube pan.  
**7.** Bake at 275-300 F for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or longer if needed.  
**8.** Check doneness by inserting a toothpick into the cake.

**To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).**