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General Manager, Rick Hensley

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Managing Editor, Becky Walker

Ennis Editor, Sandra Strong

Writers, Katie Brown . Bob Irish

Virginia Riddle

Editors/Proofreaders, Beverly Shay

Pat Anthony . Teresa Maddison

Angel Morris . Pamela Parisi

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla

Artists, Julie Carpenter . Martha Macias

Allee Brand . Cherie Chapman

Marshall Hinsley . Arlene Honza

Brande Morgan

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Jill Odle

Photographers, Amy Ramirez

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives,

Linda Roberson . Rick Ausmus

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Bryan Frye . Melissa McCoy . Carolyn Mixon

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John Powell . Steve Randle

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On The Cover



Let's all polka!

Photo by Amy Ramirez

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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 875-3299 or visit www.nowmagazines.com.

Editor's Note

Jak se mas, Ennis?

For anyone who doesn't know, *Jak se mas* is Czech for *how are you doing?* I can only imagine how busy you are with all that's coming up this month. I love attending the annual Polka Festival, because I never get tired of admiring all the elaborate costumes. Memorial Day on the 30th allows us a time to spend with family and friends, barbecuing and enjoying the freedoms our military fights so hard for us to keep.

By far, my favorite day this month will be May 8 — Mother's Day. I know my two wonderful sons will honor me, but I love being able to tell my mother just how much she means to me and how proud I am to call her Mom. Now that I'm a mother myself, I finally understand all she sacrificed to make me the strong woman I am today. Thank you, Mom!

Sandra

Sandra Strong
EnnisNOW Editor
sskoda.nowmag@sbcglobal.net



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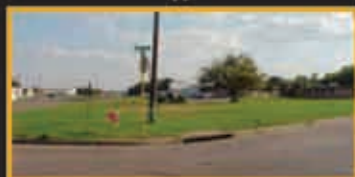
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make it happen."*



Memories With Meaning

— By Sandra Strong

Kathleen Prachyl took her first trip to the Czech Republic in 1996 with a tour group that originated in Ennis. “That first trip included three generations,” she remembered, “my mom, Elaine Gallagher, my two daughters, Stephanie and Jessica, and me.” Her second trip with the same tour group also included three generations. “My boys, Andrew and Daniel, went with mom and me.” Now that Kathleen, her mom and a few of their close friends go as tourists without a guide, Kathleen is hopeful one day she will be able to take a family trip that will include all her children at one time.

The freedom the small entourage has, minus a guide, allows them to “go where we want to go” and “see what we want to see” on “our” timetable. The biggest obstacle they had to overcome was the driving. “I’m one of the designated drivers,” Kathleen laughed. “Now that we travel as tourists, we do all our own driving. The only thing I miss about not having a guide is being able to look out the window at the sites.”

Thankfully for Kathleen, the steering wheel is on the left side of the car and driving is done on the same side of the road as in America. To keep everyone safe on their journeys, Kathleen did her “homework.” She studied several pages of street signs before actually taking on the European roadways. One of the funniest signs resembles a contour bra. “We call it the sign with the bra in the road,” Kathleen said, laughing aloud. “It looks like two bra cups, but it means you’re about to drive over uneven pavement. Driving really isn’t so bad once you get the hang of it.”

Getting over her fears and learning to drive opened so many doors for the group. As the five meet at Elaine’s house before leaving Ennis, they all have ideas on what they want to see and sites they have a desire to visit, sometimes for the second, third and fourth times. “We always have a long list of things we want to do and places we want to go,” Kathleen reiterated, “and castles are always on the ‘to do’ list.”

Several years ago, Kathleen and her mom met family members from Frystak, one of the many small villages located in the Czech Republic. “Our Czech cousins were even able to locate the house where my great-grandmother was born.” Thanks to this family, going back has been simpler, and much more relaxed, because of their hospitality. “They have a small apartment we



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stay in when we travel in that particular area," Kathleen explained. "When we're in other areas, we try to stay at *penzions*, the equivalent of a bed and breakfast here in America, because they're cheaper than hotels."

Last year when trying to locate the Edison 7, a *penzion* in Slovakia, the group ended up getting lost. "We pulled up in front of this house," Kathleen shared. "A guy was getting out of his car, so we asked him directions." She laughed as she remembers him turning around and walking back to his own vehicle. "He loaned us his GPS. He programmed in the address and told us to ask the manager of the Edison 7 to store the GPS in his safe and he'd be by in a few days to retrieve it. How many people in America would trust five strangers with their GPS?"

When asked what her favorite part of the Czech Republic is, Kathleen answered, "All of it. I love the architecture, the landscape, the small villages and towns. I find I have a great time looking in the various shops, even hardware shops," she added with a grin. "If you look long enough, you'll find something unique, something you won't find in an American hardware store."

Attending the wedding of one of her newfound cousins a couple of years ago gave Kathleen a couple more lessons in Czech tradition. "After they were married, they were given a white dish which was dropped on purpose before them. As the new bride and groom, they must clean it up together," Kathleen said. "Soup was the first course of the wedding meal. The couple was draped as one in a large white cloth. They were given one bowl and

one spoon. They began their married life feeding one another. These two traditions represent a picture of the married life to come; to help one another in all things.”

The Festival of Kings, in the Moravian village of Vlcnov, is similar to the annual Polka Festival here in Ennis. “There are various bands, craft items to buy and lots of food. It’s a day of drinking, eating and dancing. The men and women in the procession and even the horses in the parade are dressed in very detailed costumes.” According to legend, the king must be a virgin, and is now a boy of 10 or 12. As a person who loves taking photos, Kathleen has been able to memorialize this event in an album that she loves to share with visitors.

So many keepsakes and memories that reflect her Czech heritage have been purchased abroad and now have a special place in Kathleen’s home. Memories with meaning are definitely being made. Her modest collection of hand-painted Czech plates is displayed on the walls, a collection her mom started for her many years ago. Christmas ornaments manufactured at the Irista Ornament Company in the Czech Republic are some of Kathleen’s most favorite memorabilia. “We have toured the factory several times and once they allowed us to try blowing the glass ourselves,” she said. “The glass is very thin and lightweight. The ornaments are very detailed and delicate.”

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Kathleen's kitchen windows while a Bohemian Czech lead crystal dish is home to scented potpourri. "I also collect calendars from the Czech Republic," she admitted. The reason she almost came home last year without one was due to a rather nasty accident. "A friend on her first trip with us took a very nasty fall," Kathleen explained. "She broke her ankle so badly that she had to be hospitalized." The surgery she underwent at the hospital in Zlin included a plate and several screws. When she got home a week later, her American physicians said the European surgeon had done a stellar job.

The group's next trip to the Czech Republic is slated for the last week of August and will extend into September. In order for Kathleen to make the trip happen as often as it does, she has adopted a somewhat frugal lifestyle — a lifestyle well worth the memories it reaps. "As long as my mom is able to make the trip and she wants to go," Kathleen said, "I'm going to do all I can to make it happen." **NOW**

Tonya Youngblood

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AT HOME WITH
KEVIN AND LISA FINCHER



An Elegant, Comfortable Haven

— By Virginia Riddle

A rock-rimmed pool with a wonderful waterfall flowing from the hot tub is only one of the many relaxing comforts that Kevin and Lisa Fincher's home holds for family members and friends who frequently visit. The circular drive fronting the antique red brick, Tudor-style home with white stone accents welcomes visitors to come, park, eat and just stay awhile. "We had 10 kids sleep over the other night," Lisa said. The host child was the Finchers' daughter, Alyssa, who is 15 years old and a sophomore at Ennis High School.

Enjoyment is paramount around the pool where a toad with an umbrella and turtle stand on sentinel duty over the hot tub. The roses and lantana provide a natural setting for butterflies to add to the magic of the sound of music and the relaxing setting. "This is where you can usually find us," Lisa said. "We spend a lot of time out at the pool." A covered patio and grill give Kevin the opportunity to satisfy hungry, young appetites. On weekends Kevin can be found cooking for 10-15 young adults. "You know you're doing something right when they ask you to do it," he related.

Children are this couple's priority. Kevin, who is the branch manager of Leggett and Platt Incorporated, has also found time to coach and manage Alyssa and daughter, Heather's, girls' softball team, The Ennis Tomboyz. With Alyssa's interests turning to track, Kevin remarked, "This is the first year since Heather was 4 that I haven't coached softball."



Heather, who is 20 and a student at Texas A&M University, has kept Lisa busy with competitive cheerleading events. "Heather competed with cheerleading, and we went just about anywhere and everywhere she wanted including several trips to Disney World for the All-Star World Competitions, Daytona for College Nationals and the Orange Bowl, where she performed for the pregame and halftime shows," Lisa recalled.

Lisa, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Registered Texas School Business Administrator (RTSBA), serves as assistant superintendent of finance for the Ennis Independent School District. As a former partner in an accounting firm that handled governmental audits, she now finds working with the school district more compatible with her

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mothering duties. "I had two little kids, and I couldn't do what my children needed me to do," she remembered.

Working with builder Robert Slovak in 2002, Kevin and Lisa custom designed their home to be an elegant, yet durable haven. From the pool it is only a few short steps to a kitchen that aids in satiating hungry teenage appetites, as well as accommodating both Kevin and Lisa's families at Thanksgiving and

Christmas dinners. The tile floors, granite countertops, an island work area and breakfast bar provide practicality and durability while the beautiful cabinets and faux custom painting provide elegant touches. The painting is an on-going project throughout the home as Kevin and Lisa commission Jill Hammonds, a Southlake interior designer and artist, to paint and add custom touches, such as medallions, wall hangings and other decorative features. Jill has coordinated wall paintings with the hall tree that

is conveniently located by the garage door in order to catch the backpacks and store them out-of-sight.

The kitchen opens into the informal dining room which boasts a table large enough to accommodate most crowds whether they are eating or playing games. Kevin remembered a recent game of spoons that the "big kids," aged 20-30 years old, were playing when the table almost collapsed from the weight of competition. "Everyone is competitive," he stated. "None of us want to lose at anything."

The living area overlooks the pool and features the fireplace surrounded by built-in cabinets placed into walls with soaring ceilings. The elegant wood floors flow into the formal dining room featuring red walls with a trim painted to perfectly



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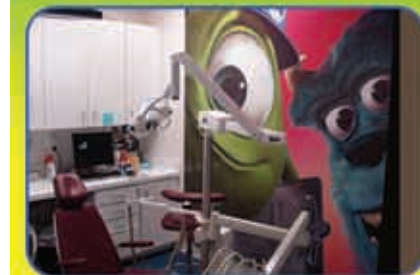
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coordinate with the kitchen. Floor to ceiling windows are trimmed with beautiful window coverings while a Persian carpet graces the floor. Lucy, the family's resident dog, clearly rules from her perch on the couch.

Another hall tree greets guests entering the front door with its leaded glass inserts. An elephant-safari-themed half bath is hidden discretely under the staircase, while one of the most practical surprises is just around the corner. Lisa changed this space from the office on the original floor plan to the family's utility and laundry room. The change gave the family additional storage, as well as a laundry chute from the bedrooms on the second story. A storage closet provides one entrance to the master bedroom and bath, which is an isolated haven for the couple with its own private exit to the pool and hot tub.

The open-to-the-lower-floor second story nearly belongs to the girls. Lisa claims one bedroom as a guest bedroom/office area for herself. It is decorated with Kevin's jersey from his football playing days at Texas Tech University and photos of Heather in competition. The bedspread is in brown and black stripes coordinating with brown and black squares painted on the walls by Lisa and the girls. An oversized walk-in closet contains Lisa's work and craft supplies. A Jack-and-Jill bathroom joins this bedroom to Heather's room. The ladies of the house painted the bath to transition from black and white polka

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dots, to asterisks, to stripes. "Heather loves to decorate," Lisa revealed.

Alyssa's retreat, her bedroom, decorated in shades of maroon, brown and black with a jungle theme, transitions beautifully to "the jungle room" through another bathroom. Jill has outdone herself with the creation of this room which features curling vines painted across the ceiling and teal and brown stripes on the walls. A large-screened television with a Nintendo Wii and comfortable couches make this a room to "dream" or "believe" in as the wall plaques say or just a room in which to play. "The kids all just love it," Lisa said. When the girls were younger they had an "everything Barbie" room, but as they have grown up the girls wanted to make the change to a TV/hangout room.

Kevin and Lisa, who were class of '82 Ennis High School sweethearts, loved building the house and have loved making memories with their girls and friends. A graduate of The University of Texas at Arlington, Lisa said, "We both went off to different schools and



came back home to stay. We made it through the separation." As they start anticipating their days as "empty nesters," Lisa volunteers with the Lions Club and United Way. Kevin enjoys playing golf and hunting and fishing with his dad and brothers. However, Kevin, Lisa and Lucy will still be ready to welcome guests to their elegant haven for fun, food and a swim. **NOW**




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a wonderful, yet safe experience is General Manager Gabrielle Stevenson's primary job. "I absolutely love the job," she said smiling enthusiastically.

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The National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) has 20 national event tracks in the United States, but only two of those tracks are managed by women, putting Gabrielle in a very unique position, especially since she has never raced or been a crew member. "I like to watch them race. I enjoy being the unique individual who gets to promote the track and racing," she reflected.

Growing up in Northern California, Gabrielle fulfilled her childhood aspirations by becoming a sports writer, another rather male-dominated field. A public relations position with the NHRA brought her to drag racing tracks across America, and it was love at first sight. Her contacts firmly in place within the racing world, she formed her own public relations firm. Even during a two-year intermission as a staff member with the United Way, Gabrielle still kept finding her way back to the Texas Motorplex. "I had been here for nine fall nationals," she said. A meeting with Billy Meyer, the Motorplex's owner, Waco native and

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member of the South Central Division 4 Hall of Fame of the NHRA, gave her the opportunity to inquire about the general manager's job opening. "I told him he would be crazy not to consider me. We had very similar goals," Gabrielle recalled. A few days later, Billy called and offered her the position.

Both Billy and Gabrielle are passionate about maintaining a high level of quality in all aspects of the quarter-mile track's life. "This has been a landmark facility around the country. Regionally, so many people don't realize how important it is," Gabrielle said. In the upcoming 2011 season, the track will celebrate its 25th anniversary. "Billy was a rebel in 1986." He designed the facility with seating very near the track, allowing fans to get up close and personal. "Tracks have been using this design ever since," she said while adding, "Billy is such a savvy business man, and he gives me room to succeed."

The Texas Motorplex was planned and opened by Billy after taking into consideration the expected growth from the now defunct Superconducting Supercollider project. However, the Ennis location of the track near the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex has still proved to be beneficial. Gabrielle appreciates the advantages of having both the DFW Airport and Love Field nearby with a four lane highway leading to the track, as well as easy access to both Interstates 45 and 35. In the last 10 years, both Ennis and Waxahachie have shown phenomenal growth in spite of the loss of the Supercollider project, and yet the track is not located near enough housing to be a noise problem to residents. The country-like setting allows the Motorplex to provide plenty of easy parking, even on the busiest of days. "The location



is very accommodating to our national audience,” Gabrielle pointed out.

Gabrielle has found the Ennis area a great place to live, even though she is far away from family and friends in the San Francisco, California, area. “There is so much to do,” she remarked. “I eat someplace different every day. I’m a ‘foodie,’” Gabrielle added. She enjoys tranquil walks with her dogs nearly every day, in spite of them not adapting to the Texas heat very well.

Family is very important to Gabrielle. She gives her parents credit for her determination and driving spirit. “My parents are really great. They are two of the hardest working people who raised their children to be the same,” she said of herself and her two younger brothers. “My Italian mother is very ‘tight’ about family, and they are my biggest cheerleaders,” Gabrielle admitted.

Volunteering in her newly adopted community is also a part of Gabrielle’s life. She enjoys her membership in Ennis’ Noon Lion’s Club and the area Meals on Wheels organization. The Motorplex’s 12 full-time staff members have also adopted Route 11 for Meals on Wheels with everyone taking turns Monday through Friday with the deliveries. The track was the location of a benefit for Meals on Wheels in March.

On Thursdays or Fridays of most months, the Texas Motorplex provides another important community service when it hosts “Race the Strip, Not the Street” events as a fun and inexpensive alternative for racing safely as opposed to dangerous street racing. Called Thundering Thursdays or Fast Fridays, the events invite street racers to race other enthusiasts, including police officers. Clinics are held by professionals,



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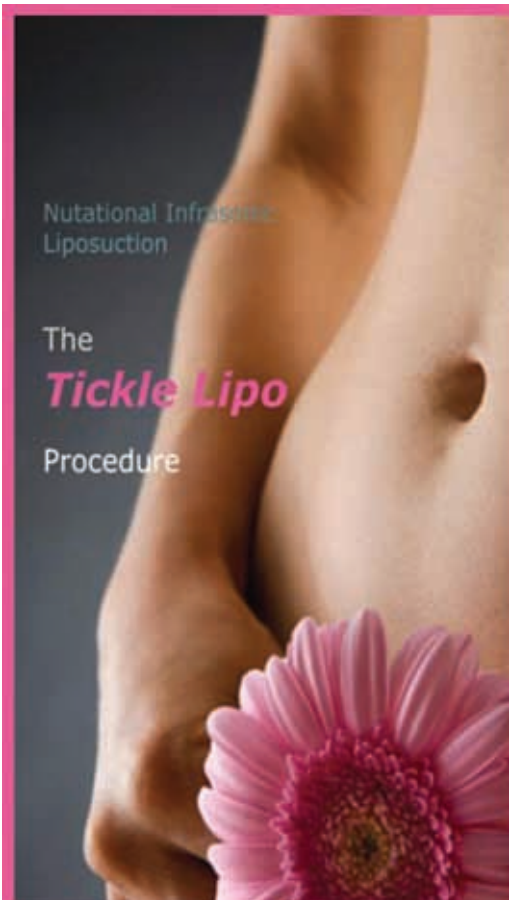


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vehicles are inspected and races are monitored for safety. Sponsored nationally by the NHRA and American Automobile Association (AAA), the groups are trying to lower the number of over 100 fatalities nationwide attributed yearly to street racing. Gabrielle has bemoaned each tragic death as the news has come across her desk, "This was so unnecessary," she said. "Anyone can race any car here at the track. It's safe and affordable."

When the 2011 racing seasons opened in March, Gabrielle oversaw a staff that balloons to 20 full-time and to 200 part-time staff members on event days. "A lot of the team is from Ennis," Gabrielle noted. On average, over 1,000 spectators fill the bleachers, the private boxes and



the Champions Club during most events, except for the nationals which boast upward of 65,000 attendees. Gabrielle is quick to point out that this is a family-oriented sport, where children and young adults are seated only four feet from the cars and pit crews, whose members, along with the drivers, are ready to interact with the crowd and sign autographs. "The food served will knock your socks off, too," Gabrielle smiled.


Gabrielle feels privileged to be the general manager for a race track noting that the people in the business are great. "This is a network of lifelong friends." People come to race like Big Daddy Don Garlits who Gabrielle described as an iconic legend. "He raced a Top Fuel Super stock car and had an amazing weekend. He always had a smile and had so much fun. It reminded me of all the good things we do here," she said.

A smile on everyone's face as they leave the venue signals to Gabrielle a job well done. "You want it to be a Disneyland-type experience. I think 2011 will be an incredible year." No doubt, with this lady at the helm, it should be. **NOW**

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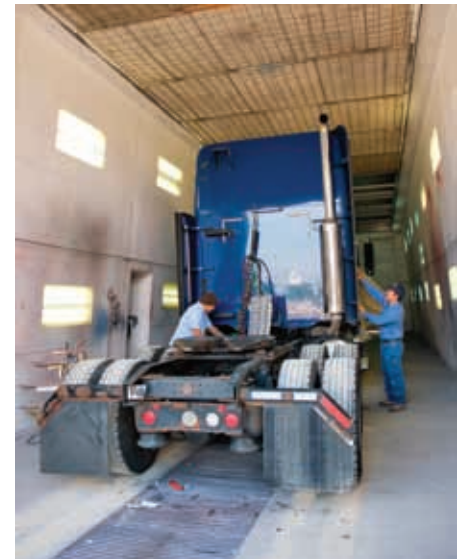


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Don Pechal, Tommy Pechal and Karl Wood.



Caring Beyond the Business

D.R.P. Auto Body: new name and new owner, but the same great customer service. — By Sandra Strong

When financial strain and the nation's economy hit Pechal's Paint and Body Shop, it opened a door for Retha Magness, owner of D.R.P. Auto Body and Ennis Truck & Trailer Repair. "As a woman, it was an opportunity I was unable to pass up," Retha stated. "Nothing but the name has changed. Our employees offer the same great service customers have grown accustomed to in the past 30 years. Don and I are a team. That's what keeps the business going." Don Pechal and Retha admit they would not be able to find success in this new business venture if it were not for the five honest, dedicated shop employees they refer to as part of the "D.R.P. family."

As a teenager, Retha always thought nursing would be her career choice as an adult. She only recently realized the quality time she spent with her father, Ron Grady, all those years ago

prepared her for what she is successfully accomplishing today. "I've been working on motors ever since I was a young girl," she said, smiling at the memories. "I have this one photograph of me and my dad. I guess I was about 15. We had just finished changing out a U-joint, and I had grease all over me." Retha never thought she would be doing this type work for a living. She always thought she would be taking care of people, not vehicles.

D.R.P. Auto Body and Ennis Truck & Trailer Repair opened new doors to the public on September 8, 2008. "Everyone still refers to us as Pechal's and that's all right," Retha explained. "The Pechal name is well-known and very much respected in the community." These first three years have been stressful to say the least, but Retha and Don are finally able to see "the light at the end of the proverbial tunnel." "We were a team when

this journey started,” Retha admitted, “and we’re an even stronger team since opening D.R.P. Auto Body and Ennis Truck & Trailer Repair.”

The body repair work offered at Ennis Truck & Trailer Repair is done in-house. “We do a lot of heavy truck collision repair,” Don said. “We rarely ever sub anything out.” Due to the nature of the collision, the majority of the work is covered by insurance, but they welcome anyone who needs body work and/or repair to stop by for a free estimate.

They admit the “bread and butter” of the business is found in the towing services offered through D.R.P. Auto Body, a service available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. With four wreckers, they are able to meet the demand, regardless if the towing call comes from an individual, the city, the highway patrol or the county. “We work on a rotation schedule with other towing services,” Retha explained. “They all seem to overlap at one time or another.”



“We love what we do,” Don said. “Don’t think for a minute Retha just sits behind a desk punching numbers. When I need her, she’s a wrecker driver to boot.”

Giving back to the community is also very important to Retha and Don, because it is paramount to good customer relations. “We’ve gained a lot of friends by volunteering,” Retha said. “Caring for others goes way beyond the business.”

Future plans for the team include a summer wedding in Europe and quality time spent with family. “We’ve learned to cherish the time spent with family,” Retha said, as Don smiled and nodded his head in agreement. **NOW**

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Abby Rose, Erika Bishop and Kailey Evans gather in Mrs. Bishop's second grade classroom at Austin Elementary.



Dr. Anthony-White, Denise Patak, Lisa Williams, Debbie Vitorovsky and Stephanie Phillips attend Breath of Life's open house.



Brandon Hroza (bottom left) shares a laugh with his groomsmen and friends, Rusty Rose, Robert Gillentine, James Jurica and Jeremy Walker.



Bonnie Smith and Juan Pedraza enjoy some patio dining at Mexicano Grille.



Laura Vanover and Randy Tester smile for the camera.



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Does my child really need those antibiotics?

— By *Katie Brown, M.D.*

Children commonly catch colds and end up at the doctor's office. There are several misconceptions about the treatment of runny noses and coughs. Many parents think that antibiotics are the answer. Frequently, however, antibiotics are not what your child needs.

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria and viruses. Antibiotics can cure bacterial infections, but not viral infections. Bacteria cause strep throat, some pneumonia and sinus infections. Antibiotics can work in these cases. Viruses cause the common cold, most coughs and the flu. Antibiotics do not work in these cases.

So, your child has a runny nose. This is a normal part of what happens during the common cold. When germs that cause colds first infect the nose and sinuses, the nose makes clear mucus. After two to three days, the body's immune system fights back, changing the mucus to a yellow color, and eventually, to a green color. This is normal! It does not mean your child needs an antibiotic.

What is the harm of giving antibiotics?

Taking antibiotics when they are not needed can be harmful. Antibiotics can have side effects like diarrhea and rashes in the

diaper area. Also, every time a child takes antibiotics, they are more likely to carry resistant germs. So, when your child gets an illness, which does require antibiotics, the medication might not work. When this happens, your child might need to take stronger and more expensive antibiotics or even be admitted to the hospital to get antibiotics. So, since a runny nose almost always gets better on its own, it is better to wait and take antibiotics only when they are needed.

What should you do for your child's runny nose?

The best thing to do is "wait and watch." The runny nose and cough may be bothersome, but antibiotics will not make them go away any faster. Some people find that using a cool mist vaporizer or saltwater nose drops makes their child feel better. Most of the time, the runny nose (and cough) will get better after about a week. If the symptoms are not better after seven-10 days, you should make an appointment to see your child's doctor. **NOW**

Katie Brown, M.D.

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Smart Financial Moves for New Parents

— By Bob Irish

If you've just had a new baby, your life is filled with more joy (but less sleep). You're probably already aware of the time and effort you must invest in rearing your child, but you may not have thought as much about another aspect — the financial one.

Consider this: The average cost of rearing a child to age 17 is now \$222,360, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report on how much middle-income, two-parent families spend on their offspring. And this is the amount you might spend before your son or daughter heads to college. Clearly, you need to start making the financial moves necessary to take your child from diapers to a degree. Here are some suggestions for doing just that:

- **Purchase sufficient life insurance.** When it was just you and your spouse, it was a good idea for you to have life insurance — but now that you have a child, it's an absolute necessity. If you have any doubts about the value of life insurance, just look again at that \$222,360 figure above, and then tack on the costs of four years of college. If you or your spouse were to die unexpectedly, would the survivor earn enough to raise and educate your child? In this day and age, that's not likely — so make sure you have adequate life insurance in place.

- **Prepare a will.** Obviously, you hope to enjoy a long life — one in which you see your child grow to adulthood. But none of us can predict the future, so it's essential that you draw up a will to provide for the care of your child, both financially and physically. When you create a will, you can name a guardian to step in and take care of your child, if necessary, and you can make sure your child receives your financial assets. However, many people go beyond writing a will and establish a living trust, which

gives them more control over how and when they want their assets distributed. Your legal advisor can help you prepare a will and determine if a living trust is appropriate for your needs.

- **Maintain adequate cash.** To help pay for all those expenses related to child rearing, keep enough cash on hand. By having enough resources available in liquid accounts, you can avoid having to dip into your long-term investments to pay for short-term needs.

- **Save early and often for college.** It's never too soon to start saving for the high costs of higher education. A 529 plan is a tax-advantaged vehicle and may be a great option for your college savings. Contributions to a 529 plan are made with after-tax dollars, and have the opportunity to grow tax-free. Withdrawals used for qualified higher education expenses are also tax free. Furthermore, your 529 plan contributions may be eligible for a state tax deduction or credit depending on the plan and state.

- **Stay balanced.** As we've seen, it takes a lot of money to rear a child. But even as you're meeting these expenses, think about your own future, particularly your retirement. Strive to strike a balance between the money you spend on your child and the amount you invest in your 401(k), IRA and other retirement-savings vehicles.

You can't put a price-tag on your child's future, but when it comes to taking care of that child, you'll want to know the costs involved — and be prepared for them. **NOW**

Bob Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.

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May 3

National Teacher's Day

May 5

Cinco De Mayo

May 6

Muffins for Mom: 7:15 a.m., Stephen F. Austin
Elementary.

May 6-8

Waxahachie Community Theatre presents
Annie: Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday,
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May 7

Share the Health 5k Fun Run: registration begins
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Park, 400 South Grand Avenue, Waxahachie. By
running, you support Sarah Snider, a student at
East Texas Baptist University, as she travels to
Bantu, Ethiopia, as a Christian missionary. A \$10
donation per participant is requested. Door prizes,
refreshments and fun for the whole family.

May 8

Mother's Day

May 12

Thundering Thursday Season Opener: Fireworks
Night at the Texas Motorplex.

May 14

2010-2011 Lionette Banquet: 6:00-11:00 p.m.

Open House and Carnival: 4:00-7:00 p.m., in
the new children's building at Eastridge Baptist
Church, 732 East Ovilla Road in Red Oak. Call
(972) 617-2338 or visit www.eastridgebc.com.

May 16

EHS Band Spring Concert: 7:00 p.m.

May 23

EHS UIL Academic Banquet: 6:30 p.m.

May 27-29

National Polka Festival: Parade, 10:00 a.m.
Saturday. Downtown will host arts, crafts, street
dancing, food and fun.

May 30

Memorial Day: District Holiday.

June 4

Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in: 8:00 a.m.-11:00
a.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport, off Hwy. 287
between Waxahachie and Midlothian. Attractions
include: Classic airplanes/fighters, flying contests,
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tickets: Ages 8 and above, \$6; ages 3 to 7, \$3; and
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June 4, 5

Super Chevy Show: Texas Motorplex. Event offers
a car show, swap meet, car corral, activities for
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June 18

Bristol Volunteer Fire Department annual
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In The Kitchen With Cecelia Bowles

— *By Sandra Strong*

Cecelia Bowles has always loved to cook. "Cooking is a creative outlet for me," she confessed. "I learned the basics when I was a young girl by watching my mother. I love to bake and try new cookie recipes." Cecelia and her mother still spend time together in the kitchen when Cecelia goes to visit. To this day, the pair enjoys trying new recipes they find in several of their favorite magazines.

Since Cecelia's husband is a "meat-and-potatoes kind of fellow," she tries new recipes out on her co-workers at Sam Houston Elementary, her fellow Bunco players and several of her husband's clients. "As you can tell, I enjoy cooking for others," Cecelia said. "Cooking is a way to give a little of myself to others." **NOW**

Hearty Cheese Soup

- 1 1/2 quarts low-sodium chicken broth**
- 3 large potatoes, diced**
- 1 small onion, diced**
- 3 carrots, diced**
- 3 Tbsp. dried parsley**
- Pepper, to taste**
- 2 chicken bouillon cubes**
- 1 large pkg. frozen carrot, broccoli and cauliflower mix**
- 2 cans cream of mushroom soup**
- 1 lb. Velveeta cheese, cubed**

- 1.** Boil the first four ingredients for about 10 minutes.
- 2.** Add parsley, pepper, bouillon cubes and frozen vegetable mix.
- 3.** Continue to cook until the vegetables are tender.
- 4.** Add cream of mushroom soup and cheese to the mixture.

- 5.** Continue cooking over medium heat, stirring often.

Hot Chicken Salad

- 4 cups cooked chicken, chopped**
- 1 cup celery, diced**
- 1 cup onion, chopped**
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice**
- 1 cup slivered almonds**
- 1 cup mayonnaise**
- 1 can cream of chicken soup**
- Salt and pepper to taste**
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded**
- 1 1/2 cups potato chips, crushed**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 F
- 2.** Combine all ingredients except the cheese and potato chips.
- 3.** Spoon mixture into a 9x13-inch baking dish sprayed with nonstick cooking spray.

- 4.** Top with cheese and then crushed chips, baking until bubbly, about 30 minutes.
- 5.** Best when served with salad and hot bread.

My Mother's Batter Cobbler

- 1 stick butter, melted**
- 1 cup flour**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 tsp. baking powder**
- 2/3 cup milk**
- 1 qt. sweetened fruit of your choice**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 325 F
- 2.** Pour melted butter in a 2-quart or larger glass baking dish.
- 3.** Sift or whisk all the dry ingredients. Add milk to the dry ingredients and stir to combine.
- 4.** Pour batter over melted butter. Pour fruit over middle section of batter.
- 5.** Bake for 1 hour. Good when topped with a scoop of ice cream.

Big Aunt Roxie's Ice Box Cookies

- 1 cup margarine**
- 1 cup brown sugar**
- 1 cup white sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 3 cups flour**
- 1 tsp. baking soda**
- 1 tsp. baking powder**
- 1 cup pecans, chopped**

- 1.** Cream margarine and sugars. Add eggs and vanilla.
- 2.** Sift dry ingredients together; add to cream mixture.
- 3.** Stir in pecans.
- 4.** Divide dough into two logs; roll in waxed paper or plastic wrap.
- 5.** Chill dough until firm or freeze to use later.
- 6.** When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 F; slice logs into rounds.
- 7.** Bake on greased cookie sheets or parchment paper for 10-12 minutes.
- 8.** Remove cookies to cooling rack to cool. Store in an airtight container.

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