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ON THE COVER

The colors of Czech heritage brighten the landscape.

Photo by
Sandra Strong.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Sandra

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Colors of summer abound ...

I love the plants of summer — the potato vine as it drapes over pots and retaining walls, the purple blooms on the Mexican heather, the Shasta daisies in every color imaginable and the yellow lantana that attracts the prettiest butterflies. But, my favorite flower of all is the sunflower. I did have a couple plants in my backyard flower garden last year. I may have only had a few golden blooms, but I was so proud of what my once dormant green thumbs were able to accomplish.

And I didn't realize how many "sunflower collectibles" I have in my home until I took a visual inventory. I have a sunflower cutting board that serves as the decor for the top of the refrigerator. Sunflower plates hang on the wall, announcing the beginning of a new season. There are several in my collection of keepsake pitchers. They have also found their way into the floral arrangements throughout my home.

Realizing I *was* a sunflower collector, I immediately got on the Internet. My research confirmed why I love the sunflower. They represent long life, adoration, admiration, loyalty, strong bonds, strength and lasting happiness. Wow! These are all the traits I strive to possess in my own life. I'm thankful to know I can look at the sunflowers in my home and be reminded of who I want to be.

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— By Sandra Strong

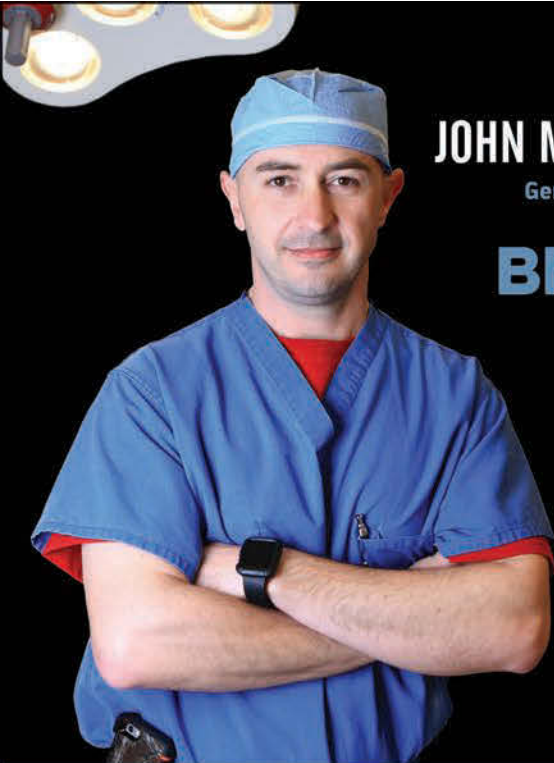


David and Diane Liska are two of the most dedicated Czech ambassadors in Ennis. Their love of all things Czech comes through in all they do to keep the rich heritage alive. They are breathing new life into the Czech culture by hosting a dance class where they, along with other dedicated helpers, are teaching the beseda, the national dance of The Czech Republic, Slovakia and Moravia.

David learned how to dance the beseda 50 years ago in Dallas. "I've been dancing this same dance at the State Fair of Texas for many years," he shared. "I've always loved to dance."

Diane learned the dance of her family's homeland in Ennis and danced during the Polka Festival





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while in high school. She, too, now dances with David at the State Fair. "Once you learn the dance, you always remember it," she said. "The music will cause you to want to dance."

The love story of David and Diane began during a mutual trip to the Czech Republic. It was on this trip that they met and quickly realized they had a lot in common. They lovingly refer to Ennis resident Stevie Jakubik, the one who hosted the trip, as their matchmaker. They began dating soon after they returned home and married in 2009. They love to dance, so much so that they've competed in more than one dance contest over the years. "We were the National Polka Festival King and Queen in 2011," they both said in unison.



With all this dance experience between them, who better to teach *beseda* than David and Diane? The *beseda*, a dance composed of complicated dance steps, comes with a history lesson to help ensure the Czech heritage does not disappear. In the 19th century, many Czechs dreamed of independence based on their Slavic language and cultural differences. When the spirit of nationalism began in Europe, Czechs responded. For one, the Sokol movement was founded by a Czech nationalist in 1862. Sokol, a youth sports and gymnastics organization, put great emphasis on moral and intellectual development and Slavic pride.

The arts flourished with books, music and dance as a way for Czechs to encourage the richness and value of their culture. They wanted to be referred to as more than ignorant serfs and peasants. Jan Neruda, an essayist, newspaper columnist and poet, promoted Czech patriotism and statehood. He was a great writer, but he was also a pretty good dancer. Disliking German dances and thinking Czech folk dances were too rough, Jan, his dance teacher Karel Link and a musician by the name of Ferdinand Heller created the *Česká beseda*. Karel put steps to Ferdinand's musical arrangement.

The exact birthday of the *Česká*

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beseda has never been set in stone, but November 11, 1863, is the most accepted date. The first performance of the Czech National Dance was held in Prague, featuring 24 pairs of dancers. The only thing known for certain about the *beseda* was that it caught on like wildfire. Within just a few short months, all of Bohemia knew of it.

"The *beseda* is a 15-minute dance," David explained. "There must be four couples to each circle, or the dance steps will not work."

"The steps are quite detailed and deliberate. There is a story behind each move," Diane added. "The *beseda* is much different than the polka and the waltz."

Several other dedicated people were needed to bring David and Diane's venture into dance instructing to fruition. Danny Zapletal took an old recording and cleaned it up. "He made individual tracks, so we can teach a section of the dance at a time," David said. "Students learn the dance in sections, and then they are introduced to the full recording, allowing them to cut loose."

Lynda Novak has helped tremendously with the details. Jimmy and Theresa Liska, David's brother and sister-in-law, travel from Dallas once a week to help instruct. "The

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first class, held on Monday night at the Sokol, was a five-week class," Diane said. "We will need to do more classes as the need arises, and we're ready."

The inaugural class, which was free to all who attended, had a smorgasbord of students ranging in age from junior high school to adults in their 60s. "Everyone in the class was younger than us," Diane laughed. "We encourage students to be 12 and up because of the attention it takes to learn the dance."

The first class allowed the students to not only learn the dance and the meanings behind each step, but it also gave them the extra time they needed to fine-tune what they'd learned, so they could all be on the same page. "The goal is for them to perform later this month at the annual National Polka Festival," David stated.

As they dance in full *kroj* costumes, they will be embracing their heritage, while serving as the warm up to all the Czech dances to follow. "Just the music alone changes the way you feel," Diane confessed. "Dancing makes everyone feel happy — those dancing, as well as all those watching. It costs nothing, and it's not illegal."

The love David and Diane have for their Czech heritage and for the dance that began so many years ago is the incentive that got the dance classes started, and it will, no doubt, be the catalyst that moves them forward with future classes. "Our Czech heritage is so important," Diane said. "It's up to all Czech descendants to keep it alive." **NOW**

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AT HOME WITH JUSTIN AND

A trip over winding and hilly country lanes brings family, friends and visitors to Justin and Sarah Gulledge's limestone and log home. Since their home is located on one of those lanes that bears her family's name, it's no surprise that Sarah's uncle lives next door, a cousin resides across the lane and her parents, Albert and Rosemarie Cameron, live nearby. "We bought our home from a cousin in 2014, and we have family living all around us," Sarah, a native of Ennis, said.

With only a brief interruption in his life as an Ennis resident, Justin still claims the town as his home. His dad and stepmom, Heath and Michelle Gulledge, live down the road and have the privilege of staying with Haven, Justin and Sarah's 2-year-old daughter, when Sarah is working. The three of them fly often to California to visit Justin's stepdad and mom, Tim and Tonya Tietjen, or host them as guests. Haven is one lucky girl. Her parents and extended family love to share in her accomplishments firsthand.

Although Justin and Sarah attended Ennis High School together, they didn't know each other. "We met through mutual friends who were dating each other," Sarah recalled. They married in 2012. Following high school, Justin started working in a chemical plant in nearby Avalon and became trained in emergency hazmat operations. "I'm now a supervisor in the field for another company and can be called on to travel throughout





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Texas and neighboring states,” he explained. Sarah graduated in 2013, from Baylor University Medical Center and now serves as a radiology tech at Baylor Scott & White Health in Waxahachie.

The couple has made quite a few changes to their home to make it their own, while keeping memories of the past alive. Haven lives in the room that Dillion Hornik, Sarah’s cousin who passed away last fall,

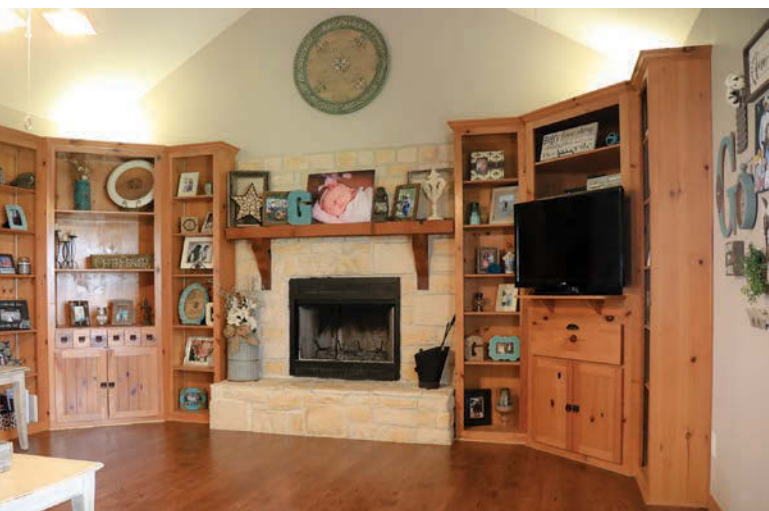
used to live in as he was growing up. “Memories are a big part of owning and residing in our home,” Sarah stated. “As adults, we all shared game nights here. Those were some really good memories.”

However, updating to their tastes and function has occurred. The logs have been re-stained both inside and outside, and new flooring has been installed throughout. “We redid the kitchen, with my mom and I redoing

the kitchen cabinets,” Sarah shared.

New memories are being created with Haven nearly every day. Both parents agree that bringing newborn Haven home is their best memory made to date. “It’s fun watching her grow and seeing how fast she learns,” Justin said.

Sarah agreed. “At the end of the day, we’ve always had a lot of fun with Haven. All the grandparents love being around her.”



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Busy, as most working parents are, Justin and Sarah still find time to be involved with their church, Refiners Fire. "I do yard work," Justin said, "but it's hard for me to find time for a hobby." Justin was a volunteer fireman when he worked in Avalon. Much of the furniture throughout their home has been refinished by Sarah, or Justin has had a hand in helping to build the piece. She admits to having a love for shopping. "I have the UPS truck driver on payroll," Justin joked.

Folks are greeted by a large *Welcome* sign placed by the front door that was created by Michelle. Sarah painted the large garden rock with the saying, *Faith plants the seed, love makes it grow*. The entryway hosts a former hope chest. "We used that when we were getting married, but now it's a blanket chest," Sarah explained.

The entry opens into the open space of the living and dining rooms and kitchen. A kitchen island is the only divider of the space. A soaring limestone fireplace is surrounded by beautiful cabinets holding family treasures and photos. More photos are hung on the living room wall, along with crosses. A dining hutch was one of Sarah's refinishing projects. "I bought it online, and it almost got ruined in the rain before I completed it," she said.

Haven's playroom, loaded with bright toys, occupies one bedroom. The guest bedroom's bed was built by Sarah's dad when she was in high school, and the rest of the



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furnishings were Justin's when he was a boy. They've been refinished by Sarah to fit the style of the room. A hall bath uses the log theme and is full of country frills.

Every little girl could have sweet dreams in Haven's pink and girlish bedroom. Albert converted an old door into a changing table with useful shelves to hold more treasures. Haven's colorful bow collection hangs handily on the closet door. "Justin calls Haven's closet my favorite room in the house because I love selecting her outfits every day," Sarah said.

Justin built the master bedroom headboard, and Sarah refurbished her grandmother's dresser and other pieces. The result is a restful retreat for the couple.

French doors lead to a covered patio where the couple can cook out and entertain friends and family. The large backyard accommodates Haven's big toys and trampoline and overlooks peaceful pastures. A space in the side fence allows for easy access from Sarah's uncle's home to theirs. The family's two dogs — Lucky, a Border Collie, and Lulu, the "mutt," are playful. "One dog came with the house, and the other one came from a friend," Sarah said.

Justin and Sarah have made this their home with unique touches created by their own hands and those of family members. They are actively making memories with Haven, who represents yet another generation happily growing up on treasured family land. **NOW**

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Newspaper to Celebrate 30 Years with a Texas-sized Party

The Texas Polka News is celebrating its 30th anniversary of covering happy music for happy people with a Texas-sized birthday bash on Saturday, June 30. Doors to the KC Hall in Schulenburg open at noon, and music starts at 1 pm with Das Ist Lustig, followed by Czechaholics, Red Ravens, Ennis Czech Boys, and Mark Halata & Texavia. Accordion Cowboy Chris Rybak will also perform throughout the day, and Valina of Das Ist Lustig will lead dance lessons.

"TPN covers and supports all types of Texas dance hall music, and seeks to promote family dancing experiences like

the National Polka Festival in Ennis," said publisher Theresa Cernoch Parker. "We are proud to have been a part of advertising and capturing the 'Little bit of Czechoslovakia,' of the National Polka Festival for the past 30 years."



About Texas Polka News

The Texas Polka News was started by Julius Tupa of Houston in 1987 with the mission to preserve and promote polka music and dance. Originally from Moravia, Texas, Julius was a well-known Houston area musician, music promoter, and radio disc jockey. Julius and his wife, Marie, helped start the Texas chapter of the Polka Lovers Klub of America,

and they served as the club's first king and queen.

When Julius passed away in 2002, Marie continued as publisher, and Julius' friend, John Rivard, took the reins as volunteer editor. John's wife, Marlys, was a regular contributor to the paper and the couple were always on the floor at dancehalls throughout Texas and the U.S.

John stepped down as editor in June 2014, and Marie sold the paper to Theresa Cernoch Parker, who resumed publishing in September 2014. Theresa also founded polkabeat.com in 2010 in memory of her dad, Bill Cernoch, to promote polka music and heritage. A subscription to the monthly paper is only \$25/year. Send check to TPN P.O. Box 800183 Houston, TX 77280 or go to TexasPolkaNews.com. The paper is also available in an e-edition for only \$20/year.

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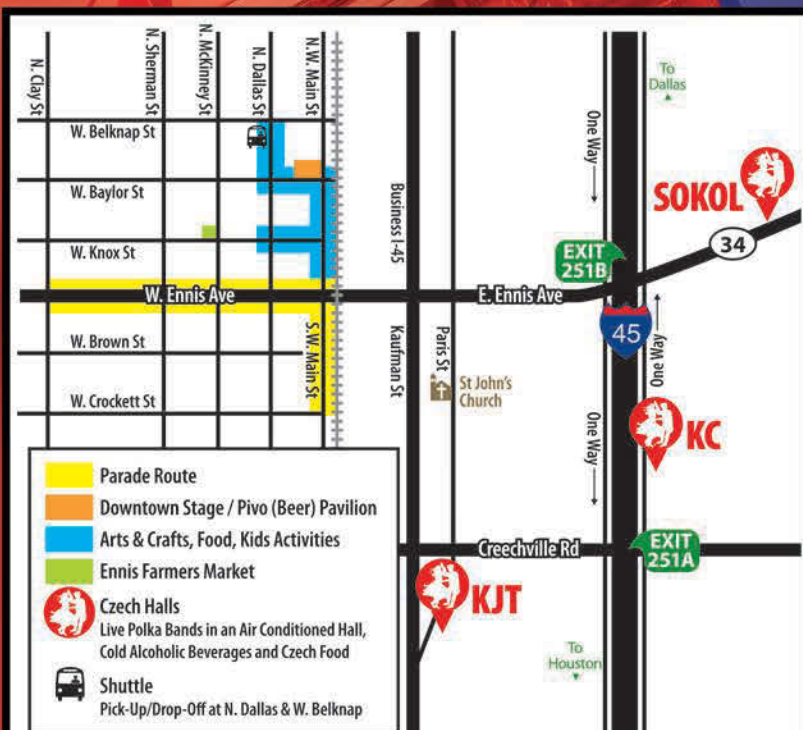
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Friday, May 25 • \$9

Saturday, May 26 • \$13

Saturday, May 26 — Parker McCollum Country Concert with Special Guest Vandoliers • \$14 advanced purchase \$18 day of the event

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Knights of Columbus
(850 S. IH 45, Ennis)



Sokol
(2622 E. Hwy. 34, Ennis)

TIME	EVENT / BAND	PLACE
FRIDAY, MAY 25, 2018		
6:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.	Eva Adams Česká Kapela (6-7pm) & Jodie Mikula Orchestra	Sokol
9:00 p.m.	King and Queen Dance Contest	Sokol
SATURDAY, MAY 26, 2018		
7:00 a.m.	Polka Fest Run 10K, 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk	Lonestar Fitness Center
10:00 a.m.	Parade	Downtown Ennis
9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Arts & Crafts, Food, & Pivo/Beer Pavilion	Downtown Ennis
11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Ennis Czech Boys	Knights of Columbus
11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Czech Harvesters	KJT Auditorium
11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Eva Adams Česká Kapela	Sokol
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Street Dance - Czech Melody Masters	Downtown Ennis
1:00 p.m.	Kolache Eating Contest	Downtown Stage
4:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	Fritz Hodde & Fabulous 6	Knights of Columbus
4:00 p.m. - 8:10 p.m.	Texas Dutchmen (4-7:30) & Happy Players (7:40-8:10pm)	KJT Auditorium
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Czechaholics	Sokol
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Street Dance - Alpenmusikanten	Downtown Ennis
8:30 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	Brave Combo	Knights of Columbus
8:30 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	The Moravians	KJT Auditorium
9:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	Parker McCollum with special Guest, Vandoliers	Sokol
SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018		
9:00 a.m.	Polka Mass	St John Church
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Live Broadcast: KBEC Polka Party with Jodie Mikula Orchestra	KJT Auditorium
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Arts & Crafts, Food	Downtown Ennis
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Pivo/Beer Pavilion	Downtown Ennis
12:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Street Dance - Happy Players	Downtown Ennis
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Eva Adams Česká Kapela	Knights of Columbus
12:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	Czech and then Some / Alex Meixner	KJT Auditorium
8:30 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.	Brave Combo	KJT Auditorium



Parade in Downtown Ennis

Saturday, May 26, 2018 • Start Time: 10:00 a.m.

Floats, bands and colorful costumes will kick-off the downtown festivities. The parade traditionally includes something for visitors of all ages. Enjoy the music of our polka bands riding on decorated floats or the sounds of our award-winning Ennis High School Marching Band. The Shriners make their annual appearance, as well as celebrities, public officials, motorcycles, horseback riders, clowns, kids and seniors! This giant parade twists through historic downtown Ennis and is sure to please. This year's theme is "A Little Bit of Old Czechoslovakia — Celebrating 100 Years of Czechoslovak Independence."

8th Annual Kolache Eating Contest Saturday, May 26, 2018 • Downtown Stage

Registration Ends: Noon, Friday at the Chamber of Commerce, or noon Saturday at the Downtown Stage.
Start Time: 1:00 p.m. Don't miss the annual Kolache Eating Contest! Prizes will be awarded for Men's, Women's, Youth Boy and Youth Girl Individual Champion.

In 1983, Vašek Ševčík formed a band by the name of Surf. Some years later in 1989, the band was looking for a singer. Eva Dvořáčková had just completed her fourth year at the Music School Conservatory in Pardubice, Czech Republic. At the age of 17, Eva's mother, who was an event and concert organizer, introduced the two. "He took me on as an alternating singer in the Surf band," she remembered. "It was there that everything began to develop. It was a good fit for all of us."

Those early days were a lot of fun. The band played festivals, balls, annual meetings and dances. Their repertoire was drawn from history, and in the evening, about 60 songs were played in a six-hour production.

Vašek and Eva married on February 24, 2007. For the past 28 years, before and after their marriage, they have been headlining shows across the world at venues in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, most of Europe and, later this month, during the 52nd Annual National Polka Festival. The name of the band changed over the years to Eva Adams Česká Kapela. When asked where the name "Adams" came from, Eva just smiled. "A new name really doesn't help me, but I cannot imagine how people from all over the world could easily pronounce my real name — Eva Ševčíková from Klepáčov in the Moravian Region." One day as they were walking along the beach in Australia with a friend, they asked the friend what some of the most commonly used names among English-speaking people were. "He thought for a moment and said, 'Adams,'" Eva shared. "And just like that, Eva Adams was born."

Students from the Conservatory will be accompanying Eva and Vašek as they perform at the upcoming festival.

They represent not only the prestigious school, but the whole Pardubice region. Each musician is an excellent soloist on his or her musical instrument. When Eva thinks of the young talent that will be joining them, she can't help but recall fond memories of singing with Surf when she was a student. "Singing with the band had to be hidden from my professor, because at the time, the Conservatory students had been banned from performing with amateur bands," Eva admitted. "For me, hiding it was sometimes difficult, because on the weekends when I performed, I almost always lost my voice, which was met by disapproval by my professor." Thankfully, she got a new professor who more than approved of her extracurricular singing by stating that, "the more practice, the better."

The Eva Adams Česká Kapela comes to Ennis with many accolades to their name. They are among the most popular professional musical couples in the Czech Republic. They have been active in the domestic and international scene for nearly 30 years. They are originally from the Moravian region, and during their career, they have received many awards. In CD sales, they have garnered two multiplatinum,



MUSICAL MISSION

— By Sandra Strong





16 platinum and 32 gold records. Eva and Vašek are also talented multilingual singers, as they perform in their native Czech language, as well as German, English, Polish, Spanish, Italian and several other languages.

With a lifetime of travel, Eva and Vašek have several interesting “band stories” to tell. Those times that seemed unpleasant or horrible during the moment, are now memories that bring smiles to their faces. “Once when we were backstage, I stepped on a nail that passed through my shoe right into my foot,” Eva said. “The organizer took me to the ER. I got a tetanus shot and returned to the show. I played on one foot.” Another time was on their first trip to Australia when a snake crawled into her piano. “I did not know it. When I was performing, the snake made a puff sound under the flaps and then disappeared back inside.” The next day when the piano was dismantled, the snake was gone.

The couple have one child — Evička. They don’t force her to follow in their

musical footsteps. They leave those choices entirely up to her. But, growing up listening to the music her parents present has caused the musical bug to get under her skin. “She always says, ‘Mommy, do not play those slow songs, play something fast for me, like Cappuccino music.’”

Music is a mission for Eva and Vašek, one they went looking for until they found it. “We have performed everywhere for our listeners. The paths themselves have been a great inspiration, even for life,” Eva stated. “It is a tremendous honor to be a part of the National Polka Festival in Ennis. It’s a great tradition with such continued interest from people. It also means that we must commit ourselves to doing our best. We must not disappoint.” **NOW**



SATURDAY, MAY 26 — COUNTRY CONCERT

Time: Doors open at 9:00 p.m.

Location: Sokol Hall • 2622 E. Hwy. 34 • Ennis, TX 75119 • Cost: \$14 advanced purchase/\$18 day of the event • Purchase tickets at www.nationalpolkafestival.com



Parker McCollum

Parker McCollum, the 25-year-old Austin-based singer-songwriter broke out with the revealing and critically adored 2013 debut *The Limestone Kid* and now returns with his highly anticipated follow-up album, *Probably Wrong*. Set for release on November 10 independently, *Probably Wrong*, pulls back the curtain and reveals McCollum like never before. The 10-track LP, written after the dissolution of a long-term relationship, is equal parts introspective and transcendent and includes stunning songs like “I Can’t Breathe” (co-penned with Micky Braun of Micky & The Motorcars) and “Hell of a Year.” Singing such soul-baring songs is a decidedly therapeutic act for McCollum.



Vandoliers

An alt-country band with punk roots, Vandoliers formed in 2015, bringing together a group of Dallas-Fort Worth musicians led by frontman Joshua Fleming. Fiercely proud of their homeland, Vandoliers put their own spin on the Texas country tradition with 2016’s *Ameri-Kinda*, a debut album that mixed honky-tonk twang with hard-edged, rock ‘n’ roll stomp. The band’s follow-up release, *The Native*, arrived in less than one year, doubling down on their modern approach to traditional influences. *The Native*’s 10 songs feature barreling guitar solos, train beats, anthemic melodies, mariachi horns and the autobiographical details of Fleming’s own travels.

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May 25-27, 2018

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Eva Adams Česká Kapela

Friday - Sokol - 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Saturday - Sokol - 11:30am - 3:00pm

Sunday - KC Hall - 12:00pm - 4:00pm



Jodie Mikula Orchestra

Friday - Sokol - 7:00pm - 11:30pm



Ennis Czech Boys

Saturday - KC Hall - 11:30am - 3:00pm



Czech Harvesters

Saturday - KJT Hall - 11:30am - 3:00pm



Czech Melody Masters

Saturday - Downtown
12:00pm - 3:00pm



Fritz Hodde & Fabulous 6

Saturday - KC Hall - 4:00pm - 7:30pm



Texas Dutchmen

Saturday - KJT Hall - 4:00pm - 7:30pm



Happy Players

Saturday - KJT Hall - 7:40pm - 8:10pm
Sunday - Downtown - 12:00pm - 3:30pm



Czechaholics

Saturday - Sokol - 4:00pm - 7:00pm



Alpenmusikanten

Saturday - Downtown - 4:00pm - 7:00pm

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The Moravians

Saturday - KJT Hall - 8:30pm - 12:00am



Brave Combo

Saturday - KC Hall - 8:30pm - 12:00am
Sunday - KJT Hall - 8:30pm - 11:30pm



Alex Meixner

Sunday - KJT Hall - 12:00pm - 7:30pm



Czech and Then Some

Sunday - KJT Hall - 12:00pm - 7:30pm



32nd King and Queen Dance Contest

Friday, May 25, 2018 • Sokol Hall

Doors Open: 6:00 p.m.

Dance Contest Registration Ends: 8:30 p.m.

Dance Contest Starts: 9:00 p.m.

This year's King and Queen Dance Contest will be one like no other! So, dust off your dancing shoes and plan on competing this year. Dance contestants must be 15 years old or older.

A Czech costume or "fancy" dancing is not a requirement to compete, but a Czech costume is required for the winners who will participate in the weekend festivities.

In addition, contestants age 5 to 10 years are eligible to participate in the Polka Princess Contest. Contestants must have their parent's or guardian's consent. Winner must have a costume.



20th Annual PolkaFest Run

Hosted by the Rotary Club of Ennis

Saturday, May 26, 2018

Lonestar Fitness Center

2405 Yorkstown Drive

Registration/Package Pickup: 5:45-6:45 a.m.

10K Race: 7:00 a.m. • 1-mile Fun Run/Walk: 7:10 a.m.

5K Race: 7:30 a.m. • Awards: 8:30 a.m.

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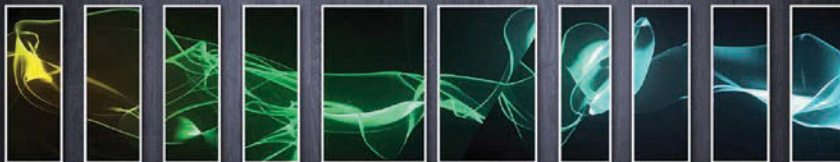
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Polka Festival Menus

Friday, May 25 -
Sunday, May 27, 2018



KC Hall

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Saturday and Sunday: Barbecue beef and klobase, parsley potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, bread and Czech pastries.



KJT Hall

1216 S. Paris St. • Ennis, TX 75119 • Adults: \$11. Children: \$7. Price includes meal, tea/coffee and dessert. Food prices do not include admission.

Saturday and Sunday: Barbecue beef and klobase, parsley potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, bread and Czech pastries.



Sokol Hall

2622 E. Hwy. 34 • Ennis, TX 75119 • Adults: \$11. Children: \$7. Price includes meal, tea/coffee and dessert. Food prices do not include admission.

Friday: Sandwiches only.

Saturday: Barbeque beef & klobase or pork roast & dumplings, parsley potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, bread and Czech pastries.



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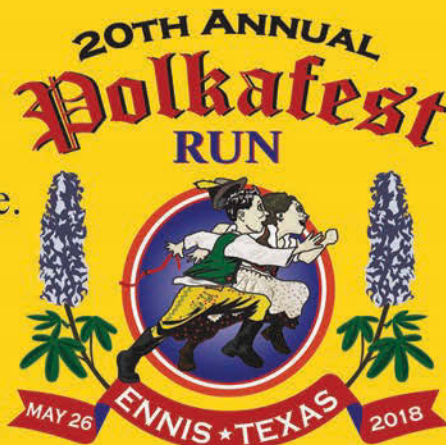
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POLKA FESTIVAL

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Looking to the Future

— By Sandra Strong

Tommy Copeland's first year as the Ennis High School horticulture instructor is about to come to an end, but looking back, he's quite pleased with all that he and his students have been able to achieve in just a few short months. After serving as an EHS physics teacher for four years prior, he quickly realized that physics and horticulture are both fascinating subjects, and they have quite a lot in common. "You can learn something new every day in both subjects," he explained. "Each subject teaches students how things work from start to finish."

Taking the helm in August was overwhelming at first, but that feeling of "being a fish out of water" soon turned into a sense of great excitement for Tommy. "The late

Kelly Boston left the program in great shape," Tommy admitted. To see early possibilities come to fruition as the school year progressed has been a great motivator for Tommy and his students.

The first field trip Tommy scheduled for his new charges was to the Fresh Water Fisheries in Athens. "I took 108 kiddos fishing at one time," he remembered with a laugh. "There were lots of folks with lots of hooks. Forty percent of the kids had never fished before, so this was a great first-time experience for them."

This year, Tommy's students learned the universe is a vast thing, but it can also be as small as a seed growing beneath a few inches of soil. The horticulture department grew poinsettias, vegetables and flowering plants such as begonias, periwinkles, geraniums and potato vine to prepare for sales to the public that were held several times throughout the school year.

And in the growing, they also learned how an aquaponic system works thanks to an Education Foundation grant awarded to the department the summer prior to the start of the school year. "We have tanks filled with tilapia,

striped bass and shrimp. The fish waste is converted into a usable form to fertilize plants,” he explained in simplest terms. “Then coming full circle, it’s converted back to fresh water for the fish.” Students also learned about hydroponics — no fish and no soil — as they grew delicious strawberries.

Sustainable living is the thing of the future. “As farmland becomes even more scarce and the population of the world is nearing 8 billion, people need to know how to grow their own food,” Tommy stated. “Aquaponics and hydroponics are two ways to do this, while also conserving water.”

The vision for the horticulture department is based on a five-year plan. “If we can make this work, half of the vegetable portions of the meals served in the cafeteria will come from the horticulture classes,” Tommy shared. “With the green houses, we have year-round growth of lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, potatoes and onions.”

The newest venture for the horticulture department was the 500 bluebonnets the class had ready for Bluebonnet Trails last month. They used three plants per each eight-inch pot. “We started all of them from seeds. We had plantings in October, November, December and January, so we’d have plants in four different maturity levels,” Tommy explained. “We learned that bluebonnets aren’t like most other plants. They thrive on neglect. They don’t need fertilizer, and they need very little water.”

Tommy looks forward to the future as the horticulture department continues to grow in teaching students the importance of self-sufficiency. EHS is looking to expand the program to include vineyards, berry growing and fruit trees. “This is an elective class,” he said. “It’s not an easy class. There’s a lot of outside, hands-on work. Students choose to attend because they want to be here.” **NOW**



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CookingNOW

In the Kitchen With

JENNY SOWDER

— By Lindsay L. Allen



Jenny Sowder grew up with all three meals of the day served at the same time every day and always homemade. She credits this for part of her practice in the kitchen. “Anyone can cook,” she said. “It’s about trial and error, but mostly, it’s about sharing.” With a number of inherited cookbooks, some dating back to 1940, Jenny laughs at the first time she read a recipe that called for oleo and being thrown for a loop at that ingredient.

While she loves to bake the most, she spends her fair share of time cooking for her family of six, too. She is thankful to have her husband’s help in the kitchen and the opportunity to teach her girls how to bake and cook, as well. **NOW**

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Add turkey to a large bowl. With your hands, mix in all remaining ingredients, except barbecue sauce.
2. Place in a loaf pan; top with barbecue sauce.
3. Place loaf pan on top of a cookie sheet; bake for approximately 70 minutes.

Almond Tea

6 cups boiling water (divided use)
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup lemon juice
1 tsp. almond extract
1/2 tsp. vanilla

1. Bring 2 cups of water to a boil. Add sugar; let dissolve.
2. Add lemon juice, almond extract and vanilla; stir well.
3. Add 4 more cups of boiling water.

Pineapple Cookies

2 cups sifted flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup crushed pineapple
1/2 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/2 tsp. vanilla

1/4 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. sugar

1. Sift together the flour and baking powder. Add drained pineapple; mix well.
2. Add shortening, sugar, egg and vanilla; mix until creamy.
3. Drop 1 tsp. at a time on an ungreased cookie sheet, roughly 2 inches apart.
4. Mix the nutmeg and sugar together; sprinkle on the cookies.
5. Bake at 375 F until golden brown.

BBQ Turkey Meatloaf

2 lbs. ground turkey
2 cups Pace Picante Sauce
1 packet Lipton Dry Onion Mix
1 egg
1 cup breadcrumbs
1 tsp. soy sauce
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 cup barbecue sauce

Pound Cake

2 sticks butter
2 cups sugar
6 eggs
2 cups flour
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. lemon extract

1. Preheat oven to 300 F. Soften the butter.
2. Add the butter to a bowl. Mix in the sugar; add the eggs, two at a time, beating well after each addition.
3. Add flour, vanilla and lemon extract.
4. Grease a Bundt pan; pour batter into pan. Bake for 1 hour.

Ms. Halis’ Chicken Pot Pie

8 Tbsp. butter (divided use)
2 lbs. chicken breast, diced
4 carrots, diced
3 celery stalks, diced
1 onion, diced
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 cans crescent rolls

1/2 cup flour
2 cups chicken broth
1 1/2 cups milk
Nutmeg, to taste
3/4 cup frozen peas, thawed
1 can corn, drained


1. Melt 2 Tbsp. of butter in a pan; add the chicken, cooking until all the pink is gone.
2. In a separate pan, melt 2 Tbsp. of butter; add carrots, celery, onion, salt and pepper. Cook until everything is tender.
3. Heat oven to 350 F. Roll the crescent rolls in the bottom of a 9x13-inch casserole dish. Cook for about 10 minutes.
4. Move cooked chicken to another bowl. Using the same pan the chicken was cooked in, melt 4 Tbsp. of butter on medium heat. Add flour, whisk together; slowly add chicken broth and milk. Continue whisking to get all lumps out.
5. Add nutmeg, peas, corn and chicken; stir together.
6. Add the carrots, celery and onion to the chicken mix.
7. Add all the above to the casserole pan and spread evenly.
8. Roll the other can of crescent rolls on top of the casserole mixture; bake for 20 minutes, or until the crescent rolls on top are done.

Granny's Goulash

1 lb. ground beef
1 small onion, diced
1 tsp. garlic, minced
1 8-oz. can tomato sauce
1 14.5-oz. can crushed tomatoes
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1 cup. macaroni pasta, cooked per package instructions
Parmesan cheese, grated, to taste

1. In a large skillet, brown the beef, onion and garlic.
2. Drain the grease; stir in the tomato sauce and crushed tomatoes.
3. Season with sugar and Italian seasoning.
4. Stir well; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer about 10 minutes.
5. Add cooked pasta. Simmer for about 5 minutes; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

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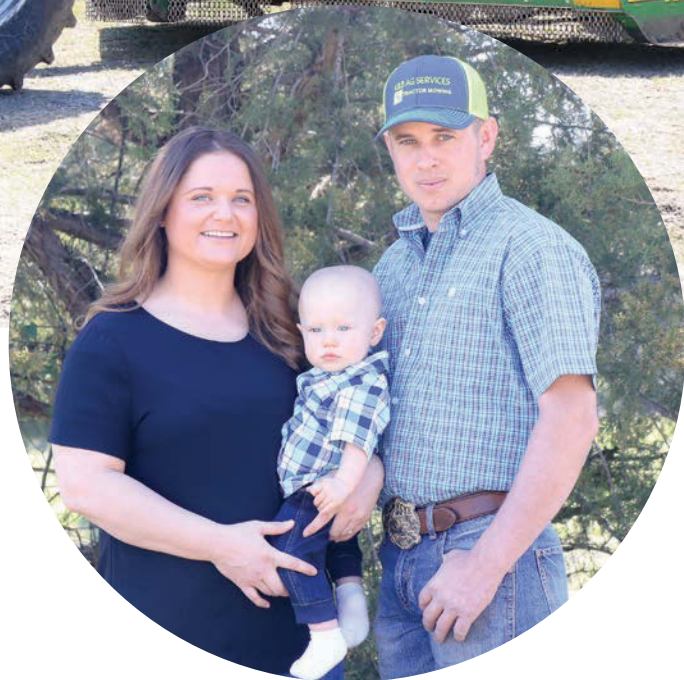



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— By Virginia Riddle

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Making hay while the sun shines is just a saying to most people, but to Bryce Smith, the “B” of K&B Ag Services, it defines his work days and hours. Needed rains this spring will, hopefully, produce a bumper crop of hay for area farmers and ranchers, and Bryce has the equipment, experience and fortitude to work the long hours in Texas’ dryer summer months to gather in that crop. “I can

be on a tractor all day and into the night and enjoy it,” Bryce said. “I’ve worked on ranches all my life and enjoy working cows.”

Tractor mowing occupies most of Bryce’s time, but his other services include portable welding, shop welding and custom hay baling. K&B Ag Services will tractor mow all property sizes from 1 to more than 1,000 acres. “We service our customers on time with 100-percent satisfaction guaranteed,” Bryce said. “In the two years that we have been in business, we have established many repeat customers because customer satisfaction is our top priority.” The business accepts cash, all major credit cards and local checks as payment.

During peak summer and fall seasons, Bryce hires part-time employees to help him with the increase of properties to be mowed. “We’ve grown each year as our name and reputation gets out there,” Kathleen, Bryce’s wife and business partner, stated. “We’re working toward adding

more commercial and corporate customers as this area grows in population.”

K&B Ag Services are offered to customers within a 100-mile radius of Ennis. Kathleen, the “K” of the partnership, is the business’ marketing and administrative arm. She has a marketing background and is also employed by a carpet cleaning corporation in Plano.

This young couple has poured its time, energy and expertise into the business, but there’s one ingredient that is most important in any operation — the right equipment in proper repair. “Our business has kind of evolved,” Kathleen explained. “And with our growth, we have invested heavily in our equipment.”

Bryce, a resident of nearby Rice since his kindergarten days, graduated from Texas State Technical College-Waco campus with an associate degree in applied science and welding technology. For several years he did pipeline welding. “The money was great, but I was always away from home,” Bryce recalled. “I wanted to get back to what I’ve known all my life and get back home with family.”

Kathleen is from nearby Palmer. She and Bryce are now parents of Bryant, a curious 1-year-old. “We work hard and spend spare time with family,” Kathleen explained. Bryant enjoys time with his grandparents, since they all live in the area.

Bryce and Kathleen are also building a home on acreage and want to become even more involved in the communities their business serves. “We lent our trailer to a pee-wee football team for the Waxahachie High School homecoming parade last year,” Kathleen said. “We’re hoping to do more in the coming years.”

They also want to help the economies of this area. “We want to be able to grow, so we are able to hire full-time employees,” Bryce said. “Country folk owned and operated” is K&B Ag Services’ slogan. Bryce and Kathleen live up to the agricultural creed of doing whatever it takes to get the job done right and on time. **NOW**

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Awakening in Charleston

— By Amanda Hollinger

A rich and colorful painting by acclaimed artist and South Carolina Lowcountry native Jonathan Green depicts a vibrant sunrise spreading across a tidal creek and marsh grass that is Charleston's iconic landscape. Entitled *Awakening in Charleston*, the painting captures more than the fiery beauty of sunrise. It also evokes the spirit of awakening Charleston experiences as it tells its story to the world — not just the postcard-ready version of cobblestone streets and historic plantations, but also the realities of enslaved people whose skills and labor built Charleston. Once a sleepy coastal port, today Charleston draws visitors to discover a vibrant, modern city examining its roots and teeming with high-tech job growth, a vibrant arts and culture scene and an award-winning culinary destination.

Charleston boasts more than its share of award-winning “get-your-reservation-in-advance” dining experiences but

also entices with off-the-radar offerings. Felix, a hip and modern French café at the north end of the King Street Historic District, tempts visitors with small, savory plates of lobster deviled eggs and crab croquettes with crispy okra. For a quieter, more sophisticated dining experience, reserve your spot at the James Beard award-winning restaurant, FIG. Chef Mike Lata's cuisine is a simple, yet innovative, approach to Lowcountry food, such as baked golden tilefish with spring shallots. For something casual, yet no less mouthwatering, venture to the diverse North Central neighborhood. Strap on your appetite for James Beard-nominated Chef Rodney Scott's legendary whole hog BBQ or sit outside at Leon's Oyster Shop and dine on charred oysters and spicy fried chicken.

After getting your fill, explore downtown Charleston by foot. Founded in 1670, Charleston offers unparalleled

opportunities to experience history. At the Old Exchange and Provost Dungeon, completed in 1771, walk the same floors where George Washington was received, and learn about the site's tragic role in the history of the slave trade.

While downtown, take a walk down historic Broad Street — slowly — so as not to miss the reasons why this street is ranked one of the nation's "Great Streets" by the American Planning Association. Bluestone sidewalks, gas streetlights and palmetto trees frame structures dating back to 1715. Near Broad Street, you will find The Gibbes Museum of Art, home to the foremost collection of American art that incorporates Charleston. The collection includes something for everyone, from 18th century portrait miniatures to modern sculptor Patrick Dougherty's twig and branch structure (a kid favorite).

Visitors are likely to encounter one of Charleston's many popular festivals, such as Charleston Wine + Food, Southeastern Wildlife Exposition, Charleston Fashion Week, Festival of Houses and Gardens or, if you're lucky enough to visit during the 18-day period beginning Memorial Day weekend, Spoleto Festival USA. Every year since 1977, the festival has transformed Charleston, filling its historic venues with opera, symphonic music, theater, dance, chamber music and jazz from across the globe.

No visit to downtown Charleston would be complete without a visit to the Battery, the southernmost tip of the historic district and the Charleston peninsula. This promenade provides sweeping views of Charleston Harbor, Fort Sumter, the convergence of the Ashley and Cooper Rivers and the Atlantic Ocean beyond. Awakening couldn't be more romantic. **NOW**

For more information or to plan your visit to Charleston, visit www.explorecharleston.com. Photos courtesy of ExploreCharleston.com.

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Your Style, Your Palette

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

Home improvement can be an unavoidable hassle. When a garbage disposal goes out or you have a leaky faucet costing you money, you take action. Sometimes, though, home improvement can mean fixing up an old piece of furniture or giving a decorative coat of paint to your accent pieces. Here are some tips for sprucing up your house this summer.

Finding Your Canvas

- *Use your own furniture.* Fixing up your house does not have to mean buying all new things. Your old couch can get new padding or a new cover, either from a professional or as a do-it-yourself project. A worn tabletop might be sitting on a solid foundation or vice versa. You can incorporate some of the parts of an old piece to make something unique and new.

- *There are simple bathroom solutions.* Replacing faucets and towel hangers is a relatively inexpensive way to give your bathroom a facelift. And if your marble tub is starting to seem outdated, consider replacing only the sides with sleek wood painted to match your cabinets. It is an easy way to get a very different look without too much effort.



Looking Outside Your Home

- *Drive slowly and look both ways.*

One of the best ways to find furniture ripe for redoing is just by driving through neighborhoods the day before trash collection. People often have old furniture they just need to get rid of, and they will stick it by the curb to be taken by their garbage service. If you want a piece for aesthetics alone, a cursory once-over can determine if someone else's trash really could be your treasure. If you are using something that needs to bear weight, like a dining table, check all joints and tighten all screws before you even load it in your car.



- *Be safe, not scared.* Getting things online might make you a little anxious, but it can be a great way to start a project. If a seller is too vague with details, or they will not send ample photos, beware. Try to have someone go with you for added safety and avoid making plans to pick something up at night in a remote location. When things are free or too cheap, it might be a sign that the item needs more work than you want to put into it.

Painting Like a Pro

- *Pick the right paint.* Once you have cut, remade and sanded the perfect piece, a good coat of paint is the perfect final touch. Based on what you are covering, you might need a nicer paint to ensure a good, smooth finish. The paint experts at your local store can be invaluable

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when selecting the right paint for
your project.

- *Chalk it up.* If you want to give a piece the fresh but distressed look that is so popular right now, there are a few things to keep in mind. Chalk paint is versatile. You can thin it or thicken it to change the look a bit. Distress the wood after painting, but before waxing, which is a step you cannot skip. One benefit is that you cannot really mess it up, since nicks and scrapes are a part of this style.

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Whatever you decide to tackle this summer, take your time and be creative. Remember, these projects should be a fun way to spruce up the most important space you have — your home. **NOW**



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Zoomed In: Sandra Wakefield

By Sandra Strong

Sandra Wakefield has many accolades to her résumé — actress, author, public speaker, retreat leader, ordained minister, mother, sister and friend. She is a world traveler who cherishes each memory made, from those throughout the United States to her visit to England. She is best known locally for her portrayals of women found in the Bible. “I have lived in Ennis for the past 12 years,” she said. “I’ve loved meeting so many wonderful people, and I’ve made so many special friends.”

Her brother, David Gregory, and her two miniature silver poodles, Chloe and Elise, are her immediate family. She graciously stopped packing for her next speaking engagement to snuggle her babies and smile for the camera.



Natalie Bardsley is a third-grader at Bowie who puts creativity and great detail into each one of her pieces of artwork.



Good friends Dee Anderson and Pearl Toepfer enjoy an evening out.



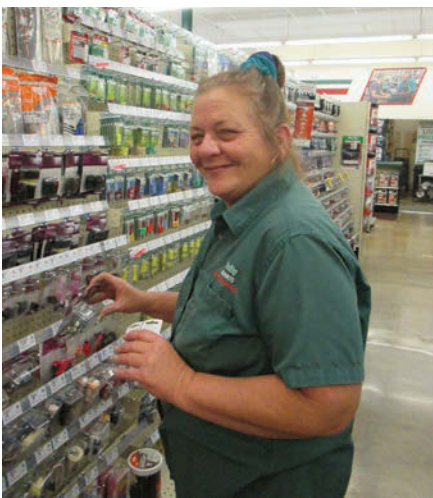
Atwoods Ranch & Home celebrates their grand opening in Waxahachie.



Several local women gather at Pop Top Coffee Shop to learn more about Plexus and each other.



Anchors Tydrick Dickerson and Rey Morales during the recording of The Lion's Den, a sportsnews show for EHS that is seen also on YouTube.




Connie Newberry has been stocking shelves and helping customers at O'Reilly's for 19 years.





Julie Olsen, Adeline Trojacek and Ilene Ferman get ready to show rabbits at the Ellis County Youth Expo.

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Calendar

May:

3 — 13

Ennis Public Theatre presents
The 39 Steps: 113 N. Dallas St.
For additional performance
dates or ticket information, visit
EnnisPublicTheatre.com.

4, 5

Waxahachie Cinco de Mayo Festival:
downtown Waxahachie. Hosted by
Ellis County Hispanic Organization
(ECHO). For more information, visit
www.elliscountyhispanicorg.com.

First United Methodist Church
Shred-it Document Disposal:
4:00-5:30 p.m., **May 4**; 10:00 a.m.-
noon, **May 5**, 505 W. Marvin St.,
Waxahachie. On-site shredding of
any paper documents for minimal
donations. Suggested donations are
\$20 for a 13-gallon bag and \$10 for
smaller containers. Proceeds benefit
mission work.

5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20,
26, 28

Scarborough Renaissance Festival:
2511 FM 66, Exit 399A and I-35E.
Festival is set back in the time of
King Henry VIII with arts, crafts,
vendors, food and entertainment. For
more information, call (972) 938-3247
or visit www.srfestival.com.



12

Pet Parade: 10:30 registration. Ennis
Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave.

16, 30

Survivor Trail, Surviving Cancer
Together: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Cowboy
Church of Ellis County. There are
new topics presented at each of the
meetings. Call (972) 935-9801 for
topic titles, more information and
directions to the church.

19

20th Annual Corsicana AirSho: 8:30
a.m., gates open; noon, show begins,
Corsicana Municipal Airport. \$10 per
person or \$20 per carload. Veterans
and military personnel and their
families are free.



25 — 27

National Polka Festival: visit
www.nationalpolkafestival.com or
look in this edition at the special
Polka section provided.

June:

2

Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in:
8:00-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way Regional
Airport. The event includes classic
airplanes and fighters, helicopter
rides, CAF vintage airplane rides,
fly-overs, Midlothian Classic Wheels,
Gold Wing Road Riders, live music,
children's activities and more.
Breakfast tickets are \$6 for adults and
children 8 and above. Children under
8 are \$3. Parking is free. For more

information, call (972) 923-0080 or
visit www.mid-wayregional.com.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Sign Language Class: 4:00-5:30 p.m.,
Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis
Ave. Classes are free and available for
all ages. No sign up required.



Second Mondays

Parkinson's Support Group: Ennis
Regional Medical Center.

Third Mondays

Ellis County Veterans Networking
Group: 6:00 p.m., Ryan's Buffet,
Waxahachie. Come join the group
for dinner and listen to what the
guest speaker for the evening has
to share. For more information, call
Mike Lamb at (214) 763-0378 or visit
vetsnetgrp@att.net.

Fourth Mondays

Texas Master Naturalists Indian Trails
Chapter: 6:00 p.m., First United
Methodist Church, Waxahachie. The
program begins at 7:00 p.m. For more
information about the group, visit
www.txmn.org/indiantrail.

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis

County meeting: 6:30-8:30 p.m. at
the Waxahachie Bible Church, 621
Grand Ave.

Tuesdays

Lariat Bridge Club: 6:30 p.m., Boy
Scout Cabin, 1139 Brown St.,
Waxahachie. For more information

or to confirm the meeting, email Shari at weatherscf@yahoo.com or call (505) 270-4017.

Second Tuesdays

Ennis Masonic Lodge No. 369 meeting: dinner at 6:30 p.m., meeting to follow at 7:30 p.m., Masonic Lodge, 209 N. Dallas St. For more information, contact Cecil Curry at c Curry_98@yahoo.com.

First Wednesdays

Bluebonnet Patches Quilt Guild meeting: 9:30 a.m., First Presbyterian Church, 210 N. McKinney. Contact Judy Wensowitch at (972) 921-8800 or Diana Buckley at SeldomSeenQuilting@gmail.com for more information.

Thursdays

Chess: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave., Ennis.

Elementary age and above. No sign up required.



Second Thursdays

Mom's Connected meeting: 9:30-11:30 a.m., Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1200 Country Club Rd. Call the church office at (972) 875-3861 for more information.

Second and Fourth Fridays

Ennis Bridge Club: 1:00 p.m.,

Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave. For more information, email Judy at judytx@sbcglobal.net or call (972) 878-1035.

Saturdays

Ennis Farmers Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. For more information, visit EnnisTX.com/FarmersMarket or call (972) 878-4748.

Fourth Saturdays

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

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to sandra.strong@nowmagazines.com.

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Take Steps to Control Your Investment Taxes

Tax season is finally over. Of course, how much you pay in taxes depends on a variety of factors, many of which you can't control. But you might give some thought to how you can manage your investment-related taxes. Here are some suggestions to consider:

Contribute to your employer's retirement plan.

If your employer offers a 401(k) or similar plan, such as a 403(b) or 457(b), contribute as much as you can afford. The more pre-tax dollars you put in to your retirement plan, the lower your taxable income. Your employer also may offer a Roth 401(k) option, under which you invest after-tax dollars, so your annual income won't be lowered and your withdrawals will be tax-free.

Contribute to an IRA.

Even if you have a 401(k) or similar plan, you may still be eligible to contribute to an IRA. With a traditional IRA, your contributions may be fully or partially deductible, depending on your income level. With a Roth IRA, contributions are not deductible, but your earnings can grow tax-free, provided you've had your account at least five years, and you don't start taking withdrawals until you're 59 1/2.

Follow a "buy-and-hold" strategy.

You can't control the price movements of your investments, but if you do achieve gains, you can decide when to take them — and

this timing can make a substantial difference in your tax situation. If you sell investments that you've owned for one year or less and their value has increased, you may need to pay capital gains taxes at your personal income tax rate, which, in 2018, could be as high as 37 percent. But if you hold investments for more than one year before selling them, you'd be assessed the long-term capital gains rate, which is 0, 15 or 20 percent, or a combination of those rates.

Consider municipal bonds.

If you're in one of the higher tax brackets, you may benefit from investing in municipal bonds. The interest on these bonds is typically free of federal taxes, and possibly even state and local taxes. Interest from some types of municipal bonds may be subject to the alternative minimum tax (AMT). However, because of the new tax laws, the AMT exemption amounts were increased significantly.

You might be wondering what these new laws mean to investors. In terms of your regular investment activities, the effect might not be that significant. The tax brackets for qualified dividends and capital gains — such as those realized when you sell stocks — will remain about the same. This means that most investors will continue to pay 15 percent to 20 percent on long-term capital gains and dividends. Consequently, the new tax laws shouldn't really affect you much in terms of your decisions on buying and selling stocks or investing in companies that may pay dividends. Of course, it's still a good idea to consult with your tax advisor on how the totality of the new laws will affect you.

Ultimately, your investment decisions shouldn't be driven only by tax implications. Nonetheless, it doesn't hurt to take steps to become a tax-smart investor. **NOW**

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Jeff Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.

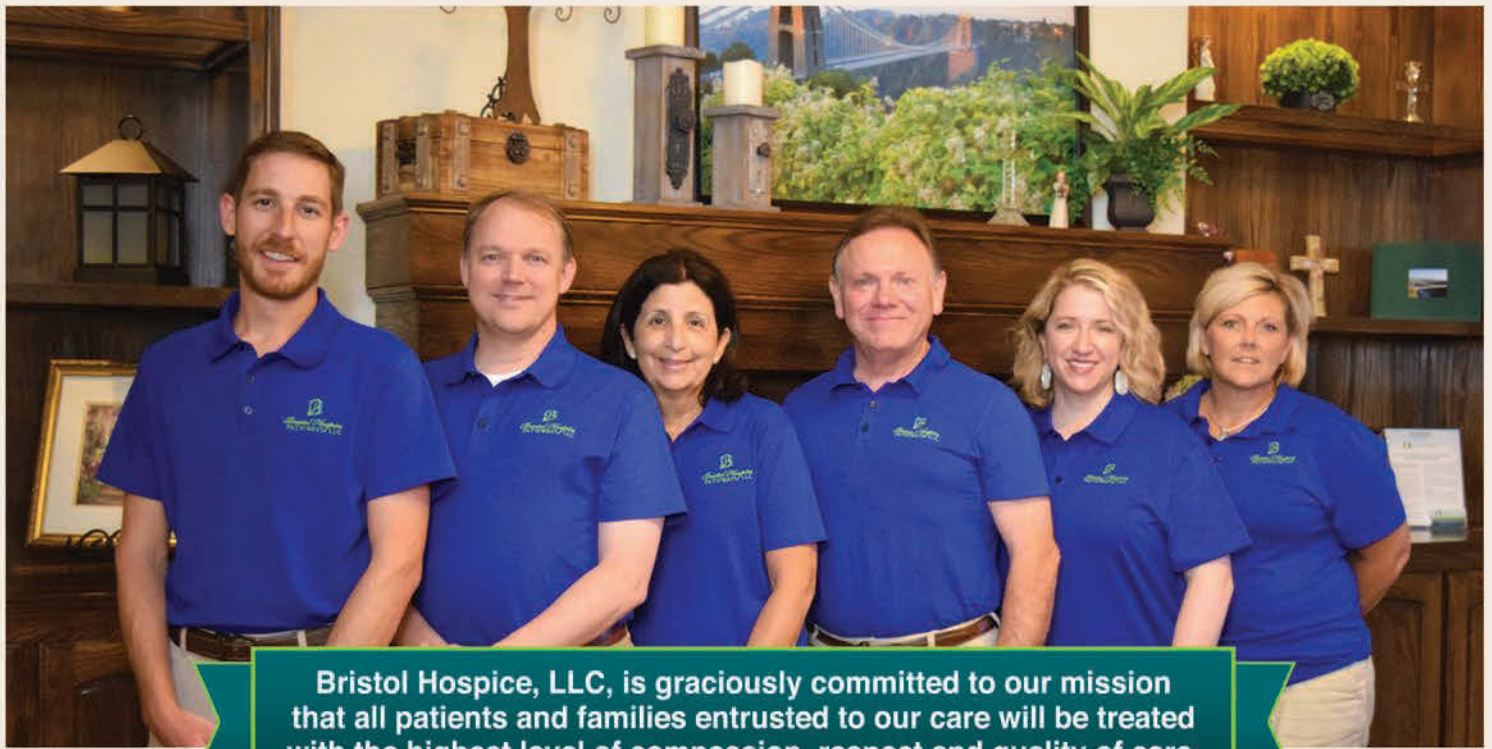
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