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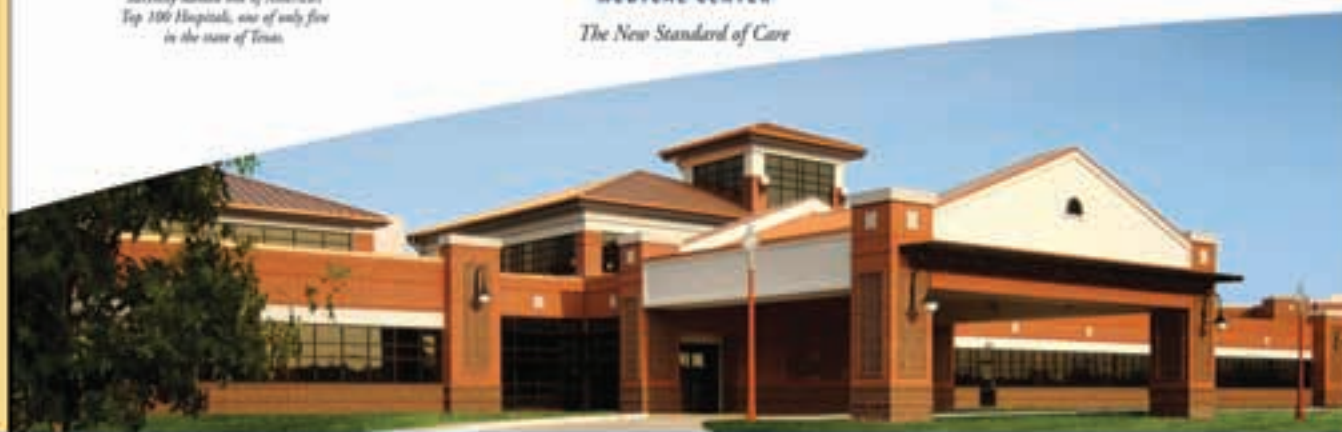
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Ennis NOW

Editor's Note

Happy Independence Day, Ennis!

Whether thrilling to the new fireworks show at the Motorplex or enjoying a Fourth of July barbecue with family, we are experiencing the benefits of living in a free society. May we each say a prayer for the safety of our men and women in the military. Many are stationed far from home and we owe them our gratitude for their diligence and dedication.

Citizenship is a privilege some take lightly, but our main feature about Waltraud Erdmann Carter Stroope reminds us it is a cherished, new status for some. Refiner's Fire young adult minister, Chris Jackson, invites us in for a fun look at his home this month. Summer fun can be enjoyed at the Bristol Opry, as well as at the 85 Speedway watching Sandy Ramsey on the racetrack. Look inside for fascinating reading, which also shares some great ideas for family fun.

Kelly Kovar

EnnisNOW Editor

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Wally's World

— By Kelly Kovar

On the Fourth of July, Waltraud (pronounced Vall-trowd) Erdmann Carter Stroope will be looking back just 10 months to the birth of her citizenship. She became a United States citizen on September 12, 2007, after taking the Oath of Allegiance for Naturalized Citizens in Dallas. “I was excited to stand there with all those people and start a new life,” Waltraud said.

Wally, as her friends in the U.S. have nicknamed her, was born Waltraud Elizabeth on December 29, 1943, in Germany. “My dad died in 1948 and left my mother with nine kids,” she said. “Germany is the land of Mozart, Bach and Beethoven and Brahms, so, you should see how she raised us. She taught us to sing. We sang all the time.” As a teenager, Waltraud married Edgar Erdmann. Her children, Thomas and Stephanie, were soon born. Sadly, after only six years of marriage, Edgar died in an accident, leaving Waltraud a very young widow. She became a supervisor in a big department store in Germany. “I had to work my way up in a large company,” she recalled.

Soon, she met and married Julian Carter, an American career soldier 20 years her senior, who was stationed near her hometown. “He served in the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam,” Waltraud said proudly. They made their home in



“I love the music and food here. Ennis reminds me of the town where my sister lives in Germany.”

Germany, and had a daughter whom they named Sybille. “Julian got older, and I could see he was homesick,” Waltraud remembered. “I made the decision to ‘bring a soldier home.’” Her daughters had already emigrated from Germany to the U.S. “Sybille left Germany when she was 17 and lives in Dallas. Stephanie, along with my grandson, Julian, left seven years after that. Stephanie has two other children, Sarah and Benjamin, who have been born in the U.S.”

Three months later, in 1996, Waltraud and Julian were on their way to the U.S. “It was a hard decision,” she said. “I had to give up my work, and leave my son, Thomas, behind in Germany.” The Carters headed for Ennis, where Julian’s son, Rex, from a previous marriage, lives. “I love the music and food here. Ennis reminds me of the town where my sister lives in Germany.”



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"When we first came here, I was totally lost. People could not say my name, Waltraud, so they make "Wally" out of it. Rex and his wife, Joyce, helped us when we moved to Ennis. Stephanie, with her three kids, moved in with us, and we enjoyed life." Waltraud struggled to learn English and found driving around pick-ups and 18-wheelers scary.

Earning her Texas drivers' license



Don and Waltraud have a lot in common.

was not the hardest trial Waltraud was to face here. "My husband, Julian, got very sick and had to go to the VA (Veterans Affairs) Hospital in Dallas, and then he died in 2002. A special thank you goes to James Wilhoite, because he really helped me with all my veteran's affairs. I had to make decisions, but I never thought about going back to Germany. I am the kind of a person that when I start something, I finish it."

"I started life over again. I was very lonely; it took me six years before I got out of that because Julian and I had a very, very good relationship." Waltraud wanted to find something to do. "In this country, people are very nice and kind to me and they like to help me, so I have to turn that around and do volunteer work." Because of Julian, she got involved with the Ladies Auxiliary for Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). She has volunteered for over four years at Ennis Regional Medical Center (ERMC), first in the day-surgery recovery room and now in obstetrics. "I like it very much. They are very nice to me; it is a good feeling." She also volunteers as a chaplain at the

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hospital as well as at Sam Houston, reading to the students. Every school day, Waltraud takes her three grandkids to their schools. "I help my grandkids and they help me, and that is so nice." Grandson Julian helped Waltraud study for her naturalization interview.

One of Waltraud's greatest joys was becoming involved at St. Thomas Episcopal Church. "The little yellow church reminds me of home — it looks like churches in Germany. I really "find myself" in that little church. The people are nice to me. They took me in. They let me do things, even though



"In this country, people are very nice and kind to me and they like to help me, so I have to turn that around and do volunteer work."

I don't speak right."

Little did Waltraud suspect that life held another surprise for her. She went with a friend to the Waxahachie Senior Citizen center and met Don Stroope. "His wife passed on three years ago. He called and asked me out. So, we go step-by-step, he bought me a ring and we set a wedding for April 12, and now I am a married woman. My friend

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Kelton Blackshear
Graduate of Bow School of Visual & Performing Arts



Raven Denise Burr
Graduate of Ennis HS



Gina Lee Ann Hartzel
Graduate of Ennis HS

Kelton is the grandson of Hubert & Pat Ashley of Ennis. (Pat is a Loan Exception Clerk at Ennis State Bank.)

Raven is the daughter of Byron & Kristy Burr. (Kristy is a Commercial Motor Bank Teller at Ennis State Bank Motor Bank.)

Gina is the daughter of Doug Hartzel and Kellie Hugues of Ennis. She is a teller at Ennis State Bank Motor Bank.



Lindsey Keeney
Graduate of Ennis HS



Justin Munn
Graduate of Ennis HS



Jessica Ray
Graduate of Ennis HS

Lindsey is the daughter of Danny & Denise Keeney of Ennis. (Denise is a New Accounts Representative at Ennis State Bank.) She is the granddaughter of Keith & Dorothy Keeney and Rosie Kriska & the late Ed Kriska of Ennis.

Justin is the son of Bramlet & Michelle Beard of Ennis and Dustin & Amy Munn. Justin is a teller at Ennis State Bank Motor Bank. Justin is the Salutatorian of the Ennis High School Class of 2008.

Jessica is the daughter of Lynda Woods & Chris Ray. She is a teller at Ennis State Bank Motor Bank.

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from St. Thomas, Betty Glaspy, made my wedding so nice. Betty is a wonderful person. She is straight-out; I don't like that sweet-talking, because I am not used to it."

"Now, I am moving on. Don is a very educated man. He helps me with my English, so I speak a little bit better and feel free to speak. Don and I have a lot in common. We love to go places, and to be outdoors. We love music and we love to dance. We love to read." They soon planned a trip to Waltraud's class reunion in Germany, so Don could meet Waltraud's son and siblings. "When all my siblings meet together, after the first glass of wine, we always look at each other, we think about my mother, and we all start singing. One will start, another will join in and then we are all singing."

Waltraud only recently sought U.S. citizenship. Her application was filed in August of 2005. "You have to give up your rights to your country; you have to learn the laws and the history of the United States. And, then you go through the process. You have to sit in front of the immigration officer. You have to write; you have to read and he asks you questions about the United States. You don't know what is coming next. I believe that is very hard for an immigrant. You don't know if you passed or failed. They tell you that they will send you a letter. You wait and you wait and you wait. I had to wait almost one year before they decide to let me make my oath. I got my letter finally, and I called Father Dennis Smart from St. Thomas and he went with me. Stephanie and Sybille, who are both citizens, went with me. Sybille was born American since her father was American, and Stephanie got her citizenship before I got mine.

"If you ask me now, 'Would you make the same decision again?' I would say, 'Yes.' I am very happy and proud of myself. In the 12 years that I am here I have built my life up. I can help my daughters. I know my grandkids are safe and I can help them. I love living here." **NOW**

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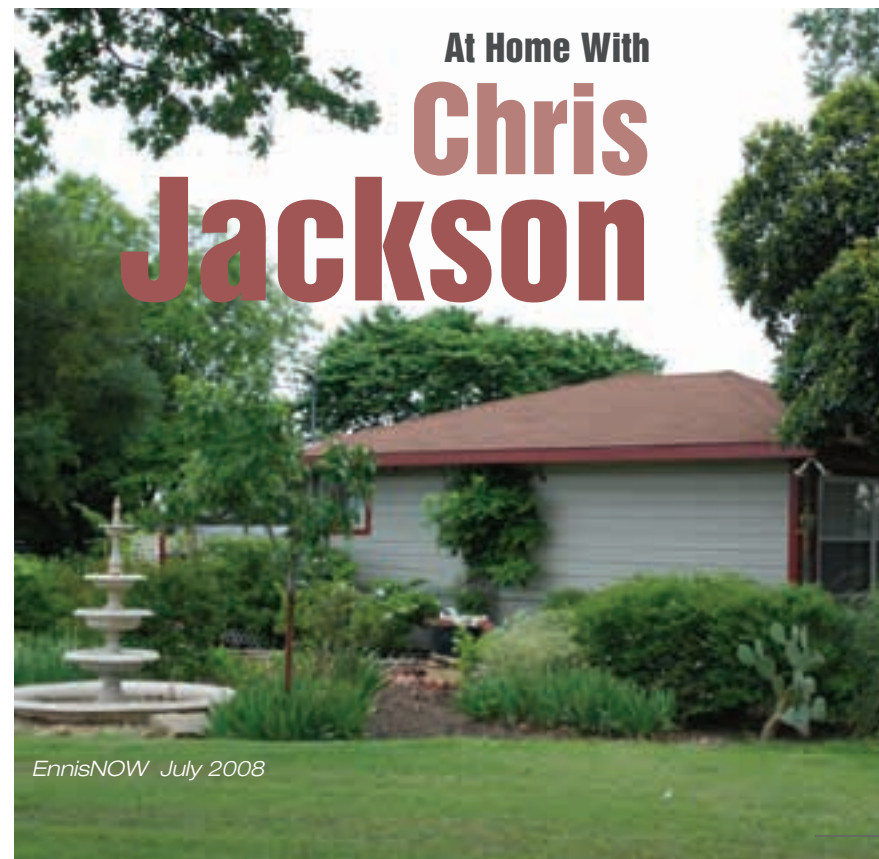


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14



Chris Jackson, pastor for the young couples and singles groups at Refiner's Fire Ministries, not only enjoys beautiful things, he also loves sharing them with others. Making his home available for fellowship and gatherings has become second nature to him. Those who frequent the one-bedroom, two-bath, cottage-style abode have come to expect his hospitality. In fact, they look forward to the Friday night meetings with excitement and anticipation. "There's a misconception that I'm a partying preacher," Chris said, referring to the number of cars parked outside his home at any given time, both day and night. "I open my home all the



At Home With Chris Jackson

EnnisNOW July 2008



time. The young couples and singles love coming out here, and I just love sharing my blessings with them."

Going back in time, Chris remembers how life for him first began in Italy, Texas, where he was born and reared. He went on to graduate from Italy High School before moving to the Ennis area several years later. "I came to Ennis when I went to work for Elk in 1988," he explained. "I retired nine years ago on April 28 and immediately started my own cleaning business." While working at Elk, Chris lived within the city limits. It was not until September of 2001 that he found his dream home on the outskirts of town.




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The home was originally built in 1958 by the Novak family. At the time of purchase, the home boasted of 800-square-feet, which included two very small bedrooms, a single bathroom, a living room, a kitchen/dining room combination, a one-car garage and several closets. Chris, knowing exactly what he wanted, threw a mattress down on the floor and got busy renovating the home in its entirety. "I lived here throughout the whole renovation process," Chris laughed.

"The work was taking place everywhere at the same time."

Making the quick and conscious decision to enclose the garage immediately gave Chris 200 extra square feet. He recalled living with plastic on the wall where the garage door once was for a longer period of time than he cares to remember. "It was cold," Chris said, referring to the air that made its way into the home through the thick piece of plastic, "and sometimes a bit scary; but it was

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all worth it." Closing in the garage allowed for an oversized living room, while knocking out several other walls opened up the two small bedrooms into one large master suite and allowed for a great room concept in the kitchen and dining area. "We filled up three dumpsters with walls and flooring," Chris said. "It was a great deal of work."

Needless to say, the entire home was "gutted." The hardwood floors were refurbished. Carpet was added to the living area. New paint allowed

Chris' personality to come forth in deep red, pale green and soft cream. Columns were added in place of the walls that had been removed. It was a major undertaking, to say the least, but Chris finds it easy to give thanks, where thanks is due. "The whole process took about six months, from start to finish," Chris interjected. "I couldn't have done it without the help of my church family."

As Chris described it, the home now has a manly feel with "lots of foo-foo."

His style is a combination of what he likes intermingled with ideas and suggestions he received from Beverly Garland and Donna Blankenship. "Merging our three styles," Chris smiled, "became my style." The idea of a theme for each room originated with Beverly. "The kitchen and dining rooms are my two collectible rooms," Chris explained. "The living room is now the red room and my bedroom is where you'll find a modest collection of birdhouses and flowers."

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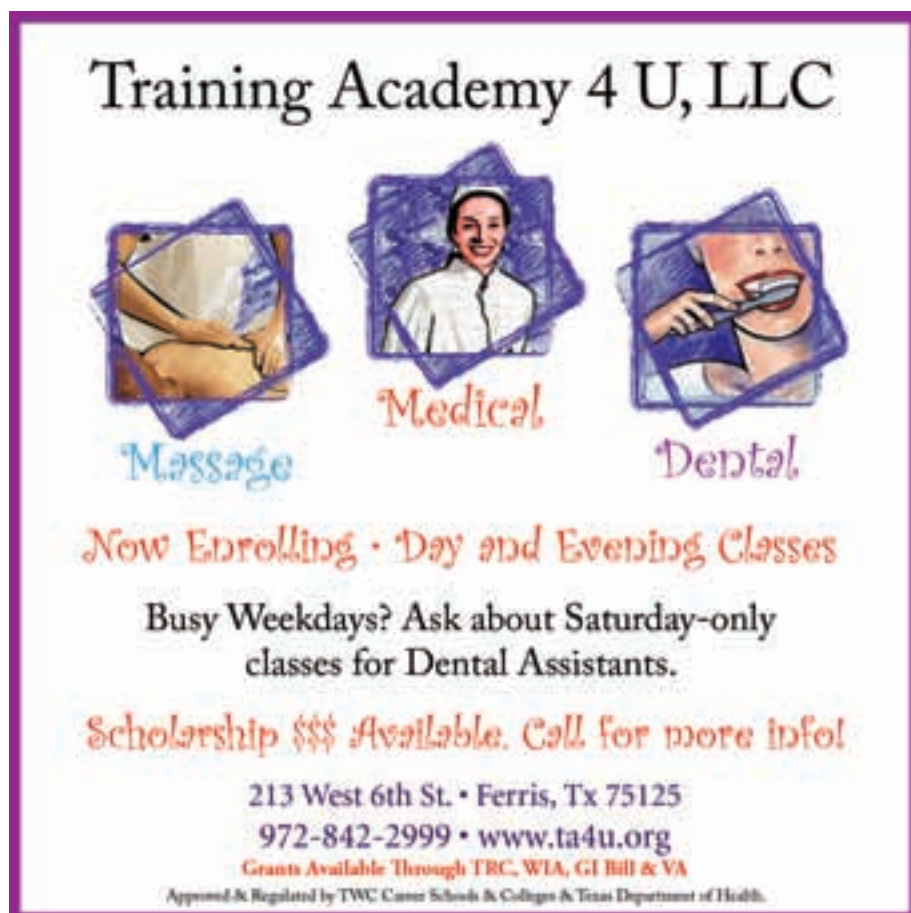
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Before the living room became known as the red room, it was the lighthouse room. Chris found it soothing to come home in the evening to the individual vignettes he had purposely arranged. "Each area would be lit up with a lighthouse," he added. Now the living room boasts clean lines and tasteful decor. Thick, stylish curtains add to the ambiance and warmth Chris was hoping for with the use of such a deep shade of red on the walls. "I think colors put you in a certain mood," he



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said, further explaining his color pallet. "Red is lively," he added. "When I have fellowships, I want the room to be alive. Red is an alive color." The softer colors Chris chose in the rest of the home offer serenity, softness and a sense of peace.

When asked which collectible means the most to him, Chris wasted no time in offering up his answer. "The wash pans and dishpans hanging on the kitchen wall have the most sentimental value," he stated. "I vividly remember using them as a kid growing up." A few thrift store items and antique gifts from church members have been added

to the collection of keepsakes and memorabilia, tastefully bringing his two families together as one. So many of the items displayed throughout his home, both inside and out, have been given to him by church members. These individuals not only have a special place in Chris' heart, they have also carved out special places in his home, too. "I receive gifts from men and women," Chris said. "I find a place for everything!"

A lot of the ideas Chris used in the remodel came from magazines. The grape vines that encompass the dining room were from a Neiman Marcus catalog. Getting the finished product did not come easy. "Pastor Cord [Blankenship] went down to the creek



with me to help gather the grape vines," Chris reminisced. "I came home and wired all the artificial greenery and grapes to the vine. Pastor Cord always had faith in the plans I saw for my home."

French doors open to a bedroom that is warm and tranquil. Two other doors, when hinged together, serve as a room divider, allowing the sleeping area to be separate from the sitting and bathing areas. The "manly" essence of the room is found in the antler chair located in the far corner. Other special items in the home include a pair of living room lampshades which are handcrafted from real shells, a curio cabinet filled with a mixture of crystal and collectible dolls, a salvaged, claw-foot bathtub and an abundance of floral arrangements Chris designed himself.

Chris calls his style "country elegance." He knew exactly what he wanted at the onset of the journey. His desire was to have a home he could share with others. He got that and so much more. **NOW**

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ARTS NOW



— By Kelly Kovar

The Bristol Opry features a regular band and rotating local performers.

The old Bristol schoolhouse has been out of the education business for years, so why are voices and laughter spilling out of its door these days? In January of last year, an idea for a Bristol opry was born. Jim Gatlin has been in Bristol five years, and before that in Palmer for 18, originally coming from Odessa. Of course, he is still considered a “newcomer,” according to Bristol residents, Roland Jones and Eddie Howard. “When Jim moved to Bristol, he and Roland and I, for health purposes, used to walk every morning,” Eddie remembered. “Jim kept saying that he liked to play and ‘when were we going to start something?’ We decided to go up to the school and try this opry out, and it has blossomed from there on.” They formed the Bristol Opry, a country music revue featuring a regular band

and rotating local performers. March of 2007 marked the first performance.

“The Bristol Opry is a community effort,” Jim said. “Everybody benefits and they get to socialize.” For the size of the community, about 500 according to Jim, the opry is quite successful. “We had a low of 75 one time, and we’ve had a high of 170.”

They hold an opry on the fourth Saturday of each month. “It is local musicians and singers, pickers and gridders we call them,” Jim said with a laugh. “We are not professional musicians, but we sound pretty good. We have an eight-piece band.”

Jim is the Bristol Opry producer. He has sold real estate for 21 years in Ellis County and DeSoto. However, his true love is music. He even used to have a music store in the area. “I would rather



ARTS NOW

sit around and play, though," he said. "I am the bass player in the opry band." Other band members include: Jack Gullledge on harmonica, Jody Taylor on lead guitar and Dottie Crawford on rhythm guitar. The drums are manned by Lonna Westeman. Butch Seaman handles dobro guitar, Pete Peterson plays the fiddle and Marilyn McConnell is on electric keyboard.

Singers, often strumming their guitars, are accompanied by the band. Scheduled performers are asked to bring the words and chords to the three songs they plan to sing so the opry band can rehearse with them at 5:00 p.m. on opry nights. "We probably have a roster of 25 to 30 singers," Jim said. The singers rotate through about every three months. "We put on about five or six singers a night."

Jim said there are so many singers eager to perform, that they have to take turns. "We are covered up with singers. Sometimes, they get upset if they can't sing right away. Sometimes we have to schedule them three or four months in advance."

Jim plans the schedule for opry nights. "Jim does a fantastic job doing that," Eddie Howard, Bristol Opry emcee declared. "He is a good producer; we appreciate him. Jim's wife, Linda, does a great job doing the flyers and the program. My wife, Mary Jo Howard, kind of heads up bringing the food for the concessions, which are operated by Caring Hands."

"People come out and eat supper there," Roland Jones said. His wife, Marian Jones, brings a lot of the food, which includes nachos, coffee and soft drinks. There are homemade sandwiches, cakes and pie. Admission is free but raffle tickets are sold at the door and most people by a raffle ticket. "I charge five dollars for two tickets," said Roland, the official ticket seller. Each ticket is a chance to win one-half

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of the night's proceeds. The other half is shared between Caring Hands and the Bristol Cemetery Association, and pays the band.

The Bristol Cemetery Association owns the schoolhouse and is a sponsor of the event. "We have a great place for the opy in the old Bristol schoolhouse, which was built in 1939," Jim said. "The auditorium is a perfect place to have the opy. When the school was closed, the building was given to the cemetery association, so it wouldn't have to be torn down. It is used as a community center."

The Bristol Opy offers local entertainment with decidedly down-home country flair. "We have country, gospel and bluegrass music,

"It is local musicians and singers, pickers and gridders we call them. We are not professional musicians, but we sound pretty good."

but it is about 85 percent old country," Jim said. "The singers that come cover a wide-range of ages, from children, to teenagers to adults."

"It is good, clean fun for little kids and grown-ups," Eddie added. "The band member who plays the harmonica is from Bristol and his 92-year-old mother never misses an opy; she sits right on the front seat, and if you don't watch her she'll get up and dance." In fact, everyone in the audience and the band seem to have a very good time.

"It has been rewarding to see the benefits," Jim said. "The good thing about the opy is it is good for the community; it brings them together. It is a lot of fun." **NOW**

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Speed Racer

— By Kelly Kovar

Jessica Ramsey, Sandy Ramsey and Dearl Lawhon share a family love of racing.



Lap after difficult lap passes, the car slides on curves and maintains a lead. The racer speeds around the track, leaving 20 men behind. At the checkered flag, untangling from the protective harness and emerging from the vehicle while the dust settles, the driver pulls off a helmet and shakes out her mane of long hair. Sandy Ramsey stands beside her hot pink race car, another successful run behind her.

"I have always wanted to race," Sandy said. "When I was little, my dad, Dearl Lawhon, would be out in the yard working on the race car, and I would be with him. My dad always said, 'If one of my daughters ever raced, I would want them to drive a pink car.' So, that is why I painted my car pink. I did it for my dad. It is bright neon pink. When I very first pulled it down into the track people said, 'That is the most awesome car I have ever seen.'"

Sandy excels at dirt track racing, the most popular form of auto racing in the United States. The season runs from March to October, with races held every Saturday night. "We've been racing at the 85 Speedway in Ennis for seven years," Sandy said.

Sandy and her husband, Gary, used to go and watch family race. "I've been around racing ever since I was in diapers. My dad raced. All my uncles, cousins and my brother raced. I've been itching for it, but I never got the nerve." Seven years

Sports NOW

ago, Gary began racing, and Sandy rode along in the car with him. "The wives of the racers can get out on the track once a month, get in their husband's cars and race the powder-puff. I finally decided I wanted to do it."

Before long, Sandy resolved she was ready for the feature races in the bomber category. "At my first race, I was scared to death. I got in line and my heart was pounding. Each lap, I got faster, and each race, I got better. Now, I'm used to finishing in the top five every week." In the beginning, she got a lot of flack from the male racers. "My first couple of years they were saying, 'You need to be in the stands, where wives belong.' A few were unpleasant. They didn't like being beat out by a girl in a pink car. But now, they are really nice to me. I have won a lot of respect at the track."

Her first year, she finished twelfth for the season, then the next year sixth, and last year she finished in fourth place. She was track champion for most of 2006 and 2007. "I love it. At every race, I get nervous. I say a prayer; I ask God to watch me and guide my car. Once I get onto the track and we are going around, fixing to start, the nervousness all goes away and I focus on my driving."

On a typical race night at 85 Speedway, there are five different classes of races; modified, limited modified, street stock, bombers and cruiser. For each feature, heat races are run to determine position in the feature race. "If you finish first in your heat race, you will be positioned closer to the front in the feature."

"In one race, with six laps to go, I had a flat and I drove as hard as I could drive it and I finished ninth. With that little left to go, by the time I could have changed the flat and gotten back on, I would have been in the back." Helping on the sidelines are Sandy's pit crew: husband, Gary, and her brother,



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Jerry Lawhon. "If it wasn't for my husband, I wouldn't get out there and race. He puts me first. He builds my car, he puts the body on, the engine in and makes sure I'm on the track." The car has an '85 Monte Carlo chassis with a '95 body and a Chevy 350 engine.

Sandy gives a lot of credit for her car's stand-out appearance to her sponsors. "Randy, at Eckert Motor Sports, built the set-up of my car. Smiley's Racing Products, Charlie's



Batteries and Dunn Motor Sports help. PDI Graphics letters my car and Predmoore & Larry McCollum Street Rods painted the car pink. A lot of people call me 'Pink.' I've been racing for five years, and the second year, I was going to change the color, and they all said, 'You can't. You're Pink.'"

Sandy is inspiring the next generation in her family. "My stepdaughter, Jessica, has started driving in the powder-puff and plans to move up to cruiser class this year. My 10-year-old granddaughter, Taylor, will be our next racer and my 6-year-old granddaughter, Katie, is interested in cars, too." With Gary driving in the limited modified class, a day at the races is a family event. "Gary is really good," Sandy bragged. "My dad also still races at age 61. He is my biggest inspiration. I wanted Dad to be proud of me." **NOW**

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Care for the Whole Person

— By Kelly Kovar

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Many people come to the office looking for a family doctor; they also find a family friend. “Probably about half the patients here have become pretty good friends and some of them really good friends,” he said.

Finding more than you bargained for

is par for the course at this office. Not only is Dr. Yetter an experienced family practitioner, he is the director of the Ennis Regional Medical Center emergency room. As a result, he brings crisis-care expertise to his patients that some doctors may not have. “I’ve been in the Ennis emergency room for about five years, and have 20-plus years in emergency care. I really like emergency medicine, but it doesn’t have the personal contact that you have in family practice, so I like the mix.”

The challenges of both responsibilities keep him busy. “Small town, rural emergency medicine is challenging. Having Air Evac on site is a big asset. We have probably saved additional lives because of Air Evac.”

Dr. Yetter began his career in the medical field with 10 years as a pharmacist. He decided to go to medical school in order to have more interaction with patients and a more active hand in their care. After medical school, he taught a residency program. “I had eight or 10 residents at a time that I taught. Over a period of nine years, I had 88 medical students.”

While he was the resident director in a Dallas hospital, teaching the pharmacology portion, he met his future wife, Christy. “I was a dietician before I went back to school to become a physician assistant,” Christy said. “A physician assistant, like a nurse practitioner, is a mid-level health care provider.” Christy and Craig have been

Business NOW

married seven years this July. They live in Tellico with their baby son, Nathan.

They opened a family practice together in Ennis a year-and-a-half ago. "Having Christy working with me is great," Dr. Yetter said. Christy's background as a dietician gives her a unique perspective on health which she is able to offer her patients. "Having a physician assistant helps me see more people," Dr. Yetter said. Christy is at the practice Monday through Friday. Dr. Yetter is at the family practice office Monday and Wednesday mornings, and Fridays until 3:00 p.m. "We see patients with chronic diseases. We handle pediatrics, adults and geriatrics."

"Working together is nice because of the relationship," Christy mentioned. "It is nice to bounce ideas off another care-provider with a medical license. A physician assistant is a trained, licensed medical provider, who offers care of the total person and traditionally takes more time with the patient. I offer well-woman care and women's medical

"The thing our patients tell us is that we are a lot more personable. They feel a lot more comfortable coming in here."

and gynecology services, giving women another health-care option here in Ennis."

"When I had a practice in Dallas," Dr. Yetter recalled, "I saw 60-65 patients a day. I don't really want that." He values the smaller town practice he has now, where he can take the time to only see 25 or 30 patients a day. "The thing our patients tell us is that we are a lot more personable. They feel a lot more comfortable coming in here. Getting to know patients and taking care of them is a lot more rewarding."

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Education **NOW**

Mission

— By Alex Allred

Steve and Laura Boon: You will be faced with the impossible task of motivating and inspiring preadolescent teenagers during a most challenging time. Their bodies are changing; they are becoming free-thinking and independent people with personalities of their own. They are happy, sad, lonely, angry and wildly enthusiastic — sometimes all at the same time. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to educate this group. This message will self-destruct in 15 years.

For 14 years, Steve and Laura Boon have walked the halls of Ennis Junior High School, enforcing rules, teaching the students and caring for their young charges in the best manner possible. Their mission is to develop responsible, caring young people who will succeed in life. “We want to teach them and make an impact in their lives,” Steve said of the students.

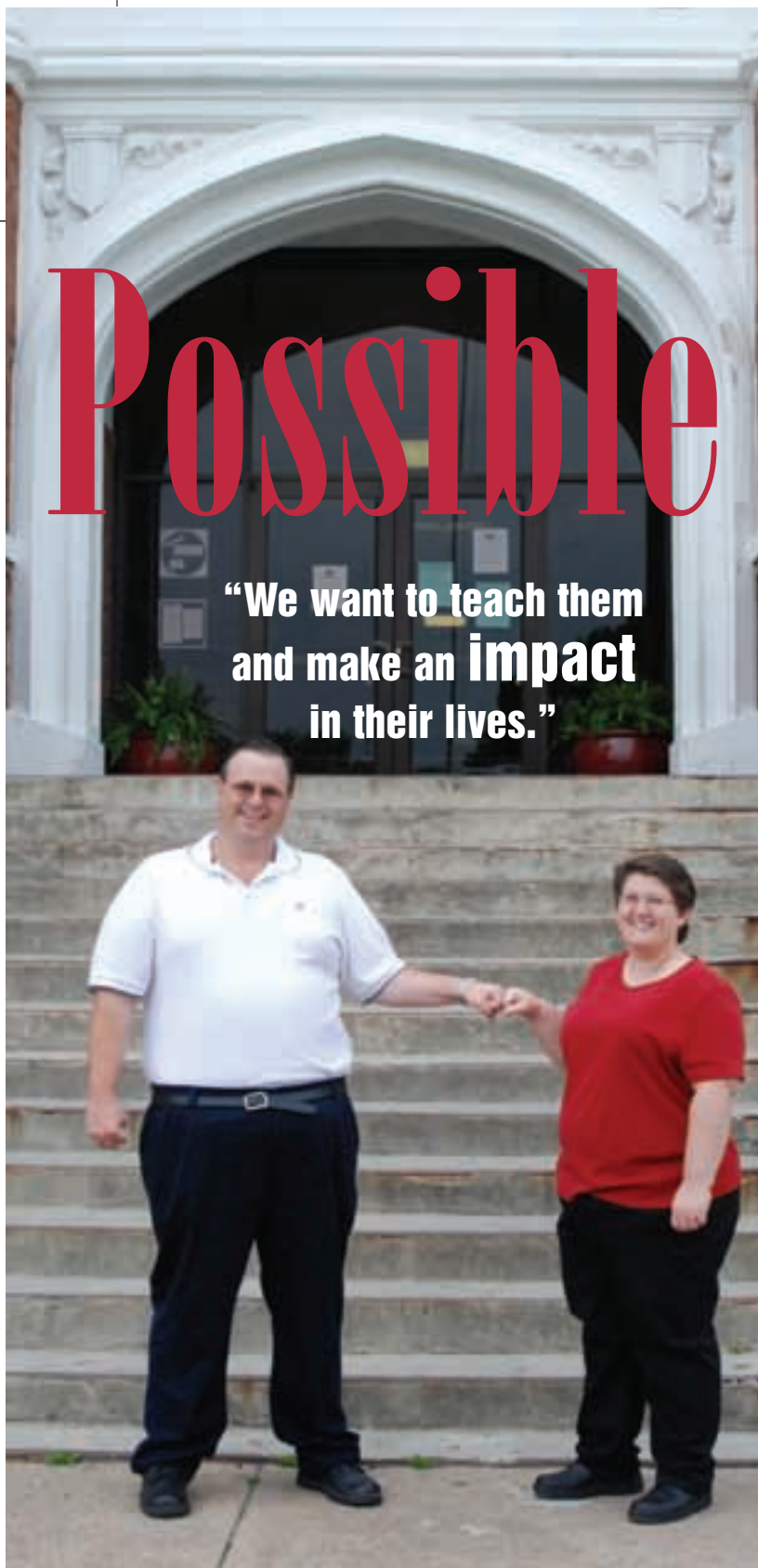
While Laura, now an eighth grade math teacher, always knew she wanted to teach, Steve was not so certain. Initially, he had been working on a degree in engineering, but quickly realized his love was history and teaching.

As a newly certified teacher, he landed his first job teaching special education, “but all they wanted was a warm body.” Taking attendance and babysitting was not what interested Steve, so when he learned of an opening within the Ennis Independent School District, he leaped at the opportunity. “This is where I grew up; this is my home,” he said. It is also where Laura grew up and though they walked the same hallways as high school students, ironically they would not formally meet until they began teaching at Ennis Junior High School.

Together, they have three children. The twins, Sarah and Alex, 10, and Michael, 5, occupy all of the couple’s time after school, but during the day, both Steve and Laura have the seemingly impossible task of teaching over 200 students. “But,” noted Laura, “this isn’t like other jobs — when you leave the office, you leave the office.” When Laura leaves the

Possible

**“We want to teach them
and make an impact
in their lives.”**



school, “I see my kids in grocery stores, in the park, at the post office.”

“You never stop being a teacher,” Steve said proudly. Not long ago, he recalled seeing a former student who had been in trouble with the law. When the young man saw Steve, he lowered his head in shame but walked toward his teacher, shaking his head all the while. “He was all grown up and towered over me,” Steve said. Still, all the young man said was, “I’m sorry.” I told him, “It is okay, we all mess up.”

Education **NOW**

With a pat on the back, Steve told his former student the key was to learn from his mistakes and move in a more positive direction.

"If our students fail, we fail," Laura said. While they understand there is little they can do once the student has moved on from the seventh and eighth grade, both Steve and Laura feel an attachment for each child. It is all the

“Steve is very caring with his students. He gets involved in his students lives, asks them questions and tries to teach about life, not just history.”

more reason why they both work so hard to motivate and captivate their current students.

"If a kid turns off or tunes out," Steve said, "I have to figure out how to reach him. If I can't, it's my failure, too."

“Steve is very caring with his students,” Laura said. “He gets involved in his students lives, asks them questions and tries to teach about life, not just history.” Both educators offer a consistency that is reassuring to their students. They know they can trust and talk to Steve and Laura, and it is not uncommon for students to hunt them down in the hallway and ask for private time to talk.

"This is a tough age group," Laura

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Education **NOW**

said with a smile. "I've got some who are really immature and others who have matured early. Oh, and the hormones!" For these reasons alone, many teachers steer clear of the middle school years. "Elementary students love on you and hug you," Steve said, assessing the different age groups. "And high school students have a goal in mind. They



want to go to college or just graduate to be on their own, and they're thinking about writing their bios in the school yearbook. But middle school ..." he shook his head.

Is it "mission impossible" for the Boons? "No, this is a great age," Laura smiled. "I love it." For Laura, this is the age group that stands on the cusp of greatness and all things that are possible. You just have to believe.

"We have an incredible team," Steve said, explaining that while he and his wife truly love teaching this age group, the entire staff at the Ennis Junior High School have moved mountains to help children. Stories of the teaching and administrative staff holding fundraisers, gathering clothes and feeding children on personal times are plentiful. Often, the parents are unaware of how much time the school staff actually dedicates to the students outside school hours. "Bottom line is: We're here for them." When you have that one kid who gets it, and you can see that they understand a problem and want to learn more, suddenly the mission is once again possible. **NOW**

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Great Outdoors NOW

Heat-tolerant Bloomers

— By Nancy Fenton

Looking for blooming, heat-tolerant plants to brighten up your scorched landscape? Try a few more crepe myrtles. You can find them in almost every size and color.

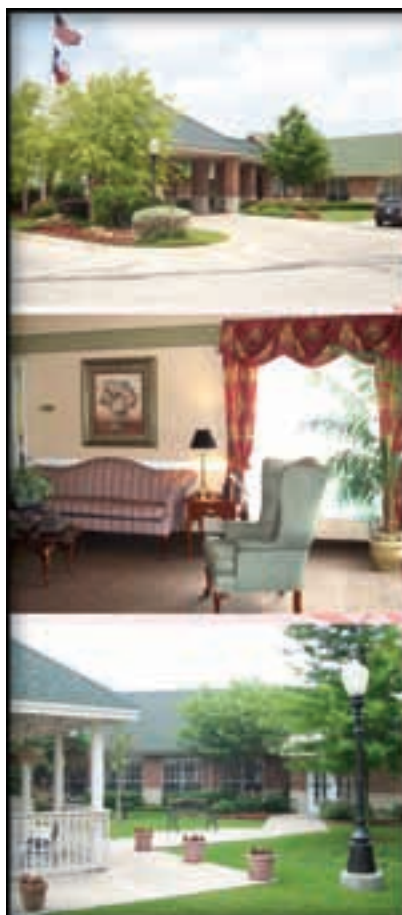
Varieties in assorted colors start at about two feet and range to tree-sized ones over 12 feet tall. Smaller ones like Baton Rouge-red, Cordon Bleu-lavender and New Orleans-purple tend to weep or cascade and make great plants around patios, pools or even foundations. Dwarfs reaching only to about six feet, come in almost every color, including: White Snow Baby, Red Petite Plum and Dwarf Purple. Intermediates grow to between six and 12 feet with Red Cherokee, Pink Pecos and Purple Catawba being some of the favorites of this area. The tall, white weeping ones you see up and down the streets of Waxahachie are called

Natchez. The tall varieties are the ones you see growing past the roof lines of homes and along the roads and byways towering over the fences. As these “trees” mature, they make a show of pink, red or white blooms.

All crepe myrtles need bright sun and good air circulation. Aphids are about the only bugs drawn to them, and they can be thwarted with good air circulation or a regular stiff spray with a hose. If a crepe gets black sooty stuff or mildew on it, it is a sign of poor air circulation. I use a stiff spray from my hose end sprayer of soap and water (use one tablespoon soap to 5 gallons of water) to battle the bugs and mildew. The spray disrupts the bugs enough that they move on. Regular spraying once every 10 days or so will help to keep the bugs moving!

Try some of these beauties in your sunny spots. Remember to water weekly the first year, mulch heavily and choose the right size for your space. Do not plant tree-sized crepe myrtles under the electric lines! Enjoy blooms even in the heat of the summer. **NOW**

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.



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Around Town NOW



Children in the RFMI Kids World Program, top left, performed during a Memorial Day Celebration. Brianna Marie Alford, top right, sported a pair of hot pink sunglasses. Several members of Leadership Ennis, second row left, participated in an end-of-year closing retreat. A ribbon cutting, bottom left, was held at Snap Fitness. Anna Thompson and her mother, Brenda, from Oklahoma, bottom center, wore authentic kroje from the Czech Republic to the annual Polka Festival. Another ribbon cutting, bottom right, was held at The Can Depot.



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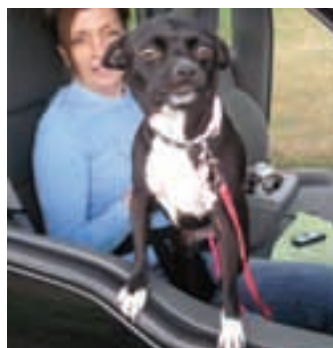
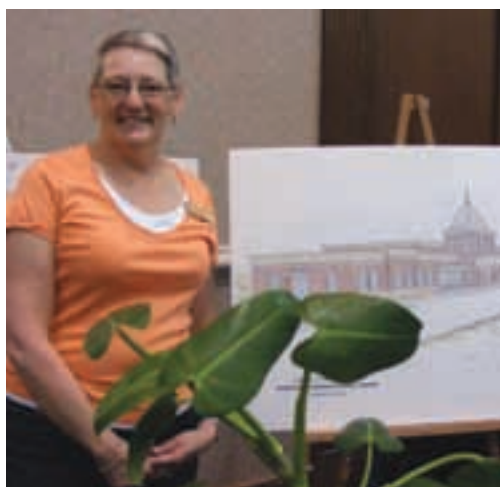
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Around Town NOW



A ribbon cutting, top left, was held at Salon 207. Sam Houston first grader Miguel, top right, received a football from Coach Sam Harrell that had been signed by the entire EHS football team. Ennis resident Cindi Schneider, second row left, shared plans for the new Waxahachie Senior Citizens Center. Ms. Josephine, second row center, visited neighbors with her mother, Janelle Houdek. A grand opening celebration, second row right, was held at the new Sherwin Williams location. A ribbon cutting, bottom left, was held at Document Solutions. After Miguel performed a record number of 61 pushups, he was invited to do a repeat performance, bottom right, for Coach Harrell and the EHS football team.



Left to right: Lashley Johnson, Dietary Mgr.; Theodora Brown, Med. Record & Control Supply; Kristina Ortega, DON; Ricci Wright, Maintenance; Josh Dickerson, Activity Director; Stephanie Seawell, Bus. office Mgr.; From: Virgil Pizarro, Administrator; Suzanne Wright, ADON

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Look Who's Cooking

— By Faith Browning

IN THE KITCHEN WITH POLLY PERCIVAL

Every year during Polly's family reunion, a name is drawn to choose the lucky recipient of one of her lovely quilts. "I started quilting with my grandmother when I was a little girl," Polly fondly remembered. "I then quilted with my mother, and to this day, my mother still does all of it by hand."

In her kitchen, Polly is passing on special traditions to her own children and grandchildren, creating a patchwork of family memories. "On Halloween, the grandkids come over and carve pumpkins," she said. "At Christmas, we make gingerbread houses. We did it before they ever had the kits."

Two of her grandchildren graduated from Ennis High School this May, and Polly loves having all of her children and grandchildren residing in Ennis. **NOW**

To view more of your neighbors' recipes, visit our archives at www.nowmagazines.com.

FIVE SOUP CASSEROLE

3 lbs. ground meat
1 onion, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
1 12-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
1 12-oz. can cream of celery soup
1 12-oz. can cream of onion soup
1 12-oz. can cream of chicken soup
1 12-oz. can cream of cheese soup
1 10-oz. can Ro-Tel tomatoes, chopped
1 8-oz. can milk
1 12-oz. bag Doritos Nacho Cheese Corn Chips, crushed
2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
Brown meat, onion and bell pepper; drain well. Mix all soups, Ro-Tel and milk together in separate bowl. In a 9x13-inch baking dish, layer: meat mixture, 1/2 soup mixture, chips and remaining soup. Bake at 350 F

for 45 minutes. Cover with cheese; let melt before serving.

VEGETABLE SALAD

1 17-oz. can French style green beans, drained
1 17-oz. can English peas, drained
1 17-oz. can shoepeg corn, drained
1 8-oz. can water chestnuts, chopped and drained
1 4-oz. can pimento, chopped and drained
8 green onions, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
1 cup celery, diced or sliced
DRESSING:
3/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup oil
1 Tbsp. water
1 cup sugar

1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper

Combine all vegetables together. Bring dressing ingredients to a boil; let cool. Pour over vegetables and refrigerate overnight.

MARINATED VEGETABLE SALAD

1 cup vinegar
1 24-oz. bottle Italian Dressing
1/4 cup sugar
salt and pepper, to taste
1 head cauliflower, chopped
1 head broccoli, chopped
1 pint cherry tomatoes
2 cucumbers, chopped
1 17-oz. can corn
1 large onion, chopped
1 10-oz. can black olives, pitted and chopped



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Who's Cooking **NOW**

Mix vinegar, dressing, sugar, salt and pepper together. In large bowl, combine remaining ingredients, leaving tomatoes whole. Pour dressing mixture over the vegetables; mix together. Refrigerate overnight.

STRAWBERRY BANANA DESSERT

1 14-oz. can Eagle Brand milk
1 cup cold water
1 4-oz. pkg. instant vanilla pudding
2 cups whipping cream, gently whipped
1 pint fresh strawberries, cleaned and sliced
2 bananas, sliced (dip in real lemon juice to hinder browning)
1 10-oz. loaf pound cake, cut into 12 slices
In large bowl combine milk, water and pudding; beat well. Chill 5 minutes. Fold in whipped cream; add strawberries and bananas. Using a 3 1/2 quart serving bowl, place slices of pound cake on bottom and sides. Spoon pudding mixture into bowl. Garnish with strawberries and bananas. Refrigerate overnight.

RANCH DIP

8 oz. cream cheese
8 oz. sour cream
8 oz. Hellman's mayonnaise
24 oz. large curd cottage cheese
1 1.5-oz. pkg. ranch dressing mix
Mix all ingredients well and serve.

POLLY'S BREAD

1 loaf frozen bread dough
1 lb. Munster cheese, grated
1/4 cup sour cream
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1/4 tsp. salt
1 egg white
Roll room temperature dough into a large circle; let rest 30 minutes. While dough is resting, mix together cheese, sour cream, beaten eggs and salt. Place dough in a buttered 8-inch pie plate. Place cheese mixture in center of dough; spread over the bottom. Gather up the sides of the dough creating your desired twists or pinched edging. Brush egg whites over exposed dough. Bake at 375 F for 25 to 30 minutes.

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Finance **NOW**

What Can You Expect From a Financial Advisor?

— By Angie Wingo-Juenemann

The investment world can be complex, and trying to navigate it by yourself is a daunting task. That's why you may want to work with a professional financial advisor — someone with the experience and resources to help you reach all your important financial objectives.

Your first task, then, is to find a financial advisor with whom you will be comfortable. Ask your friends, relatives and co-workers for referrals, and don't be shy about interviewing a few financial advisors. When you're talking to prospective financial advisors, look for someone who stresses comprehensive financial strategies, rather than individual transactions. Ideally, you will want someone who asks questions such as these:

- **What are your goals?**

You'll need a financial advisor who shows considerable interest in your short- and long-term goals. After all, you'll want this person to help you accomplish a variety of things — saving for a new home, sending your children to college, attaining a comfortable retirement lifestyle and so on. Every single recommendation a financial advisor makes should be based on your goals.

- **What does your family situation look like?**

A financial advisor will ask you a lot of family related

questions: How many children do you have? Do you plan to send them to college? If so, how much do you hope to contribute to their education? Does your spouse have a retirement plan at work? Will you have aging parents that may require some type of assistance from you? By eliciting this type of information, a financial advisor can help you create a "family friendly" investment strategy.

- **What are your attitudes toward investment risk?**

A conscientious financial advisor will determine if you are a conservative investor (someone who favors investments that offer a greater likelihood of preservation of principal); an aggressive investor (someone who is comfortable taking greater risks in hopes of greater returns); or a moderate investor (someone who falls in between the other two groups). While a good financial advisor will, of course, tailor recommendations to your risk tolerance, he or she may, on occasion, need to push you a bit out of your "comfort zone" to help you achieve your goals.

- **What investments do you currently own?**

For a financial advisor to do his or her job, and to provide the best chance of showing these possible benefits to you, he or she will need a complete understanding of your current holdings: your IRA, 401(k), stocks, bonds, government securities, Certificates of Deposit (CDs) — everything. Once a financial advisor knows what you already have, he or she can identify any potential gaps in your portfolio and make appropriate recommendations for filling them.



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• What are your feelings about leaving a legacy?

For many people, the issue of leaving a legacy is highly emotional. That's because so many of us, almost instinctively, want to "leave something behind" for our families and those charitable organizations we support. A good financial advisor will probe your attitudes toward leaving a legacy and help develop strategies that support your goals in this area. Eventually, your financial advisor may have to work with your other financial professionals, including your tax advisor and your attorney, to carry out your strategies of leaving the legacy you desire.

As you work toward your financial objectives, you'll have a lot of questions. Just make sure your financial advisor does, too. **NOW**

Angie Wingo-Juenemann is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.

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Health NOW

Making Smart Decisions During Pregnancy

— By Bill Cook, MD.

Pregnancy can be a very exciting time, and some women feel overwhelmed by warnings and advice from family and friends. However, following certain widely recognized guidelines can significantly impact the health of mother and baby, minimize complications and birth defects and shorten the recovery process. In fact, babies born to mothers who do not receive prenatal care are five times more likely to die and three times more likely to be of low birth weight.

One of the most important steps a woman can take to ensure a healthy pregnancy is to establish a healthy lifestyle before pregnancy. This includes: avoiding tobacco, drugs and alcohol, following a healthy diet, exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy weight.

Folic acid, a form of Vitamin-B, plays an integral role in preventing neurological defects, such as spina bifida. Adequate levels of folic acid are especially important in the first few weeks of pregnancy, before most women are even aware they have conceived.

In addition, most physicians recommend dietary changes during pregnancy. Women are generally advised to avoid foods that may carry certain bacteria, such as listeria. Listeria is commonly found in foods such as ready-to-eat or undercooked meat, poultry or seafood, and can lead to a serious infection called listeriosis, which has been linked to

miscarriages, premature births, fetal blood poisoning and birth defects. Women who are pregnant should heat all deli meats until steaming and avoid unpasteurized milk products and soft cheeses (brie, feta and blue cheese) throughout pregnancy.

Seafood known to contain high levels of mercury is also prohibited during pregnancy. Fish such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish often contain high levels of mercury, a toxin that can harm a developing fetus, and should be avoided during pregnancy. Catfish, salmon, cod, pollock, mahi mahi, shellfish and canned light tuna are considered lowest in mercury and are safe for consumption twice a week.

Pregnant women should continue to exercise unless otherwise instructed by a physician. Women who are active often enjoy an easier labor and shorter recovery time after birth.

Additional pregnancy restrictions often include the following:

- Avoid using chemicals, such as hair dye.
- Avoid hot tubs or saunas. These are considered high-bacteria environments.
- Avoid optional X-rays as radiation can be harmful to the developing fetus.
- Avoid cleaning out cat litter boxes as this is linked to a disease known as toxoplasmosis, which can cause miscarriages, stillbirths and birth defects.








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- Get adequate rest. Fatigue is common during pregnancy.
- Consider getting a flu shot, which will also protect the unborn child.
- Wear a seat belt correctly, with the lap belt across the hips under the belly.

Pregnancy is an exciting time of change, but those changes can be challenging. Consult your physician about plans to become pregnant and follow his or her advice before, during and after pregnancy because women who receive routine, adequate prenatal care are at much less risk for complications and much more likely to deliver a healthy baby. **NOW**

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July 2008

Community Calendar

Weekdays

Golden Circle Senior Citizen Center. Tuesday: singing and devotionals. Wednesday: Bible study. Thursday: exercise and pot luck lunch. (972) 875-6101.

Every Thursday

Chess for Kids, Ennis Public Library. (972) 875-5360.

Every Friday and Saturday

Live Bands at Red Moon Café. For upcoming events, visit www.theredmooncafe.com.

July 1, 15, 22, 29

The Central Texas Quarter Horse Association members only Ride Night, 6:30 p.m., Navarro County Exposition Center. (903) 641-6844.

July 3

Circle of Friends women's group meeting, 7:00 p.m. Call (972) 878-0740 to confirm date and location.

July 4

Independence Day Event at the Texas Motorplex. Drag racing, fireworks. Grand Funk Railroad will be performing. Call 1 (800) motorplex or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

July 5

RJ Productions will host a team sorting with free admission

at the Navarro County Exposition Center. Practice time: 11:00 a.m. Event time: Noon. (254) 379-1685.

July 6

Heart of Texas Barrel Racing Association show, noon, Navarro County Exposition Center. Free to the public. (903) 872-5283.

July 6, 13, 20, 27

Waxahachie Downtown Farmer's Market, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (972) 938-2101, ext.198.

July 8

Central Texas Quarter Horse Association sorting, 6:30 p.m., Navarro County Exposition Center. Open to the public. Ride as many times as you wish for \$20. (903) 641-6844.

July 12

United Christian Brotherhood multi-denominational men's breakfast, 7:30 a.m., Baylor Baptist Church. (972) 935-6787.

Ellis County Equine Association show, 9:00 a.m.,

Navarro County Exposition Center. Free to the public. (972) 483-6175.

ACROSS (A Christian Response of Shelter and Service) fundraiser, Knights of Columbus Hall. Doors open: 6:00

p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m., entertainment to follow. (972) 872-9828.

July 12 - 13

Waxahachie Trade Days, Ellis County Expo Center. Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (903) 286-0183. waxtradedays@yahoo.com. www.waxtradedays.com.

July 16

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection, affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, luncheon, Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 W. Hwy. 287, Waxahachie. Cost: \$13. For reservations, contact Kay at (972) 937-2807, Mary at (972) 937-9984 or visit windchime@charter.net by July 13.

July 22 - August 12

New Hope Church Vacation Bible School: "Super Summer Seven - Pursue the Prize," Tuesdays and Thursdays only, 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., 2003 East Ennis Ave. Ages 5 - 12. Cost: \$100. (972) 875-9710. www.NewHopeForever.com.

August 3

NBBC "Run Toward the Son" Motorcycle Rally: 10:00 a.m., New Beginnings Bible Church, 1970 FM 983, Ferris. Motorcycle games, contests and door prizes. Enjoy free hot dogs and bottled water. Register online at www.new-beginningsbiblechurch.com or call (972) 842-2800.

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