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ON THE COVER



Amanda Muniz is looking into a bright future.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Happy Independence Day!

So many things come to mind when I hear the word *independence*. I think of the song, "Independence Day," made popular years ago by country recording artist Martina McBride. Although she talks about being liberated from a dysfunctional home life, I think of the freedom that comes with being released from any situation that makes you feel like a prisoner in your own skin. I enjoy knowing that I have the freedom to choose what I wear, read, eat and think, as well as how I worship. In my old age, I'm learning that we *are* byproducts of our choices as we mature into adulthood. Only I can make good on the blessings God has given me.

As you put on your red, white and blue attire to head out to the local fireworks show, remember all those who chose to join the military to keep our freedoms intact. As you wave the American flag high in the air, remember that the freedom to do so came with a hefty price.

Cherish your freedoms this Independence Day!

Sandra

Sandra Strong

EnnisNOW Editor

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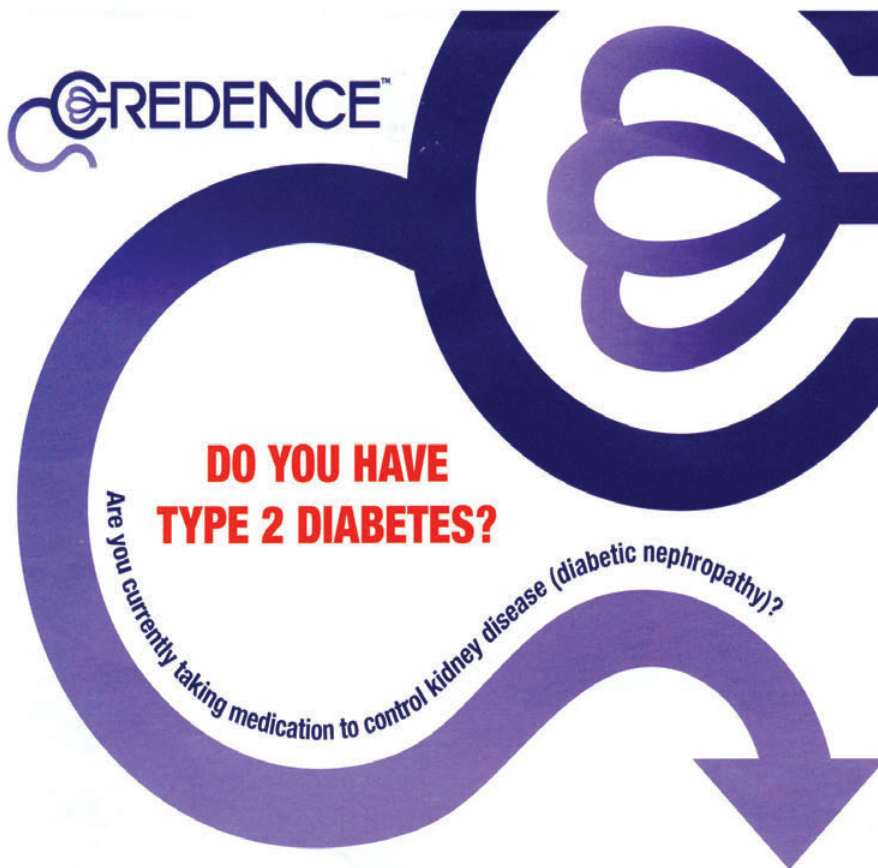
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Her

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As the story's told, Amanda Love Muniz dreamed of being a dancer from her stroller. And when the recent Ennis graduate visited the City that Never Sleeps in the winter of 2015, another vision came to life. Thanks to an overactive heater in her hotel, her opened windows ushered in constant traffic sounds, and they lulled her to slumber better than a lullaby. But first, she announced her presence rather dramatically. "My mother dared me, so I yelled, 'I love New York!' out the windows, and I posted it to Instagram. It was a beautiful moment," Amanda remembered.

Name in

GHTS



— By Stephanie Marchbanks

Another key memory in the Big Apple came when Amanda attended a mock tryout for the world-famous Rockettes and scored top ratings. She has her tally sheet posted on her organized walls, and her social media video of the tryout has over 2,000 views. The Rockettes are a precision dance company founded in 1925. Since 1932, they have performed at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan, New York City. And that's exactly where Amanda intends to live one day, hopefully, as a Rockette. "I'm not going to let anything stop me," Amanda stated, with determination.

That kind of resolve is exactly what Amanda needs to reach her goals, and she's no stranger to hard work. In four years on the Ennis Lionettes drill team, she made the commitment and put in the hours to reach excellence and positions of leadership, and those walls hold the certificates and awards to prove it. Her freshman year on the drill team represented an epiphany moment when years of dance lessons moved from her head to her heart and began beating. "Drill team is life," she emphasized. "It's hard core, and it takes a lot of time. It's make it or break it. You have to ask yourself, 'Do I really love dancing, or is this just a hobby?' I decided I loved it."

But as the now oft-repeated story goes, Amanda's romance with dancing really began in her stroller, in San Antonio, Texas, on a family trip. According to her father, Amanda spied flamenco dancers from her perch in the buggy, and adorably announced to him that dance was what she wanted to do with her life. And

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since Amanda's maternal grandparents were accomplished jitterbuggers in the '50s, and another maternal cousin was a dance instructor, her mother also takes credit. "Mom and Dad always argue about who got the idea first to put me in dance," Amanda laughed. "Mom says it comes from her side of the family, and Dad thinks he wins because of the stroller story."

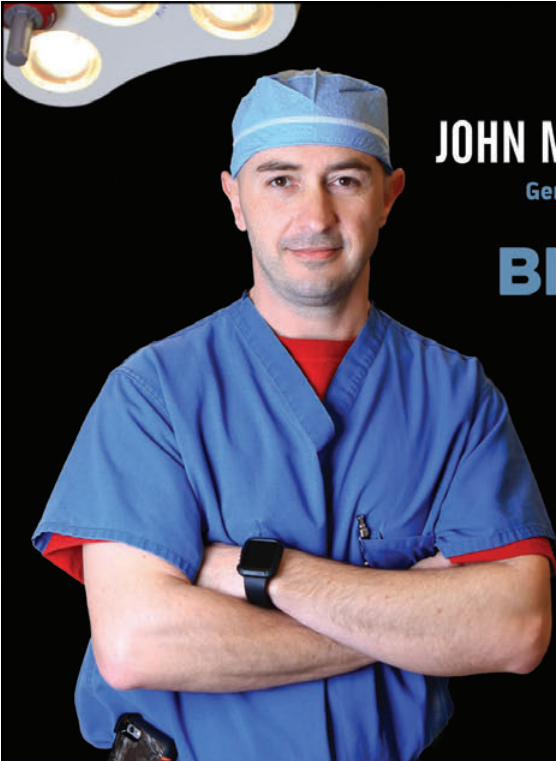
Amanda doesn't recall the San Antonio episode, but one thing she does remember is her mom enrolling her in every sport she could think of before realizing athletics was not the path. "I was horrible at all of it," Amanda admitted. "I pretended to have a heart attack in soccer." But fortunately, the next stop for Amanda was the Go! Dance & Gymnastics Studios in Ennis, where at age 9, she enrolled and began studying tap, hip-hop, jazz and ballet right off the bat. She eventually transferred to Danceworks studio in Waxahachie and studied most other styles of dance, including modern, lyrical and contemporary, all of which served her well for her years as a Lionette.

And Amanda has a head start on her Rockettes idea because of some summer workshops she took at Trinity Valley Community College in Athens, Texas. The weeklong experience is called the Dance Your Heart Out Camp (DYHOC, or "die-hoc"), and Amanda's face lights up when she talks about it. "You stay in the dorms and experience campus life," Amanda explained. "You dance all day long. It's a lot of fun."

A guest instructor at the DYHOC camp was Summyr Whaley, a former Rockette. "Her class was optional, and obviously, I chose it," Amanda recalled. Amanda attended the camp for two summers and believes the work with Summyr gave her the added benefit of being familiar with Rockettes' choreography. She keeps up with Summyr via Instagram to this day.

Currently, Amanda's future plans are taking shape nicely. After several college tryouts, including a national collegiate audition in Houston in January, she heard from two drill teams that offered automatic acceptance and scholarships. She plans to attend junior college first, possibly Trinity Valley, to further develop her skills in acting, singing and dancing. After that, in Amanda's mind, it's the big city lights. "I want to transfer to a university, hopefully, in New York City. It will help me to find internships and experience life there," Amanda pointed out.

But the icing-on-the-cake story, which Amanda bubbled over telling, is how she got to meet actress and singer Bernadette Peters during her junior year. Her mother blames Amanda's English teacher, Mr. Campbell, for birthing her love of all-things Bernadette via movies

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shown in class, such as *The Odyssey* and *Into the Woods*. “She’s my literal idol. I love Broadway, the whole thing!” Amanda raved. “And when I realize a celebrity can sing, that takes it to the next level.”

By following Ms. Peters’ touring schedule, Amanda discovered the actress would be in Fort Worth doing a concert for breast cancer awareness at TCU via Frogs for the Cure, a group dedicated to supporting those with breast cancer and helping to find a cure. An email exchange with the group’s chairperson, Ann Loudon, resulted in an unlikely friendship and a surprise invitation to not only attend the show, but the gala also, and to meet Bernadette Peters face to face. “I was the first person to meet her, over the mayor of Fort Worth,” Amanda beamed. “I got to hug her and take a picture with her. I was speechless. I’ve been involved with Frogs for the Cure ever since.”

Lessons learned throughout Amanda’s budding life shaped her goals, and taught her well. Family, friends and mentors alike chipped in. And everything goes back to that moment her freshman year when the focus became clear. “It was really hard. You’re new. You don’t know anything. It’s strict, dance-wise and attitude-wise. It’s a lifestyle you have to accept. Looking back now, I respect that so much more, realizing the leader it helped me to be. I think my biggest life influences have been my past Lionettes director, Cassie Ortiz; my godmother, Donna Blankenship; and my mom,” Amanda mused.

Although it wasn’t always so, Amanda’s parents, Jayme and Terri Muniz, are now supportive of her dreams to move to New York City. And about that future, there is no confusion in Amanda’s mind. “Dance is what I want to focus on,” she said, simply. And, hopefully with her name in lights, the horizon looks bright. **NOW**

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Shannon Childs

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Shannon Childs is an Ellis County native who has practiced in Ennis since 2001. She received her master's degree in nursing administration with a minor in education from The University of Texas at Arlington. Shannon received her Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Certificate in 2000 and her Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate in 2009. She is board certified in both acute care and family nursing. Shannon is the proud mother of three daughters and has two beautiful grandsons. Shannon is accepting NEW patients of all ages.



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At Home With Daniel and Theresa Darst ...



Daniel and Theresa Darst met at the wedding of mutual friends. Although it wasn't love at first sight, it was the introduction to a friendship that grew into a long distance romance, resulting in a marriage proposal and wedding on July 4, 1981. "We sent recorded cassette tapes and letters to each other for almost a year," Theresa remembered. While on leave from the Navy, Daniel returned home in December 1976. "We got engaged during the Christmas holiday and stayed engaged for five years, until Daniel's time in the military was complete."

"We had the large wedding at St. John Catholic Church," Daniel shared, "and the reception was held at the KJT Hall." They were the last couple to celebrate at the KJT before lightning struck the building during a large electrical storm, burning it down just two weeks following their celebration.



— By Sandra Strong

ess

The newly married couple decided to wait for several years before taking their honeymoon to Hawaii. Since he had been stationed there during his time with the Navy, they both wanted some time to lapse before going back to enjoy the tranquil beauty as husband and wife. “We went to a hotel off Waikiki Beach on the island of Oahu,” Daniel said. “We saw things together I never noticed while I was stationed there.”

In what will very soon be 35 years of marriage, Daniel and Theresa have only called two locations home. The first — Paris Place Apartments — was where they came to relax until they broke ground on the home of their dreams on October 31, 1988, on the acre of land her parents gifted to them. Kevin Betik, local builder and family friend, drew up

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done very little in the way of remodeling. Recent upgrades in the kitchen include Cambria quartz countertops with flakes of earth tone accents that blend beautifully with the pops of colored glass found imbedded in the tile backsplash. The revamp in the guest bathroom included a new

the plans that allowed for the personal touches Daniel and Theresa wanted in their new home. He also built the two-bedroom, two-bath abode to their specifications. "He replicated a built-in china cabinet that we had enjoyed for years while living in the apartment," Theresa said. "Thankfully, we had dry weather that winter, which allowed Kevin to complete the house in record time and allowed us to move in on January 23, 1987."

After 27 years in the home, they still love it just as much as they did when they first moved their belongings in. In that same number of years, they've



marble countertop, new flooring and a completely new shower. The master bath boasts of new flooring, new countertops, a cast-iron tub and decorative tile to complete the overall effect Theresa wanted when planning the remodel. Several years ago, they also replaced the carpeting throughout the home, taking it from the pale pink of the late '70s and early '80s to the more natural colors that are so popular today.

Several of the design choices show evidence of how ahead of the times the home was when it was built. The kitchen opens up to the dining room on one side, the entry on the other and through an opening into the living room, thus giving them an open concept, which would only become the norm many years later in newer homes. The boxed and vaulted ceiling added the "something dramatic" Kevin wanted to give the home, and the couple is glad they went along with it.

The living room is the couple's favorite place to be when indoors. Theresa loves all the windows that allow her views of the raised backyard garden, as well as the variety of flowers in full bloom, which



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The home's interior is decorated with items that have special meaning to the couple.



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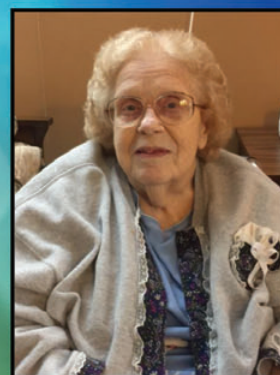
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~ J. Dover

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~ R. Curry



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encircle the home in wonderful colors. Daniel enjoys the overall comfort the large living area offers, but he is happiest when he's in his backyard workshop or getting his hands dirty in the garden. "He makes wood crafts, ornaments and collectibles," Theresa said, with pride for her husband in her voice. "The garden was planted on time, so it's producing good produce."

Kae Li is the couple's four-legged baby, and to say she is spoiled would be an understatement. She meets family, friends and first-time guests with a fast wag of her tail and what appears to be a smile on her little face. As their little princess, Kae Li has a basket filled with clothes to mark every holiday, every season and all those days in between. "She loves getting dressed every day," Theresa smiled. "Sometimes, you can lay two or three choices out and she will pick the one she wants to wear that day." She truly is their little sweetheart.

The home's interior is decorated with items that have special meaning to the couple. Her favorite piece is the treadle sewing machine that once belonged to

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her maternal grandmother. "I remember her making everything on it," Theresa shared. "She made all the clothes for her four children." Daniel's favorite heirloom piece is a clock he got from his grandmother. Although it's not on display, the clock is still very near and dear to his thoughts and memories.

A wooden baby rocking chair that made its way from the Czech Republic to America is displayed in the living room with its original finish. At one time, it belonged to Theresa's great-aunt. "My mom, who lives just down the street, remembers rocking in this chair." Now a keepsake, a teddy bear calls it home. Other notable items that hold heartfelt memories include a picture of St. Theresa in the master bedroom; the framed photograph of Theresa in her wedding dress made from Belgium lace, with elaborate pearl detailing in the entryway; and the crocheted hat in the guest room. Oil paintings are also prevalent throughout the home. All except one have been hand-painted in oil by Theresa, and each canvas has a story attached to it that either brings a smile to her face or a tear to her eye. There's one over Daniel's desk in the home office, one in the hallway of an infamous squirrel, as well as her first painting — a landscape of trees with a creek and fence that invites the viewer into the tranquil countryside.



What was once only an acre of vacant land alongside a dusty dirt road is now the place the Darsts call home. It was built on a strong foundation of love and a commitment made 35 years ago this Independence Day. Whether Daniel and Theresa are relaxing in their spacious living room with Kae Li beside them or in the backyard enjoying the beauty they've created, they are most likely together, taking each new day as it comes. **NOW**



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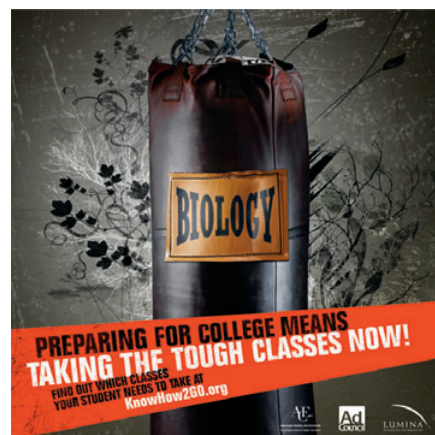


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An advertisement for Hamil, Harrison & Co., LLC featuring a large image of a Trane air conditioning unit against a background of a sunset with fireworks. The company name is at the top in large, bold letters. Below it, a list of services is provided. A Trane Comfort Specialist logo is on the right. At the bottom, the phone number and address are listed, along with a BBB logo and a note about the company's history.



His students and players like him. His approach with “the kids” is one of mutual respect and having fun, while learning and playing on the court of adolescence. He is young enough to remember his days at a private school and what it was like to maneuver his way through the halls, the classes, the friends and the playing field. Jonathan Newton or “New New,” as the kids call him, is straightforward. “If I have to show tough love at times, they seem to respond to me appropriately, and I feel I can assist them during a hard time in their lives,” Jonathan said, with pride in his work evident in his diction. It’s easy to see that he enjoys what he does. Jonathan teaches seventh grade Texas History at Ennis Junior High and coaches girls’ volleyball at the high school.

THE CURVES KEEP C

Jonathan was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas, surrounded by a rich culture of Texas history. It’s no surprise he’s teaching the subject. Growing up with a proud sense of his Spanish ancestry, and hoping at the same time that somewhere in his past he might find a little fascinating English history, he laughed as he said, “Say, maybe a relationship with the knights of England and the famous round table!”

He was the first in his family to attend college. His journey took him quite a distance from home, but not far from his love of Texas history. He went from San Antonio to a small town in East Texas also rich in history — Nacogdoches — deep in the Texas Piney Woods. “Heat I was used to. Humidity not so much,” he wiped his brow and grinned. “I grew accustomed to the temperatures and soon fit into my surroundings. I was used to being among so many different people from all over. I was learning about classmates from Houston who complained about their traffic and the kids from Dallas who bragged about big hair and big ‘D.’” He grinned when he referred to the group of transplanted Cajun students from Louisiana. Jonathan portrays his experience at Stephen F. Austin State University with pride and humor. “When the team and I travel for our games, I’m prepared to share the best eating spots across East Texas,” he said. Just the tone of his voice lets you know he loves coaching volleyball.



— By Nancy Smothermon

OMING

In between semesters of school, he worked as a summer camp counselor. Camp Allaso, sponsored by the Fellowship Church in Grapevine, Texas, became a valuable teaching ground for Jonathan. He liked working with the young people and teaching them to work things out for themselves, among themselves. "Life change happens," was the camp motto. "The word *allaso* means 'change' in Greek," he shared.

Working as a volunteer, Jonathan

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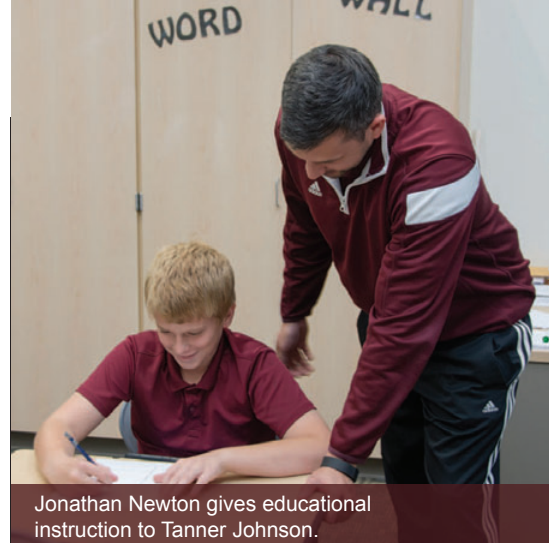
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Jonathan Newton gives educational instruction to Tanner Johnson.



Jonathan poses with his history class.

realized he was good at coaching students in sports and activities. The church offered him a full-time position. He was happy to stay on as the outdoor education coordinator and conference coordinator. It was during this time he met a young woman named Kendal. They became engaged and were soon married.

Jonathan graduated from SFA with a major in kinesiology and a minor in Texas history. He had a great experience at the university. He made a lot of good friends, and they are still good friends to this day. He played all the sports he could, including volleyball and soccer. He has a thirst for knowledge and this attitude is what keeps him on his toes and always one step ahead of his students and players.

Following graduation, he and Kendal soon returned to Nacogdoches. Kendal coached softball at SFA, while Jonathan started his teaching career at McMichael



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Middle School. "Then as life so often does, it threw us a curve ball. My wife, Kendal, became pregnant with our son, Jonathan Jr.," he said with a huge smile of pride. "It's funny that I would use that expression (thrown a curve ball)," he added. "It's wonderful being a father."

Before long, they began looking for places near Kendal's parents' home, where they could both work. "With a new baby on the way, we wanted to be near family," he admitted. "I don't get back to San Antonio as often as I would like. Sometimes, I take off and go back home. A Latin boy has a close relationship with his mother, you know!"

A friend of Kendal's from SFA had just accepted the position of head softball coach at Ennis High School. She encouraged Kendal and Jonathan to apply. With a little help from this old college pal, they found a new school where they have made new friends. "My wife is the softball coach here at the high school and teaches eighth grade algebra at the junior high," Jonathan said. He has lofty goals and has considered moving into school administration in the future. He only has 18 hours of studies left in order to qualify for a principal position. He appreciates a challenge and has a positive attitude.

Jonathan has made a dear history teacher friend, who also works for EISD. "I can sit for hours soaking up what he has to share. It's wonderful," he said. "Tony Morgan has been in education for 30 years, and I value his friendship."

Jonathan and Kendal live happily in Waxahachie, a short drive to work and close to family. "Family is a priority," he stated. "The kids here are a priority."

Jonathan was an only child, but his experience at a private school was not limited. He fit right in with everyone —



Jonathan is proud of the Ennis volleyball team.





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the city kids, the country kids, the nerds, the jocks and the list goes on. One of his fondest memories living in San Antonio was giving tours of the Alamo.

When asked how the volleyball team was doing, he shared they were down when he first came on board with a record of 6-22. "But, they are improving." His first season the records show 15 wins and 24 losses. This past season, the numbers were 15-19. "We are looking forward to a newly drawn district this year," he said. "We have some valuable seniors and a new group of freshmen. We will be stepping up!" He stresses to the girls that everyone makes mistakes. In sports, mistakes are just another part of learning. Jonathan wants them to do their best. "Sometimes, I might come across as a little strict, but sometimes that is necessary with this age group," he admitted. "We're preparing them for real life."

Life for Jonathan is good. He's enjoying the challenges that being a teacher and coach afford him. "I'm excited," he said, "and I'm looking forward to what the future holds." **NOW**

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Ready, Set, SHOOT

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

Summer is the time for making memories, and one of the best parts of making memories is capturing the perfect shot to commemorate the occasion. Whether your little ones jumped off the high dive for the first time, or you need a photo of your family pet fetching a Frisbee out of the water, getting the picture can be harder than it seems. These simple steps will help make sure you get an image to last a lifetime.

KNOW HOW TO USE YOUR EQUIPMENT

- Modern-day single-lens reflex cameras are amazing, as long as you know how to use them. If you have, or are buying an SLR, the manual should be your friend. Most SLRs, whether digital or manual, offer many features, but



the novice photographer often misses some of the features available. Specifics differ from one camera to another, but some common features include: changing shutter speeds, optional flash and the ability to take rapid-fire photos.

• Lenses have zoom capabilities for specific ranges, and bigger is not always better. For closer photos, a smaller lens gives a clearer picture, but shots from far away are greatly enhanced by lenses with a range of 55-300 mm.¹ Most companies also offer a lens choice that is branded “vibration reduction” or “image stabilization,” which steadies the subject but can also slow some camera functions.

IF YOUR CAMERA IS A PHONE

Phone companies have come a long way when it comes to their camera features, although a phone picture will probably not have the quality of a stand-alone camera. Here are some things to remember when your phone is the only camera you can use:

- Use space behind the subject to make sure



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they stand out as much as possible. This could include the sky, a field or even a solid-colored wall. Most phones will automatically enhance the subject of the photo, but even the smartest phone may not know whether the subject is your son or the celebrity on the poster behind him.

- Use the flash and zoom sparingly. Most camera flashes overexpose the subject and leave colors looking washed out. And if you have to take a picture from far away, crop it afterward instead of zooming. You will see a drastic reduction in quality when you zoom in on a subject that is far away. Instead, let the subject be far away and fix it in the editing stage.²

- Find the right editing app. Different phones will have different best options, so find out what apps are ideal for your use.³ Getting out red-eye, touching up lighting issues and adding enhancements will take a standard camera phone and



turn it into the work of art you were hoping to get when you snapped the photo in the first place.

FINDING THE RIGHT LIGHT

- Photographers of every level deal with the singular issue of lighting, with every picture they take. One of the best ways to ensure a good photo is to take it outdoors.⁴ Too much sunlight can be bad, but on a mildly cloudy day, just enough light means fewer shadows and rich colors for the photos. If you have to take a picture in the middle of a cloudless day, try to use trees with large openings to diffuse the sun, without completely putting your subjects in the dark.

- Make sure you and the subject are in the right spot. You may not be able to control the amount of light, but putting the light source to the side of the subject will decrease washout, if the light is behind them, and should eliminate the awkward squint that happens when your subject has to look into the sun. If you see shadows, you might consider adding a light source on each side of the subject, which will provide equal lighting for the photo.

- Learn how and when to use your flash. Make sure not to let the flash reflect off a mirror or window. On the other hand, using the flash when the sun is behind your subject can reverse the shadowing effect that typically ruins some pictures.

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HOW TO CAPTURE YOUR LOVED ONES

Even with the right camera, the perfect light and complete understanding of how to use what you have, getting a great shot of a moving target can seem impossible. Remember these tips:

- Anticipate the movement, and use the shutter speed to your advantage. Aim your shot in the direction your subject is moving. It is better to get your child's face and the grass in front of him than the back of his feet.

- Be careful how you bribe. Offer the kids a treat for doing a good job, but do not hold it in front of them while taking the shot. You are likely to get a child with an unhappy look and outstretched arms.

- Use their energy and spunk. It may be messy, but getting a candid photo of your daughter joyfully eating an ice cream cone may be better than struggling to get a shot of her sitting just right. And for your pets, try action shots of them playing fetch instead of getting them to sit still for a photo.

This list can help you get a great photo of special moments this summer. But the most important tip is this: Focus on having fun. Do not let the stress of taking the perfect picture take away from making great memories with your loved ones. **NOW**

Sources:

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2. <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/good-pictures-phone-tips>.
3. <http://appadvice.com/applists/show/free-photography-apps-youll-love>.
4. <http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/cameras-photography/tips/5-tips-for-photography-lighting.htm>.

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All those at McDonnell Richardson CPA enjoy working with the people of Ellis County. They find satisfaction in helping others.

Growing to Serve Well

The McDonnell Richardson CPA, PC staff values customers' time and listens to their needs. — By Virginia Riddle

Kevin McDonnell's 2003 New Year's resolution was to start his own business. Even with credentials as both a CPA and attorney, it wasn't easy at first. "Through hard work, long hours, a wonderful community and an understanding wife, I was able to grow our business," Kevin remembered.

With the addition of Jennifer McDonnell, CPA, the "understanding wife," and Jim Richardson, CPA partner, the business now has three CPAs, three attorneys, a certified global managerial accountant, an enrolled agent, an MBA, a masters in tax and about 18 support staff to service clients with every accounting, tax, property tax and legal service they might need. A new address also marks the addition of newly expanded and remodeled office space behind their familiar cottage that fronts Ferris Avenue in Waxahachie.

Services offered include income tax return preparation, general

accounting, payroll, property tax services, CFO/controller services and general business services. Custom services can be designed to meet each client's individual needs through McDonnell Richardson CPA, PC's staff members who listen and communicate effectively with clients. "Every client has different needs and goals. It's a joy to see people's relief when we organize their finances, catch up on their tax returns, solve their IRS problems, reduce their property tax or provide other services. Assisting a business we represent and watching their sales increase from \$100,000 to over \$10,000,000 in five years is amazing," Kevin stated.

Kevin received a B.S. degree from the University of New Orleans and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from Tulane University School of Law. He's licensed to practice law in Texas, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas and the United States Tax Court.

Kevin is a member of the Texas State Board of Certified Public Accountancy, the State Bar of Texas, the American Institute of Certified Accountants, the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy and the American Bar Association.

Jennifer is a native of Ennis with family living here. She graduated from The

“It’s a joy to see people’s relief when we organize their finances.”

University of Texas at Arlington with a Master of Taxation degree, and she is a member of the State Board of Certified Public Accountants and a member of the American Institute of

Certified Public Accountants.

Jim graduated from The University of Texas at Arlington with a B.B.A. in accounting. He’s a member of the State Board of Certified Public Accountants and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He is also a certified global managerial accountant.

Jim was a senior appraiser for the Dallas County Central Appraisal District. A native of Arlington, Texas, he spent eight years working in Ennis before joining this firm. “I enjoy Ennis’ small-town feel, with its big-city amenities when I’m working with our many Ennis clients,” Jim said. He is a member of the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce’s current year’s Leadership class and volunteers with Waxahachie’s Kernow Storm Futbol Club’s board of directors, Gingerbread House Chili Cook-off and his family’s church, First Baptist of Waxahachie. He and his wife, Paige, have three children who actively involve their parents in scouting and sports activities.

Kevin is a founding member of CASA of Ellis County (Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children), and Jennifer serves as its treasurer. Kevin also volunteers with the Knights of Columbus, and together, he and Jennifer enjoy traveling. “We are devoted parents, and traveling together really strengthens the family bond we have,” Kevin said.

“McDonnell Richardson CPA, PC succeeds as our clients succeed,” Kevin said. “As a business grows, so do the administrative, accounting and legal demands. We can assist with those demands, so business owners can focus on growing their business,” Kevin added. “We enjoy working with the people of Ellis County.” **NOW**

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Mayor Angie Juenemann waves at the crowd during the 50th Annual Polka Festival Parade.



Blue Arrow Fitness ribbon cutting and open house.



Joan Huang with her helper, Kaci Bowling, greet customers at Unity Coffee.



During his going away party, Johnny and Tee Roberts share a few emotional moments with their son, Jesse, before he leaves on a three-month long mission trip.



Amanda and Nathan Grant revisit the halls where they first met during the Alamo Education Center 100-year event.



Gemma Neville is a happy little girl who enjoys smiling for the camera.



Community members, family and friends attend the ribbon cutting for Moore Ventura Bed & Breakfast.



Teri Moore helps Hazel Ford feel safe in the saddle as she takes a pony ride.



Ennis FFA puts on an outstanding dinner and dance fundraiser.



Jennifer Mudd takes a quick break to smile for the camera.



The SPJST float was a crowd favorite during the Polka Festival Parade as they celebrate 50 years of Czech history.

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Retirees Need “Longevity Strategy”

The late, great Yogi Berra supposedly said it: “The future ain’t what it used to be.” And the same could be said of retirement. Due to several factors, such as advances in health care, today’s retirees are living longer, more active lives than their predecessors. In fact, you could spend two, or even three, decades in retirement — which means you need a “longevity strategy.”

Such a strategy needs to be part of your overall retirement income strategy, but here are five key areas you’ll need to address:

- **Lifestyle.** What do you plan to do during your retirement years? Travel the world? Stay close to home and pursue your hobbies? Volunteer? Open a small business or do some consulting? Your choice of lifestyle will probably affect every aspect of your longevity strategy.

- **Income.** Your biggest threat to an enjoyable retirement is the possibility of running out of money. This fear is apparently widespread. In a survey commissioned by Allianz, a life insurance company, more than 60 percent of respondents said they were more scared of outliving their assets than they were of dying. You need to create a retirement income strategy that incorporates, among other elements, a withdrawal rate that allows you to take money from your 401(k), IRA and other investment accounts in such a manner that you don’t run out. You’ll also need to answer other key questions, such as when to take Social Security. As you may know, the longer you wait, the bigger your monthly checks, until they “max out” at age 70.

- **Housing.** Once you retire, you may want to review your housing situation. If you’ve already paid off your mortgage, and

you like your house, you may want to stay there. But if you’re thinking of downsizing or moving to a more favorable climate, or even purchasing a vacation home, you need to calculate the costs and include them in your plans.

- **Health care.** As far as health care, consider these questions: What will the treatment of existing medical conditions cost over the long term? Do you know what costs Medicare will cover? Have you thought of how you might pay for a nursing home or other long-term care? This last item is especially important, because the annual average cost for a private room in a nursing home is more than \$90,000, according to the 2015 Cost of Care Survey, produced by Genworth, a financial services company. A financial professional can suggest ways of meeting these long-term care costs.

- **Caregiving.** It’s possible, at least early in your retirement years, that you could still be a caregiver to aging parents. If so, you might need to factor in these costs to your financial strategy. Later on, you may need some caregiving yourself, such as that provided by a home health aide. So you’ll need to consider these potential expenses.

Your retirement years can be filled with activities and accomplishments. And you can get even more enjoyment from this time of life if you stick to an appropriate longevity strategy. **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.



Happy Independence Day



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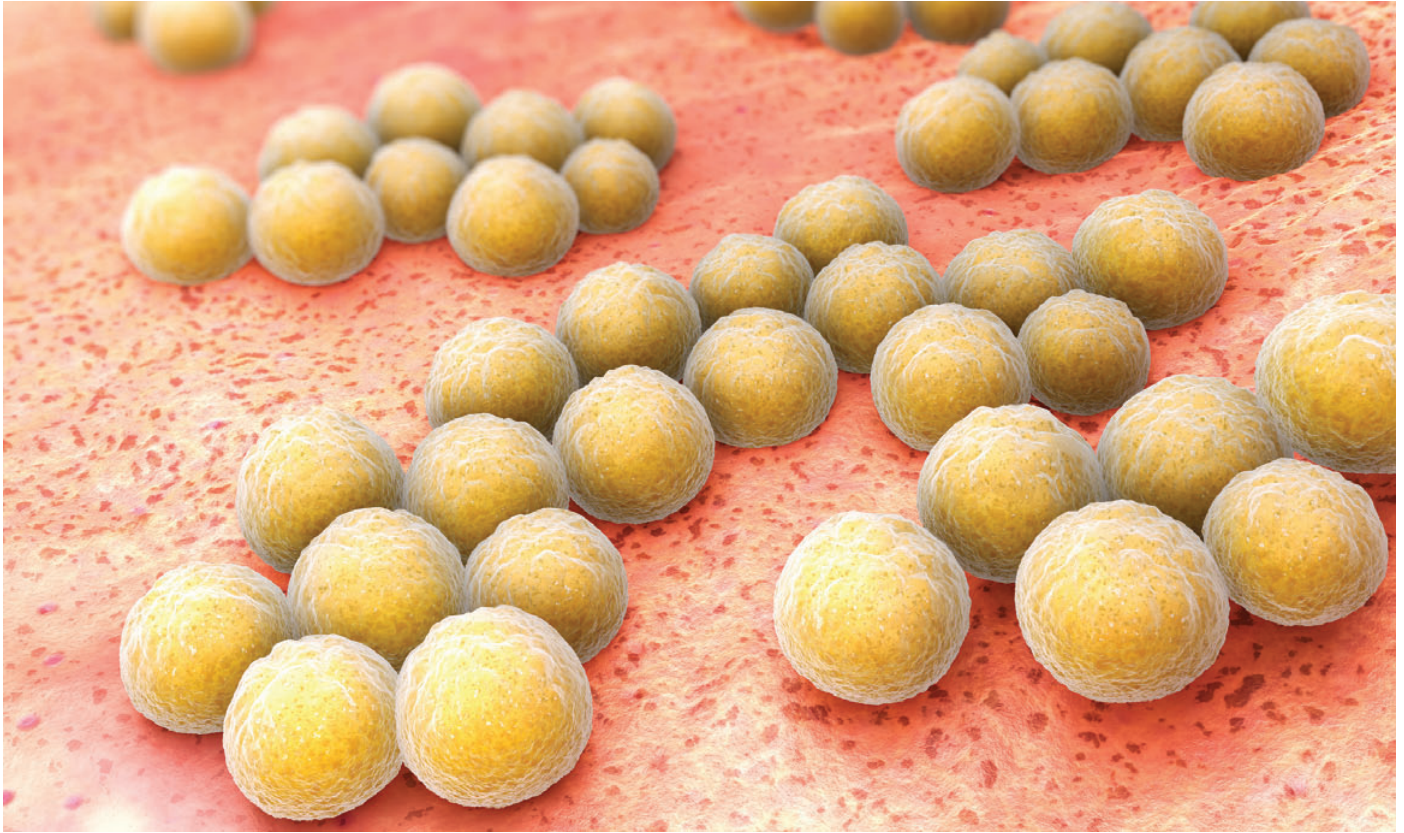


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Common Summer Ailments: Spider Bite or MRSA?

As primary care practices across Ellis County begin to prepare for the most common types of summer illness and conditions, it is important to shed some light on a condition that is often misunderstood and misdiagnosed. A “spider bite” is a frequent complaint that brings many patients to visit their PCP during the summer months. Few if any patients, however, actually see a spider bite their skin. They present to the clinic with complaints of localized swelling, redness, warmth and a white, pustular, pimple-like center that sometimes drains clear or bloody, purulent drainage. If not treated promptly, this wound oftentimes increases in size and becomes painful, red and unsightly. Patients may also develop a fever.

Although spider bites should never be ignored, this skin condition that is often confused as a spider bite may actually be a skin infection caused by the bacterial organism *Staphylococcus aureus*. This bacteria favors warm, moist environments, hence the common seasonal outbreaks during the summer months. *S. aureus* is everywhere in the environment, and is even a common organism that occurs on the skin’s surface. Whenever a break or tear occurs on the skin’s surface, this creates an opportunity for the bacteria to enter the various layers of the skin and cause an infection.

MRSA, a more serious form of *S. aureus*, is resistant to many antibiotics and is more difficult to treat. Depending on the severity of the abscess, your health care provider may decide

to open and drain the abscess, which allows the infection to heal from the inside out. Antibiotics may also be prescribed in certain clinical situations. Your health care provider may also send a sample of the fluid to a laboratory to test the sample to determine its source.

How can people avoid contracting this skin infection? Popular areas where *S. aureus* and MRSA are commonly contracted include fitness centers, community locker rooms, day cares and health care facilities. Wiping down workout equipment before and after use, as well as meticulous hand washing, can prevent the spread of this skin infection. If you develop symptoms as stated above and are concerned that you may have a spider bite or staph infection, make an appointment to see your health care provider right away! If left untreated, the abscess can grow large under the skin, which may require surgical intervention or in worse cases may even enter the blood stream and cause a systemic infection. For more information about MRSA, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. **NOW**

Source: www.cdc.gov/mrsa/community/.

Chance Turner, RN, MSN, FNP-C
Ennis Doctors Center

July 3, 4

19th Annual Grape Myrtle Festival, Pink Petals and Patriotism: **July 3**, Waxahachie Sports Complex: 5:00 p.m., tailgate party; 7:30 p.m., Tejas Brothers perform; 9:00 p.m., fireworks; **July 4**, downtown Waxahachie: 10:00 a.m., parade begins on College Street and ends with a picnic in the park at Getzendaner Park. Free admission. For more information, visit www.waxahachiecvb.com or call (469) 309-4040.

July 5, 19

Ellis County HEALS support group meeting: 6:30 p.m., 408 Water St. The group hopes to connect with survivors of suicide loss in Ellis County, while giving them a safe place to share their struggle and pain. For more information, email elliscountyheals@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook.

July 9

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association Chapter 1191 monthly meeting: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Ryan's Buffet, Hwy 77. The event also includes a guest speaker. For membership information, call (214) 850-4783.

July 15

Summer Moonlight Movies presents *JAWS*: 9:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie. Admission is free. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and bug spray. Concession stand on-site. For more information, call (469) 309-4111.

July 16, 17

Lone Star Cowboy Church of Ellis County 10th anniversary celebration: The event will offer many family activities, a ranch rodeo and a musical, "The Cowboy Ain't Dead Yet!" beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday. For more details, call (972) 576-0900 or visit www.LoneStarCC.org.

July 21

Ellis County Amateur Radio Club: 7:30 p.m., Ellis County Sheriff's Office Training Center, 2272 FM 878, Waxahachie. For more information, visit www.wd5ddh.org.

July 29 — 31

Rumpelstiltskin Private Eye presented by the Waxahachie Community Theatre's Kid Showcase: Venue TBD. Tickets and the most recent venue information can be found by visiting www.waxahachiecommunitytheatre.com.

August 2, 16, 30

Ellis County HEALS support group meeting: 6:30 p.m., 408 Water St. The group hopes to connect with survivors of suicide loss in Ellis County, while giving them a safe place to share their struggle

and pain. For more information, email elliscountyheals@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook.

August 12

Summer Moonlight Movies presents *Charlotte's Webb*: 9:00 p.m., downtown Waxahachie. Admission is free. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and bug spray. Concession stand on-site. For more information, call (469) 309-4111.

August 18

Ellis County Amateur Radio Club: 7:30 p.m., Ellis County Sheriff's Office Training Center, 2272 FM 878, Waxahachie. For more information, visit www.wd5ddh.org.

September 13, 27

Ellis County HEALS support group meeting: 6:30 p.m., 408 Water St. The group hopes to connect with survivors of suicide loss in Ellis County, while giving them a safe place to share their struggle and pain. For more information, email elliscountyheals@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook.

September 15

Ellis County Amateur Radio Club: 7:30 p.m., Ellis County Sheriff's Office Training Center, 2272 FM 878, Waxahachie. For more information, visit www.wd5ddh.org.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Sign Language Class: 4:00-5:15 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave. Classes are free and available for all ages. No sign up required.

Third Mondays

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin, Waxahachie. For more information, visit www.elliscountyaggiemoms.org.

Fourth Mondays

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meeting: 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Ave.

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 ccurry_98@yahoo.com.

Third Tuesdays

Ellis County Veterans Networking Group: 6:30 p.m., Ryan's Steakhouse, 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.

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.

Third Wednesdays

The Ellis County Christian Women's Connection meeting: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Waxahachie Country Club. Cost is \$13. For more information, contact Kay at (972) 935-2054 or Margaret at (972) 937-1016 for reservations.

Thursdays

Chess: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Avenue, Ennis. Elementary age and above. No sign up required.

Fourth Thursdays

MACS: 6:00 p.m., Tabernacle Baptist Church Life Center. Evening includes a covered dish meal and a program of singing or informational message.

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.

Saturdays

Farmers Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 100 N. Dallas St.

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.

Sundays

GriefShare meeting: 2:30-4:00 p.m., Cowboy Church of Ellis County in the sanctuary Youth Inc. room. For more information, call (972) 935-9801 or visit www.cowboychurchofelliscounty.org.

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



In the Kitchen With Cindy Pechal

— By Rachel Smith

For Cindy Pechal, cooking demonstrates your love or care for others. An Ennis native from a large family, the kitchen was the center of family life. On Sundays and holidays, Cindy learned to cook with the help of her mother, grandmother and sisters. “It could be competitive at times for who brought the best new food item,” she quipped.

She shared her love of cooking with her daughter, Colby Pechal South. In high school, Colby raised funds to attend a study abroad program in Europe by gathering family and friends to compile a cookbook entitled *Hometown Favorites*, which included various family recipes. “It was a heartwarming project that created a family treasure, Cindy reminisced. “It’s nice now to have those recipes all in one place.” **NOW**

Steak Balsamico

- 2/3 cup balsamic vinaigrette**
- 1/4 cup fig preserves**
- 4 beef steaks, your choice of cut**
- 1 tsp. ground sea salt**
- 1 tsp. freshly ground pepper**
- 1 6.5-oz. container buttery garlic and herb spreadable cheese (Alouette suggested)**

- 1.** Combine first two ingredients in a blender until smooth; pour into a shallow dish or large zip-top plastic freezer bag. Add steaks and marinate in refrigerator at least 2 hours.
- 2.** Remove steaks and discard marinade. Grill over medium-high heat 5-7 minutes on each side, or to desired degree of doneness. Remove to serving platter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover to keep warm.
- 3.** Heat cheese spread in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring often until melted (2-4 minutes). Serve cheese sauce in hollowed-out lemon halves with steaks.

Berries Romanoff

- 2 cups sour cream**
- 2/3 cup light brown sugar**
- 2 tsp. cinnamon**
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract**
- Berries of your choice**

- 1.** Combine first 4 ingredients in a small bowl; stir until smooth. Serve with your favorite seasonal berries, such as strawberries, raspberries or blackberries.

Broccoli-cauliflower Salad

Salad:

- 3 crowns broccoli, chopped bite-size**
- 1 large head of cauliflower, chopped bite-size**
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped**
- 1 cup shredded cheddar or Jack cheese**
- 1 lb. bacon, cooked and crumbled**
- 1 can water chestnuts (optional)**

Dressing:

- 1/2 cup sugar (can substitute with Splenda)**
- 2 cups mayonnaise**
- 3 Tbsp. vinegar**

- 1.** For salad: Prepare ingredients as instructed; add to a large bowl.
- 2.** For dressing: In a small bowl, combine dressing ingredients. Pour dressing over salad. Toss until well blended.

Cilantro Rice

- 1/2 onion, chopped**
- 1 4-oz. can green chilies**
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic**
- 1 lime, juiced**
- 1/2 bunch cilantro, chopped**
- 3 cups water**
- 4 tsp. chicken bouillon granules**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- 1 Tbsp. butter, softened**
- 3 cups uncooked, instant rice**

- 1.** Blend first four ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth; add cilantro. Pulse until finely chopped into the mixture.
- 2.** Bring water to a boil in a saucepan. Stir cilantro mixture and remaining ingredients into the water. Return to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low and cover. Allow to simmer about 20 minutes, until rice absorbs liquid entirely.

Green Bean Bundles

- 3 cans whole green beans, drained**
- 1 lb. center cut bacon, slices cut in half**
- 1 cup butter, melted**
- 1 cup brown sugar**
- 1 tsp. soy sauce**
- 1 tsp. garlic salt**

- 1.** Gather 4-6 beans in a bunch and wrap with a half slice of bacon. Place in a 9x12-inch pan. Repeat process until all green beans are used.
- 2.** In a bowl, combine remaining ingredients and spoon mixture over green bean bundles. Marinate overnight in refrigerator.
- 3.** Remove pan from refrigerator; bake at 350 F for 40 minutes. Remove pan from oven; drain majority of marinade. Turn thermostat to broil. Return pan to oven until bacon is crisp.

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