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# EnnisNOW

M A G A Z I N E

September 2010



## A Year-round Racket

### ALSO INSIDE:

Sew Much Fun

Watching Her Garden Grow

Home Away From Home

## Going for Gold

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Bill and Nancy  
Dodson



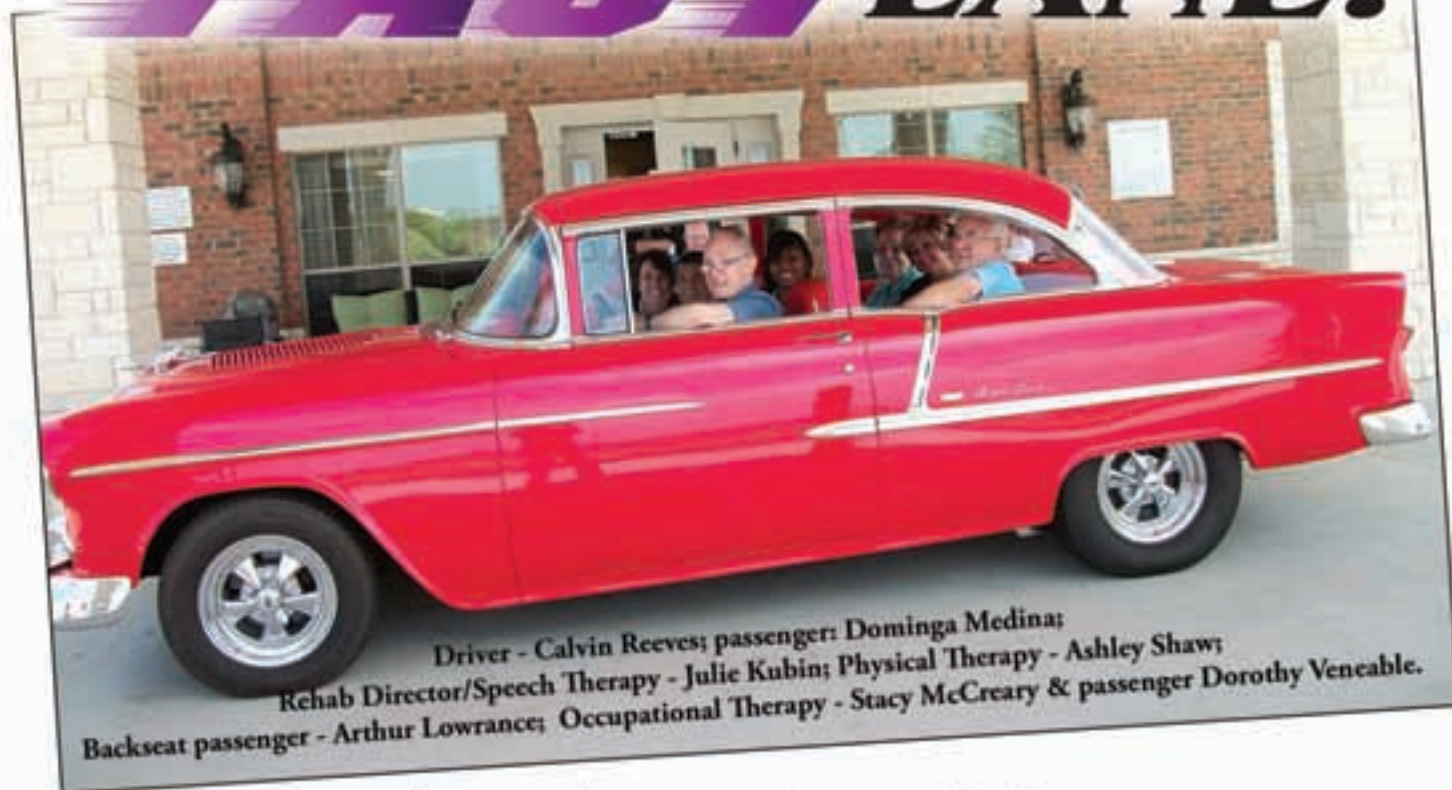
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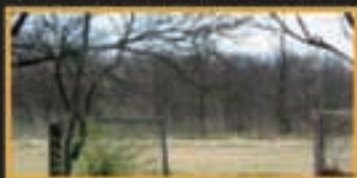
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Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50 per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates or editorial correspondence, call (972) 875-3299 or visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).



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## On The Cover

A lion statue in the home of Bill and Nancy Dodson looks ready to pounce.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

# Editor's Note

## *Sensational September!*

Autumn is lurking just around the corner. I can feel it in every fiber of my being. As I have mentioned before, I love the changing of the seasons, but fall is most definitely my favorite time of year. The leaves start turning several shades of orange, yellow and brown. I begin moving the summer clothes out of the closet to make room for my winter sweaters. Weekend sporting events change from baseball to football. It is a time of seasonal metamorphosis.

Another change on the horizon is my youngest son's marital status. Two days after autumn officially arrives on September 23, my son and his lovely bride will exchange wedding vows in an evening ceremony at Waxahachie Creek Park. As his family and I bid farewell to his childhood, he will be saying "I do" to a new chapter — a chapter he has been writing his whole life.

Sandra Strong  
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Senior Girl Scouts Justine Schmidt, Rose Arkusinski, Annie Scoggins, Helen Baumgartner and Rachel French have a heart for community service.

## GOING FOR GOLD — By Virginia Riddle

*Community service is the key component in every Senior Girl Scout's Gold Award project. By earning this coveted award, the five Senior Girl Scouts of Troop 1245 of Ennis have given back to their community and have shown personal and spiritual growth, a positive value system and excellent organizational and leadership skills. "I gained patience, leadership skills, courage to call complete strangers to ask for donations and learned how to work within a limited budget," Helen Baumgartner stated. "Each of these skills has made me a better, stronger person, and I can use each of them in whichever career I will have."*

When daughter, Justine Schmidt, joined Girl Scouts in third grade, her mother, Kristy Schmidt, became a registered troop mom "just to help out." By the girls' seventh-grade year, Kristy had become Troop Leader. Only about five percent of the Senior Scouts in the United States earn the Gold Award in any year. Kristy, the girls, and their families, as

well as mentors and volunteers can be really proud of their accomplishments, which parallel the more recognized and prestigious Eagle Scout Awards given in Boy Scouts. "I'm just as proud of the five wonderful sets of parents as I am of the girls; their brothers and sisters were even phenomenal," Kristy exclaimed. "They were all behind these girls."





# Meg Sullivan, M.D.

## Cardiology

*Dr. Sullivan graduated from the University of Texas Medical School in San Antonio and completed her residency in internal medicine and fellowship in cardiology at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. Dr. Sullivan practices general cardiology including outpatient stress testing, echocardiography, preoperative assessment, pacemaker evaluation and preventative cardiology. She is accepting new patients.*



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Joining Justine and Helen at troop meetings held at Starbucks on Saturdays are Rose Arkusinski, Rachel French and Annie Scoggins. The girls have come a long way since Justine and Rose first went to Camp Rocky Point. "The mosquitoes somehow ended up inside the netting instead of outside," Justine remembered. "We somehow ended up closer friends because of the bugs." The troop earned their Polar Bear Patch by camping in below-32-degree temperatures. Other activities have included rock climbing, sailing on Rockwall Lake, canoeing, ice skating and participating in cooking and interior design classes, as well as a car care seminar.

Along with earning the required patches throughout the years, two of the girls earned their Bronze Awards, and all five girls earned their Silver Awards while in junior high school by donating 32 backpacks to Buckner Baptist Children's Home (now known as Buckner Children's Home). The Scouts had learned that children sometimes arrive at the home without many personal items due to emergency removals by Child Protective Service social workers, so the girls went shopping and filled each backpack with



journals, school and personal hygiene supplies. To finance their project they asked for donations and organized fundraisers. Area dentists donated toothbrushes and other businesses, as well as private citizens, were generous. "They purposely picked things that they would want in *their* backpacks," Kristy said.

Extremely full schedules often make it difficult to plan all the activities. "All of them are very busy girls who are all-academic scholars; they all receive academic awards, too," Kristy stated. "The girls just bonded," Kristy added. That bond is also strong between the girls and their leader. Kristy said, "I wasn't going to stop until they did."

**"Each of these skills has made me a better, stronger person, and I can use each of them in whichever career I will have."**

The girls, however, placed a priority on scouting. "I stayed (in scouting) because I wanted to; it was good for me. I'm more of a lady, and I have a different perspective about the world. I wouldn't have met the people I [have] and [done] the things I [have]. I've learned to figure out what is important by helping someone else rather than using my 'me time' just for me," Justine replied. Looking at her mother, she added, "It's made you proud of me."

Gold Award projects take three years of training, planning, documentation and implementation. Girls are encouraged to select their projects based on an assessment of community needs, as well as a self-assessment of their interests and abilities. The four projects chosen incorporated skills and information the girls had learned in their interior design class. Rose and Annie remodeled The Boys and Girls Club to better focus on a positive reading and homework environment by painting and decorating the space. The community was invited to an open house promoting the use of the new study area. Rachel and her volunteers spent several months completely remodeling the Alliance of Faith United Methodist Church's kitchen after having removed everything to the bare walls. Paint, new appliances, cabinets, countertops and light fixtures were all

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obtained and installed. The Alliance of Faith United Methodist Church requested that Justine remodel their fellowship hall which involved heavy lifting and the installation of a chair rail. Justine and her volunteers started a movement, which has been continued by other organizations to help this church with other necessary projects. Helen remodeled the senior high youth room at the First Methodist Church of Ennis from a dull, outdated space to a clean and vibrant area designed to be more inviting to teens.

To pay for the extensive remodels, the girls organized fundraising events and solicited private and corporate donations. They organized the necessarily large work forces by mobilizing volunteers, created budgets and looked online for "free-if-you-haul" items. "It was just a lot of little things; I call them 'God-sends,'" Kristy noted. "One man overheard us talking about the projects, handed us an envelope and told us he had a 'passion for Scouts.' I opened it when we got home; it was full of money. I was amazed!"

Not all went well. Justine remembered a squirrel infestation and even found a dead, petrified squirrel staring at her. "I screamed and ran," she laughed nervously.

Kristy, in addition to the other parents and community adult mentors, helped the girls when the going "got tough."

"Mom pushed me at times even when I didn't want to get out of bed," Justine recalled.

The girls received their Gold Star pins during a ceremony hosted by the Dallas-based Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas Council at the Mesquite Convention Center. Another celebration followed at Don Jose's Restaurant. The girls have also received letters of commendation from national, state and local political figures. Soon these girls will be joining an impressive list of Girl Scout Alumnae who successfully apply skills learned in scouting to their lives: joyfully trying new things, setting and achieving goals, cooperatively working toward a common goal and volunteering their "me time" to their communities. As the girls of Troop 1245 make college and future career plans, they leave behind a golden legacy of community service and the achievement of long-range goals; but they will carry with them golden memories that will forever bond them together. **NOW**





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— By Virginia Riddle



## At Home With ——— BILL AND NANCY DODSON

*Lake breezes gently blow Bill and Nancy Dodson's American flag, flown proudly in the side yard of their lake and park side home. Joggers, bicyclists and neighbors walking dogs enjoy the beautifully landscaped, oversized corner lot of the couple's Colonial American-style home. "I've been blessed all my life. I had a great mom and dad who taught me a work ethic," Bill declared. "Hard work is good for you."*

Bill and Nancy knew each other during their days at Ennis High School, but had gone their separate ways following graduation. Years later, "both of us were free again; we met up and just started talking," Bill said. They got married 14 years ago, blending their six children while also searching for a new home. However, they could not find any other home or neighborhood in Ennis that fit them better than Nancy's home of 20 years. Having grown up on his family farm, Bill enjoyed the oversized lots in this Ennis neighborhood, and





Nancy enjoyed birthday dinners and get-togethers with long-time neighborhood friends. The Dodsons made the decision to stay and began remodeling her home.

Hard work and innovative ideas are evident throughout this two-story home. Every room has been redecorated. Bill and Nancy have done a great deal of the work themselves, while also depending on friend, Betty Glaspy, for ideas and furnishings. Nancy's collections and souvenirs picked up during the couple's travels to Italy, Honduras, Savannah,



Washington, D.C., Vail and New York City help to decorate each room.

The entry hall opens to the dining room and living area, both comfortably furnished with boxes, large and small, which Nancy has collected. You will find every size box decorating one of the largest "boxes," the coffee table. The dining room has lighted shelving, which provides a beautiful showcase for Nancy's Flow Blue English stoneware. The fireplace and a view of the garden, lake and flag complete the dining



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room. Antiques and Persian carpets on hardwood floors add a finishing touch to these rooms.

The kitchen features a unique, tile backsplash in soft green that complements the stained glass window insert. Nancy's son, Derek, created and installed the stainless steel sink and countertops. A lighted cabinet features more glass and pottery, while the largest "box," an antique English bread box, provides more storage.

A guest bath featuring another stained glass window is located just inside the back door, providing the perfect spot to freshen up after a visit to the backyard. Nancy pointed out, "Bill made the koi pond and laid the flagstone patio." The koi, having grown from four inches each into "whoppers," swim through the sparkling waterfall, its peaceful sounds drifting throughout the perennial gardens of esperanza, bachelor buttons, verbena and yellow trumpet vine. Crown-of-

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**“The dining room has lighted shelving, which provides a beautiful showcase for Nancy’s Flow Blue English stoneware.”**

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thorns plants from Bill's mother's gardens at the family farm hold a special place in the yard. Bill created the decorative fencing and a dog run for the family dogs.

Several times a year, the couple hosts friends for steaks and hamburgers in their backyard Eden. "Having friends over for cookouts and being outside is great fun!" Bill said.

Nancy's collection of flower frogs on the upstairs landing greets the couple as they retire to the respite of their tranquil master bedroom and bath. Family photographs and Nancy's needlepoint line the hallway walls. Fresh paint and added crown molding offer a soft background to Nancy's childhood side saddle, and paintings are featured along with Honduran objects d'art. A colorful Indonesian exterior fireplace screen became the bed's headboard.

The guest bath was Nancy's project.



The Dodson's family pet Millie makes herself comfortable.

She creatively used paint and wheat straw from their farm to create a 3-D wall pattern. The couple again worked together on the innovative walls in the two guest bedrooms. Butcher paper and crown molding were added to one bedroom. "The money was nothing, the effort was everything," Bill remembered. Yarns from Nancy's needlepoint projects are hung artfully to provide a headboard for this room. The other guest bedroom was painted by the couple in 12-inch stripes of green and white. Nancy's



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"Nancy's collections and souvenirs picked up during the couple's travels to Italy, Honduras, Savannah, Washington, D.C., Vail and New York City help to decorate each room."

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collection of Madame Alexander dolls resides over an antique English doll house. Bill fashioned a headboard from a gate built in 1881, and the decor was completed with quilts Nancy has made for each of the six, soon to be seven, grandchildren.

During the holiday season, a collection of nutcrackers resides in Christmas trees,

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and Nancy's needlepoint stockings decorate the home. Bill and Nancy gather the family together on other special dates: the 4th of July, Labor Day and Thanksgiving. Bill's mother, children and grandchildren reside on the family farm, where all the grandchildren love to gather for fun in the country. "We like living in a small-town, farming atmosphere but still so close to Dallas," Bill noted.

Nancy, who spent three weeks in Honduras using her dental hygienist skills following her graduation, is employed several days a week with area dentists. She finds time to volunteer with Meals on Wheels and serves as a board member of the Ennis Public Theatre. In her spare time, she enjoys playing tennis, working





in the yard, needlepoint, quilting and adding to her collections. "Family and friends always know what to give me," she noted.

After attending Navarro College and Dallas Baptist University, Bill worked 30 years for Saint-Gobain Containers. For four months after retirement he found himself back on the family farm. However, "talking to cows every day didn't really work" well for this self-professed "people

person." After having previously gotten his political feet wet serving nine years as an Ennis ISD Board of Trustee member, Bill made a successful run for Precinct Two Ellis County Commissioner's office. This fourth-generation Ellis County resident finds being a county commissioner very challenging and rewarding. "It gives you a good feeling to help people," Bill said. He still finds time to be an active member of the Lions Club and volunteers with the SPCA. In his spare time, Bill still enjoys communing with his cows, hunting pheasant and quail with his bird dogs and fishing.

Bill and Nancy's American flag will always fly by this innovatively designed home. "We are so blessed to be Americans," Bill noted. "I started out



as an hourly wage worker, rose to manager and got to travel the world. We have so much in America and can have so much more with hard work." Bill and Nancy's home is the product of hard work and fresh ideas making it a true American masterpiece. **NOW**

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*Darlene McCorvey and Mary Blackmon volunteer to organize clothing donations for Give a Kid a Chance.*



*Lisa Whiteside, Abby McGuire and Martina Johnson show off their summer dresses.*



*Baylor Haden eats a cupcake at a recent wedding shower.*



*Astin Codi Donet falls asleep while on an outing with her mom.*



*EISD school board president, Mac Boyd cuts the ribbon at the grand opening of the new Jack Lummus Intermediate School.*



*Michelle Spicer gets ready to enjoy a frosty Spiderman treat.*



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At left: Deana and her niece Kailey McMahan

Deana Betik loves to sew. She does things her own way and does the kind of sewing she likes. “I don’t use patterns; they drive me crazy. And I’m not a seamstress; I don’t enjoy hemming pants.”

Deana started sewing back in high school when she took a sewing class. “It was the only class in high school I failed,” she laughed. Her final project, a dress, did not turn out so well. The size was so off that the friend she made it for was not able to use it until she needed a maternity dress. But that inauspicious beginning did not deter Deana. When she moved to Ennis, she and her cousin, Kelly, both stay-at-home moms, started making shirts, sweats, bows and decor for their homes.

Deana started making curtains out of sheet sets and then

# Sew MUCH FUN

— By Adam Walker



From left to right: Joann Stekes, Deana Betik, Jean McDonald (Deana’s mom), and Patsy Brewer — aka the Pink Ladies.

decided she wanted some Roman shades — a project a bit more complex than she had previously tackled. So she asked a friend to sew them for her. Deana remembered, “She told me, ‘I know you can do this, so I’m going to charge you a lot of money.’ She was sure I could do it and challenged me to make them myself, so I started making Roman shades.” People admired Deana’s work and started asking her to make curtains for their homes.

Kelly gave Deana her first Brother sewing machine, which she had won selling Tupperware. When that machine eventually died, her sister offered to replace it if Deana would make curtains for her. “I knew how much sewing machines cost and how much it would take to make the curtains,” Deana admitted. “I know a good deal when I hear it!”

Soon Deana found herself making lots of curtains and shades, redecorating the houses of friends and the houses of people who became her friends after they hired her. But after 20 years of making curtains, Deana decided it was old hat. “I don’t like to do the same thing over and over again. That’s why I got burnt out on curtains,” Deana confessed she gets bored easily and likes doing different things, so now she focuses on projects which allow her more creative play.

She spends a lot of her time designing custom T-shirts. “People bring me their designs and ask, ‘Can you do this?’ and I say, ‘Sure!’ or they just bring me a vague idea — they want a T-shirt for their group or something for an event — and I embellish.”



## Arts **NOW**

She loves a challenge. "Tell me I can't do it, and I'll do it 10 times better than you think. Don't tell me I can't, 'cause I will!"

You may already have seen some of her creative designs being worn around Ennis, especially if you know any educators or librarians. She made T-shirts for field day at Crockett, which feature the word Lions and a big paw print. She also made the zoo-day shirts for the Crockett teachers. Any kindergarten teachers you know may be sporting her Fanny Frog creations. At the public library, you may encounter her red, white and blue I ♥ Reading shirts.

Another place you may have seen her work is on high school students with whom her custom-made, spirit shirts are popular. She has made shirts for the Crockett Lions, the Forney Falcons, Scurry Wildcats and for colleges as well. For the costume ball this year, she got her first order for a guy's T-shirt when one of her cousins asked her to make one for him. Somewhat tired of the whole Team Edward/Team Jacob debate raging among female fans of Stephanie Meyer's popular vampire novels, "Byron brought me a black V-neck T-shirt and asked me to make him a 'Team Myself' shirt. I was shocked, but he said it had to be sparkly,"

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which is, of course, only fitting when mocking sparkly vampires.

She has also made shirts, for mother/daughter dress-alikes, her mother's group of church "sisters" shirts, on which the T in sisters became a cross, a "Sen10rs" T-shirt for a girl who wanted to commemorate graduating this year, and many other creative projects. She has outfitted groups for cancer walks, birthdays and Zumba classes. But she does not stop with T-shirts.



Kyndal McMahan, Deana's niece, models one of Deana's fashionable creations.



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When one of her cousins wanted to make some burp rags for her niece's baby shower, she and Deana stayed up till 3:00 a.m., producing 24 designs. The burp rags were a hit and since the shower, Deana has been getting more and more requests from mothers-to-be and their friends.

Deana will make anything someone asks for — hair bows for polka festivals, baby headbands, accessorized flip-flops, bridesmaid's purses, ring bearer's pillows and backpacks. But even larger projects are not outside her scope — things like prom decorations, or her daughter's dorm room, which won a prize and was used to impress prospective students. All this ensures that Deana stays busy, while the creativity and care she puts into her work make sure people keep asking for more. Keep an eye out. The next time you spy a cool, creative T-shirt, it just might be one of Deana's creations.



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DR. KELLY WALKER earned her Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine from Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine. She completed a Podiatric Orthopedic Residency at the VA Medical Center in Massachusetts. Next, she completed a Podiatric Surgical Residency at the HealthSouth Surgery Center of Mesquite. She has since been in practice in Oklahoma City and Dallas. She has relocated to Ennis to open her own private practice.



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Top Row (L to R): Keith Howard (coach), John Marlin, Joel Watson, Jesse Collins, Cole Woody, Eris Rivera, Wyatt Johnson. Middle Row (L to R): Brooks Graham, Michael Nicklas, Trent Graham, Alex Fry, Chris Shorrock, Evan Fry, Christian Durbin. Bottom Row (L to R): Molly Slovacek, Allison Skuza, Karri Kirkpatrick, Britney Sibley, Marisela Almanza, Vanessa Almanza, Courtney Polson, Valeria Garza. Not pictured: Casey Crow and Bele Nelson.

# A Year-round Racket

— By Janice C. Johnson



Left to right: Valeria Garza, Keith Howard and Marisela Almanza

“Tennis is what drew us together,” Marisela “Mari” Almanza said, smiling at her teammate Valeria Garza. The two knew each other only slightly in elementary school, but when they reached seventh grade, both went out for tennis at Ennis Junior High School. The girls are now doubles partners on the court and close friends off of it. This year, they are also the only two seniors on the Ennis High School Lions tennis team.

High school athletics can be pretty demanding, and tennis is no exception. The season starts with two-a-day practices in August, two weeks before school opens. Then in the fall, the players compete for their school as a team. Each competition, held between two schools, consists of girls’ and boys’ singles; girls’ and boys’ doubles; and mixed doubles — a total of 19 matches. A match win gains one point for the school; and the first school to score 10 points wins. The teams compete for state championship through district and regional playoffs,



## Sports**NOW**

much as in football and other University Interscholastic League (UIL) sports.

In spring, players vie for district, regional and state championships again — this time as individuals or in doubles pairs. Afternoon practices continue until the end of the school year. Starting in June, players attend “Breakfast Club.” Not nearly as appetizing as it sounds, this “Club” consists of one early-morning and one afternoon practice session, five days a week for a month. When the month of two-a-days is completed, the students have just a few weeks’ break before the whole process starts over again in August.

All that effort is paying off: the Ennis Lions are the 2010-11 District 16 favorites. The girls attribute much of this success to the Lions’ unity and teamwork. The players spend time together and have become very close. For each competition, Coach Keith Howard chooses the current top players to represent the team. But that choice is sometimes difficult. Because the close-knit teammates help each other build their skills, the whole level of play is high. “There’s not much difference [in ability] between players,” Valeria said. Marisela added, “The girls have all improved.”

Part of the credit for the players’ skill level also goes to the coach. Both talking at once, the girls described Coach Howard as:

“Tough at times.”

“Really serious.”

“Outspoken.”

“He’s really good — he teaches a lot.”

A long-time veteran of Ennis ISD, Coach Howard frequently tells stories on himself, sometimes to illustrate how to handle a situation. But he does not hesitate to use himself as a negative example either, to warn about what not to do. He and his team obviously respect each other. Valeria said, “When he has us do a tough drill, like a four-mile run, he does it with us.” Coach Howard even joined his team for a full mile of walking lunges — a thigh-burning exercise which, Valeria emphasized, “took forever” to complete.

As dedicated and hard-working as the athletes are, circumstances sometimes fall into place favorably, too. Valeria

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## Sports **NOW**

noted that the UIL realignment of districts for 2010-11 boosts Ennis' prospects. "For one thing, we lost Waco Midway [as an opponent] — they always seem to beat us," she said. In fact, the only two schools staying on with Ennis in District 16 are Waxahachie and Corsicana, and both girls "expect to finally beat Corsicana."

Lions tennis is beginning to get more attention locally than in the past. For one thing, the program built a good deal of momentum last year. Valeria also mentioned the new practice courts, recently opened at the high school, are making a difference. Before, team members raced over to the Lone Star Athletic Center for every practice. Now that they can also practice at the school, students more often see the team practicing and stay around to watch. The team even has a mascot of sorts: Samson, Coach Howard's American Bulldog. The large, friendly dog often accompanies the coach to the Lone Star Athletic Center when the team practices there.

The team members hardly ever seem to put their racquets down, playing and practicing through Texas' hot summers and unpredictable winters. What motivates a teenager to put out that sort of effort? There are likely as many answers as there are athletes. As for Marisela, she said her uncle got her started with tennis, teaching her to play as a child. She liked it and wanted to stay with it as she grew older. Mari wants to play in college, at least for a couple of years.

Valeria had played other sports, and finds she especially likes the challenge that tennis presents. She, too, wants to play in college. She is interested in the University of Oklahoma, "but they have a really strong tennis program. I doubt I could even make the team there." She would happily accept a tennis scholarship from an in-state university.

You might wonder whether all those workouts, practices and competitions leave enough time for schoolwork. Rest assured; both girls are making good grades. Mari said that tennis has actually improved her grades. Whenever she has been tempted to slack off, she claims, "That 'no pass-no play' rule is a motivator." **NOW**



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# Home Away *From Home*

*They become our family, and we become their family. — By Sandra Strong*

Talk to anyone at Claystone Healthcare Center and you will more than likely hear the same story. “I come to work here every day,” Assistant Director of Nursing (ADON) Suzanne Wright said, “but it feels like my second home.” She and her husband, Ricci, who serves as the maintenance supervisor, have been with Claystone for several years. “This is my second time to work for Claystone,” Suzanne added with a smile. “We’ve made our careers a family affair.”

Suzanne held a supervisory role her first time around. After being away for a couple of years, she felt a yearning to return. But the second time, she came

back as a nurse. “I spent seven months working the floor,” she explained. “The ADON quit, and I was asked to take her place. I took the job for Claystone and the residents.”

Under the new leadership of Administrator Georgiana Roller and Director of Nursing (DON) Mary Brown, Suzanne seems to be flourishing right along with the residents she serves. As all three look to the future, they have the residents’ best interests at heart. They will continue to offer quality, long-term care, as well as short-term care for those individuals who, once rehabilitated, will return to their own homes. “We have

**From left:**

Mary Brown, RN - Director of Nursing  
Suzanne Wright, LVN - ADON (Asst. Dir. of Nursing)  
Ricci Wright - Maintenance Supervisor  
Theodora Brown - Medical Records Director  
Cheryl Fowler - Business Office Manager;  
Georgiana Roller - Administrator

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## Business **NOW**

come a long way since November,” Mary added, of the strides the center has taken to remain successful.

Claystone Healthcare Center was built 40 years ago to serve individuals in Ennis and the surrounding communities. Like any business, it has experienced many ups and downs throughout the years. “I talked to the man who built the building recently,” Suzanne stated. “He came in to visit and was amazed at his work.”

The Center also boasts of residents who originally came to Claystone years ago as volunteers. “Now, they are residents here,” Georgiana said. “We just had a lady leave who first came to Claystone as a volunteer. She moved to Plano with her family.” Yes, these moves are tough for everyone involved, but the joy is realizing she got to go home and be closer to her family. “They quickly become our family,” Suzanne said, “and we become their family. It’s bittersweet to see them go, but it’s wonderful at the same time.”

Employees play a major role in the happiness and wellness of the 34-plus residents, ranging in age from 48-100, who currently call Claystone Healthcare Center home. Qualities employees must possess include patience, understanding and compassion. One such employee is Theodora Brown, who has been with Claystone for the past 27 years. “The residents are dear to me,” Theodora said. “They are like my family, and this too, is my home away from home.”

Along with the weekly scheduled activities, Mary and Suzanne have also been able to incorporate an individualized weight-loss program for two ladies who came to Claystone from other areas of Texas. “Their goal is to return to their homes,” Suzanne said. “They want to have bypass surgery.” The main goal in the weight-loss program is basically the same goal echoed throughout the center — teaching them to not be discouraged. “It’s all about giving them verbal encouragement,” Suzanne said, “regardless of what they’re doing.”

Georgiana, Mary and Suzanne choose to be at Claystone Healthcare Center. “It’s a heart decision,” Suzanne confessed for all three. “This is home to us, and other jobs can’t compare.” **NOW**



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Pat Emsley, right, poses with one of her former students, Caren Lawrence (1986). Caren is now a fifth-grade teacher at Dorie Miller Intermediate School.

Some people plant seeds in their backyard gardens. They get excited watching their gardens grow. Pat Emsley is a seed planter of a different kind. She has been planting educational seeds within the community's youngest citizens for the past 39 years. "God gave me a passion for small children at a young age," Pat said.

Pat's career as an educator may have reached its pinnacle at Baylor Baptist Church when she celebrated her retirement, but her love for teaching began when she herself was in high school. "I started teaching vacation Bible school when I was in the ninth grade," she remembered. "After Don and I married, I served as the children's coordinator at our past church in Irving. Once Don and I became members of Baylor, our involvement within our new church home was immediate."

So it came as no surprise when J.W. Parker, chairman of the kindergarten committee at Baylor Baptist Church, asked her to substitute teach in the kindergarten program. She wasted little time thinking about it before saying, "Yes."

"Within a week," she said, "he asked me to be a teacher." The year was 1970. This is when Pat's journey as a seed planter first began. "I never regretted a single minute of it," she admitted. "I told God that if I ever got up and didn't want to go to school, that would be the day I needed to go do something different. I'm proud to say I retired never having this feeling. I always wanted to be there for the children."

In the early years, Baylor Baptist only offered one kindergarten class per day. Changes did not take place until the state added

# Watching Her Garden Grow — By Sandra Strong

kindergarten to the public school system. At that time, Baylor made a change of it is own. "I can't recall the exact year, but when kindergarten was included in the public school, we began offering pre-kindergarten classes to 4- and 5-year-olds," Pat explained. "We taught one class per day until the late '80s, when the need allowed us to offer two classes per day."

Five years into her service at Baylor, Pat found herself adding to her role as teacher. She became the full-time acting director of the program, too. Up until this time, the kindergarten committee had been handling the decisions. Pat was eased into

the position, which she held faithfully until her retirement this past May. This promotion served the program well when it came time to be licensed with the state. "To be a credible program, we had to be licensed with the state," she said. "To be licensed, the program had to have an acting director."

The program received its state licensing credentials in 1977. In 1993,



Pat diligently worked at getting the school accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children. They remained accredited until 2008. "Prices went up," she said, "so we dropped it." What once prompted two classes and a three-year waiting list had changed. Enrollment had taken a huge hit, so in its final year, Baylor's pre-K program regressed, once again only offering one class per day. "We had always worked in tandem with the Ennis school district," she said. "As Ennis grew, more choices became available. Choices mean change."

In January of 2010, a meeting was held and the main topic of conversation was the future of the pre-K program. "I was planning to retire at the end of the school year," Pat said.



## Education **NOW**

"Because of low enrollment and the status of the economy, the committee decided and the church voted that it was the right time to discontinue the per-K program. It was discontinued on a positive note."

Although the ending has been bittersweet, Pat was able to come away with so many wonderful memories, including two generations of students, fellow teachers and aides, church staff members and the pre-K committee. "I didn't want to teach unless it was a direct ministry of the church. I didn't want to just teach the children, I wanted the program to minister to the families, too. It was God's leadership from day one," she stated. "The program was so successful because I had great support from so many. And I could not have done it without all the positive parent involvement. It was such a wonderful experience. I wouldn't change a thing."



Once classes were concluded in May, a retirement celebration was held. The community gathered to express their gratitude for Pat's years of service. Tears flowed as she was presented with a beautiful, heart-shaped pendant necklace; a gift she will cherish forever. Two rows of diamonds encircling a center heart prompted some heartfelt, yet honest, words from Brother Johnny Mansell, longtime pastor of Baylor Baptist Church. "The diamonds represent all the hearts Pat has touched in her 39 years as a teacher."

Pat not only touched hearts, she planted hundreds upon hundreds of seeds. The beauty of planting is being able to watch what you have instilled in others grow. She will continue watching from the sidelines, of that you can be sure. **NOW**

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# Who's Cooking **NOW**

## In The Kitchen With Jeanne Graham

— By Faith Browning

Jeanne Graham is the proud parent of two grown children, Tiffani and Robert. As they were growing up, Jeanne developed a creative cooking talent. "I have always enjoyed baking, especially when my children were young. That was when I began to bake," she explained. "My fondest memories are baking birthday cakes for my children and drawing their favorite characters in the icing."

Jeanne also expresses her creative talent in two other hobbies: drawing and painting, but cooking for others is where she finds great joy. "I like baking best, but I do not do fancy pastries," she said. "I do find recipes in magazines from time to time, but my favorite recipes are handed down in the family." **NOW**



### CHICKEN SALAD

2 ripe avocados, cut and coated with lemon juice  
2 cups cooked rice  
3 cooked chicken breasts, chopped  
3/4 cup celery, chopped  
3/4 cup green onion, chopped  
1 tsp. salt  
1 cup green grapes, halved  
Equal parts Miracle Whip® and sour cream, to taste

1. Mix together; chill.

### CHICKEN SPAGHETTI

1 chicken, cooked and deboned  
1 pkg. spaghetti, break 3 times  
1/2 onion, chopped  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
1 can sliced mushrooms, drained  
1 can sliced black olives, drained

1 can cream of chicken soup  
1 can cream of mushroom soup  
1/2 cup milk  
1 lb. grated cheddar cheese

1. Mix all together. Put half in greased 9 x 13-inch casserole dish. Top with half of the cheese. Put remaining spaghetti on top and top with remaining cheese.  
2. Bake at 350 F for 30 to 35 minutes.

### SKILLET DINNER

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef  
1 tsp. garlic  
1/2 cup chopped onion  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
1/2 cup chopped green pepper  
1 tsp. salt  
1/2 to 1 cup water  
1 pkg. macaroni  
1 12-oz. can chopped tomatoes  
1 to 2 cups grated cheese

1. Cook meat and the next six ingredients together until water is almost gone.  
2. While meat mixture is cooking, prepare macaroni per directions on package.  
3. Stir tomatoes into meat mixture. Drain macaroni and add to meat mixture. Top with cheese and heat until cheese is melted.

### PINEAPPLE PIE

2 piecrusts  
1 16-oz. can crushed pineapple  
1 Tbsp. flour  
1 Tbsp. butter, melted  
1/2 cup sugar

1. Place 1 piecrust in bottom of a 9-inch pie plate. In a small bowl, mix pineapple, flour, melted butter and sugar. Pour into unbaked piecrust.

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2. Top with remaining crust and bake at 350 F for 30 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

#### CRANBERRY SALAD

1 pkg. cranberries, ground  
2 cups sugar  
1 can crushed pineapple  
1/2 pint whipping cream, whipped  
1 cup pecans

1. Mix first 3 ingredients together; refrigerate overnight.  
2. Fold in whipped cream and pecans when ready to serve.

#### DEWBERRY COBBLER

1/2 gal. fresh dewberries, washed  
1/2 stick butter  
2 cups sugar  
1 piecrust  
2 Tbsp. milk

1. Bring berries, sugar and butter to a boil and cook until slightly thick. Pour into a 9 x13-inch pan. Top with piecrust, brush with milk and sprinkle with sugar.  
2. Bake at 350 F until crust is golden brown. Serve with ice cream.

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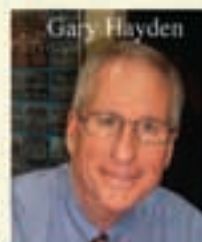
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# For Men Only

— By Betty Tryon, R.N.

There was a time when men rarely thought about their prostate. That was before the advent of the seemingly never-ending parade of commercials promoting various drug treatments for prostate ills. With the increased focus on the prostate today, men are more aware of the risks associated with this gland. The prostate is part of the male reproductive system. Located in front of the rectum and below the bladder, it makes a slightly alkaline fluid that is the liquid part of semen. This fluid protects sperm cells in semen and aids in the motility of sperm. Although a gland, the prostate is also a muscular organ, which helps propel semen through the penis.

The anatomy of the prostate lends itself to possible problems as a man ages. Part of the structure of this organ is the urethra, which is the tube that transports urine and semen. The prostate gland grows until a man reaches adulthood, but often the inner part of the organ that surrounds the urethra, continues to grow. This can set up the beginning of a condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), which is an enlarged prostate.

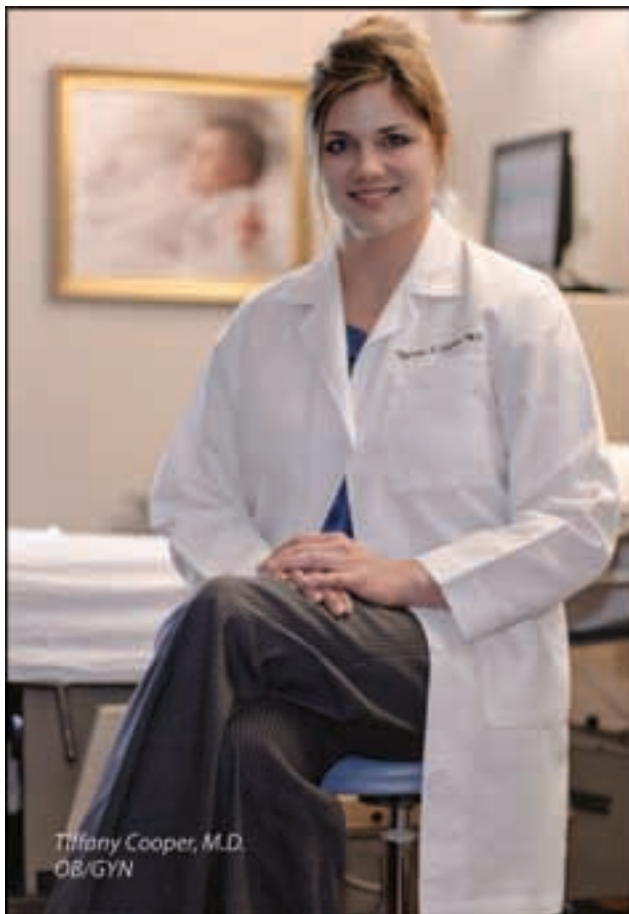
In BPH, the surrounding tissue presses on the urethra, which can cause difficulty in urination. On average, this issue does not occur until after the age of 50 and over in most men. Other than difficulty in passing urine, some additional problems associated with this condition are frequent urination, sensation of the

bladder not being emptying after urination, stopping and starting repeatedly during urination, dribbling urine and a frequent need to get up at night to urinate. Anyone with these symptoms should see their doctor.

When visiting the physician for a yearly physical or investigation of a complaint involving the prostate, a digital rectal exam is performed. The physician looks for lumps, tenderness and other abnormalities. Another part of the examination, the Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test, also aids in screening for possible prostate cancer. The PSA is a protein found in the prostate cells. It is normal for all men to have low levels of PSA. A higher number does not automatically lend itself to prostate cancer. It may be cause for concern in that you may be at higher risk for the disease. Your health care provider can weigh all of the factors and determine what level is normal for you. They can also recommend when screening is appropriate for you and if further tests or treatment are warranted. PSA is a great screening tool, but it is only the beginning, after that, comes the rest of the story. **NOW**

*This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.*





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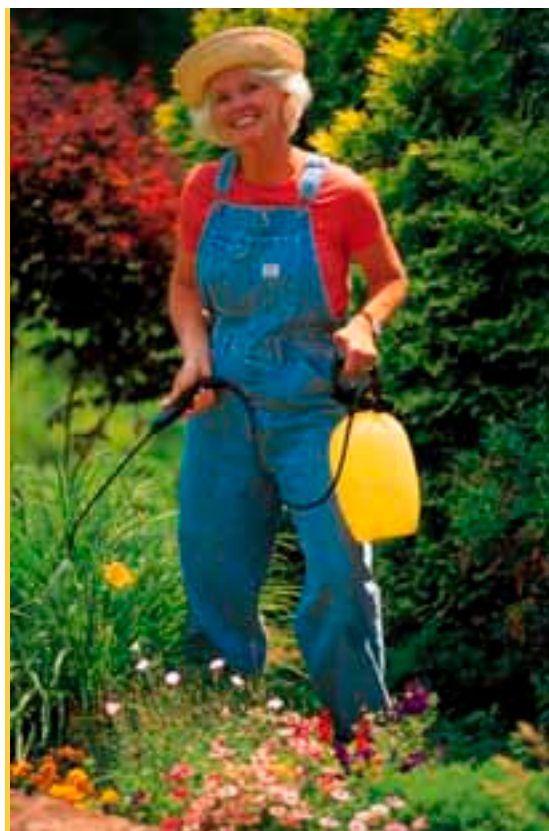
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# THE TIME IS NEAR!

— By Nancy Fenton

September is here, and it is time to think about fall fertilizers for lawns. Sometime around the end of September, the evening temperatures cool down to 50 degrees or below. That is the time to get out the spreader! Another great indicator that it is time to fertilize your lawn is when you do not need to mow for two weeks or so. It is important to fertilize the lawn in the fall to prolong fall color and increase winter hardiness. Also proper fertilizer helps maintain a dense turf that resists winter weeds.

Our alkaline soils have lots of their own phosphorous, so Texas A&M suggests fall fertilizers should be high in nitrogen (the first number) and very low in phosphorous (the last or third number). Usually the amount to be applied is one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn. Most bags of fertilizer will tell you how much the bag will cover. Organic or chemical makes no difference as long as the numbers are the same.

Watering the lawn is the icing on the cake because it activates the fertilizer. Spray and soak will give you the best results, with the fertilizer going to the roots rather than running into our streams and lakes. This consists of several short periods of watering (the lawn, of course, not the street or drive) relatively close together, so the water soaks into the ground, rather than one long period when it runs off.

If you have more questions about lawns, call the Texas AgriLife Extension at (972) 825-5175. **NOW**

*Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener.*

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# Fall AUCTION

**Saturday, September 25th @ 8:30am**

Registration begins at 7:45am. Auction item lists available for pick up Thursday, Sept. 23rd

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# Happening **NOW**

## Every Wednesday

GriefShare: recovery seminar and support group: 6:15 p.m., Palmer Christian Child Care and Day School, 510 S. Dallas Street, Palmer. Call Vivian Saladino at (214) 802-2256 or e-mail [griefshare@fbcpalmer.com](mailto:griefshare@fbcpalmer.com).

## Third Monday

Ellis County Aggie Moms meeting: 7:00 p.m., Waxahachie First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin, Waxahachie. Visit [www.elliscountyyaggiemoms.org](http://www.elliscountyyaggiemoms.org).

## Third Tuesday

Skyblazers of Waxahachie R/C Club: 7:30 p.m., Parks and Recreation Building in downtown Waxahachie.

## First and Third Tuesday

Ennis Cancer Support Group: 7:00 p.m., Ennis Regional Medical Center classroom. Call Kathy at (972) 878-6927 or visit [www.enniscancersupport.com](http://www.enniscancersupport.com).

## First and Third Thursday

Mom's Connected: 9:30-11:30 a.m., Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1200 Country Club Rd., Ennis. Free fellowship for moms of all ages. Contact [ennismoms@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ennismoms@sbcglobal.net).

## Fourth Monday

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Avenue, Waxahachie. The September program is "Brown Bag."

## September 4

Fight for Faith Wrestling Benefit: 7:00 p.m., Palmer Assembly of God Church. Contact Paul Ingram at (817) 637-5372.

## September 10

After Hours Improv: Dance Hall Night: 8:00-11:00 p.m., at the Historic Rogers Hotel, 100 N. College Street, Waxahachie. Adults: \$10; children: \$5. Call (972) 937-9839 or visit [www.AfterHoursImprov.com](http://www.AfterHoursImprov.com).

## September 11

4th Annual Black Belt Academy Invitational Tournament: 10:30 a.m., Ennis High School, 1405 Lake Bardwell Drive. Pre-registration is required. Ages 5 and older may compete. Spectator fee: adults \$7; children 5 years and under, \$5. Contact Master Jackie Self at (972) 875-1015 or visit [ebba@ectisp.net](mailto:ebba@ectisp.net) or [www.ennisblackbelt.com](http://www.ennisblackbelt.com).

## September 11-12

Trade Days of Waxahachie: Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Sunday: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Ellis County Expo Center, 2300 W. U.S. Hwy. 287, Waxahachie. Free parking and admission. Visit [www.tradedaysofwaxahachie.com](http://www.tradedaysofwaxahachie.com) or call Les Clemons at (972) 617-8156, James Scott at (214) 202-1788 or Jean Davis at (972) 816-3644.



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## Happening **NOW**

### September 16-18

Ennis Public Library Book Sale: Preview Day September 16: 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Members: free; \$5 for non-members. Book Sale: September 17, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. and September 18, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., in the community room at 501 W. Ennis Avenue. Event is hosted by Friends of the Ennis Public Library.

### September 17

After Hours Improv: Improv Comedy: 8:00 p.m. at the Historic Rogers Hotel at 100 N. College Street, Waxahachie. Adults: \$10; \$5 for children, unless otherwise noted. Benefits Portion for Orphans. Call (972) 937-9839 or visit [www.AfterHoursImprov.com](http://www.AfterHoursImprov.com).

### September 18-19

St. John Catholic Church Bazaar: For more information, contact the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce office at (972) 878-4748.

### September 23

18th Annual Taste of Ennis: Knights of Columbus Hall. All proceeds go to benefit Helping Hands of Ennis. Contact Judi Hejny at (972) 875-0218.

### September 25

Telico Volunteer Fire Department 25th Annual BBQ and Barn Dance: 4:00 p.m., SPJST Hall, East Highway 34 in Ennis. Event includes BBQ dinner, live and silent auctions, a raffle, crafts, games for the children and a live band for dancing. All proceeds benefit the Telico Volunteer Fire Department, which is funded by donations, grants and the money raised during this yearly event. Call Chief Van Fowler at (972) 878-2083.

Bristol Opry Country Music Show: 7:00 p.m., Old Bristol Schoolhouse, 100 Church Street, Bristol. Free admission. Donations are accepted. The event is presented by the Bristol Cemetery Association and Caring Hands of Bristol. For more information or to be a sponsor, contact Jim Gatlin at (972) 846-2211, Randall Willis at (972) 666-2151 or Roland Jones at (972) 666-2273.

PitPops: Doors open: 7:00 p.m.; performance: 8:00 p.m., Ellis County Expo Center. Jodie Dean will serve as the master of ceremonies. This event celebrates the 10th anniversary of Habitat for Humanity of Ellis County. Admission is \$25 and includes a loaded baked potato.

### October 16

9th Annual Autumn Days in Ennis fall festival: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. Event is hosted by the Ennis Historic Downtown Merchants Association. Contact (972) 878-4748 or visit [www.visitennis.org](http://www.visitennis.org).

**For more community events,  
visit our online calendar at  
[www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).**





## "My husband and I were planning to start a family..."

My grandmother was a patient at Ennis Regional in 2008. She went on and on about the wonderful staff and excellent service.

Dr. Kingsley is absolutely wonderful. He is very caring and patient with my many questions, whether I am seeing him for my yearly exam or during my pregnancy."

Jonathan, Dusty & Brazos Kunkel  
[16 weeks old]  
Wortham, TX

## "My experience..."

The entire staff couldn't have been better. I just felt so at home at Ennis Regional – like family really. My nurse Jill made me feel so comfortable and really gave me a sense of peace. Our room was very quiet which was nice for the three of us to bond together as a family. Couldn't have been better; I will never forget it.

At my six week checkup, I even joked with Dr. Kingsley that I needed to hurry up and have another one. His response, "I am not going anywhere; I am going to be here for a long time."



Ennis Regional Medical Center is PROUD to offer a friendly and professional birthing center not just for the people of Ennis but all of our Ellis County and neighboring families. As we did with Jonathan, Dusty and little baby Brazos, we take immense pride in showering our mothers and babies with the care and attention they deserve. Please come visit us for our weekly child birth education classes or tour our spacious delivery rooms.

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