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EnnisNOW

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SEPTEMBER 2011

MENU

MADNESS

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The Lights of Ennis is a Non-Profit, 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization committed to enhancing the Quality of Life for every Ennis citizen. The proceeds from this fundraiser have enabled the Historic Downtown buildings and trees in Pierce Park, on Main Street and Ennis Avenue to be illuminated throughout the Holiday Season. In this, our twelfth year, we remain committed to our Historic Downtown, to attracting commerce, to lifting spirits, and to helping our community shine brightly for all to enjoy.

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On The Cover



Gary and Joe Ben Macalik are proud Ennis Lions fans.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Oh Happy Day!

Are you one of those people who watch commercials? My home becomes a commercial almost every Thursday night. I call it "family night," but I think my kids refer to it as "free-meal" night. But, I don't care. It's the one night I can count on everyone being together for the evening.

Once our tummies are full, we'll watch a movie or play a game. Just recently we chose Monopoly, and my youngest son sent everyone to the poor house. It was only after we were left "penniless and without property" that we decided to read the instructions. We've requested a rematch.

Just lately, Thursday night conversation has been centered on a very special baby – a grandson that's due to arrive in late November. As my daughter-in-law struggles to make a decision about bedding, I daydream of how wonderful it's going to feel to hold him for the first time. Wow, that could make for another really good commercial!



Sandra

Sandra Strong
EnnisNOW Editor
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MENU MADNESS

— By Sandra Strong

What started as a dare in the fall of 1999 quickly turned into something Ennis Lions fans look forward to year after year. Gary Macalik and his dad, Joe Ben, found a unique way to support the Ennis Lions during football season. They don't use poster board and crepe paper streamers to cheer their team to victory. Their special mode of spirit takes a parking spot at the H-E-B grocery store, a back windshield, some white shoe polish and a menu fit for a den of hungry lions. "I can't really remember exactly how it all began, but someone dared us to write something on the car window," Gary said with a smile, "We had so much feedback from people that first year that we continue what has become somewhat of a tradition here in E-town."

With all this school spirit, you might think Gary, and Joe Ben for that matter, had a long history of their own playing football for the Ennis Lions. That would be an untrue assumption. Joe Ben never played, and Gary only suited up for a single season. But Gary's memories of the first game he attended with his father are still vivid. As he reminisces, the excitement he felt comes flooding back. "We saw someone really special that night," he said. "He was a running back and kick returner named Stanley

Robinson. He was electric. Every time he touched the ball, we held our breath because we knew something magical was about to happen."

A few years later when Gary was in the seventh grade, he went out for the football team. This was his one and only season of play. "I soon found out that 120 pounds and slow feet would not be a winning combination," Gary admitted. "That was the only year I actually suited up to play." One might think this alone would squelch any football spirit, but it made no difference to Gary and Joe Ben. They continued to go to as many home games as they could. Memories of Gary's freshman year at Ennis High School (EHS) came rushing back. "It was 1975," he stated. "Ennis won the Class 3A title in a game against Cuero."

As time marched on, Gary graduated, married Valerie and had a family of his own. He and Joe Ben continued to make the games as often

as they could. In 1999, Gary's son decided to go out for the football team as a seventh grader. "Things really had changed since I was in the seventh grade," Gary said. Over 100 young men tried out for the squad, which had grown to include three teams – the maroon, the white and the gray. They dominated their opponents, so much so that the maroon and white teams took district honors. "This was the year Dad and I started

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going to away games, too," Gary said. "It was also the year Coach Sam Harrell got the 'E-train' going."

Coach Harrell took the team to the playoffs that year, eventually losing to the 1999 Champions from Stephenville. At the beginning of this playoff round the dare was levied. "I was dared to begin the Lions' menu," he laughed, "and it wasn't long before I had a cult-like following. I had friends, fellow H-E-B employees, family and E-town fans asking what was going to be on the menu next." Gary admits that some of his menu ideas came from Paula Deen cookbooks or from the Food Network.

Tasteful and fun menu items over the years have included every school mascot the Lions have ever played. Looking back, Gary cannot recall a week of play that a menu wasn't posted. Before the first game, the menu will read, "E-Town Football, We Believe." During the months of play, menus will include Panther Puddin', Smoked Tiger, Cougar Burgers, Tiger Kolbase and the ever-popular Indian Pot Pie. When the season comes to a close, the back windshield simply reads, "E-Town Football, We Thank You."



E-Town football fans like Gary and Joe Ben believe in their football team. From 1999 on, fans have planned the Thanksgiving holiday, last minute Christmas shopping and family birthdays around the Ennis Lions' playoff schedule. Once Coach Harrell went to a spread offense in 2000, the team started mauling their competition. Quarterbacks Tate Wallis and Graham Harrell and receivers B.J. Jones and Vincent Marshall punched the excitement of the game up



several notches during their tenure with the team. "We were winning playoff games every year in Texas Stadium, which we called Lions Stadium North," Gary remembered. "I think our Lions won more games in that stadium than the Cowboys did."

As Gary and Joe Ben started attending more games, they took on a sidekick, the one they like to refer to as the "bus

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driver.” Joe Ben stated, “Judge Lee Johnson started catching as many games as he could with us. I think I remind Lee of his father. That might be why the three of us have so much fun.”

“Lee liked the idea that no matter where we went, someone knew my dad,” Gary added. “Lee got a real kick out of that.”

Gary and Joe Ben aren’t the only two football fans in the family. They just happen to be the two who have kept the dare going all these years. Gary has two sisters who also have a great deal of Lion pride and school spirit. Sharon’s two girls were always cheerleaders, while his younger sister, Kathy, has a son who is playing football as a ninth grader this year. “When the girls were in school, it



was a family event,” Sharon said. “It was nice to have everyone there together.”

All these many years later, it’s still a time of father-and-son bonding for Gary and Joe Ben. “When the kids were little, Joe Ben was too busy to go to football games on a regular basis,” Helen, Joe Ben’s wife of 54 years, said. “Now that they have time to go, it’s brought them closer together.”

This closeness is what prompted Sharon to make a call. She wanted to share the story of this bond between a father and his son that’s not only special, but heartwarming. All the dare of a Lions’ menu did was add spice to an already close relationship. “Gary really is a football fan,” Sharon confessed. “He loves the Ennis Lions and the Washington Red Skins equally.”

Gary and Joe Ben have hearts for football. They love kickoff, when everyone throws the “L” sign in support of their team, and Gary’s heard yelling, “Come get some.” They love watching the team win, and they’ve also been to the few games when the team has had to eat some “humble pie.” Joe Ben laughingly stated, “We don’t hunt or fish. Football is the factor that has brought us closer together as father and son.” **NOW**



Dilip Solanki, M.D. Oncology

Dr. Solanki specializes and is board certified in Internal medicine, Medical Oncology and Hematology; Dr. Solanki was Professor of Medicine at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and also held academic appointments at Georgetown University School of Medicine. He currently sees patients at Texas Oncology - Corsicana, Methodist Charlton Cancer Center, and Ennis Doctors Center.

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Live, Love, Laugh

— By Randy Bigham



What makes a house a home? Todd and Kim Marsh seem to have the answer. Recent transplants to Ennis, the cheerful young couple has enjoyed renovating their historic abode, but what has inspired them is the satisfaction they are laying down roots in a city that feels like a small town. For the Marshes, moving to Ennis represents more than acquiring a beautiful old house in a desirable neighborhood; it has meant finding a safe, happy place to live and rear a family, which already includes their six-month-old son, Ethan. “I love Ennis,” said Kim, a fourth grade teacher in Waxahachie. “I love the old streetlights and how everyone’s so friendly.”



Todd, an executive with a transportation company, agreed, noting he’s especially impressed by the school spirit that defines Ennis as much as its bluebonnets. “I’ve never been in a town that has such school spirit. Even people whose kids are out of school love the Lions.”

Todd and Kim, both from Elkhart, have been proud Ennisites since 2008, when they closed sale on the Edwardian-era cottage with its green- and red-painted façade. The dominant color, once an authentic period shade of green chosen by former homeowners, the late Joel and Dawn Hardell, has been updated by the Marshes to a slightly brighter hue. “We just kicked it up a notch,” Todd



At Home With Todd and Kim Marsh



said, although he and Kim confess their decision has met with mixed reactions.

"We've had good and bad comments," Kim added. "Some people don't like it. Some love it."

Todd explained that the feedback hasn't always been solicited. "One thing about old homes with original glass windows like ours is that you can hear everything outside!" he laughed. "So we've heard people, walking by on the sidewalk, say the colors are hideous! But many more we hear talking about it seem to like it."

Located in Ennis' historic district, Todd and Kim appreciate the it's veneration for old structures. And while they are not yet members of the Ennis

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Heritage Society, the couple said they hope to join soon, having received several invitations.

The Marshes are proud of the state-designated historical plaque that hangs on their front porch, and for Kim it has become a passion to redecorate the house in a style that does justice to the distinction. The designs she has worked out suit the period of the house, yet reflect her and Todd's own eclectic tastes. Their new home, and the opportunity

to decorate it to her heart's content, is a dream realized for Kim. "This was my thing," she said. "I've always loved old houses. When Todd and I were dating, we used to go out to dinner and then go driving around the historic areas near Palestine. So those first dreams I had riding around have come true."

Todd has also fallen in love with the house. "My job brought us to Ennis, but it was the house that kept us here."

Todd gives full credit to Kim for revamping the interiors of their 1,750-square-foot, quasi-gingerbread house built in 1903. "I've done the landscaping, and Kim did the inside," he said. He admits to being skeptical of her abilities at first, but now fully approves of the way she has integrated his "outdoorsy" preferences with her more traditional style. "I was raised on a working ranch in east Texas," Todd



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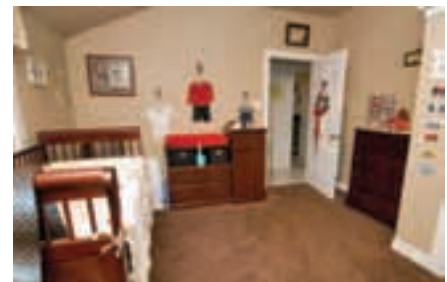
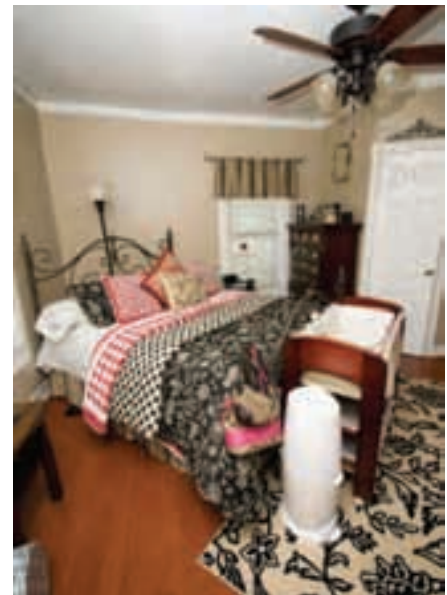
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clarified, “so I’d probably have put in an antler chandelier or things made of tin. But Kim has done a very good job blending elegance with a rustic feel.”

In fact, she couldn’t wait to try her hand at revitalizing the old house. “We moved in at the end of October 2008, and by Thanksgiving I had already started painting. Todd and I agreed on every room except the kitchen and his office. I loved doing the house, although it took me two weeks to scrape the wallpaper off the walls in the dining room!”

But the result is well worth the hard work. A balance of soft, dark and neutral colors makes the three-bedroom, two-bath home warm and inviting, and refurbished antiques are mixed effectively with modern pieces throughout. Kim’s upbeat personality is expressed in accents like painted signboards with uplifting comments inscribed. Todd considers his wife’s “whimsical sayings” – featured in the kitchen, dining room and little Ethan’s nursery – crucial to the overall lighthearted effect of the interiors. One of Kim’s mottos even graces the front porch steps: “Live, Love, Laugh.” But Todd’s imprint is perceptible, too. For all Kim’s stylish efforts, she allowed Todd a free hand in fitting out the master bath in his favored country motif. She has also left undecorated her husband’s study where he displays his hunting trophies –



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much prized by him, less loved by her.

Todd's domain, the colorful exterior of the house and its lush front and back gardens, are as well-maintained as Kim's attractive interiors. He takes pride in the number of pedestrians and motorists who stop to admire the house. "It's pretty common for people to come by and ask to take pictures of the house and yard," he said. Among visitors have been members of the Hardell family, who once owned the property. "As they were looking over the place, I heard them say they were very pleased," Todd added, "and that meant a lot."

Now that the remodeling is finished, the Marshes are enjoying the perks of hearth and home. The duo shares in caring for Ethan, whom Todd describes as having "his daddy's appetite and his mamma's good looks." They are still getting to know their neighbors and making new friends — the Penfold, Tenpenney, Armstrong, Vaughan and Sellers families among them. The newcomers also continue to soak up Ennis culture, from the Bluebonnet



Trails Festival and the Polka Parade to the Autumn Days Fall Fest. "This is our third year for each festival," Todd enthused.

Kim added how great it is to live so near to downtown when events are in full tilt. "No worry about parking," she laughed. "We just walk right down."

Todd and Kim have many friends in Waxahachie where they attend church, but they have no intention of moving again. "We're in Ennis for good," Todd said. "This is where we want to be."

"It's exciting," Kim agreed, "to see the pride people have here, and we want to continue to be part of that." **NOW**

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KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

— By Donna Kubecka

Finding out you're pregnant comes with so many emotions. In some cases there is great excitement, while other times anxiety and fear of the uncharted territory known as motherhood take over. Regardless of the early emotions immediately following the news, there are decisions and plans that have to be finalized. There are no "for sure" manuals for the expectant mother to follow. No real "right way" or "wrong way" to move forward with the decisions that will affect both her and her unborn baby.

But, there is a place where expectant parents, both male and female, can go for the help and options they need — WRC Pregnancy Center of Ellis County. WRC offers accurate information about pregnancy and parenting in an effort to make it easier for the prospective parents to make informed decisions that work for their particular situation. "Every woman, and man



Donna Young (executive director),
Valinda Scruggs (volunteer), Rachel Bishop
(volunteer) and Sharra Poteet
(center director)



for that matter, should be able to get all the information they need,” said Sharra Poteet, director of the Ennis WRC Pregnancy Center. “She needs to know what her options are and how they relate to the decisions she will make about her pregnancy. Knowledge is power.”

The mission at WRC is quite simple. “We provide compassionate care and practical help,” Sharra explained, “along with dispensing the information needed to make wise and healthy choices.” Services offered at the Ennis facility include: pregnancy tests, options counseling, limited ultrasound, referrals for community resources, pregnancy and parenting education, abstinence education, support groups, material resources and Bible studies. Anyone can take advantage of the free pregnancy tests and Bible studies offered. Expectant mothers and those parents with children under 24 months old who have a need can get help in obtaining diapers, formula, clothes and other necessary items for the baby.

If there is a positive pregnancy test result received at the center, the expectant mother is given a gift bag with newborn diapers, a pacifier, bottles and a receiving blanket, among several other items that help with the immediate needs that arise with the birth of the baby. “The WRC is also transitioning into a medical clinic that will be able to offer an ultrasound to those who have positive pregnancy tests in the near future,” said Donna Young, executive director of WRC Pregnancy Center of Ellis County. “The limited ultrasound will be used to determine if there is a viable intrauterine pregnancy, and to also determine a heartbeat and the gestational age of the unborn baby. Currently, local physician Dr. George M. Kingsley III performs the ultrasounds when needed.”

An ingenious program already in place at WRC ensures that families get practical help in a useful way. The Earn While You Learn Program rewards parents, once again both male and female, who complete lessons in various life and parenting skills with credits, also known at WRC as “baby bucks.” Once accumulated, these credits can be used toward baby supplies, and even for some “mommy” supplies. The classes are administered by volunteers who teach the lessons in a classroom setting, many



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times with the use of DVDs. "Parents can learn so much that's helpful in the overall job of childrearing," Sharra stated. "The list of topics offered to parents includes: getting ready for baby's arrival, protecting your child from molestation, how and when to start potty training, budgeting, menu planning and learning how to discipline with love."

By attending classes, parents earn baby bucks. They can earn even more baby bucks when they complete homework-like assignments. Attending weekly Bible studies earns even more baby bucks. Bible studies are offered every Thursday at 3:30 p.m. in English, and Spanish Bible studies are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 12:30 p.m. Since the program's inception, parents have found the baby bucks to be well worth the time spent in the classroom, not only for the items that may be



purchased for the baby, but also for the invaluable information they are learning.

Each baby buck is equal to about \$1. Parents can shop in Noah's Room, located right at the center. "In Noah's Room, parents find some wonderful deals on several different items," Sharra stated. "For example, parents can get 10 diapers for only two baby bucks. There are personal items available for mom, too."

A limited number of baby bucks can also be used at the Thrifty Boutique, a shop located not far from the WRC at 210 West Brown Street. Madaline Bryant manages the boutique. "We take everything here except computer hardware and mattresses," Madaline said. "The shop always stays full!" Since it opened in March 2009, Thrifty Boutique has seen steady growth. In the beginning, they were open Tuesdays through Fridays. "But now, we're also open on Saturday," Madaline smiled. "If you have a garage sale," she continued, "don't discard any of those items that don't sell. Drop them off here so they can benefit WRC." All proceeds from the boutique go to support the efforts of the WRC, and they are also tax deductible.

The WRC saw about 600 different men and women in 2010, in approximately 3,000 visits. All this was accomplished from very humble beginnings. Sharra related how the idea of a pregnancy center for Ellis County was born. "Life Chain is an annual event in which pro-life individuals stand together in prayer. At one of these events, one pastor turned to another pastor and said, 'We need to do something more than stand by the street and pray.'" The Crisis Pregnancy Center

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Thrifty Boutique staff (l to r) Audrey Jones, Lourdes Ruiz Sousa and Madaline Bryant

of Ellis County first opened its doors in a little house near Baylor Medical Center in Waxahachie in 1995. The Ennis center opened in 2003 to help meet the growing needs in the county. "There have been so many good experiences here," Sharra admitted. "We've helped so many expectant mothers get through their pregnancies while also finding the confidence they need to finish school, earn a diploma, get a job and care for their little ones."

For the rest of 2011, the WRC has some goals to allow them to offer even more practical assistance to parents in need. "We want to become a medical clinic, where Dr. Kingsley will be the medical director," Donna reiterated. "There will be a registered, licensed nurse on-site four days per week." Both Donna and Sharra are excited about the prospect of furthering their mission to care for those in need. And they still firmly believe that "knowledge is power." **NOW**

For more information about the Ennis branch of WRC Pregnancy Center of Ellis County, contact Sharra Poteet at (972) 878-0784.



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The Perfect Fit

Providing uncompromising excellence in podiatric care, one foot at a time. — By Sandra Strong

Personal and professional goals brought Dr. Kelly Walker to the Dallas area in 2007. Soon after the move, she was made aware of the need for a podiatrist in Ellis County. After visiting with medical professionals in the Ennis area, Dr. Walker took a leap of faith and the first step to owning her own business – she purchased the practice of the late Dr. Larry Dunkerley. On June 1, 2010, Walker Foot and Ankle opened its doors in Ennis, and Dr. Walker and her staff have been going strong ever since. “This is the perfect fit for me and the community,” she stated with a smile. “The community has been so welcoming to me, it’s overwhelming.”

Dr. Walker came to her practice with a resume befitting the podiatric services she provides to help patients maintain

healthy, happy feet. She attended Union University in Tennessee, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1994. She went on to pursue her podiatric medical training at Barry University in Florida. In 1998, she earned her Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine (DPM), then completed her residency training at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Massachusetts and HealthSouth Surgery Center in Mesquite, Texas. Dr. Walker is a member of the American Podiatric Medical Association, the Texas Podiatric Medical Association, the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons and the American Professional Wound Care Association. In 2009, Dr. Walker became board-certified in foot surgery by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery.

Services provided at Walker Foot and Ankle include

Business **NOW**

treatments for injuries, arthritic conditions, deformities of the foot and ankle and preventative diabetic foot care. Skin and toenail conditions of the foot, such as: ingrown toenails, warts, fungus and wounds are also treated by Dr. Walker. Progressive conditions, such as: flat foot, bunions, hammertoes, heel and nerve pain are among the most common ailments Dr. Walker treats on a daily basis.

One area Dr. Walker specializes in is treating adult and pediatric flat foot deformities. "Patient awareness is the key to healthier feet. Educating patients, parents, caregivers and pediatricians is so important," Dr. Walker stated. Two proven ways are available to treat and alleviate the fatigue, inactivity, pain and deformity caused by flat feet. "The first is the conservative approach, where the patient is treated with non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory medications, icing, physical

"Educating patients, parents, caregivers and pediatricians is so important."

therapy, supportive taping, bracing and orthotics," Dr. Walker explained. Conservative care usually lasts 6-12 months. "The second is surgical." Surgery is reserved for those patients that do not respond well to the conservative care.

The surgery for flat foot correction may vary from patient to patient, but it usually consists of a tendon-lengthening procedure combined with the insertion of a removable, titanium implant that helps in creating an arch. "I was fortunate enough to train with one of the developers of the implant, as well as research the efficacy and patient satisfaction of patients who had the procedures performed," she said.

It's a well-noted fact that foot pain can make a person feel horrible. The main goal at Walker Foot and Ankle is to correct the problem, so the person can feel better again. Their mission is to provide uncompromised excellence in podiatric care, one foot at a time. **NOW**



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Ten Tips for Safe Bike Riding

— By Kelley Powell, R.N.

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Bicycle riding is a fun and popular activity for children. Encouraging them to be more active and ride their bikes regularly can lead to a healthier lifestyle.

Unfortunately, bicycle riding can also lead to injuries, especially when children do not wear a helmet. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), more than 500,000 children go to the emergency room or doctors' offices due to bicycle injuries each year!

Far too many children do not wear a helmet when riding their bikes. Approximately 41 percent wear a helmet and only 35 percent of those wear it correctly. The most important thing we can do is to set a good example by always wearing a helmet ourselves and teach children how to ride safely.

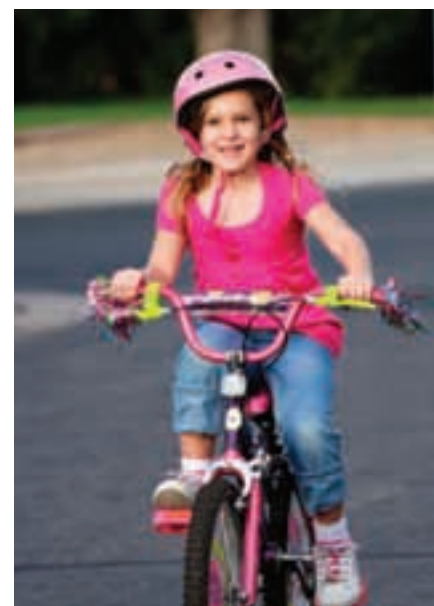
Listed below are tips for safe bike riding:

1. Always wear a bike helmet.
2. Stop and check traffic before riding into a street.
3. Do not ride at night.
4. Understand and obey all traffic signs and signals.
5. Ride on the right side of the street.
6. Always check your brakes and tire pressure before riding.
7. Give cars and pedestrians the right-of-way.
8. Wear light or bright-colored clothing so that motorists can easily see you.
9. Be extra careful turning left — motorists do not expect it.
10. Avoid broken pavement, loose gravel, leaves and wet areas/puddles which could cause you to lose control of your bicycle.

Remember that simply wearing a helmet is not enough. Your child has to wear it correctly for it to keep him or her safe. You should choose a bike helmet that meets current safety standards. Other tips to help you select and correctly use a bike

helmet include:

1. Start children wearing helmets with their first tricycles or play vehicles.



2. Use foam pads inside to fit the helmet snugly so it does not move on the head.

3. Fit the helmet so the front is just above the top of the eyebrows.

4. Teach your child to wear a helmet so that it covers the upper part of the forehead and sits level on the head.

5. Adjust the two side straps so they meet in a "V" right under each ear.

6. Adjust the chin strap snugly under the chin.

7. Make it tight enough so the helmet pulls down when the child opens his/her mouth.

8. Check often to make sure straps stay snug and the helmet stays level on the head.

These tips may sound like a great deal of work for a simple bike ride but studies have found that most injuries occur with "simple" rides in the child's own neighborhood. Let's all take the time to make bike riding a fun and safe activity for our children and ourselves. **NOW**

Kelley Powell, R.N.

Director, Med Surg, Pediatrics and Nursing
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Time to Re-examine Your Retirement Plans?

— By Bob Irish

As a nation, we appear to be getting nervous about retirement. We aren't sure if we'll have enough money, and we don't know if we'll be able to retire when we had originally planned. That's why you may want to review your financial strategy both before and during retirement.

Before we look at some actions you might take, let's get a sense of how concerned many Americans are about their future:

- **Less confidence** — The percentage of workers who are “not at all confident” about having enough money for a comfortable retirement is now at 27 percent, according to the 2011 Retirement Confidence Survey, sponsored by the Employee Benefit Research Institute. This figure is the highest level measured in the 21 years of the Retirement Confidence Survey.

- **Later projected retirement age** — Back in 1995, over half of those surveyed in a Gallup Poll said they expected to retire when they were under age 65, while about 15 percent thought they would retire after age 65. But in 2010, the same Gallup Poll showed that just 29 percent of survey respondents expected to retire before they reached 65, while 34 percent planned to work beyond 65.

This lowered confidence and the expectation of having to work past 65 are due in part to the Great Recession and the housing market collapse, which combined to reduce the savings of many future retirees. You can't control these types of factors, but you can do a lot to boost your prospects for a comfortable retirement — both before and after you retire.

Before You Retire:

- **Estimate your expenses.** Try to estimate about how much money you'll need each year of your retirement.

- **Contribute to your retirement plans.** Put as much as you can afford into your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 403(b) or 457(b) plan. Each time you get a raise, boost your annual contribution to your retirement plan. Also, try to fully fund your traditional or Roth Individual Retirement Account (IRA) each year.

After You Retire:

- **Evaluate your employment prospects.** You may have retired from one career, but that doesn't mean you can't work part time, do some consulting or even open your own business. If you think you'd enjoy doing some type of work, the added income can obviously be quite helpful at this stage of your life.

- **Decide when to take Social Security.** You can start taking Social Security at any time from 62 to 70, but the longer you wait, the bigger your monthly payments. Your decision on when to take Social Security should be based on the amount of income you can expect from a pension or your investment portfolio, plus any income you might receive from employment.

- **Determine your withdrawal rate.** You'll need to calculate how much you can safely withdraw from your various retirement accounts each year. Your withdrawal rate will depend on several factors, including your lifestyle, your estimated longevity, your other sources of income and the level of inflation. You may need to adjust your withdrawal rate periodically.

These aren't the only factors involved in preparing for, and living in, retirement, but they should give you a good idea of what you need to do to enjoy the lifestyle you've envisioned. **NOW**

Bob Irish is an Edward Jones Financial Advisor based in Ennis.

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September 17

Waxahachie Oktoberfest: 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., Waxahachie Civic Center: free admission/parking. Kinderfest offers games for all ages. Washer tournaments: 1:00 p.m.; Karaoke for Kids: 3:00 p.m. Casual-style Biergarten open all day. Silent/live auctions, great raffle prizes and shopping galore. (972) 207-2380.

Annual Girl Scout Membership Drive: 2:00-4:00 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin Avenue. www.gssu251.org or joinus@gssu251.org.

September 22-25

26th Annual AAA Texas Fall Nationals, Texas Motorplex. www.texasmotorplex.com.

September 23-24

Johnson County Antique Tractor & Car Show, Alvarado Old Settlers Reunion Grounds Alvarado, Texas. Featuring a Performance by Sonny Burgess. Admission: \$5 per car load; everyone in car gets a ticket for door prize drawing. Drawings take place every 30 minutes. Must be present to win.

September 23

Travis Elementary BBQ Bash: 5:00-7:00 p.m.

September 24

Chautauqua Preservation Society Annual Assembly: 12:30 p.m., Chautauqua Auditorium at Getzender Park. Theme: "Energy – Oil and Gas." www.discoverculture.org.

Mischief in the Magnolias presented by the Waxahachie Community Theatre: 4:30 p.m., Chautauqua Auditorium. Admission included in all-day ticket for the Chautauqua Assembly or tickets at the door: \$5. (972) 646-1050 or e-mail wct.texas@gmail.com.

September 27

Girl Scout Volunteer Sign-ups: 7:00-8:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin Avenue. joinus@gssu251.org.

October 7

Austin Elementary Chili Supper: 5:00-7:00 p.m.

October 15

Autumn Days in Ennis Fall Festival. Call (972) 878-4748 for more details.

Ongoing:

Mondays and Wednesdays

Sign Language Class: 4:00-5:15 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Avenue, Ennis. Free.

Fourth Mondays

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County: 6:30-8:30 p.m.,

Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Avenue.

Wednesdays

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

Chess for Kids: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Avenue, Ennis. Elementary age and above.

First and Third Thursdays

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

Third Fridays

Veterans Networking Group: 6:00 p.m., Zula's Coffee House, 1804 West Highway 287 Business. Mike Lamb: (214) 763-0378; vetsnetgrp@att.net.

Third Saturdays

Covenant Treasures Institute College Level Classes: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Refiner's Fire Ministries International, 1611 W. Ennis Avenue, Ennis. (972) 765-3530.

Fourth Saturdays

Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., featuring local singers and musicians. Jim Gatlin: (972) 846-2211.

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In The Kitchen With Ann Fincher

— *By Sandra Strong*

Ann Fincher has always called Ennis home. As she grew up, her mom and grandmother taught her the most about cooking. “I stayed with my grandmother when I was young,” Ann remembered. “I watched her cook the old-fashioned way.”

Watching certainly paid off. “I love to cook, period, although baking is my favorite,” Ann stated with a smile. “It’s so rewarding when your recipe comes out as planned, and your family and friends enjoy it.” Nowadays, she cooks mainly for her husband, Larry. “I guess it’s fair to say he’s my guinea pig when it comes to new recipes.” New recipes are introduced all the time, thanks to the cookbooks and cooking magazines Ann collects, the Internet, and of course, her family and friends. **NOW**

Crunchy Candied Pickles

- 1 qt. hamburger dill pickles**
- 2 cups granulated sugar**
- 1/2 cup tarragon wine vinegar**
- 1 tsp. celery seed**
- 1 tsp. dry mustard**
- 1/2 tsp. crushed dried red pepper**
- 1/8 tsp. garlic salt**

- 1.** Drain pickles and rinse. Combine remaining ingredients in saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and cool.
- 2.** Pack pickles in two sterilized pint jars and pour syrup over the pickles.
- 3.** Cover jars and refrigerate at least 6 to 8 hours.

Pineapple Banana Delight

- Crust:**
- 1/2 pkg. graham cracker crumbs**
 - 1 stick butter, melted**
 - 3 Tbsp. sugar**

Filling:

- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- 1 8-oz. can Eagle brand condensed milk**
- 1 16-oz. canned pineapple**
- 4-5 bananas**
- Whipped cream**
- Cherries**
- Crushed pecans**

- 1.** For crust: Combine and press all crust ingredients into a 13x19-inch pan.
- 2.** For filling: Combine cream cheese and condensed milk. Spread evenly on crust. Chill 2 hours.
- 3.** Drain pineapple. Cut up bananas; layer bananas on the crust. Spread pineapple evenly over bananas.
- 4.** Put whipped cream over mixture and then top with cherries and crushed pecans.

Tom Thumb Cookie Bars

- 1/2 cup shortening**
- 1/2 tsp. salt**
- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar, firmly packed**

- 1 cup flour, sifted**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 2 Tbsp. flour**
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder**
- 1/4 tsp. salt**
- 1 1/2 cups coconut**
- 1 cup nuts, coarsely chopped**

- 1.** Cream together shortening, salt and 1/2 cup brown sugar. Add sifted flour and blend.
- 2.** Spread mixture in 8x12x2-inch greased pan. Bake at 325 F for 15 minutes or until brown.
- 3.** Blend remaining ingredients. Spread over the baked mixture. Bake at 325 F for an additional 25 minutes.
- 4.** Cool and cut into small squares.

Spoonoodles

- 1 can Chow Mein noodles**
- 1 cup nuts of your choice, coarsely chopped**
- 1/3 cup honey**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. butter**
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla**
- 1/8 tsp. salt**
- 1 6-oz. package butterscotch morsels**

- 1.** Combine noodles and nuts in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Combine honey, sugar, butter, vanilla and salt in saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
- 3.** Remove pan from heat and add butterscotch morsels. Stir until smooth. Pour over noodles and nuts. Mix gently until coated.
- 4.** Drop by teaspoons onto waxed paper. Let stand until set or chill until firm.

Squash Casserole

- 3 medium yellow squash**
- 1 medium onion**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 1 pkg. jalapeño cornbread mix**
- Cheese, grated**

- 1.** Cut up the squash and onion into desired-size pieces and put in saucepan. Cover with water and cook until tender. Do not drain.
- 2.** Add eggs and cornbread mix. Pour mixture into baking dish. Bake at 325 F for 40 minutes. Add grated cheese just before removing. Allow cheese to melt.