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On The Cover



Harold and Lee Ann Markham Jr. enjoy opening their home to family and friends.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello Ennis!

I've often heard we're able to "think things into existence" if we think long and hard enough. If that's really the case, then I'm going to start daydreaming of fall-like temperatures. Once the weather cools off, I can think of the days to come that will include more quality time spent outdoors. Maybe I'll look more diligently for a place close to home where I can spend an afternoon horseback riding, or maybe I'll repaint a couple rooms in the house. I just pray

the cooler temperatures get here soon. I've been burning up long enough!

Autumn arrives later this month on the 22nd, which means one more thing — this year's football season will be in full swing. The lights at the stadium will illuminate the skies, and if you listen closely, you can almost hear the crowd cheering, "Go Lions!" You have to agree, this is what autumn is all about.

Sandra

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PRIDE *al* PLACE

— By Randy Bigham

The tornado that swept through Avalon last year nearly destroyed a 75-year-old school gymnasium, but its rebuilding has been a rallying point for the campus and the community. “It was a blessing in disguise,” said Avalon ISD superintendent, Dr. David Del Bosque. “We weren’t sure the old gym could be saved, but support from the town and from alumni convinced us we needed to try.”

The disaster has resulted in more than a refurbished facility. It has revived pride in the history of the school. David and his wife, Neva, a counselor and director of special programs for the district, are spearheading the effort to pay homage to Avalon’s heritage through a Facebook page recording highlights

from the school’s past. “But really we aren’t the only ones leading this,” Neva pointed out. “There are so many people — current and former students, teachers and other citizens, who are as passionate about reclaiming our school’s history as we are.”

In reality, Avalon ISD has not been lacking in honors. A Recognized school district since 2006, it has been named by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of America’s Best High Schools for three of the last five years. But the district’s distant heritage hadn’t been celebrated. That changed on Monday, April 25, 2011, when the J. P. Griffith Gymnasium, built in 1937 and named for a former superintendent, was struck by a tornado that damaged most of the roof. The possibility the old structure would have to be demolished ignited a groundswell of local support for restoring it. Although the gym hadn’t been a fully-functioning facility for some





time, being used primarily for storage, the threatened loss of the building stirred the hearts of townsfolk who still held fond memories of its heyday. “We quickly learned our old gym had been much more than a gym,” said David, Avalon ISD’s superintendent for 10 of his 18 years there. “Community affairs had been held there, even a wedding. There was an outpouring of love for the building, from locals and alumni scattered all over the world.”

Former students e-mailed photos of events held in the gym over its nearly eight-decade history. Locals dug out old uniforms, a coronation robe and tiara were found and all editions of the yearbook, *Avilion*, since 1938 were researched. The family of J.P. Griffith, the building’s namesake, donated letters, books and albums.

The once-dormant gym was embraced again by a town that wasn’t ready to let it go. “It reawakened a sense of pride about where we’ve been, not just where we are going,” David explained. “We



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began to see that the old and the new can coexist. It forced us as a town and a school to discover who we are."

His wife agreed. "It would have hurt the heart of the community if the building had been destroyed," said Neva, who has been with the district for 15 years. "And the whole process of



restoration gave our students a little more ownership. Even the youngest kids, who didn't know the gym's history, wanted to be a part of bringing it back."

The old building's fate was determined by the people of Avalon. "We didn't know the stability of the structure, and feared the worst, so we really wrestled with this," David admitted. "But we wanted the residents to have input in the decision." To this end, the matter was brought before the board of trustees who moved to survey the community through the school's Web site and via Facebook. Results came back two to one in favor of remodeling. It wasn't just the number of supporters that was impressive. It was their level of passion. "Looking at the roster, those who wanted to tear down the gym just checked that option," David recounted. "But those who wanted to save the building checked the option and then gave you an essay on why it should be saved."

When the rededication of the J.P. Griffith Gymnasium was held earlier this year, it was obvious that not only had a

vital piece of history been spared, but the improvements made to the structure had made it once again a center of campus and civic life. "If we didn't save it, we would have been stuck with a parking lot," David said. "But now we have a fully operational structure that can be used for many events, just as it once was."



Careful planning made this possible. Of \$213,000 in insurance funds, over half would have gone toward reconstituting the gym floor if the school opted to duplicate the original maple wood. Instead the board chose to order a simulated-maple, multipurpose flooring, which saved \$60,000 that could then go toward roof repairs, new bathrooms, a repurposed concession area and the installation of air conditioning and heating throughout. "Now the building can be used year round, not just three months out of the year," Neva said. "It's livable again."

By preserving the gym, Avalon ISD has recovered its past and brought a town together. "The tornado tore a hole in the

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Terri Miller, Donna Dodson

roof but not in our spirit," David said. "It has made for stronger bonds." For the couple at the center of revisiting Avalon's heritage, working to restore the gym's history has brought them even closer. "We have worked together for about 25 years, first at St. John Catholic School in Ennis, and then here," Neva recalled.

"It's kind of all we know," chuckled David. "It works for us because the job isn't just a job. We love Avalon. It has



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become a part of us." Yet David and Neva are quick to ascribe responsibility for Avalon's success not to themselves, but to the district's long-tenured faculty. From instructors to administrators, the staff is dedicated. Among these are Julie Carter, who has served Avalon ISD for 32 years; and Sue Morrison, who has taught for 42 years; Patty Hernandez, secretary to the superintendent for 30 years; and Alice Compton, business manager for 29 years.

"I hope to retire here," David confessed. "Our kids are the best, and I'll give a prime example. During a Penny Drive, a small child, whom I know is not from a wealthy family, came up to me, dug deep in his pockets and pulled out a bunch of pennies. He was so proud. His face was lit up. He just wanted to give."

Although the couple resides in Ennis, Neva agreed that Avalon was like a second home, even more so since the tornado united the town. "It's all about being a great school," she said. "But it's also about neighbors and family and community." **NOW**

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Dr. Farley has authored and published spinal research in the international publication, Spine. He has also presented spinal research at multiple national and international spine meetings.

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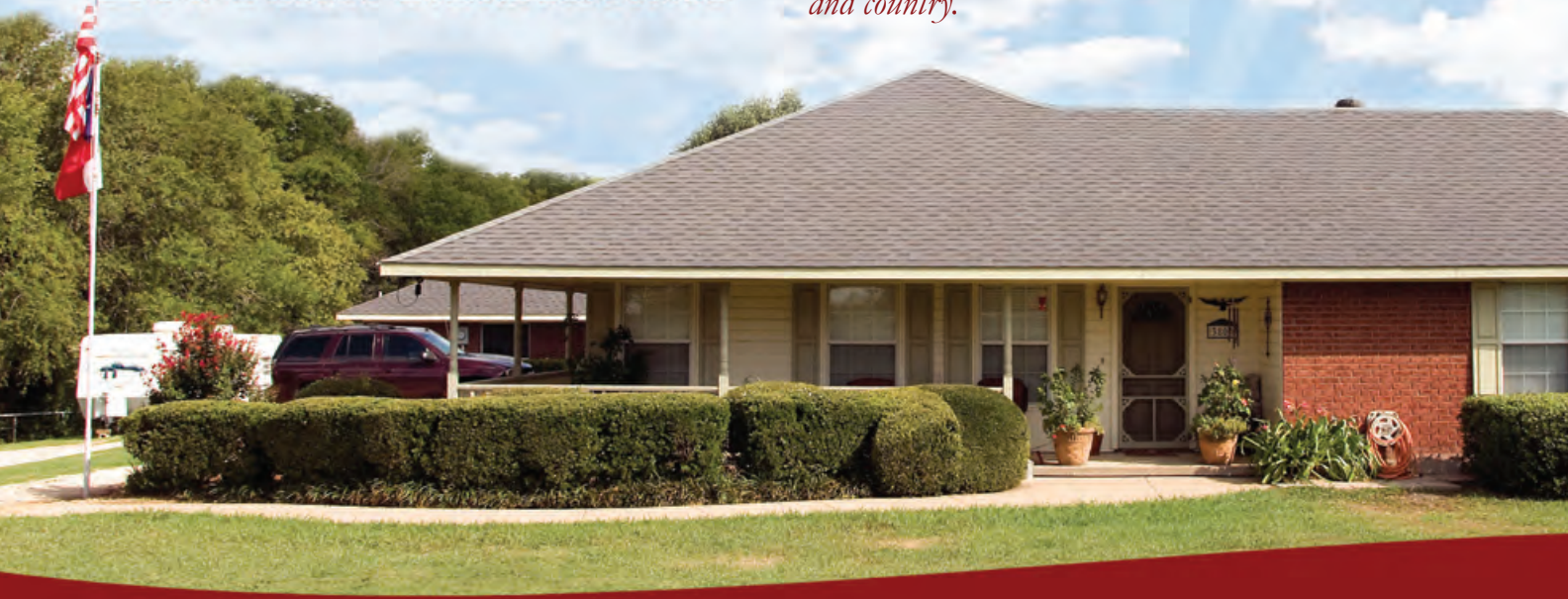


All About *God* and Country

— By Sandra Strong

One constant always waving proudly to those passing by the home of Harold “Buddy” Markham Jr. and his wife, Lee Ann, is the American flag. “We are a very patriotic family,” Buddy stated. “We became religious about flying the flag when our son-in-law, Robert Bell, was deployed.” When he was deployed, Buddy flew the Marine Corps flag under the United States flag. Now that Robert is stateside, the Texas flag has taken its place. “We’re all about God and country.”

At Home With
**Buddy and
Lee Ann Markham**





Family and friends, and fellowship with both, could be added to “what they are all about” according to those same family members and friends who know them best. Just this past June, the couple celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary. Reminiscing about the years brought back so many memories. “The first home we had was in Palmer,” Buddy said. “It was a mobile home.”

The next two homes were in Ennis, where Buddy was employed with the city. “I went to work for the city of Ennis,





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and it was the only full-time job I had after college.” Buddy retired December 31, 2011, after faithfully serving his community for 37-and-a-half years. Buddy and Lee Ann have called the custom-built abode on the hill overlooking Lake Bardwell home for the past 15 years. The third home in Ennis, and the fourth home overall, is set on two, spacious



acres. “Lee Ann drew up the plans on a piece of graph paper,” Buddy said proudly. “We took those drawings to a draftsman who put them into blueprints.”

Today, the home boasts of three bedrooms and bathrooms, but in the beginning it had a fourth bedroom to accommodate the children in the family —Elizabeth, Jeannie and Harold III. That fourth bedroom was converted some time ago to serve as Buddy’s home office. Twelve years ago, Buddy’s parents came to live with them. The cottage apartment is separate from the home, but the short walking distance to and from makes looking after them convenient.



All three children graduated from Ennis High School, and they have each married and started families of their own. Elizabeth is married to Chad Wester, Jeannie is married to Robert and Harold III is married to Staci. All the men in these unions are serving their God and country, following Buddy’s dedicated and diplomatic footsteps. “Robert is a Marine, Chad is a fireman and Harold is a Kaufman County police officer,” Buddy explained. “They protect and serve.”

The two extra bedrooms become the private guest quarters when the children and grandchildren, of which there are 10, return home for a visit. Although the guest area is attached to the rest of the

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home, it is zoned off so as not to waste energy when just Buddy and Lee Ann are at home. "We're able to turn the power off in those areas to help with energy efficiency," Buddy added.

When company is gone, Buddy and Lee Ann are left to enjoy the remaining rooms in their comfortable, lived-in, traditional home with its rustic paint colors. It's almost impossible to live in one place for 15 years without making some changes. The latest remodeling effort is the kitchen with its new granite countertops and tile and colored glass backsplash. "We tried to find colors to match the cabinets that were already in place," Buddy said. "It wasn't easy."

"No it wasn't," Lee Ann agreed. "We had so many choices. It was overwhelming."

The colors they chose complement the off-white cabinetry, while the new black,



wrought iron hardware complements the black flecks found throughout the countertop. Although Buddy and Lee Ann try to do all the repainting themselves, they give thanks to Lonestar Flooring and Tyner Electric for the part they each played in the remodel. "We do our best to keep it close to home," Buddy said, explaining he uses local talent whenever possible. "It's my list of three — church people first, locals second and those within Ellis County third." This philosophy has proven to be a win-win situation for all concerned.

The predominant theme in furniture throughout the home is mission style. Some sentimental pieces that hold wonderful memories are intermingled with the new. An Early American La-Z-Boy reclining rocker that once belonged to Lee Ann's grandmother seems right at home in the living room. "It was Granny's crocheting chair," Lee Ann

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admitted. "The arms are worn and the burnt orange upholstery needs to be replaced, but it sure keeps the memory of her alive." One of Lee Ann's mom's handcrafted quilts rests on the back of the recliner.

Buddy's office is home to several items of great interest and pride. The statue of the Battlefield Cross was presented to him by the Veteran's Memorial Committee. The flag in the windowsill was presented to him by the American Legion. "It flew over the Capitol building," Buddy said.

Crosses, coffee cups and challenge coins are the three collectibles displayed in the Markham home. At one time, all the crosses were on one large wall, but Lee Ann decided it was time for a change. "I have them scattered all over now," she laughed. "Buddy's younger brother, Neil, made the one from wire and wood that hangs in the living room. Some were bought on vacation trips, while others were gifts from family and friends. We've also collected several that stand freely."

Challenge coins are military oriented, but have since moved on to include other areas where motivation is needed. "They are used as a motivational tool," Buddy explained. "I have one from every place Robert has ever been stationed. I designed the one we have commemorating the Veterans Memorial. I'm currently working on a coin design for our church, RFML."

Buddy refers to the wall in the front hallway as the wall that he and Lee Ann are most proud of. "I started them when the children were young," Buddy said, explaining the picture collages showing small photographs of each child from kindergarten through high school graduation. "I've started one for all the grandkids, too."

Buddy's newest business endeavor may be Texas Compliance Solutions, but his constants are still family, friends and fellowship. "Sometimes it's just me and Lee Ann sharing a cup of coffee on the porch. We may talk about God, work or nothing at all," Buddy admitted. "Other times it's a spontaneous road trip to Glen Rose or Marble Falls with friends." The fun for both Buddy and Lee Ann is finding what prompted the road trip in the first place. It's an easy, laid back life that they wouldn't trade even if they could. **NOW**


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One Adventure After Another

— By Rick Herron

Through the often unpredictable and mysterious convergence of timing, talent and tenacity, a young Ennis writer and illustrator experienced what is probably the dream of every aspiring writer — the publication of his very first book late last year. Salvador “Sal” Arrez started on the path that would lead to the ultimate recognition of his talents when he was just a wee child. “I started drawing when I was 3 by copying what my older sister drew, and my mom saw that I had some raw talent. When I started school I started taking art classes,” he remembered. One thing led to another, and after taking some computer courses in high school, he discovered the enticing world of graphic illustration. This became the perfect outlet for his unique, artistic drawing gift.



That gift led the now 22-year-old to the publication in October 2011 of his first book for children ages 5 to 10, *Doowie the Adventure Dog and the Universe*, which he both wrote and illustrated. Amazon.com describes it in this manner: "Salvador Arrez takes children on an adventure through our solar system with Doowie, the Adventure Dog, as he explores a small part of our universe with his friends." From the cover to the last page, each of the 24 pages of the paperback is full of Sal's unique and beautifully drawn images, all textured in his signature bold and pastel colors, which literally leap from the page and propel the educational, yet whimsical story along.

How it eventually got published is one of those in-the-right-place-at-the-right-time stories in itself. "Back in early 2010, I had the idea of writing about Doowie's adventures in space. I had talked to my brother, Raul, about this story I had written and illustrated about a dog who explores the universe. He told his teacher, who just happened to know someone who published books part time," he said.

That person was Rhonda L. Davis, a science teacher at Ennis High School and president of Splendor Publications.



According to an article that appeared in a January 2009 edition of a local newspaper, Rhonda, author of several books and audio-books, found a place for her work, and the work of talented writers such as Sal, in the relatively new niche of supernatural teen and young adult series such as the popular *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* series.

She started working with Sal in early 2010 to get the story — one which she and Sal envisioned as a children's

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Salvador with Isaac and Jasmine Alejandro (his nephew and niece)

story about the mystery and beauty of the universe — ready for publication. “It was probably sent back to me at least five times over a six-month period to make changes and edits,” he recalled. “By late 2010, I got the news that it had been published. When I went to some Web sites where books are sold, there it was.” The feeling of seeing his work published and for sale was “unforgettable,” he admitted.

“Sales were slow at first,” Sal said. “My publisher told me I would need to publish two or three more books of the same genre to really get the public’s attention. I’m halfway done on the second Doowie book, which is about his exploration of the ocean. I did some preliminary sketches then finished the first draft of writing the story. I’m working on the illustrations now. I’m hoping it will be ready for Rhonda to send off soon, with the goal of getting it published later this year. A third one is in the planning stage, and may be about Doowie in the jungle.”

For Sal, the process of creating a book follows a predictable route: pictures first, then writing the story. “I do most of the sketches on paper first, using pencil



or pen, to get an idea of how the story will flow from beginning to end. Then I go to the computer and use Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop to do the artwork," he said. He began using the Adobe programs when he was in middle

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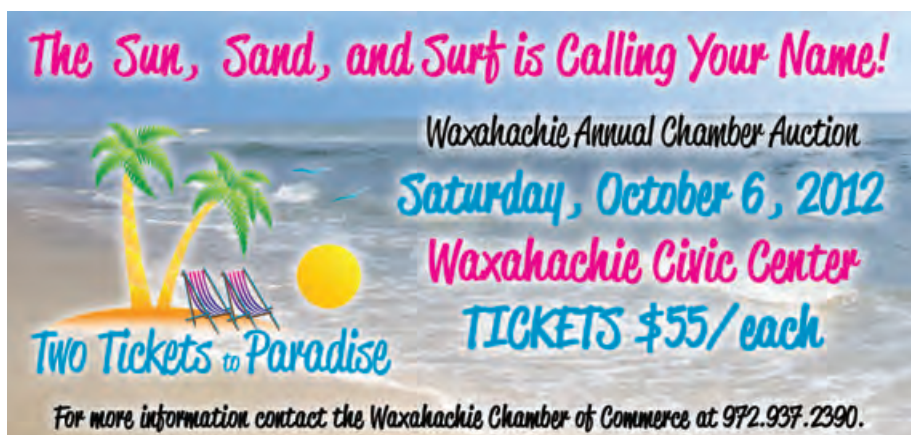
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school, after several teachers taught him the software.

Next is the writing stage, which he does in a sing-song style of rhyme, and then it goes through a rigorous series of rewrites. Not only does Sal write and illustrate, he also paints. "I have done several paintings using mostly pastel colors, which are my favorite. I like working in acrylics the best. I sculpt in clay, too, which I started doing in high school. To be honest, I would love to have a gallery someday to showcase my work," he admitted.

He gets to indulge his love of sculpting at Terry Wilson's Antler Designs in Kemp, Texas, where he works during the week when he's not busy on his laptop creating the second *Doovie the Adventure Dog* saga. Sal uses his artistic talents at Terry Wilson's in the creation of furniture and lighting fixtures — all from antlers.

But his writing and illustrating are Sal's greatest loves. "I have written a lot of poetry in rhyme, which is another favorite pastime. I hope I can publish at least two more books and at least one more *Doovie* book. Then I'm thinking about writing a science fiction work set in the future for teenagers," he said.

One of his dreams, he confided, is to travel to book signings of his works all over the world, "hopefully one day," he said. It's not an unrealistic goal for someone so naturally gifted with the ability to create such visually stunning art.

He's quick to give credit to English writer, Aldous Huxley's masterpiece, *Brave New World*, as one of the most inspiring books he has read to date. Sal is most comfortable writing in the science fiction genre. In terms of art, Salvador Dali is his all-time favorite painter.

He was born in 1990 and lived with his family in Michoacan, Mexico, for two years before moving to Chicago, Illinois. In 1996, his family moved to Ennis, where his mother, Maria Martinez, had family living, and it's in Ennis Sal hopes to stay for the time being.

"Getting published was one of the greatest things to have happened to me, and I want other people to know it can happen to them, too. Just keep writing," he offered. "Watch for a publisher who understands what you write and knows how to get your work published." **NOW**

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From left:

Dr. Edward L. Holt specializes in obstetrics and gynecology. His staff includes Jamie Cherry, Jaclyn Schilling and Rocio Santollo.



Building Bonds

Having the best of both worlds is proving to be a great combination. — By Sandra Strong

Dr. Edward L. Holt didn't grow up yearning to be a doctor. He didn't have footsteps to follow or big shoes to fill. His self-proclaimed calling came later in life. "After college, I worked many years for a pharmaceutical company," Dr. Holt explained. "As I worked, I began to learn more about the medical field. Then I made the move to become a doctor of obstetrics and gynecology." It may have been late in life, but he got here as quickly as he could.

Medical school was accomplished in Kansas City, Missouri. Dr. Holt completed his residency in 2004 at the University of South Carolina, and his medical career began in Abilene, Texas. His decision to relocate to Ennis came following an invitation from Ennis Regional Medical Center. "There had been a sizable

growth in the number of deliveries at the hospital," Dr. Holt explained. "They saw a need for an additional physician who specialized in obstetrics and gynecology."

While some choices in the field have remained the same, other areas have made advancements that make it easier for both doctor and patient. Tubal occlusion can now be performed using the Essure procedure — a sterilization method that was first introduced to patients in 2002. Essure is a permanent birth control procedure that works in tandem with your body to create a natural barrier against pregnancy. It offers what other birth control methods do not: no cutting or burning, no going under general anesthesia, no down time from recovery, no hormones and no second guessing. The non-invasive choice with less

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Dr. Holt also offers a procedure for those patients who experience heavier than normal menstrual cycles. "It's called endometrial ablation," Dr. Holt said. "It ablates, or removes diseased or unwanted tissue, from the lining of the uterus. It allows patients to avoid the more traditional hysterectomy. Results have been good, and patients are happy."

Delivering babies is something that Dr. Holt will never grow tired of doing. Each new baby represents a new life — a new little miracle. Since 2004, Dr. Holt has delivered thousands of newborns, but he never felt the need to keep count. "What I remember is the joy on the families' faces," he admitted. With five daughters of his own, Dr. Holt knows firsthand about the joy of which he speaks.

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Health maintenance and preventative medicine are also at the top of Dr. Holt's list of patient priorities. "When I evaluate a new patient, we talk about diet, exercise, weight, regular checkups and mammograms," Dr. Holt shared. "All these areas are important when maintaining a healthy body." Since one in eight to 12 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime, Dr. Holt stresses monthly self-breast exams, along with annual mammograms. "Since the stats are so high, these steps are crucial to early detection," he emphasized.

Dr. Holt is happy he relocated to Ennis. He and his staff, clinic coordinator, Jaclyn Schilling, and medical assistants, Jamie Cherry and Rocio Santollo, feel quite fortunate to be able to do what they do. "I have the best of both worlds. It's a great combination of office and surgical," he confessed. "We are building unique, lasting relationships with our patients, and that's a great feeling." **NOW**



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Preventive Recommendations for Your Child's Health

— By Barry Davison, M.D.

The American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases has recently endorsed changes in vaccine administration. Many parents are probably aware that the advice regarding annual flu shots was amended last year. The recommendation is that all children who are at least 6 months old should receive the flu vaccine every year. One of the main reasons for this difference is several studies have shown that children often bring the flu virus into a household, after which it rapidly spreads to other family members. Therefore, protecting these children from influenza will reduce the overall infection rate for the general population.

The best strategy is to get a flu shot early and not put it off until flu season. In and around Ennis, physicians typically start seeing the first cases of influenza in December, and the season is in full swing by January through March. Common side effects of the flu vaccine include mild pain and/or swelling at the injection site and low-grade fever, which usually lasts no more than 24-48 hours. On the other hand, influenza's usual course causes three-four days of fever, body aches, chills, sore throat, a cough that can last up to two-three weeks and a high incidence of secondary bacterial respiratory infections. The shot form of the flu vaccine is a killed virus product. Therefore, it is not possible to "get the flu" from this flu immunization.

Another immunization that has been added to the line-up for children is the vaccine for meningococcal disease, or the so-called "meningitis shot."

In Texas, all children entering the seventh grade are required to have had this vaccine. Recent evidence suggests that the protection provided by this immunization begins to wane three-four years after it is given. Therefore, the Committee on Infectious Diseases is now urging general pediatricians to give kids a booster dose at age 15 or 16 to insure they have immunity to meningococcal disease for the entire time they are at increased risk of contracting it.

Finally, another important piece to pediatric preventive health care is the recommendation for the age to put children in forward-facing car seats has changed from 1 year old to 2 years old. Several studies show that 1- to 2-year-old children who were passengers in car crashes and restrained in forward-facing car seats had a high rate of neck injuries, secondary to their heads being suddenly jerked forward during the accident. Although children in this age group will likely protest some when their car seats are turned around to back-facing again, they should quickly get used to the new look, particularly if everyone who chauffeurs them around consistently enforces it. These recommendations will help keep your children and your family healthy and safe for the next school year and many years to come. **NOW**

Dr. Barry Davison is a local pediatrician and part of the medical staff at Ennis Regional Medical Center.

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Financial Tips for Newly Single Women

Within a marriage, a man and a woman's financial circumstances are generally pretty much equal. But if a divorce occurs, the woman's situation tends to be somewhat more challenging than that of her ex-spouse. And that's why, during this major life transition, you may want to meet with a professional financial advisor to go over your spending needs and your cash flow, so that you know what you absolutely need today — and how you can plan for tomorrow.

Before we get into some possible steps you can take, let's look at some of the reasons that women may fare worse than men, financially speaking, following a divorce:

- **Lower income.** The average woman's family income drops by 37 percent after divorce, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In many cases, divorce exacerbates a situation in which women were already trailing men in earnings. In fact, women still only earn 77 cents for each dollar earned by men, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

- **Smaller retirement accounts.** The average balance on women's defined contribution plans — such as 401(k) plans — is only 60 percent of men's average balances, according to LIMRA, a financial services research organization.

Of course, averages are just that — averages. But whether you recognize yourself in the above numbers or not, consider these suggestions:

- **Create an emergency fund.** Try to put six months' to a year's worth of living expenses in a liquid account. Once you've established this emergency fund, you won't have to dip into long-term investments to pay for unexpected costs, such as an expensive car repair, a new furnace or a large medical bill.

- **Contribute as much as you can afford to your retirement accounts.** Even if you will eventually receive some of your ex-spouse's

retirement funds, you need to take full advantage of your own savings opportunities, because it's pretty hard to save too much for retirement. If money is tight, it won't always be easy, but contribute as much as you can to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. At a minimum, put in enough to earn the employer's match, if one is offered.

- **Rebalance your investment portfolio.** If you are now investing for yourself, you'll want to take a close look at your asset mix to make sure it is appropriate for your situation. For example, your risk tolerance may be quite different than that of your ex-spouse's. So if you now have total control over an investment portfolio, you need to make sure it reflects your needs and preferences. Consequently, you may need to rebalance your holdings.

- **Above all, get some help.** As mentioned above, now is a good time to meet with a financial advisor. And if you don't have much experience in managing your finances, you may even find it helpful to work with a trust company, which can collaborate with your financial provider to manage your assets and also provide a variety of other functions, including bill payment and record keeping. A trust company's services can prove especially valuable to you and your family should you ever become incapacitated.

Unfortunately, a divorce may leave you feeling "at sea" in many areas of your life. But by following the above suggestions, you can at least help keep your financial ship in calmer waters. **NOW**

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

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September 5

Gypsy Soule Trunk Show: 6:00-8:00 p.m., Boyce Feed & Grain, 441 South College Street. For more information, call (972) 937-1541 or (972) 937-4260.

September 7-8

Fun Ford Weekend: Texas Motorplex.

September 13

Meals-on-Wheels 25th Annual Golf Benefit: 7:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Cleburne Golf Links. Tee times: 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Event benefits Meals-on-Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Counties. For more information, visit <http://servingthechildrenofyesterday.org>.

September 13-22

The Hallelujah Girls: Warehouse Living Arts Center. Follow the ladies of Eden Falls, Georgia, as they enjoy a day at the spa with this Southern comfort comedy offering. For information or reservations, call (903) 872-5421 or visit www.warehouselivingartscenter.com.

September 15

Fly Fishing on Texas Lakes: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Sunset Cove Marina on Lake Richland Chambers. \$50 per person includes lunch. This beginning class will be taught by Bob Cappallo,

Texas Parks and Wildlife Instructor. For information or to make a reservation, call (903) 874-2300.

September 20-23

27th Annual AAA Texas Fall Nationals: Texas Motorplex.

September 22

11th Annual Hooked on Fishing: Registration: 6:00 a.m.; tournament begins: 7:00 a.m., I.O.O.F. Park. This fun-filled morning of fishing for ages 16 and under will include free refreshments, T-shirts and prizes. Tournament coordinator is pro-angler, Sam McCollum. Poles and bait are provided or participants may bring their own. For more information, call (903) 654-4872.

September 28-October 27

Waxahachie SCREAMS Halloween Theme Park: 7:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m., 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie. For more information, call (972) 938-3247.

September 29

Annual Telico Volunteer Fire Department Barn Dance: 4:00 p.m., SPJST Hall, East Highway 34. Fundraiser includes BBQ dinner plates, live and silent auctions, raffle, live music, crafts, games for children, rooster drop and more. For more information about the barn dance or raffle

tickets, contact Chief Van Fowler at (972) 878-2083.

The Green Garden Club Garden Tea Tour: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Guests will enjoy five beautiful gardens and a complimentary progressive tea throughout the tour. The event will feature three chefs and an artist from the Ellis County Art Association will be painting en plein air at each location. Tickets are \$50 per person, and are available online at www.greengardenclub.org. Proceeds benefit Green Garden Club, an organic garden club in Ellis County. For more information, call Carolyn Mixon at (214) 914-6030.

October 13

4th Annual Ride of Champions: 3:00 p.m., Campfire Creek Therapeutic Riding Center, 767 Bethel Road. For more information, call (972) 937-7265.

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

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In The Kitchen With Nancy Allen

— *By Sandra Strong*

Nancy Allen enjoys cooking because she likes to eat. "Eating isn't just a necessity," she admitted. "It's a pleasure." Whether eating in a restaurant or at home, Nancy enjoys a delicious, beautifully prepared meal. "By cooking at home for family and friends, I find I can control the amounts of fats, sodium, carbohydrates and other substances I use," she stated. "By buying and using fruits and vegetables in season at the peak of freshness I save money, while boosting the flavor."

As the family and consumer science teacher at Ennis High School, Nancy finds satisfaction in teaching students how to create delicious meals, too. "The students learn basic cooking skills," she said. "Some of the recipes shared here are the same recipes my students have enjoyed preparing." **NOW**

Morning Glory Muffins

2 eggs
2/3 cup canola oil
1 tsp. vanilla
1 apple, peeled, cored and diced
1/2 cup raisins
1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. sweetened coconut, divided use
1/2 cup carrots, shredded
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
1 1/3 cups whole wheat pastry flour
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. In a small bowl, combine the wet ingredients and set aside.
2. On your cutting board or in a bowl, set aside apple, raisins, 1/4 cup coconut, carrots and walnuts.

3. In a large mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients. Add wet to dry; stir well with a large spoon. Fold in apple, raisins, coconut, carrots and walnuts.
4. Fill a muffin tin that has been sprayed with cooking spray 3/4 full. Sprinkle on remaining coconut using just a few pieces per each muffin.
5. Bake for about 25 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean.

Strawberry Spinach Salad with Berry Dressing

Dressing:
1/2 cup fresh strawberries, washed and stemmed
1/2 cup fresh raspberries, washed
1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. raw agave nectar
Fresh ground pepper, to taste

Salad:

4 cups baby salad greens, washed
2 cups baby spinach leaves, washed
1 1/2 cups fresh strawberries, washed, stemmed and sliced
2 small onions, washed and sliced
1/4 cup walnuts
Mint sprig

1. For dressing: Place the first 5 ingredients into a blender container. Cover; blend on high until the berries are pureed. Season with a grind of fresh black pepper.
2. For salad: Toss the baby salad greens with the spinach leaves. Add in the strawberries, onions and walnuts.
3. Drizzle the dressing on the salad. Toss lightly. Serve with a mint sprig.

Fruit Salsa with Baked Cinnamon Chips

2 kiwis, peeled and diced
2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored and sliced
8 oz. raspberries
1 16-oz. carton strawberries, diced
1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. white sugar, divided use
1 Tbsp. brown sugar
3 Tbsp. fruit preserves, your choice of flavor
10 10-inch whole wheat tortillas
Butter flavored cooking spray
2 Tbsp. cinnamon

1. Thoroughly mix the first 7 ingredients, using only 2 Tbsp. of sugar, in a large bowl. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least 15 minutes.
2. Coat one side of each flour tortilla with cooking spray. Mix 1 cup sugar with cinnamon to make cinnamon sugar. Sprinkle tortillas with desired amount of cinnamon sugar. Cut into wedges. Arrange in a single layer on a large baking sheet.
3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes at 350 F. Repeat with remaining tortilla wedges. Allow to cool for approximately 15 minutes. Serve with chilled fruit mixture. Salsa may also be served with cinnamon graham crackers or cinnamon pita chips. Best when eaten the same day.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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On The Cover



Harold and Lee Ann Markham Jr. enjoy opening their home to family and friends.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello Ennis!

I've often heard we're able to "think things into existence" if we think long and hard enough. If that's really the case, then I'm going to start daydreaming of fall-like temperatures. Once the weather cools off, I can think of the days to come that will include more quality time spent outdoors. Maybe I'll look more diligently for a place close to home where I can spend an afternoon horseback riding, or maybe I'll repaint a couple rooms in the house. I just pray

the cooler temperatures get here soon. I've been burning up long enough!

Autumn arrives later this month on the 22nd, which means one more thing — this year's football season will be in full swing. The lights at the stadium will illuminate the skies, and if you listen closely, you can almost hear the crowd cheering, "Go Lions!" You have to agree, this is what autumn is all about.

Sandra

Sandra Strong
EnnisNOW Editor
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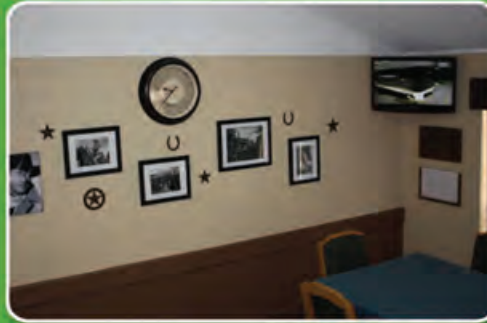
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PRIDE *al* PLACE

— By Randy Bigham

The tornado that swept through Avalon last year nearly destroyed a 75-year-old school gymnasium, but its rebuilding has been a rallying point for the campus and the community. “It was a blessing in disguise,” said Avalon ISD superintendent, Dr. David Del Bosque. “We weren’t sure the old gym could be saved, but support from the town and from alumni convinced us we needed to try.”

The disaster has resulted in more than a refurbished facility. It has revived pride in the history of the school. David and his wife, Neva, a counselor and director of special programs for the district, are spearheading the effort to pay homage to Avalon’s heritage through a Facebook page recording highlights

from the school’s past. “But really we aren’t the only ones leading this,” Neva pointed out. “There are so many people — current and former students, teachers and other citizens, who are as passionate about reclaiming our school’s history as we are.”

In reality, Avalon ISD has not been lacking in honors. A Recognized school district since 2006, it has been named by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of America’s Best High Schools for three of the last five years. But the district’s distant heritage hadn’t been celebrated. That changed on Monday, April 25, 2011, when the J. P. Griffith Gymnasium, built in 1937 and named for a former superintendent, was struck by a tornado that damaged most of the roof. The possibility the old structure would have to be demolished ignited a groundswell of local support for restoring it. Although the gym hadn’t been a fully-functioning facility for some





time, being used primarily for storage, the threatened loss of the building stirred the hearts of townsfolk who still held fond memories of its heyday. “We quickly learned our old gym had been much more than a gym,” said David, Avalon ISD’s superintendent for 10 of his 18 years there. “Community affairs had been held there, even a wedding. There was an outpouring of love for the building, from locals and alumni scattered all over the world.”

Former students e-mailed photos of events held in the gym over its nearly eight-decade history. Locals dug out old uniforms, a coronation robe and tiara were found and all editions of the yearbook, *Avilion*, since 1938 were researched. The family of J.P. Griffith, the building’s namesake, donated letters, books and albums.

The once-dormant gym was embraced again by a town that wasn’t ready to let it go. “It reawakened a sense of pride about where we’ve been, not just where we are going,” David explained. “We



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began to see that the old and the new can coexist. It forced us as a town and a school to discover who we are."

His wife agreed. "It would have hurt the heart of the community if the building had been destroyed," said Neva, who has been with the district for 15 years. "And the whole process of



restoration gave our students a little more ownership. Even the youngest kids, who didn't know the gym's history, wanted to be a part of bringing it back."

The old building's fate was determined by the people of Avalon. "We didn't know the stability of the structure, and feared the worst, so we really wrestled with this," David admitted. "But we wanted the residents to have input in the decision." To this end, the matter was brought before the board of trustees who moved to survey the community through the school's Web site and via Facebook. Results came back two to one in favor of remodeling. It wasn't just the number of supporters that was impressive. It was their level of passion. "Looking at the roster, those who wanted to tear down the gym just checked that option," David recounted. "But those who wanted to save the building checked the option and then gave you an essay on why it should be saved."

When the rededication of the J.P. Griffith Gymnasium was held earlier this year, it was obvious that not only had a

vital piece of history been spared, but the improvements made to the structure had made it once again a center of campus and civic life. "If we didn't save it, we would have been stuck with a parking lot," David said. "But now we have a fully operational structure that can be used for many events, just as it once was."



Careful planning made this possible. Of \$213,000 in insurance funds, over half would have gone toward reconstituting the gym floor if the school opted to duplicate the original maple wood. Instead the board chose to order a simulated-maple, multipurpose flooring, which saved \$60,000 that could then go toward roof repairs, new bathrooms, a repurposed concession area and the installation of air conditioning and heating throughout. "Now the building can be used year round, not just three months out of the year," Neva said. "It's livable again."

By preserving the gym, Avalon ISD has recovered its past and brought a town together. "The tornado tore a hole in the

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Terri Miller, Donna Dodson

roof but not in our spirit," David said. "It has made for stronger bonds." For the couple at the center of revisiting Avalon's heritage, working to restore the gym's history has brought them even closer. "We have worked together for about 25 years, first at St. John Catholic School in Ennis, and then here," Neva recalled.

"It's kind of all we know," chuckled David. "It works for us because the job isn't just a job. We love Avalon. It has



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become a part of us." Yet David and Neva are quick to ascribe responsibility for Avalon's success not to themselves, but to the district's long-tenured faculty. From instructors to administrators, the staff is dedicated. Among these are Julie Carter, who has served Avalon ISD for 32 years; and Sue Morrison, who has taught for 42 years; Patty Hernandez, secretary to the superintendent for 30 years; and Alice Compton, business manager for 29 years.

"I hope to retire here," David confessed. "Our kids are the best, and I'll give a prime example. During a Penny Drive, a small child, whom I know is not from a wealthy family, came up to me, dug deep in his pockets and pulled out a bunch of pennies. He was so proud. His face was lit up. He just wanted to give."

Although the couple resides in Ennis, Neva agreed that Avalon was like a second home, even more so since the tornado united the town. "It's all about being a great school," she said. "But it's also about neighbors and family and community." **NOW**

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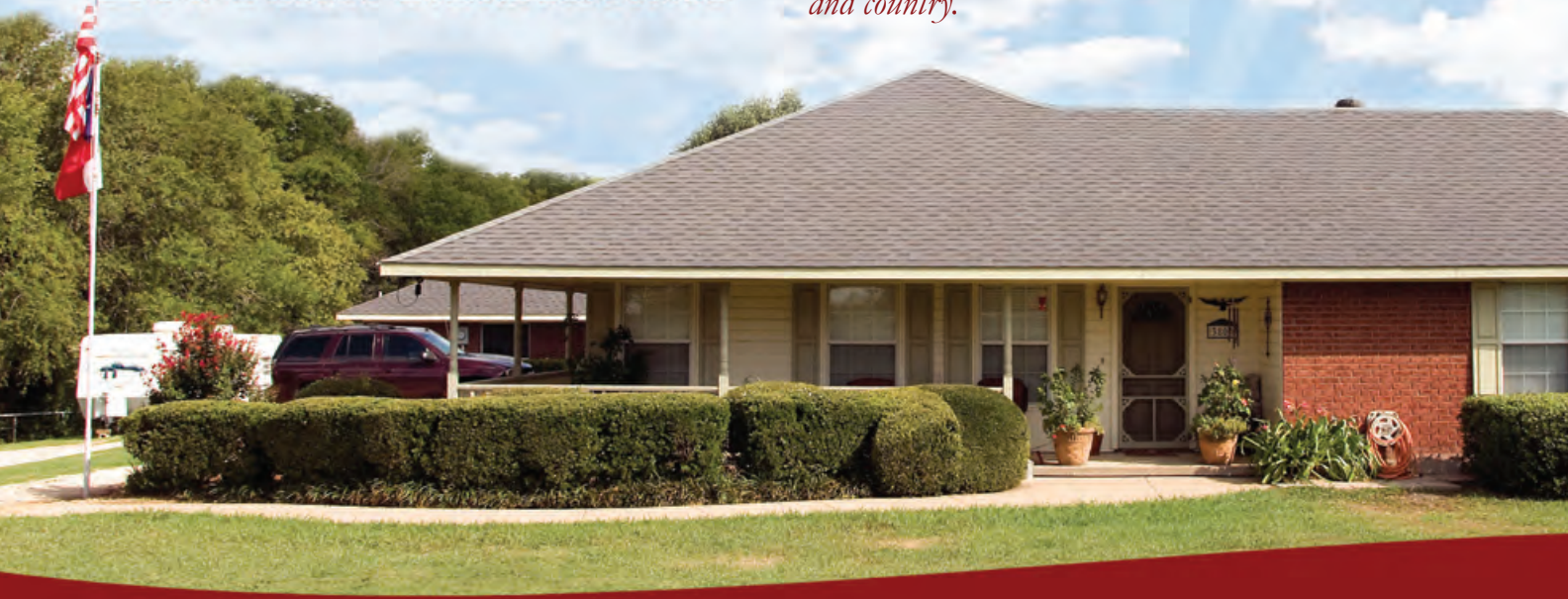


All About *God* and Country

— By Sandra Strong

One constant always waving proudly to those passing by the home of Harold “Buddy” Markham Jr. and his wife, Lee Ann, is the American flag. “We are a very patriotic family,” Buddy stated. “We became religious about flying the flag when our son-in-law, Robert Bell, was deployed.” When he was deployed, Buddy flew the Marine Corps flag under the United States flag. Now that Robert is stateside, the Texas flag has taken its place. “We’re all about God and country.”

At Home With
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Family and friends, and fellowship with both, could be added to “what they are all about” according to those same family members and friends who know them best. Just this past June, the couple celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary. Reminiscing about the years brought back so many memories. “The first home we had was in Palmer,” Buddy said. “It was a mobile home.”

The next two homes were in Ennis, where Buddy was employed with the city. “I went to work for the city of Ennis,





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and it was the only full-time job I had after college.” Buddy retired December 31, 2011, after faithfully serving his community for 37-and-a-half years. Buddy and Lee Ann have called the custom-built abode on the hill overlooking Lake Bardwell home for the past 15 years. The third home in Ennis, and the fourth home overall, is set on two, spacious



acres. “Lee Ann drew up the plans on a piece of graph paper,” Buddy said proudly. “We took those drawings to a draftsman who put them into blueprints.”

Today, the home boasts of three bedrooms and bathrooms, but in the beginning it had a fourth bedroom to accommodate the children in the family —Elizabeth, Jeannie and Harold III. That fourth bedroom was converted some time ago to serve as Buddy’s home office. Twelve years ago, Buddy’s parents came to live with them. The cottage apartment is separate from the home, but the short walking distance to and from makes looking after them convenient.



All three children graduated from Ennis High School, and they have each married and started families of their own. Elizabeth is married to Chad Wester, Jeannie is married to Robert and Harold III is married to Staci. All the men in these unions are serving their God and country, following Buddy’s dedicated and diplomatic footsteps. “Robert is a Marine, Chad is a fireman and Harold is a Kaufman County police officer,” Buddy explained. “They protect and serve.”

The two extra bedrooms become the private guest quarters when the children and grandchildren, of which there are 10, return home for a visit. Although the guest area is attached to the rest of the

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home, it is zoned off so as not to waste energy when just Buddy and Lee Ann are at home. "We're able to turn the power off in those areas to help with energy efficiency," Buddy added.

When company is gone, Buddy and Lee Ann are left to enjoy the remaining rooms in their comfortable, lived-in, traditional home with its rustic paint colors. It's almost impossible to live in one place for 15 years without making some changes. The latest remodeling effort is the kitchen with its new granite countertops and tile and colored glass backsplash. "We tried to find colors to match the cabinets that were already in place," Buddy said. "It wasn't easy."

"No it wasn't," Lee Ann agreed. "We had so many choices. It was overwhelming."

The colors they chose complement the off-white cabinetry, while the new black,



wrought iron hardware complements the black flecks found throughout the countertop. Although Buddy and Lee Ann try to do all the repainting themselves, they give thanks to Lonestar Flooring and Tyner Electric for the part they each played in the remodel. "We do our best to keep it close to home," Buddy said, explaining he uses local talent whenever possible. "It's my list of three — church people first, locals second and those within Ellis County third." This philosophy has proven to be a win-win situation for all concerned.

The predominant theme in furniture throughout the home is mission style. Some sentimental pieces that hold wonderful memories are intermingled with the new. An Early American La-Z-Boy reclining rocker that once belonged to Lee Ann's grandmother seems right at home in the living room. "It was Granny's crocheting chair," Lee Ann



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admitted. "The arms are worn and the burnt orange upholstery needs to be replaced, but it sure keeps the memory of her alive." One of Lee Ann's mom's handcrafted quilts rests on the back of the recliner.

Buddy's office is home to several items of great interest and pride. The statue of the Battlefield Cross was presented to him by the Veteran's Memorial Committee. The flag in the windowsill was presented to him by the American Legion. "It flew over the Capitol building," Buddy said.

Crosses, coffee cups and challenge coins are the three collectibles displayed in the Markham home. At one time, all the crosses were on one large wall, but Lee Ann decided it was time for a change. "I have them scattered all over now," she laughed. "Buddy's younger brother, Neil, made the one from wire and wood that hangs in the living room. Some were bought on vacation trips, while others were gifts from family and friends. We've also collected several that stand freely."

Challenge coins are military oriented, but have since moved on to include other areas where motivation is needed. "They are used as a motivational tool," Buddy explained. "I have one from every place Robert has ever been stationed. I designed the one we have commemorating the Veterans Memorial. I'm currently working on a coin design for our church, RFML."

Buddy refers to the wall in the front hallway as the wall that he and Lee Ann are most proud of. "I started them when the children were young," Buddy said, explaining the picture collages showing small photographs of each child from kindergarten through high school graduation. "I've started one for all the grandkids, too."

Buddy's newest business endeavor may be Texas Compliance Solutions, but his constants are still family, friends and fellowship. "Sometimes it's just me and Lee Ann sharing a cup of coffee on the porch. We may talk about God, work or nothing at all," Buddy admitted. "Other times it's a spontaneous road trip to Glen Rose or Marble Falls with friends." The fun for both Buddy and Lee Ann is finding what prompted the road trip in the first place. It's an easy, laid back life that they wouldn't trade even if they could. **NOW**



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One Adventure After Another

— By Rick Herron

Through the often unpredictable and mysterious convergence of timing, talent and tenacity, a young Ennis writer and illustrator experienced what is probably the dream of every aspiring writer — the publication of his very first book late last year. Salvador “Sal” Arrez started on the path that would lead to the ultimate recognition of his talents when he was just a wee child. “I started drawing when I was 3 by copying what my older sister drew, and my mom saw that I had some raw talent. When I started school I started taking art classes,” he remembered. One thing led to another, and after taking some computer courses in high school, he discovered the enticing world of graphic illustration. This became the perfect outlet for his unique, artistic drawing gift.



That gift led the now 22-year-old to the publication in October 2011 of his first book for children ages 5 to 10, *Doowie the Adventure Dog and the Universe*, which he both wrote and illustrated. Amazon.com describes it in this manner: "Salvador Arrez takes children on an adventure through our solar system with Doowie, the Adventure Dog, as he explores a small part of our universe with his friends." From the cover to the last page, each of the 24 pages of the paperback is full of Sal's unique and beautifully drawn images, all textured in his signature bold and pastel colors, which literally leap from the page and propel the educational, yet whimsical story along.

How it eventually got published is one of those in-the-right-place-at-the-right-time stories in itself. "Back in early 2010, I had the idea of writing about Doowie's adventures in space. I had talked to my brother, Raul, about this story I had written and illustrated about a dog who explores the universe. He told his teacher, who just happened to know someone who published books part time," he said.

That person was Rhonda L. Davis, a science teacher at Ennis High School and president of Splendor Publications.



According to an article that appeared in a January 2009 edition of a local newspaper, Rhonda, author of several books and audio-books, found a place for her work, and the work of talented writers such as Sal, in the relatively new niche of supernatural teen and young adult series such as the popular *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* series.

She started working with Sal in early 2010 to get the story — one which she and Sal envisioned as a children's

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Salvador with Isaac and Jasmine
Alejandro (his nephew and niece)

story about the mystery and beauty of the universe — ready for publication. “It was probably sent back to me at least five times over a six-month period to make changes and edits,” he recalled. “By late 2010, I got the news that it had been published. When I went to some Web sites where books are sold, there it was.” The feeling of seeing his work published and for sale was “unforgettable,” he admitted.

“Sales were slow at first,” Sal said. “My publisher told me I would need to publish two or three more books of the same genre to really get the public’s attention. I’m halfway done on the second Doowie book, which is about his exploration of the ocean. I did some preliminary sketches then finished the first draft of writing the story. I’m working on the illustrations now. I’m hoping it will be ready for Rhonda to send off soon, with the goal of getting it published later this year. A third one is in the planning stage, and may be about Doowie in the jungle.”

For Sal, the process of creating a book follows a predictable route: pictures first, then writing the story. “I do most of the sketches on paper first, using pencil



or pen, to get an idea of how the story will flow from beginning to end. Then I go to the computer and use Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop to do the artwork," he said. He began using the Adobe programs when he was in middle

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school, after several teachers taught him the software.

Next is the writing stage, which he does in a sing-song style of rhyme, and then it goes through a rigorous series of rewrites. Not only does Sal write and illustrate, he also paints. "I have done several paintings using mostly pastel colors, which are my favorite. I like working in acrylics the best. I sculpt in clay, too, which I started doing in high school. To be honest, I would love to have a gallery someday to showcase my work," he admitted.

He gets to indulge his love of sculpting at Terry Wilson's Antler Designs in Kemp, Texas, where he works during the week when he's not busy on his laptop creating the second *Doovie the Adventure Dog* saga. Sal uses his artistic talents at Terry Wilson's in the creation of furniture and lighting fixtures — all from antlers.

But his writing and illustrating are Sal's greatest loves. "I have written a lot of poetry in rhyme, which is another favorite pastime. I hope I can publish at least two more books and at least one more *Doovie* book. Then I'm thinking about writing a science fiction work set in the future for teenagers," he said.

One of his dreams, he confided, is to travel to book signings of his works all over the world, "hopefully one day," he said. It's not an unrealistic goal for someone so naturally gifted with the ability to create such visually stunning art.

He's quick to give credit to English writer, Aldous Huxley's masterpiece, *Brave New World*, as one of the most inspiring books he has read to date. Sal is most comfortable writing in the science fiction genre. In terms of art, Salvador Dali is his all-time favorite painter.

He was born in 1990 and lived with his family in Michoacan, Mexico, for two years before moving to Chicago, Illinois. In 1996, his family moved to Ennis, where his mother, Maria Martinez, had family living, and it's in Ennis Sal hopes to stay for the time being.

"Getting published was one of the greatest things to have happened to me, and I want other people to know it can happen to them, too. Just keep writing," he offered. "Watch for a publisher who understands what you write and knows how to get your work published." **NOW**

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From left:

Dr. Edward L. Holt specializes in obstetrics and gynecology. His staff includes Jamie Cherry, Jaclyn Schilling and Rocio Santollo.



Building Bonds

Having the best of both worlds is proving to be a great combination. — By Sandra Strong

Dr. Edward L. Holt didn't grow up yearning to be a doctor. He didn't have footsteps to follow or big shoes to fill. His self-proclaimed calling came later in life. "After college, I worked many years for a pharmaceutical company," Dr. Holt explained. "As I worked, I began to learn more about the medical field. Then I made the move to become a doctor of obstetrics and gynecology." It may have been late in life, but he got here as quickly as he could.

Medical school was accomplished in Kansas City, Missouri. Dr. Holt completed his residency in 2004 at the University of South Carolina, and his medical career began in Abilene, Texas. His decision to relocate to Ennis came following an invitation from Ennis Regional Medical Center. "There had been a sizable

growth in the number of deliveries at the hospital," Dr. Holt explained. "They saw a need for an additional physician who specialized in obstetrics and gynecology."

While some choices in the field have remained the same, other areas have made advancements that make it easier for both doctor and patient. Tubal occlusion can now be performed using the Essure procedure — a sterilization method that was first introduced to patients in 2002. Essure is a permanent birth control procedure that works in tandem with your body to create a natural barrier against pregnancy. It offers what other birth control methods do not: no cutting or burning, no going under general anesthesia, no down time from recovery, no hormones and no second guessing. The non-invasive choice with less

downtime has allowed women to stop worrying about unplanned pregnancy.

Dr. Holt also offers a procedure for those patients who experience heavier than normal menstrual cycles. "It's called endometrial ablation," Dr. Holt said. "It ablates, or removes diseased or unwanted tissue, from the lining of the uterus. It allows patients to avoid the more traditional hysterectomy. Results have been good, and patients are happy."

Delivering babies is something that Dr. Holt will never grow tired of doing. Each new baby represents a new life — a new little miracle. Since 2004, Dr. Holt has delivered thousands of newborns, but he never felt the need to keep count. "What I remember is the joy on the families' faces," he admitted. With five daughters of his own, Dr. Holt knows firsthand about the joy of which he speaks.

"We are building unique, lasting relationships with our patients, and that's a great feeling."

Health maintenance and preventative medicine are also at the top of Dr. Holt's list of patient priorities. "When I evaluate a new patient, we talk about diet, exercise, weight, regular checkups and mammograms," Dr. Holt shared. "All these areas are important when maintaining a healthy body." Since one in eight to 12 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime, Dr. Holt stresses monthly self-breast exams, along with annual mammograms. "Since the stats are so high, these steps are crucial to early detection," he emphasized.

Dr. Holt is happy he relocated to Ennis. He and his staff, clinic coordinator, Jaclyn Schilling, and medical assistants, Jamie Cherry and Rocio Santollo, feel quite fortunate to be able to do what they do. "I have the best of both worlds. It's a great combination of office and surgical," he confessed. "We are building unique, lasting relationships with our patients, and that's a great feeling." **NOW**



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Linda Colvin gets ready to unload food items into the freezer at the Ennis IHOP.

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Preventive Recommendations for Your Child's Health

— By Barry Davison, M.D.

The American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases has recently endorsed changes in vaccine administration. Many parents are probably aware that the advice regarding annual flu shots was amended last year. The recommendation is that all children who are at least 6 months old should receive the flu vaccine every year. One of the main reasons for this difference is several studies have shown that children often bring the flu virus into a household, after which it rapidly spreads to other family members. Therefore, protecting these children from influenza will reduce the overall infection rate for the general population.

The best strategy is to get a flu shot early and not put it off until flu season. In and around Ennis, physicians typically start seeing the first cases of influenza in December, and the season is in full swing by January through March. Common side effects of the flu vaccine include mild pain and/or swelling at the injection site and low-grade fever, which usually lasts no more than 24-48 hours. On the other hand, influenza's usual course causes three-four days of fever, body aches, chills, sore throat, a cough that can last up to two-three weeks and a high incidence of secondary bacterial respiratory infections. The shot form of the flu vaccine is a killed virus product. Therefore, it is not possible to "get the flu" from this flu immunization.

Another immunization that has been added to the line-up for children is the vaccine for meningococcal disease, or the so-called "meningitis shot."

In Texas, all children entering the seventh grade are required to have had this vaccine. Recent evidence suggests that the protection provided by this immunization begins to wane three-four years after it is given. Therefore, the Committee on Infectious Diseases is now urging general pediatricians to give kids a booster dose at age 15 or 16 to insure they have immunity to meningococcal disease for the entire time they are at increased risk of contracting it.

Finally, another important piece to pediatric preventive health care is the recommendation for the age to put children in forward-facing car seats has changed from 1 year old to 2 years old. Several studies show that 1- to 2-year-old children who were passengers in car crashes and restrained in forward-facing car seats had a high rate of neck injuries, secondary to their heads being suddenly jerked forward during the accident. Although children in this age group will likely protest some when their car seats are turned around to back-facing again, they should quickly get used to the new look, particularly if everyone who chauffeurs them around consistently enforces it. These recommendations will help keep your children and your family healthy and safe for the next school year and many years to come. **NOW**

Dr. Barry Davison is a local pediatrician and part of the medical staff at Ennis Regional Medical Center.

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Financial Tips for Newly Single Women

Within a marriage, a man and a woman's financial circumstances are generally pretty much equal. But if a divorce occurs, the woman's situation tends to be somewhat more challenging than that of her ex-spouse. And that's why, during this major life transition, you may want to meet with a professional financial advisor to go over your spending needs and your cash flow, so that you know what you absolutely need today — and how you can plan for tomorrow.

Before we get into some possible steps you can take, let's look at some of the reasons that women may fare worse than men, financially speaking, following a divorce:

- **Lower income.** The average woman's family income drops by 37 percent after divorce, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In many cases, divorce exacerbates a situation in which women were already trailing men in earnings. In fact, women still only earn 77 cents for each dollar earned by men, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

- **Smaller retirement accounts.** The average balance on women's defined contribution plans — such as 401(k) plans — is only 60 percent of men's average balances, according to LIMRA, a financial services research organization.

Of course, averages are just that — averages. But whether you recognize yourself in the above numbers or not, consider these suggestions:

- **Create an emergency fund.** Try to put six months' to a year's worth of living expenses in a liquid account. Once you've established this emergency fund, you won't have to dip into long-term investments to pay for unexpected costs, such as an expensive car repair, a new furnace or a large medical bill.

- **Contribute as much as you can afford to your retirement accounts.** Even if you will eventually receive some of your ex-spouse's

retirement funds, you need to take full advantage of your own savings opportunities, because it's pretty hard to save too much for retirement. If money is tight, it won't always be easy, but contribute as much as you can to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. At a minimum, put in enough to earn the employer's match, if one is offered.

- **Rebalance your investment portfolio.** If you are now investing for yourself, you'll want to take a close look at your asset mix to make sure it is appropriate for your situation. For example, your risk tolerance may be quite different than that of your ex-spouse's. So if you now have total control over an investment portfolio, you need to make sure it reflects your needs and preferences. Consequently, you may need to rebalance your holdings.

- **Above all, get some help.** As mentioned above, now is a good time to meet with a financial advisor. And if you don't have much experience in managing your finances, you may even find it helpful to work with a trust company, which can collaborate with your financial provider to manage your assets and also provide a variety of other functions, including bill payment and record keeping. A trust company's services can prove especially valuable to you and your family should you ever become incapacitated.

Unfortunately, a divorce may leave you feeling "at sea" in many areas of your life. But by following the above suggestions, you can at least help keep your financial ship in calmer waters. **NOW**

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

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September 7-8

Fun Ford Weekend: Texas Motorplex.

September 13

Meals-on-Wheels 25th Annual Golf Benefit: 7:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Cleburne Golf Links. Tee times: 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Event benefits Meals-on-Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Counties. For more information, visit <http://servingthechildrenofyesterday.org>.

September 13-22

The Hallelujah Girls: Warehouse Living Arts Center. Follow the ladies of Eden Falls, Georgia, as they enjoy a day at the spa with this Southern comfort comedy offering. For information or reservations, call (903) 872-5421 or visit www.warehouselivingartscenter.com.

September 15

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September 22

11th Annual Hooked on Fishing: Registration: 6:00 a.m.; tournament begins: 7:00 a.m., I.O.O.F. Park. This fun-filled morning of fishing for ages 16 and under will include free refreshments, T-shirts and prizes. Tournament coordinator is pro-angler, Sam McCollum. Poles and bait are provided or participants may bring their own. For more information, call (903) 654-4872.

September 28-October 27

Waxahachie SCREAMS Halloween Theme Park: 7:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m., 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie. For more information, call (972) 938-3247.

September 29

Annual Telico Volunteer Fire Department Barn Dance: 4:00 p.m., SPJST Hall, East Highway 34. Fundraiser includes BBQ dinner plates, live and silent auctions, raffle, live music, crafts, games for children, rooster drop and more. For more information about the barn dance or raffle

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The Green Garden Club Garden Tea Tour: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Guests will enjoy five beautiful gardens and a complimentary progressive tea throughout the tour. The event will feature three chefs and an artist from the Ellis County Art Association will be painting en plein air at each location. Tickets are \$50 per person, and are available online at www.greengardenclub.org. Proceeds benefit Green Garden Club, an organic garden club in Ellis County. For more information, call Carolyn Mixon at (214) 914-6030.

October 13

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In The Kitchen With Nancy Allen

— *By Sandra Strong*

Nancy Allen enjoys cooking because she likes to eat. "Eating isn't just a necessity," she admitted. "It's a pleasure." Whether eating in a restaurant or at home, Nancy enjoys a delicious, beautifully prepared meal. "By cooking at home for family and friends, I find I can control the amounts of fats, sodium, carbohydrates and other substances I use," she stated. "By buying and using fruits and vegetables in season at the peak of freshness I save money, while boosting the flavor."

As the family and consumer science teacher at Ennis High School, Nancy finds satisfaction in teaching students how to create delicious meals, too. "The students learn basic cooking skills," she said. "Some of the recipes shared here are the same recipes my students have enjoyed preparing." **NOW**

Morning Glory Muffins

2 eggs
2/3 cup canola oil
1 tsp. vanilla
1 apple, peeled, cored and diced
1/2 cup raisins
1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. sweetened coconut, divided use
1/2 cup carrots, shredded
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
1 1/3 cups whole wheat pastry flour
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. In a small bowl, combine the wet ingredients and set aside.
2. On your cutting board or in a bowl, set aside apple, raisins, 1/4 cup coconut, carrots and walnuts.

3. In a large mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients. Add wet to dry; stir well with a large spoon. Fold in apple, raisins, coconut, carrots and walnuts.
4. Fill a muffin tin that has been sprayed with cooking spray 3/4 full. Sprinkle on remaining coconut using just a few pieces per each muffin.
5. Bake for about 25 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean.

Strawberry Spinach Salad with Berry Dressing

Dressing:
1/2 cup fresh strawberries, washed and stemmed
1/2 cup fresh raspberries, washed
1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. raw agave nectar
Fresh ground pepper, to taste

Salad:

4 cups baby salad greens, washed
2 cups baby spinach leaves, washed
1 1/2 cups fresh strawberries, washed, stemmed and sliced
2 small onions, washed and sliced
1/4 cup walnuts
Mint sprig

1. For dressing: Place the first 5 ingredients into a blender container. Cover; blend on high until the berries are pureed. Season with a grind of fresh black pepper.
2. For salad: Toss the baby salad greens with the spinach leaves. Add in the strawberries, onions and walnuts.
3. Drizzle the dressing on the salad. Toss lightly. Serve with a mint sprig.

Fruit Salsa with Baked Cinnamon Chips

2 kiwis, peeled and diced
2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored and sliced
8 oz. raspberries
1 16-oz. carton strawberries, diced
1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. white sugar, divided use
1 Tbsp. brown sugar
3 Tbsp. fruit preserves, your choice of flavor
10 10-inch whole wheat tortillas
Butter flavored cooking spray
2 Tbsp. cinnamon

1. Thoroughly mix the first 7 ingredients, using only 2 Tbsp. of sugar, in a large bowl. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least 15 minutes.
2. Coat one side of each flour tortilla with cooking spray. Mix 1 cup sugar with cinnamon to make cinnamon sugar. Sprinkle tortillas with desired amount of cinnamon sugar. Cut into wedges. Arrange in a single layer on a large baking sheet.
3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes at 350 F. Repeat with remaining tortilla wedges. Allow to cool for approximately 15 minutes. Serve with chilled fruit mixture. Salsa may also be served with cinnamon graham crackers or cinnamon pita chips. Best when eaten the same day.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.