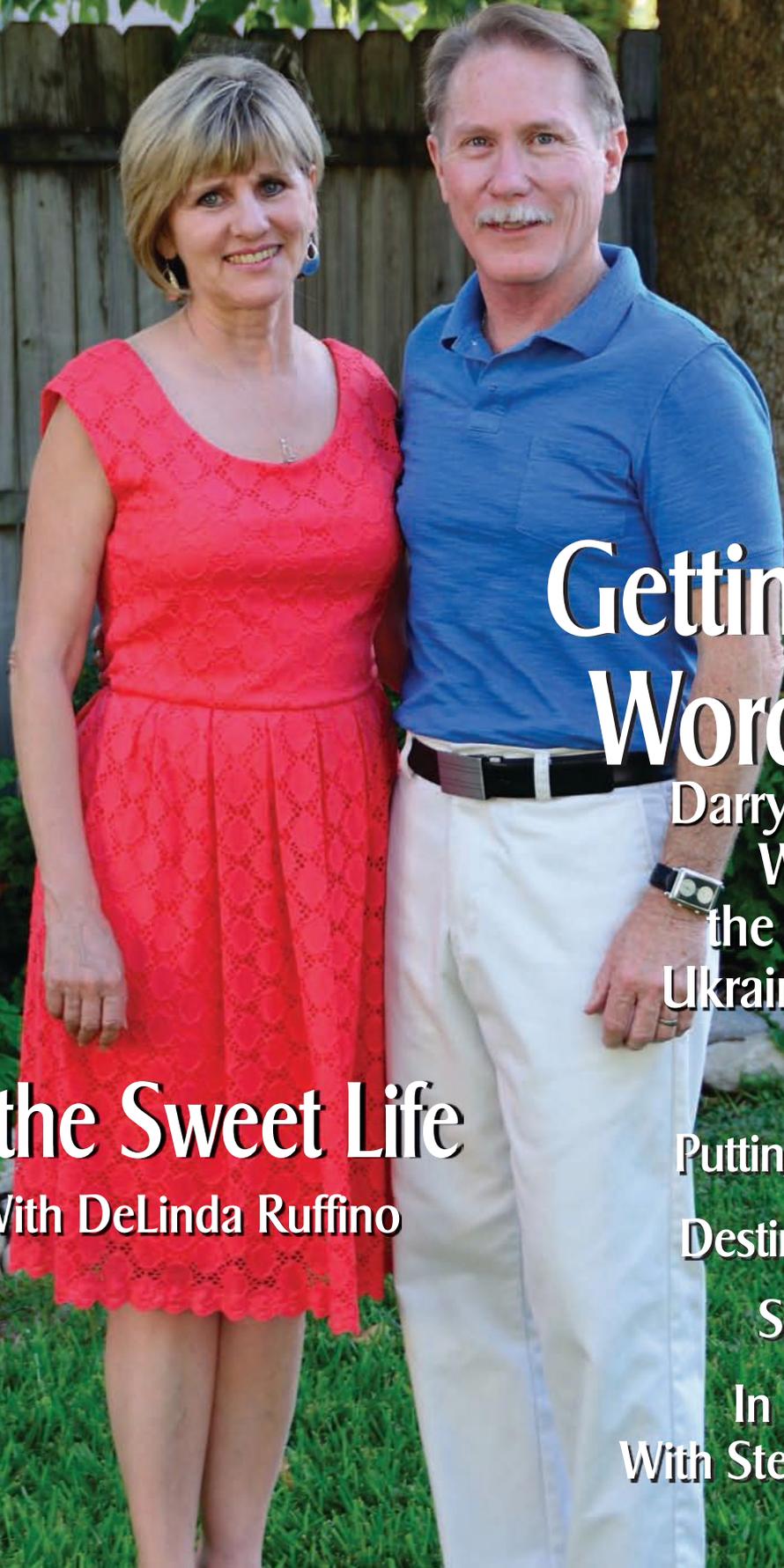


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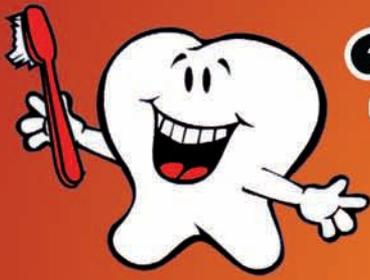
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ON THE COVER



Darryl and Terri Willis devote their lives to Ukrainian mission work.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

School days have begun ...

Or should I say “school *daze*,” since that’s what it seems like to many parents — or uncles like me — who marvel at the frenzied activities of the modern student. Kids are involved in any number of extra-curricular pursuits. In my day (I guess I’m officially an old man to start a sentence like that!), students might have one after-school interest, possibly two, but now there’s no limit to the classes, games and other programs in which youths participate.

This is great for kids, though not so much for parents, whose bleary-eyed yawns at courtside attest to soccer mom (and dad) overload. Parental fatigue aside, it’s a distinct advancement that there are so many educational choices for children these days, in school and out. Another fact we elders are awed by is that kids still have the stamina to ace everything from classwork to social media to church and volunteer involvement!

Randy

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EnnisNOW Editor
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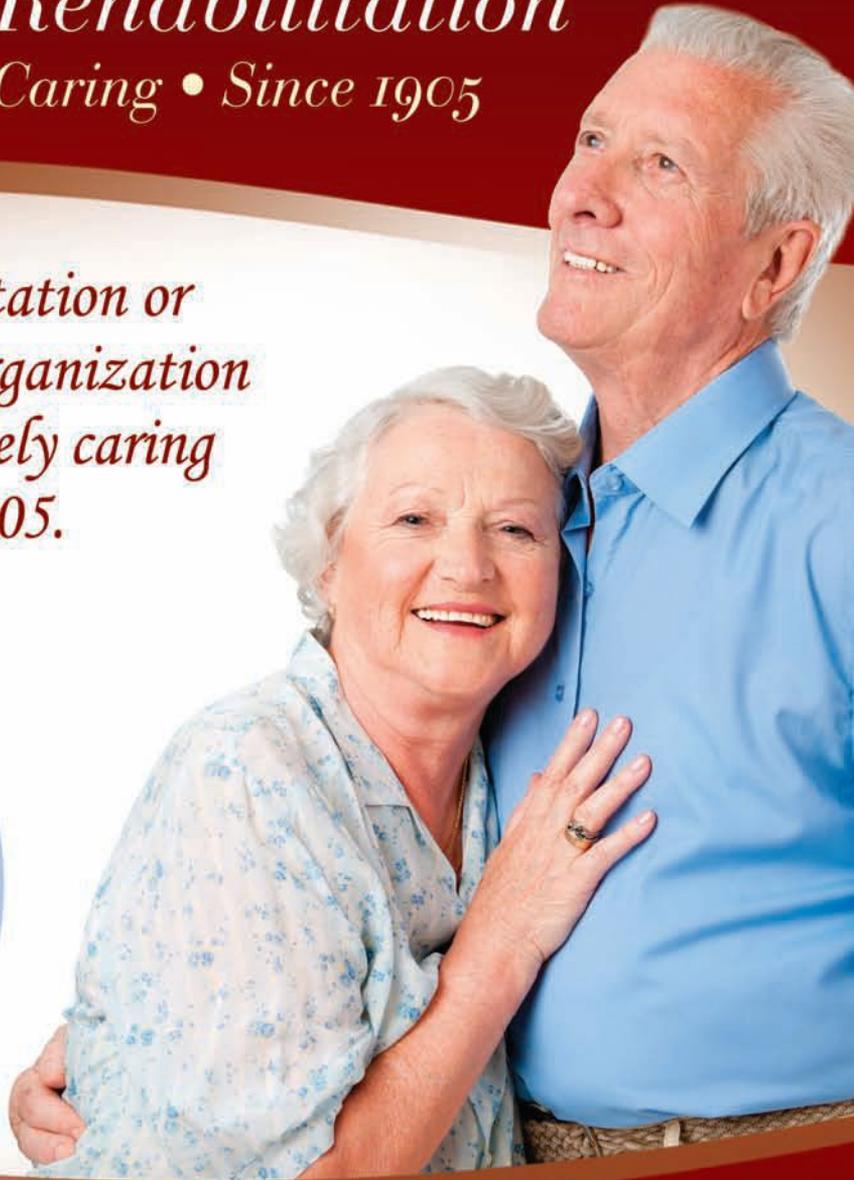
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~ K. Brown, July 2014

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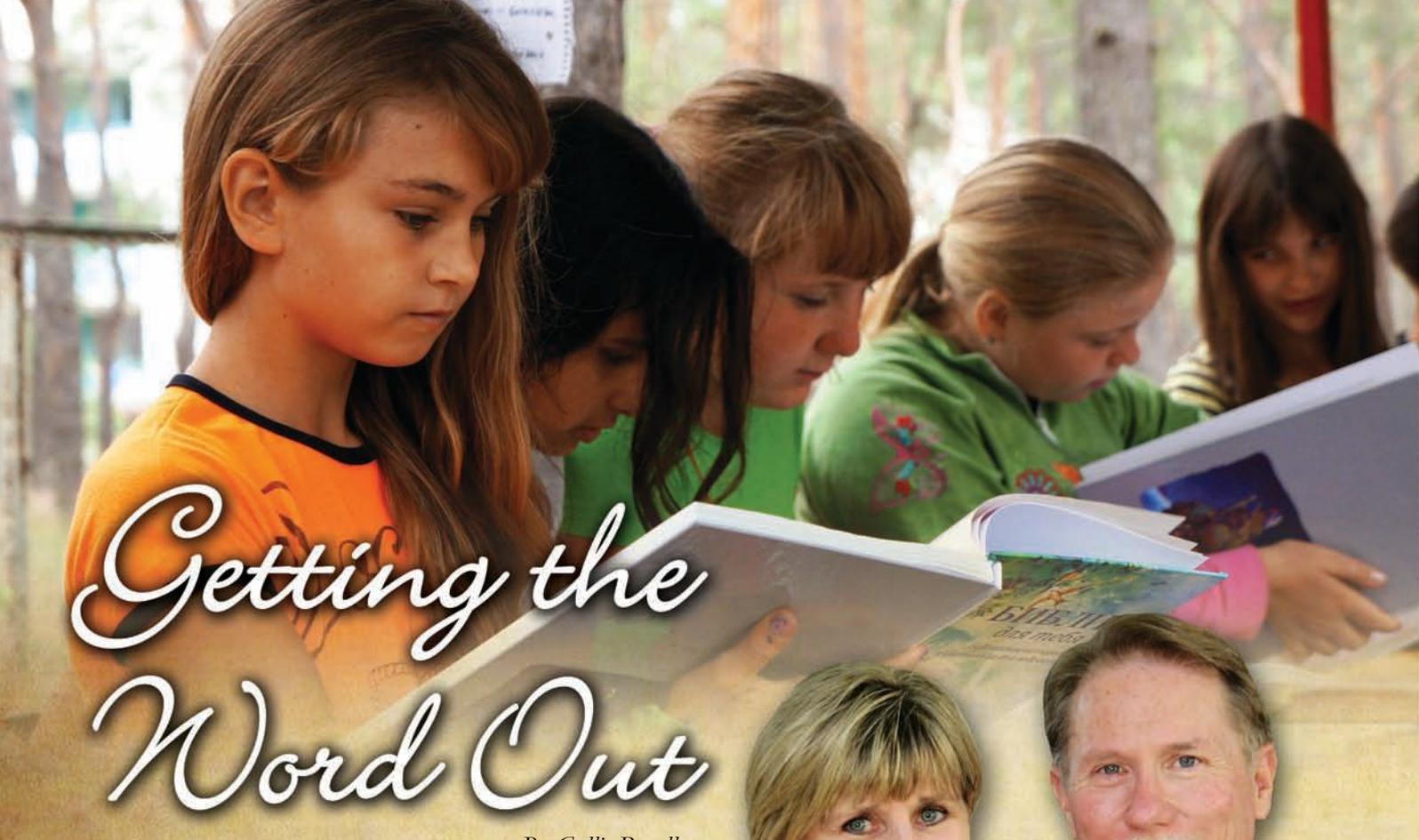
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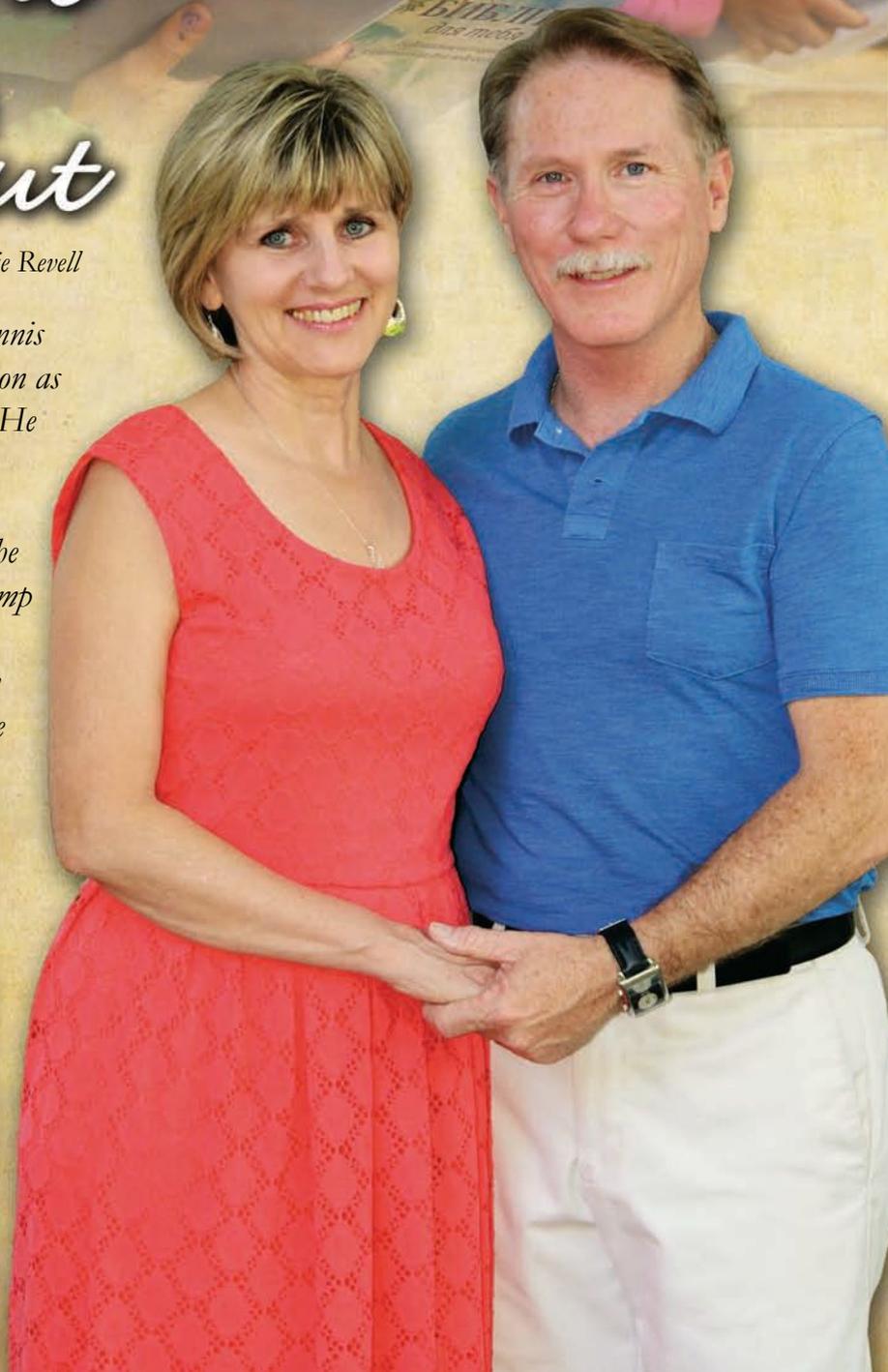
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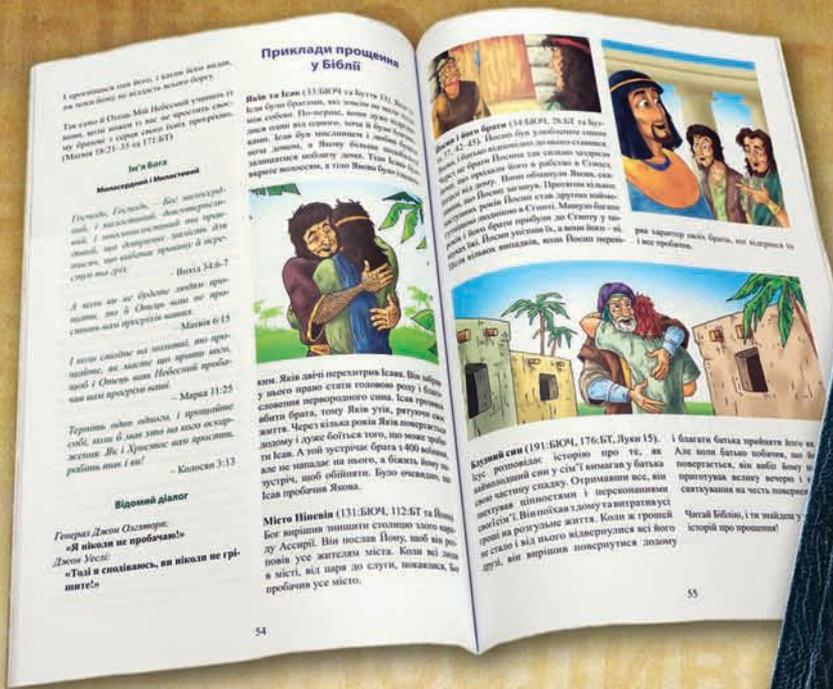


Getting the Word Out

— By Callie Revell

When Darryl and Terri Willis moved to Ennis 17 years ago, Darryl had just accepted a position as senior minister of the local Church of Christ. He never imagined life would lead him to Eastern European Mission, a Dallas-based agency committed to the distribution of Bibles. Now, he serves as vice president, directing the Youth Camp Program in the embattled country of Ukraine. Recently, Terri began working for EEM as an administrative assistant. Together, they help the group positively impact lives on the other side of the world.





“Eastern European Mission was, perhaps, one of the original Bible smuggling organizations,” Darryl explained. “We started in 1961 sneaking Bibles into countries behind the Iron Curtain. Then in the ’90s, when the wall came down, all of that changed. We then became a Bible distribution organization, still trying to get God’s Word to as many people as possible in their own language free of charge. We do not sell our product. We raise the funds for it here in the United States. Some say we are the Bible bookstore of Eastern Europe — we just don’t send the bill.” In 2013, EEM distributed over 483,000 Bibles and other Christian books in 15 Eastern and Central European languages, including Czech.

Darryl was approached by EEM in 2008 to write curriculum for teams to use in secular youth camps in Ukraine. His course covers ages 6 to 17. After Darryl completed the project for the summer of 2009, EEM decided to send him to Ukraine on a team to get firsthand experience. Since then, his promotion to director of the youth camp program has strengthened his connection to the youth of Ukraine. “Before he preached, he did 18 years of youth ministry and loved it,” Terri said. “I could tell going on that trip brought that passion out in him again. He loves what he does. It’s very obvious. He has gotten very attached to some of the people there. I think he’s found his niche again.”

Now, Darryl and Terri share an attachment to Ukraine, and the work EEM has accomplished there is important to them. “In six regions, we’ve put Bibles in every single public school at *their* request — at the request of the Ministers of Education — and we have three more opening up this year for the express purpose of textbooks to teach character and values,” Darryl said. “This is a huge thing. We believe that within a decade, we can blanket the entire nation of Ukraine.” About the size of Texas, Ukraine is a large country currently in political turmoil, struggling in a hotly debated conflict with Russia. “Even in the middle of all the fighting, they’re saying, ‘Yes, please, we want the Bibles,’” Darryl recounted. “Last year, I had five teams. We distributed 12,000 Bibles and other pieces of Christian literature to 2,000 children and adults.”



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Yet EEM reaches Ukrainians primarily through government-sponsored youth summer camps. According to Darryl, the camps are similar to Boy Scout troops and involve three-week sessions filled with character and morale-building activities. “Five hundred thousand to a million children go through these camps every summer,” Darryl pointed out. “They range in size from 150 to 600 kids. They call them Children’s Health Resort Establishments.” During the communist regime, all children attended the camps which were also used to indoctrinate them. Since the fall of communism, the camps have changed focus. In addition to outdoor activities, they feature talent shows, pageants and competitions.



One question Darryl and Terri are often asked is if traveling to Ukraine is safe. Darryl recalled a recent flight that had to be canceled because the airport in Donetsk had been under fire, resulting in dozens of casualties. However, Darryl insists that, although eastern Ukraine is dangerous, the western half of the nation is still very safe. Terri often answers concerned phone calls in the office. “People will call and say, ‘Is it safe? Are people still going? Are they still going to let you send the Bibles?’” Terri related. “I



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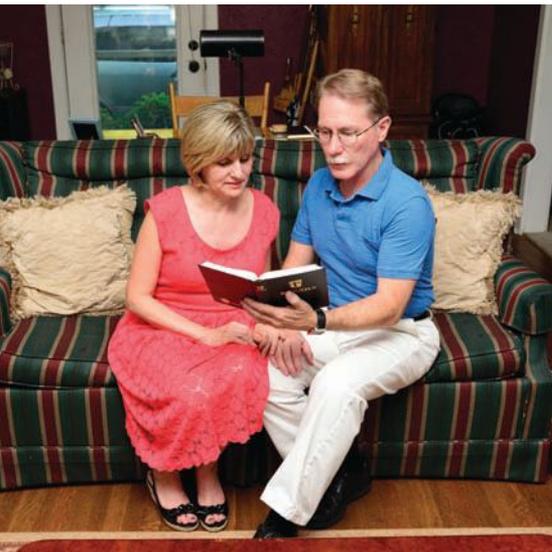
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tell them, "We smuggled Bibles over there in the '60s. If we have to start again, we'll do what we have to do to get God's Word over there."

When fighting began in Ukraine last spring, EEM began a 31 Days of Prayer Campaign. "Each day, we would have a different prompt to pray for Russia, Ukraine or the United States," Darryl outlined. "We did the 30 days in April and the first day of May, which is the National Day of Prayer in the United States." Darryl added that the campaign was not a promotion for EEM. "We're not about politics," he said. "But we need to be focusing on this very volatile situation and pray that peace will happen — and not at the barrel of a gun."

Darryl and Terri are aware that many Americans wouldn't recognize Ukraine on a map, and there are many misconceptions about the country they try to erase. Darryl notes that Ukraine is not a communist government but rather a parliamentary republic. "Most people don't realize this, but Ukraine is a developing nation,

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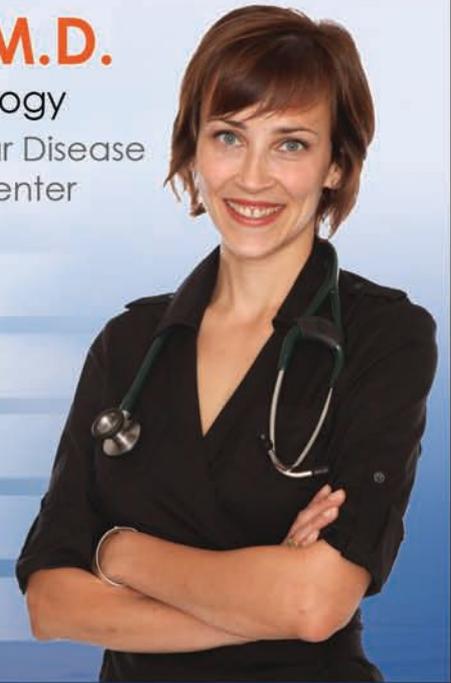
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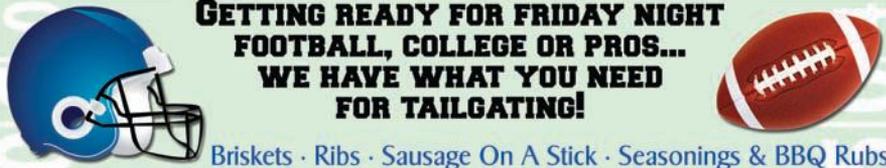
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much like Zimbabwe,” Darryl said. “As far as people’s salary, I’ve seen anywhere from \$200 to \$400 a month, and Bibles are *very* expensive.” However, Darryl is careful to point out that not all developing nations have uneducated citizens. “The literacy rate in Ukraine is 99.7 percent,” he shared. “That’s higher than in the United States. These people are as sharp and sophisticated as anybody.” Although many think of Ukraine as isolated and closed-minded, Darryl and Terri have found that isn’t the case. “They’re very interested in what we have to say,” Darryl confirmed. “They understand what it’s like not to have the Bible, to live in an atheistic society. That’s why they’re open. It was taken away from them, and now they want it back.”

Darryl and Terri encourage fellow Ennisites interested in supporting the efforts of Eastern European Mission to get involved. “Ennis has Czech roots,” Darryl said. “There is a connection here with Eastern European heritage.” EEM always needs financial assistance and volunteers to travel to Ukraine. “For anybody who goes over there, the kids are going to remember you and connect with you,” Darryl said. “That’s the beauty of it. We’re dealing with children. I think everyone knows that children are our hope for the future.” **NOW**

Editor’s Note: For more information about Eastern European Mission, visit www.eem.org. For information on Bibles in public schools, visit www.milliondollarsunday.org.




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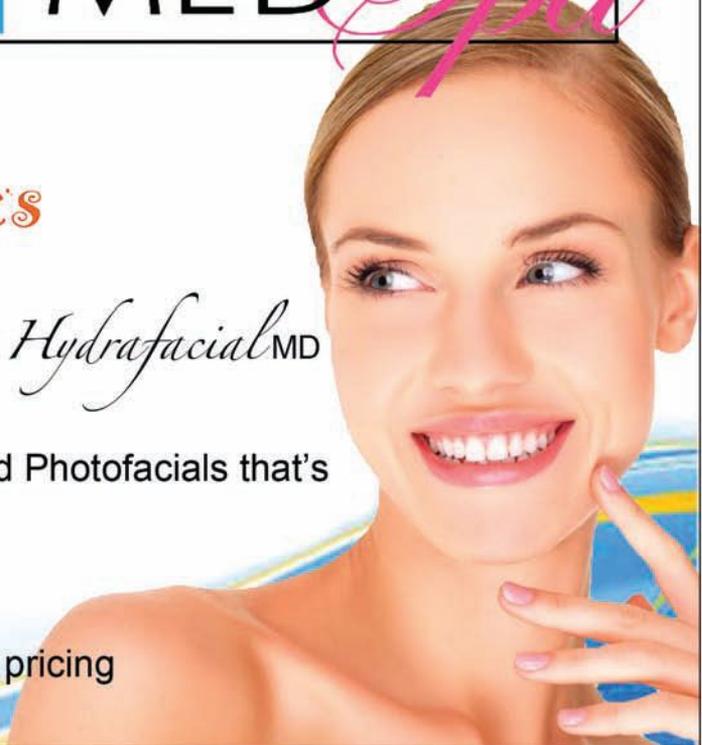
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Living the Sweet Life

— By Sara Edgell



At Home With DeLinda Ruffino



Editor's Note: While final preparations were underway for this article, EnnisNOW learned of the untimely passing of Carlos Ruffino, who will be deeply missed by the community in which he played such an integral role. In extending our heartfelt sympathy to his widow, DeLinda, and their children, we trust the following story will serve as a tribute to Carlos' talent, gentle nature and the love for family and friends that was central to his life.

Sugar Ridge is a popular road in Ellis County, situated picturesquely along the Bluebonnet Trails. Each spring, the winding country lane is emblazoned with color as the state flower blooms, eventually giving way to the Indian Paint Brush. Locals and out of town visitors alike pass through the glorious landscape, stopping to take family photos. But when seasonal flowers wilt, the beauty of the place doesn't fade. The real beauty that permeates life on Sugar Ridge exists year-round, something Carlos and DeLinda Ruffino have known all about. "When we first married, we lived in Oak Cliff, and then we moved to Lancaster," DeLinda recounted. "And then we moved here. We just kept moving south. We felt the urge to live in the country on 50 acres, and that's what we did!"

Their charming hillside home offers more than meets the eye. On the outside, it appears a modern-day version of a rustic homestead. However, its eclectic, artsy decor balances the countrified feel. The antiquated meets contemporary design reflects the couple's love of art and life. The standard horses and donkeys are typical of country living, but they also bring a distinct elegance unrivaled in these parts.

Sharing a strong faith, Carlos and DeLinda met and got to know one another through church-related activities. The couple described their inevitable nuptials as an "arranged marriage, orchestrated by God." They celebrated their 26th year of wedded bliss on June 11 with hopes of another 26-plus. Together they have two adult children, Robert and Michaela, and Grace Covenant Church in DeSoto is where DeLinda attended services with Carlos



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until his passing on July 16. Their relationship was faith-based, Carlos always said, with that faith really at the core of each of them.

DeLinda stumbled on the custom-built abode by chance. After inspecting the property on her own, she took Carlos to see it. After two days of discussion, the pair bought the house. As it turned out, DeLinda actually knew the owner, Paul Morgan, a fashion photographer in Dallas with whom she had worked several times over the years. "Paul told us he felt he built the house specifically for us," DeLinda remembered Carlos saying. The interior was perfect for them: a blending of contemporary amenities and charming characteristics from tile work to custom paint colors.

"We haven't changed a thing in the interior," DeLinda said, "except for adding on an extra room in the back."

The Ruffinos did alter the exterior siding to stone to add a certain rural, yet sophisticated, ambience to the lot. In addition to the barn and storage building, the property features a garden, gravel driveway and wooden stick-lined cow fence. On the spacious back patio, a serene pool is surrounded by spectacular views of the surrounding countryside. Here, there's plenty of seating under the pergola, complete with fire pits and a grill, a perfect space for entertaining a crowd or just enjoying pleasant, private evenings under the starry Texas sky.

The house sits on a sprawling 32 acres of gorgeous Texas land with the kind of

breathtaking views suited to unwinding and appreciating life. This slowed-down mode of living seems atypical of DeLinda, an active, spunky woman, but it fit Carlos' quiet, observant type well. In addition to the home, the property includes the adjacent 20 acres of sprawling countryside and serves as a bed-and-breakfast, dubbed Winding Ridge.

Despite easy living, DeLinda manages to stay busy, jokingly calling herself and Carlos "Renaissance people who happened to be late bloomers to boot." Health wise, she's now the fittest she has ever been. Yoga and horseback riding are two hobbies that help keep her in shape, and she is active in dressage competitions, dressage being one of the oldest and highest forms of horse training. DeLinda trains

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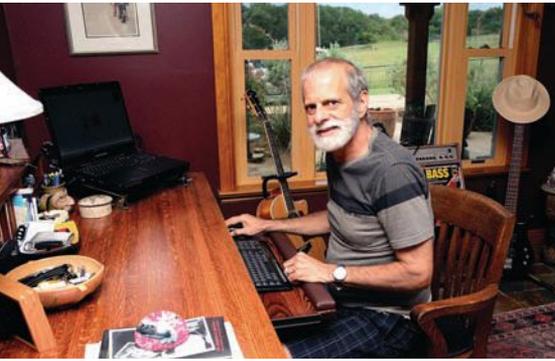
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three or four days a week in Rockwall and competes throughout the year. This interest is rooted in her childhood love of horses. “You know, I feel like God puts things in your heart,” DeLinda shared, “and just because you don’t do them when you think you’re supposed to, He plants them in your heart for a reason.”

Another way she stays fit is by feeding all the animals on the property. It’s quite a menagerie: six horses, two mini-horses, three goats, six dogs, six chickens, one parrot, two doves, two cats, three donkeys and two zebus. She also loves gardening, and just a few art-based interests include theater and painting. She has performed in many Ennis Public Theatre productions, her favorites being *Proposals* and *A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking*. She and Carlos became involved with the newly formed Theatre Rocks with excitement about its future in Ennis’ burgeoning entertainment community. DeLinda’s other artistic flair is for painting. She dabbles in watercolors, acrylics, pastels and oils. In fact, several of her paintings adorn the walls of the home. These include her first piece, a horse in a pasture, which hangs by the front door, and a watercolor of Lady Madonna, which she gave to Carlos as an engagement gift.

In addition to DeLinda Ruffino originals, there are countless other



paintings throughout the home, and all have a special story behind them. Several were painted by a late sister-in-law, while others were handed down to Carlos by his father. Others were purchased, like Carlos' favorite — a dog riding shotgun in a pickup truck. All the art contributes to the eclectic, yet traditional style that has always defined the pair's personalities so well.

Carlos enjoyed basketball and biking, and like his wife, was fond of the arts, though his interest was mainly that of a collector. For his part, Carlos was drawn especially to playing music, reading and writing. He was also a romantic in thought and deed. During their courtship, Carlos actually kept a journal about their experience, documenting every emotion and gesture. He even wrote love songs for DeLinda, one of which was played as she walked down the aisle. "There wasn't a dry eye in the house that day," Carlos would say. "It was just really powerful."

Often on the go, some of the couple's favorite places to travel have been Belize, Europe and Hawaii, and they hoped to visit such exotic locales as Greece and Alaska. But in the end, there's really no place like home. And for the Ruffinos, that home, nestled among the bluebonnets, has everything they ever needed or wanted. Because they spent it together, life on Sugar Ridge has been sweet indeed. **NOW**

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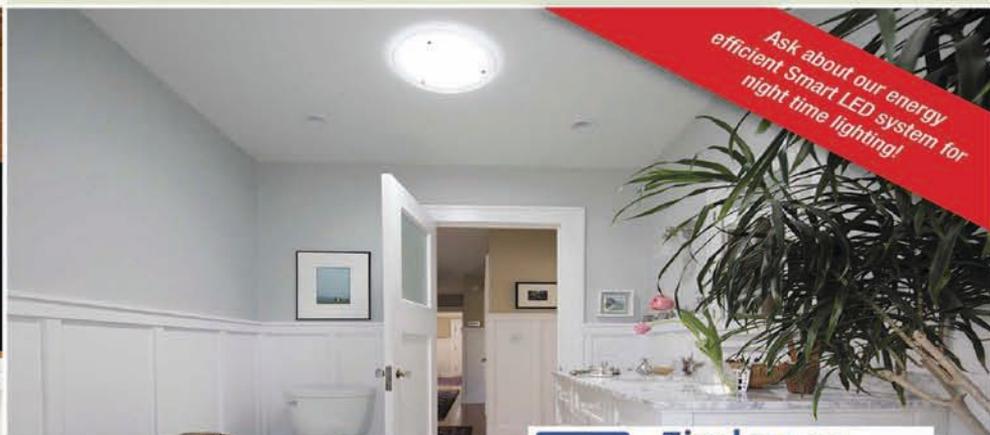
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PUTTING ON AN ACT

— By Randy Biggam

For Shelley Aubrey, the Ennis Public Theatre's new director, performing is more than a career. It's as essential to life as breathing for this attractive, high-spirited lady whose eyes brighten as she discusses the art and craft behind the footlights. "My mother said I was acting and singing from about age 5," the Oak Cliff-born entertainer recalled. "But it wasn't until I was 13

that I knew the stage was for me." She was babysitting for a couple who held season tickets for Dallas Summer Musicals, and they invited her to come along one evening. The show was *Desert Song*, and the experience changed her life. "I immediately knew that working in the theater was what I wanted to do," Shelley said.



Ennisites only since last December, Shelley and her husband, Bill, also a Dallas native, have welcomed the gentle culture shock of small-town life. "I think Ennis is beautiful, but it has taken some getting used to," she acknowledged. Living in Dallas and later Rockwall, the communities she and Bill called home were such busy places they never really knew their neighbors. "But here people are so friendly," Shelley enthused. "You walk into a store, and they actually say 'hi' to you! We're not used to that. But we sure love it." While Bill, a chaplain for Baylor Medical Center, busies himself locally with the Greater Ennis Development Alliance, Shelley auditions and directs actors in the profession she loves.

She comes to the newly refurbished Ennis Public Theatre with an impressive résumé, a fresh vision and a dedication to the work that's defined her personal and public existence for more than 40 years. "I've performed almost all my life and directed for half of it," Shelley explained. From productions at the Music Hall at Fair Park and Casa Mañana Theatre to national tours of *The Fiddler on the Roof* and *1776*, Shelley has earned her stage chops. In addition, she operated a community theater in Cedar Hill for a decade and served the military for seven years as a theater director at Fort Hood. One of the most exciting experiences of her career as an actress was joining the first national tour of *Godspell*. "That was long before it went to Broadway," Shelley recounted. "It was such a hit at Casa Mañana that we were held over for two weeks, and then a company picked us up for a tour of dinner playhouses across the country."

The tour of *Godspell* was also notable for the controversy it attracted. Although now regarded as an ingenious approach to the story of Jesus, many then were outraged. "A lot of people picketed the show along the route, because they didn't see it as a spiritual commentary," she remembered. "They thought it was blasphemous."

The belief in originality Shelley demonstrated then is as strong now when she stages a show. Acting was always stimulating, but today her heart lies in directing. "Acting is fun," she granted,

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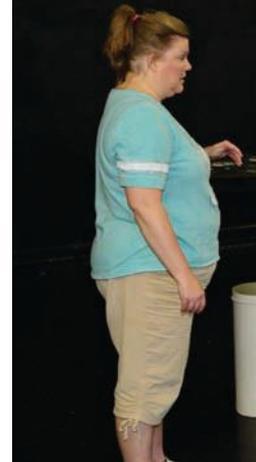
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“because you get instant gratification from audiences. But directing is so satisfying because you’re building something, making it your own.”



And Shelley definitely knows what she wants in an actor. “My shows reflect naturalness,” she said. “I like people walking and talking like real people. I don’t want actors to stand there like a cardboard cutout and recite lines.” She takes a special interest in fostering talent in young or otherwise untried actors. “What I thoroughly enjoy, apart from singing, is being able to direct the novice,” Shelley confirmed. “The thrill is not just in molding a talent but in allowing that talent to express itself in its own way.” She feels mentoring is what she does best. Moreover, she finds fulfillment in contributing to the development of an actor’s latent gifts. As an example of nurturing a hidden talent, Shelley recalled a woman who volunteered her services, not as a performer but as one



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of the backstage crew. She told Shelley she was just marking the experience off on her bucket list and was perfectly content to work behind the scenes. But the director sensed potential and asked her to audition for a part in an upcoming play. "She was great," Shelley said. "I cast her, and she was the cutest thing in the role! Inspiring people to their full potential like that is what I love."

Shelley's plans for future Ennis Public Theatre productions mostly involve sating



the tastes of audiences. "I try to think of the audience first," she maintained. "Yes, giving actors great lines and a challenging part is important, but it only matters in the end if the audience goes for it." She's also an advocate of interactive theater, as seen in her recent productions of *Clue: The Musical* and *Train to Danger*. "In *Clue*, audiences took part in the mystery," she pointed out. "In *Train to Danger* they booed and threw popcorn at the villain,

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and in *Bingo*, they play the game while they're watching the play!"

Her hope is that by providing upbeat, family-oriented vehicles, the Ennis Public Theatre will continue to attract lovers of quality entertainment for all ages. "Now there may be some shows we do that aren't appropriate for young children," she clarified. "But for the most part, we want to attract the community at large." She admits to being partial to comedies and musicals rather than serious or avant-garde dramas. "I think comedies are where the real action and fun are," Shelley said. "People want to be entertained. They want subjects that are light and happy, so they can have a good time. There's too much already that's dark and negative, so why would anyone turn out to see something like that on the stage?"

But a good drama with lighthearted moments is a different story, Shelley qualified, and the theater's board of directors is interested in supplying the public that option. Shelley is also a proponent of emphasizing the talent of local children, and stands by the excellence of Ennis Public Theatre programs geared to kids. These shows, like the recent *Alive in Wonderland*, are all directed by Jamey Pritchett, the organization's managing director.

Bringing top-notch theater to Ennis in a budding cultural atmosphere is a challenge Shelley embraces. "Ennis is expanding in so many ways, including the arts," she observed. "I mean, already we are big enough to support two theater groups." She takes pride in the special art form community theater has become in Ennis and throughout Ellis County. "And we really try to embody what that means," Shelley concluded. "The community participates onstage, backstage, on the board and in the seats. *We are the community!*" **NOW**



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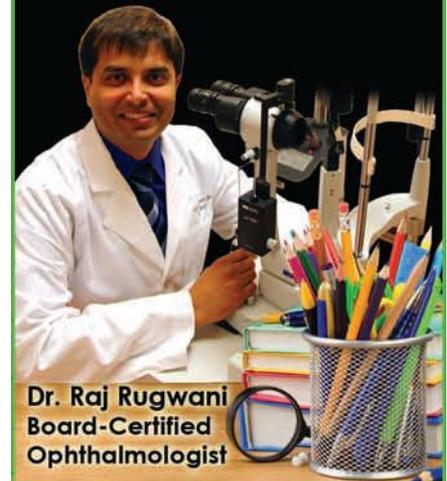
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— By Shannon Pfaff

Planning a wedding can be a hectic experience. The preparation can take months, yet the actual wedding day passes so quickly. With all the details that go into planning the wedding, it seems like the honeymoon is the time to recover. Why not get the vacation started early with a destination wedding? A destination wedding can be a unique and exciting way to get married and have a honeymoon all in one shot!

When considering a destination wedding, it may seem like it would be more expensive than having a traditional wedding at home. Depending on the type of wedding and the location, having a destination wedding may actually save money. Many resorts will include the ceremony for free when you stay and have the reception at their location. This will save you from having to find two locations for the ceremony and the reception. Several resorts also offer credits toward the ceremony package to include: flowers, linens, chairs and the officiant, as well as room upgrades for the bride and groom. Some packages even include table settings and the wedding cake. The cost to the couple is the food, drinks and any additional guests not covered by the package.



The expense of the event will also vary depending on the number of guests and any additional activities paid for by the bride and groom. Since you are requesting for people to travel for your wedding, it makes sense to plan some fun for you and your guests. Destination weddings tend to be more intimate affairs with a smaller guest list, which helps keep costs down. While the couple is responsible for the ceremony and reception expenses, wedding guests should expect to cover their own travel expenses. To help their traveling guests, the bride and groom can arrange a flight and room block to help guests with making arrangements. Some hotels offer group discounts when booking several rooms, which will help your guests save money. This is a great incentive to start the planning process early.

Because the party generally pays for their own accommodations, the bride and groom should choose their attendants as soon as possible. Once the attendants are chosen, the couple should inform them of their plans to have a destination



wedding. This gives each person in the wedding party time to set aside funds for their trip. Encourage your guests to book early as well, which will help them save money. Be prepared to make necessary changes if someone you ask cannot afford the trip. If you can afford it, you can always help someone who is in financial need, but this is not a requirement. Consider having a reception



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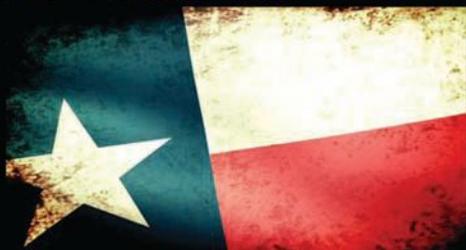
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later on to include those who could not attend your wedding.

If you are planning to travel out of the country, make sure your passport is up-to-date and that you meet all the necessary requirements to get married in that location. Some countries have residency restrictions, so it's important to plan ample travel time to meet the required number of days, if necessary. A wedding planner at your destination is a great tool to help you understand the country's requirements, communicate with vendors, set up travel arrangements and make your dream a reality. A wedding planner close to home is also a great source to help you coordinate your wedding. Whether they help you plan the entire event or just assist you in some of



the details, they can help save time and money in the planning process.

Another wedding professional you should consider hiring is a travel agent. A travel agent can help simplify your travel arrangements. They can research destinations, compare prices, negotiate with hotels, as well as help plan excursions. It's best to select a local travel agent that you can meet personally. When selecting a travel agent, make sure you check their certifications. This will ensure they are certified with credible agencies. You will also want to interview the agent before selecting one. Ask them about their experience and their fees.

Selecting a destination is important in determining the wedding type, travel time and budget for the event. Some popular

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12:15 pm: Elizabeth Engleheart, SOUTHERN FOOD MATTERS: Stories From The Dinner Plate

1:00pm: Steven Bailey, URBAN ACRES: Building Community Through Real Food

2:00pm: Daniel Vaughn, THE PROPHETS OF SMOKED MEATS: A Journey Through Texas Barbecue

3:00pm: Sherrie McLeRoy, GRAPE MAN OF TEXAS: How T.V. Munson Saved The World's Vineyards

4:00pm: Hank Fincken, NOT "JOHNNY" IF YOU PLEASE: A Conversation with Johnny Appleseed

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choices are Hawaii, Canada and Europe. If your budget is limited, consider traveling a little closer to home. There are several beautiful locations that are just a drive away.

Whichever location you choose, make sure you research the weather patterns when setting a date. Keep in mind that optimal weather conditions usually coincide with high tourist season, which will mean higher prices. Shoulder season is the best time to travel for good prices and great weather. This is the time that falls between high season and low season when tourists are few and the weather is on the edge of ideal. During this time, resorts are lowering their rates due to receding tourism. The Internet is a great source for understanding the best times to travel to various locations.

Once you have chosen your destination, selected a date, advised your attendants and family, the fun truly begins in the planning process. With all of the major and more difficult decisions out of the way, you are free to think about planning your trip. There will be other wedding details to consider, but you should also think about some fun with your friends and family. Consider planning a welcome dinner when everyone arrives. A destination wedding is a great way for you to celebrate a significant moment in your life. You will be able to spend time with close friends and family and make memories that will be part of the foundation of your future together. **NOW**

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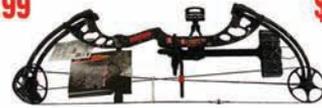
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Dr. Kelly Walker and her dedicated staff improve patients' lives one healthy step at a time.



Step By Step

Dr. Kelly Walker and her staff enable patients to put their best foot forward.

— By Randy Bigham

When Dr. Kelly Walker's pre-med advisor suggested podiatry, the aspiring surgeon looked perplexed. "Feet?" she asked, half surprised, half amused. But she heeded the sound recommendation, and for 12 years now, has enjoyed a successful career in the field she once questioned. "I've found podiatry to be an extremely rewarding profession," the doctor admitted.

One of the most fulfilling aspects of her practice is knowing that most patients leave the office feeling and functioning better. "And that's not true of all areas of medicine," she pointed out. "Helping improve people's quality of life is what makes me love my job."

The journey to a satisfying life has been a long one, etched with challenges and near tragedy, but the young doctor derives strength from the past and applies her positivity to the work that defines

her spirit. A graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, Dr. Walker earned her Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine from Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine in Miami. Following residency training in Massachusetts and Texas, she joined a small practice in Oklahoma, before returning to the Dallas area. After two years in a group practice in Mesquite and Dallas, she learned of the need for a podiatrist in Ennis.

Dr. Larry Dunkerley, who had practiced in the Bluebonnet City for over 30 years, passed away in 2008. The following year, Dr. Walker purchased the Dunkerley practice from his family. "I met with Ennis Regional Medical Center administration," Dr. Walker remembered, "and received the gracious support of Dr. Dunkerley's family." Her first visit to Ennis in October 2009 was

Business **NOW**

a surprise and a revelation. "It seemed like it was going to be hard, going into business for myself, but somewhere I got the courage to take the chance, and I've never regretted it," she shared.

Walker Foot & Ankle opened its doors in June 2010, and with a dedicated staff, has met the needs of Ennis and Ellis County residents. Only once, nine months ago, was there a crimp in her success. An avid equestrienne, Dr. Walker suffered a riding accident that caused a crippling neck injury. But through faith, innate bravery and the encouragement of her family, friends and patients, she has made a full recovery following cervical fusion surgery. "I couldn't imagine not practicing anymore," she said.

The same gung-ho attitude that sustained her through her own traumatic experience, inspires patients on a daily basis. Dr. Walker also brings her special expertise to the cases she treats. "In residency training, I concentrated a lot on conservative biomechanical treatments and surgical options to treat foot and ankle conditions," she explained. "I also spent two years researching a titanium subtalar joint implant to correct flatfoot deformity, in conjunction with lengthening the Gastroc/Achilles tendon complex, to restore a more functional arch."

Dr. Walker treats a variety of conditions, from diabetic complications and ankle sprains to chronic heel pain and fractures. "We do see many diabetics," she admitted. "I try to educate diabetic patients on preventative care to avoid wounds and amputations." She also treats Achilles tendonitis and plantar fasciitis that afflicts patients of all ages and activity levels. Other common conditions treated at Walker Foot & Ankle include ingrown toenails, nerve entrapments, fungal toenails and painful callouses.

Her excellent bedside manner notwithstanding, Dr. Walker credits her success in Ennis to her capable and caring staff: assistant Carmela Sanchez, PMAC; receptionist Priscilla Elizondo; and office manager Rita Gotcher. "We make a good team and have a great rapport," she said. Patients sense the camaraderie, becoming a part of it, and that suits the doctor just fine. **NOW**

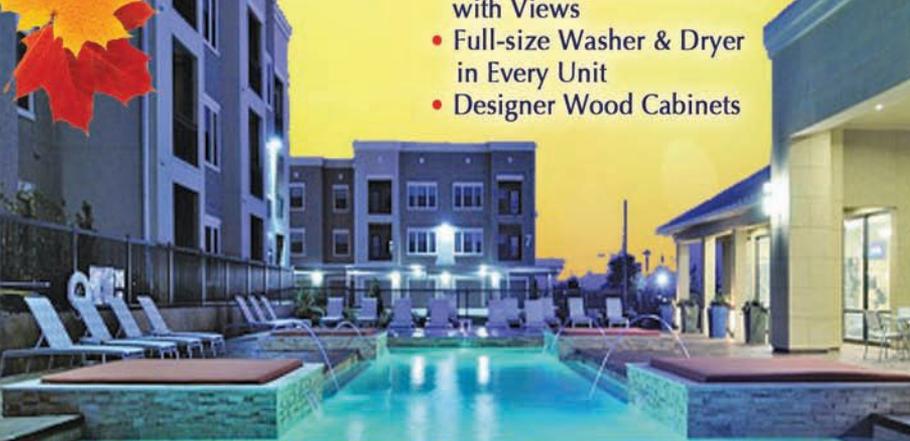


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Ennis Chamber of Commerce's quarterly luncheon features guest speaker Marty Nelson, Economic Development Coordinator for the city.



Family Smiles operate a booth at a recent Memorial Park health fair.



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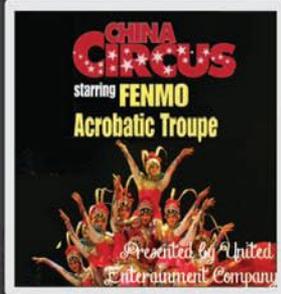
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What's Smarter – Paying Off Debts or Investing?

It probably doesn't happen as much as you'd like, but from time to time, you have some extra disposable income. When this happens, how should you use the funds? Assuming you have adequate emergency savings — typically, three to six months' worth of living expenses — should you pay off debts, or fund your IRA or another investment account?

There's no one correct answer, and the priority of these options may change, depending on your financial goals. However, your first step may be to consider what type of debt you're thinking of paying down with your extra money. For example, if you have a consumer loan that charges a high rate of interest — and you can't deduct the interest payments from your taxes — you might conclude that it's a good idea to get rid of this loan as quickly as possible.

Still, if the loan is relatively small, and the payments aren't really impinging on your monthly cash flow that much, you might want to consider putting any extra money you have into an investment that has the potential to offer longer-term benefits. For instance, you might decide to fully fund your IRA for the year before tackling minor debts. (In 2014, you can contribute up to \$5,500 to a traditional or Roth IRA, or \$6,500 if you're 50 or older.)

When it comes to making extra mortgage payments, however, the picture is more complicated. In the first place, mortgage interest is typically tax deductible, which makes your loan less expensive. Even beyond the issue of deductibility, you may instinctively feel that it's best to whittle away your mortgage and build as much equity as possible in your home. But is that always a smart move?

Increasing your home equity is a goal of many homeowners — after all, the more equity you have in your home, the more cash you'll get when you sell it. Yet, if your home's value rises — which, admittedly, doesn't always happen — you will still, in effect, be building equity without having to divert funds that could be placed elsewhere, such as in an investment. In this situation, it's important to weigh your options. Do you want to lower your mortgage debts and possibly save on cumulative interest expenses? Or would you be better served to invest that money for potential growth or interest payments?

Here's an additional consideration: If you tied up most of your money in home equity, you may well lose some flexibility and liquidity. If you were to fall ill or lose your job, could you get money out of your home if your emergency savings fund fell short? Possibly, in the form of a home equity line of credit or a second mortgage, but if you were not bringing in any income, a bank might not even approve such a loan — no matter how much equity you have in your house. You may more easily be able to sell stocks, bonds or other investment vehicles to gain access to needed cash.

Getting some extra money once in a while is a nice problem to have. Still, you won't want to waste the opportunity, so when choosing to pay down debts or put the money into investments, think carefully. **NOW**

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

Add an Important Item to Your Back-to-school List.

For parents, back-to-school season means it's time to stock up on school supplies. But it can also be a good time to think about how to save for your child's future education.

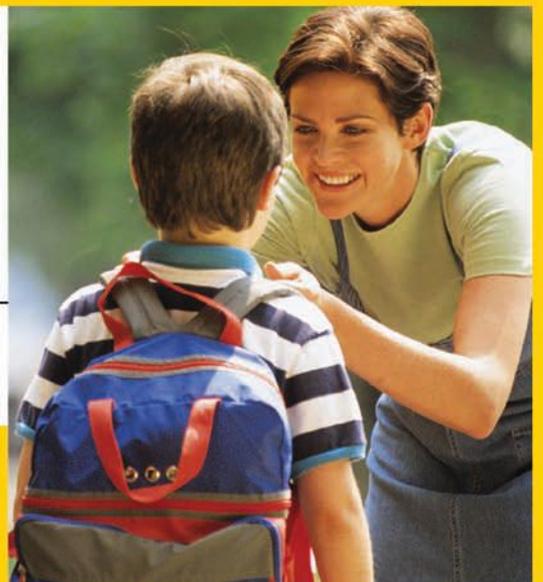
Developing a strategy for achieving your education savings goal — or other savings goals — can help you stay on track.

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Coastal Getaway

— By Becky Walker

There is just something about the smell of salt in the air and the sound of waves crashing against the shore. The beauty of the ocean is like none other, and for landlocked North Texans, the Gulf Coast is a favorite vacation destination. This is true any time of year, but the frigid temperatures we experienced this winter might really make a trip south sound like a great idea for many. Corpus Christi is definitely one destination to consider when thinking about a coastal getaway.

Corpus Christi offers fun of all varieties. Completed in 1941, the seawall was constructed to offer the city protection from hurricanes, but it also provided the city with one of its most striking and beautiful attractions. The seawall is 1.75 miles long and graced by multiple *Miradores del Mar* — gazebos that overlook Corpus Christi Bay. The wall itself is made like stairs leading into the bay. Joggers, cyclists and inline skaters all find the wall an excellent place to get in a good workout. For Tejano music lovers, the Selena memorial, located along the seawall, pays tribute to the hometown girl whose life ended far too soon.

The Port of Corpus Christi is the fifth deepest in the United States, and the marina, known as the T-heads, is a bustling place, with restaurants, private yachts, sailboats and rentals available. Sailboat races take place here on a regular basis. It is also home to the *Niña*, part of a replica fleet constructed in Spain and sailed

to the United States in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' voyage to the New World.

On the east side of downtown is Harbor Bridge, the second tallest bridge in Texas. Spanning 620 feet, it opened to traffic in 1959. Crossing the ship channel via the bridge, you will find the *U.S.S. Lexington*, a World War II-era aircraft carrier, which has been retired to the bay. The ship is now a museum, which displays the many models of aircraft flown from its flight deck during its many decades of service. Pretend you are a flying ace as you pose for a photo in front of a Blue Angels fighter jet, F-14A Tomcat or climb into a flight simulator. Walk the narrow corridors and learn about the young men who fought for our freedom.

Standing on the flight deck, you can look out over the bay or back toward the shore, where you will see the Texas State Aquarium, which features a variety of presentations and exhibits, including dive shows and animal feedings. Several restaurants offering fresh seafood are also nearby. If the beach is more to your liking, North Padre Island, the world's longest barrier island, is located just south of Corpus Christi.

Corpus Christi is located six hours south of the Metroplex. If you are thinking about taking a trip this summer, this might be the relaxing destination for you! **NOW**



It's *Just* My Gallbladder

Common things being common, many people have gallbladder disease or know someone who has or had gallbladder problems. It seems accepted parlance now to refer to abdominal pains as being either ulcers or gallbladder problems, and people seem to be quite fine “just dealing with it.” People often think these aren’t dangerous problems, but it is necessary to understand the gravity of these issues and that self-treatment may have devastating consequences.

So what is a gallbladder? The gallbladder is a small sack tucked under the liver in the right upper side of the abdomen. The liver makes bile, and the bile is stored in the gallbladder. Bile helps digest food, particularly fat. When we eat and food fills our stomachs, the stomach sends nerve and hormone signals to the gallbladder saying, “Send me the juice.” The gallbladder then squeezes and, through a set of ducts, sends bile down into the first part of the small intestine to meet up with the food as it leaves the stomach. We never feel this, and it works just great for the vast majority of people. However, there are some who form stones in their gallbladders. Just like kidney stones, there are genetic and environmental factors that contribute to the formation of gallstones.

With stones in the gallbladder, some people experience nausea, cramping pains or aches in the center of their abdomen or under their rib cage. This is particularly common after eating a greasy, fried or spicy meal which can cause the gallbladder to contract most vigorously. Sometimes, people write this off as indigestion or sour stomach, but if it is caused by gallstones, this is only a warning. As long as the stones are mobile, they cause some discomfort, or people stop eating and the discomfort fades until the next time they eat something that “doesn’t agree with them.” A more dangerous situation

occurs if a stone gets lodged in the duct leading out of the gallbladder. If the gallbladder can’t squeeze it out, then the process may lead to cholecystitis where the back-up causes inflammation of the gallbladder. With time, this can lead to infection or even gangrene of the gallbladder. Although not as common as appendicitis, this can be a lethal condition. If the stone makes it out of the small duct and into the common duct with the liver, it can block the liver, the pancreas or both. Infection can back up into the liver or the pancreas, where it can cause pancreatitis. Some people think they can wait until it gets worse, but that is not the best time to intervene. When the gallbladder is chronically irritated or inflamed, the body sometimes will attempt to wall it off, which makes surgery harder and more risky. If a stone is lodged, it may require different operations — one to remove the stone and then another to remove the stone factory — the gallbladder. What could have been a laparoscopic, outpatient, same-day surgery may become an open operation requiring a week or more stay in the hospital and months of recovery or ... death.

Other problems can mimic gallbladder disease that may or may not require surgery or medications. But if you or someone you care about says, “It’s *just* my gallbladder,” let them know of the complications and suggest they see a doctor! **NOW**

*John Sullivan, MD
General and Vascular Surgery of Ennis
Ennis Doctors Center
802 W. Lampasas Street, Ennis*

September 1

Labor Day: Ennis ISD closed for student holiday.

September 6

“Ennis Dynasty,” 31st Annual Ennis Chamber of Commerce Auction: 5:00 p.m., Sokol Hall, 2622 E. Hwy. 34. Event offers dinner, silent and live auctions and an open bar. Dress code: Camouflage. For more information, call (972) 878-2626 or visit www.ennis-chamber.com.

Dallas String Quartet: 7:00 p.m., SAGU Performance Hall, 1200 Sycamore St, Waxahachie. The first half of the concert will be classical music. The second half will feature custom-made electric instruments and amplification, covering a variety of genres from jazz to tango, classical to rock and pop music.

September 6 — 27

Ennis Farmers Market: **Saturdays**, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., North Dallas St. Event features locally grown produce, organic beef, seeds, canned and jarred condiments and sauces and many other vendor offerings. On **September 13** visit a special booth hosted by Greater Ennis United Way. For more information, call the Ennis Visitors & Convention Bureau at (972) 878-4748 or visit www.visitennis.org.

September 11

Rails, Bails and Bluebonnet Trails: 6:00 p.m., Ennis National Bank Event Center, 116 W. Ennis Ave. Sponsored by the Ennis Historical Society, the City of Ennis and the Rotary Club, the program will introduce a cellphone audio tour of the history of Ennis. Wine, cheese and light fare provided.

September 13, 14

16th Annual Cancer Memorial Golf Tournament: Old Brickyard Gold Course, 605 N. I-45, Ferris. For information on times, sponsorships and registration, call Hazel at (972) 875-5995.

September 17

Pre-Stage Fan Fest: 5:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. Event celebrates the AAA Texas NHRS Fall Nationals at the Texas Motorplex **September 18-21**.

September 25

22nd Annual “Taste of Ennis” Fundraiser: 6:00 p.m., Knights of Columbus Hall, 850 S. I-45. Tickets are \$10 per person. Event benefits Helping Hands of Ennis, spotlighting samples of Ennis’ best chefs in a

“taste-a-bite” setting (no “to go” plates). For information on sponsorships call (972) 875-0218 or email Judi at hhe.jhejny@sbcglobal.net.

September 27

Telico Volunteer Fire Department Barn Dance: 4:00 p.m., Knights of Columbus Hall, 850 S IH45, Ennis. Raffle tickets are currently on sale. Contact Chief Van Fowler at (972) 878-2083 for more information.

Bristol Opry: 7:00 p.m., featuring local singers and musicians. Sponsored by Bristol Cemetery Association and Caring Hands of Bristol. For more information, contact Jim Gatlin at (972) 846-2211.

Ellis County SPCA’s “Wish Upon a Paw” Gala: 6:00 p.m., Midlothian Event Center, 1 Community Dr., Midlothian. For information on tickets and sponsorships, email director@elliscountyspca.org.

September 27 — October 27

Screams Halloween Theme Park: 7:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Event offers five haunted attractions, live music, games, rides, food and drink. Costumes and masks are not allowed in theme park. For tickets and information, visit www.screamspark.com.

October 3-19

Leading Ladies by Ken Ludwig: **Fridays and Saturdays**, 7:30 p.m.; **Sundays**, 2:30 p.m., Ennis Public Theatre, 2905-C N. Kaufman St. Two out-of-work Shakespearean actors pose as nephews to an ailing old lady, hoping to nab her fortune. For more information, call (972) 878-7529 or visit www.ennispublictheatre.com.

October 10 — 26

A Bad Year for Tomatoes: **Fridays and Saturdays**, 7:30 p.m., **Sunday Aug. 24**: 2:30 p.m., Theatre Rocks, 505 N.W. Main St. Written by John Patrick, the comedy follows the misadventures of a TV star trying to lead the simple life in a country town. For tickets and information, call (972) 878-5126 or visit www.theatrerocks.com.

October 16

Halloween at Myrtle Cemetery — A Tour with Jim Templin: 6:00 p.m. Historian Jim Templin will lead a walking tour of the graves of notable locals, sharing insight into their lives and deaths. Kids are welcome and attendees are encouraged to wear costumes. Sponsored by the Ennis Historical Society.

October 18

“Autumn Days in Ennis” Fall Festival:

10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. Event features musical entertainment, food vendors and children’s activities, including face painting, petting zoo and photo booth. For more information, call the Ennis Chamber of Commerce at (972) 878-2625.

November 7, 8

Waxahachie Old Fashioned Singing: **Friday**, 7:00 p.m.; **Saturday**, 3:00 p.m., historic Chautauqua Auditorium. This is a staged musical featuring quality arrangements of several well-known hymns and gospel songs. Contact artistic director R.G. Huff at (972) 923-2709 or visit www.WaxaOFS.com.

November 8, 9

Greatest Generation Aircraft & Gun Show: Sokol Hall, 2622 Hwy. 34. For more information, call (972) 875-7959.

Ongoing:

Mondays and Wednesdays

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

Third Mondays

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

Fourth Mondays

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meetings: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 Grand Avenue.

Third Wednesdays

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

Thursdays

Chess for Kids: 6:00-7:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave. Elementary age and above. No sign up required.

Sundays

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

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



In the Kitchen With Stefanie Davis

— *By Randy Bigham*

Stefanie Davis has childhood memories of her grandmothers' cooking but not of helping out in the kitchen. Instead, she was a shameless food bandit, sneaking snacks while meals were being prepared. "I'll never forget the time I stole so much pie dough, my Mamaw Hartis stuck me in the corner!" Stefanie laughed.

Now a teacher at Jack Lummus Intermediate, Stefanie loves cooking for husband, Will, and kids, Kaleb and Raegan. She admits dinnertime can be a challenge since she's "no Betty Crocker."

Yet she's learned some healthy shortcuts that all enjoy, though none can be found in her Grandma Trojacek's coveted book of down-home classics. "Things like fried pork chops have been kicked to the curb in place of grilled chicken and baked fish," Stefanie admitted. **NOW**

Mamaw's Chocolate Chess Pie

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3 Tbsp. flour
- 4 Tbsp. Hershey's powdered cocoa
- 1/2 stick butter, room temperature
- 3/4 cup evaporated milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 Tbsp. Karo syrup
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Pecan halves, to taste
- 2 frozen piecrusts

1. Mix sugar, flour and cocoa.
2. Add remaining ingredients; mix.
3. Pour into piecrusts and bake 1 hour at 350 F.

Potato Casserole

- 2 lbs. frozen hash browns
- 1 10.75-oz. can cream of chicken soup

- 8 oz. sour cream
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 sticks butter, room temperature (divided use)
- Cornflakes, to taste

1. Mix first 4 ingredients.
2. Melt 1 stick of butter in the bottom of a 13x9-inch baking dish.
3. Pour hash brown mixture into the prepared dish.
4. Melt remaining butter and mix with enough cornflakes to make a moderate top layer; spread on top of hash brown mixture.
5. Cover with foil and bake for 1 hour at 350 F.

Parmesan Chicken Bake

- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 16 oz. plain Greek yogurt
- 2 cups shredded Parmesan cheese

- (divided use)
- 1 1/2 tsp. seasoning salt
- 1 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. garlic powder

1. Preheat oven to 350 F; grease or spray a 13x9-inch baking dish; add chicken breasts to dish.
2. In a large bowl, mix remaining ingredients (except 1 cup of Parmesan); spread evenly over chicken and sprinkle remainder of cheese on top.
3. Cover with foil and bake 30 minutes. Remove from oven and slice through the thickest chicken breast to test for doneness. If not done, return to the oven for 10 more minutes.

Will's Chicken & Rice

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, raw and cubed
- 1 16-oz. jar Great Value Classic Alfredo Pasta Sauce
- 1 14.5-oz. can Great Value No Salt Added Petite Diced Tomatoes, drained
- 8 oz. chicken broth
- 2 cups uncooked white (or brown) rice

1. Mix all ingredients in a 13x9-inch baking dish.
2. Bake at 350 F for about 25 minutes or until chicken pieces are no longer pink.

Portobello Burger

- 4 Giorgio D'Lightful Portabella Mushroom Caps, washed and dried
- Olive oil, to taste
- Hamburger buns
- Toppings (lettuce, tomatoes, onions, mustard, mayo, etc.)

1. Brush mushroom caps with olive oil; grill mushrooms for 2 1/2 minutes on each side.
2. Place caps between buns and add toppings to taste.

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

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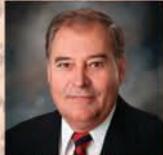
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Featured Listing

6893 FM 1129, Chatfield

Gorgeous doesn't begin to describe this home! 1960's home totally gutted and remodeled in 2012. Nothing left undone. 2 bdrm/2 ba w/ 2 living that could easily be changed back to 3 bedroom 1 living. Beautiful backsplash in kitchen and lovely wood floors. 2 heavily treed acres. Property great for entertaining.



1025 NW CR 0180

Beautiful 29+ wooded acres. This property has great features-woods, ponds and serenity of country living. Graced with a farm house which needs some TLC, but with a little imagination it will be a great home to entertain, family and friends.



2002 Lakeridge Circle, Ennis

Beautiful home w/ marble floors. Upon entry, you view elegant tall ceilings, study, formal and upstairs cat walk. LR windows view a lavish backyard with salt water pool. 2 bdrm down & 2 up, media room, game room and extra play/exercise room. Big fenced backyard for your very own oasis. Come see to appreciate.



1120 Hampel Road, Palmer

This immaculate custom home sitting on 15 acres has 6 bdrm, 4.5 bath featuring spacious living & dining room, gorgeous kitchen, oversized master bdrm & ba, game room perfect for kids. Just wait till you see the backyard w/ huge pool & hot tub great for beating the heat this summer.



117 Pecan Hollow Street, Ennis

Beautiful 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Great work shop 25 x 30. Granite countertops in kitchen. This is a MUST-SEE!

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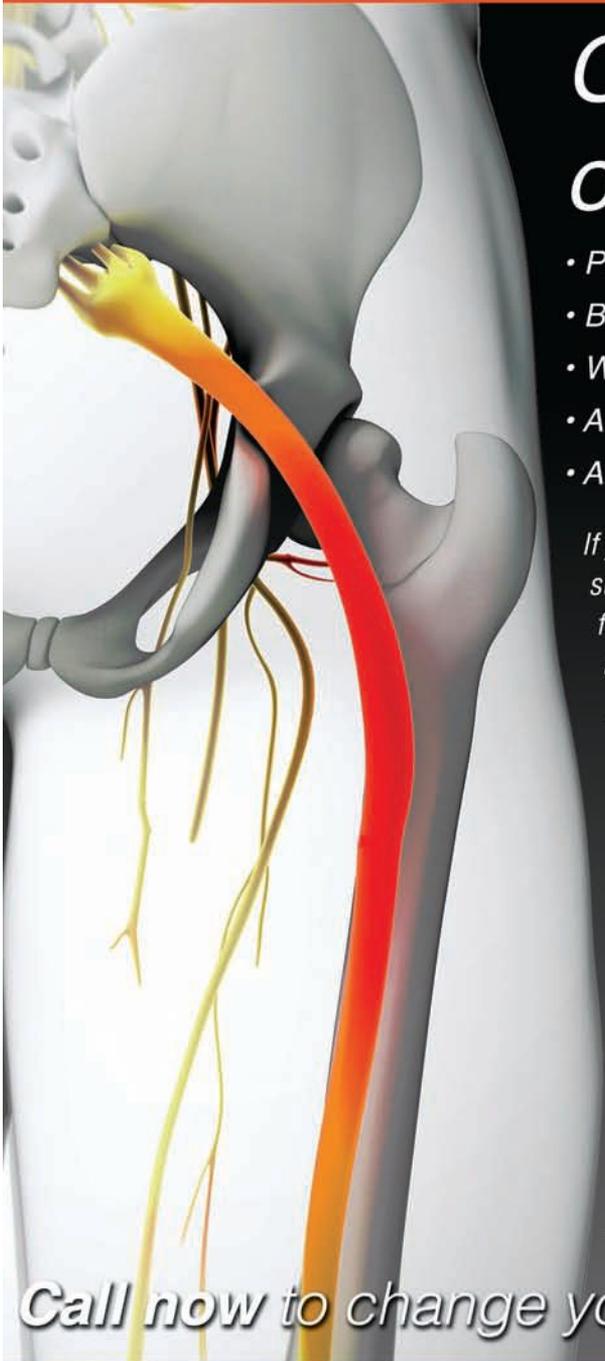


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- A shooting pain that makes it difficult to stand up

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