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NOVEMBER 2026



Going for Artistic Gold

Mckinzie Orduno
creates magic on both
paper and screen

2026 Holiday
Shopping Guide

Waves and Rays Await

Adventure is just
beyond the horizon

Around Town

Calendar

Recipes for a
Thanksgiving Feast

Crossword/Sudoku

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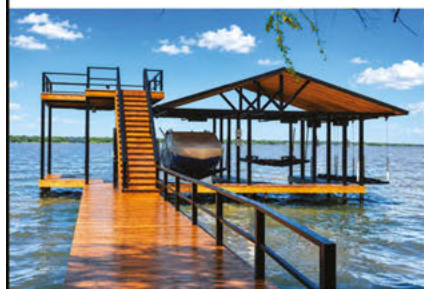
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After shadowing different careers in college, Dr. Cristina Allala discovered her calling in dentistry. Ten years later, she brings specialized expertise and a spa-like atmosphere to Cedar Hill through Serenity Advanced Dentistry, a solo, minority, woman-owned private practice.

Dr. Allala graduated from Baylor College of Dentistry in 2016 and completed her Bachelor of Science from The University of Texas at San Antonio in 2012. Since opening her practice, she has built a loyal following of patients who have followed her from her previous office, drawn by her gentle approach and commitment to patient care.

What sets her practice apart is her advanced certification in Level 2 moderate sedation — a qualification most dentists do not have. This certification requires at least 60 hours of specialized instruction and successfully administering sedation to at least 20 patients under supervision. For patients who experience dental anxiety, this option can transform their experience, making procedures like extractions comfortable and stress-free.

"Another thing that sets our practice apart is our skill with dental surgeries," Dr. Allala said. "Here are some of my favorite quotes from patients:

"Regarding implants: 'My implant surgery went smoothly. They explained everything, kept me relaxed, and I had very little discomfort afterward.'

"Regarding tooth extractions: 'I had oral surgery done and was extremely nervous, but the doctor and team made me feel comfortable the entire time. The procedure was painless, and recovery was easy.'

"Regarding tooth fixed dentures: 'My experience with fixed dentures was great. Dr. Allala planned everything digitally, the surgery went smoothly, and I had no complications. I can eat comfortably now, and they feel like my own natural teeth.'"

Serenity Advanced Dentistry offers most dental procedures under one roof, including sedation dentistry, dental crowns, dentures, emergency treatment, oral surgery, dental implants, root canals, teeth whitening, extractions, clear aligners, gum grafts and periodontal therapy. The practice emphasizes privacy and comfort. The office features private treatment rooms that allow honest conversations between doctor and patient without worry of being overheard. The modern facility incorporates the latest dental technology while maintaining a calming, spa-like environment.

"We are not a corporation," Dr. Allala said. Unlike larger corporate dental practices, Serenity Advanced Dentistry remains independent, allowing Dr. Allala to focus on building genuine relationships with patients. All assistants are bilingual, ensuring Spanish-speaking patients feel comfortable and fully understand their treatment options.

Dr. Allala lives in DeSoto, just 10 minutes away from her office, keeping her deeply connected to the community she serves. She gives back by supporting the Friends of Tri-City Animal Shelter through monthly contributions, a cause close to her heart as a devoted pet lover. For families seeking personalized dental care in a welcoming, professional environment, Serenity Advanced Dentistry offers an alternative to corporate dental chains.

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Going for Artistic Gold

— By Bill Smith



Ennis High School art student Mckinzie Orduno is undoubtedly her own worst critic. "I'm usually satisfied with my work when I finish it, but then when I go back and review it later, I see things I think would make it better," she said. "I don't like to give praise to my own art, but criticism motivates me to make positive changes."

Mckinzie's foray into the world of artistic expression began when she was just 4 years old, with drawings of flowers, buildings, anime and other characters. "I always drew with a pen and not colored pencils," she recalled. "It was the kind of stuff Mom would put on the refrigerator. I think we still have some of it, but if I look at it today, I'll be embarrassed. I know I would be very critical of it."

Cheryl Kelly has been Mckinzie's art teacher since her freshman year and noticed her talent early. "She says I'm too hard on myself. Even though she noticed my work early on, and it qualified for the state contest, by the time we got to present the piece, I was no longer happy with it." At the state contest as a freshman, Mckinzie's art scored a 3, and her junior year entry scored a 4, which is the second highest award. Still Mckinzie said, "I want to be better. I want to win!"

Mckinzie does a lot of her work digitally, indicating that she received her first iPad at age 10. She has learned to work with pen and charcoal also. Her first trip to state as a freshman was with digital. "When I did not return to state as a sophomore, I was very disappointed in myself, but again, that is where my motivation comes from — the negative feedback. It is harsh, honestly, but it helps me refine my work. Ms. Kelly and the judges see it from a different perspective, and I see that as a benefit to me."

The goal of winning a Gold Seal Award at the state contest is a lofty one, but Ms. Kelly agrees that it is attainable for Mckinzie. The requirements to qualify at the state level are rigorous, including attendance at a regional event where the artist is interviewed by jurors and the work is evaluated. If the art receives a superior rating, it is awarded a regional medal and a set percentage advance to the state event and are presented an area medal. The work is then reviewed by the state jury panel where Gold Seal Awards may be presented. Gold Seal artworks receive a State Gold Seal Medallion.

Reflecting on Mckinzie's work, Ms. Kelly said, "Since her freshman year, I have watched her grow into a curious, strong-willed and talented young artist. She has a penchant for ink, charcoal and drawing Asian characters. Her classmates would describe her as quirky, messy, competitive but easygoing and super crazy talented."

Last year's submission to the state contest was a pen piece that included a couple of Mckinzie's own characters with a detailed background. "I still like anime and K-pop characters," she said. She has examples of some of her creations on her cell phone, including a picture that was created in her imagination with a superimposed cover from *Vogue* magazine that would make one expect to see it on a newsstand. "I went to state for characters, but



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I really love realism. It thrills me when people tell me that they can't tell it's not real." She revealed a picture of a domestic cat that was so authentic one might be tempted to reach out to pet it!

Mckinzie is a well-rounded student, and she pointed out that before her passion for art, she was pursuing tennis. "I enjoyed tennis, but with schedules clashing, I eventually had to make a choice.

Ms. Kelly just happened to look over my shoulder at something I was working on as a freshman and wanted me to sign up for state. I was excited because I was the only girl that made it. At the end of my sophomore year, I decided I had more of a future in art."

"Sometimes Mckinzie listens to me, and sometimes she doesn't," Ms. Kelly acknowledged with understanding. "She still asks

me for my opinion and trusts my feedback and critique. I am proud of her, and I absolutely cannot wait to see what she does with her talent after graduation."

"Ms. Kelly is not one to give fake compliments," Mckinzie stated. "She wants what is best for her students, and she is excited when we do well. She's my favorite teacher, and I love coming to this room."

Mckinzie is aware of art programs at colleges from Illinois to Rhode Island. "I would love to travel out of state. My dream job would be to write books and animate them with my own characters," she said.

"I am easily distracted, so I like to have music playing when I draw, so I don't have to pay attention to anything else." She concluded, "I know I am very competitive. I want to do well in art and make my parents proud of me."

There is a very good chance that there will be a book in the future written and illustrated by Mckinzie Orduno. Watch for it! **NOW**



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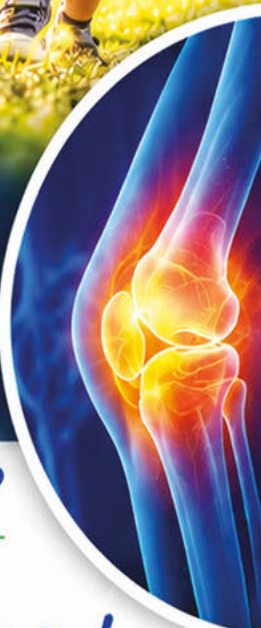


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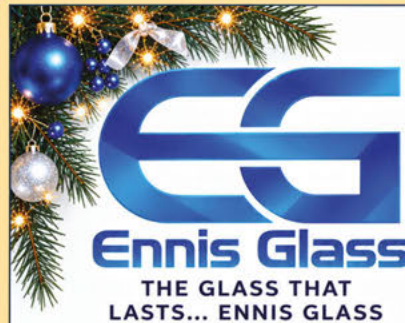


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Waves and Rays Await

— By Virginia Riddle

Taking your first cruise can be an amazing experience. It's a trip families and/or friends can take where each person can spend time enjoying their own activities, or they can make memories together.

Each cruise line has its own vibe. Some are known as family favorites like Disney or Royal Caribbean. Others cater to couples or luxury filled times like Celebrity. Carnival is favored by young adults. Choose destinations and cruise lines accordingly. Inside cabins are cheaper but have no windows. Oceanview and balcony cabins provide a view, and suites come with extra perks. Mid-ship and lower deck cabins offer less movement if seasickness is a concern.

Select shore excursions, on board shows, evening dining seating, special dietary needs and events early, since the bookings fill up. Note the suggested packing tips and physical requirements.

Start early getting passports renewed or issued. If cruising internationally, check online with the U.S. State Department for visa requirements for the country/countries you will visit, and enroll in the State Department's Smart Traveler Program. If a minor child is traveling without both birth parents/legal guardians, several legal documents, including one for the cruise line, will require the other parent/parents/guardians' notarized signatures. These documents are available online. Prepare to spend more time checking in at airports and the cruise ship while those original documents are checked and scanned.

Arrange for international cell calling and medical insurance, if needed. Medicare/Medicaid and many private health policies don't cover international health



care. Ships have a medical team for minor problems, but the costs are extra.

Packing Tips

Check the cruise line's dress code for different days/nights at sea and requirements for shore excursions. Laundry is available at an extra charge. Your carry-on bags should contain all medications; power requirements on board and for other countries (power strips are usually banned on board); and a change of clothing/swimwear, since it may take hours for checked bags to arrive at cabins. For the return trip, have all items you've purchased ready to declare at customs. Carry all documents on yourself in a safe place.

On Board

Find the assigned dining room, pools, entertainment venues, guest services and shore excursion gathering places. Main dining rooms and buffets are usually part of the package. Specialty restaurants are not.

Arrange for a Wi-Fi package, and set it up. There are usually child care/activities offered for every age. Register children the first day. Know and follow the rules and schedule.

If sea sickness is a problem, bring medication. Wash your hands often and well, especially before meals and after bathroom breaks. Touch as few common surfaces as possible. If traveling with a group, know your daily gathering place and muster station. Check on each other often.

Most ships are cashless. Your room key is an on board credit card and pass to get on and off the ship. Talk to kids about charging on their room keys. Gratuities on board will be charged daily per cabin, and extra gratuities for those who were special are appreciated by staff who work long hours. Know tipping requirements for shore excursions. Drink packages and other extra offerings might be worth the price depending on your plans/needs.

Ports and Shore Excursions

Ship-arranged tours are pricier than arranging your own private tour, but the ship's tours will get travelers back on time for the ship's departure. Private tours aren't guaranteed to do so. If traveling with children, parents/guardians must accompany them when departing or boarding the ship.

Be polite/cooperative at ports, and enjoy exploring in-country as a guest. Carry your cruise line's shore pass/key card, medical supplies and all other suggested items safely due to pickpockets. Wear appropriate clothing for that country. Listen to the guide's instructions, and follow time limits. Being left behind means you are on your own to get to the next port. That can be expensive. Most of all, have a great time! **NOW**

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Stern, Steven B. Stern's Guide to the Cruise Vacation. Xlibris. 2018.

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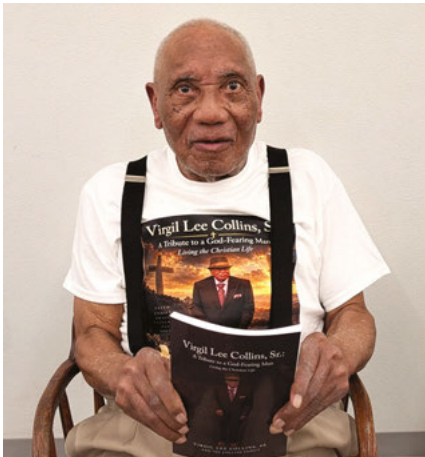
Brandy McDaniel and Andie Miller work at Ennis Regional Medical Center. During the Ellis County Preparedness Fair, they represented Ennis Regional with a booth downtown.

Brandy is an Ennis native and graduate of EHS. She prepared for her position as a respiratory therapist at El Centro College in Dallas. Brandy has been a respiratory therapist for 12 years, nine of them in Ennis. Her family includes a 21-year-old son.

Andie Miller is an RN/emergency room coordinator at Ennis Regional, a position she has held for three years. She said she is from Canton and Amarillo, and she is a fan of Ennis for its small-town charm. When Andie is not working, she enjoys video games and reading.



Frank and Gloria Garza happily serve at Ennis Golden Circle.



Virgil Collins displays his biography at the book signing at Ennis Public Library.



Ennis and Waxahachie firefighters support each other at the Ellis County Preparedness Fair.



Alice Hughes, Eula Beal, Brandy Foster and Jo Ann Wilson support Blues on Main.



Maria Elena enjoys the Quinceañera Exhibit at the Welcome Center.



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Zoomed In:
Trent Dowd

By Bill Smith

Ennis ISD recently introduced Trent Dowd as Deputy Superintendent. Trent’s responsibilities include coordinating both operational and instructional programs for the district.

His experience was most recently as assistant superintendent at Lake Worth ISD, and before that assignment, he was with Mansfield ISD. Though new to Ennis, he is familiar with the community as an avid fisherman. He has enjoyed Lake Clark for many years, as his older son started paddling a kayak here about seven years ago.

Trent is married to his wife, Bethany, and they have two sons, Brayden, 15, and Tyler, 13. Besides fishing, Trent also enjoys golfing with both of the boys.



Kassie Sears and Finnley enjoy a walk around the Puppy Park.



Marissa Schultz sings karaoke at Ashleigh’s Downtown Kitchen & Bar.



Karen Witte sells delicious cookies at Bluebonnet Market.



Millie Alcala and her grandchildren attend the evening edition of the Bluebonnet Market.

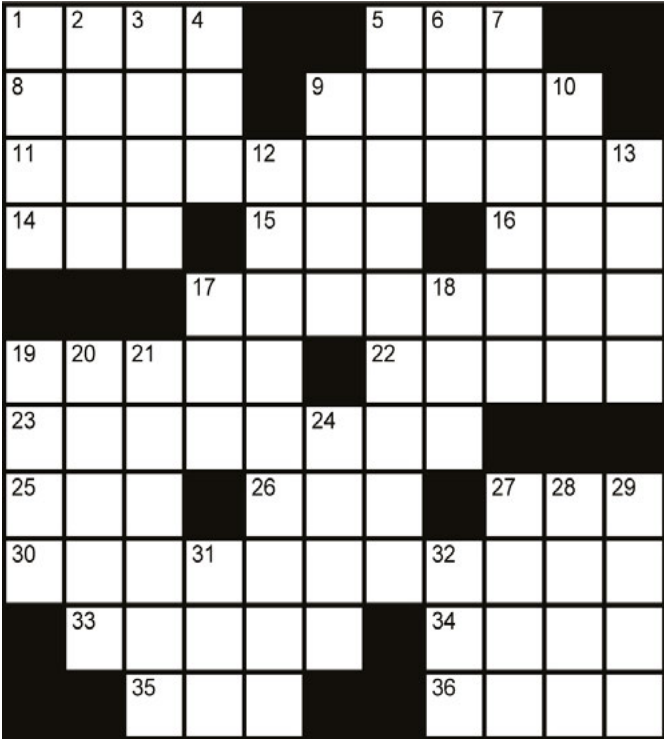


The Liska Family celebrates Senior Night at Lion Memorial Stadium.



Trey and Catherine Reyna are ready to attend the EHS Band Ice Cream Supper and Concert.

Crossword Puzzle



Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Across

- 1 Shimmering gemstone
- 5 Old school dance
- 8 "Lemon" fish
- 9 Washed out
- 11 Disturbed enough moose, of a kind
- 14 Sleuth's cry
- 15 It should stop you at an intersection
- 16 Texting letters for a former identity
- 17 Thrown objects
- 19 Polite form of address for a woman

- 22 Apparel
- 23 Native Coloradan, originally
- 25 Diminutive dog
- 26 Intimidate
- 27 "Dallas" star Barbara --- Geddes
- 30 In a highly-strung manner
- 33 A means to ---
- 34 Furnace
- 35 It checks brainwaves
- 36 High point

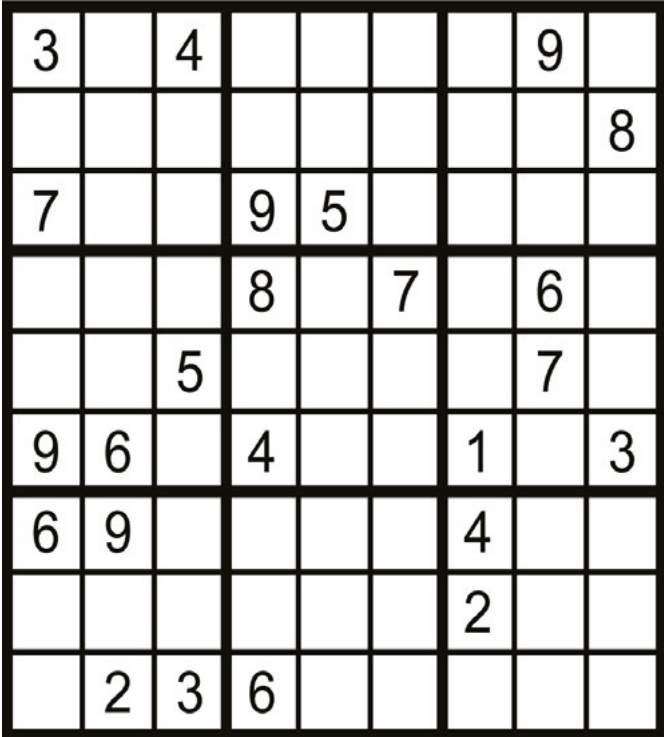
Down

- 1 Labor Dept. agency
- 2 "A Bear of very little Brain"
- 3 --- mater
- 4 13 Popes have had this name
- 5 Bequeaths
- 6 Lyric poem
- 7 What Soylent Green was made of (1973 movie)
- 9 Broker's charges
- 10 Boxers' fists
- 12 Massage magic ring, pulling a face
- 13 Get lippy
- 17 Planetary plan
- 18 Anger
- 19 Spouse
- 20 Fragrance
- 21 Very beginning
- 24 Goon
- 27 Radar image
- 28 Cosmopolitan competitor
- 29 Wildcat
- 31 Golfer's peg
- 32 William H. Bonney, --- "Billy the Kid"

Find puzzle answers within this magazine. Online versions and solutions are also available at www.nowmagazines.com.

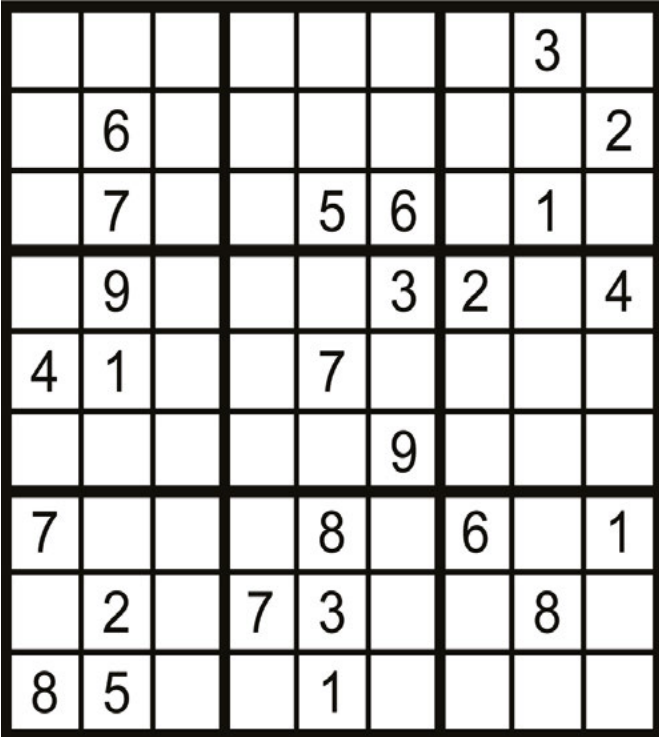
Sudoku Puzzle

Easy



Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Medium



Find puzzle answers within this magazine. Online versions and solutions are also available at www.nowmagazines.com.

RECIPES FOR A Thanksgiving Feast



From the golden turkey to the perfectly spiced sides, the Thanksgiving meal represents tradition and togetherness. These recipes deliver classic flavors with a few special touches, ensuring your holiday spread is both delicious and memorable for everyone gathered around your table. **NOW**

Herb-Roasted Turkey

- 1 12- to 14-lb. whole turkey, defrosted
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2 Tbsp. fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh thyme, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh sage, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1 lemon, halved
- 1 onion, quartered
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 2 cups chicken broth

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F; remove the turkey giblets, patting the bird dry with paper towels.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the butter, rosemary, thyme, sage, minced garlic, salt and black pepper.
3. Gently loosen the skin over the turkey breast; rub half of the herb butter underneath.
4. Rub the remaining herb butter over the outside of the turkey.
5. Stuff the cavity with the lemon halves, quartered onion and rosemary sprigs.
6. Place the turkey on a roasting rack in a large roasting pan; pour the chicken broth into the bottom of the pan.
7. Roast for 3 to 3 1/2 hours, basting every 30 minutes, until a thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the thigh

reads 165 F.

8. Let the turkey rest for 20-30 minutes before carving.

Cast-Iron Candied Sweet Potatoes

- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup mini marshmallows
- 1/4 cup pecans, chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F.
2. Peel the sweet potatoes; slice them into 1/4-inch rounds.
3. Melt the butter in a large, cast-iron skillet over medium heat.
4. Add the brown sugar and maple syrup to the melted butter, stirring until combined.
5. Stir in the cinnamon, nutmeg and salt.
6. Arrange the sweet potato rounds in the skillet, layering them in the sugar mixture, and turning to coat both sides.
7. Cook on the stovetop for 5 minutes to begin softening the potatoes.
8. Transfer the skillet to the oven; bake for 25-30 minutes until the sweet potatoes are tender.

9. Remove from the oven; sprinkle the mini marshmallows and chopped pecans evenly over the top.
10. Return to the oven; bake for an additional 5-7 minutes until the marshmallows are golden brown. Serve warm.

Pecan Pie Bars

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3/4 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 3 large eggs
- 3/4 cup corn syrup
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F; line a 9x13-inch pan with parchment paper.
2. Pulse the flour, powdered sugar, salt and cold butter in a food processor until crumbly.
3. Press the mixture into the pan; bake for 18 minutes.
4. Whisk together the eggs, corn syrup, brown sugar and vanilla extract. Stir in the pecans.
5. Pour over the baked crust; bake for 25 minutes.
6. Cool completely before slicing into bars.

FinanceNOW

Stay One Step Ahead of Cybercriminals

Your financial security is only as strong as your digital security. A single stolen password, convincing scam or fraudulent investment offer can lead to lost savings, damaged credit or hours spent recovering compromised accounts. As our financial lives move increasingly online, protecting your personal information is part of protecting your financial future.

Cybercriminals are getting smarter, and technology like AI is making their job easier. But fortunately, some consistent habits can help protect you from many of today's common threats.

Watch out for phishing. Phishing is a common way criminals break into accounts and steal money. These attacks often arrive as emails, texts or phone calls that appear to come from your bank, employer or another trusted organization. Fake websites can trick you into typing in your password or financial details.

To protect yourself, verify unexpected requests through a separate channel, such as calling a company directly using a number from its official website rather than one provided in a suspicious message. Avoid clicking unexpected links, and consider using a password manager which auto-fills your login information only on legitimate websites.

Strengthen your accounts. Stolen passwords give criminals easy access to your email, banking and social media accounts. Try using a unique password for every account, and enable multifactor authentication whenever it's offered. When possible, choose phishing-resistant options like passkeys or security keys; they're harder for

scammers to bypass than basic text message codes.

Be skeptical of urgency. Scammers increasingly use deepfakes, which leverage AI-generated voices, videos and images to convincingly impersonate trusted people, including company executives, advisors and even family members. These messages often create pressure to send money or share sensitive information immediately.

If you receive an urgent request that feels off, slow down. Hang up and try calling back to the person or organization using a known phone number. Many successful scams rely on emotional pressure rather than technical tricks, so a moment of skepticism can go a long way.

Protect your money and identity. Fraudulent investment platforms and cryptocurrency schemes continue to cost Americans billions of dollars each year. Be cautious of investment opportunities promoted through unsolicited messages or social media contacts, and always verify a platform independently before sending money. If you're unsure whether an opportunity is legitimate, a financial advisor can help evaluate it before you invest.

Data breaches can also put your information at risk, even when you've done everything right. It's smart to check your bank and credit card statements regularly for unfamiliar charges, and to freeze your credit if you suspect your information has been compromised. You may also choose to freeze your credit preemptively.

Keep your devices updated. Software updates often fix security weaknesses that criminals could otherwise exploit. Backing up important files, whether to the cloud or an external drive, also protects you if ransomware ever locks you out of your own data.

Small habits matter. Unique passwords, multifactor authentication and skepticism help stop many scams before they start. Take steps to help safeguard your money, identity and long-term financial goals. **NOW**

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

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Things to do in Ennis!

NOVEMBER EnnisNOW

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press.

M A G A Z I N E

11/1-11/17

Thanksgiving

Blessing Baskets

Collect Blessing Baskets for those in need. Drop off location: 1500 Jack McKay Blvd. For details, visit <https://canva.link/8tgat6gy2badpp9> or call Amy or Tanya at (972) 875-1660.

11/7

5th Annual Texas Arbor Day Celebration (ShadeEnnis)

Free. 9:00-11:00 a.m., Bluebonnet Park, 201 S. Hwy. 287. For details, contact Ennis Welcome Center, 201 NW Main St., (972) 878-4748.

Annual Fall Ladies Day

Vendors, wine and lots of fun! Sugar Ridge Winery, 353 Sugar Ridge Rd. For details, call or text (469) 716-8961 or email christal@sugarridgewinery.com.

11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28

November Country Night Hayrides

Make Saturday Nights at Garcia Family Farm part of your family tradition! Snacks and drinks available for purchase. Reservations recommended. Suggested donation: \$5 for children; \$8 for adults. For more information, call or text (214) 906-8817 or (214) 796-1780.

11/14

Rhymes & Rhythms on the Prairie

This program celebrates local prairie nature, hosted by the Indian Trail Master Naturalist Chapter. Free. Ennis Welcome Center, 201 NW Main St., (972) 878-4748.

11/13-11/15

GT-R +Nissan Festival

The world's largest dedicated festival for Nissan GT-Rs. Ticket pricing varies. The Texas Motorplex, 7500 W. Hwy. 287. For details, call (972) 878-2641 or visit www.texasmotorplex.com.

11/28

Small Business Saturday

Shop for the holidays with your local hometown businesses. Santa, live reindeer, carolers. Register for prizes and pick up your map: 10:00 a.m., Ennis Welcome Center, 201 NW Main.

12/3

Lights of Ennis Parade and Block Party

Crafts and train display, pictures with Santa, live reindeer, dance performances, choirs, Christmas Bluebonnet Market, parade and more. 5:00-9:00 p.m. (Parade at 7:00 p.m.) For more information about the parade, contact the Chamber at (972) 875-2625. For more information about the Block Party, contact The Welcome Center at (972) 878-4748.

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Crossword - Sudoku Solutions

1	O	P	A	L		5	H	O	P	
8	S	O	L	E		9	F	A	D	E
11	H	O	M	O	G	E	N	E	O	U
14	A	H	A		15	R	E	D		16
					17	M	I	S	S	18
19	M	A	D	A	M			D	R	E
23	A	R	A	P	A		24	H	O	E
25	T	O	Y		26	C	O	W		27
30	E	M	O	T	I	O	N	A	L	L
					33	A	N	E	N	D
					35	E	E	G		36
										A
										P
										E
										X

Easy

3	1	4	2	6	8	7	9	5
2	5	9	7	1	3	6	4	8
7	8	6	9	5	4	3	2	1
1	3	2	8	9	7	5	6	4
8	4	5	1	3	6	9	7	2
9	6	7	4	2	5	1	8	3
6	9	1	5	8	2	4	3	7
5	7	8	3	4	9	2	1	6
4	2	3	6	7	1	8	5	9

Medium

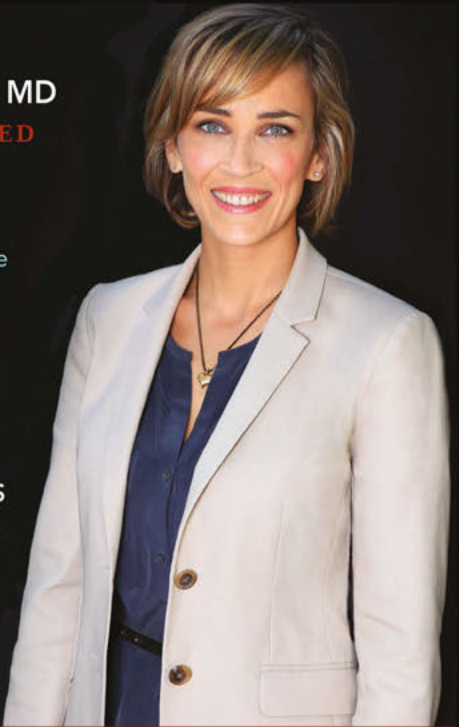
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4	1	6	2	7	8	5	9	3
2	3	7	5	4	9	1	6	8
7	4	3	9	8	5	6	2	1
6	2	1	7	3	4	9	8	5
8	5	9	6	1	2	3	4	7



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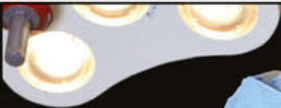


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