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Lola lived a long life but it was not an easy life. She had a lot of trials and tribulations including losing three of her four children as well as her husband. Although she experienced a lot of heartbreak she also experienced a lot of joy. She never lost her faith in God and read through the entire bible 30 times. She's left a big hole in many hearts and we will all miss her.



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Lindsey Cooper transforms her home into a Christmas wonderland.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

Many times I've wondered what it would be like to be someone else, even if only for a day. I would love to be Santa Claus for just one Christmas Eve. The joy that comes from a night flying around the world to deliver toys to all the good little girls and boys has to be off the charts. As Santa shimmies down each chimney, I envision him laying packages under trees with a smile on his face, because he knows the happiness they're going to bring on Christmas morning.

As I return to the present, I know I'll never be Santa Claus to the world, but I can bring that same joy to those around me. As I place gifts under the tree, I can smile because I know the happiness my grandchildren are going to have as they unwrap each one. And I know the joy I'm going to feel as I sit in the floor and watch.

Wishing you unmeasurable joy!

Sandra

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P.S. The publisher and staff of Now Magazines wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and the happiest of holiday seasons!

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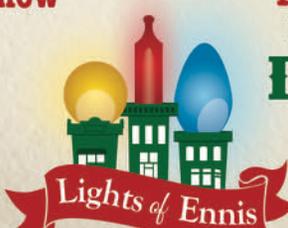
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Artistic abilities come in all shapes and sizes. The Crow family has several of them covered. Kirby Crow Jr. and his son, Casey, are artists in their own rights, but when they team up, their talents result in the spectacular.

Kirby has been developing his painting skills since he was a young boy. From an early age, he drew things that he saw. His mother recognized his potential and connected him with a friend of hers who was an art teacher. Kirby was really too young for the oil painting class, but the teacher took him on as a favor. This caused him to pay attention and work even harder. He enjoyed all that he learned in these classes, from the time he was 7, until he was 12.

Though Kirby now uses a variety of mediums, it was while he was in college at the Texas Academy of Art that he began to use watercolor dominantly. "After working with oils and dealing with the smells and drying times, I knew I needed a change," Kirby said. He watercolor painted a series of 12 cars at that time and enjoyed the carefree brush strokes that watercolor allowed him, even though he found the medium to be less forgiving than oils.

In college, Kirby studied advertising and learned to draw mockups of buildings, which clients would use when trying to acquire a construction loan from the bank. "You know, the drawings had the building, sidewalk, cars and bushes. Everything had to be there," he described. It was precise, detailed work. This training led him into his first job, and he stayed in that industry for several years.



ART WORTH

Crowing Over

— By Jill Martinez





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When Kirby was 32 years old, he opened his own printing company and created many company logos. "I created many of the logos in Ennis," he said. He did use some computer graphics, but most of his designs were created by hand.

For six years, Kirby tried his hand at being a full-time artist. For four of those years, he kept an online journal of the process he went through when creating a painting. He faithfully posted a picture of the work, along with an explanation of what he had done on the painting that day. It was a labor of love. At one point, his artwork hung in four galleries in Dallas. "I almost starved to death though!" he said with a chuckle. Because it takes so long to complete a painting, Kirby found it difficult to meet financial obligations, so he took on a different full-time job remodeling the interiors of older homes. He updates the color and the style of the home to include the cabinetry.

People often seek Kirby out to paint a portrait of a lost loved one, even the furry kind! Yes, dog portraits are a bit of a specialty. He has done approximately 30 portraits that have been a combination of dogs and humans. "People feel that their pets are part of the family, and they want to remember them," Kirby commented. He has done work for people in Dallas, Plano and even Wichita Falls. Local folks can browse some of his work at the Ennis State Bank, where he has a series of six Ennis buildings on display.

Kirby and Casey are resourceful artists. Kirby sometimes paints on reclaimed wood and also builds furniture with it. He finds pieces of wood that people have thrown out, or he is given wooden skids from a friend and turns them into masterpieces. "My daughter, Taylor, tells me that I can't make everything for a man cave. She helps me

to diversify my style by presenting me with trendy ideas she finds on Pinterest. My wife, Belinda, plays the role of ‘quality control,’” Kirby added. Casey helps his dad to execute the ideas that he has, often doing the metal work for the projects.

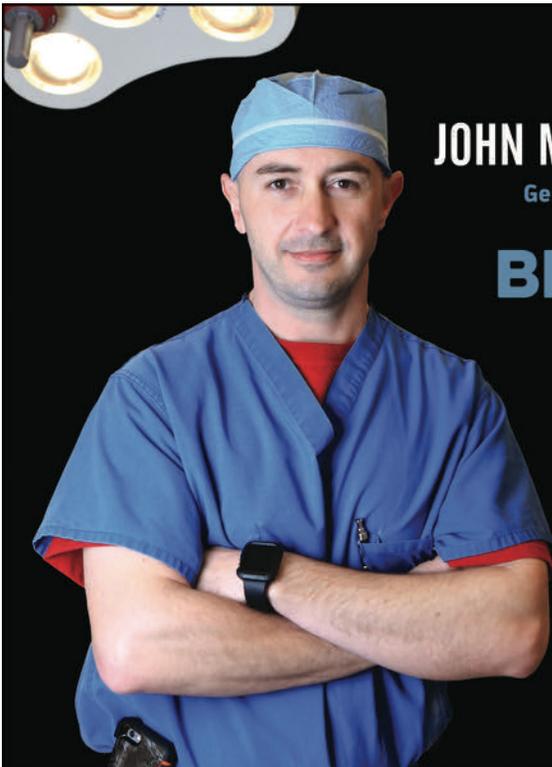
Casey grew up watching his dad paint, carve and build. “My dad always made things that we used all over our house, such as paintings, tables and cabinets. I always thought it was super cool,” Casey said. It seemed only natural that Casey should work alongside his dad.

While Casey did try his hand at airbrush painting, he always preferred building and doing metal work. “Casey is like my dad. He has a natural talent for mechanical engineering,” Kirby said.

“I first learned how to MIG weld in Mr. Linson’s seventh-grade metal shop class at Ennis Junior High School,” Casey remarked. His first creation was a grill that he made in that class. From then on, he was hooked. Casey’s grandfather bought him his own welder when he was a sophomore in high school. He had been teaching Casey how to build things and work on things since Casey was a young boy.

Casey loves trucks, but like most people, lives on a budget. He learned to use his metal-working skills on his own truck and saved a good deal of money. Casey bought steel from companies or would happen upon a good find during a dumpster dive or a trip to the junkyard.

In addition to metal work, Casey learned woodworking from his dad, grandfather and from classes he took in school. He built his own bedroom furniture and was called upon

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to build custom garden trellises. One original creation of his is a portable speaker cart. Imagine a metal wagon filled with speakers that are encased in textured sheet metal. The family uses it in the backyard for barbecues, but the Ennis tennis team and the Ennis Polka Festival organizers have borrowed it a few times for their events. "I'm not as good with sound systems as I am with metal, but I enjoy it," Casey admitted.

When others see what the Crow men can do, they ask them to build things for them, as well. Kirby describes himself as a visionary. He can imagine wonderful designs, but he isn't always capable of executing them on his own. When he dreams up such a design, he consults his friend, Wes Odlozil, a fine woodworker, who helps him and Casey with the task.

While Casey considered studying engineering in college, he ultimately chose to study business finance at Baylor University, where he now attends. He has always been good with math, an influence from his mom who also works in banking. "I think I'll keep my art as a hobby for now. I know I'll stick with it though, because I love being able to design and build things to be just the way I want them."

Everyone is gifted in some way. The Crow men complement one another artistically and help each other to execute the things they envision. They follow the advice of Benjamin Franklin: "Hide not your talents, they for use were made. What's a sundial in the shade?" **NOW**

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Santa's Special STOPPING PLACE

— By Virginia Riddle



AT HOME WITH
Lindsey Cooper

Christmas cheer has been tucked into every corner of Lindsey Cooper's home just as Santa Claus arrives for a visit. Lindsey's year-round white and red shingled exterior is the perfect backdrop for seasonal cheery decorations, so Santa knows he will be welcome here. That jolly ol' elf just relaxes on Lindsey's lawn in an easy chair or climbs onto her rooftop to see the joyous lights of Ennis. "I inherited more than just the December decorating 'bug' from my mother. I love to decorate anytime," Lindsey said.



A kindergarten teacher at St. Joseph Catholic School in Waxahachie, Lindsey begins decorating her home during the week of Thanksgiving. "My parents, Tom and Donna Cooper, help, along with my Nanny Galetka. My dad decorates the outside, while we work on the inside of my home. Then I help my mom decorate her home, which won a Lights of Ennis award last year," she recalled.

White lights strung over the beautiful front yard landscape and across the home's roofline cast a welcoming glow, and a bright star leads to Lindsey's front porch and door decorated with a wreath of candy cane-themed ribbon, red bows and greenery. "I come from three generations of wreath makers," Lindsey said. "I decorate with a wreath to fit whatever is going on with each season of the year." Guests and family get a friendly and enthusiastic greeting from Bo and Sassy, Lindsey's two Schnauzers, who are both dressed in their holiday finery. "They've been with me since my internship, when one of my students gave them to me."

The entry, living room, dining room and kitchen are an open area created during the extensive remodeling Lindsey and her contractor, Matt Newsom,



*May this season bring you the Blessings of
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Merry Christmas!*

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Lindsey remembered. A pantry in the utility room was turned into a shower stall, providing another full bathroom. New carpet and doors were installed. “Matt knew what I had to work with and worked hard to stay within my budget,” she said.

A snowman placed by the front door holds a sign with winter greetings. The Christmas tree is decorated in the same ribbon theme as the front door wreath accented with red and green balls. The living room mantel is beribboned in bright green, yellow and red, with snow people standing at attention. Comfortable leather couches with seasonal greetings

imprinted on pillows provide seating for holiday gatherings and surround a beautiful coffee table. Pictures of family, friends and students are on display throughout the home.

The dining table’s silver urn centerpiece is filled with candy sticks and greenery. Settings of white pottery on green placemats are ready for those Christmas dinners and parties. The chairs are elegantly covered with cloth featuring the faces of snowmen. A distressed red pie safe is festooned with Merry Christmas lights and more snowmen. Stuffed Christmas friends march above the kitchen cabinetry, and holiday-themed

and family and friends performed with complete success. “This house had been a rental when I saw and purchased it in 2007. We opened up the tiny rooms by tearing down walls, installed new kitchen cabinets and heat and air conditioning,”

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dish towels and favorite cookbooks are at the ready. A small chalkboard announces, *Merry and Bright.*

Even the utility room/bathroom sports Christmas cheer with two miniature Christmas trees set on a table and the sink's vanity. A stocking is waiting for Santa's treats to arrive.

Lindsey's backyard features a covered patio with table and chairs lit by a candle-filled chandelier. A corner sitting area offers relaxation from gardening duties. "My mom helped me with the landscaping during the spring break after I moved into my home," Lindsey recalled. "There was not even grass then."

A full guest bathroom in the hallway is decorated in red hues. "We redid all the bathroom cabinets while remodeling this home," she recalled. A wall plaque states, *Dream the Impossible.*

The three bedrooms are decorated beautifully for the holidays. A tree covered with ribbon stands on the master bedroom's night stand. Another tree is decorated with Santas and flanked by snowmen. The second guest bedroom is full of stuffed Christmas darlings and a silver tree with blue poinsettias. "One guest bedroom is really the dogs' room, and the other one is decorated for sleepovers with my nieces, Addison and Riley." The girls' parents are Lindsey's brother and sister-in-law, Brandon and Christy Cooper. "My whole family lives in Ennis. I grew up here, and I know everybody," she explained.

Another small city that Lindsey values is her ceramic Christmas village of cottages, stores and inhabitants that she remembers from holidays past spent in her Nanny Cooper's home. A lamp provides soft lighting over the snowy village. Lindsey's





Christmases are spent at home, in Ennis, attending mass and sharing the opening of presents and other seasonal events with her friends and family.

Her introduction to the world of education was at St. John Catholic School, which Lindsey herself attended through the eighth grade. She graduated from Ennis High School, and then attended Navarro College and Texas A&M University-Commerce on the Corsicana campus. "I started my teaching career in Oak Cliff/Dallas and while in this home," Lindsey said. "Owning my own home makes me feel accomplished. I'm very independent."

Lindsey also likes to be on-the-go. She's traveled to Alaska, Hawaii, Utah and Colorado, and cruises have taken her to the Bahamas and Key West, Florida. "I like to shop, as well. My mom and I find lots of our Christmas and other decorative items while shopping together, and I like spending time with friends and family."

During Lindsey's summer breaks from teaching, she gives swimming lessons to children in her parents' backyard pool. "That gives me my extra money," she admitted.

Sharing Christmas cheer with her young charges at school comes easy for this enthusiastic teacher. "I wear different Christmas shirts every day, from December 1 until we let out for the holidays, at the class' Christmas party and during the Christmas program," Lindsey said. "The kids and I also make gingerbread houses."

A collection of crosses is one permanent decoration in Lindsey's home. "I started the collection when I moved into this home, and it's just kept growing. I get them from here and there and as gifts from my students."

Sparkling lights and brightly colored ribbons bring warmth, Christmas cheer and joy to Lindsey's neighbors and guests. She mused, "I love sharing this season of the year with everyone." **NOW**

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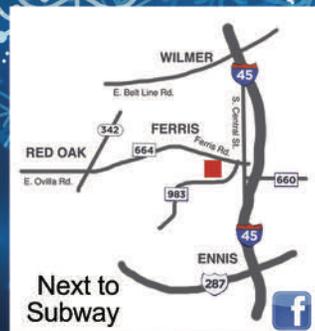
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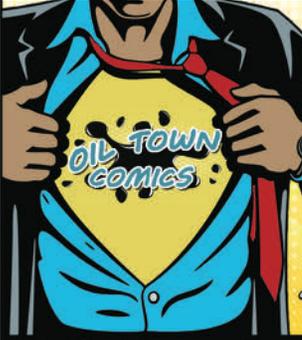
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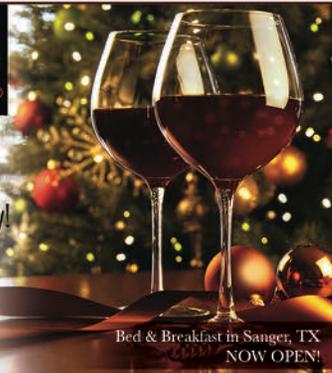


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SEEING A NEED

— By Sandra Strong

Even as a youngster, Kameron Raburn was determined to work ahead of his age limits and traditional restraints. “At Christmas, I didn’t want regular little, age-appropriate toys,” Kameron remembered. “I asked for Craftsman wrenches, a dolly and a small forklift. I’ve always thought big and outside the box.”



Needless to say, Kameron has been geared from an early age to stay busy, and this busyness continued all through his formative years. As a senior student at Waxahachie Global High School, an Early College and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Academy, Kameron was a student in Engineering Design and Problem Solving. For this particular course, he was required to participate in a mentorship and community project referred to as the Capstone Engineering Project. “I was a volunteer for the Garrett Rural Volunteer Fire

Department at this time, too,” he stated. “I wanted to work on something related to what I was doing as a firefighter, while also helping the communities in Ellis County, as a whole.”

As Kameron researched for a way to combine both aspects of the project, he came across the Vial of Life Program. The purpose of the Vial of Life is to supply life-threatening patient information to first responders who are called to the home of an unconscious patient or a patient who may be having difficulty remembering their personal medical information. What the Vial



of Life offered in the way of saving lives intrigued him.

The original packaging was a Ziploc baggie. Thinking outside the bag, so to speak, Kameron came up with the idea of using an oversized blue pharmacy pill vial with a white top. The Ellis County Vial of Life labels he designed for the vial and the front door area are large and

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bright red, with the print in bold black lettering. “When a first responder sees a Vial of Life sticker at the front door area of a residence, they will automatically know to look for the Vial of Life information in the patient’s refrigerator,” Kameron explained. “The red, white and blue packaging change makes it much easier to identify, when in so many cases, time is of the utmost importance.”

The information found in the Vial of Life includes the patient’s current and past medical conditions, current medications, allergies to medications and insurance information. “Individuals may also consider including a copy of their most recent EKG, a living will or equivalent and/or a DNR,” Kameron added. There should be a vial for each family member, and there are several ways you can mark them for easy identification. This information, as stated in Kameron’s proposal, is crucial for first responders, but oftentimes, it cannot be obtained because of the patient’s condition or family members’ lack of medical knowledge, thus making the Vial of Life a mainstay in the refrigerator. “If there’s a man and a woman in the household, you can mark the top of the lids appropriately with an M or an F,” Kameron shared, “or you can always add a current photograph to each vial.”

Every vial comes with a blank medical form. If and when medical information changes, additional blank forms can be printed by visiting www.vialoflifeforms.weebly.com. The more current the medical information is, the better for first responders. When Kameron put his idea to paper, his target audience was focused on citizens of Ellis County who are 65 years of age or older, but the vials are available for anyone, regardless of age or medical condition.

Funding for the project came to a grand total of \$2,118.84. This dollar amount included 5,000 paper copies, 5,000 plastic vials and 10,000 reflective decals. Kameron contacted several



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entities when he was working toward funding the project. Funding was finally realized, thanks to the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Counsel. "I knew I only needed one to say, 'Yes,'" he confessed. "The NCTTRAC proved to be that one."

Assembling the Vials of Life came at no monetary cost to the project. "This was accomplished through the use of volunteers and the pre-arrangement of Global High Vice Principal Ken Lynch," Kameron noted. "The vial kits were assembled by students at Global who found themselves serving after-school detention." He found that his idea of an assembly line worked quite well in the process of making 5,000 Vial of Life kits. "It proved to be a tedious task for the students," he said, "but they got it done." Students placed one decal on the vial and a second one inside the vial, along with a folded patient information form. Vials were produced at a rate of 120 vials per student per hour. "This means it took approximately 42 hours of volunteer work to complete the assembly of 5,000 Vials of Life," Kameron added.

Usually, funding for a project like this is difficult. "I worked diligently to obtain significant funding," he admitted, "but the real difficulty has been getting them distributed. I never dreamed it would be so hard." Kameron's main goal now



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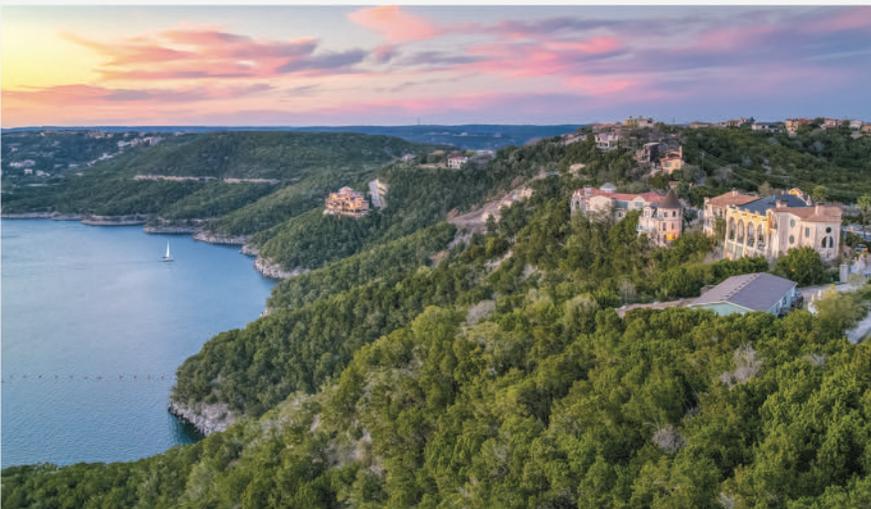
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is to get the Vials of Life distributed to as many homes in Ellis County as possible. “They come at no cost to those individuals who would like to have them,” he explained. “All anyone has to do is contact me. I will be more than happy to deliver as many as is needed for that particular household.”

Kameron is dedicated to the Ellis County Vial of Life Program. For him, it’s always been so much more than a grade, of which he earned an A. As a young man, he is involved in many areas that would benefit from the Vial of Life. He is a captain of the Garrett Rural Volunteer Fire Department, a dedicated volunteer firefighter in the same department, the vice president of the Ellis County Firefighters’ Association and a senior level civil engineering student at the University of Texas at Arlington. He also holds a position as an intern at WSP/Parsons Brinckerhoff, an engineering firm in the Metroplex.

Like aforementioned, Kameron was not the typical youngster, and his determination and outlook on life has not changed as an adult. “I am on the fast-track plan in college,” he shared. “I will graduate with my Bachelor of Science in civil engineering in May 2017. In May 2018, I will have earned my Master of Science in transportation/engineering.” Grounded, focused and busy are adjectives that would definitely describe Kameron, and that’s OK with him. “I find the life I lead to be very rewarding,” he confessed. “As a firefighter, I’m able to go out and help people when things are at their worst. To know I can help during these times means so much to me. My life is one long adrenaline rush.” **NOW**

Editor’s Note: For more information on the Ellis County Vial of Life Project, call Kameron at (469) 658-5011 or email him at kameronrabburn@aol.com.

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Relationship Banking

Ennis State Bank and its two branch locations always put customers first. — By Sandra Strong

Ennis State Bank has enjoyed over 80 years of service to the community since opening its doors on April 18, 1933. How does a bank, or any institution for that matter, carry such a large marker of longevity? For Ennis State Bank, success stems from the commitment of those in leadership positions. Senior Vice President J. Hugh Green celebrated 50 years with the bank in March, while President and CEO Bramlet Beard is in his 27th year. “We are a full-service bank,” Olivia Williams, marketing director and newest member of the team said, “but the bank’s success comes from the care individuals like Mr. Green and Mr. Beard extend to each banking customer. It’s the hometown feel that customers have come to expect and appreciate that’s grown the bank over the years.”

With the growth in Ennis, it only made sense to expand beyond the Ellis County area. The first branch location, Trinity Capital Bank

of Texas in Dallas, opened its doors to the public in 2012. Branch Manager Jason Clements oversees the day-to-day operations at the Riverfront location. The newest branch location, also named Trinity Capital Bank of Texas, recently opened its doors to customers in Sunnyvale under the leadership of its Branch President Chris Lawless.

As the new marketing director who was welcomed with open arms, Olivia’s plan at the Ennis location is to keep the hometown feel intact as she markets the offerings of the bank to new customers, while keeping the lines of communication open to generational customers who rely on all Ennis State Bank has to offer. Until Trinity Capital Bank of Texas opened, Sunnyvale had not yet had a community bank. “Our goal in Sunnyvale is to bring the same hometown feel that’s made Ennis State Bank such

a success,” Olivia said, explaining that she strives to expand community outreach in Sunnyvale in the same manner, as in Ennis. Throughout the years, Ennis State Bank has worked closely with Ennis ISD and their booster clubs, the United Way, the Ennis Boys & Girls Club, the Ennis Chamber of Commerce and so many other clubs and organizations as a way to give back to the community. “We want to expand the community outreach in Sunnyvale in the same way. Although Sunnyvale is a smaller town than Ennis, they deserve the same hometown feel and commitment to service.”

“We remain competitive with larger banks, while still taking pride in our commitment to our customers.”

Offerings at Ennis State Bank and both branch locations include personal banking, business banking and a large selection of banking services. Personal banking includes: checking and saving accounts, loans, CDs, Money Market accounts and IRAs. Banking services include, but are not limited to: Internet banking, mobile app, SMS/text alerts, ATM and a 24-hour customer service line. All locations have made it easy to “bank anytime, anywhere.”

With a successful past always at the forefront, Ennis State Bank and its branch locations pledge to continue bringing the best in banking services to its many valued customers. The roots Ennis State Bank has in the community run deep, and although the bank has expanded yet a second time, those local roots will remain intact at Ennis State Bank, as they continue to actively give back to the community. “We remain competitive with larger banks, while still taking pride in our commitment to our customers,” Bramlet stated. “We will continue to offer relationship banking with a personal touch.” **NOW**



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Rhonda Winters, Ashley Colunga and Morgan Ruffin check out Finn McCools, a new bar in downtown Ennis.



Jordan Jenkins and Madeline Makovy represent Ennis FFA and 4H as they prepare to show their cattle at the 2016 State Fair of Texas.



Interior Ideas gets ready to host their annual open house.



Felix and Erico Serbellon, twin brothers and EHS seniors, take a break from selling items for the band trip to Disney to pose for the camera.



Gail Talley and Sharon Kelly enjoy their time working together at Brookshire's.



Donna Cooper with Cooper Creations poses with Santa, one of many beautiful wreaths available during the Autumn Days in Ennis Fall Festival event.



Flori, Frank and Armand Veseli greet customers with smiles at Napolis.



Linda Rudd, Lynda Isbell and Kelly Francis take time out of their busy day to smile for the camera.



Sue Pierce of Crafts by Sue enjoys the fall weather during the Autumn Days in Ennis Fall Festival event.



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Want to Retire Early? Start Planning Now.

The average American retires at about age 63, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau. If you enjoy your work, of course, you may want to go well beyond that age. But what if you don't want to wait until 63 or so? Can you afford to retire early? Possibly — if you follow these suggestions:

- **Research the costs involved.** What will you do during your retirement years? Will you travel the world or stay close to home, pursuing your hobbies? Will you downsize from your current home? How will you pay for health care until you're old enough for Medicare? You will need to answer these and other questions to determine how much you will need to sustain a comfortable lifestyle as an early retiree.

- **Invest more — and invest for growth.** One big advantage in retiring at the usual age, or even later, is that it gives you more time to invest. But if you're determined to retire early, you will almost certainly need to accelerate your investment rate — which, in practical terms, means you'll likely have to contribute more each year to your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan than if you were going to retire later on. Plus, you may have to “ratchet up” the growth potential of your investment portfolio. However, because growth-oriented investments typically are more volatile than other investments, you will be taking on more risk than you might otherwise. If you are truly uncomfortable with this risk level, you may need to re-evaluate your plans for retiring early.

- **Cut down your debt load.** It's always a good idea to enter retirement with as few debts as possible. But if you want to retire early, you may need to be even more diligent in controlling your debt load.

- **Know the rules governing retirement plan withdrawals.**

If you want to retire before age 59 1/2 and begin taking distributions from your IRA or 401(k) plan, you will generally be subject to a 10-percent early distribution penalty, plus normal income taxes. (To withdraw your earnings from a Roth IRA tax- and penalty-free, you generally must have owned the account for at least five years and have reached age 59 1/2. You can withdraw your contributions at any time tax- and penalty-free.) However, you may be able to avoid the 10-percent penalty if you take “substantially equal periodic payments,” which are calculated based upon your age and other factors. Once these distributions begin, they must continue for five years or until you reach age 59 1/2, whichever is longer. Other rules apply to these distributions, so before taking any, you will want to consult with your tax and financial professionals. And keep in mind that if your withdrawal rate is too high, you risk seriously depleting your retirement accounts, especially if your investments decline in value during the years you're taking these payments.

Most importantly, do everything early: Plan early, invest early (and don't stop), and lower your debt load early. Getting a jump on all these activities can go a long way toward turning your early retirement dreams into reality. **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.

Merry Christmas

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we wish you all the best.



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A Multifaceted Jaw Problem

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Do you ever think about your chewing mechanism? Probably not, because it is as natural and automatic as breathing. However, if something interferes with it, you will think about it a lot! The action that makes all this activity possible begins in the temporomandibular joint. Think of it as a hinge that connects the lower jaw, called the mandible, to the skull. Put your fingers in front of your ears and open your mouth. Now move your jaw up and down and side to side. This is what gives you the ability to chew on whatever you want. Because this joint is so multifaceted and complex, its actions can create challenges if there are problems.

When these problems occur, they are known as temporomandibular joint disorders, or TMD. These disorders are characterized by an aching pain and tenderness in the joint and surrounding area. Or, there may be no discomfort at all. Chewing, talking or opening the mouth widely can cause distress. Along with those symptoms, one might experience persistent headaches, limited function in the jaw, noises of clicking, popping and grating in the area or a feeling that your bite is off. Sometimes, the jaw area can lock or feel as if it's stuck when the mouth is open.

These symptoms are difficult to treat because the cause of TMD has not been established. However, there are factors that can increase your risk or exacerbate the condition. Someone with arthritis may experience the affliction in that joint. Extended periods where the mouth is open wide for a

significant amount of time, such as a long dental procedure, can precipitate the discomfort. Other possible causes are autoimmune diseases, injuries to the area and stress, which may cause grinding of the teeth or jaw clenching.

One of the goals for treatment is to alleviate the pain. Over-the-counter pain medications and, sometimes, prescription medications may be used. Eat soft foods that won't aggravate the condition. Try to consciously rest the jaw area and become aware of grinding or clenching episodes when awake. Bite guards at night may be a good option, if you tend to grind or clench in your sleep. If the muscles in your face feel especially tense, a massage of that area and a warm pack may provide some relief.

For some, the discomfort from TMD is temporary and not very severe. It may come and go as factors that affect it present themselves. For those experiencing significant discomfort that doesn't go away with home treatments, it may be necessary to see a health care professional for help. **NOW**

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



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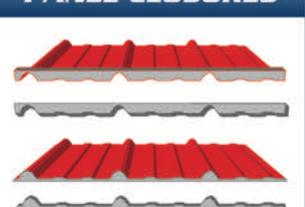
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December 2, 3

Christmas Market & Gift Show: 6:00-9:00 p.m., **Friday**, preview party; 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., **Saturday**, Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Ln. The annual event is sponsored by the Waxahachie Junior Service League.

December 2, 3, 4

8th Annual New Hope Christmas Celebration/Christmas Around the World: 7:00 p.m., 101 S.W. Main St. For free tickets, call (972) 330-4673 or pick up at Unity Coffee at 406 W. Ennis Ave.

December 2 — 4, 9 — 11

Bethlehem Revisited: 6:00-9:00 p.m., 402 N. College St., Waxahachie. directly behind Central Presbyterian Church. Free admission. Donations welcome.

December 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18

My Favorite Christmas by Bill Rhoten: **Friday** and **Saturday**, 7:30 p.m.; **Sunday** matinee, 2:30 p.m., Theatre Rocks, 505 N.W. Main St. Tickets: adults, \$15; senior adults and students, \$12. For more information, call (972) 878-5126 or visit www.theatrerocks.com.

Nun crackers: **Friday** and **Saturday**: 7:30 p.m.; **Sunday** matinee, 2:30 p.m., Ennis Public Theatre. For tickets and further information, visit www.ennispublictheatre.com.

December 3

Lucky's C.C. Car Show & Toy Drive: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., downtown Ennis. Awards will be presented at 3:30 p.m. Registration: \$10 and one unwrapped toy. For more information, contact Chubby at (469) 774-5692.

December 6, 20

Ellis County HEALS support group meeting: 6:30 p.m., 408 Water St. The group hopes to connect with survivors of suicide loss in Ellis County, while giving them a safe place to share their struggle and pain. For more information, email

elliscountyheals@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook.

Ongoing:

Mondays

Sign Language Class: 4:00-5:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave. Classes are free and available for all ages. No sign up required.

Acrylic Painting Class: 4:00-6:00 p.m., Interior Ideas, 211 W. Knox St. Classes offered by Jana Jennings. \$75 (one time only) supply fee for the year, plus \$15 per class. For more information, call (972) 878-6868.

First Wednesdays

Bluebonnet Patches Quilt Guild meeting: 9:30 a.m., First Presbyterian Church, 210 N. McKinney. Contact Judy Wensowitch at (972) 921-8800 or Diana Buckley at SeldomSeenQuilting@gmail.com for more information.

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 Alison Wright

— By Virginia Riddle

Alison Wright, Ennis Regional Medical Center’s dietary director, finds cooking, reading and watching murder mysteries on television to be relaxing pleasures. “I started cooking at age 4 but never studied cooking. However, I had excellent inspiration from my grandmother,” Alison said. Baking is Alison’s favorite form of cooking. “It’s much more precise than other cooking. I have to measure carefully.” She supplements her collection of family favorites and cookbooks with Internet recipes.

“I like down-home cooking,” Alison revealed. Favorite seasonings are lemon and apple cider vinegar. “I find that they bring out the natural flavors in food,” she said. Alison’s recipes also reflect her life lived in several states, including a long tenure in Louisiana. “I enjoy cooking favorite foods for my husband, Bill, family and friends.” **NOW**

Shrimp Creole

Chicken may be substituted for the shrimp.

- 1 Tbsp. corn oil
- 1/2 cup green bell peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1 Tbsp. flour
- 1 6-oz. can tomato paste
- 1 Tbsp. hot sauce
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 1/2 lbs. shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 4 cups rice
- Green onions, chopped

1. On high heat, preheat a cast-iron pot.

Allow corn oil to heat; add peppers, onions and celery.

2. Cook until vegetables are softened; remove from heat; slowly blend in flour.
3. When mixture is slightly thickened, add tomato paste, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Cook about 5 minutes over medium heat; add shrimp and cook for an additional 3 minutes.
4. Cook rice according to package instructions; top rice with shrimp mixture; garnish with green onions.

Chicken Sauté

- Vegetable cooking spray
- 4 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless

- 1 tsp. dried Italian seasoning
- 1/2 cup vermouth or chicken broth
- 4 cups rice or your choice of noodles

1. Spray a skillet with vegetable cooking spray; when skillet is very hot, add chicken breasts.
2. Cook for about 3 minutes over medium to high heat; sprinkle side up with Italian seasoning.
3. Flip onto other side; when slightly cooked, add vermouth or chicken broth.
4. Cook for about 10 minutes or until chicken is tender; serve over rice or noodles.

Skillet Cornbread

Recipe yields 8-10 servings.

- 1 1/4 cups white cornmeal, coarsely ground
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup creamed corn
- 1 stick unsalted butter, melted (divided use)

1. Preheat oven to 400 F; place a 9-inch, cast-iron skillet in the oven.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the cornmeal, flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda.
3. Whisk in the milk, buttermilk, eggs, corn and almost all of the melted butter; reserve about 1 Tbsp. of the butter for brushing the skillet.
4. Carefully remove the hot skillet from the oven; brush the skillet’s bottom and sides with the reserved butter.
5. Pour the batter into the skillet; return the skillet to the oven.
6. Bake for about 20-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cornbread comes out clean.
7. Let cool for 10-15 minutes before serving.

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

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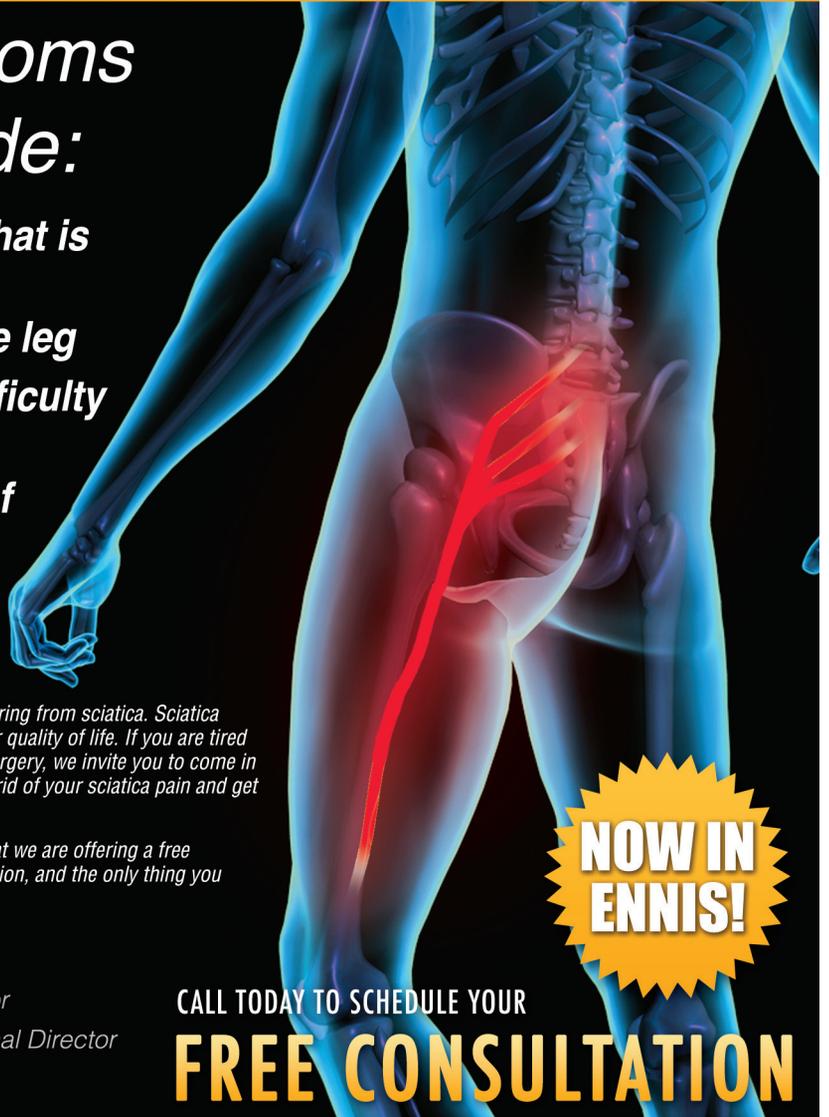
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