EnnisNC The Plant Whisperer Ian Smith loves his backyard garden M AIS Also inside: In the Kitchen With Scavenger Hunt Patti Owen and Crossword Jan Braddock Featured Business: .one Star Floorcovering Postal CustomerECHM28 EDDW



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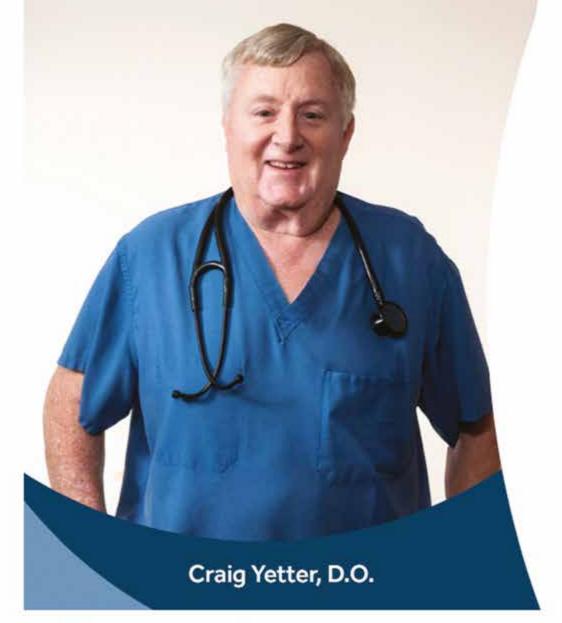
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ON THE COVER



lan Smith shows the healthy plants he cares for.

Photo by Bill Smith

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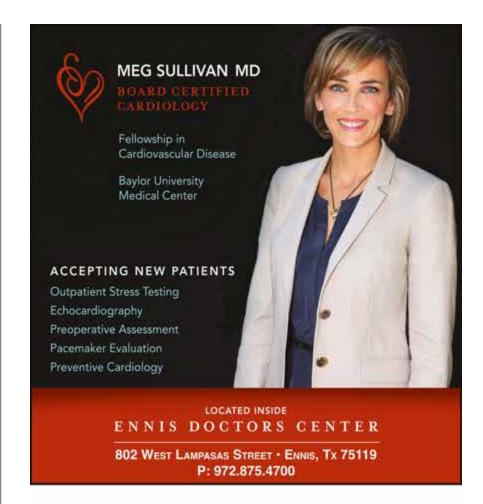
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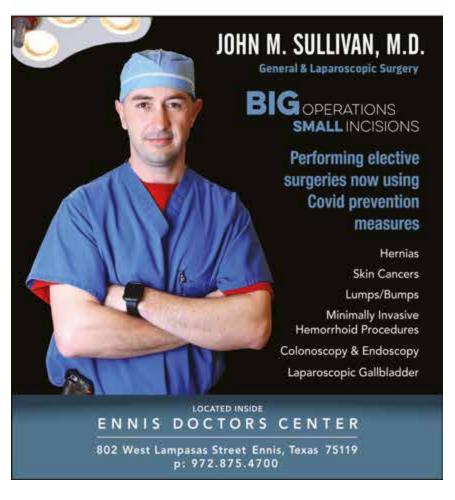
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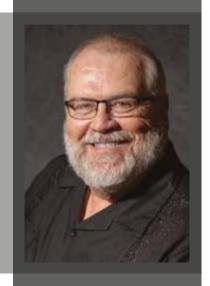
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Where is your June?

This month is travel prime time. The weather is warm but not yet "Texas hot." It will probably be dry enough for most of your outdoor activities. If you consider working in the yard a downside, well this might not be your favorite time of year, because it is the peak of the growing season. But, if you enjoy the smell of freshly mowed grass and working in your garden, this might be your favorite month to stay home!

We like to travel a little during June, and if we are going to take a long trip, this will probably be the month. We have relatives as far away as Pennsylvania and Nebraska whom we see at least once a year, and neither of those destinations are what we would expect to be short trips.

There is a lot to be said for staying close to home in June also, especially in Ennis. Our Freedom Festival will be at the end of the month. Every Saturday morning, there is something going on downtown, including the Bluebonnet Market. Usually, there are activities for kids there also, including Mornings at Minnie.

Staycations are great. Ennis' parks offer something for everyone, with great playground areas for kids, walking trails, exercise areas, picnic tables and fishing piers. My siblings were here recently for a reunion, and they really enjoyed walking around our beautiful downtown and reliving the old memories of growing up here.

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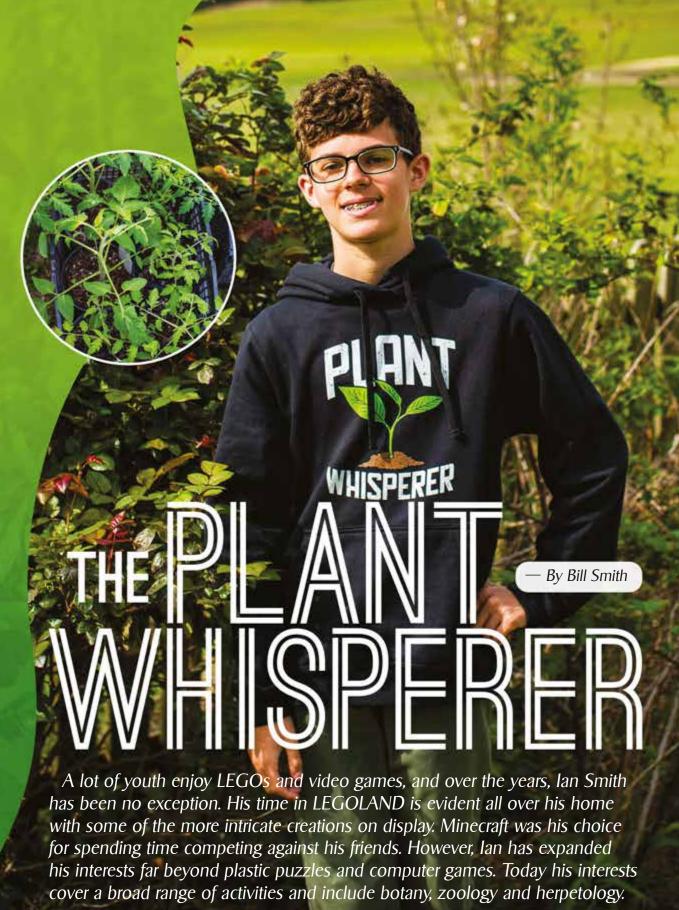


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"My phone app identifies plants that I see and want to pursue for additional information. I like to learn about plants, and not just the ones we grow for food," Ian offered. The home in the country where he lives with his parents, Brandon and Amy, is surrounded by gardens of various types. Some of them grow produce, such as asparagus and tomatoes. Others are plants that will eventually come inside to decorate the home.

At age 15 and a freshman in high school, lan joked that his favorite class is "lunch," but with a little prompting, he admitted he really enjoys science. "We are in biology this year, and I love all animals." The Smith property hosts a variety of pets, poultry and reptiles, plus bee hives. Two large dogs announce visitors entering the home. The African leopard tortoise is a beautiful reptile with a distinctive shell that resembles the markings of the large cat from which it gets its name. While lan can hold the 18-month-old tortoise in one hand today, with a life span of 100 years, the family knows it will likely outlive all of them and be quite large one day. The tortoise is named Pole Pole, pronounced "po-lay po-lay." The name is Swahili for "slowly, slowly." "We took a trip to Africa two years ago. 'Pole Pole' was written on the streets as we approached intersections, warning us to slow down. The name just fits the tortoise," lan related.

The aquarium across the room is home to lan's bearded dragon, Bob. Outside are four guineas, a full chicken coop and a rabbit pen that is home to two lop-eared show rabbits. Amy mentioned that the rabbits may become part of lan's business, as there aren't many breeders of show rabbits around Ennis. Finally, the menagerie is complete with bee hives in the backyard, and Brandon complimented lan on his work with the bees and gathering honey.

"We grow a lot of what we feed to the animals," Ian explained. "Bob and the tortoise like the romaine lettuce, bell peppers, mustard greens and cilantro."

Amy pointed out how lan's face lit up as he walked outside to view the various animals and garden areas. The trees were just beginning to bud and only a few of the vegetables were starting to grow. Ian mentioned, "The potatoes are doing well. There is also asparagus, squash, onions and garlic. These tomatoes and peppers are still in their plastic pots and will be planted soon. They were started from seeds that we harvested last year and grew to this point in our greenhouse during the winter. We will also plant Brussels sprouts, but Mom is the only one that likes them," he mused.

Amy furnished a couple of pictures that reveal how lan's interest in plants





and animals has evolved over the years and continues to grow. A photo of him at age 7 shows him delighted to have his hands covered with lady bugs. Other photos picturing lan with a basketful of potatoes he had just harvested and Ian with Brandon standing in the garden full of healthy plants were taken when Ian was 11.

lan has a booth at the Ennis Bluebonnet Market that is set up periodically as they have produce available for sale and time and weather allows. "We set it up the first time two or three years ago, but COVID intervened," Amy said. "Then there was one year where it seemed to rain the whole season. We have a 10-by-10 booth with a nice banner that pictures lan. It says, Welcome to My Backyard Garden."

"In years past, lan was just interested in helping out, but now when we pass by Tex-Scapes Nursery or Walmart, Ian says, 'Can we stop and look at plants?"" Brandon said.

"I am mostly self-taught when it comes to plants. I have watched a lot of YouTube videos, and when I see a plant that I am interested in, I can

explore it further just by taking a picture of it. The app tells how to take care of it, like how much light it needs to grow properly. Through the app, I recently learned about the red bird plant. The flowers on it really look like red birds. It is also known as devil's backbone or a zigzag plant."

lan's hobby with his plants and animals fills much of the time he is not in school or doing homework. "There is something to be done with the plants every day, whether it is planting, watering, weeding, harvesting or spending time at the market."

Ian met Tommy Copeland, owner of Oak Grove Organic Farm and manager of Ennis Bluebonnet Market, at his booth downtown. Amy said they bonded over plants. Tommy is also a former horticulture teacher and is impressed with lan's love for gardening. Tommy remarked, "I was also impressed with lan's entrepreneurial spirit. I applaud his parents for the encouragement they give him to pursue his dreams. What he is doing could be applied to any business." Tommy indicated that because of lan's



example, several other young people attended the city's program called Big Dreams Little Tables. The program was a promotion to interest more youth in participating in the Bluebonnet Market and learning about small business.

Brandon is really curious about where lan's interests will take him in the future. "He has a lot of passion for what he does," he said. "We have seen it evolve over the years." NOW



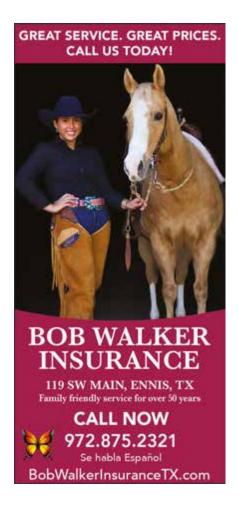


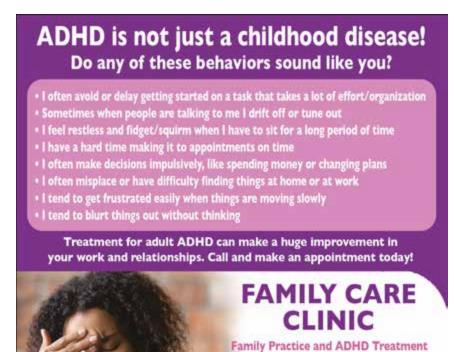


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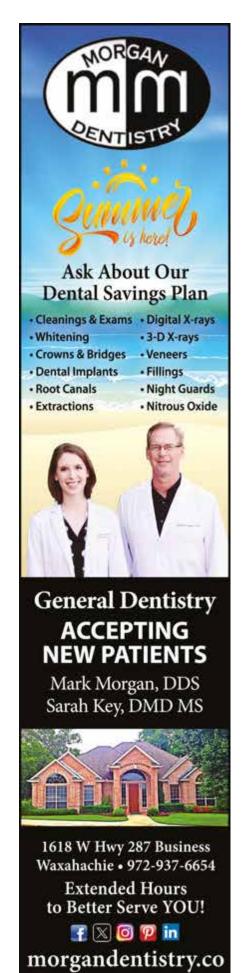
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Around Town



Kevin Blade sells his welding projects to

raise money for prom.

Darla Gardner, a speech and language pathologist, celebrates the opening and ribbon cutting of her business, Wonderfully Made Therapies, with colleagues, family and close friends.

Zoomed In:

Reece Walker and Jacob Chapman

Reece Walker and Jacob Chapman are local firefighters serving during the Bluebonnet Festival. Reece just recently started his career in Ennis as a firefighter and EMT. Reece said, "I am from Pursley, just south of Corsicana. After four years in the Marine Corps, I completed my firefighter and EMT training at Navarro and have been working in Ennis for about four months."

lacob has been in Ennis since childhood and has been with the Ennis Fire Department for four years. "I took my firefighter training at Kilgore and my paramedic training at Navarro," he related. He is married, and his parents also call Ennis home.

The ATV they were in was acquired by Ennis FD through a grant. They said it is also used for small fires and rescues on country roads that full-size vehicles would struggle to access.



Haley Burnett explains the Bluebonnet Trails Map at the Welcome Center.



Kids create crafts at Make It At the Market.

By Bill Smith



Ginger Gonzales and Christen Rudd serve with Ennis Cares.



Janice Carey with NARFE introduces speaker Brian Guenzel, senior planner of the city of Midlothian at their recent meeting.



Russell and Nancy Thomas with their grandson, Beau, visit the Perot Museum van.







BusinessNOW

Lone Star Floorcovering

By Virginia Riddle

Lone Star Floorcovering 2203 W. Ennis Ave., Ste. 200 Ennis, TX 75119 (972) 872-9811 www.lonestarfloor.com Facebook: Lone Star Floorcovering

Hours: Monday-Thursday: 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Friday: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. After hours by appointment.

As a family-owned, local business, Lone Star Floorcovering has served Ellis County homeowners and businesses since 1985. With a welcoming bell chime, customers enter the soothing and relaxing interior design showroom to match products to their dream. "It's important that we fulfill customers' needs," said Jesse Law, manager and son of owners Mike and Kellie Law.

The store offers free decorating assistance to help you

choose among the granite and quartz countertops, tile for backsplashes and showers, interior and exterior lighting, wood floors, vinyl plank, carpet and more. "We work with our contractors daily to install the products we sell but also offer cash-and-carry," Jesse said. "Additionally, we sand and finish wood floors." Most customers come from Ellis County and surrounding cities.

Some of the flooring product lines include Daltile, Shaw, Mohawk, Prestige, Armstrong, Bella Cera and Mannington. "We carry carpet, hardwood, laminate, stone, tile and luxury vinyl flooring," Jesse added. Cash, check and most major credit cards are accepted as payment.

The business employs six people. "We work with great sub-contractors every day. Our contractors are true craftsmen," Jesse explained. Whether the customer's job is residential or commercial, new construction or remodeling, building a great relationship with customers is paramount. They work to accomplish this goal by creating a beautifully finished project in a timely manner. "We get a sense of pride out of a successful job and happy customers' smiles," Jesse said.

High tech has offered customers many more products from which to choose. "It's a challenge to keep up with new decorating trends, installation techniques and all the new products," Jesse explained. "We stay up to date through education and good relationships with our vendors." Lone Star Floorcovering is a member of the Better Business Bureau and American Home Services. The business earned Best of the Best in Ellis County honors in 2014.

Jesse grew up in Ellis County, served in the Marines from 2002-2006 and earned a business degree from the University of North Texas. "I grew up in this business, so I have a lot of hands-on experience," he said. "I was picking up carpet scraps for my dad when I was just a kid." Between owning a business and spending time with their 12 grandchildren, Mike and Kellie are seldom bored. Jesse and his wife, Madison, have contributed two boys — Dylan, 8, and Charles, 4 — to the mix.

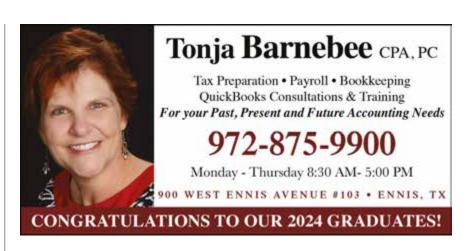
Lone Star Floorcovering supports the local community through their sponsorship of the Ennis Polka Festival and other local charities. "My dad and I have run in the Polka Fest's 5K, and I serve the Ennis community through my membership in the Lions Club and as members of Tabernacle Baptist," lesse stated.

Through all the years in business, the Law family has opened two other Ellis County showrooms before settling in their present, conveniently located Ennis showroom in 2007. "We're proud to be in Ennis! Ennis is central to the area we serve, and its growth, with so many new homes and offices, is exciting to see," Jesse said.

The opportunity to meet people from all walks of life and days that are always different are just two things Jesse noted that make coming to work wonderful. "It's the legacy. I'm proud of what my dad started, and I want to carry his work forward. We take pride in our showroom, design expertise, products and in seeing a project successfully completed." NOW



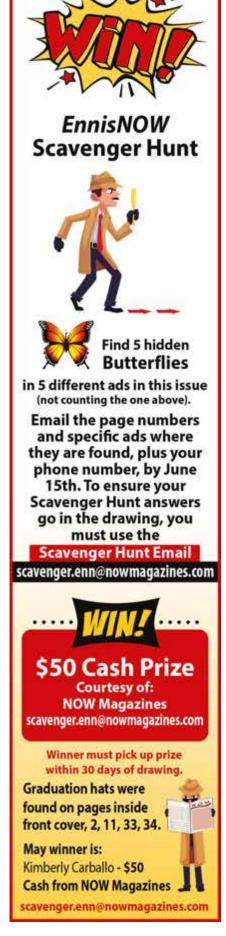
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Patti Owen was speaking for both her friend, Jan Braddock, and herself when she said with a laugh, "We love to cook because eating is at the top of our entertainment!" While neither of them formally studied cooking, they recall their mothers and grandmothers cooking with rolling pins and flour all over the kitchen.

"Our granddaughters love to let us teach them to cook, and we love that," Jan added. "And, sometimes, we try new recipes that don't turn out like we expected." They both shared that getting around the table and sharing their days is nice, and grilling and down-home cooking is their style.

Patti recalled a Thanksgiving meal from years ago. "Mom made dressing, but the bowl it was in broke. We had store-bought dressing that year. It wasn't like Mom's, but we still had a great time eating together!" **NOW**

Peanut Clusters

- 1 12-oz. pkg. semi-sweet chocolate
- 1 11-oz. pkg. butterscotch
- 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
- 2 cups peanuts
- **I.** Combine the first three ingredients in a glass bowl; heat the mixture in a microwave

for 2 to 2 1/2 minutes.

- 2. Stir until melted; stir in the peanuts.
- **3.** Drop by the spoonful onto a cookie sheet. Put in the refrigerator to set.

Patti's Broccoli and Rice

1 1/2 cups rice, instant or your favorite 2 crowns broccoli, approximately 1 lb.

- 1/2 stick margarine
- I medium onion, chopped
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of celery soup
- 1 16-oz. jar Cheese Whiz
- **1.** Cook the rice per the package directions.
- **2.** Cook/steam the broccoli.
- **3.** Melt the margarine in a medium-size pan. Add the onions; cook for about 6-7 minutes, or until tender.
- **4.** In a Crock-Pot, combine the rice, broccoli, both soups, onion/margarine mixture and the cheese. Stir well; heat until warm. Note: Substitute frozen broccoli for fresh if you like.

Lemon Fruit Cake

2 sticks butter

1 lb. brown sugar

6 eggs, beaten

1/2 lb. candied cherries

1/2 lb. candied pineapple

2 oz. lemon extract

3 1/2 cups flour, sifted

1/2 tsp. salt2 tsp. baking powder1 lb. pecans

- **I.** In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar together. Add the beaten eggs.
- **2.** In a separate bowl, add the fruit. Pour the extract over the fruit; let stand for 10 minutes.
- **3.** Add the flour, salt and baking powder to the creamed mixture; stir well.
- 4. Add the fruit and nuts; stir.
- **5.** Spoon the batter into a buttered and floured tube cake pan.
- 6. Bake in a slow oven at 275 F for 1 1/2 hours. Let cool before removing from the pan.7. Note: The cake is best if wrapped tightly and stored for several weeks before serving.

Black-eyed Peas

- 5 slices of bacon, cut into small pieces
- 1 cup onion, chopped medium
- 2 Tbsp. jalapeños, finely chopped (I de-seed one and use one with all the seeds.)
- 2 cups tomatoes, chopped medium (I use 1 10.5-oz. can of diced tomatoes.)
- I clove garlic, minced
- 1 pinch salt
- Pepper, to taste
- 3 cups water
- 2 beef bouillon cubes
- 4 16-oz. cans black-eyed peas
- 3 cups cheddar or Swiss cheese
- **I.** In a stock pot, sauté the bacon until lightly browned.
- **2.** Sauté the onions, jalapeños, tomatoes, garlic, salt and pepper in the bacon drippings.
- **3.** Add the water. Dissolve the beef bouillon cubes in the mixture.
- **4.** Drain the juice from the peas; add to the soup.
- **5.** Add the cheese; simmer until the cheese is melted.





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Dr. Allala is a graduate of the Texas A&M School of Dentistry. "When I started there, it was still Baylor. My diploma has both names on it," she recalled. "I specialize in oral surgery, and we're really good at it. I'm nothing without my team. We do everything in dentistry. I like being well rounded. I enjoy being an overachiever, so I'm constantly taking continuing education, keeping up with all the

newest techniques and technology. I'm also a native Spanish speaker. I grew up speaking both languages. Our YouTube videos explaining procedures are available in both English and Spanish."

Dr. Allala is proud of the service they provide at Serenity Advanced Dentistry. "I think we give five-star service. And I know my staff is five-star. We know what works and what doesn't. I know it sounds corny, but this is my life's work. Most of my staff have been with me for years, at different locations around DFW, before I came to Cedar Hill. I met Mariela seven years ago, in Pleasant Grove. It was my first job out of school. Racine has been with me four years. and Jazmine three years, both in Red Oak. Our newest team member is Jessica. She found us three months ago when she emailed me looking for an opportunity to shadow a dentist."

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theserenitydentist.com | 972-634-1434 Dr. Cristina Allala 605 E. Belt Line Rd., Suite 101, Cedar Hill









Crossword Puzzle

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Across

- 1 Poetical daybreak
- 5 Dove sound
- 8 Diva delivery
- 9 Not in silence
- 11 Put on
- 13 Slapstick ammunition
- 14 Stock car racing overseer
- 15 Arabic form of "Mac"
- 16 Suit shuffled: as found after leading in
- 17 Fruitcake
- 18 Fine hair

Down

19 "Awesome!"

22 Opposite of

Indianapolis

for example

nigh

24 Gun. at

25 Canny

27 Curve

28 Imitation

diamonds

30 Dispositions

31 Cuzco valley

dweller

33 Leaves

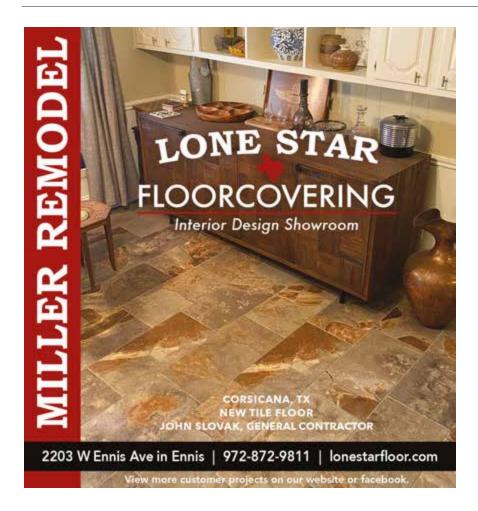
- 1 Pepperdine University locale
- 2 Alignment altered on iteration
- 3 Patch targets
- 4 Doze
- 5 Agreement
- 6 Eke --- living
- 7 Bad aroma
- 9 Legendary oilwell firefighter Red
- 32 Hankering 10 Schindler had

one

11 What dreidels

- 12 Guarantees
- 18 Three goddesses of destiny
- 20 Virgil's Trojan hero
- 21 Movie media
- 23 Back financially
- 25 Major organization?
- 26 Card case
- 27 If it's pro, it's free
- 29 Welding technique

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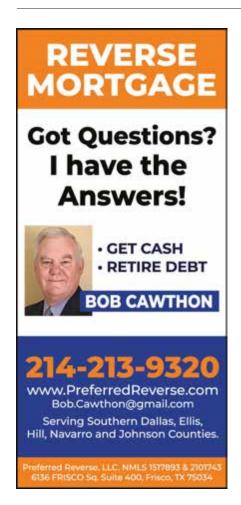
Sudoku Puzzle

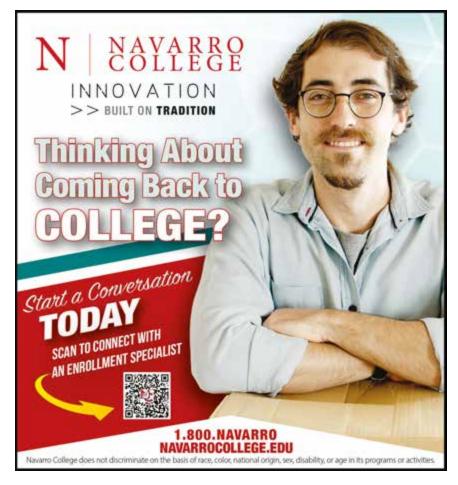
Easy Medium

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

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6/1-6/2

54th Annual Gingerbread **Trail Tour of Homes:**

A walkable tour featuring five of the most iconic historic homes on Main Street in Waxahachie. Adults: \$29: children under 12: \$10. For tickets and more information, visit www.gingerbreadtrail.org.

6/6

Ennis Retired School Personnel Meeting:

Program will be Scholarship Presentation and Annual Potluck Luncheon. 11:00 a.m., First Methodist Church Family Life Center, 300 N. Sherman St. For more information, email EnnisRSPA@gmail.com.

6/7, 6/14, 6/21 and 6/28

Summer at the Park:

Follow the path to free summer fun every Friday in June! Games, arts and crafts and nature walks. 10:00-11:30 a.m.. Bluebonnet Park, 201 US-287. For more information, call (972) 878-4748, ext. 2823.

6/10-6/14

Vacation Bible School:

Join us with our theme The Great Jungle Journey. All children who have completed pre-K through sixth grade are welcome. Free. 6:00-8:30 p.m.

each evening, Baylor Baptist Church, 210 N. Preston St. For more information, contact the church office at (972) 875-2521.

6/13

Traditional Hand Quilting:

The Ennis Sewing Circle invites you to participate. Quilting: 9:00 a.m.-noon, followed by a potluck lunch, Sokol Ennis, 2622 E. Hwy. 34. Enter on the west side. For more details, phone or text (972) 765-3733.

6/13-6/18

The Wizard of Oz:

Join Dorothy and her loyal companion, Toto, as they "follow the yellow brick road" through the Land of Oz. Ennis Public Theatre, 113 N. Dallas St. For tickets and showtimes, visit www.ennispublictheatre.com.

6/14-6/30

Criminal Mischief:

Freddy, Angie and Spencer think they are in love. The problem is who's in love with whom? This sets off a series of comical, yet criminal, misadventures. Theatre Rocks! 505 NW Main St. For tickets and showtimes visit www.theatrerocks.com or call (972) 878-5126.

6/29

Red, White & Bike Ride:

Line up for bike parade judging: 9:30 a.m.; parade begins: 10:00 a.m. Contact the Ennis Welcome Center for more information at (972) 878-4748 or go to www.visitennistexas.com.

Ennis Freedom Fest 2023

With the most beautiful fireworks display in all of Texas, this year's Freedom Fest in Ennis will be one to remember. Veteran's Memorial Park, 2301 Ennis Pkwy. For more information, contact the Ennis Welcome Center at (972) 878-4748 or go to www.visitennistexas.com.

Mondays and Wednesdays

Chess Classes:

Come learn to play. Free. 3:00-5:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 115 W. Brown St. For information, call (972) 875-5360.

Tuesdays

Rotary Club of Ennis Meeting:

Lunch, club business and program, Noon, The First United Methodist Church. 300 N. Sherman St.

Second **Tuesdays**

Ennis Masonic Lodge

#369 Meeting:

7:00 p.m., 209 North Dallas St.

National Active and **Retired Federal Employees** Chapter 1191 Meeting:

11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., rotating between Corsicana, Ennis and Waxahachie. For more information, contact (972) 775-2463 or rjcarey I @gmail.com.

Wednesdays

Ennis Host Lions Club Meeting:

Noon, Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1200 Country Club Rd.

First Thursdays

Sip, Shop & Stroll:

Come enjoy some sips. bites and special deals with our wonderful downtown merchants. 5:00-8:00 p.m., Downtown Ennis. Call the Ennis Welcome Center for more information at (972) 878-4748.

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











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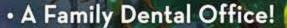
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