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ICE CREAM AND SORBETS

CHET PAYS HIS RESPECTS
AT THE FUNERAL MUSEUM

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FOR NUECES EC MEMBERS

JULY 2021

A man with a beard, wearing a white cowboy hat and a blue button-down shirt, stands with his hands in his pockets, smiling. Behind him is a large mural on a yellow wall. The mural depicts a bearded man with a red bandana, wearing a blue shirt and playing a yellow guitar. The words "WILDLIFE" and "OF TEXAS" are visible in red lettering on the mural.

Painting the Town

Mural artist
Matt Tumlinson
turns Rankin
into his canvas

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July 2021



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Artist Matt Tumlinson interprets the state's culture in murals around a West Texas town.

*By Pam LeBlanc
Photos by Erich Schlegel*

An Unlikely Blueprint

John S. Chase charted a unique course to become Texas' first Black licensed architect.

By Michael Hurd

ON THE COVER

Thanks to Matt Tumlinson, Willie Nelson has a permanent residency in Rankin.
Photo by Erich Schlegel

ABOVE

John S. Chase and his sons in front of his signature Houston home, circa 1959.
Photo courtesy African American Library at the Gregory School | Houston Public Library

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Groundbreaking Cougar

WARREN MCVEA was a high school football phenom—arguably the best running back in the country—at San Antonio’s Brackenridge High School in 1964, when he turned down more than 70 other scholarship offers and elected to play for the University of Houston.

The decision was historic, making McVea, who turns 75 this month, the first Black player to receive a scholarship to play football at any of the major college programs in Texas. He was a two-time All-American for the Cougars and later played six seasons in the NFL.

McVea was born July 30, 1946.



July 5

National Bikini Day

This year’s celebration takes on special meaning as it marks the 75th anniversary of the skimpy swimsuit.

Dancer Micheline Bernardini debuted the bikini, designed by Louis Réard, at a poolside photo shoot July 5, 1946, in Paris. A world just emerging from World War II considered the suit scandalous because it showed a woman’s navel.

Réard named the swimsuit, which used about a napkin’s worth of fabric, after the Bikini Atoll, the Pacific Ocean coral island where the U.S. tested nuclear weapons for more than a decade starting in 1946.



That’s roughly the number of times a person breathes in a day.



FERTILE FELINE

No cat on record has given birth more than a tabby born in 1935 in Bonham, in North Texas. Dusty produced 420 kittens during her life, according to Guinness World Records, giving birth to her last litter, a single kitten, in 1952.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I SHOULD HAVE PAID MORE ATTENTION ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town. Below are some of the responses to our May prompt: **This Memorial Day I remember ...**

All the fallen. War is hell, and we better remember too few come back from it.

SALLY WOLFE
VIA FACEBOOK

Not only those who fought and died in battle for this country but also those front-line heroes who fought and died in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

W. GRANT BRALY
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC
CUERO

Maj. Marie T. Rossi, the first female aviation combat commander to fly into battle. She was killed in action March 1, 1991.

TAMMY DUPLECHIN
TRINITY VALLEY EC
NEW YORK, TEXAS

Too many to list.

STEVE AND LISA BOSTON
VIA FACEBOOK

To see more responses, read Currents online.



Best Foot Forward

SOME PEOPLE in this country have two feet, and it's causing all kinds of problems. That's about to change, however.

Wait. What?

One foot is the old U.S. survey measuring foot from 1893, according to *The New York Times*, that takes Earth's curvature into account. The other is the shorter and slightly more exact international foot from 1959, used by nearly everybody in the U.S. except surveyors in some states. The two feet differ by about one-hundredth of a foot per mile, or 2 feet for every 1 million feet.

But come January 1, 2023, the old foot gets the boot when the National Institute of Standards and Technology adopts the international foot as the official standard in the U.S.



TCP Contests and More

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RAUL ALLEN

The Hero of Cinco de Mayo

“You have made me feel very proud of being a Tejano. Thank you for your great story on Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín.”

ANTHONY BARRON
TRINITY VALLEY EC
TERRELL

San Jacinto Stands Alone

While I enjoyed the article about the Battle of Puebla and admire Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín’s part in it, I take exception to calling it “Mexico’s San Jacinto moment” [*The Hero of Cinco de Mayo*, May 2021].

San Jacinto was a victory that ended the war with Mexico and gave Texas independence, whereas the Battle of Puebla was just a lone victory in a war Mexico eventually lost to France the next year. Cinco de Mayo is not nearly as important as San Jacinto Day.

Steve Yates
Pedernales EC
Wimberley



I love any and all yarns [*Serendipity Spinners*, May 2021].

WENDY L. VERA
VIA FACEBOOK

Dear Texas

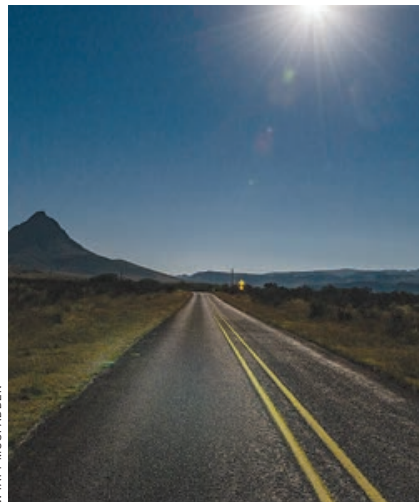
The writing and great photo of Eli Winter’s piece [*Few and Far*, March 2021] were so beautiful. It was a poignant, personal and perfect love letter to the entire state of Texas.

Suzanne Howalt
Pedernales EC
Austin

Falfurrias Beef

At one time the Lasater ranch encompassed 350,000 South Texas acres, and in 1912, somewhere on that huge spread, my mother was born [*A Name That Sticks*, February 2021]. The Lasaters were not only famous for their butter, but they were also known for developing the Beefmaster cattle breed in 1931.

Jerry Klumpp
Central Texas EC
Kingsland



WYATT MCGSPADDEN

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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Austin, TX 78701

Please include your electric co-op and town. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

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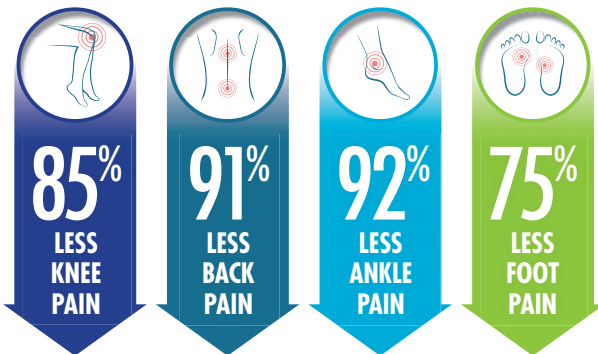


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Rankin as a Canvas

Artist Matt Tumlinson interprets the state's culture in murals around a West Texas town

ABOVE Life imitates art as Matt Tumlinson grabs a selfie in front of his modern take on a *Lonesome Dove* scene. RIGHT A palette of spray paint.

BY PAM LEBLANC • PHOTOS BY ERICH SCHLEGEL



Matt Tumlinson wanted to create a painting that stretched across an entire building, so when the opportunity arose to splash one on the side of a restaurant in tiny Rankin, he headed west, paintbrushes in tow.

“I was thinking if it turns out bad, very few people will see it in Rankin,” the San Antonio-based artist said.

The 8-foot letters that spell out the town’s name, in a style reminiscent of what you’d find on a cowboy’s belt buckle, turned out pretty good, in fact. And since that 60-foot mural went up in 2015, Tumlinson has painted seven more in the West Texas oil town, population about 850.

“With murals, it’s really tough to get permission or access to a wall and even tougher to get access without stipulations on it,” Tumlinson said. “I only wanted to do one if I could paint something I wanted to paint, and Rankin’s been really good about ‘I’ve got a wall you can paint.’”

Tumlinson grew up in Early. After graduating from Texas Tech University, he worked briefly as a history teacher

but disliked it. When he and his wife, Allison, moved to Nantucket, Massachusetts, he sold his first painting—a watercolor map. In 2013 they moved back to Texas, where he worked as a guide on the San Antonio Riverwalk while trying to kickstart his art career.

Tumlinson’s main business is in “brass canvas” paintings, made on groups of spent bullet casings collected from his uncle’s gun range. He also works in oil, painting his view of Texas’ quickly changing rural landscapes and drawing influence from Texas singer-songwriters.

“People have this idea that Texas is all boots and cowboys and open range,” Tumlinson said. “I just feel like being an eighth-generation Texan, if somebody’s going to tell the accurate story of what Texas is today, why not me?”

Rankin, 55 miles south of Midland, didn’t offer up its downtown as a canvas randomly. Tumlinson’s sister teaches at Rankin High School; his brother-in-law coaches the Red Devils, the school’s six-man football team. A local restaurant



ABOVE Tumlinson says the mural of Matthew McConaughey is about being confident in yourself. RIGHT Spray-painting in windblown West Texas can be tricky. OPPOSITE Rankin City Hall.



owner thought a mural would liven things up (which it did). Tumlinson's sister mentioned that her brother was an artist looking for a place to paint a mural, and an invitation was extended. The mural was Tumlinson's first.

Soon, locals suggested he paint the side of the city's water tower. The structure looked rickety to Tumlinson, so instead he painted a scene from Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* on the side of a building owned by the mayor. The mural shows characters Gus and Woodrow riding into San Antonio, marveling at how the city has changed. "It's all grown up," Gus says in the TV miniseries.

In Tumlinson's version of the scene, the cowboys are holding a selfie stick. He painted it in a single night, using his pickup truck's headlights to illuminate the wall.

"In a world where all the spaces are filled in on a map, I wonder what happened to the guys like that," Tumlinson says of the image. "I'm trying to put that concept of what it is to be Texan into a modern context."

Another mural sprouted on the wall of an abandoned gas station along U.S. 67 a few blocks away. Tumlinson checked tax records to find out who owned the building and then contacted the company to get permission. The CEO granted approval, and Tumlinson illustrated a saintly looking Willie

Nelson, halo overhead and joint in hand. Within a week, Tumlinson got a call. He'd received permission from the wrong building owner, and the true owner wanted the artwork removed. Tumlinson suggested a compromise—he'd erase the joint if the rest could stay.

It did.

A John Wayne mural adorns the other side of that gas station, alongside a graph marked "stupidity" on one axis and "difficulty in life" on the other, a nod to a quote often incorrectly attributed to Wayne: "Life is hard; it's even harder when you're stupid."

Tumlinson painted other murals, too: a pair of oil field workers on one wall, another Rankin sign on another and a state trooper ticketing a kid riding a Big Wheel on a pink cinder block building. (That one was modeled after his uncle but coincidentally looked like a local trooper at the



time. The trooper took it in stride, according to Tumlinson.)

The artist's most popular work decorates a metal tank near the railroad tracks. In it, actor Matthew McConaughey holds a can of spray paint next to the words, "You'd be a lot cooler if more people thought so," a twist on the actor's quote from the Richard Linklater movie *Dazed and Confused*: "It'd be a lot cooler if you did."

Tumlinson tried but never located the tank's owner to get permission to paint it. He decided to put up the artwork—painted in his studio in downtown San Antonio, then applied to the metal structure—anyway. As he worked in broad daylight, a state trooper stopped to inquire. He asked if Tumlinson had painted the city's murals, told him McConaughey looked great, then drove away.

Since painting the Rankin murals, Tumlinson has expanded his reach—part of a long-term goal to paint his way across the state. In San Antonio his *Puro San Antonio* mural is filled with nods to the local culture. One dubbed *King George* depicts country music singer George Strait in

royal garb, and a third features a woman dressed as Davy Crockett swinging a gun.

Tumlinson likes painting murals because anybody can see them. "It's the closest thing an artist gets to being on a stage," he said. "It's more communal."

The Rankin community, apparently, approves. None have been vandalized.

"You see people all the time taking pictures," said Brandon Brown, the mayor. "I don't think we're a destination yet, but I think the murals have sparked a little bit of new life in Rankin." ■

TCP WEB EXTRA See a slideshow of Tumlinson's Rankin murals.



An Unlikely Blueprint

John S. Chase charted a unique course to become Texas' first Black licensed architect

BY MICHAEL HURD

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE John S. Chase with his sons in front of the family's Houston residence, circa 1959. A rendering of the home's courtyard. A street view of the home from 2019.

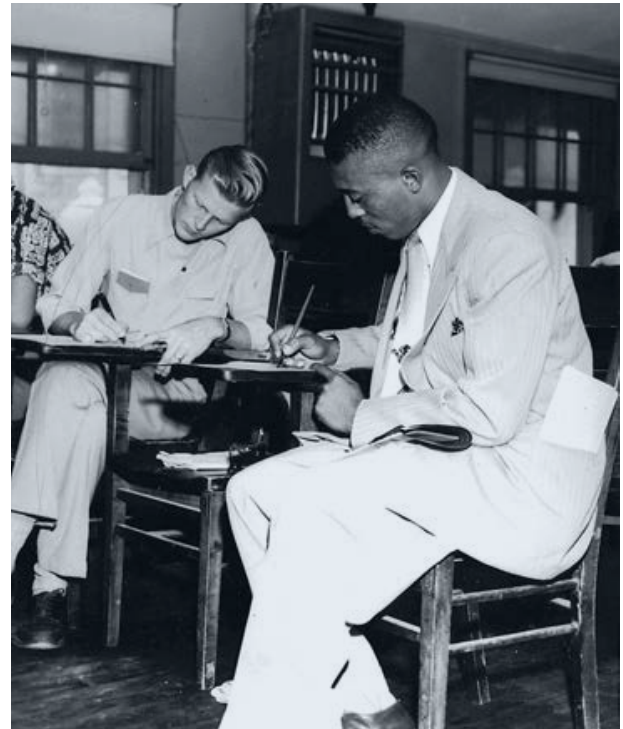


FAMILY: AFRICAN AMERICAN LIBRARY | HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY; HOME: HESTER + HARDWAY

JOHNSAUNDERS CHASE didn't want Texas, and the state certainly wanted nothing to do with him. It was 1948, and race relations in the rigidly segregated South were heavily tilted toward nonexistent.

Yet as Chase pursued an education and started his career as an architect, he and the Lone Star State struck up a historic relationship despite an epic perfunctory legal battle, menacing stares, media glares, hate mail and death threats.

Because of this unlikely alliance, it was in Texas where the Annapolis, Maryland, native would, in 1950, become



Chase in a University of Texas classroom in 1950.



the first African American student admitted to a graduate program at a major university in the South—the University of Texas. Chase followed that victory in 1952, when he became the university's second Black graduate and, the same year, the state's first Black licensed architect.

"For the most part, they treated me with respect, and I treated them with respect," Chase recalled in a 2004 interview with the HistoryMakers, a research institution that archives African American oral history. "I got to know some very, very important architects and some very important people because of the work and relationships that I had at UT."

Chase went on to design an estimated 300 Black churches, primarily in Houston and throughout East Texas but also in Austin, where the angular roofs of Olivet Baptist Church and David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, with their minimalist approaches, are indicative of Chase's style. They blend contemporary design with natural materials—wood and stone—and an abundance of open spaces and natural light. Inside David Chapel the amount of natural light increases as you approach the pulpit and a simple wooden cross on the wall, intentional symbolism Chase designed into the building.

One of his most noted residential designs is the Phillips House in Austin—with its distinctive green, diamond-shaped roof; large expanses of windows; and long lines—built for Della Phillips, co-owner of East Austin's Phillips-Upshaw Funeral Home.

In Houston several buildings on the Texas Southern University campus, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Humanities Center and Thurgood Marshall School of Law building, are Chase designs. He also collaborated on construction of Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center and the Astrodome renovation and was commissioned to design the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia. In 1980, Chase became the first Black man to serve on the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

As a young man, Chase could not have imagined doing any of that while based below the Mason-Dixon Line, but in retrospect his iconic, trailblazing career in Texas was fated. Chase had just received his architectural engineering degree from Virginia's all-Black Hampton College in 1948 when the school's placement officer presented Chase with several job possibilities. Chase told him, "You can strike Texas off the list." However, when the job he took in Philadelphia didn't work out, Chase wrote the officer to ask if he had other prospective employers and added a surprising stipulation.

"I underlined the Deep South, and I never did think I'd do something like that," he said in the HistoryMakers interview. "I just figured that in Philly, they got everything they need, but down in the Deep South, the opportunity to build would be greater, and I was right."

DRAWING: DAVID HEYMANN, BROOKE BURNSIDE, SARAH SPIELMAN AND WEI ZHOU. CLASSROOM: THE DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in East Austin.

Chase started his own business, and his first clients were the congregants of African American churches.

Outside the classroom, heads turned when Chase passed. He was shadowed around campus by reporters and federal marshals and received stacks of explicit hate mail that varied on the theme “You are less than a dog to force your way into someplace that you’re not wanted.”

Yet Chase persevered and completed the program, even making some lifelong friends. He and his wife, Drucie, moved to Houston, where Chase took a teaching position at Texas Southern University. No architecture firms would hire him because of his color.

Chase started his own business, and his first clients were the congregants of African American churches.

“To me, selling architecture is no different than selling insurance—you got to know somebody,” Chase said of his Sunday pilgrimages with Drucie and their three children in tow. “I figured it was the best way to know people—join church. We got so much work out of that.”

However, it is the home he built for himself in Houston’s Third Ward that is the focus of *John S. Chase—The Chase Residence*, a new book by David Heymann and Stephen Fox.

“It was designed around a completely open-air courtyard and exemplified the type of house that was very popular with Houston modern architects in the 1950s—flat-roof, courtyard houses, often with interior walls of glass that opened to the courtyard,” explained Fox, an architectural historian at Rice University. “When he added a second story, it reflected his great admiration for the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, so it kind of changed the tone of the house from an austere modern house to one that had a mixture of materials, a very exuberant interior.”

Chase died in 2012, leaving an inspiring legacy that continues to impact Black architects. He co-founded the National Organization of Minority Architects in 1971.

“He was one person against all odds,” said William Batson, an associate professor at the Prairie View A&M University School of Architecture, the country’s top producer of African American undergraduate architects. “Those people hated him, didn’t want him to succeed, but he did, no matter what. He didn’t have any crutches, he didn’t have any pampering. He didn’t go around protesting, whining and complaining. He set the example and dropped the mic 70 years ago.” ■

TCP WEB EXTRA Enter online to win a copy of *John S. Chase—The Chase Residence*.

N MOVING TO TEXAS, Chase worked for the Black-owned Lott Lumber Co., a homebuilder in East Austin, but he knew he needed more formal education in architecture, and that meant studying at the state’s segregated flagship university just across East Avenue, now Interstate 35.

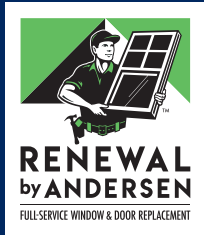
Chase got two breaks: first, a friendly face in Hugh McMath, dean of the UT School of Architecture, and then the Sweatt v. Painter Supreme Court decision prompted by Chase’s friend Heman Sweatt, who gained admittance to the UT law school after the high court ruled in his favor in the case that outlawed the separate-but-equal doctrine and opened the door for school desegregation.

“I talked with Dean McMath,” Chase remembered. “He asked if I was familiar with the case in front of the Supreme Court. He said, ‘Well, give it just a little more time, and if that thing comes through, I think your prayers are answered.’”

The decision was handed down June 5, 1950, and two days later Chase registered for UT’s summer session. Chaos ensued.

“All the media made it difficult,” he said, “but you could pick the friends out right away; you could pick out the foes. The ones that thought you were OK would do things like if you’d been drawing and studying, they’d come in, saw you’d been working long enough and say, ‘Let’s go to the Union and get a soda or a sandwich or something; come on, go with us.’”

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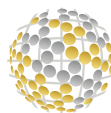
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Offer limited to the first 1400 orders from this ad only

"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."

— Positivity Sparkles.com



Pendant enlarged to show luxurious color.



TRIGGER THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Happiness takes flight in shimmering abalone and gleaming sterling silver for just \$49!

They say that something as tiny as the flap of a butterfly's wings can change the course of history. Even the faintest flutter can set off a chain reaction affecting the future. Is it possible that by choosing the perfect gift today, you can positively alter the course of tomorrow?

We say yes! After all, they don't call the present a gift for nothing!

Consider the *Abalone Butterfly Effect Pendant*. This graceful beauty blends two of Mother Nature's most magical creations—shimmering abalone and the fanciful butterfly. Nothing on earth creates an iridescent glow quite like abalone. Even the subtlest of movements elicits an ever-changing rainbow of colors. This organic gem suits the transformative splendor of the butterfly perfectly.

Now, there are abalone pendants in sterling silver fetching in excess of \$1,000. But who wants that price tag in their future when our *Abalone Butterfly Effect Pendant* will bring just as much joy without the buyer's remorse. In fact, chances are good that giving her this pendant will change your life for the better, creating a romantic chain reaction beginning the minute she opens the box.

100% Satisfaction Guaranteed. Try the *Abalone Butterfly Effect Pendant* for 30 days. If it fails to delight, just send it back for a refund of the item price. But we have a feeling happiness is in your future.

Limited Availability. These are handcrafted artisan pieces, and we only have so many. There's no time like the present. Call today!

Abalone Butterfly Effect Collection

- A. Butterfly Pendant ~~\$199†~~ **\$49** Save \$150
- B. 18" sterling silver chain \$59
- Butterfly Pendant & Chain ~~\$258†~~ **\$59** Save \$199
- C. Butterfly Earrings ~~\$199†~~ **\$59** Save \$140

Butterfly Pendant, Chain & Earrings ~~\$457~~ **\$99 Best Value!**

- Shimmering abalone in .925 sterling silver
- 1 1/3" drop & 1 1/4" wide Butterfly Pendant

Call now and mention the offer code to receive your special discounts.

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Nueces Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

2021 Hurricane Preparedness Guide

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook

The U.S. could be in for another active hurricane season in the months ahead. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released its 2021 Atlantic hurricane season outlook in May, predicting a 60% chance of an above-normal number of named storms.

The NOAA outlook predicts a likelihood of 13 to 20 named storms with sustained winds of at least 39 mph. It says six to 10 of those are likely to become hurricanes, and three to five may become major hurricanes of Category 3 or higher.

Those numbers range higher than the newly adjusted “normal” figures of 14 named storms, seven hurricanes and three major hurricanes in a typical season. NOAA raised its assessment of the “normal” number of storms due to the significant uptick in activity in recent decades, up from the previous level of 12 named storms, six hurricanes and three major hurricanes.

Forecasters at NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center said several factors contributed to the higher outlook this year, including an enhanced West African monsoon, meaning more atmospheric disturbances emerging off the African coast; less wind shear; and warmer ocean temperatures providing more fuel for storms.

It comes on the heels of the most active Atlantic hurricane season ever seen. 2020 shattered records, with so many storms that we ran out of letters in the alphabet to name them. Twelve of the storm systems made landfall in the U.S., including nine that hit the Gulf Coast — contributing to a record number of billion-dollar weather and climate-related disasters last year.

NOAA said experts do not expect such historic levels of storm activity this year but stressed that now is the time for people who live in coastal areas to get prepared.

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale


Category 1 - 5



1 WIND: 74-95 mph
DAMAGE: Very dangerous winds will produce some damage



2 WIND: 96-110 mph
DAMAGE: Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage



3 WIND: 111-129 mph
DAMAGE: Devastating damage will occur



4 WIND: 130-156 mph
DAMAGE: Catastrophic damage will occur



5 WIND: 157 mph or higher
DAMAGE: Catastrophic damage will occur



Focus on Safety: Generator Safety 101

If you plan to purchase or install a backup generator for your home, it is ideal to plug devices or appliances directly to the generator. However, in some cases members ask to run their home central AC unit to the generator. In order to do this, you will need to tie in the generator with the main breaker. For the safety of line crews and your home, there are certain issues you must resolve with NEC before you activate your system.

NEC requires you to have an electrician safely install a “break before make” transfer switch between your meter and main breaker, and have them tie in your generator to the electric transfer switch. This way the electricity your generator produces will be isolated from the power grid. If you plug in your generator and do not have this transfer switch, you are putting line crews working to restore power at risk of electrocution due to the backfeeding of electricity through your power lines. When power is restored, simply reverse the transfer switch so the main source of power is coming from the power lines. Talk to your electrician to see if an automatic or manual transfer switch is right for your home.

1. Determine what lighting and appliances you will want to use and choose a generator that produces more power than will be drawn.
2. It is best to plug appliances directly into the generator using heavy duty, outdoor extension cords.

3. Every year, people die in incidents related to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from using portable generators. **We can't say it enough: Never Use a Portable Generator Indoors!** This includes inside a garage, carport, basement, crawls pace, or other enclosed or partially-enclosed area, even with ventilation. Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent CO buildup in the home. The CO from generators can rapidly lead to full incapacitation and death, but CO can't be seen or smelled. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get to fresh air RIGHT AWAY - DO NOT DELAY! Because you may have windows open to get fresh air while the power is out, be sure to place the generator away from windows, doors, and vents.

Emergency Resources

1. Ready.gov

Website: ready.gov
Phone: 1-800-FED-INFO

2. TXDOT Highway Conditions

Website: DriveTexas.org

3. National Hurricane Center

Website: nhc.noaa.gov

4. American Red Cross South Texas Chapter

Website: redcross.org
Toll Free: (800) 785-7851

5. FEMA

Website: fema.gov
Phone: 800-621-3362

We're Ready for Hurricane Season. Are you?

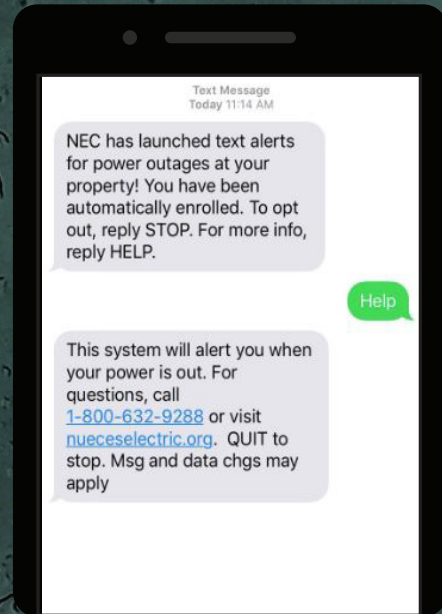
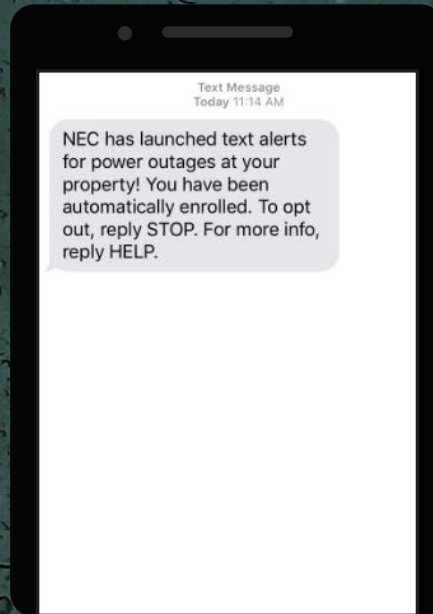
Every year at this time, people in South Texas brace themselves for another potentially destructive hurricane season. Use our hurricane preparedness guide to help you and your family prepare before, during, and after a potential storm.

Hurricane season officially takes place from June 1 through November 30, but NEC storm restoration planning takes place year-round. These powerful cyclones can severely impact our electrical system.

When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before working on downed lines. Our number one goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible when storm impacts any part of the eight-county NEC service territory. When severe weather is predicted, NEC teams makes preparations to ensure line crews and contractors are mobilized and properly equipped to respond as soon as it is safe to do so. During hurricanes, each NEC employee plays an important role in the restoration plan and has been trained to be as ready as needed.

NEC encourage you also to practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages. For prolonged power outages, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers, and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and avoid overloading the circuits during power restoration. Leave one light on to alert you when power is restored.

Whatever this hurricane season may bring, your local electric cooperative is here for you just as we have been for more than 80-years. We hope that the information in this guide proves useful to you and your family or business as you prepare for the upcoming storm season. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and wonderful summer.



NEC Outage Texting

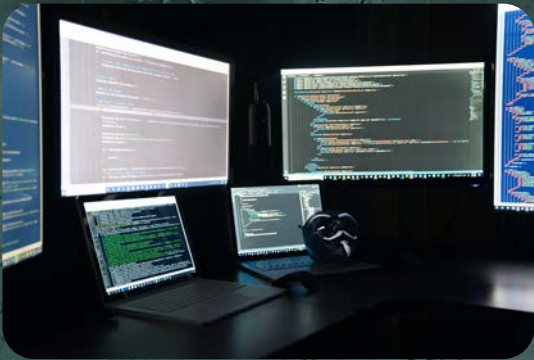
Nueces Electric Cooperative always strives to keep up to date with member communications, especially during times of severe weather. When our member's lights go out, there are typically two things they want to know (1) Does NEC know we are out of power? (2) How long until power can be restored? Fortunately, NEC has recently introduced a new way to be alerted of outages during a storm or severe weather.

How it works

Members will be notified when their power goes out through an outage text messaging system. It is important for our members to have an active, working phone number on file that NEC can reach in case of emergencies. The mobile phone number members have on file with NEC will receive an initial text message stating that they will begin receiving NEC outage notifications. Members will have the option to opt out of outage texting by replying "Stop". Members can also reply "Help" and receive a text containing more information.

This service is a great resource for NEC members in the event of evacuations and when keeping track of power in the home is impossible. Now members will have an exact time the power went out, as well as when the power is restored. This allows members to be aware of how long electronics such as the refrigerator and other devices were left without power. Members will also receive an estimated time frame of when power is expected to be restored. NEC launched its outage texting system in June 2019. NEC will continue to improve communication methods for our members to continuously fulfill our mission of providing reliable, cost-effective service in a culture where safety is a priority.

Hurricane Command Center



The NEC command center: It's high tech. It's encased in eighteen inches of concrete. It has seating for three employees and eight senior staff. It is where the magic will happen in the event of a category three, four or five hurricane. It is definitely the coolest room in the entire cooperative.



When building the new headquarters, durability and longevity were on the top of the long list of concerns. Living on the coast, designers had to take into account that hurricanes can, and do, impact the area. That is why the NEC blueprints included a specially designed (“hardened”) room which will withstand high force hurricane winds. The room is specially designed and outfitted with its own back-up generator and computer system. In the event of a hurricane, the coordination of restoration can be manned from one of three chairs while management coordinates department efforts and communication from the conference table in the back portion of the room.

Rest assured that in the event of a hurricane, our NEC lineworkers are trained, dedicated, and will not stop until power is restored to all members.

NEC Outage Viewer

NEC members can view outages 24-hours a day, seven days a week from the comfort of their office, home, car or anywhere you can access the internet.

The outage viewer can be found in the Storm Center located on the NEC website at www.nueceselectric.org/stormcenter. On the NEC Storm Center, you will find emergency and local weather links, the 2021 South Texas Hurricane Guide, and power restoration FAQs and updates.

Through the NEC website, the outage viewer page securely interfaces outage information with our dispatching personnel.

As outages are repaired, the program automatically updates to reflect the progress.

Members can view the entire NEC system at a glance to determine how many folks are out in their area and how many other outages are happening at the same time. Each outage has a colored dot, and some will have a “halo” around the dot. The color of the dot represents the number of members affected. The halo represents the a larger land mass that is affected.

Bringing this technology to members is another way the Co-op is being accountable and transparent to members. Not only can members see how their area is affected, but it also allows members to see the bigger picture of what NEC crews are up against. Whether it be a big storm or small rain, NEC is here for you when you need us.

Getting Started

- * Start with an easy to carry, water-tight container. A large, plastic trash can will do, or you can line a sturdy cardboard box with a couple of trash bags.
- * When storing your documents, use a portable, waterproof (airtight) bag that's brightly colored, so you can quickly find it in the dark.

First Aid

- * Band-aids
- * Gauze
- * Roller bandages
- * Antiseptic
- * Latex gloves
- * Adhesive tape, 2-inch width
- * Anti-bacterial ointment
- * Cold pack
- * Small scissors
- * Tweezers
- * Sunscreen
- * Thermometer
- * Safety Pins
- * CPR breathing barrier/face shield
- * Non-prescription drugs (e.g., aspirin)

Food

- * Ready-to-eat, non-perishable foods, such as canned meats, granola bars, instant soup and cereals, fruits and vegetables, canned or box juices, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix, bread and any special dietary items you and your family need.
- * Dry milk and juices
- * Water: 1 gallon per person per day.
- * Manual can opener
- * Baby supplies: formula, bottle, pacifier, soap, baby powder, clothing, blankets, baby wipes, disposable diapers, canned food and juices

Sanitary

- * Garbage bags
- * Large trash cans
- * Towelettes
- * Bar soap and liquid detergent
- * Shampoo
- * Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- * Feminine hygiene supplies
- * Toilet paper
- * Household bleach
- * Rubber gloves

Supplies

- * Paper plates & napkins
- * Duct tape
- * Matches
- * Foil
- * Tools
- * Signal Flare
- * Ponchos
- * Blanket or sleeping bag per person
- * Battery-powered, portable radio or portable TV and plenty of extra batteries
- * Eyeglasses
- * Games, such as cards, and quiet toys
- * Seasonal change of clothing, including sturdy shoes

Document & Finance

- * Copy of driver's license
- * Printed emergency contact list or address book (even if contacts are stored in a smartphone)
- * Insurance policies (health, home, auto)
- * Vital documents (birth certificates, passports, wills)
- * Bank account information (account numbers, passwords)
- * Cash and change
- * Photocopies of credit and debit cards (front and back)
- * Stock certificates, investment info
- * Extra keys (home, safe deposit box, office and car)

Pet Needs

- * One week of food and water
- * Leash and a crate or carrier
- * Bed, dishes, toys
- * Any medications
- * Battery-operated air pump for aquarium
- * Vet's contact information

Baby Needs

- * Bottles, formula, and/or powdered milk
- * One-week supply of diapers
- * Baby wipes and diaper rash ointment

Lighting

- * Flashlights and extra batteries
- * A large light source
- * Utility lighter
- * A wrench or set of pliers (to turn off utilities)

Communication

- * Battery-powered AM/FM radio
- * NOAA hazard-alert radio
- * Car or emergency charger for mobile devices
- * Small notepads and pencils
- * Games and activities that don't require electricity

Preparedness Kit

When Your Power Goes Out

Your power reliability is a priority for Nueces Electric Cooperative but sometimes weather, wear and tear, animals, and other things can cause an interruption in your electricity services. If you experience a power interruption please follow the steps below to ensure your power is restored in the quickest most efficient manner possible.

1. Check your breakers

2. See if your neighbors are also out of power

3. Report your power outage by calling

1-800-NEC-WATT

- Give us your name and NEC account number
- Tell us the time the power went out
- Give other important information: If neighbors are out also out of power, if there are wires down, trees on a line, bad weather, pole fires, or any sounds that accompanied the outage, and if there is digging or construction in the area (if you have underground lines).

4. Monitor outages and updates

- Use the Outage Viewer to monitor restoration progress
- Check NEC's Facebook page
- Check NEC's Storm Center on their website

Communication is Key During Storms

Communication during a storm can often times be difficult and frustrating. After all your power is out and thoughts immediately start racing through your mind: it's hot; the food in your fridge and freezers; no chargers or electronics work; you may have livestock water pumps; and you have no idea why your electricity is out and how long it will be out. It's stressful and we get it. When you experience a power outage, use the information to the right to help guide you on how to work with the Co-op.

The most important step is utilizing the NEC outage viewer, located in the Storm Center on the NEC website, to see how large the outage is. If you have gone to another home while your power is out, check the Viewer to know when your power is back on and you can return home. During major storms, the co-op will do our best to post updates on Facebook, the Storm Center, and our website. We will also communicate with you via email blasts and by issuing press releases to local the media. We will update you to the best of our ability as we receive information.

Five Practical Ways to Protect Yourself and Others From the Dangers of Inland Flooding

1. Protect Your Personal Documents and Special Items

- * Store valuables in plastic tubs with locking tops.
- * In case of an evacuation, you should be able to secure and move all of your valuables within 15 minutes.

2. Buy Flood Insurance - A Plan for Replaceable Items

- * The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is available from an insurance agent or the NFIP.
- * For more information see www.floodsmart.gov

3. Flood Proof Your Home - Take Steps to Minimize Flood Damage

- * Shut off the main circuit breaker to prevent appliances from short circuiting and eliminate the threat of electrocution.
- * Raise outside air conditioning units onto platforms above ground level.
- * Store rarely used or expensive items in the attic or on high shelves.

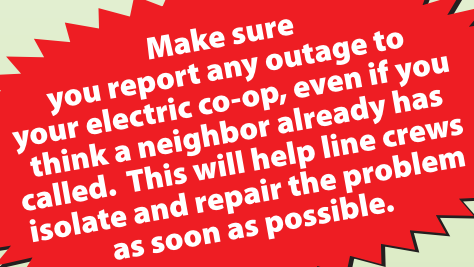
4. Develop a Family Flood Plan

- * Develop a plan of action to keep from panicking or with drawing during an emergency
- * Communicate your plans with friends or family outside of your home area
- * Battery powered radios or televisions can be used in the event of a power outage

5. Never Drive on Flooded Roads

- * Driving into flooded roadways puts your life and the lives of others at risk
- * Unless told to evacuate, you are probably safest staying at your current location
- * If you encounter flood waters when driving:

Turn Around, Don't Drown!



Make sure you report any outage to your electric co-op, even if you think a neighbor already has called. This will help line crews isolate and repair the problem as soon as possible.

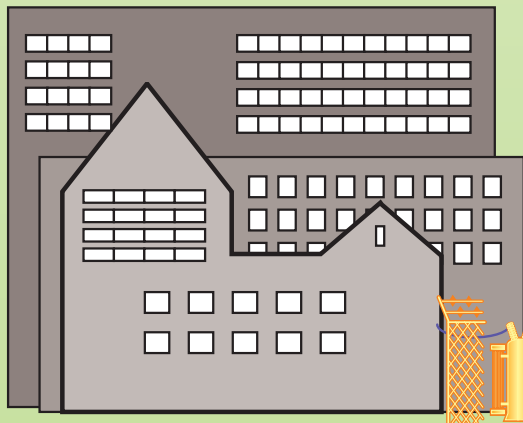


High-Voltage Transmission Lines

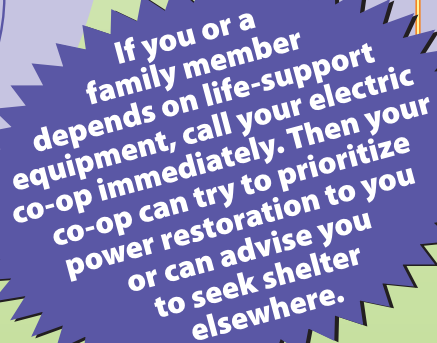
1. Transmission towers and lines that supply power to one or more transmission substations rarely fail. However, when damage does occur – usually due to high winds or ice buildup – these towers and lines must be repaired before other parts of the distribution system are inspected, because they serve thousands (or ten of thousands) of people.



Transmission Substation



Large Industrial User



If you or a family member depends on life-support equipment, call your electric co-op immediately. Then your co-op can try to prioritize power restoration to you or can advise you to seek shelter elsewhere.

Restoring power after ANY storm involves much more than just flipping a switch at a substation or pulling a fallen tree off a down powerline. Highly trained line crews from NEC and crews from neighboring co-ops work together around the clock to restore service.

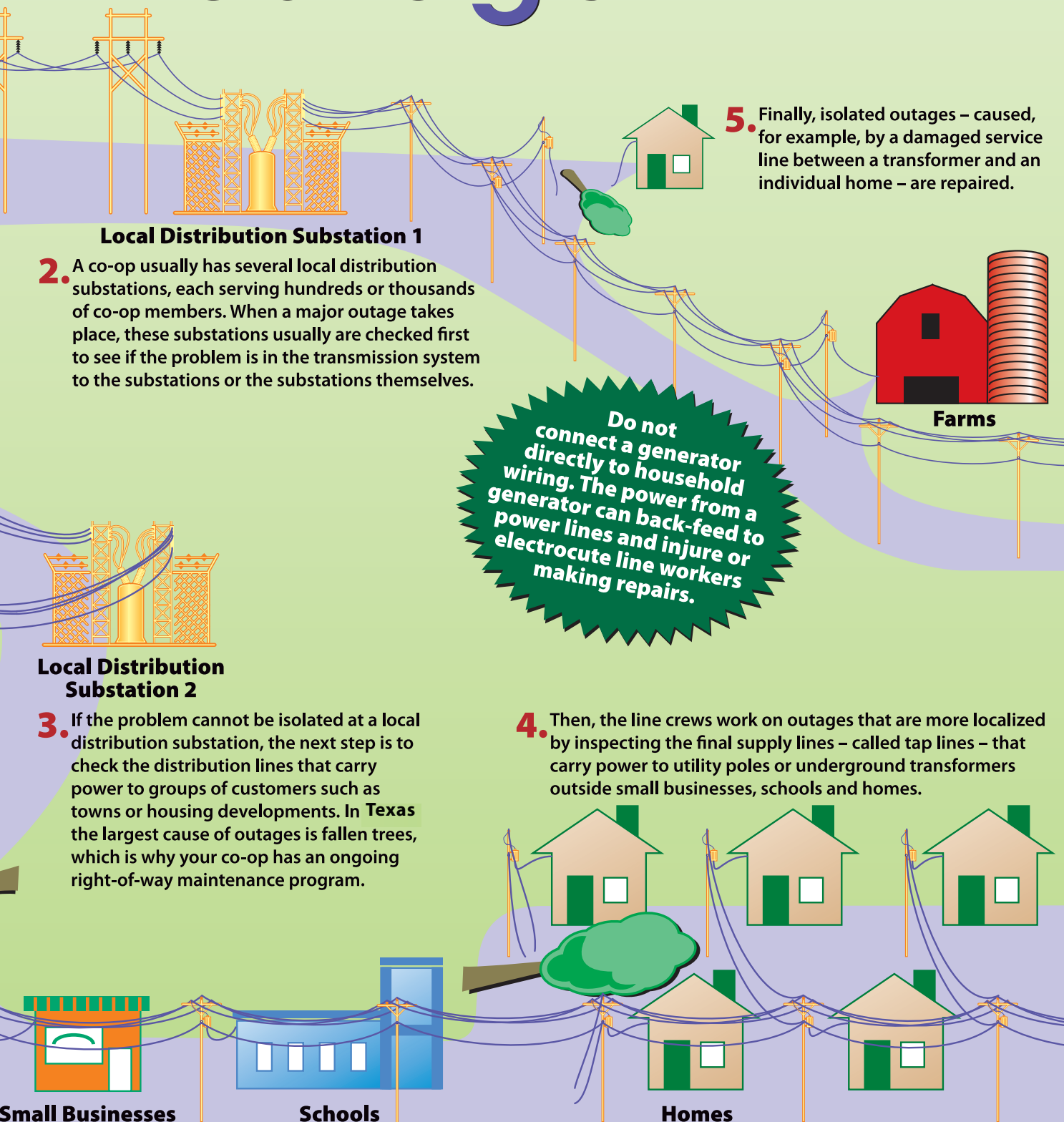
Shown here are the steps co-ops follow to restore power. At each stage, the primary goal is getting the greatest number of members online in the shortest amount of time possible.



Nueces Electric Cooperative

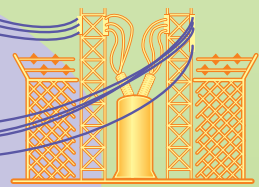
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

How power is restored after an outage



Local Distribution Substation 1

- 2.** A co-op usually has several local distribution substations, each serving hundreds or thousands of co-op members. When a major outage takes place, these substations usually are checked first to see if the problem is in the transmission system to the substations or the substations themselves.

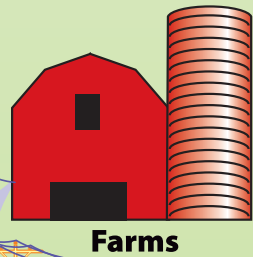


Local Distribution Substation 2

- 3.** If the problem cannot be isolated at a local distribution substation, the next step is to check the distribution lines that carry power to groups of customers such as towns or housing developments. In Texas the largest cause of outages is fallen trees, which is why your co-op has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.

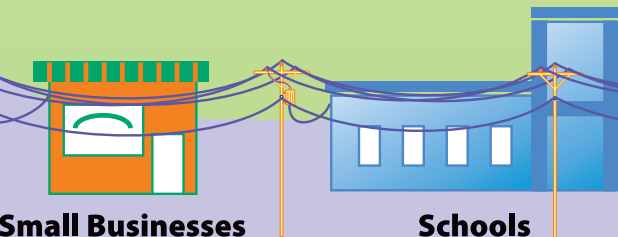
Do not connect a generator directly to household wiring. The power from a generator can back-feed to power lines and injure or electrocute line workers making repairs.

- 5.** Finally, isolated outages – caused, for example, by a damaged service line between a transformer and an individual home – are repaired.



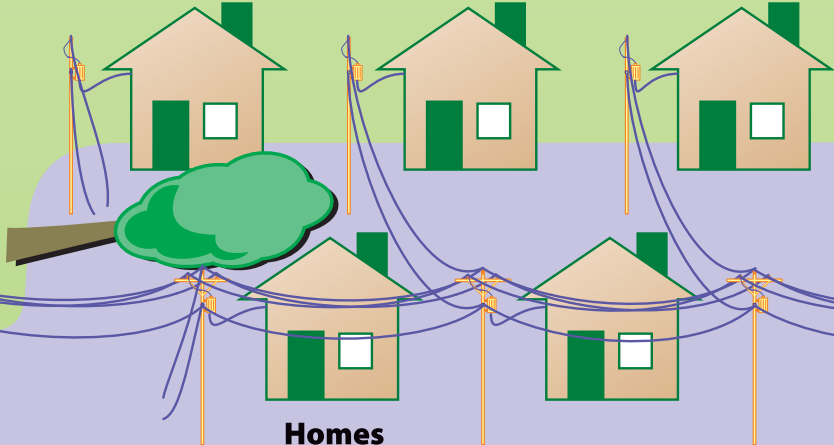
Farms

- 4.** Then, the line crews work on outages that are more localized by inspecting the final supply lines – called tap lines – that carry power to utility poles or underground transformers outside small businesses, schools and homes.



Small Businesses

Schools



Homes



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Change Habits To Beat the Peak

AS TEMPERATURES RISE and air conditioners get a serious workout, looking for ways to improve energy efficiency at home can help you and your electric cooperative reduce demand, saving energy and money.

Making small adjustments in when, where and how you use electricity will help control your energy costs.

Avoid peak times, typically 4–8 p.m. in summer, by putting some chores on hold, at least until power demand dips. Consider some of the jobs 1 kilowatt-hour of electricity can do before you use it:

- ▶ Wash three loads of laundry.
- ▶ Complete one dryer cycle.
- ▶ Vacuum two average-size homes.
- ▶ Iron five shirts.
- ▶ Run three cycles in a loaded dishwasher.
- ▶ Use the oven for 30 minutes.

Love 78

At 78 degrees most people are comfortable outside, so why not indoors? Most people aren't sensitive enough to notice much of a difference in air temperature whether the thermostat is set at 73 or raised to 78. But the closer your thermostat setting is to the outdoor temperature, the less your air conditioner will run.

Each degree of temperature difference represents a percentage of the total cooling load. That means that when temperatures are in the high 80s, you could reduce your cooling demand by 10%–15% for each degree above 75.

Fans offer an economical alternative to air conditioning on mild days and can pitch in for comfort as temperatures climb. In summer, set ceiling fans to turn counterclockwise and blow air downward to get the most value.

Central AC can use as much as 1 kWh of electricity for each 12-minute cycle of cooling. A ceiling fan can operate for about 13 hours on the same amount of electricity, while a floor or table fan, depending on its size, might run for 10 hours per kilowatt-hour of power. Turn off fans when you leave a room because they cool people, not space.

Kitchen Comfort

Appliances on your countertops or stashed in your pantry use less energy and could keep you cooler. Microwaves use about 60% as much energy as full-size ovens, and a toaster oven or induction cooktop consumes about half as much power. Because these appliances are designed to heat food more efficiently in less space, the surface areas available for heating are smaller, which means less heat goes unused, keeping your kitchen cooler.

Share the Space

In simpler times families spent more time together in the same room even as they pursued different interests. Some members might've read books or magazines under the light of a shared lamp while others watched TV or played board games.

Today it's common for everyone to retreat to separate spaces, turn on their electronics and close their doors to cocoon in their own environments.

Getting control of your energy use to reduce your home's overall demand can be really challenging when you have to consider the entire home, so bring back family time to beat the peak.

LCD televisions generally use 60% as much electricity as comparably sized plasma models. One laptop uses about 20% as much power as a desktop computer and monitor. And today's home assistant devices can play music using about 17% of the energy of a component stereo system.

A video game console consumes about 200 watts of power. One system pressed into service for spirited competition between family members uses about a third of the power of three players engaged in separate games throughout the house. ■



NANTHIM | ISTOCK.COM

2 Devices That Prevent Shock, Fire

TWO IMPORTANT SAFETY devices can protect consumers from electrical hazards in the home: ground-fault circuit interrupters and arc-fault circuit interrupters. Each protects against different dangers: GFCIs address shock hazards, and AFCIs fight fire risks.

GFCIs have cut the number of home electrocutions by more than half since they were adopted for widespread use in the 1970s, according to Electrical Safety Foundation International. By detecting ground faults—an unintentional electric path between a source of current and a grounded surface—a GFCI protects against electric shocks, including electrocutions.

GFCIs constantly monitor electricity moving through a circuit. If the current flowing out differs from what's returning, the device quickly switches off power.

If you have ever experienced an electric shock, it probably happened because part of your body contacted an electrical current and provided a path for the current to go to ground. That can cause serious injury.

AFCIs help prevent home fires caused by arcing faults in damaged or deteriorated wires and cords. Home wiring problems are associated with more than 40,000 house fires each year, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. These fires kill more than 350 and injure 1,400 victims annually.

Arcs may happen in the brushes of a vacuum sweeper or light switch, producing the small electric shocks that occasionally surprise us. More dangerous arcs can occur in frayed cords. When unwanted arcing occurs, it generates temperatures that can ignite nearby combustibles such as wood, paper and carpet.

Conventional circuit breakers only respond to overloads and short circuits. By the time a fuse or circuit cuts power to defuse these conditions, a fire may have already started. AFCIs use unique current-sensing circuitry to discriminate between normal and unwanted arcing conditions. In the event of an arcing fault, the AFCI shuts off the electricity flowing through a circuit. ■

Fourth of July Safety Reminders

SOME COMMUNITY FIREWORKS shows might still be on hold this summer as public health recommendations evolve. If you plan to use your own fireworks, check first if it is legal in your area, and remember these safety pointers from the American Red Cross and National Safety Council.

- ▶ Never give fireworks to small children.
- ▶ Never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.
- ▶ Always follow the instructions on the packaging.
- ▶ Keep a supply of water such as a garden hose or bucket of water close by as a precaution.
- ▶ Make sure the person lighting fireworks wears eye protection.
- ▶ Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight a "dud."
- ▶ Never use fireworks while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ▶ Don't light fireworks indoors.
- ▶ Don't try to relight or handle defective fireworks.
- ▶ Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets. ■



ALEKSANDARNAKIC | ISTOCK.COM

Cool Tips for Hot Weather

It's time for another hot Texas summer—time to enjoy all the outdoors has to offer. While in the heat, make time to stay cool so you can enjoy each day. Follow these tips to keep your cool:

Take frequent cooling-off breaks in the shade or air conditioning.

Drink plenty of water before starting any outdoor activity, and during the day. Drink fewer caffeinated and alcoholic beverages.

Wear lightweight, loosefitting, light-colored clothes.

Kids, cars and heat make a deadly combination. Never leave a child—or pet—in a vehicle, even for just a few minutes.

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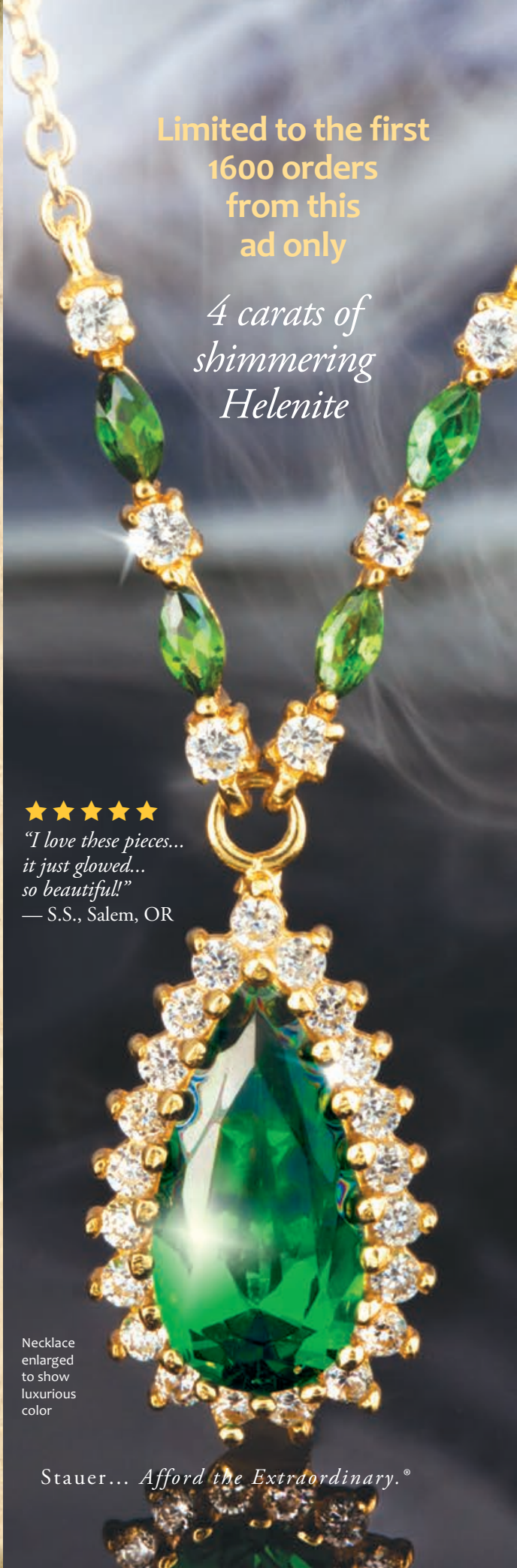


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Bat's Assorted Adventures

Roving gunslinger Bat Masterson made memorable stops in Texas

BY JOE HOLLEY

ON AN AUTUMN MORNING in 1921, a stocky, balding man in his late 60s sat at his desk in the newsroom of New York's *The Morning Telegraph*. He was putting the finishing touches on one of his columns, just as he had done three times a week for 18 years. As he typed the last word, he slumped over his desk and died, felled by a heart attack. A copy boy found him.

Although his name and sports column were well-known around the city, particularly among boxing enthusiasts, there was nothing in the man's appearance to suggest that he had been a living legend, no hint that his colorful life came close to matching the myth of the dime novels written about him decades earlier. Before becoming the proverbial ink-stained wretch—an observer rather than a doer—he had been a scout for the U.S. Army, a buffalo hunter, gambler, Dodge City sheriff, and friend of Wyatt Earp and later of President Theodore Roosevelt.

He was said to have been “the best known man between the Mississippi and the Pacific Coast,” *The New York Times* noted in the article reporting his death. The *Times* also called him “the last of the old time gun fighters.”

Joel McCrea played Bat Masterson in the 1959 film *The Gunfight at Dodge City*.

His name was Bartholemew William Barclay Masterson. Most people called him Bat.

It's hard to fathom how one man could have packed so many disparate adventures into one life. His was a life that inspired not only those dime novels but also serious biographies and historical accounts, a movie, a TV series, and a classic Broadway musical that features a thinly veiled Bat Masterson.

Several of Masterson's more memorable adventures took place in Texas. On a June morning in 1874, the 20-year-old Canadian-born Kansas farm boy was holed up with a party of buffalo hunters, 28 men and one woman, inside the ruins of an old trading post near the Canadian River and present-day Stinnett. An estimated 700 warriors led by Comanche chief Quanah Parker had the hunters under siege. At times they "descended on us like a storm," buffalo hunter Billy Dixon recalled years later, "taunting us in every imaginable way."

In the Second Battle of Adobe Walls, as it would come to be called, Masterson was the youngest of the hunters. He "was a chunk of steel," Dixon recalled, "and anything that struck him in those days always drew fire."

Masterson "should be remembered for the valor that marked his conduct," Dixon said. A year later, he was living in Mobeetie, a scruffy and lawless Panhandle settlement favored by buffalo hunters and soldiers from nearby Fort Elliott. Temple Lee Houston, a Panhandle attorney and Sam Houston's youngest son, described Mobeetie as "a baldheaded whiskey town." Rancher Charles Goodnight once said that Mobeetie may have been "the hardest place I ever saw on the frontier except Cheyenne, Wyoming."

Masterson was working as a faro dealer in a saloon called the Lady Gay. He hadn't been there long when he and a tough ex-cavalry sergeant named Melvin King got cross-ways over the affections of a dance-hall beauty named Mollie Brennan.

Near midnight on January 25, 1876, Brennan and Masterson were sitting at a table inside the dance hall where she worked. King burst in with a drawn revolver. His first shot hit Masterson, shattering his hip; the second tore through Brennan, killing her instantly. Masterson managed to rise off the floor and fire a shot, mortally wounding King.

Masterson left town. The young woman is buried in Old Mobeetie Cemetery.

The 21-year-old Masterson wandered into the Black Hills of South Dakota and then to Cheyenne before settling in Dodge City, Kansas. In that notorious cattle town, he made his living as a gambler and a county sheriff, working alongside Earp and his brothers.

Legend has it that Masterson killed 28 men during his years in the West, although three is more likely, including the man who shot and killed his brother, Ed Masterson, on a Dodge City street. Three is the number he claimed in court during a libel suit he filed against a New York newspaper.

Masterson left Dodge City in the early 1880s and spent most of the next 20 years in Denver, where he gambled, dealt faro and promoted prize fights. He also wrote for a Denver paper. In 1893 he married Emma Moulton, a young woman who ran races for money against her first husband, a world-class sprinter named Ed "the Gopher Boy" Moulton. She also was a juggler of bowling pins.

Masterson returned to Texas in 1896 for a heavyweight championship bout arranged by Judge Roy Bean, the self-proclaimed "Law West of the Pecos." Prize fighting had been outlawed in the U.S., so the fight took place in a ring hastily erected on a sandbar on the Mexico side of the Rio Grande. Masterson served as master of ceremonies and head of security. British boxer Bob Fitzsimmons knocked out Peter Maher, an Irishman, less than two minutes into the first round.

In 1902, Masterson and his wife moved to New York City, where he caught on with *The Morning Telegraph*. "The last of the old time gun fighters" loved city life, loved strolling around town wearing a dapper bowler hat and carrying a cane. In *Guys and Dolls*, the stage play and movie based on short stories by Masterson's friend Damon Runyon, one character, a Colorado gambler willing to bet on anything—the Marlon Brando character in the movie—is called Sky Masterson.

As a columnist, Masterson had a way with aphorisms, including the one he wrote on deadline, literally. Appearing two days after his death, Masterson's final column concluded with this observation: "There are those who argue that everything breaks even in this old dump of a world of ours. I suppose these ginks who argue that way hold that, because the rich man gets ice in the summer and the poor man gets it in winter, things are breaking even for both. Maybe so, but I'll swear I can't see it that way."

Bat Masterson was 67 when he died. His fingers weren't wrapped around a six-shooter on a dusty Western street; they rested near a typewriter in a New York City newsroom. The "best known man between the Mississippi and the Pacific Coast" lies buried in a Bronx cemetery. ■



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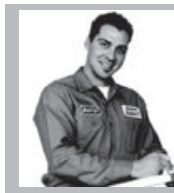
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From the publishers of **TexasCoopPower**

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.



Dear
Darryl

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option.

I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly – Lubbock, TX

DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY: As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unclog the drain field as well. **SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs** deliver your system the fast active bacteria and enzymes needed to liquefy solid waste and free the clogs causing your back-up.

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Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

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This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

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TCP WEB EXTRA

Listen to W.F. Strong read this story.

An Early RGV Mover

Col. Sam Robertson envisioned Boca Chica as the place to launch his highway on the beach

BY W.F. STRONG

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO. Col. Sam Robertson stood on the same Boca Chica Beach that Elon Musk owns today and dreamed a different dream. Instead of Musk’s spaceport, Robertson dreamed of seaports and an oceanside highway.

Robertson owned 800 acres at Boca Chica, and it was likely some of the same 1,000 acres now managed by Musk’s companies. Back then Robertson built the railroad that connected the Rio Grande Valley to the wider world. He had founded the town of San Benito, serving as sheriff and helping to run the Ku Klux Klan out of the region.

He had repurposed the old resacas to irrigate the lower Valley. In 1926 he gathered RGV leaders in Brownsville’s El Jardin Hotel to make his pitch for an

oceanside highway that would run from Boca Chica to Corpus Christi and become, in his words, “the most beautiful 150 miles of highway in the world.”

Robertson laid out his vision before the Rio Grande Valley Commercial Club. “I have traveled somewhat extensively in this world,” he said, “and have never seen any scenery wilder or more beautiful than this stretch of beach.”

Robertson was not only an entrepreneur; he was a decorated soldier and noted engineer. In 1916 he served as a scout for Gen. Jack Pershing in the pursuit of Pancho Villa in Mexico. During World War I, he served in Europe as a commander of the 22nd Engineers, building railroads and bridges for Allied troops in France. He was awarded the

Distinguished Service Medal for bravery under fire.

The business leaders of the Valley trusted his vision because they believed his claims. He wasn’t pitching a black-top road.

“The beach is as smooth as a billiard table,” Robertson said. “No road can be constructed by man as good for autoing as the beach, and the Gulf of Mexico maintains it.” All you would need is maintenance crews to move driftwood out of the way, he said, telling those assembled that he had explored the beach from Corpus Christi to the mouth of the Rio Grande River and that a highway was quite possible and would bring in enormous numbers of tourists.

Robertson advocated the laying in of water lines for irrigation because then the beachscapes could be enhanced with “bermuda grass, live oak trees, palms and other beautiful trees along the sand hills of the beaches.”

Such a development would be good for the Rio Grande Valley, too, he argued. With good roads to Boca Chica Beach, Valleyites could have a Sunday lunch at home, then drive to the beach for a Sunday afternoon swim at the beach and still be home by 10 p.m.

Robertson’s oceanside highway was never developed. But looking at South Padre and North Padre today, with their causeway bridges, carefully maintained beaches, opulent hotels and verdant landscaping, you can see that his dream for the island has been partially realized.

Robertson opened his Del Mar Resort on Boca Chica Beach in 1931, but the resort was virtually wiped out by a hurricane in 1933. He rebuilt within six months and constructed an asphalt road from Brownsville to Boca Chica Beach because his personal mantra was “Civilization follows transportation.”

Musk would like that, too. ■

Ice Cream and Sorbets

Churn out flavorful treats sure to take the edge off a Texas summer

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

One blessing of the Texas heat is that we rarely need an excuse to indulge in a cool, creamy bowl of ice cream. When I make ice cream, I tend to opt for Philadelphia-style, which does not use eggs. After chilling the liquid, you can let your machine churn it while you're eating dinner and have fresh soft serve for dessert. Amaretto helps keep this ice cream soft enough to scoop, but if you prefer, you can substitute ½ teaspoon of almond extract.

Cherry Amaretto Ice Cream

1 jar (11 ounces) maraschino cherries, without stems, divided use
1½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
½ cup sugar
2 tablespoons amaretto liqueur

1. Strain cherries over a bowl, reserving liquid. Slice half the cherries into quarters and set aside.
2. Purée remaining cherries with the reserved juice, then pour into a medium bowl. Whisk in cream, milk and sugar. Cover and chill 2 hours.
3. When ready to make the ice cream, add amaretto and mix well. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. In the last few minutes of churning, mix in the reserved sliced cherries. Scoop ice cream into freezer containers and chill completely, until ready to serve.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Chocolate Frozen Yogurt.





Texas Wildflower Honey Ice Cream

MELISSA TURLEY
BANDERA EC

This ice cream is sure to be a hit for honey lovers. Turley re-created the recipe after tasting a similar version at a local restaurant. Note that the honey makes this a very soft ice cream, so be sure to keep it frozen right up until serving.

1 cup whole milk
¾ cup raw honey
2 cups heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1. In a bowl, whisk together milk and honey until well blended. Add cream and vanilla and mix well. Cover and refrigerate 1–2 hours or overnight.
2. When ready to make the ice cream, stir mixture and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

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\$500 WINNER

Pecan Caramel Pear Ice Cream

KRYSABELLE GILBERT
WOOD COUNTY EC



Don't be daunted by the extra steps for the mix-ins in this ice cream—the results are well worth the effort. "It tastes just like eating a pear upside-down cake a la mode," says Gilbert, who came up with the recipe after a neighbor shared a harvest bounty. If you can't find Asian pears, Bosc pears make a suitable substitute.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

ICE CREAM
2 eggs
½ cup sugar
1½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

CARAMEL PEARS
2 Asian pears
¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter
½ cup sugar

PECANS
1 egg white
1 tablespoon water
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups pecans, chopped
¼ cup sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ cup diced crystallized ginger

COOK'S TIP Crystallized ginger can be found in the spice section, but you can also leave it out.

1. ICE CREAM In a small bowl, whisk eggs and ½ cup sugar together until thickened and pale.

2. In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, bring cream and milk to a simmer. Slowly whisk half the heated liquid into the egg mixture to temper, then pour tempered egg mixture back into saucepan.

3. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick and coats the back of a wooden spoon.

4. Strain into a large bowl and let cool to room temperature, then stir in vanilla and cinnamon. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

5. CARAMEL PEARS About an hour before churning, make the mix-ins. Peel pears and chop into ½-inch chunks.

6. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add ½ cup sugar and cook until it starts to turn golden. Add pears, stirring to coat, and cook 10–15 minutes, or until golden brown and caramel has thickened.

7. Pour pears onto a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet to cool.

8. PECANS Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg white, water and vanilla. Add chopped pecans and toss to coat.

9. In a large plastic bag, combine sugar, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg, cloves and ground ginger. Add pecans and shake to completely coat nuts.

10. Spread nuts on a rimmed baking sheet and bake 20 minutes, stirring once halfway through. Stir again and let cool completely.

11. When ready to make the ice cream, stir the ice cream base and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. Add pears, pecans and crystallized ginger in the last few minutes of freezing. Scoop ice cream into freezer containers and let chill completely before serving.





Strawberry Perfection

LAMONT PETERSEN
 NAVARRO COUNTY EC
 BANDERA EC

Ideal for summer, when strawberries are at their peak, strawberry ice cream is a hit for all ages. The fruit is macerated before blending to soften and release juices, which allows the berry flavor to pop.

1 pound strawberries, hulled and sliced
¾ cup sugar
⅛ teaspoon salt

Which Ice Cream Maker Is Right for You?

BY MEGAN MYERS

When it comes to making ice cream at home, there are two main types of machines: electric and traditional.

Electric

Countertop electric ice cream machines are widely available and make churning at home a breeze. Their smaller size makes them ideal for those who like to make ice cream often or enjoy experimenting with flavors. Keep in mind, however, that the mixing bowl needs to be pre-chilled, so you'll need to plan ahead.

Traditional

If you grew up with hand-churned ice cream makers, you'll be familiar with this style, which uses rock salt and ice packed around a center compartment. While hand cranks are still available, these now have an electric motor option as well. The standard size makes 4 quarts of ice cream, so make room in your freezer.

2 cups heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1. In a bowl, combine sliced strawberries, sugar and salt. Cover and refrigerate 1–2 hours to release juices.
2. Stir mixture well and purée berries with the accumulated juices.

3. Whisk together purée, cream and vanilla. Cover and chill in the refrigerator 2 hours.

4. When ready to make the ice cream, stir mixture and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS



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We are excited to announce the release of the 2021 Texas Silver Round - Revolution Series. This is the second release of a four-year series commemorating the battles of the Texas Revolution. Each Texas Silver Round is one troy ounce .9999 fine silver.



The obverse of the high-quality mint strike features Texas' iconic lone star in the foreground. The smooth engraving of the star is framed by a textured topographical outline of the state of Texas. "TEXAS" arches proudly over the top of the round's obverse in large capital letters, with "Precious Metals" presented inversely along the opposite side. The round's mintage year is engraved in the bottom left of the round, just southwest of what would be the Rio Grande bordering Texas and Mexico.



The reverse of the 2021 release displays a scene from the famous Battle of the Alamo. It depicts two Texian soldiers including the American icon, Davy Crockett, attempting to fend off Mexican soldiers attempting to breach the walls of the Alamo.

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BATTLE OF GONZALES

first in the series ● ● ● ●

The stunning 2020 Texas Silver Round depicts a scene from the Battle of Gonzales, with three Texian revolutionaries defending the famous Gonzales cannon, while brandishing the Come And Take It Flag.



BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

second in the series ● ● ● ●

The events of this famous battle took place on the days of February 23rd - March 6th, 1836. At the end of a 13-day siege, President General Antonio López de Santa Anna and his Mexican troops reclaimed the Alamo Mission, killing the Texian and immigrant occupiers.

The Texas Silver Round can be purchased in a monster box produced exclusively for the Texas Mint. Packaged in 20 protective tubes of 25 rounds each, the monster box holds 500 1-ounce Texas Silver Rounds. Built from durable cold-rolled steel and finished with a matte black powder coat, the monster box lid features an orange cutout of the state of Texas. Each sealed monster box is secured with a unique serial number and a holographic seal to ensure maximum product protection.

The Texas Silver Round is also available to purchase in a similarly designed and secured mini-monster box, which contains 10 protective tubes of 25 rounds each for a total of 250 silver rounds.



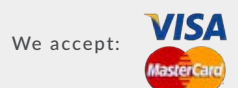
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

A Serious Undertaking

Houston funeral museum pays its respects to the inevitable

BY CHET GARNER

AN OVERCAST SKY painted the North Houston landscape with a somber shade of gray, which seemed appropriate as I approached the National Museum of Funeral History. Based on the institution's name, I expected an experience akin to a carnival sideshow or a roadside attraction full of plastic corpses and otherworldly burial stories. Instead of a tribute to the bizarre, I found a museum staffed by funeral directors who take their profession—and its history—very seriously.

Starting with a narrative of Egyptian mummies and mummification, I followed a serpentine path through the cavernous building, learning about funerary topics such as custom casket-making and the embalming techniques of the Civil War. Each lesson was communicated through detailed displays or life-size dioramas. Most impressive was the collection of classic hearses, one of which served in the funerals of presidents Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan. Also fascinating was the step-by-step description of how a pope is laid to rest. This sequence chronicled the death and burial of Pope John Paul III, whose funeral was one of the largest in history.

As expected, I saw displays to satisfy the morbidly curious, such as a three-person casket and the ghost stories that accompany one of the horse-drawn hearses. I found one entire room with memorabilia from the funerals of celebrities such as Michael Jackson, Neil Armstrong and Gene Wilder. That room seemed like a funeral home version of Planet Hollywood.

I could have spent hours learning more about every detail of how we humans mourn and pay tribute to those we've lost. It turns out that honoring the dead is a tradition that goes back to the earliest days of humans. This strange yet compelling museum can help us become a little more comfortable with our own inevitable conclusion. ■

ABOVE Even at a funeral museum, Chet's mug is half full.

TCP WEB EXTRA Chet ponders life's grave consequences in his latest video. See all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.

Know Before You Go

Some events may have been affected by COVID-19. Call or check an event's website for scheduling details.

JULY

03

Bandera [3, 10, 17, 31]
Cowboys on Main,
 (830) 796-3781,
banderacowboycapital.com

Bulverde [3, 10, 17, 24, 31]
Saturday Night Rodeo,
 (830) 980-2226,
tejasrodeo.com

05

Salado [5–Aug. 26] Women, Aviation and WWII,
 (254) 947-5232,
saladomuseum.org

07

Goliad [7, 14, 21, 28]
Wayback Wednesdays,
 (361) 645-3752,
presidiolabahia.org

08

Palestine [8, 10, 15–17, 22–24, 29–31] Diesel Round Trip,
 1-855-632-7729,
texasstaterailroad.net

09

Palestine Wines in the Pines, 1-855-632-7729,
texasstaterailroad.net

Gladewater [9–10] East Texas Gusher Days,
 (903) 845-5501,
gusher-days.com

10

Arlington Micky and the Motorcars, (817) 543-4301,
levittpavilionarlington.org

Corpus Christi Plumeria Passions, (361) 852-2100,
stxbot.org

11

Arlington Courtney Patton,
 (817) 543-4301,
levittpavilionarlington.org

15

Fredericksburg [15-18]
Beauty and the Beast Jr.,
1-888-669-7114,
fredericksburgtheater.org

16

Taylor [16-17] Taylor
Rodeo, (512) 238-2101,
wilcoexpo.com

Temple [16-17] Wildflower
Quilt Guild Quilt Show,
(254) 220-5597,
wildflowerquiltguild.com

Fredericksburg [16-18]
Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,
fbgtradedays.com

17

**Fredericksburg Night in
Old Fredericksburg**, (830)
997-2359, gillespiefair.com

**Howe Hotter 'N Howe Sum-
mer Bash**, (903) 532-6080,
howechamber.com

Lockney Christmas in July,
(806) 983-6228

23

Fredericksburg [23-25]
Hill Country Swap Meet,
(254) 751-7958, earhart
productions.com/
hill-country-swap-meet

24

**Arlington Green Day,
Fall Out Boy and Weezer**,
(817) 533-1972,
hellamegatour.com

**Bandera National Day of
the Cowboy**, (210) 215-1995,
nationaldayofthecowboy
bandera.com

**Bandera Ridin' the River
Cowboy Fellowship Ranch
Rodeo**, (830) 460-0710,
ridintheriver.com

**Waxahachie Indian Artifact
Show**, (979) 574-6501

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your September event online by July 10, and it just might be featured in this calendar.

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Event Calendar

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With hundreds of events across Texas listed every month, TexasCoopPower.com has something for you.

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TexasCoopPower.com/events

24

Buffalo Gap [24-25] Tour de Gap, (325) 829-0617, tourdegap.com

29

Clute [29-31] Great Texas Mosquito Festival, (979) 265-8392, mosquitofestival.com

Brenham [29-Aug. 1] The Wizard of Oz, (979) 830-8358, unitybrenham.org

Fredericksburg [29-Aug. 1] Hill Country Film Festival, 1-866-224-7714, hillcountryff.com

30

Bonham [30-31] Quilt Hop, (903) 583-9830, visitbonham.com

31

Columbus Country Market, (979) 732-8385, columbusfmtx.org

AUGUST

06

Kerrville [6-7, 13-15, 20-22] Murder on the Orient Express, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

07

Bellville Farmers Market, (979) 865-3407, discoverbellville.com

Fredericksburg Texas Ranger Day History Symposium, (830) 990-1192, trhc.org

Freeport KidFest, (979) 233-0066, freeport.tx.us

Palestine Saturdays on Main, (903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

South Padre Island [7-8] Pro-Am Beach Soccer Tournament, (415) 308-0603, sopadre.com

Bulverde [7, 14, 21, 28] Saturday Night Rodeo, (830) 980-2226, tejasrodeo.com



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Night Life

No, it isn't hot in Texas; and the cool night dews are falling,
 And the katydids are chirping in the grass beside the pool;
 And from out the moonlit distances the mockingbirds are calling,
 And I know the days are hazy and the nights perfumed and cool.

From *Longing for Texas* by Judd Mortimer Lewis

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

MICHELE TECH
 UNITED COOPERATIVE
 SERVICES

Honky-tonk nights at Billy
 Bob's Texas in Fort Worth.

CHARLES BAXTER
 COSERV

The Fort Davis Drug Store
 and Hotel.

KYLEIGH HOLLE
 HILCO EC

The Dallas skyline at night
 with car light trails.

ELYSE KANA
 BLUEBONNET EC

The other side of nowhere,
 Big Bend Ranch State Park.

Upcoming Contests

DUE JUL 10 **Funny Signs**

DUE AUG 10 **Bridges**

DUE SEP 10 **Fired Up!**

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP WEB EXTRA See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.



Common Ground

Whether many acres or a pint-size lot, there's pride and joy in land ownership

BY RHONDA REINHART
ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA BLECK

IN THE BLACK-AND-WHITE Westerns that my dad used to watch when I was a kid, a cowboy hat-clad rancher might head out on horseback to survey his domain, a vast expanse of dusty terrain spanning thousands of acres. My father wasn't a rancher by any means, but he did own a 10-acre spread in deep East Texas where he raised all manner of animals, including guinea fowl, hogs and cows.

He loved "going to the land," as we called it back then, and he spent countless hours building pens, planting vegetable gardens, clearing sections of the property and walking mile after mile through the seemingly endless stretch of pines.

I did not share my father's affinity for going to the land, and even though I spent plenty of time out there with

him over the years, I would have much preferred to be back in Houston, reading a book, hanging out with friends or sitting in a cool, dark theater watching a movie—definitely not a Western. In fact after I left home, I spent two decades living in apartments, townhouses and condos—surrounded by land covered in concrete instead of pine needles and serenaded by the sounds of traffic instead of livestock.

About five years ago, however, I reached my limit on sharing walls with nosy neighbors and knowing that I was spending my hard-earned money to live atop ground that would never be mine. So I decided to purchase my own tiny patch of land.

At my little homestead in northwest Dallas, unlike the sprawling ranches in those old Westerns—or even my father's modest parcel in the Piney Woods—I merely have to peek out the back door to take in the full 7,976 square feet of North Texas soil that belongs to me. After 20 years of having little more than a balcony or patio at my disposal, the 0.18 acre on which my 1952 cottage sits feels enormous to me. I've even dubbed the small section of yard behind the garage "the back forty."

My dad died years ago, and his land was sold. While I don't have his knack for animal husbandry or even one-tenth of the acreage he owned in Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's service area, I do have a dog who loves to roll in the grass, sunbathe in the driveway and patrol the grounds for squirrels and opossums. I've also been thinking about starting a garden where I can grow my own tomatoes and cucumbers, some of my dad's favorite crops.

I can't be certain, but I'm betting that if he were still around, those things alone would earn me his signature grin and a nod. ■



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