

HE TAUGHT HOLLYWOOD
STARS TO TALK TEXAN

BESSIE COLEMAN'S REACH
KNEW NO BOUNDS

CHAGRIN OVER
MY FATHER

Texas Coop Power

FOR NUECES EC MEMBERS

JUNE 2021

After Nature Strikes

How co-ops join forces
to get the power back on



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June 2021



07

'That's What Co-ops Are For'

Three months of historic weather in 2020 and the February polar vortex unleash the full force of Texas' co-op family.

Stories by Chris Burrows

ON THE COVER

A co-op crew works to restore power near Lake Charles, Louisiana, after Hurricane Delta.
Photo by Chad Simon | Sam Houston EC

ABOVE

Lineworkers across Texas scrambled to restore power during the polar vortex in February.
Photo courtesy Pedernales EC

12 Texas Talk Man

Robert Hinkle had some of Hollywood's biggest stars talkin' and dressin' the part.

By Jessica Ridge

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Parent Imperfect
By Martha Deeringer



Sunset Cinema

DRIVE-IN THEATERS have enjoyed a resurgence since last spring as the COVID-19 pandemic forced folks to find forms of entertainment that didn't risk their health. Even before that, drive-ins were thriving in Texas, as we wrote about in *Drive in, Chill Out* in June 2019.

June 6 National Drive-In Movie Day

Grab some popcorn and celebrate.

“Noble fathers have noble children.”

—EURIPIDES

Can-Do Perspective

Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a 14-watt CFL for 20 hours, a computer for three hours or a TV for two hours.



Storm Surge

A record 30 named storms formed in the Atlantic Ocean in 2020. Thirteen of those named storms turned into hurricanes, and three of them—Hanna, Laura and Delta—brought high winds or heavy rain or both to Texas, which mobilized lineworkers across the state. See *'That's What Co-ops Are For'* on Page 8.

As the planet warms, scientists say, hurricanes are lingering longer and staying stronger once they make landfall.

Alas, hurricane season begins again June 1 and runs through November.

Heavy Metal

THE LARGEST PLAYABLE GUITAR in the world is 43½ feet tall, 16½ feet wide and weighs 1 ton, according to Guinness World Records. Built by students from the Conroe Independent School District Academy of Science and Technology, it's modeled on a 1967 Gibson Flying V and was first played in June 2000 with the opening chord of *A Hard Day's Night*.



A CAREER TAKES OFF

Nothing is cooler for an aspiring writer than to see her work in print for the first time.

Ainsley Shaw gets that thrill this month with the publication of *Queen Bess Soared* on Page 29.

Shaw is a first-year student at Maastricht University in the Netherlands, but she began writing about Bessie Coleman, the Texan who became the first African American woman and first Native American woman to earn a pilot's license, in 2020, when she was a senior at Leander High School.

Shaw, a Pedernales Electric Cooperative member, participated in the Leander school district's Career Opportunities on Location week by shadowing the staff at *Texas Co-op Power*. "Being in a real writing environment has only reinforced my intention to pursue writing as a career," she said of her COOL experience.



TCP Contests and More

[ON TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM](https://www.texascooppower.com)

\$500 RECIPE CONTEST

Pies

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS

Fillin' Stations

RECOMMENDED READING

Gas With Class (January 2013) visited a fillin' station that still offered full service.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I ALWAYS LAUGH WHEN MY DAD ...

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 April prompt: **I thought I was smart until ...**

I realized I was mis-taking knowledge for wisdom.

GAIL DURFEE
MAGIC VALLEY EC
MCALLEN

I left home.

PATTY LONGINO SMITH
VIA FACEBOOK

I began talking less and listening more.

TAMMIE MANCHESTER
JACKSON EC
SARGENT

To see more responses, read *Currents* online.



DAVE SHAFER

The Seed Flourishes

“Great story on vintner Alphonse Dotson. Michael Hurd could have added that Dotson shows great character by his choice of dog—the blue Lacy pictured on the cover.”

BEN ROBERTS
HAMILTON COUNTY EC
GATESVILLE

Runaway Scrape's Anguish

Janice Woods Windle wrote about her family's involvement in the Runaway Scrape in her historical novel *True Women* [The Runaway Scrape, April 2021]. One detail I'll never forget is that a child who died on the way east was later dug up and reinterred near home, after the danger was over.

Mary Pritchard
HILCO EC
Midlothian



Gotas de Oro is the best wine, and I'm not a wine drinker [The Seed Flourishes, April 2021]. I could get used to it.

TERESA ATOR
LEIFESTE
VIA FACEBOOK

Botched Attempt

You state that Sarah Fuller was the first female athlete to play in a major college football game and two weeks later was the first woman to score in such a game [A Big Step, Currents, April 2021]. Wrong on both counts.

Katie Hnida played for the University of Colorado in 1999 and New Mexico 2002–04. On August 30, 2003, she kicked two extra points against Texas State to become the first woman to score in a Division I game.

Mike Lusk
Medina EC
San Antonio

Real as It Gets

I must say that in today's world of polemic divisiveness, your homey, well-written and informative magazine is a breath of fresh air. In a world of hypercommercialism at mind-blowing speeds, thanks for being so real.

Douglas Stewart
Pedernales EC
Wimberley



COLLEGIATE IMAGES / GETTY IMAGES

TCP WRITE TO US

letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

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

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BY CHRIS BURROWS

WALKING THE LINES

WHEN FEBRUARY'S polar vortex brought to Texas enough snow, ice, cold and wind to strain every bit of infrastructure, Cody Hansen, a Bandera Electric Cooperative lineworker, parked his bucket truck on the side of a Hill Country road. He was hoofing it.

"The roads were super snowed over. Then instead of patches of black ice, we had all black ice," he said. "It's a lot more difficult when you have to walk the lines out and try not to break an ankle."

Bandera EC and many of the state's 65 other distribution cooperatives supplied line crews with foul-weather gear—even if they couldn't supply their homes with power—and the lineworkers in turn restored power to millions between grid-mandated rolling outages. Those workers faced fender benders, exhausting conditions and 12-plus-hour shifts as they knocked ice from poles and hammered at frozen gates and chains to keep power flowing to co-op members.

But for many, the work wasn't done when their lights were back on. Not when others still needed help.

About a dozen co-ops sent workers to other cooperatives after ice broke thousands of poles across Co-op Country and residential heating demand overwhelmed other electrical equipment, stretching thin co-ops and crews.

"When our system was on the ground and members were without power, it was reassuring to know we had support from our co-op family," said Kathi Calvert, general manager at Houston County EC.

Borne out of hardship and guided by the Seven Cooperative Principles, including Cooperation Among Cooperatives, Texas' electric co-ops worked together, helped along by the very members they serve, to do what they've always done.

"Our crews in the field were constantly stuck and having to be pulled around due to the icy conditions," said Bryan Chandler, operations manager at Heart of Texas EC. "Our members came to our aid with food, fuel and tractors to help pull trucks."

It took everyone working cooperatively.

"This was definitely the worst winter storm I have worked in," said Doug Grimm, a 20-year linework veteran for Bluebonnet EC. "We did what we always do: Come together and get the job done." ■

AFTER TEXAS THAWED AND THE LIGHTS CAME BACK ON IN FEBRUARY, CO-OP LINEWORKERS STILL WEREN'T DONE

COURTESY PEDERNALES AND SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



'THAT'S WHAT CO-OPS ARE FOR'



BY CHRIS BURROWS



THREE MONTHS OF HISTORIC WEATHER IN 2020 UNLEASHED THE FULL FORCE OF TEXAS' CO-OP FAMILY

IT wasn't the 16-hour days or the searing heat. It wasn't the meager accommodations—a 100-man tent—or the fact that he'd had only five days off in seven weeks. Speaking from a mud-caked work truck in southwest Louisiana, James Warden didn't bring up any of those things.

"The hardest part is being away from home," Warden said. He had just missed his youngest son's eighth birthday. "When I'm working at home, I still get to see my kids and wife when I come in late at night. I at least get to kiss 'em good night, but here it's just a phone call."

The construction foreman for Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative was five days into his second trip in about a month to DeRidder, Louisiana, where he was helping an electric co-op severely damaged by hurricanes Laura and Delta. It was mid-October 2020, and Warden's crew, based out of San Augustine in East Texas, was setting poles and hanging lines, some of which they'd already reset and rehung weeks before, following Laura. That hurricane knocked out power to Warden's own home and heavily damaged his own co-op's lines.

But the day after the lights were back on in East Texas, Warden was in Louisiana. He left his own family to help another family—the co-op family.

In his 24 years as a lineworker, Warden has worked the front lines of major recovery efforts, including after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. But he had never experienced anything like this. He'd never had to miss one of his four kids' birthdays.

"When we first got here, there weren't hardly any lines up in the air," he said. "Their whole system was tore up. It was just wiped. When you drove down the highway, just about every pole you would look at was broke."



Co-ops follow the Seven Cooperative Principles, including Cooperation Among Cooperatives, through which they seek aid from and offer assistance to fellow co-ops during times of crisis.

COURTESY BLUEBONNET, HILCO, HOUSTON COUNTY, PEDERNALES, SAM HOUSTON AND SWISHER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



‘EVERY TIME WE HAVE A STORM AT HOME AND IT GETS REAL BAD, PEOPLE VOLUNTEER TO COME HELP US. BEING A LINEMAN, WHAT YOU’RE SUPPOSED TO DO IS GO HELP PEOPLE.’

Relentlessly dedicated lineworkers like Warden have for more than 80 years ensured that the lights stay on across Co-op Country, where cooperatives rely on one another when disaster strikes. The full force of that network was on brilliant display last fall, when Laura in August, Hurricane Sally in September and Delta in October ripped through the South, including parts of Texas, killing dozens, displacing many more and destroying electrical infrastructure. And then an unprecedented ice storm tore apart co-op grids in West Texas and the Panhandle.

By the end of last October, lineworkers from every part of Texas had helped restore power for more than a quarter-million co-op members in Texas, Louisiana and Alabama—resetting thousands of poles along hundreds of miles.

But lineworkers like Ben Perry don’t measure progress in miles or meters. They measure it in relieved faces.

“That’s probably what will stick with me the most—the people that were there, the hospitality,” said Perry, a foreman for United Cooperative Services, a co-op based south of Fort Worth. Perry, like Warden, was part of a crew dispatched to Louisiana to help Beauregard EC, whose entire electrical system was taken offline by Laura—the strongest recorded hurricane to ever make landfall in Louisiana. The Category 4 storm killed 77 after it made landfall August 27, 2020, packing 150 mph winds.

Laura dealt serious damage to several Texas co-ops but decimated Beauregard EC, prompting a call for help that

drew more than 1,200 lineworkers from across the South and Midwest, including Warden and Perry, for a massive monthslong power restoration effort. “We really couldn’t do it without them,” said Danielle Tilley, communications specialist at Beauregard EC.

“The devastation from that storm was unreal,” said Brad Morrow, another United lineworker. “It seemed like everywhere you drove, there were trees and debris, and any sort of house or building was destroyed.”

Twenty Texas co-ops sent help to Jasper-Newton EC, where 90% of that East Texas co-op’s 22,900 members had no power. General Manager Mark Tamplin was grateful. “Assistance from other cooperatives was extremely critical to the restoration effort,” he said.

“Every time we have a storm at home and it gets real bad, people volunteer to come help us,” Warden said. “Being a lineman, what you’re supposed to do is go help people.”

Cooperation Among Cooperatives, one of the Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all co-ops, ensures that help is just a phone call away when any co-op anywhere needs it.

“Whenever they call us, we’re obligated to go help because there’ll be times in the future when I know we’ll need help,” Perry said. “That’s just what you do.”

Tate Glasscock knows firsthand.

The foreman at Lighthouse EC, based in the Texas Panhandle, also made the trip east after Laura’s onslaught, driving eight hours to spend 10 days helping Jasper-Newton EC.



From August through October, Texas lineworkers faced sweltering and then arctic conditions after hurricanes in the Gulf and an ice storm in West Texas and the Panhandle devastated co-ops' infrastructure.

"That's what co-ops are for—to help each other," Glasscock said.

Just a few weeks after returning from East Texas, Glasscock's own co-op was hit by a devastating ice storm that snapped upward of 3,700 power poles and knocked offline more than 63,000 meters across 15-plus cooperatives in West Texas and the Panhandle. The October storm coated power lines with half-inch-thick ice, which can add 500 pounds to a single span of line, toppling crossarms, lines and poles across sparse stretches of plains.

Help poured in to the co-ops affected by the ice, which a South Plains EC spokesperson called "the most devastating storm we've had in 20 years"; Lighthouse EC general manager Albert Daniel said was "the worst storm to ever hit Lighthouse by all recollections"; and Lyntegar EC called "likely the largest single outage event ... in the history of the cooperative."

Suddenly Glasscock and many fellow first responders were the ones in need of help after they just provided it.

"In my nearly 20-year career, I've never seen anything this detrimental to our system," Glasscock said. "Most of the time it's in one specific area. This was our whole system."

United lineworkers Perry and Morrow headed west, just weeks after their tireless work out east, joining a major rebuilding effort in the Panhandle.

"Just seeing those guys roll through the gates, I thought, 'Man, we've got help,'" Glasscock said. "I knew we were in

good shape then."

Progress was much slower in the Panhandle, where homes can be separated by miles.

"I believe the first day that we went out, there were 13 or 14 poles that were on the ground that fed one house," Morrow said. "In Louisiana that might have gotten 30, 40, 50 people on, if not more." But the payoff was no different. "The relief in people's eyes and the joy that they experience is the same."

Between the hurricanes and ice storm, Perry spent about three weeks away from his family over the course of about two months. "I don't know that I'll ever forget this year," said Perry, a 16-year line work veteran. "This has been one of the craziest years that I've been a part of in this work."

Those in need kept him going. That was just as true this past February, when co-op members supported crews through an unprecedented polar vortex. Dangerous roads, iced-over lines and poles, and grid-mandated outages made lineworkers' jobs even more challenging.

"There was the normal fatigue that comes from working so many 12-hour days in a row, but sometimes that was compounded by coming home to a cold house," said Kendal Fiebrich, a Bluebonnet EC lineworker.

Sympathetic members lent support online and in the field—like a woman in Moss Bluff, Louisiana. She cooked up a meal of gumbo "and any kind of Louisiana fixin's you could think of," Morrow said, for linemen from Texas and Missouri who restored her power after weeks of living off a generator.

Strangers united by the co-op family.

"It's the people who make it worthwhile," Morrow said. "You'll never find someone more thankful and willing to help you when you're there to help them." ■

Texas Talk MAN

A full-page photograph of a man in cowboy attire. He is wearing a black cowboy hat, a white long-sleeved shirt, and a black leather vest. He has a goatee and is smiling. He is leaning on a large, mossy tree branch. In the background, a horse is grazing in a field under trees.

He had some
of Hollywood's
biggest stars
talkin' and
dressin'
the part

Robert Hinkle

likes to sit where he can see everyone in the room and who's walking through the door. He leads me to the corner of a long table at the back of a pandemic-emptied Masonic Lodge in Leander and chooses a seat with a clear view of the entrance. He wears an Air Force cap and a sky-blue Mason's shirt embroidered with "N. Hollywood," each emblematic of the twists and turns of his prolific career.

Attention to wardrobe figured into Hinkle's duties as unofficial technical adviser on the West Texas and Panhandle sets of *Giant* and *Hud*, two better-known entries in the catalog of midcentury Texas cinema. When costume design choices went awry—a hat that wasn't creased correctly or was impractical for work, jeans too short for horseback riding—he would issue a concise verdict: "A Texan wouldn't wear that," then figure out a fix.

That was just one duty on two projects over an entertainment career that spanned decades and comprised a raft of roles: stuntman, actor, writer, producer, director and Texas talk man, as *Giant* director George Stevens dubbed him.

Hinkle's preference for an unobstructed view isn't surprising, either. A few years before he coached Hollywood luminaries Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman on the nuances of a type of Texas dialect—leaving the "g" off words like "walking" and emphasizing r's when they ended a word such as "mother" or "father"—he enjoyed an embarrassment of bird's-eye views.

Born and raised in the South Plains of Texas, Hinkle left high school in 1947 to join the Air Force at 17 after securing a promise from a recruiter that he could continue his education while enlisted. "Nobody in my family ever had a high school diploma," he says. After earning that credential, he spent several months in Europe working on a crew that flew coal from Frankfurt to Berlin.

On one trip, the co-pilot had a heart attack midflight. Hinkle took over co-pilot duties for the rest of the round



Robert Hinkle lassos Elizabeth Taylor on the set of *Giant*.

trip, thanks to the private pilot's license he'd earned at 16.

While stationed overseas, Hinkle's first stop in Vienna was to board the Riesenrad, a 212-foot-tall Ferris wheel. It was a precursor to a ride he'd take a few years later, on a Ferris wheel much closer to home, with his good friend James Dean.

Not bad for a kid from Brownfield who didn't officially exist on paper until his 20s.

The country doctor who attended Hinkle's birth on an unelectrified Terry County ranch in 1930 misrecorded his first name as "Bobbie." It didn't get corrected until some 22 years later, when Hinkle went to the courthouse with his aunt and uncle in tow to vouch for his identity. Today, the nonagenarian takes that misnomer in stride, along with the doctor's weeklong delay in recording his birth on the county rolls. "That old doctor," he says, not unkindly. "At least he got me here."

Hinkle's family followed the crops around for work for a time after his birth. "We were poor," he says. "They were



James Dean shows Hinkle how well he's learned to hogtie.

poor people." After the military and before setting out for Hollywood, Hinkle worked as a weekend rodeo cowboy and in construction, among other jobs. His 12-hour shifts in a West Texas oil field in 1950 and 1951 earned him \$1.76 an hour and, years later, a foothold in a conversation with Howard Hughes, the manufacturing scion and film producer.

An uncredited role in a 1956 film, *The First Traveling Saleslady*, led to a chance meeting of the two Texas transplants in Hollywood. After being instructed by the director to all but pretend not to even see Hughes as he visited the set, Hinkle was wrangled into meeting him anyway when the film's star, Ginger Rogers, walked him over. The inventor didn't offer to shake hands, Hinkle says, but the two quickly found common ground: Much to the magnate's approval, the drill bits the supporting player had used in his oil field days were manufactured by Hughes Tool Company.

During *Giant's* 1955 production, Hinkle, James Dean and Elizabeth Taylor, along with a handful of other cast and crew members, repaired to Dallas over the Fourth of July weekend, all because the famously violet-eyed star couldn't resist the siren song of Neiman Marcus. Hinkle called the luxury retailer and dropped a few names. Stanley Marcus, the store's owner, not only agreed to allow the group entry to the store on a Sunday, when it would typically be closed, but also sent a plane to Marfa to whisk the group to Love Field.

After being feted by Dallas society in Stanley and Billie Marcus' Highland Park mansion, Hinkle, Taylor and Dean embarked on their shopping excursion, followed by an outing to an offseason Fair Park, home to the state fair, where they rode a rickety wooden roller coaster, sampled carnival fare, played midway games and boarded the soaring Texas Star.

The lighthearted weekend contrasted with Dean's

intense focus on getting the part of Jett Rink, the anti-hero of *Giant*, just right.

"He told me, the day I met him, 'I want you to help me be a Texan 24 hours a day,'" Hinkle says. During filming, the pair grew close as the dialogue coach modeled Texan sensibilities for Dean. They shared meals, pulled pranks and hunted rabbits together. "He was like a brother," Hinkle says, "just like I was raised with him there in Brownfield."

Hinkle says Dean wasn't a big star then, having only one film credit at the time. But his commitment to his craft

and his precision in shaping a character in the likeness of his mentor precipitated a friendship.

"He was so dedicated," says Hinkle, a Pedernales Electric Cooperative member. "He wanted to be with me all the time. Because he wanted to be a Texan. I mean, he watched everything I did and everything I said, watched every person that I met, how I met 'em and things like that, and he just studied it."

That osmosis translated to the screen. Dean received a posthumous Oscar nomination for the role, which came as no surprise to his grieving friend.

"He could have played *Giant* a different way, you know," Hinkle says. "He wanted to play him just as an old down and out cowboy, didn't have anything and didn't figure he'd ever have anything, except a dream."

After filming of *Giant* ended, Dean gave a replica Oscar to Hinkle, inscribed with his name, to thank him for creating the character.

Back at the Masonic Lodge, the afternoon unspools. Just before he tells me about recruiting Buddy Holly to headline a car-selling telethon starring Western character actor Chill Wills, strains of *El Paso* fill the room. It's Hinkle's iPhone ring tone. His eyes crinkle. "That's Marty Robbins," he says. "I managed him for 14 years."

Looking back on his half-century career, spanning roles from cowboy stuntman to mentor to manager and many points in between, I ask if there's anything he'd change.

"No," he says. "I'd just love to do it again. I've had a lot of rough times and things—boy, I'd take them right along with the good ones, if I could just do it one more time." ■

TCP WEB EXTRA Want to see more from Hinkle's Hollywood days? Visit our website.



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Reputation Matters

Why are we releasing these high-purity coins at such a remarkable price? We want you to know what hundreds of thousands of satisfied collectors and stackers have known since 1984 — GovMint.com is *the best source for coins worldwide*.

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This is a strictly limited release of one of the purest silver coins in the world—and a great opportunity to secure one or more hefty 2021 One-Ounce Silver Maple Leafs in their original freshly struck Brilliant Uncirculated (BU) condition.

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5-9 Coins-	\$35.50 ea. + FREE SHIPPING
10-19 Coins-	\$35.25 ea. + FREE SHIPPING
20+ Coins-	\$34.95 ea. + FREE SHIPPING

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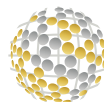
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SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



Centuries ago, Persians, Tibetans and Mayans considered turquoise a gemstone of the heavens, believing the striking blue stones were sacred pieces of sky. Today, the rarest and most valuable turquoise is found in the American Southwest—but the future of the blue beauty is unclear.

On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and snatched it up for our **Sedona Turquoise Collection**. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique, one-

of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for **just \$99**.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you aren't completely happy with your purchase, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

The supply of Arizona turquoise is limited, don't miss your chance to own the Southwest's brilliant blue treasure. Call today!

Jewelry Specifications:

• Arizona turquoise • Silver-finished settings

Sedona Turquoise Collection

A. Pendant (26 cts)	\$299	\$99*	Save \$200
B. 18" Bali Naga woven sterling silver chain		\$149	
C. 1 1/2" Earrings (10 ctw)	\$299	\$99*	Save \$200
Complete Set**	\$747	\$249	Save \$498

** Complete set includes pendant, chain and earrings.

Call now and mention the offer code to receive your collection.

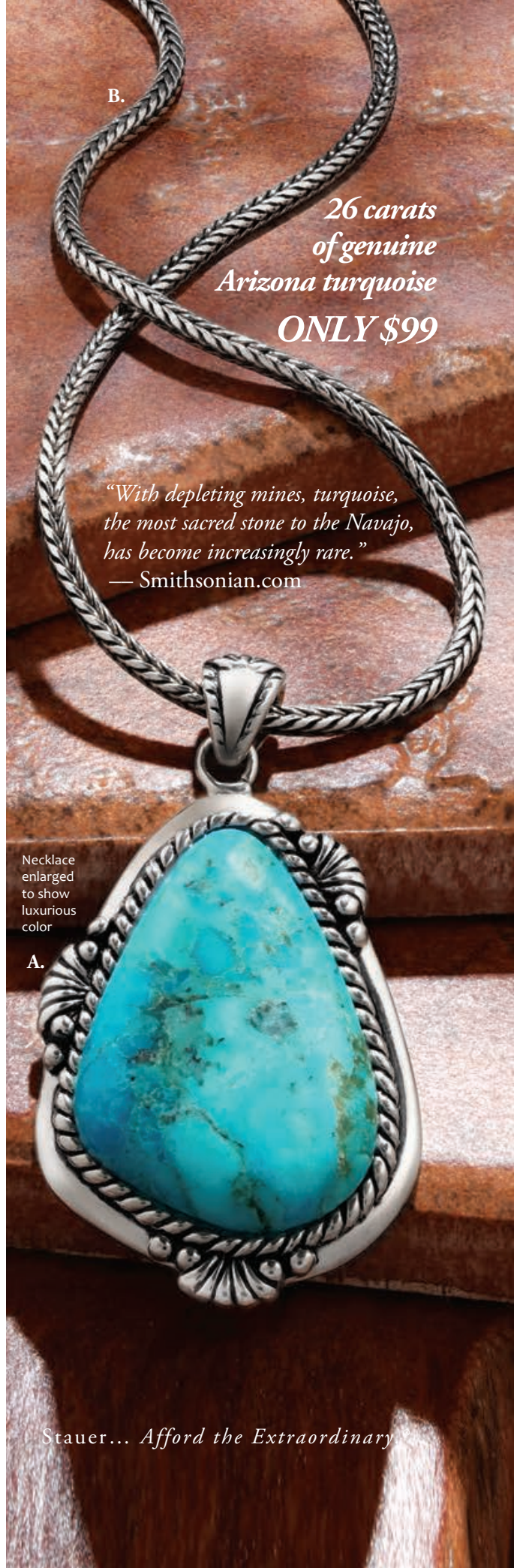
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— Smithsonian.com

Necklace
enlarged
to show
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color

A.

Stauer... Afford the Extraordinary



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO, Varzavand "Avan" Irani

Tree Trimming Improves Service For All Members

One of the things I love most about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade, and habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

That's why Nueces Electric Cooperative strives to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings with ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights-of-way.

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are **three main benefits** to trimming trees in ROW areas. But before I touch on those reasons, let me first explain what a **right-of-way** is and how it may impact you.

All the land that we use to construct, maintain, replace, and repair underground and overhead power lines makes up our rights-of-way. These protected areas enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder power line installation, maintenance, or

operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, NEC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW.

The goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

Safety: First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose a grave threat to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor such as a tree.

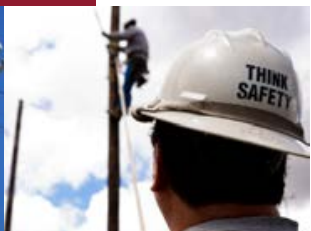
Reliability: Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the

frequency of downed lines that cause power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to promote reliability.

Affordability: As you know, NEC is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees provide, but we also know you depend on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we can keep power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.

Energizing South Texas for the past 80 years. That's the Cooperative difference.



TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Hurricane Season is June 1–November 30

PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST:

- * Make an evacuation plan. Find activated evacuation routes at DriveTexas.org or by dialing 1-800-452-9292. Call 211 to find out if you live in an evacuation zone.
- * Sign up for emergency alerts. Make sure your mobile device is enabled to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs).
- * Prepare an emergency supply kit. Learn how to build an emergency kit at ready.gov/build-a-kit.
- * Review your home insurance policy.
- * Register with State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) at stear.tdem.texas.gov/ or by dialing 211 if you live in an evacuation zone and:
 - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have a car or other vehicle to use in an evacuation.
 - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation.

Information collected for STEAR is confidential.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS ONLINE RESOURCES

Texas Division of Emergency Management: tdem.texas.gov
 Texas Department of State Health Services: texasready.gov
 American Red Cross: redcross.org
 U.S. Department of Homeland Security: ready.gov
 Office of Texas Governor Greg Abbott: gov.texas.gov

DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

Directrices para Huracanes

La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de junio al 30 de noviembre

LISTA DE VERIFICACIÓN DE PREPARACIÓN:

- * Haga un plan de evacuación. Encuentre rutas de evacuación activadas en DriveTexas.org o marcando 1-800-452-9292. Llame 211 para averiguar si usted vive en una zona de evacuación.
- * Regístrese para recibir alertas de emergencia. Asegúrese de que su dispositivo móvil esté habilitado para recibir Alertas de emergencia inalámbricas (WEAs).
- * Prepare un kit de emergencia. Aprenda como construir un kit de emergencia en ready.gov/build-a-kit.
- * Revise su póliza de seguro de hogar.
- * Regístrese con el Registro de Asistencia de Emergencia del Estado de Texas (STEAR) en stear.tdem.texas.gov/ o marcando el 211 si vive en una zona de evacuación y:
 - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene un auto u otro vehículo para usar en una evacuación.
 - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene amigos o familiares para ayudaren una evacuación.

La información recolectada para STEAR es confidencial.

RECURSOS EN LÍNEA PARA LA PREPARACIÓN PARA HURACANES

División de Administración de Emergencias de Texas: tdem.texas.gov
 Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado: texasready.gov
 Cruz Roja Americana: redcross.org
 Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos: ready.gov
 Oficina del Gobernador de Texas Greg Abbott: gov.texas.gov

PHOTOS.COM



Hurricane Readiness

Before the storm arrives, check to see that flashlights, emergency generator, battery-operated radios and other equipment are in working order.

When the storm hits, turn off all appliances except for lights. This reduces the chance of overloading circuits when power is restored. If you are in the direct path of the storm, assume you will be without power for some time. And of course, stay away from any downed power lines.

After the storm, crews will work around the clock to restore power, but their first concern is to restore service to emergency radios, hospitals, utilities, and transportation systems.

Call NEC immediately if you see sparking power lines, and call if your house is the only one on your block without power.



Lunch Local With Nueces Cafe

There are many great places to eat in the Corpus Christi area, each offering its own unique flavor, atmosphere and personality. There is one cafe that provides a peaceful environment where you can not only satisfy your belly's appetite, but your appetite for a smile and some encouragement. That place is Nueces Cafe, located in Northwest Corpus Christi. If you're looking for good food and good vibes, Nueces Cafe is definitely the place for that.

This cozy cafe's menu has a wonderful and delicious selection of homemade family recipes. Their options are more on the lighter and healthier side, with wraps, sandwiches, salads, and smoothies taking front and center. But they are more than their selection of food. Good food, family, and community are some of the things that Nueces Cafe leadership feels strongly about and both its atmosphere and menu show that. When you walk in, you will quickly notice their walls are filled with optimism and encouragement. There's even a board dedicated to their customers being featured in different newspapers and magazines. It's easy to see it's more than just a business both to the owners and the customers. It's family serving families.

More than a popular and local cafe, they are also proud Nueces Electric Cooperative members. We sat down with owner Cheri McCormick who answered a few questions about Nueces Cafe and how NEC has been here to help.





Q: How did Nueces Cafe get started?

A: I was not really looking to go into the restaurant business. I go to the church next door and the lady that previously owed this, we kind of hit it off and that's how I got my foot through the door. It turned out just right that opened the cafe and expanded the food line a little bit. The community has been very supportive along the way.

Q: What inspired you to start your own business?

A: I wanted to be in my community, serving my community. I try not to only serve healthy, homemade food but try to serve the people as well. A lot of people have this as a meeting place for their businesses. Bible studies are done here. It's a place where you can come and study if you like and just sit and relax and not have to worry about everyday life.

Q: What is a typical day like for you?

A: We do serve breakfast and start at 8:00am so we don't catch an early business crowd. Our main business is lunch. We do soups, salads, wraps, and sandwiches. We also do a lot of homemade desserts. We have been doing a lot of catering lately as well. We just try to serve as many people as possible that come through the door.

Q: So thinking of this past year, how have things been for Nueces Cafe?

A: It was not an easy time. It's been a rough year. We had to close for a while because of the guidelines. We closed once for a week because some of my team and their family members were affected. It's been tough and we've been closed a few times, but we keep coming back. And the community keeps coming back to support us and that means everything to us.

If your business would like to be featured in NEC's Texas Co-op Power Magazine issues, please contact the NEC Communications team at communications@nueceselectric.org

Good Friends ★ Good Times



Q: How has NEC been supportive of your business?

A: We are in the same community, so we are trying to serve the same people. NEC has been a good company to have our electrical supply through. You will always get a quick response and they are very reliable. We also have many customers that come in here that are employees of NEC and we appreciate that.

Q: Tell us an interesting and fun tidbit about your business.

A: If you look around, you see a lot of our history about the area. There's a lot that you can dig in. We are also a Christian cafe, so we are proud of that. You will see uplifting scriptures and quotes and we hope it will be pick-me-up for our customers. Especially now during these hard times. We are a small cafe where we try our best to give off a homemade and homestyle vibe.

June Is National Safety Month

While Nueces Electric Cooperative often focuses on electric safety, there are many other dangers lurking out there. In recognition of National Safety Month, we're sharing the National Safety Council's list of the top causes of preventable injuries and death away from the workplace.

1. Poisoning. In 2011, poisonings overtook car crashes for the first time as the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for all ages combined. Poisoning deaths are caused by gases, chemicals and other substances, but prescription drug overdose is by far the leading cause.

2. Vehicle crashes. Crashes are the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death overall. Impaired driving, distracted driving, speeding and inexperience can cause

a life to be cut short in the blink of an eye.

3. Falls. Falling is the third-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death over all age groups, but it's the No. 1 cause of death for those 65 and older.

4. Choking and suffocation. Choking on food or other objects is a primary cause. Suffocation and choking rank higher among the elderly and infants.

5. Drowning. It's the No. 1 cause of death for children ages 1–4, mostly due to children falling into pools or being left alone in bathtubs.

6. Fires and burns. Fires often start at night, when families are asleep and most vulnerable. A working smoke alarm will cut in half the chances of dying in a fire.

DID YOU KNOW?

June is National Safety Month. Celebrated annually by the National Safety Council (NSC) since 1996, National Safety Month seeks to increase awareness of safety at work, at home, and within our communities.

POWER TIP

Vacuum your air conditioner's return vents to remove dust and grime to help your system operate at its best.

IMAGE COURTESY OF UNSPLASH.COM

Stay Safe In A Lightning Storm

Lightning strikes kill an average of 49 people in the United States each year, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and more than 400 people are hit by bolts each year. But if you prepare before an outdoor event and know how to protect yourself, you can keep your family safe from lightning. Follow these tips from NOAA:

Plan ahead. Just as you have an emergency plan for fires and weather events like tornadoes and hurricanes, form an action plan for lightning. Choose a safe shelter and time how long it takes to get there.

Check the weather. A simple forecast can tell you whether you should delay outdoor activities to avoid a dangerous situation.

Look to the sky. Dark skies, whipping winds and lightning flashes are all signs that you should stay indoors.

Seek shelter. As soon as you hear a rumble of thunder, head for a safe place—an enclosed structure with plumbing and wiring is best or find a car. Open-air shelters, sheds and covered porches are often not safe places. Avoid tall trees that stand alone, towers, poles, and metal fences and other conductors of electricity.

Wait it out. Leaving shelter too quickly makes you vulnerable to lightning strikes. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder before you head back outdoors.

If someone near you has been struck by lightning, call 911 immediately. A certified person should begin CPR right away if necessary.

Electrical Safety Tips For Your Fish Tank

Water and electricity don't mix, but if you have an aquarium in your home, the two have to work together for the benefit of the fish. A faulty setup could shock you, kill your fish or start a house fire.

Ensure your fish tank's electrical components are plugged into an outlet with a ground-fault circuit interrupter, which will turn off the current if it senses an imbalance.

As an extra precaution, arrange the cord so that it has a drip loop. A drip loop is simply a section of cord that dips below the level of the outlet so that any water that might travel down the wire drips off at the lowest level; it cannot travel up the cord into the outlet.

Beware of saltwater corrosion on wires where they intersect with aquarium equipment. Corroded wires could allow electricity to enter the water, putting your fish at risk. Electrified water will kill the fish and give you a jolt.

Every time you clean the tank, it's a good idea to inspect all functioning parts for safe operation. Make sure cords are not cut, brittle or corroded. Replace any damaged items.

Turn off power to the tank before reaching inside for any task. It's too easy to think you can make a quick adjustment without unplugging the electrical equipment. It's also too dangerous to skip.



IMAGE COURTESY OF UNSPLASH.COM

IMAGE COURTESY OF UNSPLASH.COM



Tornado Season Peaks In June

Be better prepared for tornado season, which peaks in June, with this safety information from the Texas Department of Insurance.

A tornado watch means tornadoes are possible in the area, and a tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.

When a tornado warning has been issued for your area or if you see an approaching tornado, follow these safety tips.

If you are in a school, hospital, factory, shopping center, business or home:

- Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls.
- Do not open windows.

- Go to a basement, if one is available.
- Find an interior room on the lowest floor, if there is no basement.
- Cover yourself in blankets, towels or anything that will protect you from flying debris.
- If you are in a car or mobile home, get out immediately. Find a substantial structure or designated tornado shelter. If no suitable structure is nearby, lie flat, face down, in the nearest ditch or depression and use your hands to cover your head to protect against flying debris.

Director And Election FAQ's

Director Election Process

NEC prides itself on its director elections. The election process reflects one of the Seven Cooperative Principles - democratic member control: one member, one vote. NEC is member-owned and is governed by a eight (8) person, member-elected board of directors. These directors represent the eight member districts of the cooperative. A portion of the co-op directorships stand for election each year. All members can vote on all directors.

Nominating and Election Process

Any qualifying NEC member in a district up for election may seek to become a candidate. If more than two candidates petition for a directorship, a primary election will be held in the district to select two candidates who will appear on the election ballot. At the annual membership meeting to be held October 14, 2021, all members of NEC may vote to elect the new directors in the districts up for election. All members will receive a ballot by mail. If members cannot attend the meeting, they may cast their vote by mailing in the ballot. It is up to you, the members, to elect the directors best qualified to run your cooperative. There is no term limit for an NEC director but he/she must complete the nomination process every three years and be re-elected by the members.

To save on costs, NEC Board of Directors made the decision last year to not hold an election if all districts are uncontested. NEC will know by the end of July if there will be an election. If there is an election, ballots will be available by mail and online in September and in person at the annual meeting.

Director Responsibilities

Directors are tasked with the development of governance policies and monitoring the financial health of the cooperative. In addition, they are charged with keeping up-to-date on industry trends, legislative actions, and other pertinent issues affecting cooperatives as well as representing the membership at cooperative related functions.

Director Compensation

Directors receive a fee for each day during which they attend meetings or otherwise perform duties on behalf of the Cooperative.

Membership Access

Article I, Section 8, "Membership List," of the Cooperative's By-Laws. Upon authorization, Petitioners may be granted access to a copy of a map of the district in which your residence lies and to view a list of the Cooperative members in your district for up to one (1) hour for the purpose of recording, in writing, the contact information of up to fifty (50) members from that list. A full copy of the By-Laws can be found at www.nueceselectric.org -> About Us-> Transparency and Your Cooperative.

Nominations Open June 16th for NEC Director Positions

Beginning Wednesday, June 16, 2021, any eligible NEC member who wants to be a candidate for co-op director for districts **3 and 7** can pick up a petition and instructions at the NEC office in Calallen at 14353 Cooperative Ave. Candidates must have their primary residence in the district in which they are running.

NEC continues to hold our members safety as a top priority. Currently, we have not determined if NEC's Annual Meeting will be in person or in another format. In any case, we are accepting petitions for directorships. The deadline for the return of these petitions is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 30, 2021. If you are unsure of your district number, contact our member care department by calling 1.800.NEC.WATT or by e-mailing membercare@nueceselectric.org. The process requires a petition to be submitted by any person wanting to be a candidate for cooperative director. The bylaws of NEC provide for staggered three-year terms for each director. A petition for nomination must contain 15 signatures of NEC members who have service within the district the nominee would represent. All petition signatures will be verified. Petitions will be signed out from, and returned directly to, the Co-op's Executive Secretary who will contact you once the signatures are verified. If more than two qualifying petitions are received for a district, a primary election will be held in that district during the month of August to narrow the candidates to two.

The director elections will be held at the Annual Meeting on October 14, 2021 in Robstown. For more information, visit Article IV of our bylaws.

Calendar Dates:

June 16

Director Election Packet pick up for District 3 and District 7. To see which district you belong to, simply visit <https://nueceselectric.org/about-us/board-directors>, click on the district map and type in your address.

July 30

Director Petitions to be returned to the co-op

August 10

Verification of Petition Signatures by Exec. Secretary

August 23-25

Last Day Primary Election/Meeting (if necessary)

October 14

Annual Meeting at Richard M. Borchard Fairgrounds

Payment Options:



Pay Online

www.nueceselectric.org

Access your account 24 hours a day from any computer to view usage, make payments or manage your account. Just click on "Pay Your Bill", on the left side of our Homepage and it will take you to the SmartHub account portal.



Pay With Your Smart Device

Download the SmartHub app to your iPhone or Android device. View usage, weather impacts, make payments and manage your account any time of the day.



Auto Draft:

Sign up to have your bank account or credit card drafted for your monthly bill. You can sign-up via your SmartHub online account.



Equal Payment Plan

Through this payment program, a member's usage is averaged for the year and the member makes equal payments each month. See more information and sign up online under the Member Services -> Payment Options menu tab, or call the office.



Pay by Phone:

800-NEC-WATT (800-632-9288)



Pay in Person:

Pay your bill at any one of our Customer Service centers located in Calallen, Ben Bolt, Ricardo or Orange Grove.



Pay by Mail:

P.O. Box 659821, San Antonio, TX 78265



Pay at the Payment Kiosk

Quick, easy, and accessible 24 hours a day, the Kiosk is located at the Calallen office. Payments post immediately to your account.



Payment Services

Pay using any Fidelity Express Pay Stations or for an additional \$1.50 service charge. Search online to find a payment station near you.



Nueces Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Find us on the web at:

www.nueceselectric.org

Call us at:

361-387-2581 or

1-800-632-9288

Main Office / Mailing Address:

14353 Cooperative Ave
Robstown, TX 78380 (Calallen)
M-F 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Ben Bolt Service Center:

5646 S. Hwy 281 Alice, TX
M-F 8 - 12 / 12:30 - 4

Ricardo Service Center:

123 CR 1026, Ricardo, TX
M, W, F 8 - 12 / 12:30 - 4

Orange Grove Service Center:

5302 W. FM 624

Temporarily closed

Your Elected Board of Directors:

Brian Menking, District 6, President

Bill Hartman, District 5

David Rosse, District 3, Secretary Treasurer

Johnny Alvarado, District 7

Gladys Lippincott, District 8 (Retail)

Donald Herrmann, District 4

Gregg Truesdale, District 2

Rumaldo Z. Juarez, District 1

Local Pages Editor:

Alexa Patek

communications@nueceselectric.org

Use the NEC Outage Viewer to view outages 24-hours a day with any device. The Outage Viewer is located on the homepage our website.

NEC Power Providers

PLEASE NOTE: The (CRs) listed below have completed the process to qualify and are currently serving NEC area members. This provider list is subject to change. For the most up-to-date list of providers, please monitor our website nueceselectric.org or you can obtain a list from any NEC office.

AP GAS & ELECTRIC
APOLLO POWER & LIGHT
BLUESTAR ENERGY
CHAMPION ENERGY SERVICES
CONSTELLATION ENERGY
CORAL POWER SOLUTIONS
DYNEGY
ENERGY TRANSFER
ENERTRADE ELECTRIC
HINO ELECTRIC
MPOWER /MP2
NEC CO-OP ENERGY
TENASKA
ENCOA (TERM)
SMARTCOM ENERGY SERVICES
STARTEX POWER
SOURCE POWER & GAS
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LARGE COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
LARGE COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
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RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL & INDUST
LARGE COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL ONLY
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL ONLY
LARGE COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
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Stop Energy Vampires and Save 10%

MOST OF US HAVE tangles of cords to charge our phones and power TVs, computers and other gadgets in our homes. Often those rats nests can represent a significant power drain, even when those devices are turned off or not in use, wasting energy.

Fortunately, there's an easy way to stop this phantom load. Advanced power strips save energy by automatically shutting off power to unused devices. They are simple to use, cost-effective and convenient.

How They Work

Smart strips typically have three types of outlets: one control outlet, always-on outlets and automatically switched outlets. When the device plugged into the control outlet isn't being used, power is cut off to all devices on the switched outlets. Always-on outlets are for plugging in devices that need continuous power, like a cable box.

Different Power Strips for Different Needs

There are three types of smart power strips. Though they work in different ways, they all save energy by disconnecting power to electronic devices that are in standby or sleep mode.

1. Timer-equipped smart strips are programmable. Devices plugged in automatically turn on or off at designated times.
2. Occupancy-sensing devices are controlled by an infrared motion detector. These smart strips detect if someone is in the room and turn plugged-in devices on or off accordingly.
3. Current-sensing smart strips are controlled by a primary outlet. If you plug your TV into the primary outlet, your cable box and video game console will turn off automatically when the TV enters sleep mode. When you turn on the TV, the other electronics turn on as well.

Wi-Fi-enabled smart power strips can connect to your home network, allowing you to control them remotely.

By plugging into advanced power strips, you could save 10% on your electricity bill—and your devices will still be ready to go whenever you need them. ■

Energy Star Makes Product Searches Easy

IF YOU'RE READY to replace appliances in your home, look for the Energy Star logo for savings on products that meet energy efficiency specifications from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Energy Star makes it easy to find rebates and special offers available near you. Just go to energystar.gov and use the rebate finder by typing in your ZIP code.

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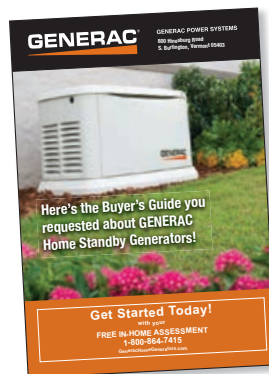
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Do Words Bug You?

A master naturalist spins a web around the tangled language of the natural world

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS • ILLUSTRATION BY GORDON STUDER

A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN six years ago captured me pointing to a warning sign posted on a Galveston beach. The sign read: CAUTION—POISONOUS SNAKES IN DUNES. The choice of adjective still irks me. But I understand. I, too, made the same mistake before I learned my first naturalist lesson. Since then, I've learned many more.

Poisonous or venomous? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines poison as “a substance that through its chemical action usually kills, injures or impairs an organism.” Venom is “a toxic substance produced by some animals ... that is injected ... chiefly by biting or stinging and has an injurious or lethal effect.” Poison must be consumed whereas venom must be injected.

Bite or sting? A venomous bite happens when a creature sinks its fangs into a victim and injects venom through special structures in its mouth. Stings occur when a creature jabs venom into a victim through its stinger. Spiders and snakes bite; bees and wasps sting.

Bee or wasp? To tell the difference, look at the body. Honeybees, carpenter bees and bumblebees have plump, fuzzy bodies with thick legs. Honeybee colonies generally build their honeycomb nests inside tree cavities or human-made boxes. They sting once, then die. Carpenter bees and bumblebees, which respectively nest in wood and underground burrows, can sting but rarely do. The majority of native bees in Texas are solitary, meaning they nest alone.

Wasps have slender, smooth bodies with narrow waists, skinny legs and bright markings. They usually build papery nests and can sting repeatedly. Examples include yellow jackets and paper wasps. As for hornets, they're larger than wasps. Texas has only one kind—the bald-faced hornet, which is actually a yellow jacket. Aren't common names confusing?

Bug or insect? First, all bugs are insects. But not all insects are bugs. Bugs are classified as insects because they all have six legs, segmented bodies and exoskeletons. But not all insects have a mouth part called a proboscis. Only true bugs do. Examples include stink bugs, leafhoppers, cicadas, aphids and bedbugs. True bugs also hatch from eggs as tiny versions of their adult selves. Insects, such as butterflies, ants, flies and beetles, go through the stages of egg, larva and pupa.

Butterfly or moth? Most butterflies fly during the day. They're usually brightly colored and have slender, smooth bodies with club-tipped antennae. At rest, they hold their wings up. In contrast, most moths fly at night. They're usually drab in color and have fuzzy, thick bodies with feathered or tapered antennae. At rest, most fold their wings back.

Chrysalis or cocoon? Butterflies and moths pupate. That is, both metamorphose from caterpillars (larvae) into pupae, which then transform into adults. Most moth caterpillars spin a silk case called a cocoon around themselves. Inside, they pupate and emerge as adults. Butterfly caterpillars attach themselves to a safe place. Then they wiggle out of their caterpillar skin, leaving behind a smooth chrysalis that hardens and protects the pupa inside. Later, an adult butterfly breaks out of the chrysalis.

Spider or daddy longlegs? Another taxonomy lesson first. Spiders and daddy longlegs both have eight legs and exoskeletons. That makes them arachnids. The two differ in that spiders have two body parts and spin silk; daddy longlegs (also called harvestmen) have one body part and spin no silk. Unlike spiders, they have no fangs or venom.

Turtle or tortoise? All tortoises are turtles. But not all turtles are tortoises. Both are classified in a group of hard-shelled animals known as turtles. True turtles live in or near water and most have webbed feet and a smooth shell. Not so for tortoises, which have stumpy feet and live exclusively on land. Tortoises eat only plants; turtles eat plants and animals.

Frog or toad? Look at the skin. Generally, toads have bumpy, dry skin and don't need to live near water. Frogs have smooth, moist skin and require a watery habitat. Both live in my yard. Gulf Coast toads, warty and blackish gray, show up in my flower beds sometimes. They're harmless. Not so for the resident Rio Grande leopard frogs. To my dismay, they hang out in my stock tank and trample the aquatic plants, but they can't hurt a human.

What's a gardener to do? That's a lesson I haven't learned yet. ■

TCP WEB EXTRA

Go online, where the author corrects William Shakespeare.

COCOON



Chrysalis

Moths



Sting



HORNET

Caterpillars



Spiders

POISONOUS

SNAKES

BITE

VENOMOUS

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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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first in the series ● ● ● ●

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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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TCP WEB EXTRA

See Gigi Coleman's performance as Bessie Coleman.

Back in the U.S. a year later, she became the first Black woman to perform in an air show. She toured the country making speeches, executing tricks, stunting like a daredevil and working as an activist against discrimination. Coleman, nicknamed Queen Bess, had a reputation for refusing to perform for segregated audiences. Using money she earned from barnstorming, she purchased her own plane, a Curtiss JN-4.

Tragedy struck during a test flight April 30, 1926, over Florida, when a loose wrench jammed the control gears and flipped the plane upside down. She wasn't wearing her seat belt, and the plane had no canopy. Coleman, 34, fell to her death.

Black newspapers gave her death front-page coverage, but the mainstream press barely noted it. In 2019, *The New York Times*, as part of an effort to recognize the lives of remarkable people whose deaths went unreported at the time, ran a complete obituary. "Coleman saw aviation as a way to empower Black people in America and dreamed of opening a flight school," it wrote. "Future pilots said they had been inspired by her, and flight clubs have been named in her honor."

The Challenger Air Pilots Association of Chicago began an annual tradition of flying over Coleman's grave there in 1931. The U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp in her honor in 1995 after Marion Coleman, Bessie's niece, persistently petitioned for it. Texas historical markers stand in Atlanta and Waxahachie, Bessie's former hometowns.

A great-niece, Gigi Coleman, portrays Bessie Coleman in a one-woman show that she performs around the country.

"When I do my performance, people cry," Gigi Coleman says. "I'm very proud to be a relative of hers. She was a trail-blazer, and she didn't take no for an answer." ■

Queen Bess Soared

Bessie Coleman slipped from the grips of gravity and Jim Crow to become the first African American female pilot and first Native American female pilot

BY AINSLEY SHAW

JIM CROW SEGREGATION laws seemed to have a grasp like gravity on Bessie Coleman—as they did for most African Americans in the early 20th century—keeping her from rising very high in life.

Coleman, born in 1892 in Atlanta, Texas, to an African American maid and a Native American sharecropper, spent her youth picking cotton. She likely never dreamed she would go on to become the first African American woman and first Native American woman to earn a pilot's license—two years before Amelia Earhart earned hers—100 years ago.

When she was 23, Coleman moved in with two of her brothers and found work as a manicurist in Chicago. Her brother John, who served in Europe during

World War I, drunkenly teased her one day about the wider range of opportunities for women in France. He told her, "Women ain't never goin' to fly, not like those women I saw in France," according to *Queen Bess: Daredevil Aviator*, a biography by Doris L. Rich.

Coleman took that as a challenge and responded, "That's it! You just called it for me." She decided to head to France, where she would face fewer obstacles for being Black and a woman.

After spending her nights learning French and days managing a chili restaurant, Coleman sailed to France and found a pilot to train her. Seven months later, she earned her pilot's license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, on June 15, 1921.

Tomatoes

Sliced is nice, but you can also bake them into saucy desserts

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

For years I avoided eating tomatoes in anything but pasta sauce or pizza. Thankfully those days are behind me, and now I look forward to when my garden starts producing piles of cherry tomatoes and sandwich-ready slicers. This cake helps use up any extra tomatoes you might have on hand—and gets kids to eat them. This recipe was one of the first to appear on soup cans, and this iteration's use of fresh tomatoes only improves it. Filled with spices and wonderfully moist, it will become a summer staple.

Tomato Cake

CAKE

1 pound tomatoes, or more as needed
to yield 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons
purée, divided use

2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
½ teaspoon ground ginger
½ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup sugar
¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, softened
2 eggs

GLAZE

1½ cups powdered sugar
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
Reserved tomato purée

- 1. CAKE** Preheat oven to 350 degrees and coat a 10-cup Bundt pan with cooking spray.
- 2.** Core and quarter tomatoes. Purée in a blender or food processor until completely smooth. Measure out 2 cups and set aside, reserving remainder.
- 3.** In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cardamom and ginger.
- 4.** In another bowl, beat sugars and butter until the batter is creamed and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time.
- 5.** Alternate adding flour mixture and tomato purée to the batter, starting and ending with the flour. Incorporate fully before each addition.
- 6.** Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake 40 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.
- 7.** Let cake cool in pan 10 minutes, then invert onto a rack to cool completely.
- 8. GLAZE** Mix powdered sugar, vanilla and 2 tablespoons tomato purée until completely smooth. Add more sugar or liquid as necessary. Drizzle over cooled cake.

SERVES 10

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Roasted Corn and Tomato Salad.





Broiled Stuffed Tomatoes

JOYCELYN SKIDMORE
LAMAR ELECTRIC

The ideal starter for any summer dinner, these stuffed tomatoes are ready in a flash. If you have one handy, a melon baller makes easy work of removing tomato seeds.

- 4–6 tomatoes**
- ½ cup breadcrumbs**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil or parsley**
- 3 tablespoons minced green onion**
- 1–2 cloves garlic, minced**
- ¼ teaspoon salt, plus more for sprinkling**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper, plus more for sprinkling**
- ⅛ teaspoon dried thyme**
- ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling**

- 1.** Core tomatoes. Using a spoon, scoop out seeds and juice, taking care not to break the sides of the tomatoes. Set tomatoes upside down in a colander to drain.
- 2.** In a small bowl, combine breadcrumbs, basil or parsley, green onion, garlic, salt, pepper, and thyme. Stir in olive oil until mixture is well combined and looks like wet sand.
- 3.** Sprinkle salt and pepper into each tomato. Fill tomatoes with breadcrumb mixture and set on a rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with additional olive oil. Broil at 400 degrees 5–10 minutes, keeping an eye on the breadcrumbs so they don't burn.

SERVES 4–6



\$500 WINNER

Tangy Tomato Slices

DALA BURK
WISE EC



This simple yet flavorful dish brings back summer memories for Burk, who has been enjoying this recipe for 40 years. Enjoy the slices on their own or tucked into a warm biscuit for a best-ever tomato sandwich.

SERVES 6

- 6 tomatoes, thinly sliced**
- 1 onion, thinly sliced**
- 1 cup olive oil**
- ⅓ cup vinegar**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley**
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**

- 1.** Layer tomato and onion slices in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and set aside.
- 2.** In a small bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients. Pour over tomatoes and onion, using a spatula to spread herbs evenly. Cover and chill 4–5 hours before serving.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

PIES DUE JUNE 10

OK, time to show off. We know readers all over the state serve up prize pies. Could yours be the \$500 winner? Enter at TexasCoopPower.com/contests by June 10.

[MORE RECIPES >](#)



Savory Tomato Bread Pudding

VALERIE KRUSE
TRI-COUNTY EC

This dish is ideal for using up day-old bread. Since the tomatoes cook down, feel free to use not-so-perfect ones.

- 8 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
- 1 large baguette, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 pounds tomatoes, cored and cut into chunks
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup grated Parmesan, Asiago

or Romano cheese
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
(optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a large casserole dish with cooking spray and set aside. Heat 6 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the bread cubes and stir to coat. Sauté about 5 minutes or until bread is lightly browned and toasted, working in batches if needed. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Add remaining olive oil to the skillet and cook the garlic 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, sugar, salt and pepper and stir well. Cook until tomatoes have released their juices and are submerged, about 10 minutes.
3. Add tomato mixture to bread cubes. Stir well to combine. Pour mixture into casserole dish and top with cheese.
4. Bake 40–45 minutes, loosening the edges with a spatula after 30 minutes to allow juices to distribute. Remove from oven and let rest 15 minutes, then sprinkle with chopped basil and serve.

SERVES 6–8

Tasty Tomato Types

BY MEGAN MYERS

While there are more than 10,000 varieties of tomatoes, most of us return to our tried-and-true favorites when cooking.

Globe

Alongside beefsteak tomatoes, this round, firm and juicy variety is what you'll most likely find at the super-market. They're delicious raw and cooked, and their shape makes them suitable for stuffing.

Roma

Roma and plum tomatoes are oblong and most commonly used for sauces thanks to their lower water content.

Cherry and Grape

These bite-size tomatoes are perfect raw for salads but also are delicious sautéed or roasted with herbs. Sweet varieties are a hit with kids, making them a great healthy snack.

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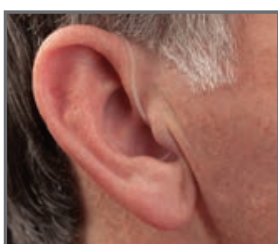
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"Quite impressive in its performance... an excellent quality-to-price ratio, and I would highly recommend it to my patients with hearing loss." – **J. May, MD**

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Deep Dip

Wimberley's seemingly bottomless Jacob's Well invites a plunge

BY CHET GARNER

STANDING ON A limestone ledge and staring into Texas' strangest swimming hole, I remembered my mother's warning, "Don't jump unless you know what's underneath you." I wasn't completely sure what was beneath the surface, but with a crowd of cheering onlookers, chickening out was not an option. I held my breath and braced for the unknown.

This is the thrill of Jacob's Well, a spring-fed swimming hole near Wimberley that's been attracting visitors for centuries. The hole itself measures less than 20 feet across but looks like it plummets to the center of the Earth. In reality, it descends into a series of caverns that extend a mile back into the Earth. Every minute of every day, the Edwards Aquifer pushes a river of fresh water out of the cave and feeds Cypress Creek.

As I completed the plunge, my only thought was, "Wow! That's cold." The spring water holds at a chilly 68 degrees year-round. Once I regained my composure, I could appreciate the fact that I was floating above what seemed like a bottomless pit of water. I had to see what was down there.

I grabbed my goggles, pointed my head toward the bottom and started kicking. I could feel the mass of water pushing against me with its invisible current, and the water was so clear that I could see every detail of the algae-covered walls and the ledge 25 feet down. With every bit of strength and air that I had, I propelled myself to the stone shelf and from there could see the small opening to the deeper and darker caves.

That was enough to freak me out, so I quickly turned and swam to the sunshine and safety of the surface. It was time for another jump. ■

ABOVE Chet leaps into Jacob's Well.

TCP WEB EXTRA See Chet's video from Jacob's Well and check out 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.

JUNE

04

Bandera [4, 11, 18, 25; July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Aug. 6] **Riding on Faith Rodeo**, (830) 777-7129, facebook.com/ridingonfaithrodeoseries

Denton [4–Sept. 4] **Soul Art Renewal: General Art Exhibition**, (940) 382-2787, dentonarts.com

05

Bulverde [5–July 31] **Saturday Night Rodeo**, (830) 980-2226, tejasrodeo.com

Hunt [5, 12, 19, 26, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31] **Crider's Rodeo and Dancehall**, (830) 238-4441, cridersrandd.com

07

Mesquite [7, 21] **Jazz Breaks**, (972) 216-8132, mesquiteartscenter.org

Jacksonville [7–12] **Tomato Fest Week**, (903) 586-2217, jacksonvilletexas.com/tomato-fest

08

Victoria [8–12] **Bach Festival**, (361) 570-5788, victoriabachfestival.org

11

Luckenbach [11–12] **Thomas Michael Riley Music Festival**, (830) 997-3224, thomasmichaelriley.com

San Antonio [11–Aug. 7] **Fiesta Noche del Río**, (210) 226-4651, fiestanochesa.com

12

East Bernard Czech Kolache-Klobase Festival, (979) 335-7907, kkfest.com

New Braunfels Granger Smith, (830) 964-3800, whitewaterrocks.com

Terrell [12-13] Antique Tractor and Engine Show and Pull, (214) 837-8861, north-texas-antique-tractor-and-engine-club.org

14

Mesquite [14, 28] Music in the Park, (972) 216-8132, mesquiteartscenter.org

17

Big Spring [17-19] Cowboy Reunion and Rodeo, (432) 267-5053, facebook.com/bigspringrodeo

Stonewall [17-19] Peach JAMBoree, (830) 644-2735, stonewalltexas.com/peach-jamboree

18

Kerrville Urban Cowboy Reunion, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

Lufkin [18-19] Pineywood Heifer Futurity, (979) 277-2656, arklatexlonghorns.com

McKinney [18-20] Third Monday Trade Days, (972) 562-5466, thirdmondaytradedays.com

19

Palestine Dogwood Jamboree: Country Music at Its Best, (903) 724-2556, dogwoodjamboree.com

New Braunfels [19-20] Old Gruene Market Days, (830) 832-1721, gruenemarketdays.com

24

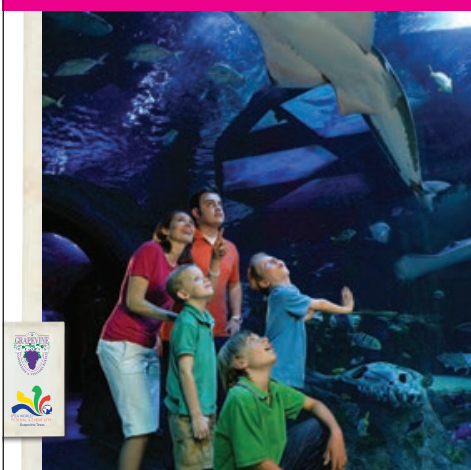
Elgin [24-26] Western Days, (512) 285-4515, elgintxchamber.com

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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

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Pick of the Month

Honey Festival

Uvalde, June 11-12
(830) 278-4115
mainstreetuvalde.com/
honey-festival

Pioneers of the late 19th century found an abundance of trees and caves loaded with honey around what is now Uvalde, which is 85 miles west of San Antonio. The town celebrates this history with a festival featuring street food, a 5K race, live music, kids activities and late-night shopping.

JUNE EVENTS CONTINUED

26

Bandera RiverFest,

(830) 796-3045,
banderariverfest.com

Belton [26-July 4] 4th

of July Celebration,
(254) 939-3551,
beltonchamber.com

JULY

02

Llano [2-4] Rock'n River-

fest, (325) 247-5354,
llanorocknriverfest.com

El Paso [2-3, 9-10, 16-17,

23-24, 30-31, Aug. 6-7]
Vival El Paso, (915) 534-0600,
vivaelpaso.org

03

Stephenville 4th of July

Concert and Fireworks,
(254) 918-1295,
stephenvilletx.gov

04

Fredericksburg 4th of

July Parade & Fireworks,
(830) 997-6523,
visitfredericksburgtx.com



Hit the Road

Event Calendar

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

TCP Plan now
TexasCoopPower.com/events

Man-made vs. Nature

Beauty can be found where the natural and the human-made collide. Over time some things once shiny and new return to the elements, often forming a new beauty all their own and leaving us to wonder at nature's awesome power.

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

KIM LEATHERWOOD
UNITED COOPERATIVE
SERVICES

Nature reclaims this old
service station in Glen Rose.

DEBRA CZERNY
BLUEBONNET EC

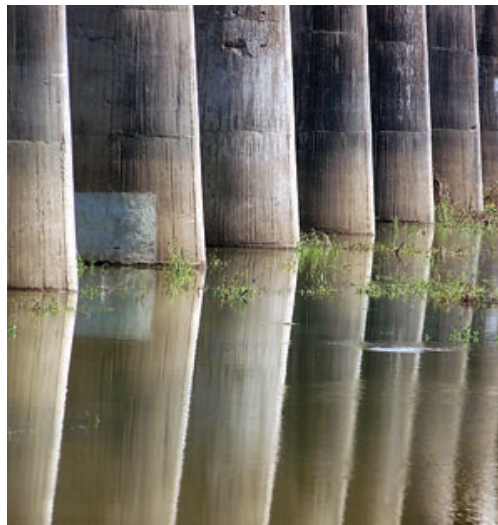
Cactus flowers growing
out of asphalt.

JACK ROBERTSON
CECA

A rainbow scarab impaled
on barbed wire.

STEVEN LACKIE
PENTEX ENERGY

The Continental Avenue
Bridge over the Trinity
River near downtown
Dallas.



Upcoming Contests

DUE JUN 10 Fillin' Stations

DUE JUL 10 Funny Signs

DUE AUG 10 Bridges

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



Parent Imperfect

Love outdistances cool
in appreciation of a good father

BY MARTHA DEERING
ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN FALES

WHAT AWFUL AFFLICTION is it that makes preteens view their parents' idiosyncrasies through a monstrous magnifying glass?

I cringe to admit this, but in middle school I was embarrassed by my father. Born with cataracts after his mother contracted German measles, he wore Coke-bottle glasses and walked with an exaggerated high-stepping gait to avoid tripping over things. Worse, he couldn't drive like other dads. Surgery improved his vision slightly, but he was still considered legally blind.

Perhaps that was why music was so important to him; being deprived of one of his senses had sharpened another.

When my friends came over, I engineered excuses to avoid my father. He told the awfulest jokes: "What did the

mayonnaise say to the icebox? Close the door, I'm dressing." In my adolescent imagination, my friends were laughing *at* him, not *with* him.

"Your father is playing with the orchestra tomorrow night at Baylor before freshman orientation," my mother explained one night. "It's the same night as my writing class. Could you walk over there with him?"

As we crossed a busy street in the dark, my father tripped over the curb and fell forward onto his chest. His battered violin case landed with a clatter on the sidewalk along with his glasses, which suffered a spiderweb of cracks across one lens. Horrified by my inattention, I helped him up and brushed off the front of his suit coat.

"Are you all right?" I asked. "Do you want to go home? You won't be able to see the music with your glasses smashed."

"No, I can't go home," he said, checking his 200-year-old violin for damage. "They can't play the violin parts without me. I can't see the music unless I'm up close anyway, so I always memorize my parts. If you'll help me get set up on the stage, I'll be OK. Why am I so clumsy?"

Years later in high school, I began to recognize the courage it took for this gentle, loving man with a disability (he hated the designation "handicapped") to get a doctorate and then a job just after the Depression; to play Mozart, Bach and Beethoven in front of large crowds; to teach psychology to classes of graduate students; to lead brain exercise groups at local nursing homes; and to raise three children, willingly wearing out the knees of his suit pants to play the part of the horse to our cowboys and Indians.

I'm sure that my father recognized and forgave my adolescent foolishness. He was that kind of guy. ■



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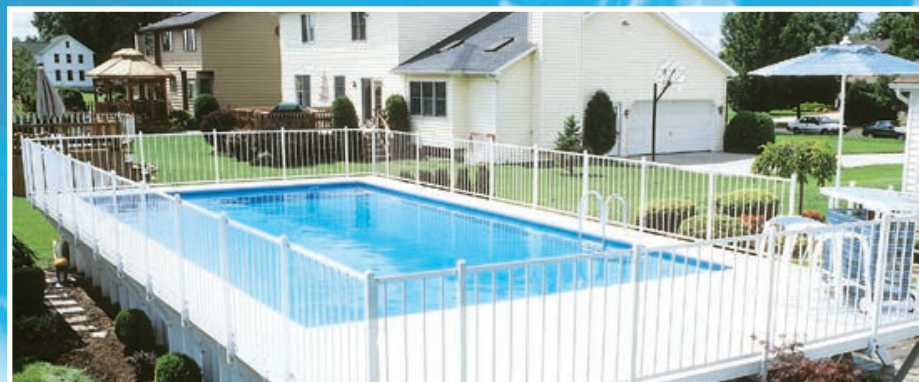


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