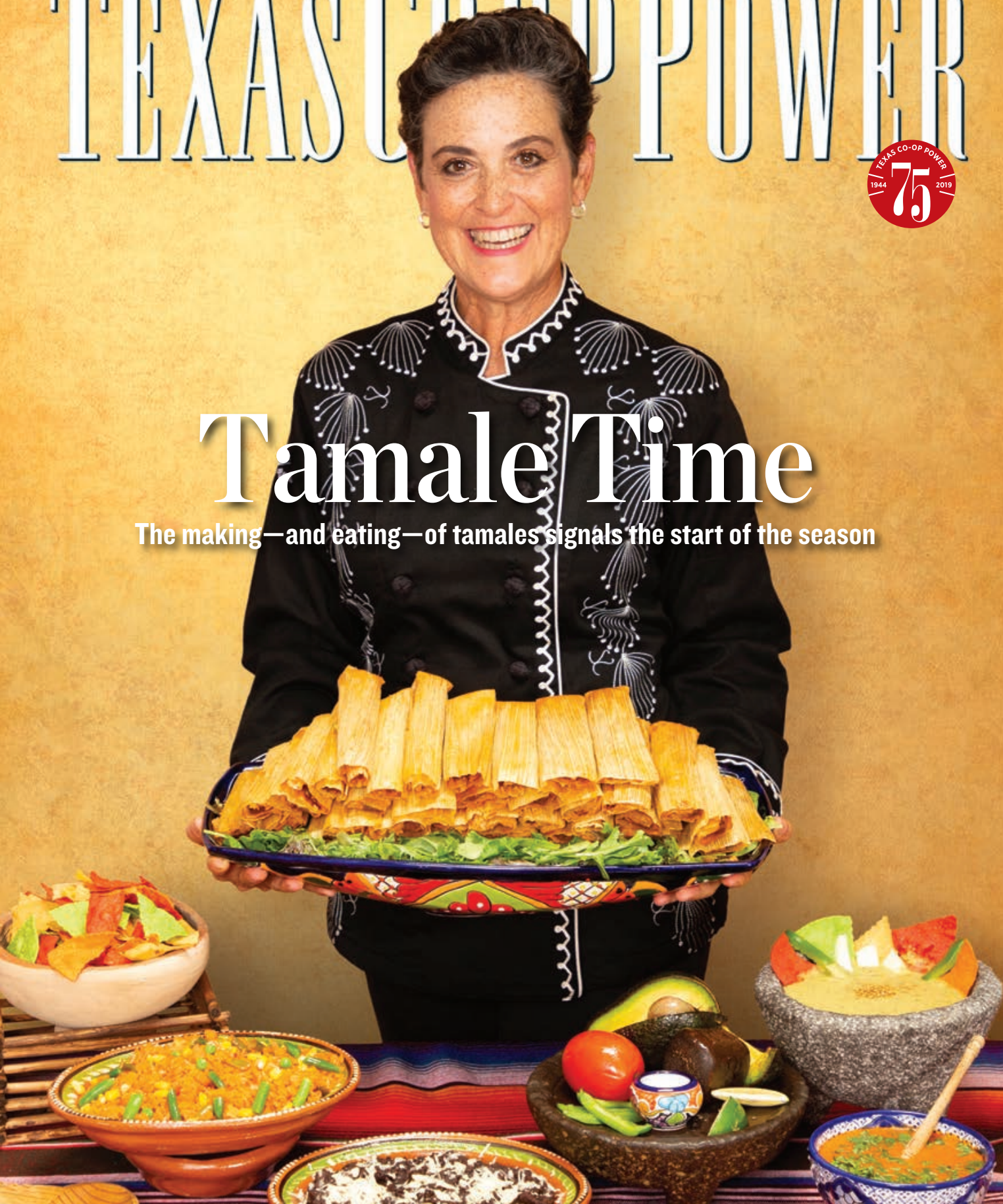


TEXAS CO-OP POWER



Tamale Time

The making—and eating—of tamales signals the start of the season





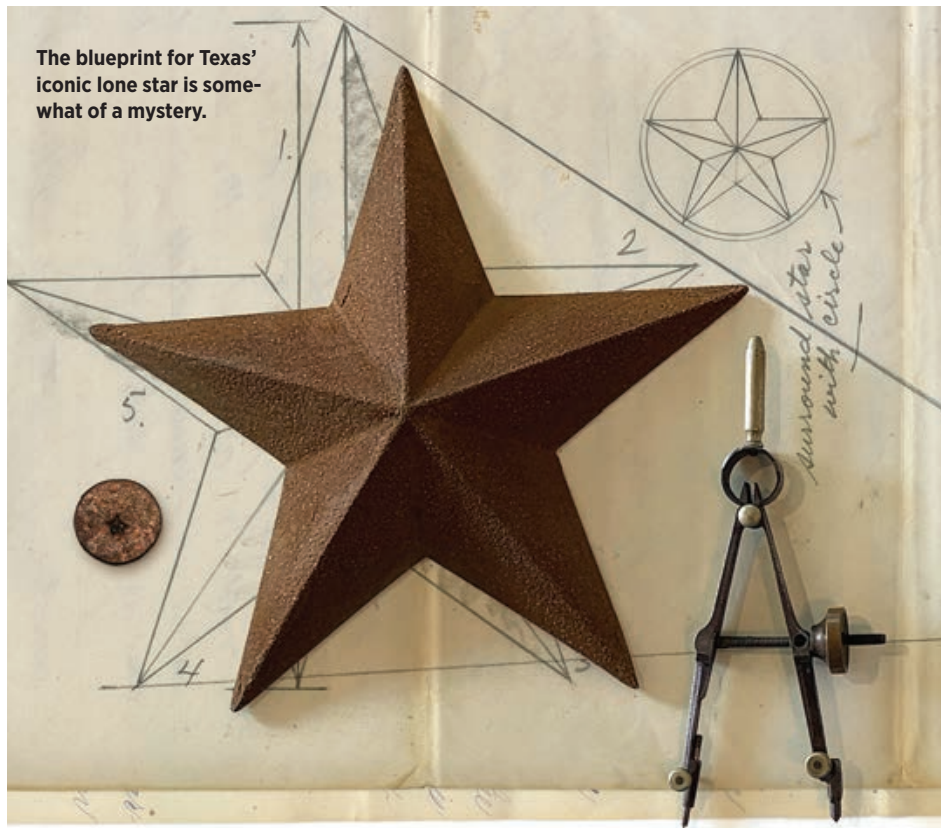
great looks & long-lasting *performance*

Mueller metal roofs offer many advantages, including curb appeal, weather resistance and durability. You can choose from a wide range of designer colors to complement your home, backed by up to a 30 year limited paint warranty. It all adds up to lasting peace of mind. Get a metal roof you can trust from a company you can trust – a Mueller metal roof.

Learn more at: www.muellerinc.com/roofing



www.muellerinc.com
877-2-MUELLER (877-268-3553)



The blueprint for Texas' iconic lone star is somewhat of a mystery.

FEATURES

8 A Star Is Born Texas' iconic lone star may trace its origins to 1817 Mexican coins.

By Clay Coppedge

10 The Call of the Tamalada Making tamales is a holiday tradition, though eating them never ends.

Story by Eileen Mattei | Photos by John Faulk

FAVORITES

5 Letters

6 Currents

18 Co-op News

Get the latest information plus energy and safety tips from your cooperative.

29 Texas History

Nixon's Attack on Co-ops

By Ellen Stader

31 Retro Recipes

Cookies & Candies

35 Focus on Texas

Photo Contest: Deserts

36 Around Texas

List of Local Events

38 Hit the Road

Camp Street Blues

By Chet Garner

ONLINE

TexasCoopPower.com

Find these stories online if they don't appear in your edition of the magazine.

Texas USA

The Southwestern Tempo

Excerpt by J. Frank Dobie

Observations

Lazarus the Bug

By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

NEXT MONTH

Texas Feels a Draft Craft breweries bring entertainment and economic opportunity to communities.



STAR: JACK MOLLOY. BEER: MAXY M | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



ON THE COVER Celia Galindo helps continue a tamalada tradition started by her grandmother in 1949 in Brownsville. Photo by John Faulk

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Alan Lesley, Chair, Comanche; Robert Loth III, Vice Chair, Fredericksburg; Gary Raybon, Secretary-Treasurer, El Campo; Mark Boyd, Douglassville; Greg Henley, Tahoka; Billy Jones, Corsicana; David McGinnis, Van Alstyne • **PRESIDENT/CEO:** Mike Williams, Austin • **COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE:** Marty Haught, Burleson; Bill Hetherington, Bandera; Ron Hughes, Sinton; Boyd McCamish, Littlefield; Mark McClain, Roby; John Ed Shinpaugh, Bonham; Robert Walker, Gilmer; Brandon Young, McGregor • **MAGAZINE STAFF:** Martin Bevins, Vice President, Communications & Member Services; Charles J. Lohrmann, Editor; Tom Widowski, Associate Editor; Karen Nejtek, Production Manager; Andy Doughty, Creative Manager; Elaine Sproull, Advertising Manager; Chris Burrows, Senior Communications Specialist; Paula Disbrowe, Food Editor; Grace Fultz, Print Production Specialist; Travis Hill, Communications Specialist; Qasim K. Johnson, Administrative Assistant; Jessica Ridge, Communications Specialist; Chris Salazar, Digital Field Editor; Ally Schauer, Intern; Jane Sharpe, Senior Designer; Shannon Oelrich, Proofreader

TECHNOLOGY SIMPLIFIED – BIGGER AND BETTER

Wow! A Simple to Use Computer Designed Especially for Seniors!

Easy to read. Easy to see. Easy to use. Just plug it in!



"I love this computer! It is easy to read and to use! I get photo updates from my children and grandchildren all the time."

— Janet F.

Have you ever said to yourself "I'd love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it." Well, you're not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they've gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the "pointing and clicking" and "dragging and dropping" you're lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that's designed for simplicity and ease of use. It's the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world at your fingertips.

From the moment you open the box, you'll realize how different the WOW Computer is. The components are all connected; all you do is plug it into an outlet and your high-speed Internet connection. Then you'll see the screen – it's now 22 inches. This is a completely new touch screen system, without the cluttered look of the normal computer screen. The "buttons" on the screen are easy to see and easy to understand. All you do is touch one of them, from the Web, Email, Calendar to Games— you name it... and a new screen opens up. It's so easy to use you won't have to ask your children or grandchildren for help. Until now, the very people who could benefit most from E-mail and the Internet are the ones that have had the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the WOW Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn't it time

NEW

Now comes with...

Larger 22-inch hi-resolution screen – easier to see

16% more viewing area

Simple navigation – so you never get lost

Intel® processor – lightning fast

Computer is in the monitor – No bulky tower

Text to Speech translation – it can even read your emails to you!

U.S. Based Customer Service

FREE
Automatic
Software Updates

you took part? Call now, and you'll find out why tens of thousands of satisfied seniors are now enjoying their WOW Computers, emailing their grandchildren, and experiencing everything the Internet has to offer. Call today!

- Send & Receive Emails
- Have video chats with family and friends
- Surf the Internet:
 - Get current weather and news
- Play games Online:
 - Hundreds to choose from!

Call now toll free and find out how you can get the new WOW! Computer.

Mention promotional code 109057 for special introductory pricing.

1-888-452-2773

The **WOW!** Computer



© 2019 firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc.

84105

Your VFD Might Need You

In my lifetime, I've been a member of five volunteer fire departments [*Putting Others First*, October 2019]. More than once, I've been the only firefighter responding to a fire or wreck in our district, having to rely on manpower and equipment from a neighboring community to assist.

Chances are good your local volunteer fire department needs you. Check it out—you might be glad you did.

DOUG EARNEST | CHANDLER
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Fateful Connection to REA

My father, Walter Smith, joined the Rural Electrification Administration in 1949 as a young electrical engineer [*Our Fearless Forefather*, August 2019]. By 1951, he was running electric service into the Missouri Ozarks for the REA. Family folklore says that Dad attended an REA conference in Salt Lake City in June 1951 and was scheduled to return home on a flight with his REA co-workers.

However, I was born in Missouri while Dad was at the conference, so when a seat opened up on an earlier flight, the REA group nominated Dad to return home early to greet his newborn son. As a result, Dad was



Remembering Cliburn

In 1959, I was a senior at the El Dorado, Arkansas, high school.

Van Cliburn had just won the International Tchaikovsky

Competition in Moscow

[*Charming the Soviets*, October 2019]. True to his previously scheduled performances, he played to a full house in El Dorado.

DEPHANIE CATES | LIBERTY HILL | PEDERNALES EC



not on United Airlines Flight 610 when it crashed, killing six REA employees, including George Haggard.

I suspect that Mr. Haggard, as a top REA administrator at the conference, probably had a hand in getting Dad on that earlier flight.

ROD SMITH | NEW BRAUNFELS
PEDERNALES EC

Before He Went Uptown

The lanky, bespectacled, rather shy young man strumming a cheap guitar in my Grandmother "Honey" Elliott's rooming house in Pecos in the early 1950s was known to us only as Uncle Joe's helper. Uncle Joe was an entomologist sent by the Texas ag department to inspect the insect population. The easygoing musician was tasked

with catching and counting bugs.

Every evening after supper, we would gather in the kitchen for an impromptu concert. I was about 8, and this was just a normal grandparent visit for me.

A few years later, when he topped the charts, I realized I had spent the summer with Roy Orbison [*Wink's Spectacle*, September 2019]. Ain't Texas grand?

BRUCE BREEN | MCLEAN
GREENBELT EC

Childhood in the Big Bend

As a young kid who grew up in Coleman, we had many wonderful trips to Alpine, Marfa and the Big Bend—great folks and amazing scenery for sure [*Big Bend's Golden Triangle*, September 2019]. My father was a dentist in Coleman for many years and, in the early 1980s, even opened up a small dental office in Alpine for a couple days a week.

TOMMY WHITE | ALLEN
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

Fit to a Tee

By the Numbers [Currents item about the odds of a hole-in-one, September 2019] had an extra special meaning to me. My 16-year-old grandson Clayton had just gotten a hole-in-one in his Farmington, Arkansas, high school golf tournament.

HELEN MCCAMEY | WILLS POINT
TRINITY VALLEY EC

GET MORE TCP AT

TexasCoopPower.com

Sign up for our e-newsletter for monthly updates, prize drawings and more!

We want to hear from you!

ONLINE: TexasCoopPower.com/share

EMAIL: letters@TexasCoopPower.com

MAIL: Editor, Texas Co-op Power, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701

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



Texas Co-op Power

TEXAS CO-OP POWER VOLUME 76, NUMBER 6 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power's* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com. **SUBSCRIPTION PRICE** is \$4.20 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Texas Co-op Power* (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of *Texas Co-op Power* showing old address and key numbers. **ADVERTISING:** Advertisers interested in buying display ad space in *Texas Co-op Power* and/or in our 30 sister publications in other states, contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251. Advertisements in *Texas Co-op Power* are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication. Product satisfaction and delivery responsibility lie solely with the advertiser.

© Copyright 2019 Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of it is expressly prohibited without written permission. Willie Wirehand © Copyright 2019 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



HAPPENINGS

New Year's Eve Party in Itasca

Three artists with impressive musical bloodlines will provide the entertainment for a **NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY in ITASCA**. Whey Jennings, grandson of Waylon Jennings, was born and raised in Grand Prairie. Thomas Gabriel is the oldest grandchild of Johnny and June Carter Cash. And Cagney Frizzell, named after James Cagney, is Lefty Frizzell's nephew.

Guests are welcome to bring their own food and beverages to the HILCO Civic & Event Center party **DECEMBER 31**.

The event will include a 50-50 raffle and drawings for other items. Tickets start at \$20. For \$40, guests get a meet and greet with the musicians.

HILCO Electric Cooperative built the Central Texas venue last year and hosts about 10 community events per month.

INFO ▶ (214) 212-5798, bit.ly/NYEItasca



WEB EXTRAS
▶ Find more happenings online.

PHILANTHROPY

Strong Libraries

The Tocker Foundation can help make your library better. Grants support new furniture, electronic gaming, Wi-Fi hot spots, digital literacy, computers and even playgrounds. Books, too, of course.

Find more information at tocker.org. All applicants must contact Karin Gerstenhaber before applying for a grant. Application deadline is January 15.

ALMANAC

CO-OPS ARE BORN

The cooperative movement turns 175 years old December 21. On that date in 1844, 28 workers opened a cooperative store in Rochdale, England. Initially, the store carried four key items: butter, sugar, flour and oatmeal.

◀ LOOKING BACK AT ARTS AND FASHION THIS MONTH



IN THE 75 YEARS since *Texas Co-op Power* debuted in July 1944, Texas and Texans have left an indelible mark in film, theater, literature and fashion—from Charlie Dunn to Sissy Spacek.

1940s

1945 Charlie Dunn, bootmaker to the stars, begins his career at Capitol Saddlery in Austin.

1948 *Red River*, a fictional account of the first cattle drive on the Chisholm Trail from Texas to Kansas starring John Wayne, is released.

1948 James A. Michener, who spent the final years of his life in Austin, wins a Pulitzer Prize for his book *Tales of the South Pacific*.

1950s

1952 Dancer and actress Cyd Charisse of Amarillo achieves star status opposite Gene Kelly in *Singin' in the Rain*.

1956 Grace Kelly marries Prince Rainier III of Monaco. Her bridesmaids' dresses are designed by Neiman Marcus of Dallas.



1960s

1960 John Wayne's *The Alamo* is released.

1966 Katherine Anne Porter, who was born in Indian Creek, wins the National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize for fiction for *The Collected Stories*.

1968 Poet and artist Consuelo "Chelo" González Amezcua has a solo exhibition at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio. It's the first time she is recognized for her brand of Texas filigree art.

Elf in Kaufman Has His Own Toy Story

WHEN JERRY REICHERT sees a 2-by-12-by-12-inch board at a construction site, he knows it is likely to end up on the scrap pile. That is fine with him because the scrap fits into his plans for Christmas.

“When I see that piece of lumber,” Reichert says, “I see a toy.” Actually, he sees one of 22 varieties of toys. These comprise the 5,000 wooden playthings made each year by volunteers at Hobby Crafters and distributed to children in North Texas by more than 20 churches and charities.

Reichert and his wife, Wilda, live in Kaufman and have been members of Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative since the early 1970s. Two or three days a week, Reichert, 81, drives more than an hour to the Hobby Crafters workshop in Garland where he holds the unofficial title of head elf. “I took over from the guy who founded it,” Reichert says. “That was 38 years ago.”

Hobby Crafters was founded in 1944 by Dallas physician Arch McNeill, who organized friends and patients to produce toys for underprivileged children. Reichert took over in 1981 at McNeill’s request. “It’s always been strictly volunteer,” Reichert says. “You can look at my checkbook and see for yourself.” Reichert retired in 1997 from his 39-year career selling electronics for Toshiba.

The Hobby Crafters workshop houses 39 machines, including a variety of power saws and sanders, but not every one of the 40 volunteers needs to operate a power tool. “I tell people if they can lay a form on a board and draw a line around it, they’re hired,” Reichert says.

INFO ► hobbycrafters.org



POWER OF OUR PEOPLE recognizes co-op members who improve their community’s quality of life. Nominate someone by emailing people@texascooppower.com.



1970s

1974 Wichita Falls’ Tommy Tune, actor, dancer, singer, choreographer and director, wins the first of his 10 Tony Awards—best featured actor in a musical, for *Seesaw*.

1974 Cadillac Ranch is created outside Amarillo.



1980s

1980 Comer Cottrell Jr. relocates Pro-Line Corporation, maker of Jheri curl hair products, to Dallas. It becomes the largest black-owned firm in the Southwest.

1981 Sissy Spacek of Quitman wins the best actress Academy Award for her portrayal of Loretta Lynn in *Coal Miner’s Daughter*.

1986 Larry McMurtry of Archer City wins the Pulitzer Prize for fiction for *Lonesome Dove*.

1990s

1990 *Friday Night Lights* by H.G. Bissinger is published. It is adapted into a movie of the same name in 2004 and leads to a widely acclaimed TV series that ran 2006–2011.

1996 The first Texas Book Festival takes place, in Austin.

1997 Arlen isn’t on the Texas map, but when the animated TV series *King of the Hill* debuts, the characters make it feel like it could be the next town over.

2000s

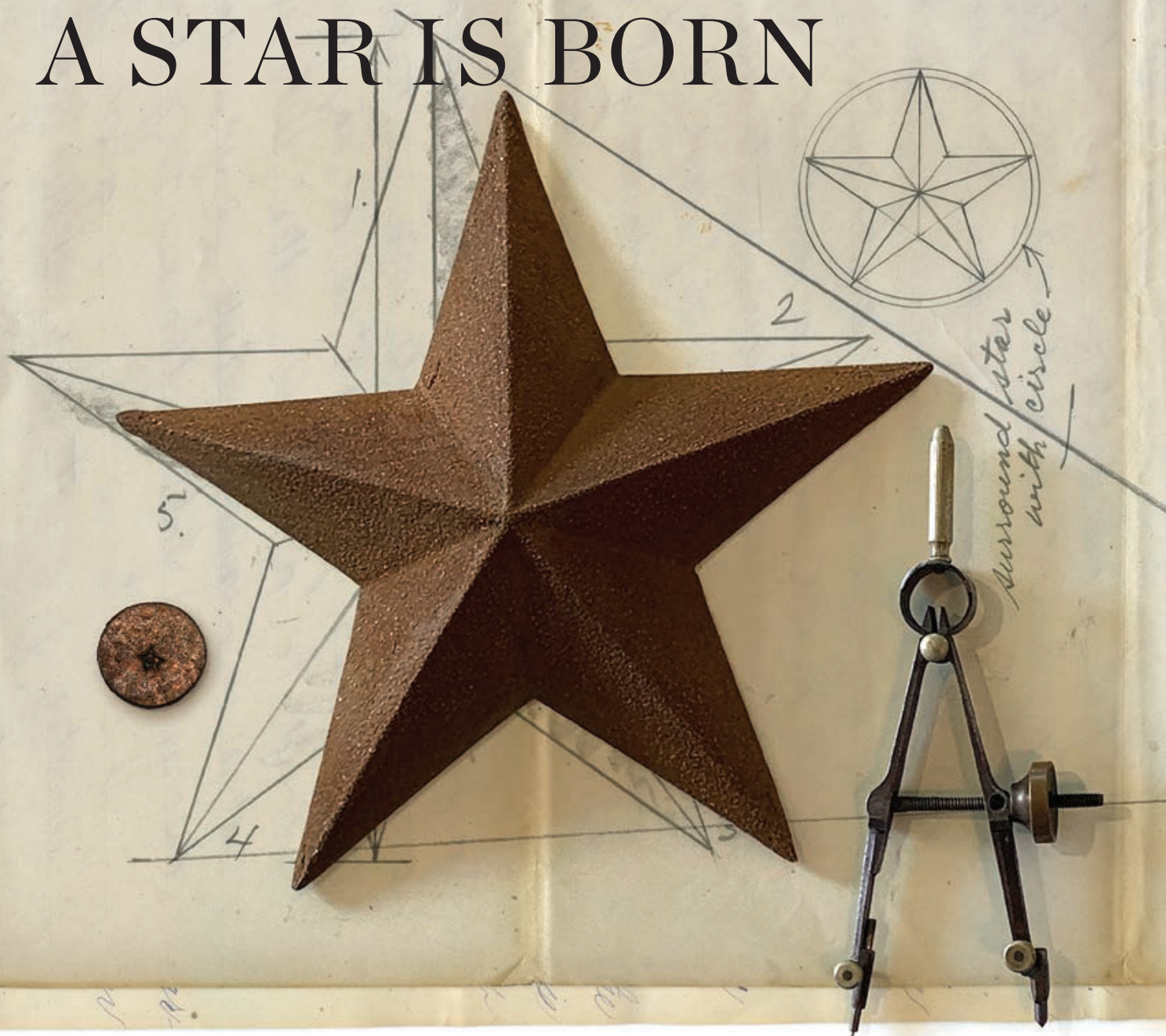


2002 Kendra Scott starts her eponymous jewelry company in a spare bedroom of her Austin home.

2003 Robert A. Caro wins a Pulitzer Prize in biography for *Master of the Senate*, one of four biographical volumes he’s written about Lyndon B. Johnson.

2013 The first episode of HGTV’s *Fixer Upper*, shot in Waco, airs.

A STAR IS BORN



Texas' iconic lone star might trace origins to 1817 Mexican coins

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

A lone star adorns the Texas state flag and the state seal. It appears on the U.S. Mint's Texas commemorative quarter, and it is the state's official gemstone cut. Texas is the Lone Star State because we Texans are proud of our beginnings as an independent republic. According to history and mythology, nothing symbolizes Texas' spirit more eloquently than a lone five-pointed star.

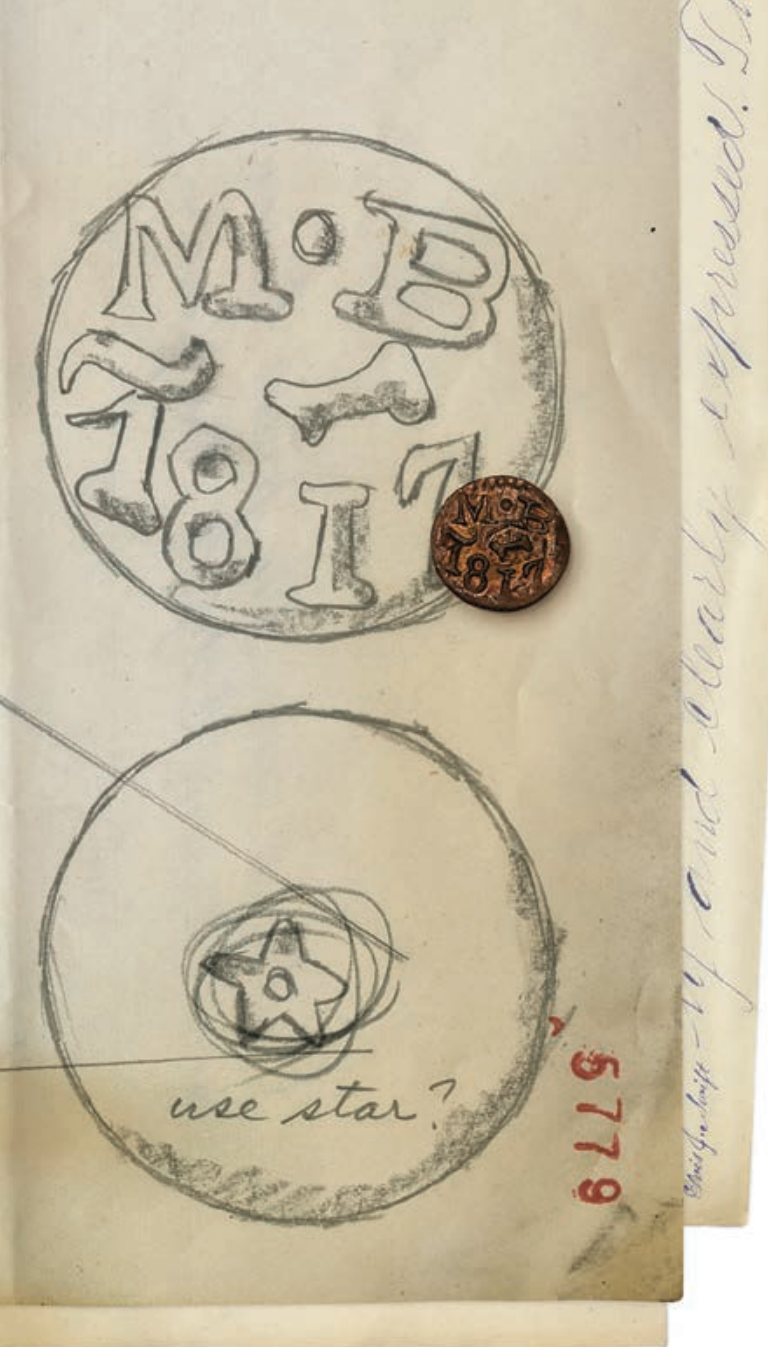
But who first came up with the idea of the lone star, and who was the first person to use the lone star as a symbol of Texas?

A lone star showed up as a symbol of Texas as early as 1819 on the flag of the ill-fated Long Expedition, an early attempt by Anglo Americans, led by James Long, to wrest control of Texas from Spain. That flag, believed to be the first Texas flag to feature a single star, incorporated 13 alternating red and white stripes with a single white star in the upper left corner. Eli Harris, a

frontier Texas printer and a leader of the Long Expedition, believed he invented the symbol and wrote to Texas President Mirabeau Lamar to that effect in 1841. "I established the flag which you now use," he wrote. "I was proud of being the man to establish the star and flag of Texas."

George Childress, author of the Texas Declaration of Independence, adopted a resolution at the general convention of the provisional government in 1836 resolving that "a single star of five points, either of gold or silver, be adopted as the peculiar emblem of this republic." The Texas Congress officially adopted the current lone star flag on January 25, 1839.

According to Houston numismatist James Bevill, the lone star—five-pointed with a dot in the middle—originated with an obscure San Antonio minter in 1817 when the central government in Mexico authorized a series of coins to be minted in San Antonio for local use.



In his 2009 book, *Paper Republic: The Struggle for Money, Credit and Independence in the Republic of Texas*, Bevill wrote that the star on the reverse side of the humble *jola* “brings us back to the very essence of Texas symbolism.” (Jola is Spanish slang for a coin of small denomination.)

Acting Spanish Gov. Manuel Pardo received authorization from Mexico City to strike small copper coins for San Antonio (then known as San Fernando de Bexar) and selected Manuel Barrera, a local merchant and administrator, to produce 8,000 jolas. These were worth $\frac{1}{2}$ real, which would be about a nickel today. The copper jolas measured 15–20 millimeters in diameter with the minter’s initials and “ $\frac{1}{2}$ ” on the obverse, or front of the coin. On the reverse was a five-pointed star with a raised dot in the center.

“It’s hard to say where the influence for a lone star came from,” Bevill says. “These were Spanish coins, after all. We don’t know if the design was done by Barrera or his helper or maybe the *alcalde*. But that was the first time the lone star representing what is today Texas first appeared.”

The Mexican government withdrew Barrera’s authority to mint the coins after about 20 months, possibly because minting coins in 1817 was difficult and the volume required presented a challenge. Barrera would have been using a steel die, or mold, to strike an imprint on the blank copper planchet (metal disc from which coins are made) with a hammer. The authority to mint the coins went to José Antonio de la Garza in 1818.

No records confirm how many jolas Barrera and Garza actually minted, but only nine of the crude coins survived. A collector found five of the nine 1817 jolas in 2004 in a coin shop.

The 1817 jolas preceded the Long Expedition by two years and the Texas revolution by almost two decades. So what did the lone star flag and emblem represent before it represented Texas as an independent republic?

According to Alamo historian and curator Bruce Winders, in vexillology—the study of flags—stars traditionally represented kingdoms or sovereigns until the end of the 18th century, when the star became a symbol of republican ideology and thus a good fit for the fledgling Texas government.

But, Winders noted, before Texas was the Lone Star State, it shared a flag—and a star—with the Mexican province of Coahuila. That flag was green, white and red with two gold stars in the middle of a white stripe.

“Prior to the Texas revolution, the Texas star flew alongside the star of Coahuila because Texas lacked a sufficient population for separate statehood as established by the Constitution of 1824,” Winders wrote in an email. “Officials designated it the Department of Texas and attached it to Coahuila for purposes of governance.”

Bevill says the lone star on the jolas might have carried the same symbolism as the flag. “There were Americans in San Antonio de Bexar who thought of Texas as having a separate identity from Mexico,” he explained.

The idea of a Lone Star State might have been a case of Eli Harris and George Childress thinking alike, but Bevill’s research makes it clear that the 1817 and 1818 coins with the five-pointed star and the distinctive raised dot in the middle created the first imprint of a lone star on Texas, the country and the world.

Clay Coppedge, a member of Bartlett EC, lives near Walburg.



BY EILEEN MATTEI
PHOTOS BY JOHN FAULK



MAKING
TAMALES
IS A HOLIDAY
TRADITION,
THOUGH
EATING
THEM NEVER
ENDS

Once upon a time, tamales appeared only at big family Christmas gatherings and special occasions in the Rio Grande Valley. Besides being tasty treats, aromatic tamales link multiple generations with memories of happy times together.

Tamales were already on the menu in Mexico and Central America 7,000 years ago, prepared for ceremonies and armies on the move. Then and now, making tamales—spiced corn dough holding a filling of meats or vegetables or sweet fruits—is a complicated, labor-intensive process. That often prompts a *tamalada*—a lively gathering of friends and family toiling in the kitchen preparing dozens and dozens of tamales.

Starting in 1949, Celia Champion would gather 20–25 female friends and relatives for a tamalada at her Brownsville home as Christmas approached. The women—*tamaleras* for a day—would make as many as 240 dozen tamales. Wearing multicolored smock aprons and white chef hats, they spread out to workstations around the house to peel garlic, grind spices, stir the *masa* (corn dough) and grind up the slow-cooked pork shoulders. Others would spread the masa on softened corn husks, top it with meat or beans and three raisins, representing the three wise men, before snugging the corn husk around it all and freezing the raw tamales.



Family snapshots show the tamalada tradition that Celia Champion started in 1949. Opposite, from left: Champion's daughter, Chickie Samano; great-granddaughter Karolina Rodero; and granddaughter Celia Galindo with a portrait of the family's matriarch.

MAKING TAMALES IS A COMPLICATED, LABOR-INTENSIVE PROCESS. THAT OFTEN PROMPTS A TAMLADA—A LIVELY GATHERING OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY TOILING IN THE KITCHEN PREPARING DOZENS AND DOZENS OF TAMALES.



Left: A Celia Champion tamalada. Above, from left: Tanya, Dora and Ana de Alba sample savory, fresh tamales prepared by De Alba Bakery using family recipes.

Seventy years later, her daughter, Chickie Samano, and her freckled, curly-haired granddaughter Celia Galindo continue the unbroken tamalada tradition. Two original tamaleras (one 104 years old) attended the six-hour work party in 2018, when the fourth generation included a 12-year-old and Champion's great-granddaughter. "Once you are in, it's till death do we part," Samano says.

"When my grandmother was alive, we would go to the Matamoros *mercado* to get the best leaves, meat and spices," Galindo recalls. "Now my cousin Cookie peels the garlic. My friend comes from Seguin with the meat grinder. I grind the spices in a blender." Nevertheless, she treasures her inherited 200-year-old stone *molcajete*, worn shiny from decades of grinding spices.

Champion's original tamalada required arduous labor to make

nearly 3,000 tamales. That prompted another tradition. "After making the first few dozen, we drink planter's punch, and the mariachis arrive. Then the *gritos* [celebratory shouts] get louder," Samano explains. "Mother was a party animal, always cooking. On her deathbed, she made me promise we would keep the tamalada."

But traditions adapt to the times, so the tamalada now gathers in Galindo's catering business kitchen. "The ladies want to do less and party more, so we make about 50–60 dozen tamales," she says. Still, that's 720 tamales. The women and their families eat the tamales at a Christmas Eve open house, on the religious feast of Candelaria on February 2 and later that month during Charro Days, a celebration of binational cultures and traditions.

The tamaleras also meet on January 6, Three Kings Day or the Epiphany, to eat the wreath-shaped sweet bread called *rosca*



Below: A De Alba Bakery tamale with shredded beef and green tomatillo salsa is wrapped in masa and a banana leaf. Bottom: A vegetable Oaxacan tamale at De Alba includes zucchini, corn, carrots, peas, onion and a bit of mozzarella cheese.



de reyes. The three who find baby Jesus dolls in their slices take charge of organizing the next tamalada.

Luis Reyes became part of a tamale-making team as a boy, joining cousins, parents, aunts and uncles, all under the direction of his grandmother. “Tamale making is an all-day activity. The whole family works together before Christmas,” says Reyes, communications manager for Magic Valley Electric Cooperative in Mercedes.

“Now the family is so big we make tamales twice a year,” he says. “My grandmother loves the American tradition of a family Thanksgiving. She blended that with the Mexican tradition of family tamale making, so we have tamales with the turkey at Thanksgiving.”

Rio Grande Valley parents once warned their unruly children: “Behave or the only thing you will unwrap at Christmas will be a tamale.” Sure, Christmas still finds Hispanic families at feasts anchored by mountains of beef, pork, chicken and bean tamales. But people readily acknowledge that making tamales at home is a time-consuming, fading art, while the convenience of buying ready-made ones is priceless. Hundreds of dozens of the foil-wrapped packets of tamales sell on a daily basis at various commercial tamale-making kitchens, like the one the de Alba family runs in Pharr.

Inside De Alba Bakery, smiles of a happy crowd get wider as the tamale aroma envelops them. They know from experience the subtly spiced masa of the tamales is as soft as butter and surrounds a savory filling inside the wrapper. De Alba makes 14 different types of tamales, from perennial favorites pork and chicken to Oaxacan vegetarian and bean or combos like cheese paired with jalapeno, beans, pork or chicken.

To satisfy a sweet tooth, De Alba Bakery makes a fudgy Mexican chocolate tamale that comes with Kahlúa sauce as well as a not-too-sweet vanilla-butter tamale common in central Mexico and a scrumptious raisin and cinnamon tamale. As a bakery, it also has shelves brimming with fresh Mexican pastries: *empanadas*, *conchas* and *hornitos*.

Ana de Alba’s grandmother made tortillas and tamales in a



DE ALBA BAKERY'S CHICKEN TAMALES

20–30 corn husks

4 cups water

5 pounds whole chicken (skinless and cut up)

1 onion, cut in half

6 cloves garlic

1 tablespoon salt

1–1½ teaspoons powdered cumin, to taste

1–1½ teaspoons ground black pepper, to taste

5 pounds prepared De Alba tamale dough (available at dealbakery.com), divided use

1. Soak corn husks in a container of hot water 1–2 hours to make them pliable. Keep them submerged.
2. Boil 4 cups water in a pot. Add chicken, onion, garlic and salt. Reduce to medium-low heat and simmer 30 minutes or until cooked. Remove chicken from broth, cool, debone and shred or cut up. In a blender, mix the leftover broth with 2 tablespoons of tamale dough (also called masa). Pour broth mixture back into pot and add meat, cumin

and black pepper. Stir and simmer 15–20 minutes to thicken the filling mixture.

3. Drain corn husks and stand them in a container with narrow ends up. Husks have a rough and smooth side. Spread dough on the smooth side, starting in the middle, about 3–4 inches from the bottom—the wider end—and then spread to the bottom and sides. This should be a thin layer of dough, about ⅛ inch thick. Spoon 2–3 tablespoons of meat mixture. After spreading meat mixture onto dough, you can add optional ingredients before rolling it. Optional ingredients include corn, squash, roasted peppers and cheese. Roll husk over from one side to the other and overlap. Now fold top of husk down and squeeze bottom of tamale. Every tamale can be individually tied with string or left-over thin strips of husk. Also, tamales can be tied in bundles of a half-dozen.

4. Position tamales, folded part down, in a steamer basket that is deep enough. If not, just lay on basket carefully with folded points facing down. Position basket in pot with 2–3 inches of water and bring to a boil then cover well with tightfitting lid. Lower heat and steam on medium-low for 1 hour. If necessary, add more water during the cooking process but let the tamales steam an extra 15 minutes to make up for lost heat.

5. Turn off heat and let tamales set, covered, 10 minutes before handling to avoid breaking them.

► Makes 20–30 tamales.

COOK'S TIP For better, fresher flavor, uncooked tamales can be kept frozen and cooked as needed.

small San Benito shop in the 1960s. Her parents expanded that into De Alba Bakery in the 1980s and soon after made tamales available year-round. Today, she is CEO of the bakery, which has two Valley locations, an online store and a staff that has spanned four generations of the de Alba family.

“We’re so blessed to have the border next door to get all the quality, natural ingredients we want—corn leaves, dried chile pods and spices,” de Alba says. The kitchen crew makes the masa from scratch, cooking dried corn for one to two hours before grinding it. Spices and chiles are added to the cooked meats and other fillings, which with the masa are fed into equipment that forms the tamales. Hand wrapping the corn husk around the tamale is the final step.

“Our tamales are stuffed with more meat than the industry average,” de Alba says. “Pleasing our customer comes first, and the bottom line takes care of itself.” In the same vein, De Alba Bakery limits what it ships coast to coast from its website and through Amazon. “Some things won’t ship well without preservatives, and we won’t use them.”

The bakery sells about 50–100 dozen daily, but during the hol-

iday season, it switches to double shifts and brings in additional equipment to meet the demand for thousands of dozens of tamales. Orders for 10–20 dozen are common, although some customers request 100–200 dozen tamales for parties.

“Winter Texans were asking for beef tamales, so we decided to try it,” de Alba says. Dora de Alba, Ana’s mother, who is in charge of tamale quality control and recipe innovation, perfected the beef brisket tamale.

“Mom knew that Mexican women love cooking. She was the first one to provide made-from-scratch masa for sale. That made it simple for women to take prepared masa home and make tamales with their kids without slaving all day,” Ana de Alba says. Making it even easier, De Alba Bakery offers recipes for tamales and other treats in their online blog and stocks cumin, oregano, anise and chiles in the bakery.

“Everybody has become accustomed to eating fresh tamales for lunch and dinner all year long,” she adds. “Tamales are faster than hamburgers and taste better, too.”

Eileen Mattei, a Nueces EC member, is a Texas master naturalist in Harlingen.

BLACK FRIDAY SAVINGS

SALE EXTENDED

24

SALE

24% OFF
YOUR WINDOW
PROJECT*

24 MONTHS
0 MONEY DOWN
PAYMENTS
INTEREST

Please ask about our other amazing finance options.
Minimum purchase required.*



SALE ENDS 12/31. CALL FOR A FREE IN-HOME DESIGN CONSULTATION

Renewal
by Andersen®
WINDOW REPLACEMENT an Andersen Company



CALL (469) 606-5229
rbaofdfw.com

Get An **ADDITIONAL DISCOUNT**
— When You Replace 10+ Windows —

*Offer not available in all areas and ends 12/31/19 and appointment must occur within 7 days of the initial contact. Discount applies to minimum required purchase. \$0 payments and deferred interest for 24 months available to well qualified buyers on approved credit only. Financing is provided by federally insured, federal and state chartered financial institutions without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or familial status. Any finance terms advertised are estimates only, and all financing is provided by third-party lenders unaffiliated with Renewal by Andersen retailers, under terms and conditions arranged directly between the customer and such lender, all subject to credit requirements. "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are marks of Andersen Corporation. ©2019 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved.

2019 Texas Capitol Ornament



ORDER TODAY!

Call 888-678-5556 or shop online at www.TexasCapitolGiftShop.com



NORTH TEXAS AUDIENCE
Circulation 527,000 • Readership 1,212,100

If North Texas Is Your Market, We've Got You Covered.

Target customers close to home with the North Texas advertising section of *Texas Co-op Power*. Be part of a statewide magazine—without the statewide cost. Call or email today.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Call: Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251 • Email: advertising@TexasCoopPower.com

CO-OP NEWS IN YOUR INBOX SIGN UP TODAY

TCP E-newsletter

Get news from your co-op, plus links to our best content delivered to your inbox each month! Feature stories, recipe and photo contest winners—get it all in the e-newsletter!



SIGN UP TODAY AT
TexasCoopPower.com



3DAYBLINDS®
YOU'LL LOVE THE TREATMENT

CUSTOM BLINDS, SHADES,
SHUTTERS & DRAPERY

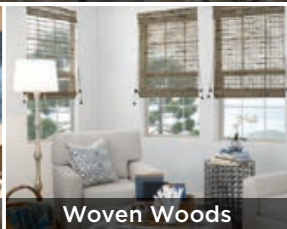


A Holiday Sale Your Windows Will Love!

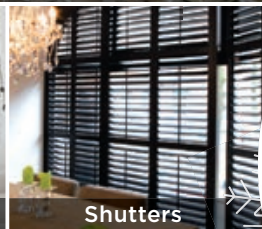
Ask About The Benefits Of Layering With Drapery



Cellular Shades



Woven Woods



Shutters

HURRY!
Limited Time Offer!

BUY 1 GET 1
50%^{*}
OFF

on Custom Blinds,
Shades & Drapery

Call To Schedule Your **FREE**
In-Home Design Consultation

1-844-327-2748

or visit www.3DayOffer231.com



WE DESIGN, WE MEASURE, WE INSTALL, YOU RELAX!®

*Offer valid on 3 Day Blinds brand products only, excluding shutters and special orders. Buy 1 qualifying window covering and receive the 2nd qualifying window covering of equal or lesser value at 50% off! Offer excludes installation, sales tax, shipping and handling. Not valid on previous purchases or with any other offer or discount. Offer Code BGXB. Expires 2/29/20. 3 Day Blinds LLC has the following licenses: AZ ROC 321056, CA #1005986, CT HIC.0644950, NJ #13VH09390200, OR #209181, PA #PA107656, WA #3DAYBDB842KS, Nassau County, NY Home Improvement License H01073101, Rockland County, NY #H-12401-34-00-00. © 2019 3 Day Blinds LLC.



Best Made Plans



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER KATHI CALVERT

IT SEEMS LIKE JUST YESTERDAY WE CELEBRATED our 80th annual meeting; now here we are in the middle of the holiday season. And with the beginning of a new year just around the corner, I find myself reflecting on some of the significant events that occurred during 2019. At the annual meeting, I shared with our attendees that no matter how much we try to prepare, it always seems like we are altering or adapting those plans due to unforeseen external factors.

This past spring, the devastating storms brought with them our biggest challenge of the year. During the week of April 13th through April 20th, we had horrific tornados, followed a few days later by storms with severe high winds. That one week in April accounted for 27% of our consumer outage hours over a five-year period.

To put it in perspective, if all weeks were equal in terms of outages, one week in five years should account for only 0.4% of consumer outage hours. That said, you can see how the restoration of damaged poles, lines and equipment affected not only our work strategies but also our budget. We were faced with stumbling blocks and delays. But we adapted. We adjusted. We altered our plans. And we steadfastly refused to let those unexpected forces derail our goal—to provide reliable and affordable service while ensuring the safety of our members and employees.

Going forward, we seek to accomplish the objectives that were put on hold in 2019, which include:

- ▶ Installing a solar project to provide power generation diversity at a lower cost.
- ▶ Transferring load to the Electric Reliability Council of Texas for access to long-term affordable rates.
- ▶ Building a new office facility for the safety and security of our employees.

Also, we are currently preparing a new four-year work plan and mapping out our annual budget, which will introduce additional goals.

To quote Tom Hanks in *A League of Their Own*, “It’s supposed to be hard. If it were easy, everyone would do it.” So we continue on, full steam ahead, ready to face new obstacles as we strive to provide the best service possible.

As this year comes to an end, we hope you were able to accomplish all of your goals for 2019. But if you fared like us and faced setbacks, we hope you have the strength and perseverance to keep going. Difficulties help us grow, allowing us to tackle new, more significant challenges.

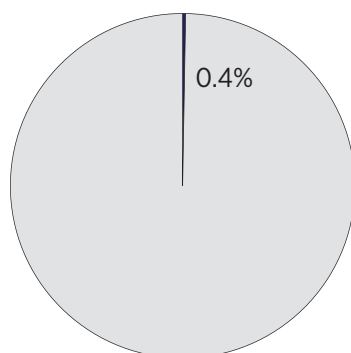
Our ongoing commitment is to give our member-owners the very best. Regardless of obstacles or outside influences, we are here to serve you.

We wish all of you a very Merry Christmas!

Consumer Outage Hours

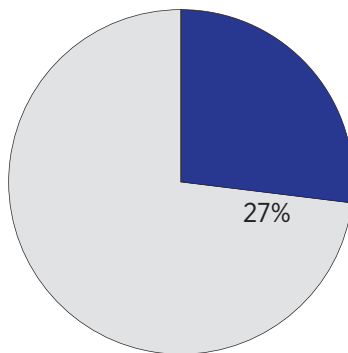
5-Years 2014-2019

Average Week



Average Week Consumer Outage Hours as a Percentage of Total.

April 13 - 20, 2019



Week of 2019 Storms April 13th - April 20th Consumer Outage Hours as a Percentage of Total



CAPITAL CREDITS: A POWERFUL RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT

TYPES OF UTILITIES:



INVESTOR-OWNED
Privately owned by
shareholders/
investors
Operate for a profit



**MUNICIPAL
SYSTEMS**
Owned by cities,
counties, or states
Not-for-profit



COOPERATIVE
Owned by the people
they serve
Not-for-profit

When you sign up for service with Houston County Electric Cooperative, you become a **COOPERATIVE member**.

YOUR MONTHLY BILL

Base Charge: Covers your share of the cost to build and maintain the electric system that makes power available at your location. Every truck, transformer, wire, pole, and meter costs money. This equipment - and the people to operate it - are needed to safely deliver reliable electricity to your meter, regardless of how much electricity you use.

Power Cost Adjustment (PCA): This line item reflects fluctuations in our wholesale power costs. Market costs and generation performance vary monthly. The PCA provides a mechanism to pass along actual wholesale power costs.

Energy Charge: This line item depicts our wholesale cost of power. This includes the cost of generation facilities producing electricity.

Delivery Charge: This line item covers the cost of delivering electricity to your meter. It includes the costs associated with maintaining our distribution system. Right-of-way trimming, line inspection, and outage restoration are some of the maintenance activities required to safely deliver reliable service.



WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

1

When you become a member, Houston County EC maintains record of your billing history.

2

After the end of every year, HCEC Directors will assess the finances to determine margins.

3

If financial conditions allow, the Board of Directors will return margins in the form of capital credits to members with a bill credit or check.

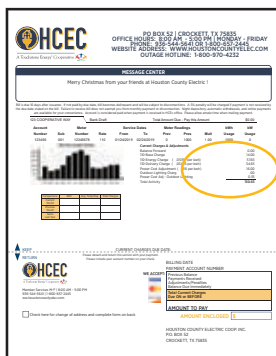
4

The allocation of margins to members is based on your billing history relative to our total billing during the year(s) that are being retired.

5

If you have an active account, you will receive a bill credit on your December statement. If your account is inactive, make sure to update your mailing address to receive the capital credit check.

HOW DO I RECEIVE MY CAPITAL CREDITS?



OR

HCEC DATE 12/2019

pay to the order of HCEC Member \$Amount

Amount Here

for capital credit refund Houston County Electric Cooperative

CREDIT ON BILL:

Members with an active account that purchased electricity during the years retired by the Board of Directors.

CHECKS ISSUED:

Inactive, former members who purchased electricity during the years retired by the Board of Directors.

\$1.2 million

Has been approved for retirement in 2019 for the remainder of 1985 and a portion of 2018 and have been assigned to qualifying accounts.

Search our list of unclaimed capital credits at houstoncountyelec.com/capital-credits to see if anyone you know is owed money from Houston County Electric Cooperative!





Memories and Milestones

HCEC annual meeting celebrates eight decades

FROM 2-DAY-OLD INFANTS TO NONAGENARIANS, MEMBERS OF ALL ages came together October 24th to celebrate 80 years of growth and opportunity with Houston County Electric Cooperative. Old and new friends came to enjoy a dinner of fried catfish, hush puppies and french fries while reminiscing about past annual meetings.

Kenny Hayes, a member from Weches, recalled when the meeting was still held under the truck shed at the current office building on Loop 304. Lynne Erickson, Human Resources Director for HCEC, remembered the first meeting at the Crockett Civic Center.

"There were about 40 members present," Erickson said.

That's quite a difference from the 428 members and their guests who attended this year's annual meeting. And, as Erickson also observed, "Over the years, we've arranged these chairs every way known to man to try and make it comfortable for everyone."

The auditorium of the Crockett Civic Center was packed with members who listened intently as General Manager Kathi Calvert delivered her message. She drew comparisons between the goals of today's cooperative and that of the founding members who formed HCEC 80 years ago—to provide affordable and reliable service to the members.

Calvert also addressed the need for adaptability when things don't go as planned and the determination to forge ahead no



matter the circumstances. Referring to the devastating storms that wreaked such havoc last April, Calvert noted that the damage accounted for 27% of the past five years of outage hours. She also commended the employees for their commitment to staying true to HCEC's original objective of restoring and maintaining reliable power, even in the most challenging of circumstances.

Angela Cross, director for Kalin's Center, a nonprofit children's advocacy center, accepted a check from HCEC and CoBank's Sharing Success program. As part of HCEC's commitment to the communities it serves, we partner with CoBank, which generously matches our donations to charities in our service territory. This year's recipient, Kalin's Center, assists children who have suffered sexual, emotional and physical abuse. Kalin's Center provides a safe environment for abused children to tell their stories and offers services to abuse survivors and their nonoffending family members in Trinity and Houston counties.

Trent Ashby, state Rep. for District 57, spoke briefly about

his support for our membership and our cooperative. Having grown up on a dairy farm in Rusk County, Ashby is familiar with electric cooperatives, and he expressed his pride in being able to call the members of Houston County EC his friends. Ashby also promised to support HCEC in any capacity that he can while representing us in Austin.

The meeting ended, as always, on a fun note. Fabulous door prizes, donated by our very generous vendors and friends, were distributed to our members. Dan Courmier, president of the HCEC Board of Directors, and Kay Reed, Anderson County district member, drew tickets and called out the names of winners, while the remaining directors passed out prizes to the lucky recipients.

We wish to thank everyone who joined us to celebrate this milestone meeting, and we look forward to serving our members for the next 80 years. Even though plans will evolve, one thing will always remain the same—our commitment to providing safe and reliable electric service to our member-owners.

Happy Holidays

"The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love and of generosity and of goodness. It illuminates the picture window of the soul, and we look out upon the world's busy life and become more interested in people than in things."

—Thomas S. Monson,
author and clergyman

HOUSTON COUNTY EC OFFICE CLOSURES

December 13, at noon
December 24, Christmas Eve
December 25, Christmas Day
January 1, New Year's Day

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



BHOFACK2 | ISTOCK.COM

Spicy Mixed Nuts

1 egg white
1 tablespoon water
½ cup sugar
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1¼ teaspoons ground cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon cinnamon
8 ounces pecan halves
4 ounces salted cashews
4 ounces roasted almonds

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees.
2. Whisk together the egg white, water, sugar, salt and spices in a large mixing bowl. Add the nuts and use a rubber spatula to mix well.
3. Pour the nut mixture onto a rimmed baking sheet. Bake 40 minutes, stirring occasionally with a metal spatula. Reduce the heat to 200 degrees and bake another 30 minutes.
4. Remove the nuts from the oven; use a fork to loosen them from the baking sheet and cool completely. Store in a metal container with a tightfitting lid; the nuts will last up to 2 months.

► Makes about 5 cups.

COOK'S TIP The recipe can be doubled. Just be sure to divide the larger quantity between two baking sheets—the nuts will crisp up better if they roast in a single layer.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

24 Days of Holiday Advice

In the tradition of an Advent calendar, here are 24 tidbits to promote safety, efficiency and overall well-being during the hectic holiday season.



Give friends and family the Best of Texas this holiday season.



Texas Co-op Power presents a collection of best-loved recipes from two of our most popular cookbooks ever, the *Typically Texas Cookbook* and *The Second Typically Texas Cookbook*.

This cookbook is filled with more than 700 recipes, including more than 300 dessert recipes.

Order online at TexasCoopPower.com and put *The Best of Typically Texas Cookbook* in your kitchen for only \$29.95 (price includes tax, shipping and handling).

To order by mail, send a check or money order payable to TEC for \$29.95 to Best of Typically Texas Cookbook, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701.

From the publishers of *Texas Co-op Power*

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

\$29.95

Bring Texas nature home for the holidays.

Texas Co-op Power presents an illustrated *Seashells of Texas* poster by artist Aletha St. Romain, 20x16 inches, suitable for framing.

Order online at TexasCoopPower.com for only \$20 (price includes tax, shipping and handling).

Bonus offer: Get 2 posters shipped to the same address for just \$30.



**\$20
or 2 for
\$30**

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

From the publishers of **TexasCoopPower**

“To you, it’s the **perfect lift chair**.
To me, it’s the **best sleep chair** I’ve ever had.”

— J. Fitzgerald, VA



You can’t always lie down in bed and sleep. Heartburn, cardiac problems, hip or back aches – and dozens of other ailments and worries. Those are the nights you’d give anything for a comfortable chair to sleep in: one that reclines to exactly the right degree, raises your feet and legs just where you want them, supports your head and shoulders properly, and operates at the touch of a button.

Our **Perfect Sleep Chair®** does all that and more. More than a chair or recliner, it’s designed to provide total comfort. **Choose your preferred heat and massage settings, for hours of soothing relaxation.** Reading or watching TV? Our chair’s recline technology allows you to pause the chair in an infinite number of settings. And best of all, it features a powerful lift mechanism that tilts the entire chair forward, making it easy to stand. You’ll

love the other benefits, too. It helps with correct spinal alignment and promotes back pressure relief, to prevent back and muscle pain. The overstuffed, oversized biscuit style back and unique seat design will cradle you in comfort. Generously filled, wide armrests provide enhanced arm support when sitting or reclining. **It even has a battery backup in case of a power outage.**

White glove delivery included in shipping charge. Professionals will deliver the chair to the exact spot in your home where you want it, unpack it, inspect it, test it, position it, and even carry the packaging away! You get your choice of stain and water repellent synthetic DuraLux with the classic leather look or plush microfiber in a variety of colors to fit any decor. **Call now!**

The Perfect Sleep Chair®

1-888-750-7451

Please mention code 109058 when ordering.



REMOTE-CONTROLLED
EASILY SHIFTS FROM FLAT TO
A STAND-ASSIST POSITION



Long Lasting DuraLux



DuraLux II Microfiber



Because each Perfect Sleep Chair is a custom-made bedding product, we can only accept returns on chairs that are damaged or defective.

© 2019 firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc.

The Southwestern Tempo

A folklorist's legacy lingers

EXCERPT BY J. FRANK DOBIE

THE TEMPO OF THE SOUTHWEST IS SEEN in the rhythms of its folklore, most of which deals with country things and ways; with nature and animals and people. It is from settled ways of life that folklore of charm and imagination comes. Ghosts do not haunt one-night camps.

The folklore of this region has not been woven by people of worldly success. The only mines that amount to anything in folklore are lost forever. The only money that figures in it is buried deeper than oil drillers ever bored. The hunters and tellers of lost mines are the hopefuls, with time to spare. Southwestern tales of the much persecuted coyote have not come from the owners of sheep, but from unpropertied Indians and Mexicans. These people have lingered with the grass, the rocks, the thorned shrubs and the chirping crickets. They have had time to fancy and imagine and have felt a kinship for their fellow creatures of the earth.

If you listen to talk by men of the range tradition you will hear more about "moseying around" than about moving "like a bat out of hell." The good storyteller likes to linger in the shade, and his best stories have a lingering quality.

In every motion picture I have ever seen showing a herd of cattle they are kept moving at such a rate that no spectator can read their brands. Sitting through one of these pictures, a person who didn't know better would think that a trail herd of cattle bound for Montana from South Texas ran up the trail all day and stampeded sky-westward and crooked-eastward every night.

Actually, they walked maybe 10 miles a day, grazing a considerable part of the time and taking a long time to water out. Slow motion with stock is natural to stock people. The songs sung around herds on their bedgrounds were in tempo as slow and monotonous and doleful as camp meeting tunes designed to draw sinners into the mourners' bench.

All cowboy songs sung to cattle were long and lonesome in tune. A man loping or trotting could not keep the tune. It was timed to a slow walk and was meant to quieten all hearers.

Old-time ranchers went by sun time, not railroad time; they went by what country Mexicanos call *el tiempo de Dios*—God's time, not *el tiempo oficial*.

Men have invented an atomic bomber, but no man can ever absorb its speed into his own body. Human energy pulses with desire to rise higher and travel faster; hence the thirst for strong drink and swift movement; but the tempo of all earthborn is the tempo of the earth itself. A raging hurricane may lash a sliver of it, a volcano may spew up some inside matter, but the tempo of the earth sustaining its bipedal nurslings is of growing grass, ripening corn and drifting leaves.

We behold expanses of glaring electric lights. We become fascinated and terrorized by torrents of headlights rushing along speedways in the night, but the light that burns under the stars with the tempo of mother earth is that of a lone campfire.

From *The Essential J. Frank Dobie* (October 2019, Texas A&M University Press). Dobie wrote this essay in 1964.



KEVIN HOWDESHELL | BRAVE UNION

Lazarus the Bug

The wonders of ironclad beetles seem to include an ability to return from the dead

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

MY HEART SANK. A TINY FORM LAY motionless at the watery bottom of a metal bucket I kept under our air conditioner's drain line. I plunged my hand into the water and scooped up the lifeless thing.

"Oh, you poor baby," I murmured, right away recognizing that I'd brought up a Texas ironclad beetle. "I'm so sorry." Gently, I laid the insect on a nearby rock. I nudged the beetle's body with my index finger. No response. Not even a twitch from a mangled leg. Darn, the bucket had claimed yet another casualty. Or had it?

This amazing species ranks high among my beetle favorites. An inch or so long, the Texas ironclad beetle (*Zopherus nodulosus haldemani*) can be found across Central and East Texas and into northeastern Mexico. It poses no threat to you or your garden. The markings on its top side remind me of an inkblot personality test. After comparing the spots of numerous ironclads, I would venture to say that, like snowflakes, no two are exactly the same.

Surprisingly, an ironclad's striking coloration actually blends in well with tree bark, where biologists believe the beetle begins its life cycle as an egg laid in a crevice. I found little information about the ironclad's larval and pupal stages. Adults feed on lichens and fungi that grow on oak, elm and pecan bark.

Though I've never tested this characteristic (nor will I ever), the ironclad's external shell is extremely hard, hence its name. Collectors who pin insects for display know this firsthand. Ask some, and they'll explain how they have to drill a small hole into a dead ironclad's wing

before they can insert a pin. (Yes, beetles have wings, and many can fly. But not ironclads—their wings are fused shut.)

I was impressed when I read how the ironclad's nearly indestructible shell and flexible six legs inspired engineers with BAE Systems to build a prototype suspension for combat vehicles. That system, developed in 2016, uses a bendable titanium alloy. After suffering an explosion, the alloy can pop back into shape.

This hardy insect can deploy another survival tactic. Many's the time I've picked up an ironclad beetle, only to have it curl up its black legs and play dead. Its black pair of clubbed antennae even disappear by tucking into little recesses on its head, thus protecting those sensitive appendages. Once, I startled an ironclad, and it immediately froze into a dead position with its legs crisscrossed. Once the beetle feels safe, it unfolds its legs and continues on its way. The death-feigning ability, performed by many organisms when threatened, is called *thanatosis*.

When I returned to check on my waterlogged beetle, I found a living ironclad beetle, ambling around the bucket. I searched for the deceased ironclad but could not find a carcass. This led me to believe that my beetle had avoided a watery demise. I rejoiced and relocated Lazarus, as I christened him, to a shrub in our backyard. Had my beetle really come back to life after drowning?

That happened in October 2015. Now fast forward to August 2018, when I spotted a lifeless ironclad beetle at the bottom of an orange bucket that I now keep under



the same AC drain line. The beetle had likely been submerged all night. With sadness, I retrieved it and laid it on a plaid pillowcase in our garage. With its legs folded up and its antennae tucked out of sight—and its normally bright white hue turned blackish gray—my friend certainly looked dead. Feeling hopeful, I was determined to document what I observed.

Gradually, the beetle's bright white color returned. Its legs opened, and its antennae reappeared. While I snapped photos, Lazarus 2, beautifully patterned and vibrantly alive, clambered around. Hallelujah!

I snooped around for scientific studies that would explain my beetle's miraculous recovery. I couldn't find any. Based on related studies, possible explanations include: Some beetles can either slow down their

metabolism while immersed or they can store oxygen beneath their wings. As for the shell's bluish black color in "death" and return to normalcy when revived, I'm stumped.

A week after Lazarus 2, I found a third ironclad at the bottom of a bucket. This time, I took a photo to prove I'd found a drowned beetle at the bottom of a water-filled bucket. Then I fished it out. Like the two others before, its bright white hue had turned blackish. Poor thing.

This one's normal color returned more quickly. Still, the beetle seemed door-knob dead—until I nudged one leg, and it moved. With my smartphone, I shot a brief video of the beetle slowly reviving. "He's alive!" I exclaimed off camera. Miracle or not, I rejoiced yet again.

Blanco writer **Sheryl Smith-Rodgers** plans to add a screened cover to the bucket.



SEASON'S GREETINGS SMOKED LOW & SLOW.



This holiday season, send the
authentic Taste of Texas.
Order online and ship nationwide
in time for Christmas at

SOUTHSIDEMARKET.COM

MARKETPLACE

BUY • SELL • TRADE • ACROSS TOWN • ACROSS TEXAS

ARK-LA-TEX
SHOP BUILDERS
"WE GOTCHA COVERED"
SHOPS • BARN • CABINS • WWW.SHOPSBUILT.COM
830-730-0515
8670 IH 35 N NEW BRAUNFELS, TX




BUILDINGS OF ALL SIZES
Shops • Garages • Barns • Equipment Sheds • Barndominiums
SHOPS STARTING AT \$10,300

Price includes all labor and materials with 4" steel reinforced concrete slab with moisture barrier, one 10'x10' heavy duty roll up door, one 3 foot steel entry door, concrete aprons, electric slab *(Dirt may be extra)

SPRAY FOAM INSULATION
Open and Closed Cell
Houses | Metal Buildings | Shops
254-681-1498 • Bart.Koerth@gmail.com

Low Cost Pole Barns
26' x 48' x 10'
3 Sides Enclosed
\$7,995
Hay/Horse Barns, Shops, Decks, Concrete Work and Pad Sites
Call Ron: 512-367-0428



POLE, HORSE, HAY BARN • ALL SIZES
CALL ANDY • 512-563-5237

GET RESULTS! ADVERTISE IN THE
MARKETPLACE
ELAINE SPROULL (512) 486-6251
advertising@TexasCoopPower.com

CUSTOM METAL BUILDINGS
Agricultural - Commercial - Residential



GCC
GOLDEN CRESCENT
CONSTRUCTION
361-573-5775

Quality & Service since 1998
www.gccbuildings.com

RHINO
STEEL BUILDING SYSTEMS
25 Year Warranty • Easy Bolt-Together Design
Engineered Stamp Blueprints



Farm • Industrial • Commercial
RHINO.BUILDERS/TX 940-304-8068
INFO@RHINOBLDG.COM

Bank C.D.'s Due?
CALL US NOW
1-800-359-4940 TEXAS TOLL-FREE
www.mattsonfinancialservices.com
BLAKE MATTSON, CFP™
Signal Securities, Inc., 5400 Bosque, 4th Floor, Waco, TX 76710
Serving Customers All Over Texas

All C.D.'s are insured to \$250,000 per institution by the F.D.I.C. All C.D.'s are subject to availability. Securities offered thru Signal Securities, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC 700 Throckmorton, Ft. Worth, TX 76102. (817) 877-4256.

WE PAY TOP PRICES FOR COLLECTIBLES
Coins • Banknotes • Gold & Silver Jewelry & Scrap
Vintage Costume Jewelry • Watches • Stamps
Tokens • Historical Documents • Other Collectibles
TEXAS BUYERS GROUP • FREDERICKSBURG, TX
All transactions private, confidential & secure.
830-997-6339 • rzcoins@twc.com

PERMA-ROOF
from Southern Builders
Steel Mobile Home Roofing
High energy bill? Roof rumble? Leaks?
MOBILE HOME ROOF OVER SYSTEMS
Since 1983
Contact us at **800.633.8969**
or **roofover.com**

Tanks Alot
Tanks to Fit Your Needs and Don't Empty Your Wallet
Rainwater Harvesting
Water Storage Tanks
Fire Protection Tanks
PIONEER
WATER TANKS
830-331-7330 | tanksalottx.com

WD METAL BUILDINGS
Erected Buildings on Concrete Slabs
800-221-1054 8 a.m.-5 p.m. | wdmb.com



What Kind of Hearing Aids Do Doctors Use?

The same ones they recommend to their patients!

Advanced Digital Hearing Aid Technology

BUY 1
GET 1

FREE

Reg: ~~\$399.98~~

Only \$199⁹⁹

Each When You Buy a Pair – **LIMITED TIME ONLY!**

Doctors love MDHearingAids® for the same reasons patients do. These FDA-registered, medical-grade hearing aids have the same high-tech features found in more expensive hearing aids at a fraction of the cost.

"MDHearingAids are better than expensive clinic hearing aids, which cost thousands more," says retired physician Dr. Robert A.

"I have had five pairs of expensive hearing aids and MDHearingAids are just as good," adds retired neurosurgeon Dr. Brian L.

Doctors Are Tired of Watching Their Patients Waste Money on Over-Priced Clinic Hearing Aids
MDHearingAids are the best value on the market, says Dr. Clarke:

"I'm a physician, and I know how much people spend on health care. They should get the best value, and this product is just as effective (if not more) than traditional overly-priced hearing aids. I will be recommending MDHearingAids to my hearing-impaired patients."

Nearly invisible!



SAVE 90%
COMPARED TO
TRADITIONAL
HEARING AIDS

CRISP, CLEAR SOUND	STATE-OF-THE-ART FEATURES	NO AUDIOLOGIST NEEDED
MDHearingAids were created by a board-certified otolaryngologist frustrated that patients couldn't afford the high price of hearing aids. So, he did the only logical thing...he created a low-cost, feature-packed hearing aid that costs 90% less than a comparable hearing aid.	Behind-the-ear hearing aid with thin tubing for a nearly invisible profile. 3 programs for customized listening environments. Amplifies the critical frequencies of the human voice, without amplifying background sounds, so you can enjoy crisp, clear conversations.	Save time and money, cancel those audiologist appointments! Advanced hearing aid technology lets you easily program and adjust your MDHearingAid at home. Set-up is fast and easy, too, going from box to ear in just five minutes.

**Try it RISK FREE
for 45 Days**

Try MDHearingAids risk-free with a 100% money-back guarantee for 45 days. Just call toll-free or visit the website shown below. Call now and get **free shipping** plus a **free, one-year supply of batteries**.

Call Toll-Free 1-800-956-8539



Visit www.MDBOGO.com
Free 1-Year Supply of Batteries with Offer Code JT78

MDHearingAid®
The Doctor's Choice for Affordable Hearing Aids

Nixon's Attack on Co-ops

President tried to block co-op loan program

BY ELLEN STADER

CO-OP LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN EASY. DURING the early decades of rural electrification, cooperatives in America had to defend themselves from special interests, with private electric companies and politicians often leading the charge.

Possibly the highest-profile attack on co-ops began just after Christmas in 1972. The Nixon administration directed the U.S. Department of Agriculture to announce that, effective January 1, 1973, it would deny funds already authorized by Congress for the Rural Electrification Administration's upcoming fiscal year and then terminate the agency's direct loan program. For 36 years, this program had enabled the REA to offer loans to co-ops at 2% interest.

President Richard M. Nixon's plan was to replace the federally funded REA loans with commercially backed loans that would be offered at 5% interest. This move, designed to cut more than \$200 million in federal spending, would gut the rural co-op system by impounding the federal funds already allocated to hundreds of electric and telephone co-ops. In addition to taking away the loans that had been approved, this action would more than double the interest rates others would have to pay on new loans.

Robert D. Partridge, then-general manager of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, said the action would "wipe out many of the more than 1,000 rural electric systems and ... threaten the welfare of millions of consumers who depend on them." Many co-ops would no longer be able to offer service to people in outlying areas. That same winter, co-op systems across the



President Nixon approves a new REA direct loan program as, from left, William Erwin, assistant secretary of agriculture; David Hamil, REA administrator; and Earl Butz, secretary of agriculture, look on.

country were suffering severe damage from ice storms, but they were left without access to the emergency funding customarily offered by the REA.

Co-ops didn't take the new policy lying down. On January 23, three weeks after the USDA's announcement, 1,400 electric co-op representatives from the 46 states across the country with electric cooperatives (including 135 Texans) converged on Washington, D.C. Participants traveled to the Rural Electric Rally to persuade their representatives in Congress to restore the REA direct loan program.

Lawmakers rode to co-ops' rescue with legislation that would allow the REA to extend loans in the full amount authorized each year. They also estab-

lished the Rural Electrification and Telephone Revolving Fund that allowed for a standard interest rate of 5%, plus a special interest rate of 2% for those eligible. The Senate and House bills both passed quickly, and the fate of co-ops hung on Nixon's pen.

Finally, on the REA's 38th birthday—May 11, 1973, exactly 19 weeks after first issuing the order that would have crippled the agency out of his "concern for the nation's economy"—Nixon signed the new legislation implementing a modified direct loan program for the REA. Ironically, this new arrangement resulted in greater co-op financing than ever.

More than \$1.2 billion was made available to rural electric and telephone co-ops in 1973, the highest amount of loans granted in the program's history. The REA administrator's report from that year notes, "Fiscal 1973 was a remarkable year in the history of the Rural Electrification Administration."

Ellen Stader is a writer in Austin.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER holiday GIFT GUIDE

In the magazine and on TexasCoopPower.com,
we make it easy to shop for friends and family.



It's Time To Bake Pecan Treats for the Holidays!

Berdoll's has been family-owned for 40 years. We provide delicious chocolate pecans, honey glazed pecans, pecan pies and more! Let us ship for you or stop by our retail store for gifts and take your picture with our squirrel, Ms. Pearl.

512-321-6157
berdoll.com



Give the Gift of Authentic Texas BBQ

No one knows BBQ like the oldest joint in Texas. Surprise the bbq-lover in your family with any of our savory, hand-made barbeque items, shipped nationwide.

512-285-6830
southsidemarket.com



Texas Red Grapefruit and Avocados

Always a gift in good taste! Orchard-fresh grapefruit and other Texas products are all hand-selected, carefully packed and shipped to be delivered just in time for the holidays.

1-800-580-1900
www.crockettfarms.com



2020 Texas Sunrise Calendar

Large 20-by-15 inch calendar with 12 watercolors of Texas sunrises by Texas State Artist George Boutwell. \$12.50 plus sales tax and \$3.50 shipping. Quantity prices on website.

1-800-243-4316
gboutwell.com



Fresh "New Crop" Pecans

New crop pecans, chocolate-covered nuts, bakers boxes, specialty gift baskets, fudge, pecan pies. Our very own specialty roasted and salted pecans & gifts galore!

325-356-3616
www.sorrellsfarms.com

Prevent Bruises



Stop Arm Bruises and Protect Thin Skin

Soft leather protective sleeves contour to hands and arms. Comfortable and very effective at preventing injuries. Useful in many situations, and provides adjustable airflow. See website for all the benefits!

651-492-4830
www.armchaps.com

Cookies & Candies

THIS RECIPE FOR CARAMEL POPCORN graced the pages of our magazine in December 1997, but its nostalgic, Cracker Jack appeal is timeless—especially this time of year. The original recipe calls for margarine, but use butter for the best flavor. To balance the sweetness and create an eye-catching, gift-worthy mix, I up the salty crunch with pecans (or use your favorite nut) and pepitas. For a kick of spice, add a pinch of cayenne to the sugar syrup, or use Picosos Hot Chile Peanuts (made in Helotes). You can pop your own kernels in a neutral vegetable oil or use store-bought popcorn.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Caramel Popcorn

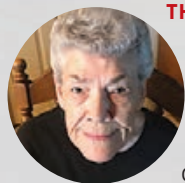
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 2 cups firmly packed light brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 6 quarts popcorn (about 1 cup unpopped kernels)
- 12 ounces roasted salted peanuts
- 1 cup roasted salted pecans or cashews
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup roasted salted pepitas

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees.
2. Melt the butter in a large, deep pan. Stir in the sugar, syrup and salt and bring to a boil. Boil 5 minutes without stirring. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda and vanilla (mixture will foam).
3. Pour the mixture over the popcorn and nuts in a large roasting pan and use a rubber spatula to combine until the ingredients are thoroughly coated.
4. Bake 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes. Transfer the hot mixture

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Retro Recipes

Cookies & Candy



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

SUE WEST | WISE COUNTY EC

These cookies will make your house smell like Christmas while baking and will please young and old when served. Spices, citrus zest and a crackled top with sugar coating—these treats meld all the holiday flavors into one delicious whole.

Cinnamon Crackles

- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened (no substitutions)
 - ½ cup shortening
 - 1 cup sugar
 - ½ cup packed brown sugar
 - 1 egg
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - ½ teaspoon almond extract
 - 2½ cups flour
 - 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
 - 2 teaspoons baking soda
 - 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
 - 2 teaspoons ground nutmeg
 - ½ teaspoon salt
 - 2 teaspoons grated orange zest
 - 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- Additional sugar for rolling cookies

1. Cream butter, shortening and sugars thoroughly in a large bowl. Add egg and extracts; mix well.
2. In a separate bowl, combine flour, cinnamon, baking soda, cream of tartar, nutmeg, salt and zests. Add by heaping spoonfuls into butter and sugar mixture and stir until combined (or use the low setting on an electric mixer).
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put about ½ cup sugar into a bowl. Shape dough into 1-inch balls and roll in sugar. Place balls 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake 12–15 minutes or until cracked and very lightly browned. ▶ Makes 6 dozen cookies.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

to waxed paper to completely cool. Store in an airtight container.
▶ Makes about 6 quarts.

Browned Butter Cherry Almond Chocolate Chip Cookies

MARIAN EVONIUK | PEDERNALES EC

This “everything” cookie will keep you coming back for more. The cookie has a crunchy texture from the almonds and oats, but then you get a bite with chocolate or a tart cherry and know you’re going to eat another one (or two).

- ½ cup sliced almonds
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- ½ cup coconut oil
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¾ cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup tart dried cherries
- ½ cup shredded sweetened coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place almonds into an 8-by-8-inch baking dish and toast until light golden brown, about 8 minutes. Remove and set aside.
2. While almonds are toasting, stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a medium glass mixing bowl and set aside.
3. Place butter into a 10- or 12-inch light-colored heavy skillet and cover with a see-through lid. Heat on medium until butter is a soft brown color and emits a nutty aroma, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in the coconut oil and pour into a large glass mixing bowl. Include the browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Let stand 10 minutes.
4. Add the sugars to the butter and oil mixture using an electric mixer on medium speed until just blended. Add the eggs and beat until well blended, about 1 minute. Stir in the vanilla. Gradually stir in the combined dry ingredients followed by the rolled oats, chocolate chips, cherries, coconut and toasted almonds.



IF YOUR RECIPE IS FEATURED,
YOU'LL WIN A TCP APRON!

\$100 Recipe Contest

May's recipe contest topic is **Spring Celebrations**. Send your favorite dish for showers and graduations. The deadline is **December 10**.

ENTER ONLINE at TexasCoopPower.com/contests; MAIL to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; FAX to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.

5. Using a metal scoop (cookie-size for small cookies, ice cream-size for giant cookies), drop cookie dough 2½ inches apart on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake 10–12 minutes, until edges are a light golden brown. Remove and allow cookies to cool on baking sheet 5 minutes before enjoying. ▶ Makes 18–24 cookies.

COOK'S TIP Dried cranberries or raisins can be substituted for the cherries.

Chocolate Lemon Balls

CHRISTINE HENDERSON | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

"A few years back, I visited Italy and fell in love with their chocolate and lemon candies," Henderson says. "This is my reimagined version of the flavors I found there."

- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- ½ cup finely chopped slivered almonds
- ½ cup finely crumbled lemon cookies
- ½ teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 cup semisweet or dark chocolate chips
- Sugar sprinkles (any color)

1. Put the white chocolate chips into a heatproof bowl and microwave on 50% power 30 seconds, then take it out and stir. Continue microwaving in 30-second intervals at 50% power, stirring as needed. Once the pieces are mostly melted, remove from the microwave and let the remaining bits melt as you stir. This should take about 1–2 minutes. (Don't try to cook at higher power, which creates a less spreadable consistency.)

2. Once the white chocolate is melted, add the chopped almonds, cookies and lemon extract to the white chocolate and stir until smooth. Let sit 1–3 minutes, until a doughlike texture develops.

3. Wearing plastic disposable gloves or wetting your hands so the dough doesn't stick to them, form dough into 1-inch balls, rolling them in your hands until they are nicely rounded. Place balls on waxed paper in a sealed plastic container (single layer) and freeze 1 hour or longer.

4. Melt semisweet or dark chips using

the same method as the white chocolate chips. Place a wire cookie rack over a cookie sheet. Remove lemon balls from the freezer. Drop a lemon ball into the liquid chocolate mixture and quickly turn to coat. Use a fork to remove the dipped balls and place on wire rack. Repeat with each ball until done. Then cover with sugar sprinkles.

5. Refrigerate chocolate lemon balls on the rack for about 15 minutes. Cover and refrigerate until ready to eat, at least 15 minutes more. Remaining balls should be kept in a cool place in an airtight container. ▶ Makes 20 balls.

COOK'S TIP Cookies and almonds can be pulsed together in a food processor. Don't use lemon sandwich cookies.

WEB EXTRAS

▶ Read these recipes on our website to see the original Caramel Popcorn recipe from December 1997 and find a recipe for I Almost Ate Fruitcake Cookies.



**TEXAS CO-OP POWER
GIFT SHOP**

Find Texas Treasures Online

Texas food, music, housewares, gifts and more—find it all at TexasCoopPower.com/shop, along with great deals for Texas Co-op Power readers.

Just pick and click—it's easy to shop for friends and family without leaving home.

**VISIT THE GIFT SHOP TODAY AT
TexasCoopPower.com**



WALK IN TUBS FROM \$7995 INSTALLED!

BEST BUY WALK-IN TUBS
FEATURING "SEALTITE" TECHNOLOGY

CALL US, DON'T WAIT ANOTHER DAY.
Our products have been made in Texas since 2006. We customize, so why pay for something you don't want? Get exactly what you want at an affordable price. So stop struggling and start enjoying your bath again. Call us for an in-home no-pressure presentation. What do you have to lose?

Visit our showroom at 3411 E. Hwy. 377 in Granbury.

888-825-2362 www.bestbuywalkintubs.com

WE INSTALL ACROSS TEXAS!

Therapeutic Diabetic Comfort Slippers Help

Make Sore, Swollen, Sensitive Feet Feel Great!



Non-Skid Safety Soles For
Indoors Or Outdoors



Diabetic FRIENDLY

Cloud-Soft
Fleece Lining



Great For Men & Women



- Cushiony
Memory Foam
- One Touch Closure
- High Ankle Support

Choose
Black Or Tan

Therapeutic Comfort Slippers are a blessing for diabetic foot problems, swelling and bunions – but they help make all feet feel great the instant you slip them on! Cloud-soft plush fleece lining and cushiony memory foam cradle feet in comfort and provide shock absorption. Hook 'n loop strap closure makes them easy to put on or take off and adjust fit. High ankle cut gives you great support. Plus, non-skid safety soles let you wear them indoors or outdoors. Imported.

FREE SHIPPING & HANDLING
WHEN BUYING 2+ PAIRS

Only \$12⁹⁹

SAVE \$7 off original price

Diabetic Comfort Slippers		INDICATE NUMBER OF PAIRS ORDERED UNDER SIZE			
#306 Ladies'	S (5-6)	M (6½-7½)	L (8-9)	XL (9½-10½)	
TAN					
BLACK					
#307 Men's	S (6-7)	M (7½-8½)	L (9-10)	XL (11-12)	
TAN					
BLACK					
Pr(s) Diabetic Comfort Slippers @ \$12.99					\$
CA residents must add 7.25% sales tax					\$
Add \$5.95 Regular Shipping & Handling 1st Pair					\$
FREE Shipping & Handling When Buying 2+ Pairs					\$
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR EXPEDITED SHIPPING (optional) (receive your order 5-7 days from shipment)					\$ 2.95
Please Print Clearly					TOTAL \$
<input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> Discover®/NOVUS SM Cards Card# _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____ Name _____ Address _____ City _____ ST ____ Zip _____ Daytime Phone # _____ Dept. 78170 Email _____					

Check or money order payable to: **Dream Products, Inc.**
Send Order To: 412 Dream Lane, Van Nuys, CA 91496

Receive A Free Surprise Gift
with every order

1-800-530-2689

Order Now Toll-Free

Connect With

DreamProducts.com

website offers may vary

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Return For Your Money Back

Deserts

TEXAS SETTLERS HAVE FOR MILLENNIA braved the harsh terrain of the Chihuahuan Desert. It's the kind of place where you shake out your boots before wearing them and look twice before stepping (or sitting). Enjoy the terrain where yucca, creosote, mesquite, agave and ocotillo dot the landscape and mountains loom in the distance. **GRACE FULTZ**

WEB EXTRAS ► See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.

▲ **KAY BELL**, Nueces EC: "The century plant, havard agave, grows in the higher elevations of the Chihuahuan Desert in the Big Bend."



▲ **J. REAGAN FERGUSON**, Central Texas EC: "Enjoying a peaceful sunset in Guadalupe Mountains National Park."

▼ **MARK HOLLY**, Bandera EC: "It was a beautiful spring day in one of my favorite national parks, Big Bend."



▲ **MIKE PRESTIGIACOMO**, Bartlett EC: "Once upon a time—a tree."

▼ **MATTHEW CROTWELL**, Guadalupe Valley EC: "Nighthawk awaiting dusk for feeding time."



UPCOMING CONTESTS

APRIL SUNSETS	DUE DECEMBER 10
MAY FAIRS AND CARNIVALS	DUE JANUARY 10
JUNE STATE PARKS	DUE FEBRUARY 10

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/Contests.

Pick of the Month Celtic Angels Christmas

Marshall December 19

(903) 934-7992, memorialcityhall.com

A quintet of singers from Ireland highlights a show that includes instrumentalists and Irish dancing. The set list includes traditional Christmas carols and Irish favorites. The event is part of the premiere season for the Memorial City Hall Performance Center, built in 1907 and former home to municipal offices and courts.



CELTIC ANGELS CHRISTMAS: COURTESY CMI ENTERTAINMENT INC. MISTLETOE: VERASTUCHELOVA | DREAMSTIME.COM. BEACH: ANNE WEBBER | DREAMSTIME.COM

December 7

Conroe Bark for Life Dog Walk, 1-800-227-2345, relayforlife.org/barkconroeandwalkercotx

Frisco Hope for the Holidays Masquerade, (972) 977-6064, melodyofhope.org/gala

Hubbard Magnolia & Mistletoe: A Victorian Christmas, (254) 625-0258, hubbardcity.com

Johnson City Lamplight Tours of LBJ's Boyhood Home and a Frontier Christmas, (830) 868-7128

Rusk Cherokee Craft & Trade Fair, (903) 268-1598

Santo Community Christmas Craft Show, (940) 659-3990

Taylor Mistletoe Market, (512) 666-9003, artoffcenter.com

Dripping Springs [7-8] Redbud Artisan Market, (512) 660-3328

Keller [7-8] Keller High School Indianettes Craft Show, (925) 708-7383, indianettes.com/craft-show

December 7
Taylor
Mistletoe Market



8

Fort Worth Woman's Club Holiday Open House, (817) 335-3525, thewomansclubfw.com

Moody Mother Neff Christmas, (254) 853-2389



ELLEN FULLER with **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA**, a nationwide organization that places holiday wreaths on veterans' graves.
POWER OF OUR PEOPLE | NOVEMBER 2019

POWER OF OUR PEOPLE

TEXASCOOPPOWER

\$100
WINNER

Nominate someone today!

Tell us about somebody who improves the quality of life in your community. Email your nomination to people@texascooppower.com. Include the person's name, co-op affiliation and a short description of his or her work in the community. Featured nominees will receive a \$100 donation for their cause.

TEXASCOOPPOWER **75**
1944 2019

Enter to win a Texas-made gift during our 75th Anniversary.



ENTER NOW
[TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://texascooppower.com/contests)

12

Palo Pinto Frontier Christmas,
(940) 769-2600, palopintohistory.com

Ransom Canyon Christmas Tour of Homes,
(806) 829-2637, ransomcanyonchapel.com

13

Cuero [13-14] Christmas in Downtown,
(361) 485-8008, cueromainstreet.com

Levelland [13-14] South Plains Showdown,
(806) 894-4161, malleteventcenter.com/events

Chandler [13-15] Night in Bethlehem,
(903) 849-6042, nib.wlbcc.com

14

Athens Wreaths Across America,
(903) 670-1031,
wreathsacrossamerica.org/tx0725

Burnet Christmas at Old Fort Croghan,
(512) 756-8281, highlandlakesofburnetcounty.com

Chappell Hill Garden Club Christmas Home Tour, (713) 562-6191

Gainesville All That Glitters Holiday Home Tour, (940) 668-8900, mortonmuseum.org

Jacksonville Cherokee Craft & Trade Fair,
(903) 268-1598

Sanger Sanger High Craft Show,
(940) 206-0007

Waxahachie YMCA 5K Santa Run,
(469) 309-4045

15

Stonewall 50th Annual LBJ Christmas Tree Lighting, (830) 644-2252

December 28-January 2
South Padre Island
New Year's at the Beach



19

Seguin Third Thursday in Downtown Seguin,
(830) 379-0730, seguindba.org

Anson [19-21] Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball, (325) 696-9040, texasccb.com

New Braunfels [19-22] The Nutcracker,
(830) 627-0808, brauntex.org

21

Boerne Winter Solstice Celebration Circle,
(830) 537-4212, visitboerne.org

Morgan Mill Live Nativity, (214) 793-9698,
morganmillumc.com

28

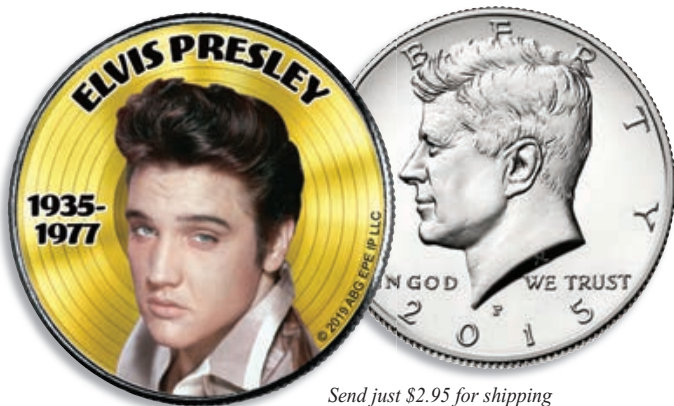
South Padre Island [28-Jan. 2] New Year's at the Beach, (254) 681-2354,
singlesinagriculture.org

31

Fredericksburg Countdown to 2020,
(830) 997-7521, fbgtx.org

Submit Your Event!

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



Send just \$2.95 for shipping and guaranteed delivery.

Now you can get a desirable US Half-Dollar honoring the King of Rock 'n' Roll for FREE. Send just \$2.95 for shipping and guaranteed delivery.

Authorized by Graceland

This coin is a meaningful keepsake and a reminder of Elvis's powerful impact on the music world since his career began. It's still amazing to think a country boy born in Tupelo, Mississippi, 85 years ago could do so much in his short life.

Act now to get this special coin in your collection today. Strict limit of one Elvis Half-Dollar per customer.

Send today and you'll also receive special collector's information and other interesting Elvis coins on approval. Your satisfaction is guaranteed.

Yours **FREE!** Elvis Presley U.S. Half-Dollar 85th Birthday Tribute to the King of Rock 'n' Roll

Elvis Presley Tribute Coin

☒ **Yes!** Send me the Elvis Presley US Half-Dollar. Enclosed is \$2.95 for shipping and guaranteed delivery. Satisfaction guaranteed. Limit one coin.

Quick order at **MysticAd.com/GA117**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

☐ **Check or money order** NY State residents add sales tax.

☐ **Visa** ☐ **MasterCard** ☐ **American Express**

☐ **Discover** Exp. Date ____/____/____

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Please send payment to: **Mystic, Dept. GA117**
9700 Mill St., Camden, NY 13316-9111



Camp Street Blues

Historic venue fuels memories of Crockett's musical legacy

WITH CREDITS TO BURN DURING MY senior year at the University of Texas, I enrolled in a class on the history of rock 'n' roll, expecting to listen to Led Zeppelin and ride an easy A into the burnt orange sunset. When the professor played a song from a scratchy blues record from 1926 by an artist I had never heard of, I realized I was in for more than I bargained for. The class turned out to be tough, but it set fire to my blues-loving soul.

That track was *Match Box Blues* by Blind Lemon Jefferson. It was a raw, visceral song with a clanging guitar and haunting vocals. I had never heard anything like it, and when I learned Jefferson was from Texas, I was hooked. My love for the blues drove me to East Texas and historic Camp Street in Crockett.

When I found Camp Street, a few blocks from the Houston County Courthouse square, I wasn't sure if I was in the right spot until I noticed a mural of Jefferson painted on a brick wall. Next to Jefferson were more musicians, including T-Bone Walker, Big Mama Thornton and Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins, who all played in Crockett when it was a stop for blues artists traveling the Chitlin' Circuit between Houston and Dallas.

In the 1930s, Camp Street hummed as one of the most vibrant business districts in East Texas. Both sides of the street were lined with businesses: a beauty parlor, an all-night laundry, a shoe repair shop and a juke joint named the Jolly Joy. And there in the middle of the action, you'd find the Starlight—now called Camp



Chet Garner and Pipp Gillette on the front porch of Camp Street Café in Crockett.

building with its red sheet metal exterior and large front porch was built in 1931 by a local rancher named V.H. "Hoyt" Porter. On the porch were three doors: Through the middle door was a barber-shop and through the left door, a pool hall. Through the right door was a café and taxi stand that featured a dice table and bar. On any given night in the 1940s, you might find bluesman Lightnin' Hopkins playing for tips. In the '50s or '60s, you might find B.B. King or Fats Domino enjoying a beer after a show at the nearby Paradise Inn.

The café was closed for many years, but in 2008 it got a second chance. Porter's grandsons, Guy and Pipp Gillette, bought the property and turned it into a listening room to honor Crockett's musical legacy. Since then, this small stage has hosted artists including Michael Martin Murphy, Kinky Friedman and Ruthie Foster.

Street Café, the town's only remaining blues-era stalwart.

The quaint

On the night of my visit, Pipp, a singer and songwriter himself, was scheduled to perform.

I found a room packed with people at small square tables enjoying wine (it's BYOB) and munching on snacks from a counter in the back. When Pipp took the stage, a hush fell over the crowd. For the next hour or so, Pipp played one song after another, woven together with his stories and meandering thoughts. The experience epitomized why I love a good listening room, as the only sounds coming from the crowd were applause and laughs at Pipp's jokes.

As I enjoyed the show, I imagined the room in decades past, as the greatest blues legends played guitar and told stories of the road. I left feeling anything but blue.

Chet Garner shares his Texplorations as the host of *The Daytripper* on PBS.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of his visit to Camp Street Café. Also, for more about the blues, read *Texas: A Blues State* in our March 2019 issue.

HARBOR FREIGHT

QUALITY TOOLS AT RIDICULOUSLY LOW PRICES

1,000+ Stores Nationwide • HarborFreight.com

SUPER COUPON
Customer Rating
★★★★★

PREDATOR BEATS HONDA

2000 WATT SUPER QUIET INVERTER GENERATOR



4.7 hours	RUN-TIME	3.4 hours
2000	MAX. STARTING WATTS	2000
1600	RUNNING WATTS	1600
61 dB	NOISE LEVEL	59 dB
48 LBS.	WEIGHT	45.6 LBS.
1.2 GAL.	TANK SIZE	.95 GAL.
3	OUTLETS	3
YES	OVERLOAD PROTECTION	YES
79.7 cc	ENGINE SIZE	98.5 cc
YES	LOW OIL ALERT	YES
YES	PARALLEL CAPABLE	YES
YES	POWER SAVER	YES



PREDATOR 2000
NOW \$449.99
SAVE \$559
ITEM 62523

\$499.99
PRICE **\$1,009**
*HONDA EU2000i stated specs
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

HONDA EU2000i

FREE

OVER 5,000
5 STAR REVIEWS
★★★★★

SUPER BRIGHT LED/SMD WORK LIGHT/FLASHLIGHT

- Super-Strong, Ultra-Lightweight Composite Plastic
- Magnetic Base & 360° Swivel Hook for Hands-Free Operation
- 3-AAA Batteries (included)
- 144 Lumens

ALL IN A SINGLE SUPER POWERFUL LIGHT

COMPARE TO PERFORMANCE TOOL **\$1352**
ITEM 63878/63991 64005/69567/60566 63601/67227 shown



22093079

20% OFF

ANY SINGLE ITEM*

22093766

Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. *Cannot be used with other discounts. Coupon on any of the following items or services: Inside Truck Club membership, Extended Service Plan, gift card, open box item, 3 Day Parking Lot Sale item, compressors, floor jacks, sales, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, welders, Admiral, Ames, Bauer, Central Machinery, Crafts, Crowsfoot, Dayton, Diamondback, Eastwood, Fisher, Hercules, Inco, Jupiter, Lynxx, Pexco, Predator, Ridgid, Viking, Vulcan, Zentech. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 2/1/20.

HARDY

POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES PACK OF 100

- 5 mil thickness

SAVE 59%
COMPARE TO VENOM \$14.97
MODEL: VEN4145

ITEM 97581, 37050, 64417, 64418, 61363, 68497, 61360, 61359, 68498, 68496 shown

SUPER COUPON
Customer Rating
★★★★★



22110951

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

PITTSBURGH

RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINUM FLOOR JACK

- Weighs 33 lbs.

SAVE \$91
COMPARE TO K TOOL \$151.42
MODEL: KT163094

ITEM 64552/64832/64980/64545 shown

SUPER COUPON
Customer Rating
★★★★★



22130624

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

4 PIECE ANTI-FATIGUE FOAM MAT SET

- Each pad measures 25" x 25"

COMPARE TO NORSK \$19.99
MODEL: 001119346



ITEM 40187 61607/62389/94635 shown

22170535

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

2 TIER EASY-STORE STEP LADDER

- 225 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO WERNER \$33.88
MODEL: S322A-1



ITEM 67514

22191751

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

10" PNEUMATIC TIRE

- 4.75" wide

COMPARE TO FARM & RANCH \$8.09
MODEL: FR1055

ITEM 69385/62388/62409/62698/30900 shown

22191419

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

NEW U.S. GENERAL

30" 4 DRAWER TECH CARTS

- 12,600 cu. in. of storage
- 580 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO Snap-on BLUE-POINT \$880
MODEL: KRBC10T8PC

ITEM 56387, 64096, 56386, 56392, 56393, 56394

22118508

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

29 PIECE TITANIUM DRILL BIT SET

- 1/8" - 1/2" sizes

COMPARE TO DEWALT \$68.14
MODEL: DW1369

ITEM 5889/62281/61637 shown

22120614

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

40V LITHIUM-ION 14" BRUSHLESS CHAIN SAW

- 14" bar

COMPARE TO KOBALT \$199
MODEL: KCS120-07

ITEM 64715/64478/452207 shown

22137915

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET

- 100% polyester

COMPARE TO BLUE HAWK \$19.99
MODEL: 77280

ITEM 69505/62418/66537 shown

22166090

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

10 FT. x 17 FT. PORTABLE GARAGE

- 1000 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO SHELTER LOGIC \$290.75
MODEL: 76377

ITEM 62859/63055/62860 shown

22171101

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

1 TON CAPACITY FOLDABLE SHOP CRANE

- Boom extends from 34" to 45"
- Crane height adjusts from 69-5/8" to 82"

COMPARE TO GOPLUS \$229.99
MODEL: GP-101040150

ITEM 69512/61858 shown

22197320

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

4 PIECE, 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS

- 400 lb. working load

COMPARE TO KEEPER \$22.80
MODEL: 5505

ITEM 60405/63056/63057/63150/56668/63094 shown

22198611

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

WARRIOR

29 PIECE TITANIUM DRILL BIT SET

- 1/8" - 1/2" sizes

COMPARE TO DEWALT \$68.14
MODEL: DW1369

ITEM 5889/62281/61637 shown

22120614

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET

- 100% polyester

COMPARE TO BLUE HAWK \$19.99
MODEL: 77280

ITEM 69505/62418/66537 shown

22166090

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

18" x 12" MOVER'S DOLLY

- 1000 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO BUFFALO TOOLS \$22.99
MODEL: HOFDOLLY

ITEM 60497 61899/62399/63095/63096/63097/63098 shown

22184694

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

3-IN-1 PORTABLE POWER PACK WITH JUMP STARTER

- 1000 lb. capacity

COMPARE TO SUPER START \$89.99
MODEL: 55001

ITEM 38391/62376/64083/56349/62306 shown

22188064

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

1 TON CAPACITY FOLDABLE SHOP CRANE

- Boom extends from 34" to 45"
- Crane height adjusts from 69-5/8" to 82"

COMPARE TO GOPLUS \$229.99
MODEL: GP-101040150

ITEM 69512/61858 shown

22197320

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

4 PIECE, 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS

- 400 lb. working load

COMPARE TO KEEPER \$22.80
MODEL: 5505

ITEM 60405/63056/63057/63150/56668/63094 shown

22198611

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

1 TON CAPACITY FOLDABLE SHOP CRANE

- Boom extends from 34" to 45"
- Crane height adjusts from 69-5/8" to 82"

COMPARE TO GOPLUS \$229.99
MODEL: GP-101040150

ITEM 69512/61858 shown

22197320

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

4 PIECE, 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS

- 400 lb. working load

COMPARE TO KEEPER \$22.80
MODEL: 5505

ITEM 60405/63056/63057/63150/56668/63094 shown

22198611

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 2/1/20

At Harbor Freight Tools, the "Compare to" price means that the specified comparison, which is an item with the same or similar function, was advertised for sale at or above the "Compare to" price by another national retailer in the U.S. within the past 90 days. Prices advertised by others may vary by location. No other meaning of "Compare to" should be implied. For more information, go to HarborFreight.com or see store associate.

*Original coupon only. No use on prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase or without original receipt. Valid through 2/1/20.

Save a Bundle on TV and Internet!

dish 2-YEAR TV PRICE LOCK!

\$59⁹⁹
month for TV



Add Internet!
Blazing-Fast Internet
~~\$59⁹⁹~~
month for Internet

\$39⁹⁹
month for Internet

It's All Included!

- ✓ Includes 190 Channels with Locals
- ✓ Includes Hopper Smart HD DVR
- ✓ Includes HD Programming
- ✓ Includes One TV, Add More for \$5
- ✓ Includes Voice Remote

Requires internet connected Hopper.



FREE Premium Channels After 3 mos. you will be billed \$30/mo unless you call to cancel.

NETFLIX

– Fully Integrated –
Just Change The Channel And Watch!
Netflix subscription required.

- Speeds from 25Mbps-1 Gbps
- No Matter Where You Live
- Now with Unlimited Data!

Save up to \$20/month!*

*Unlimited data refers to no hard data caps. \$ off discount offers vary by service address. Go to godish.com/internet to verify your discount. TV service not required for Internet.

\$200
Visa® Prepaid Card

**Get TV.
Get \$100.
Add Internet.
Get \$200.**

1234 5678 9012 3456
4000
Gift Card
Expires 01/25
Valid only in U.S.

Courtesy of GoDISH.com.



Must mention offer code Card200 when you subscribe to both TV and Internet services.

1-866-290-7151

Mon-Fri: 7am-10pm • Sat: 7am-9pm • Sun: 10am-7pm Central Time

godish.com/pricelock



iSe Habla Español!

dish
Authorized Retailer

*Prices include Hopper Duo for qualifying customers. Hopper, Hopper w/Sling or Hopper 3 \$5/mo. more. Upfront fees may apply based on credit qualification. Fees apply for additional TVs: Hopper \$15/mo., Joey \$5/mo., Super Joey \$10/mo. All offers require credit qualification, 2-Year commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay. Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Qualification: Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 1/13/20. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$59.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$69.99 for AT120+, \$79.99 for AT200, \$89.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, STARZ, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call to cancel. Requires credit qualification, 2-year commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay. Hopper upgrade fee may apply. Gift and Pre-paid Cards: Courtesy of GoDISH.com for credit-qualified customers. Customers who do not qualify may be eligible for a secondary gift offer. Cards are issued by Citibank, N.A. pursuant to a license from Visa® U.S.A. Inc. and managed by Citi Prepaid Services. Cards will not have cash access and can be used everywhere Visa® debit cards are accepted. Cards expire 6 months from date issued. Mail-in redemption form is required within 60 days of qualified activation to receive gift. Customer account must be current and in good standing at the time of redemption. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of gift. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. SHOWTIME is a registered trademark of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS Company. STARZ and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. Indiana C.P.D. Reg. No. - 19-08615 © 2019 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$39.99 price refers to 25Mbps plan. Restrictions apply. 25 Mbps internet service available nationwide, but may become temporarily unavailable to certain addresses based on local beam capacity. Availability is subject to change without notice. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately. Call for details.