

Texas Coop Power

FOR HOUSTON COUNTY EC MEMBERS

OCTOBER 2020

**SPECIAL
PROXY CARD
EDITION.**
*DETAILS ON
BACK COVER*

We're going to
P  **WER**
FORWARD

Official notice of the VIRTUAL 81ST ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

In an effort to ensure the health and safety of our members and employees during this unique time, we are adjusting our traditional business meeting. This year, for the first time since 1939, we will host a virtual annual meeting in place of our traditional in-person meeting.

While we are heartbroken over missing the opportunity to visit with you at our fish fry, we want to assure you that your service remains our priority.

Thursday, October 29, 2020
STARTING AT 6:00 P.M.

ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

No petitions were received this year in the Board of Director elections for Houston County District 1, Madison County District, or District-At-Large. The following members were nominated by the nominating committee and accepted the nomination as candidates for the Houston County EC Board of Directors:

Houston County District 1: William Emmons

Madison County District: Mary Adams

District-At-Large: Daniel Courmier

**PLEASE SEE THE BACK COVER FOR INFORMATION ON
ACCESSING AND REGISTERING FOR THE VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING.**

It is the responsibility of each member to attend this annual meeting so that a quorum will be available to transact the business of the cooperative. To be marked as attending the meeting, you need to return your signed proxy card to the HCEC office by mail or drop-off before 3 PM on Thursday, October 29. You must be registered by proxy to be eligible for prize drawings.

CO-OPS COUNT:
BY THE NUMBERS

1918 PANDEMIC
HIT OIL FIELDS

FINDING PORTRAITS
IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Texas Coop Power

FOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

OCTOBER 2020

If the Shoe Fits

Farriers help build
horse health from
the ground up





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October 2020



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The countless ways electric co-ops make a difference across Texas.

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Why Horses Wear Shoes

Texas farriers truly know the way to a horse's heart.

Story by Brenda Kissko
Photos by Kristin Tyler

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ON THE COVER

Farrier Jim Crawford at McManus Ranch in Irion County.

ABOVE

Crawford shapes a horseshoe.

Photos by Kristin Tyler

Howdy, Pandowdy

OUR RECIPES THEME this month (Page 30) is Cobblers, Crisps, Buckles and Betties. Seems like a lot of names for a dish that is essentially fruit baked with batter, biscuits, dough or crumble.

Turns out those dishes, which have been around since colonists arrived in this country with their recipes from England, go by many other names, including crumbles, grunts, slumps, bird's nest pudding, sonkers and pandowdies.



Lights Out

General Electric, co-founded by Thomas Edison, inventor of the modern lightbulb, recently sold its 129-year-old lighting business.

The New York Times compared this move to Kellogg abandoning cornflakes or Ford getting out of the auto industry.

Worms in Space?

Absolutely.

NASA's red, sleek and wavy typographical logo from the 1980s returned to the heavens May 30, adorning the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket that launched two American astronauts aboard the Crew Dragon.

When the logo debuted in 1975, it became known as the worm, and the original NASA logo, which debuted in 1959 with the agency, was coined the meatball. The worm was NASA's official logo 1975–1992, then the agency went back to the meatball.

The minimalist worm was popular in the marketing industry but scorned by NASA insiders, who favored the round blue meatball with its white type, planets, stars and orbital path enhanced with a red chevron.



\$30

That's the average weekly allowance, which about two-thirds of parents fork over to kids.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT I EVER GOT WAS ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town. Here are some of the responses to our August prompt: **When I think of Texas, I think of ...**

Mermaids in San Marcos, Big Tex in Dallas and Prada in Marfa.

WHITNEY OLDFATHER
PEDERNALES EC
SAN MARCOS

Blue skies, bluebonnets and Willie.

PJAE STANLEY
COSERV
LITTLE ELM

Home.

PAM SHORT ALFRED
HOUSTON COUNTY EC
KENNARD

Big sky and endless horizon.

AUTUMN VOGEL
TRINITY VALLEY EC
ELMO

Beaches, forests, mountains, two time zones, and taking two days to go north to south or east to west.

DEBBIE MOBLEY
HEART OF TEXAS EC
VALLEY MILLS

Windmills, sunsets, dirt roads, and cornbread and beans.

DONNA GENTRY WEEDEN
VIA FACEBOOK

To see more responses, read Currents online.



Now This Is a Selfie

WE KNOW YOU LOVE your selfies, our Focus on Texas theme this month (Page 37).

The selfie above might be the coolest of all—because it was the first.

Robert Cornelius, an amateur chemist and photography enthusiast in Philadelphia, made a daguerreotype of himself in 1839. He removed the camera's lens cap; ran into the frame, where he sat for several minutes; then covered the lens again.



TCP Contests and More

ON TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTO CONTEST
Saddles

\$500 RECIPE CONTEST
Tacos

FROM OUR ARCHIVE

More Than Electricity, October 2018, tells how co-ops are "the fabric of the community."



WYATT MCSPADDEN

My TX

“My family told about bad luck superstitions. One was putting a hat on a bed, as was wearing more than one hat at a time.”

JANICE MARTIN
CENTRAL TEXAS EC
KINGSLAND

My TX Moment

My personal *My TX* [August 2020] moment was 30 years ago and half a world away. I was deployed to Operation Desert Shield/Storm in Saudi Arabia. Near our camp was a group of Mujahedeen fighters, and they always left a grizzled old man to guard their camp.

One day he flagged us down. He started talking and pointing up and to the rear of my vehicle. I asked my interpreter what he wanted, and he said, “Texas.” The man recognized the small Texas flag on my radio aerial.

Alfred W. Evans
Hamilton County EC
Gatesville



The canyon is so beautiful [Palo Duro Love Letters, July 2020]. Very cool to have this famous artist’s work and letters reflecting that beauty.

CINDI RAK MULCAHEY
VIA FACEBOOK

Their TX

Congratulations, Pam LeBlanc, for declaring yourself a Texan [No Longer a Yankee, July 2020].

Without saying it, you seemed to echo Jay B Saucedá’s comment that Texas mystique is not built on small stuff or mediocrity or even above-average stuff but on the overwhelming.

J.K. Goode
Fayette EC
Weimar

Fixin’ To Learn

I didn’t realize the word fixin’ was Texan—as I’ve used it all my life having been born in Shreveport and raised in south Louisiana [Finish This Sentence, August 2020]. My husband has always asked me where I got it. Now I know how to answer him.

Paula Bonin
Trinity Valley EC
Gun Barrel City



COURTESY JACK CHASE

I am fortunate enough to own an SRV flat-top hat from Texas Hatters. I was a regional VP for Epic Records and helped launch Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble. I bought several of these hats from the Texas Hatters shop when the album *Texas Flood* was released in 1983.

Jack Chase
CoServ
Carrollton

TCP WRITE TO US

letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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Austin, TX 78701

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

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Bad to the Bone

Full tang stainless steel blade with natural bone handle —now **ONLY \$79!**

The very best hunting knives possess a perfect balance of form and function. They're carefully constructed from fine materials, but also have that little something extra to connect the owner with nature.

If you're on the hunt for a knife that combines impeccable craftsmanship with a sense of wonder, the **\$79 Huntsman Blade** is the trophy you're looking for.

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The handle is made from genuine natural bone, and features decorative wood spacers and a hand-carved motif of two overlapping feathers—a reminder for you to respect and connect with the natural world.

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

But we don't stop there. While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99 8x21 power compact binoculars *and* a genuine leather sheath **FREE** when you purchase the **Huntsman Blade**.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the impeccable craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

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"This knife is beautiful!"

— J., La Crescent, MN



"The feel of this knife is unbelievable...this is an incredibly fine instrument."

— H., Arvada, CO



BY TOM WIDLANSKI
ILLUSTRATION BY SHAW NIELSEN

By the Numbers

The countless ways electric co-ops make a difference across Texas

IN SOME WAYS, the less you think about your electric cooperative, the better. That means your power has stayed on almost without fail, outages are quickly remedied, and your monthly bills are fair and reasonable.

But a lot of thought goes into electric co-ops because they are so much more than power providers. They are united by a business model that values community over profits. They are locally owned and democratically controlled by their customers, called members. They work together to achieve goals and solve problems. Your cooperative is one of more than 900 electric co-ops in the U.S.

The co-op business model is used by a wide variety of organizations—not just electric utilities. Ace Hardware; REI, which specializes in outdoor clothing and gear; Ocean Spray; Sunkist; and Land O'Lakes operate as co-ops. In fact, there are more than 40,000 co-op businesses in the U.S., with 350 million members, according to a University of Wisconsin study.

October is National Cooperative Month, a good opportunity to show the reach, scope and numbers behind Texas' electric co-ops that, when added up, reveal the significant impact they have on rural and suburban communities. ■



30–35
pounds of gear

weighs down lineworkers when climbing a pole—hooks, a belt, tools and more.

9,300
people work at the
69
electric co-ops in the state.



3.7
million readers

of Texas Co-op Power, which has been landing in mailboxes since 1944. That's like everybody in Houston and Dallas having the same favorite magazine as you.

85
years

of co-ops in Texas. Bartlett EC, formed in 1935 as the first co-op in the country to receive a Rural Electrification Administration loan, turned on its first light March 7, 1936, at a farmhouse outside Bartlett.

3

million Texans

enjoy co-op electric service, mostly in rural and suburban areas.



325,000

miles of co-op power lines in Texas, enough to encircle Earth more than 13 times.

1,338,828

hours worked

without a lost-time incident at Bandera EC, which was honored in March for that long stretch of safety—remarkable considering the high voltage within arm's length of its lineworkers every day.

241

of Texas' 254 counties are served by electric co-ops.



47

million lightning bolts

struck Texas in 2019—the most of any state by far. Not all of them knocked out power, but you can bet many of them put workers on edge.

\$1.6 million

in scholarships awarded annually to college students by co-ops. A stack of 1.6 million \$1 bills would reach 573 feet high—or nearly twice the height of the Texas Capitol.

5.5

million poles hold up power lines in Co-op Country in Texas.



Texas farriers truly know the way to a horse's heart

Why Horses Wear Shoes

It's another sunny December day in West Texas, and Jim Crawford crosses the fifth and final cattle guard on his two-hour drive to the McManus Ranch from his home near Ballinger. Crawford is there to shoe horses, as he has been doing on this ranch since the early 1970s. He pulls his trailer to a convenient spot near the barn.

He wears denim, lace-up boots, suspenders and his signature red-and-white polka-dot welding cap. Last he ties on the leather farrier apron he stitched himself. Crawford is wearing the same outfit I remember him always wearing when he visited as I grew up on this ranch. My dad, Beaver McManus, a member of Concho Valley Electric Cooperative, says it's the same uniform young Crawford wore the day he met him as a junior high boy when he came out to the ranch with his great-uncle Houston Crawford.

When you live this far out, you look forward to visitors. The days that Crawford comes to the ranch to shoe horses are days filled with storytelling. More often than not, farriers become lifelong friends with horse owners. "I couldn't have gotten along without him the last 30 years," Dad says. "He's more than someone who just came out to shoe our horses. He's part of our extended family."

Farrier, derived from the Latin word *ferrarius*, meaning blacksmith, is the professional name given to horseshoers. Many prefer to be called farriers, but others, like Crawford, prefer the simpler term "horseshoer." No matter what they're called, they're necessary to the state's equine industry.

Crawford recalls first getting the horseshoeing gig at the ranch. Houston asked him to meet at the mailbox before dawn, and the young shoer beat him there. "I think that impressed him, that he didn't have to wait on me," says Crawford, a member of Coleman County Electric Coopera-

tive. Houston welcomed him to the house and made his signature extra-strong coffee. "It was boiling in the cup," Crawford laughs. "I thought, jeez, how does his system handle that? Must be cast iron." Nearly 50 years later, he still remembers the gray horse he shod that day.

Crawford loves his work, but he originally dreamed of becoming a calf roper.

"I had a lot of try, but I didn't have the talent," he jokes. "I could win fifth if they were paying four." The first horse Crawford shod was his own calf roping horse, Wimp, named after the horse's grandfather, Wimpy P-1, born on the King Ranch and the first horse registered with the American



OPPOSITE Farrier Jim Crawford has been fitting shoes onto horses for decades. ABOVE Crawford rasps one of Peanut's hooves for a final fit at McManus Ranch in Irion County.



Originally, nearly 100% of his clients were ranchers with working horses. Now more than half are pleasure horses.

Quarter Horse Association. Crawford hoped a regular horseshoeing clientele would enable him to stay at the roping gig longer.

In the spring of 1972, Crawford used his GI Bill benefits to go to horseshoeing school. An outbreak of screwworms in the summer of '72 forced ranchers to ride their land daily to monitor their livestock. This created high demand for farriers. Crawford was getting calls to book his services before he'd completed the 10-week course. When he finished, he had a satisfying work schedule and a long list of clients. He became so busy shoeing horses he never returned to roping.

Crawford's customers come to him through word-of-mouth recommendations. A stack of spiral notebooks tell the stories and names of most horses he's shod through the decades.

"Showing up and having the shoe stay on made my career," Crawford says. "When I first started, guys used their horses hard." Originally, nearly 100% of his clients

were ranchers with working horses. Now more than half are pleasure horses.

Texas ranks No. 1 in the nation for its inventory of horses, ponies, mules, burros and donkeys. Though there's been a transition in the horse's function from work to pleasure, horses are still big business in Texas and create a constant demand for farriers.

Why do horses need shoes? There's an old saying, "no foot, no horse," which speaks to the importance of a horse's feet to its overall health. Each horse's foot includes a mechanism that pumps blood back up to the heart, so each foot is like an auxiliary heart for the



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT Crawford shapes a horse shoe at his anvil. The tools and nails he uses. Crawford explains how he gives horses a proper fit. A homemade tool used to nail shoes to hooves. Crawford shows up for jobs with racks of horse shoes in the bed of his pickup.

edgeable in the treatment of many hoof diseases, such as laminitis, navicular disease and thrush.

It's believed that the horse was domesticated around 3000 B.C., and Egyptians and Persians are credited with creating the first horseshoes from woven reeds and grass. The horseshoe has evolved through the ages, though the steel shoe has not changed much since the mid-1800s, when Henry Burden patented a machine that could mass-produce horseshoes. Although many synthetic shoes have come on the market in recent years, the majority of farriers still put on a steel shoe that's either hand-forged or ready-made and shaped either cold or hot and fitted to the animal.

Before a shoe is placed, the farrier will clean and trim the hoof to ensure a level and balanced foot. Even hooves that go without shoes likely need to be trimmed on a regular basis. The farrier will then customize the shoe to mimic the shape of that horse's hoof wall. The shoe is nailed outside of the wall from the bottom, so the nails penetrate the portion of the hoof that has no feeling.

The Texas Professional Farriers Association comprises about 200 members that meet regularly for continuing education. Texas does not require farriers to have a license to practice, but the TPFA helps members achieve certification through the American Farrier's Association. Certification exams include a written and a practical

animal. A horse's hoof is a living, growing part of that anatomy. Most components of a horse's hoof are elastic, so they also act as shock absorbers.

When the growth of the hoof is balanced by equal wear and no disease or abnormalities are present, horseshoes are not necessary. Horseshoes are used for protection, traction and correction. Whether it is racing, ranching or rodeoing, a horse's work is rough on its feet. That's when shoes are necessary. Shoes also correct some problems with gait and lameness.

Horseshoeing is both art and science, and skilled farriers pride themselves on helping to keep horses sound. Farriers study the anatomy of a horse's entire leg and are knowl-

Crawford, who once dreamed of becoming a calf roper, found his calling in 1972.

TCP WEB EXTRA Learn more about alternative shoes and how to find or become a farrier, and read a proverb that puts a fine point on the value of horseshoes.

component. The TPFA also hosts clinics and competitions throughout the year.

“A shoe should be a complement to the horse, not an interruption,” says Danny Anderson, TPFA president. Anderson owns Indian Creek Forge in Whitesboro and is a member of PenTex Energy. He says the organization is growing, and there is an up-and-coming generation of farriers.

Veterans in the industry are passing along their knowledge of the trade to new members, and they don’t all look like Crawford. Women have gotten involved.

According to the 2019 Farrier Business Practices Report produced by *American Farriers Journal*, 18% of farriers are women, up from 8% reported three years prior. In 2018 Cornell University admitted its first all-female class to its farrier program.

Nichole Smith co-owns SS Horseshoeing in Wichita Falls with her husband, Stephen, and is leading the way in the growing sector of female farriers. She was the first woman in the world to achieve multiple farrier certifications and has mentored other women.

“I’m really excited that so many young ladies are getting involved and doing so well,” Smith says. “Some ladies are small-statured, and they need to be prepared to use their brain to overcome some of the challenges. I’ve always been welcomed in this industry, like family, and I appreci-



ate that.” Smith forges all the steel and aluminum shoes she sets.

Although technology like 3D printing is quickly advancing this industry, there’s no replacement for the friendly smile and personal care for horses a farrier brings.

Crawford smiles as he looks back at his career: “Having people know that I did a good job and knowing that I was appreciated—that’s the reward.” ■

October is FREE WINDOWS MONTH at Renewal by Andersen.¹

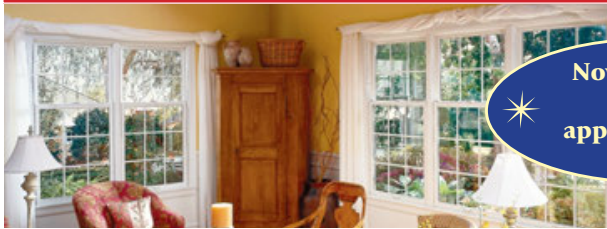


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For your one and only. The Moissanite Solitaire Collection



**2 Carat
Solitaire Ring
at
67% OFF**

IN THE NEWS:
*Moissanite is a game changer...
A hot trend in big bling—
an alternative to diamond...”
— Today Show on NBC*

To Call It a Diamond Would Be an Insult

*Possessing fire, brilliance, and luster that far surpasses that of a diamond,
this Nobel Prize winner's discovery sparkles unlike any gemstone on earth.*

When French chemist, Henri Moissan discovered an incredibly rare mineral in a 50,000 year-old meteorite, little did he know the amazing chain of events that would follow. Along with winning a Nobel prize, he gave the world a stone that surpasses even the finest diamond in virtually every aspect that makes a woman go weak in the knees. And, we have this swoon-worthy stone right here for a down to earth price.

The Stauer *Moissanite Solitaire Ring* and Earrings feature 4 total carats of sparkling perfection elegantly prong-set in sterling silver. Four total-carats of diamonds with this color and clarity would cost more than \$40,000. Much rarer than a diamond, Moissanite is the superior choice, both in beauty and in price.

The most brilliant fine stone on earth. According to the GIA (Gemological Institute of America), Moissanite outperforms all jewels in terms of its brilliance, fire, and luster. Brilliance comes from the flashes of white light reflecting from the top and sides of a gemstone. This light show is known as refraction. Moissanite has “double refraction”— which means light goes down into the stone and comes out not once, but twice. No diamond can do this. The way the light dances inside Moissanite is something to behold.

The genius of affordability. Two years ago Moissanite was over \$1,000 a carat. Now, for the first time in history, Stauer gemologists have perfected the science of romance, enabling us to price two carats of moissanite at \$199. It's pure genius. Our Nobel Prize-winning chemist would be proud.

100% Money Back Guarantee. If for any reason she doesn't fall in love with the *Moissanite Solitaire Ring* or Earrings, simply return them within 30 days for a full refund of the item price. But we have a feeling she'll be over the moon.

UNIQUE PROPERTIES COMPARISON

	Refractive Index (Brilliance)	Dispersion (Fire)	Luster
Moissanite	2.65-2.69	0.104	20.4%
Mined Diamond	2.42	0.044	17.2%

Moissanite Solitaire Collection

Solitaire Ring (1 carat) ~~\$399~~ **\$99**
 Solitaire Ring (2 carat) ~~\$599~~ **\$199**
 Solitaire Earrings (2 ctw) ~~\$499~~ **\$199**
2 ct Solitaire Ring & Earrings ~~\$1,098~~ **\$299**

Best Deal!

Available in 14K white gold...call for details

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* Special price only for customers using the offer code versus the price on Stauer.com without your offer code.



Rating of A+

• Exquisite 2 carat Moissanite • .925 sterling silver setting • Whole ring sizes 5-10



MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER

KATHI
CALVERT

Power Forward

EVERY DAY WE wake up to a new opportunity to power forward. Some days are the easy, blue-sky days. Some days we get to find our strength. A pandemic, hurricane or some personal challenge pushes us forward. Regardless of the situation, Houston County Electric Cooperative's goal is to provide you with the best service possible.

Over the years we have worked diligently to maintain affordable rates while continuing to improve service reliability. We make every effort to control costs. Yet over time our costs have increased, and our operating margins are thin. Part of our responsibility is to protect the financial integrity of Houston County EC for current and future members. As such, we are increasing energy rates 3%, effective November 1.

Before the pandemic the board deliberated for months, analyzing a cost-of-service study as well as considering affordability to our members prior to approving a rate increase. We did not anticipate the disruption created by the pandemic, and the board acted quickly in March to delay the rate increase to help our members during these uncertain and unprecedented times.



TREVOR BROOKS | HOUSTON COUNTY EC LINEMAN

However, while we strive to avoid rate increases, we recognized this postponement would only be temporary. Our energy rates have remained unchanged since 1989. We have increased our base charge three times for a total of \$6 over that same 31-year period. We have become more efficient and effective over the years, but our operating margins have averaged 1% over the past five years. Disruptions such as hurricanes and tornadoes could eas-

ily put us in a precarious financial situation, a reality that we cannot ignore.

We want you to know we take our commitment to safety, service and reliability seriously. We will never be frivolous with your resources, nor do we take for granted the opportunity to serve you. Our grid could be 100% reliable, but it would come at a price nobody could afford. So we try to find the balance: striving to improve your service while maintaining affordable rates. This increase will be less than \$3 per month for our average residential member.

Being part of a cooperative is different. We care about our members and work with you to understand your needs because you are also an owner. While we need margins to operate, any revenue in excess of the cost to operate is ultimately your margin and returned to you. Members have contributed to our success over the years, and it is our duty to give back to those members.

This year the board is retiring \$5 million in capital credits. For many this may seem counterintuitive. You may wonder why are my rates increasing while you are giving money back? The definition of cooperate is to work jointly toward the same end. As a part of a cooperative established in 1939, many, many people have built and maintained the \$89 million utility plant we use today. Members from past years deserve to have their capital returned. Current members need to contribute fairly to sustain our system for the future.

During the challenging economic times resulting from the pandemic, the board found it prudent to substantially increase the capital credits retirement to \$5 million, and we hope this helps you. The pay-it-back and pay-it-forward model is fundamental to our nonprofit cooperative. We will use your resources wisely to provide the best possible service we can, and we will give any excess back to you, our owners. We work together to maintain Houston County EC—past, present and future. ■

Then. Now. Always.
We're proud to power your life.

**October is
National Co-op Month.**



#powerforward

Houston County Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

CONTACT US

P.O. Box 52
Crockett, TX 75835
Local (936) 544-5641
Toll-Free 1-800-657-2445
Web houstoncountyelec.com

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Kathi Calvert

Board of Directors

Dan Courmier, President
Kennon Kellum, Vice President
Mitchell Huff, Secretary-Treasurer
Mary L. Pearl Adams
William Emmons
Kay Reed
Charles "Chuck" Siems
Grady Wakefield
David Whittlesey

24/7

**Outage
Hotline
Number**

For information and
to report outages,
please call us.

TOLL-FREE
1-800-970-4232

ABOUT HOUSTON COUNTY EC

HCEC owns and maintains more than 5,100 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 15,000 members in Anderson, Angelina, Cherokee, Freestone, Houston, Leon, Madison, Trinity and Walker counties.

BUSINESS HOURS

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

MEMBER SERVICE

For general information during business hours:
(936) 544-5641 local
1-800-657-2445 toll-free

To report an outage, press 1.

To make a payment over the phone
or speak with a member service
representative, press 2.

For electrical connects, transfers and
disconnects or any other problem with your
electrical service, press 3.

Para hablar con un representante que habla
español, presione 4.

VISIT US ONLINE

houstoncountyelec.com



NOTICE OF RATE CHANGE

Houston County Electric Cooperative is providing notice that it intends to change rates for electric service. Pursuant to Texas Utilities Code section 41.061, the cooperative has adopted a resolution approving the changes to the rates as presented below.

RESIDENTIAL - SCHEDULE R

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CURRENT CHARGE</u>	<u>UPDATED CHARGE</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
<i>KWh Charge</i>			
• Delivery	\$0.03465/kWh	\$0.03569/kWh	\$0.00104/kWh
• Energy	\$0.05765/kWh	\$0.05938/kWh	\$0.00173/kWh

SEASONAL - SCHEDULE S

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CURRENT CHARGE</u>	<u>UPDATED CHARGE</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
<i>KWh Charge</i>			
• Delivery	\$0.06891/kWh	\$0.07098/kWh	\$0.00207/kWh
• Energy	\$0.04719/kWh	\$0.04861/kWh	\$0.00142/kWh

SMALL COMMERCIAL - SCHEDULE C

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CURRENT CHARGE</u>	<u>UPDATED CHARGE</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
<i>KWh Charge</i>			
• Delivery	\$0.03465/kWh	\$0.03569/kWh	\$0.00104/kWh
• Energy	\$0.05195/kWh	\$0.05351/kWh	\$0.00156/kWh

The amount of the kWh charge for Residential service, Seasonal service and Small Commercial service have been in effect and unchanged since 1989.

LARGE COMMERCIAL - SCHEDULE LP-1

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>CURRENT CHARGE</u>	<u>UPDATED CHARGE</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
Demand	\$5.50/kW	\$5.67/kW	\$0.17/kW
Energy	\$0.05100/kWh	\$0.05253/kWh	\$0.00153/kWh
Minimum Bill	\$5.50/kW	\$5.67/kW	\$0.17/kW

The rates for Large Commercial "LP-1" service have been in effect and unchanged since 2019.

The proposed increases are necessitated by increases in overall operating costs for the cooperative since that time.

The effective date of these updated charges will be November 1, 2020, or as soon thereafter as may be allowed by law.

If you have questions regarding these changes, please give us a call at (936) 544-5641, and we will be happy to discuss these changes with you. You are also invited to attend a **public meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 13,** at the cooperative's headquarters in Crockett to discuss these changes with the staff.



Mitchell Huff, Secretary



Houston County EC Exists To Make Your Life Better, Not Make a Profit

STARTING NOVEMBER 1, Houston County Electric Cooperative members in the residential, seasonal, small commercial and large power rate classes will see a cost increase of 3% per kilowatt-hour. The Houston County EC Board of Directors concluded that this adjustment was necessary due to increases in overall operating costs. This decision was made prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but a further decision was made to delay the rate adjustment due to our sensitivity to the well-being of our consumer-members.

During these difficult times, we suspended nonpayment disconnects, gave consumer-members options for payment plans tailored to their specific needs and started the HCEC Relief Program for bill assistance. We understand the economic challenges that our consumer-members face, and we will continue working to control costs by operating safely and efficiently to provide the most reliable electric service possible.

The kilowatt-hour rates for residential, seasonal and small commercial services have been in effect since 1989. Over the past 31 years we have only increased the base charge by \$6 for residential service and small commercial service.

The Main Reasons Your Electric Rates Are Increasing

Keeping your lights on. This may sound simple, but it's an honest statement. **Maintaining 5,162 miles of line requires significant work and investment, including:**

- ▶ Trimming rights-of-way.
- ▶ Inspecting lines for safety.
- ▶ Testing poles.
- ▶ Protecting the grid from cybersecurity threats.
- ▶ Delivering personal service from local employees.

These are just a few of the elements contributing to the high standard of service and reliability that you receive from HCEC.

How Will This Increase Affect My Bill?

On average, Houston County EC residential members use 1,000 kWh per month. Our average residential consumer's bill will be \$2.77 more per month. ■

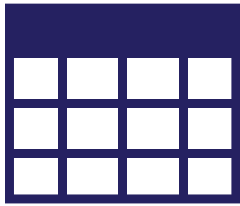




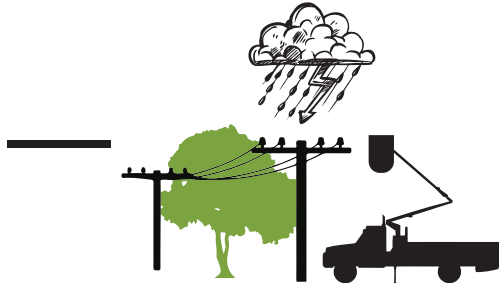
Capital Credits

Getting cash back over time.

As a not-for-profit, all revenues that HCEC receives through monthly bill payments, beyond the cost of providing reliable electric service, remain the property of our consumer-members and are returned in the form of capital credits.



The money you pay for electricity every month (revenue)



The cost to maintain and deliver reliable electric service (expenses)

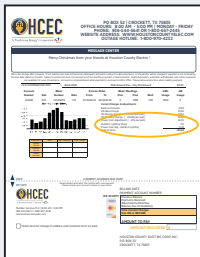
MARGINS

The money left over at the end of the year after all expenses have been paid are allocated as capital credits.



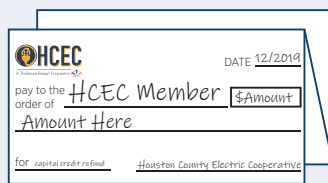
HOW DO I RECEIVE MY CAPITAL CREDIT?

Capital credits are dispersed in two ways. Active members will receive a credit applied to their account. Former members, who no longer have an account where credits can be applied, will receive a check in the mail sent to the last address provided to us.



CURRENT MEMBERS
APPLIED TO YOUR BILL

OR



FORMER MEMBERS
MAILED AS A CHECK

\$5 MILLION

WILL BE PAID IN DECEMBER 2020.

The following years capital credits will be paid in 2020:

- 1986
 - 1987
 - 1988
 - 1989
 - 1990
 - 1991
 - 2019
- 32% of the year will be paid at this time.

100% of these years will be paid at this time.

HOW IS THE CAPITAL CREDIT AMOUNT DETERMINED?

Capital credits are allocated to all members at the end of every year. Capital credits represent the assigned share of the cooperative's margins based on the amount of kilowatt-hours used for that year. You will see your allocation for 2019 margins on your November bill. Capital credit payments will be made in December.



A RESIDENTIAL MEMBER

uses 3 kilowatts a year

and receives \$

IN CAPITAL CREDITS



A COMMERCIAL MEMBER

uses 5 kilowatts a year

and receives \$\$\$\$

IN CAPITAL CREDITS

WE ARE GOING TO
miss you

AT THE FISH FRY...
but we're going to
power through.

Don't forget:

JOIN US THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29
FOR OUR 81ST VIRTUAL
ANNUAL MEETING.
(details on dustcover)

Also...

Come by the office in October to get your member appreciation bag! Members who have completed their Proxy Card are eligible. Please practice social distancing guidelines and CDC recommendations when visiting our office.



(1 per member. Please bring your proxy card.)

We know that 2020 has been a big year, filled with a lot of uncertainties. Houston County EC would like to thank you for allowing us to virtually serve you this year.

We hope you understand that we always have your best interest at heart, and that includes your health and safety.

We are going to continue to power forward into the future while remaining true to our cooperative values and to you, our member-owner.



FOTOSTORM STUDIO | ISTOCK.COM

Almond Pumpkins

1½ cups almond butter, smooth or chunky
1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon almond extract
4–5 cups powdered sugar
36 whole roasted almonds
2–3 cups white candy chips, or
3–4 squares white bark coating
Red and yellow food coloring

1. Blend almond butter, butter and extracts in a bowl. Add powdered sugar and mix thoroughly until firm. Shape into about 1½-inch balls. Push an almond into the top of each ball to form a “stem.” Cover and place in freezer until firm.

2. Melt candy chips or bark coating. Add food coloring as desired and stir. Dip pumpkins into coating and place on waxed paper to harden. Cool before serving.

MAKES 3 DOZEN COOKIES

TCP Find this and more delicious recipes online at [TexasCoopPower.com](https://www.texascooppower.com).



Beachcombing at home.

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
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Give friends and family the Best of Texas.

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 **TexasCoopPower**

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

\$29.95

It's the Law: Move Over or Slow Down

Lineworkers dedicate long hours to ensuring affordable and reliable electric power. The new “move over/slow down” law reminds us to do our part to keep our utility workers safe.

Look for flashing lights

When you see a utility vehicle on the side of the road with its amber lights flashing, move over a lane. When you move over, you're giving workers the room they need to safely complete their work.

Slower is safer

If you do not have an extra lane to move into, the law requires you to slow down 20 mph below the posted speed limit. A slower-moving vehicle is a safer vehicle.

And keep in mind, significant fines give this law teeth.

Your electric cooperative encourages you to always practice safety.





When you need it

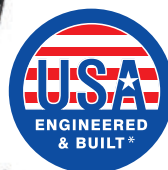
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PRO MAX34

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4 Tow-Behinds Models



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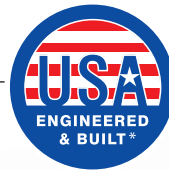
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Oil Field Mysticism

The quest to find buried treasure produced scammers and their gadgets

BY CLAY COPPEDGE • ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PLUNKERT

A TRAVIS COUNTY farmer named Charles Rolff devised an apparatus in the 1930s he called a doodlebug machine, which he believed would locate large underground deposits of oil. “It was described as a secret tube, sealed at both ends,” United Press International wrote. “At one end, there was an opening to insert a 15-inch fork with two handles. In operation, a man takes the fork in both hands with the tube up and holds it over the land or leases, and by some way he can tell whether the land has oil-bearing possibilities or whether it’s dry.”

The doodlebug worked on generally the same principles as a divining rod that dowzers used to find water. Only certain people were believed to have the gift of sensing water or other deposits through the devices.

Rolff and a group of investors sued the Pearl Oil Company for proceeds and royalties in 1935, claiming the company used his doodlebug to find oil in Rusk County. A Williamson County jury decided that the presence of a doodlebug was irrelevant. The jury didn’t say the doodlebug didn’t work, just that it didn’t matter.

An appeals court ruled against Rolff. In his written opinion, James McClendon, chief justice of the Court of Civil Appeals, said, “We take judicial knowledge of the scientific fact that there is no virtue whatever in the ‘doodle bug’ in locating oil or other substances underneath the earth.”

In the early days of oil exploration, a doodlebug or divining rod made as much sense to some people as geology or seismology. In establishing the rule of capture as the water law of the land, the Texas Supreme Court in 1904 had deemed that underground water is too “secret, occult and concealed” to regulate. If the capricious behavior of underground water smacked of mysticism, so did underground oil.

Around the same time Rolff was promoting his doodlebug, two men, Ralph Malone and Vivian Buie, were hawking a gadget that operated on the same mysterious principles. In 1935 Malone and Buie found themselves in court, charged with swindling Houston investors out of \$20,000. Buie was sentenced to five years for mail fraud. Malone got three years.

Lawyers Arthur Heemann and C. Ray Smith not only lost the case for Malone and Buie but also

ended up as defendants on mail fraud charges. They hired their own lawyers who argued the two men were not swindlers, even though Heemann had been charged five years earlier for promoting a bogus outfit called the Oil Investors Company. Heemann and Smith were acquitted.

By the late 1940s, the Securities and Exchange Commission was investigating Malone for hawking a device he called a magnetic logger. The SEC concluded: “The claims made for its efficacy in discovering oil were the usual ones and were false.” A 1951 injunction put an end, once and for all, to Malone’s shenanigans.

But oil field fraudsters changed with the times. When America became fascinated with UFOs, Silas Newton and Leo GeBauer claimed to have a machine that “operated on the same magnetic principles as the flying saucers.”

They said they came across a device after an alleged spaceship crashed in Aztec, New Mexico, in 1948. Newton and GeBauer convinced author Frank Scully they were telling the truth, so he published a book called *Behind the Flying Saucers* in 1950 that sold 60,000 copies. *True* magazine checked out the book’s claims in 1952 and deduced that Newton and GeBauer were “oil con artists who had hoaxed a gullible Scully.”

A jury agreed. A headline in the *The Denver Post* announced the verdict: “‘Saucer Scientist’ in \$50,000 Fraud.” Their UFO-inspired oil-finding machine turned out to be a box of radio parts with a bunch of cool-looking dials and switches.

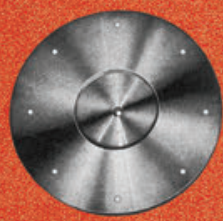
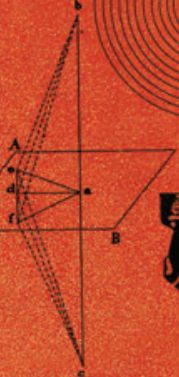
In 1936 the Society of Exploration Geophysicists warned young geophysicists about employing “black magic” or “doodle-bug” methods based on unproven properties of oil, minerals or geological formations.

However, in the 1982 book *Geophysics in the Affairs of Man*, the authors noted that the term doodlebugger had taken on a new meaning by the 1950s.

“Twenty years later, it was a badge of honor to be known as a doodlebugger, i.e., the field personnel of geophysical crews,” they wrote. “Still later, the term was applied to everyone who worked in exploration geophysics.” ■

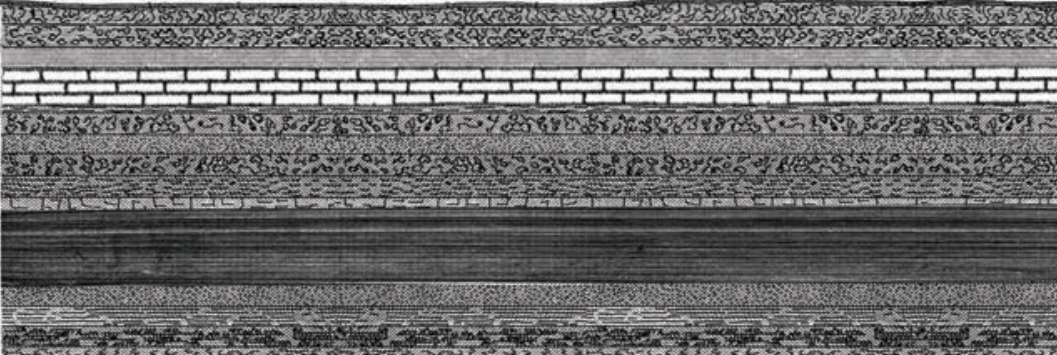


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30	800	1375	1985	2650	2950	3200
40	900	1575	2220	2950	3200	3425
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Plunkert



WE'RE BRINGING FLEXY BACK

The Stauer Flex gives you vintage style with a throwback price of **only \$79**.

Just like a good wristwatch movement, fashion is cyclical. And there's a certain wristwatch trend that was huge in the 1960s and then again in the 1980s, and is ready for its third time in the spotlight. We're talking, of course, about the flexible stretch watch band.

To purchase a vintage 60s or 80s classic flex watch would stretch anyone's budget, but you can get ahead of the crowd and secure a brand new version for a much lower price.

We're rolling back the years AND the numbers by pricing the *Stauer Flex* like this, so you can put some bend in your band without making a dent in your wallet.

The *Stauer Flex* combines 1960s vintage cool with 1980s boardroom style. The stainless steel flex band ensures minimal fuss and the sleek midnight blue face keeps you on track with date and day subdials.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed.

Experience the Stauer Flex for 30 days. If you're not convinced you got excellence for less, send it back for a refund of the item price. Your satisfaction is our top priority.

Time is running out. As our top selling watch, we can't guarantee the Flex will stick around long. Don't

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— Jeff from McKinney, TX

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Rating of A+

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EMERGENCY PRODUCTION!



Actual size is 40.6 mm

Rush Production of U.S. Silver Dollars Creates 2nd Lowest Mintage in History

One of the most popular ways to buy silver is the Silver Eagle—legal-tender U.S. Silver Dollars struck in one ounce of 99.9% pure silver. When the COVID-19 pandemic began sweeping the world, demand skyrocketed. But there was a problem...

U.S. Mint Halts Production

West Point, the U.S. Mint branch that normally strikes Brilliant Uncirculated (BU) Silver Eagles, went into lockdown. Prices quickly shot up, and freshly struck Silver Eagles became much harder to find at an affordable price. To meet the rising demand, the U.S. Mint knew it had to act—and act fast.

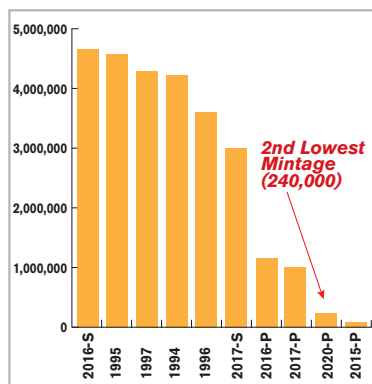
Philadelphia Steps Up

For just 13 days, the U.S. Mint struck an “Emergency Production” run of U.S. Silver Dollars at the Philadelphia Mint. This was great for silver buyers, and *really* great for collectors. Here’s why:

The Mystery of Silver Bullion

A coin’s value is often tied to its rarity. One way to determine a coin’s rarity is by its mint mark—a small letter indicating where a coin was struck. Since Silver Eagles are almost always produced solely in West Point, the coins don’t feature one of these mint marks. But this year’s Silver

Eagles were also produced in Philly—so few (a scant 240,000) that they are now the second smallest mintage of Silver Eagles ever struck! So how do we tell a 2020(W) Silver Eagle from a 2020(P)?



Certified “Struck at” Coins

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC) is one of the world’s leading third-party coin grading services. Thanks to some skilled detective work, they have certified these coins as being struck at the Philadelphia Mint during this special Emergency Production run. What’s more, a number of these coins have been graded as near-flawless Mint State-69 (MS69) condition—just one point away from absolute perfection!

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We’re currently selling these coins for \$79 each. But you can secure them for as low as \$59 each when you buy 20 or more and mention the special call-in-only offer code below. Call 1-888-201-7639 now!

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Mint:	Philadelphia (P)
Weight:	1oz (31.101 grams)
Purity:	99.9% Silver
Diameter:	40.6 mm
Mintage:	240,000
Condition:	Mint State-69 (MS69)
Certified:	Emergency Production

2020(P) Emergency Production American Eagle Silver Dollar

NGC MS69 Early Releases — ~~\$79~~

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Main Street in Desdemona at the height of the oil boom in 1918, which was also when the flu pandemic struck.

Boomtown Pandemic

The deadly flu outbreak of 1918 hit oil fields hard

BY GENE FOWLER

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has drawn comparisons to the influenza outbreak of 1918, what became known as the Spanish flu, which was the 20th century's deadliest pandemic. The Spanish flu infected about 500 million people, or one-third of the world's population, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates. Tens of millions died worldwide, including approximately 675,000 Americans.

Of the 5,000 Texans killed in World War I, a third are believed to have died from influenza. While the battlefield, with soldiers crowded in makeshift ramparts, provided a natural incubator for the virus, social conditions during

Texas' early 20th-century oil boom also allowed the disease to spread unchecked. The lack of suitable housing and access to fresh water, and poor sanitation in towns besieged by thousands of boomers — as Ranger, Burkburnett and Desdemona were in 1918 — created an environment in which infection flourished.

Researcher Ben Wright found evidence of the boomtown epidemic in the Oral History of the Texas Oil Industry, an archive of recordings held by the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. "Part of my job is to work out ways the center's collections inform current issues," said Wright. "The past is never lacking in its

warnings, lessons and reassurances."

The interviews and other materials in the archive were gathered in the 1950s and include direct testimony about the 1918 flu pandemic.

Interviewee Walter Cline, who later became mayor of Burkburnett, served as field director for the Red Cross at Call Field near Wichita Falls when the flu hit. Cline headed into the Burkburnett oil field with doctors and nurses as well as food, clothing, medicine and other donated resources. His team found people "suffering from flu and exposed in covered wagons and under these tarpaulins," he said. "In one place, you'd find a mother dead, with a little 6- or 8-months-old baby crawling around over her breast, trying to open her dress. ... I think on our first trip west of Burkburnett, we gathered up some six or eight dead men, women and children, and they continued to die until we found temporary shelter for them."

Fred Jennings, a rig manager at Goose Creek Oil Field near Baytown, recalled, "The people died, and they just died so fast here till they didn't have no undertakers. You'd just have to put them in pickup trucks and haul them to Houston. Just put them in a pine box and bury them any way you could. ... I saw one man working and walk home and was dead in 30 minutes."

Don Carleton, Briscoe Center executive director, says we don't know the full impact of the 1918 pandemic, but the disease reached Texas' highest office. Researching his forthcoming biography of Gov. William P. Hobby, Carleton learned that Hobby fought the deadly contagion just as desperately as the roughnecks of the oil fields.

"I was quite surprised to learn that even our state's governor was afflicted with the disease," Carleton said. ■

Buckles, Betties, Cobblers and Crisps

Lots of names for turning fruit and a crunchy topping into irresistible treats

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Buckles and betties and cobblers and crisps—whatever you call them—are the essence of comforting, down-home cooking. Everyone has their favorite recipe in their back pocket, no matter the season. Our family is partial to crisps. That buttery, crunchy topping is tempting enough to eat on its own, and pairing it with juicy fruits (and a scoop of ice cream) makes it difficult to resist. Another bonus: These dishes are easy to make, so dessert can happen any night of the week.



Mixed Berry Pistachio Crisp

5 tablespoons cold butter, plus more for greasing the dish
4 cups frozen mixed berries
1 tablespoon lemon juice
¼ cup sugar
4 tablespoons flour, divided use
1 cup rolled oats
¼ cup chopped pistachios
⅓ cup brown sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon cinnamon

COOK'S TIP To make this recipe gluten free, use oat flour, almond flour or your favorite gluten-free blend.

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a 9-inch pie dish or oven-safe skillet with butter.
2. In a large bowl, add berries, then sprinkle lemon juice over the top. Combine sugar and 2 tablespoons flour and sprinkle over berries; mix well. Pour into the prepared pan.
3. In a small bowl, combine oats, pistachios, brown sugar, 2 tablespoons flour, salt and cinnamon. Cut in butter using a pastry blender or two forks until large clumps are formed and no dry bits remain. Sprinkle topping evenly over fruit mixture.
4. Bake 45–50 minutes, until browned and bubbly.

SERVES 6

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



Cherry Blueberry Buckle

BECKEY BROWN
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

BUCKLE

**½ cup (1 stick) salted butter, softened,
plus more for greasing the dish**

½ cup sour cream

½ cup sugar

1 egg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Zest and juice of 1 orange

¼ teaspoon salt

¾ cup heavy whipping cream

2 cups pancake and waffle mix

1¼ cups frozen pitted cherries

¾ cup frozen blueberries

2 tablespoons brown sugar

TOPPING

1¼ cups heavy whipping cream

¼ cup powdered sugar

Zest and juice of 1 orange

Mint leaves, for garnish

1. BUCKLE Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with butter or cooking spray and set aside.

2. Using a stand mixer, cream butter, sour cream and sugar. Add egg, vanilla, orange zest and juice, salt, and whipping cream, mixing on low to combine.

3. Slowly add pancake and waffle mix, scraping down sides as needed while mixing.

4. Spread batter into prepared pan and top with cherries and blueberries. Sprinkle top with brown sugar.

5. Bake 30–35 minutes, until toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean and buckle is puffed and brown. Let cool slightly before serving.

6. TOPPING While the buckle bakes, whip the cream, powdered sugar, zest and juice



\$500 WINNER

PB&J Peach Cobbler

CHUCK BURGESS
HEART OF TEXAS EC



The unexpected addition of peanut butter makes this cobbler a dish reminiscent of your favorite childhood lunch. To make the mixing easier, warm the peanut butter and preserves in the microwave for 10–15 seconds.

SERVES 12

**½ cup (1 stick) butter, plus more
for greasing the dish**

¾ cup crunchy peanut butter

¾ cup milk

1 cup sugar

1 cup flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

**1 can (29 ounces) sliced peaches
in juice, drained**

¾ cup peach preserves

½ cup brown sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 13-by-9-inch glass baking dish with butter.

2. Melt remaining butter in a medium bowl. Whisk in peanut butter then milk until blended.

3. In another bowl, mix the sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Add the butter mixture and stir until blended. Pour into baking dish and spread evenly.

4. In a medium bowl, mix peaches, preserves and brown sugar. Then spoon evenly over batter. Bake 40–50 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and juices are bubbly.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

TACOS DUE OCT 10

Whether you love them soft, crunchy or puffy, tell us what makes your tacos the best. Enter at TexasCooPower.com/Contests by October 10.

CONTINUED >

RECIPES CONTINUED

together until soft peaks are formed. Chill until ready to serve. Serve buckle with a dollop of whipped cream and a mint leaf.

SERVES 12



Spiced Apple Cobbler

C. PAIGE YOUNG-CANNON
PEDERNALES EC

You don't need to peel the apples, making the prep easy enough for kids like Sylvia Cannon, who submitted this recipe with the help of her mom.

FILLING

- 1 **tablespoon butter, melted, plus more to grease baking dish**
- 5 **small sweet apples, cut into chunks**
- ¼ cup sugar**
- 2 **teaspoons cornstarch**
- 1 **teaspoon cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground ginger**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- Pinch of salt**

TOPPING

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened**
- ¾ cup plus ⅓ cup sugar, divided use**
- 1½ cups self-rising flour**
- 5 teaspoons cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground ginger**
- ¾ cup milk**

COOK'S TIP If you don't have self-rising flour, you can make your own. For each cup of all-purpose flour, add in 1½ teaspoons baking powder and ½ teaspoon salt.

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-by-9-inch ceramic baking dish with butter and set aside.

2. **FILLING** In a large bowl, pour melted butter over cut apples. Add sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, vanilla and salt. Stir and set aside.

3. **TOPPING** In a separate bowl, cream butter and ¾ cup sugar until pale and fluffy. Add flour and toss to coat the butter, then cut coated butter into the flour using a pastry blender or two forks. The mixture should resemble sandy crumbs.

4. Add remaining sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and milk. Mix until smooth; it will be very thick.

5. Pour filling into prepared dish, making sure to include any accumulated juices. Dollop the topping evenly over the apples.

6. Bake until topping is golden and puffed, and filling is bubbling, about 45 minutes.

SERVES 8

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Matagorda Island Lighthouse

Ancient tower once guided ships to Indianola

BY CHET GARNER

IF THE HEAT DIDN'T TAKE ME, the mosquitoes would, so I pedaled as fast as I could through the grass and sand, hoping I was rolling in the right direction. I was committed to seeing the Matagorda Island lighthouse, and the price of admission is a 2.5-mile trek across this desolate island.

The barrier island is 38 miles long and uninhabited, save for a small outpost used by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. TPWD ran a daily ferry to the island until 2003, when a fire destroyed the state's boat, and the ferry service was lost in the flames. If you want to visit Matagorda Island now, you either float your own boat across Espiritu Santo Bay or enlist a fishing guide in Port O'Connor. I reached the island with the help of guide Mike Bohac, who delivered me to Matagorda, pointed toward the lighthouse and said, "Head that way."

After an hour of pedaling, I could see the lighthouse. It was built in 1852 to guide ships through Pass Cavallo on their way to Indianola. Numerous renovations and a relocation raised the structure to where it now sits, 91 feet above sea level. The Confederate States army tried to blow up the lighthouse to keep it from falling into Union hands, but the cast-iron structure survived.

I peered into a small glass window at the bottom of the lighthouse and wondered what the view was like from the top. Volunteers open it up on special occasions, but my trip was not one of those. Near the lighthouse, I inspected the foundation for the lightkeeper's home and a small cemetery where deceased keepers lie in rest, still guarding the tower.

It was easy to imagine the isolation they must have felt here on the edge of Texas. ■

ABOVE Chet takes a selfie with the 1852 Matagorda Island lighthouse.

TCP WEB EXTRA See Chet's video from the Matagorda lighthouse and check out his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.

Know Before You Go

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

OCTOBER

03

Alvarado [3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25, 31] Sunset Hill Tree Farm Pumpkin Patch, (817) 713-6114, sunsethilltreefarm.com

08

Tyler [8-11] Fall Fun—Hunter/Jumper Horse Show, (903) 882-8696, texasrosehorsepark.com

09

Ingram [9-10, 16-17, 23-24] Count Dracula, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

10

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

Kerrville Kerr County Market Days and Hill Country Swap Meet, (830) 459-6198, kerrmarketdays.org

Brenham [10, 16-17, 24] Hot Nights, Cool Tunes, (979) 337-7580, downtownbrenham.com

11

Dallas Prism Health North Texas Virtual LifeWalk 2020, (214) 521-5191, lifewalk.org/event/lifewalk

16

Austin [16-19] American Institute of Architects Austin Homes Tour, (512) 452-4332, aiaaustin.org/homes-tour/2020

Terlingua [16-17] Ride 4 Trails, (432) 371-3382, ride4trails.com

17

Tyler [17-18] North Texas Hunter Jumper Club Fall Horse Show, (903) 882-8696, texasrosehorsepark.com

20

Edinburg [20-24] Virtual Los Muertos Bailan, (956) 383-6246, edinburgarts.com/ losmuertosbailan

22

Canton [22-24] Classic Country & Honky Tonk Halloween Party, (903) 245-6300, visitcantontx.com

24

Grand Saline Goody Trail & Trunk or Treat on Main, (903) 962-5631, grandsalinemainstreet.com

New Braunfels Simpson Texas Car and Bike Show, (830) 625-1774, playinnewbraunfels.com

Kerrville [24-25] Haunted Ghoul Pool, (830) 257-7300, kerrvilletx.gov

Rusk [24-25] Pumpkin Patch Train Ride, (855) 632-7729, texasstaterailroad.net

Buffalo Gap [24-Nov. 7] Scarecrow Festival, (325) 572-3365, taylorcountyhistorycenter.org/ scarecrow-festival

26

Jacksonville Trunk or Treat, (903) 586-2217, jacksonvilletexas.com

28

Rosanky Christmas in October Toy Drive, (512) 360-3968, rosankybaptistchurch.com

30

Tyler [30-Nov. 1] Texas Rose Autumn Breed Show, (903) 882-8696, texasrosehorsepark.com

MORE EVENTS >

TCP *Submit Your Event*

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

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COURTESY CHISHOLM TRAIL HERITAGE MUSEUM



Pick of the Month

Two Women Look West

Cuero, Oct. 8–Nov. 1
(361) 277-2866,
chisholmtrailmuseum.org

The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum features photographs of the King Ranch by Helen C. Kleberg and Toni Frissell. Kleberg was a self-taught photographer and wife of the longtime CEO of the King Ranch. Frissell was a New York fashion photographer. They photographed the King Ranch from the 1930s to the 1950s.

OCTOBER EVENTS CONTINUED

31

Kerrville Family Fright Night, (830) 257-7300,
kerrvilletx.gov

Kerrville Pumpkin Run/Walk and Harvest Festival, (830) 315-5762,
kerrvillekroc.org

Austin [Oct. 31–Nov. 15] Virtual Texas Book Festival, (512) 477-4055,
texasbookfestival.org

NOVEMBER

01

Houston Rockin' Resiliency Virtual Luncheon, (713) 623-6543,
thewomensfund.org/events

Lubbock West Texas Latino Artist Día De Los Muertos Celebración, (806) 792-1212,
loshermanosfamilia.org

07

George West A Day of Stories, (361) 436-1098,
dobie-westtheatre.com



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The modern self-portrait, a selfie captures Texas life in a personal way. Now, thanks to technology, it's easier than ever to put ourselves in someone else's boots.

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

GAIL WISE
TRI-COUNTY EC

This little fella "came over any time we worked the cows."

VIRGINIA GARCIA
KARNES EC

Cinnamon, a new chick on the farm, loves taking selfies.

DOUGLAS RATCHFORD
BLUEBONNET EC

"An early morning flight in a good friend's 1930 Waco biplane."

DOLLY HOLLINGSWORTH
SAN PATRICIO EC

"I said smile for the camera, and she sure did."



Upcoming Contests

DUE OCT 10 Saddles

DUE NOV 10 Diners

DUE DEC 10 Storms

Enter online and review submission rules at TexasCoopPower.com/Contests.

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



Francisco “Panchito” Flores of San Antonio is a third-generation *charro*—Spanish for cowboy—learning the Mexican rodeo tradition of *charreada*.

Memorable Moment

Look for striking portraits in your everyday life

STORY AND PHOTO
BY JULIA ROBINSON

WHEN I BECAME a photojournalist, portraits were a dreaded assignment. I wanted to document real people living real lives, not direct them like a studio photographer.

Initially I hid behind my documentarian role to avoid the hard work of corralling light. But as I learned more about portraiture, I wanted to get better—so I consumed the lavish sets of Annie Leibovitz; the sculpted light of Martin Schoeller; the whimsical, dark vision of Dan Winters; the dynamism of Robert Seale.

Making an emotional connection with a subject to tell a story with an image is a skill I find more valuable than slick lighting, perfect hair and teeth, or a celebrity face. The portraits made by Dorothea Lange, Diane Arbus, Robert Frank, Walker Evans and Sally Mann

have helped me tell the story of a person, a place or a moment in history.

I’ve gotten better at lighting and directing people who begin a photo session with, “I hate photos of myself.” The most meaningful portraits I have made are not those for a newspaper or a business client. They’ve been grandparents at someone’s wedding, my nieces as they grow, my family at ease. The portraits I value the most are the environmental and the informal.

Looking back through my family photos, it’s the candid portraits that stand out. A moment of connection between family members, the peak action of a laugh, the details of a bedroom or a set of toys that add to the nostalgia. Portraits don’t always need to be taken in a studio or in our best clothes. They can be “found” in our everyday lives.

The class photo on the mantel has an official purpose—to pause the march of time from grade to grade. The same is true for the annual family Christmas card and the child in bluebonnets. The images that stop me in my tracks, however, are the laughter, the quiet connection, the unaware expressions of self.

The only secret is practice. Try bringing your camera everywhere for a day. If you make picture-taking a seamless part of everyday life, the people you photograph won’t think twice when you point the lens in their direction.

Hunt the good light in your house, your backyard or on the walk to the park. If you want to make a noncandid portrait, the window light from a north- or south-facing window will be the most flattering, along with the golden hours just before dusk and just after dawn.

Observe the moments that spark your connection and joy. Think about what makes a person light up, and see if you can capture it. One fleeting and hard-won image like this is worth a thousand studio sessions. ■

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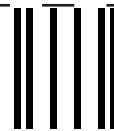


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