

GRANDMA IS A  
TIKTOK STAR

HOLIDAY SIDE DISHES  
FOR YOUR GATHERINGS

WHEN TEXAS REACHED  
INTO WYOMING

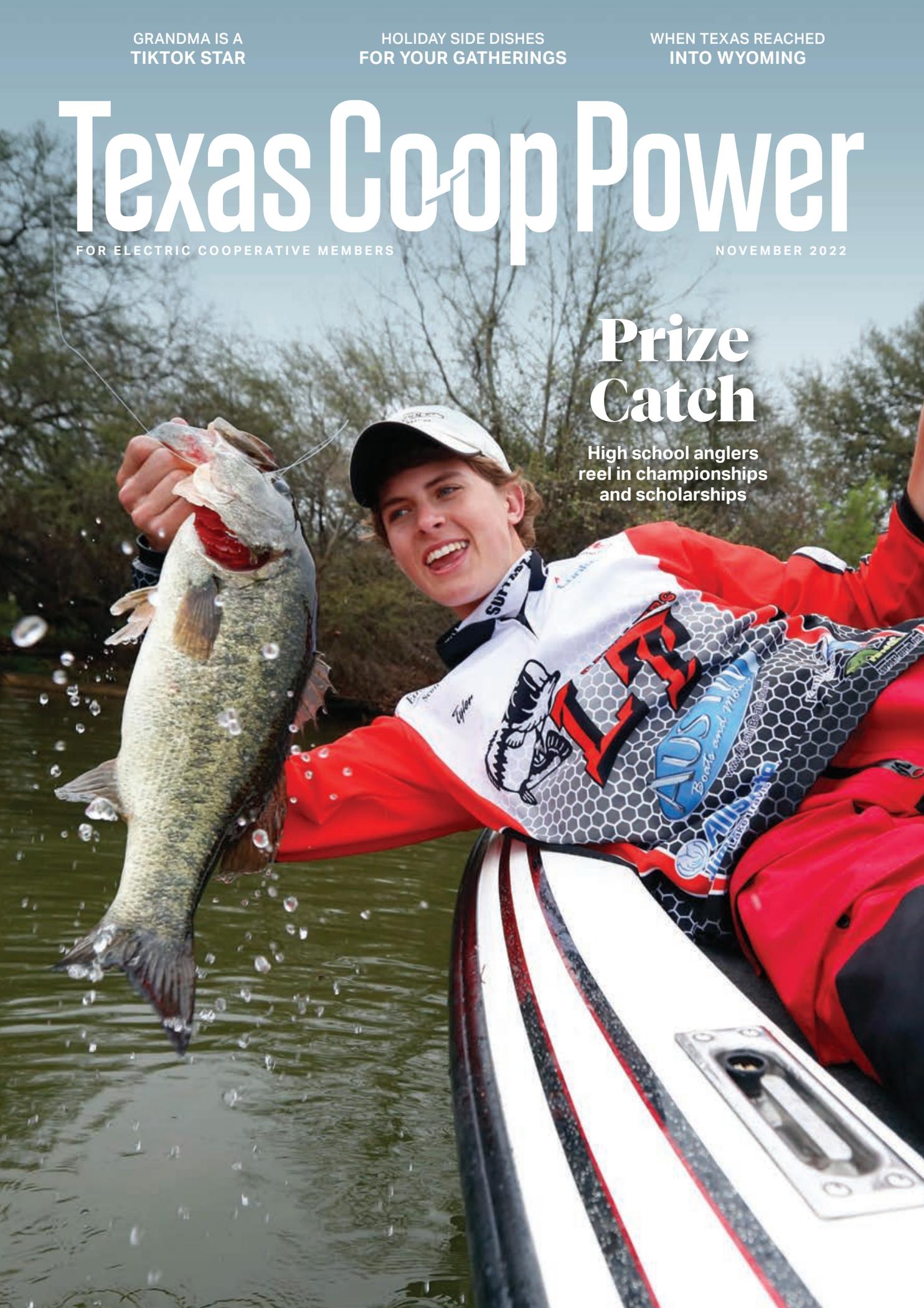
# Texas Coop Power

FOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

NOVEMBER 2022

## Prize Catch

High school anglers  
reel in championships  
and scholarships



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# November 2022



08

## Grandma Goes Viral

She's a TikTok star whose down-home videos have amassed a global following.

*By Mark Wangrin  
Photos by Scott Van Osdol*

## 12 Lakes' Allure

High school anglers get their hooks into lucrative tournament prizes and experiences.

*Story and photos  
by Erich Schlegel*

ON THE COVER

Tyler Anderson of Lake Travis High School lands a bass during a tournament.

*Photo by Erich Schlegel*

ABOVE

Dawn Hodges has put her Bellville kitchen on the social media landscape.

*Photo by Scott Van Osdol*

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*By Martha Deeringer*

# Over the Moon

**WANT TO SEE** a total lunar eclipse?

The moon will pass through the darkest part of the Earth's shadow November 8, a phenomenon that will be visible in Texas wherever skies are clear.

Check it out 2:01–7:58 a.m. It's the last chance to see a total lunar eclipse from Texas until March 14, 2025.



## Edible Edifice

The Traditions Club near Texas A&M University holds the world record for the largest gingerbread house, built in November 2013 in Bryan.

The brown gingerbread bricks lacquered in frosting required 1,800 pounds of butter, 7,200 eggs, 7,200 pounds of flour and nearly 3,000 pounds of brown sugar.

All told, the house stacked up to be 60 feet long, 42 feet wide and 10 feet tall. Oh, and it contained nearly 36 million calories.

## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I ...

**TCP** Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to [letters@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:letters@TexasCoopPower.com) or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town.

Below are some of the responses to our September prompt: **Rural life is ...**

Seeing the dust rise a mile away and knowing you better get the laundry off the line and folded before mother pulls into the driveway.

BARBARA TWEED  
TRI-COUNTY EC  
FORT WORTH

Seeing more tractors go by your house than cars.

JOHN AND SHERRIE MOORE  
BLUEBONNET EC  
PAIGE

When you see every star in the sky and you can hear every sound that nothing makes.

COREY JACOB  
PEDERNALES EC  
DRIPPING SPRINGS

Knowing and helping your neighbor even though he's acres away.

ROBERT LANKFORD  
HOUSTON COUNTY EC  
APPLE SPRINGS

Far from Walmart.

ANGEL GORKA  
CECA  
MAY

Visit our website to see more responses.

## 75 Years of Insight

*Meet the Press*, the longest-running program on American TV, first aired November 6, 1947.

# Dig This

**NOVEMBER 4** is Arbor Day in Texas.

Your electric cooperative wants to keep you safe and your power on, reminding you that regardless of where you're planting, never dig without first calling 811 to locate underground utilities.



## Landmark Election

Edith Wilmans became the first woman elected to the Texas Legislature when Dallas County voters chose her 100 years ago this month—November 7, 1922.

She served one term in the House and then ran unsuccessfully for governor.

Make sure to cast your vote on Election Day, November 8.



## S-U-R-R-E-A-L

That's how San Antonio teen Harini Logan, above, described winning the 2022 Scripps National Spelling Bee in June.

Surreal could also describe Texans' prowess at spelling. Three of the other 12 finalists call Texas home. And Logan joins six other Texans who have won outright or shared titles since 2014.

That includes three from the state who were among the octo-champs in 2019—the only time eight contestants were co-champs.

### *Contests and More*

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TAYLOR CALLERY

Roll Call

“In 1959 my bus driver, Mr. Wisely, gave me a Standing Liberty quarter when he saw me crying over losing my Big Chief tablet.”

DAN KING  
LAMAR ELECTRIC  
PARIS

Returning Home

I loved the article showcasing young people returning to the family farm as entrepreneurs [*Connecting With the Land*, September 2022]. I am in a similar circumstance with my rancher father in a San Saba nursing home.

We have been in the area for five-plus generations, but I have lived all over and find I, too, am a “weirdo.” Glad to see I am not alone.

I was also pleased to see the article highlight how one family set up a business inviting more diverse communities, including LGBTQ and people of color, to the area to camp.

Michelle Pollock  
Hamilton County EC  
Lometa

This is a delicious burger [Homemade Popper-Topped Burgers, August 2022]. And the topper can also be tweaked into a topper for something hot off the grill. Yum.

MELINDA WOOD  
SASARAK  
VIA FACEBOOK

Costly Payoff

Kirk Tidwell’s statement, “I only get paid once a year, and this is my payday right here,” shook me [*Prized Fibers*, July 2022]. I guess I have always known that farmers only get paid when crops are sold, but seeing it in writing made it so real. Farmers and others in agriculture should be the most appreciated workforce in this country.

Roberta McLaughlin  
Heart of Texas EC  
Lorena

Landry’s Followers

As I traveled around the country, I tried to schedule trips to coincide with a Cowboys game [*The Most Glorious Autumn*, August 2022]. I watched Coach Landry sign autographs in every hotel lobby for almost 30 minutes before he could make it to the elevator.

Bill “Cowboy” Lamza  
San Bernard EC  
Hempstead



JULIA ROBINSON

**TCP WRITE TO US**  
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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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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.

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# Watch Grandma Cook

She's a TikTok star whose down-home videos have amassed a global following

## THE MOST UNLIKELY TIKTOK INFLUENCER

in Texas lives in an old country house behind a scattering of oak and hickory off Highway 36 about 5 miles north of Bellville, which is about the time it takes to drink a beer, judging by the number of empties Dawn Hodges usually finds beside the roadway in front of her farm.

Quick-witted and flashing a smile beneath her piercing blue eyes, this Houston native is 76 years old, not quite 5 feet tall, uses glasses sparingly and can hear a visitor knock on the back door from her kitchen at the other end of the house.

We mention the kitchen because that's how we got here. Dawn cooks—well. And she loves to share her recipes on a social network most septuagenarians are as likely to use as a skateboard.

"I don't have the big head," says a bemused Dawn. "I'm not feeding off it—but I am enjoying it. I never thought people would be so interested in watching a grandma cook."

And yet, here she is, a TikTok star who has posted 173 videos and boasts more than 200,000 followers; her three-minute video on how to make pickles has 1.9 million views. At a follower's request, she filmed a shorter video with her 17-year-old grandson, Caden, and his friend, sampling the pickles, crunching loudly and looking happy. It got 166,800 views. Heck, a TikTok of her riding a tractor got 42,400 hits.

If there's one thing about a grandmother being a TikTok star that makes sense, it's that Dawn loves to talk. A visitor could come with 30 minutes' worth of questions and leave



OPPOSITE Dawn Hodges serves up a plate of fresh-baked oatmeal chocolate chip cookies. ABOVE Hamburger steak, as TikTok viewers see it come together.

four hours later with a notebook full of scribbling and a belly full of her delicious chocolate zucchini cake. (Yes, her recipe is on TikTok.)

A question about her cooking might lead to a yarn about Willie, the ill-fated family pig. One about how many critters she has on her farm turns into a tale of Squeaky, a sturdy, good-tempered feral cat who likes to kill gophers and drag them above an open door in her garage, much to the dismay of her two dogs—and anyone standing there when the door comes down.

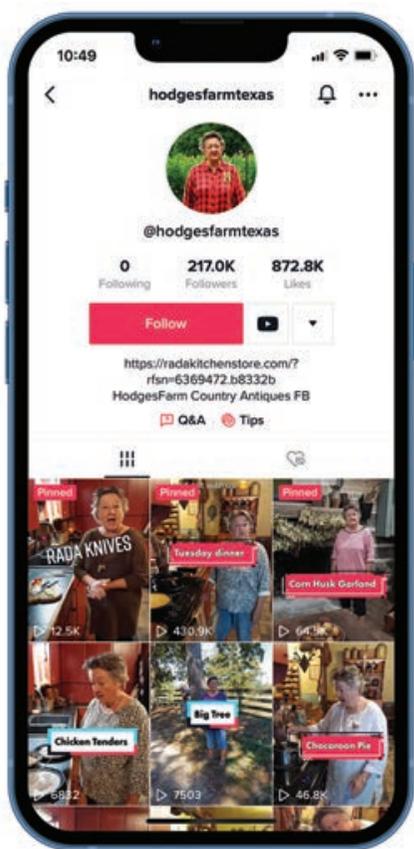
Outside the house, cobbled together from homes and parts of homes from the 1800s and filled with antiques of the same period, is the rest of the L-shaped, 95-acre

spread. There's the potting shed, a garden, a log cabin and an older structure surrounded by an overhanging porch that served as a commercial kitchen when Dawn and her late husband, Doug, gave a go at a business—a result of her fame as the Pimento Cheese Queen of Bellville, a story for another day—but now houses antiques and a refrigerator she stocks with farm eggs that neighbors can stop by and pick up on the honor system. Out back is the barn, a chicken coop, pasture, pond and the home of her daughter, Amy Owens.

Amy sparked Dawn's TikTok adventure because she wanted others to enjoy her mom's prowess in the kitchen.

"Well, I've always wanted to do that," Amy says, "because she's really good at telling people what to do. Anybody will tell you that."

And Dawn could always cook. Anybody will tell you that, too.



FROM LEFT Millions of viewers like seeing what Hodges is up to in her kitchen. Grandson Caden Owens shows the simplicity of producing a TikTok video. “I never thought people would be so interested in watching a grandma cook,” Hodges says.

**I**n October 2020, Doug passed away. He spent 31 years as an office and then business manager at San Bernard Electric Cooperative before retiring in 2005, and he slowly succumbed to dementia. “It was the worst time of my life,” Dawn says.

Looking to lift her mother’s spirits, Amy suggested producing videos for YouTube and later Facebook. Dawn admits the videos were long and unfocused, but it was valuable experience.

One evening about a year ago, Amy, Caden and Dawn were eating supper when Caden said, “You should put them on TikTok. That’s where the videos go crazy.”

So they posted a blackberry custard pie video, and it has since gotten over 54,000 views. “And we’re like, whoa,” Amy recalls.

Her fame took off from there, with Dawn getting to share her passion with strangers all over the world.

“I don’t care whether you believe it or not, but God puts stuff on your heart,” she says. For her, that has almost always been cooking.

As a child, Dawn spent summers on her Aunt Mary’s farm. Mary was a superb cook, and Dawn was inspired. Dawn’s mom “cooked because she had to,” so Dawn became the self-

taught family chef-in-residence.

Enter TikTok, where creators can make short videos, ranging from a few seconds to up to 10 minutes, often set to music and modified by filters. It skews young—almost half its users are under 25.

After making its international debut four years ago, TikTok has captured short attention spans among Americans. The platform boasts 3.5 billion mobile app downloads worldwide. It’s a popular platform for businesses, marketing and entertainers trying to make it big and people who create memes, attempt unusual challenges and generally try to go viral.

Dale Blasingame hates the expression. “I think marketers use it too much,” says the assistant professor of practice in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Texas State University, where he specializes in social media. “They promise everything will go viral. If you’re producing consistently good content, you have a much greater chance of something finally hitting than if you’re doing nothing but trying to go viral all the time.”

Which brings us back to Dawn. Blasingame can see why she’s successful.

She looks different from many TikTok performers, he says. She’s genuine, displaying a rare comfort level with the platform, unlike many her age. Her videos have solid production value (“Just me and my fancy Samsung phone,” Amy says), aren’t overproduced and are clear, simple and easy to understand.

And she’s typecast for her role.

“When you stop to think about who you trust with cooking



tips, she kind of fits the exact bill, right?” Blasingame says. “Especially when you think about the typical TikTok user, who’s probably between 15 and 30. She’s Grandmother’s age.”

Not much is known about the algorithm TikTok uses, but one thing that’s obvious, Blasingame says, is that it’s equal opportunity.

“The greatest aspect of TikTok’s algorithm is that you don’t already need to be a celebrity, a superstar or a big name or have a big following to become a shining star on TikTok,” he says. “Unlike Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, it’s the one platform where anyone, literally anyone, can produce one piece of content that can catapult them to tens of thousands, even a million, followers.”

That’s not lost on Dawn, who ponders the ridiculousness of becoming a TikTok influencer.

“This blows my mind,” she says, shaking her head. “I thought TikTok was just a bunch of kids jumping around and acting crazy.”

She has also become aware of the flip side of TikTok fame—the trolls. Commenters will rag on her for using Velveeta instead of traditional cheese, for mentioning God a lot or any one of a dozen or more things.

“I had to almost ban a troll last night for just being tacky

**“This blows my mind. I thought TikTok was just a bunch of kids jumping around and acting crazy.”**

because Mom used a packet of gravy on her hamburger steak instead of making it homemade,” Amy says.

Dawn has her go-to reply for those instances: “I just respond with a heart emoji.”

**T**he rest of her followers bring her joy. She hears from fans in Finland, Mexico, Canada, Germany and France, to name a few, and some ask for recipe substitutes when they can’t find some of the ingredients she grows in her spacious garden. And then there’s the Corpus Christi artist who created an oil painting of Dawn in 80 minutes, recorded a time-lapse video of the process and sent the TikTok to her.

She’s got a new fan, too. Blasingame, who became a vegetarian in May, still is intrigued by Dawn’s videos. There are the biscuits and sweet potato casserole, of course, but there are also memories of his own mother, who passed away in 2021.

“She kind of even looks like my mom a bit; they have a very similar hairdo,” he says sweetly. “When I watched her videos, that was the first thing that popped into my mind. My mom was a great cook.

“I wish I had videos like this preserved in time, you know, to try to remember all of her amazing recipes.”

Thanks to TikTok and Dawn Hodges, he kind of already does. ■



# Lakes' Allure

High school anglers get their hooks into lucrative tournament prizes and experiences

## How about a big fish tale?

Within the first few casts at the 6 a.m. start of one of the biggest Texas high school fishing tournaments this year, Hunter Boren and Joe Fleming hooked the biggest catches of the day—within seconds of each other. Captain and boat driver Mike Boren had to scramble to figure out which fish to net first.

“Mine weighed 7.95 pounds, and seconds later Joe caught his that weighed 7.6 pounds,” Hunter Boren says. “Those first few minutes were insane madness.”

With those fish, the Pearland High School seniors won the Texas High School Bass Association’s Angler of the Year tournament on Lake Conroe in June. Three weeks earlier, the team scored nearly the same quick hits to finish seventh in the THSBA State Championship on Belton Lake in Temple.

On the first day of the state championship—within minutes of the sunrise start—Fleming caught the first and biggest fish of that day. The 5.81-pound bass jumped once, then Fleming quickly wrangled it into the net, pumped his fist and high-fived Hunter Boren.

The Angler of the Year event is the final tournament in the THSBA circuit, which includes more than 50 tournaments. According to Matt Tolnay, who heads operations for the series, more than 3,100 anglers from 300 Texas schools compete for more than a half-million dollars in scholarships.

Boren and Fleming each won \$3,000 scholarships and \$1,000 gift cards from Academy Sports + Outdoors for winning Angler of the Year. Because THSBA isn’t part of the state’s University Interscholastic League, it can award prizes and scholarships.

The THSBA is the largest fishing circuit for high school anglers, but there are several smaller series, including Deep East Texas High School Fishing, based at the Sam Rayburn



OPPOSITE Early positioning—4 a.m.—helped Joe Fleming, left, and Hunter Boren land 30 pounds of bass and first-place trophies.  
ABOVE Boat captain Mike Boren prepares to net one of Fleming’s bass.

Reservoir; the Central Texas High School Tournament Trail; and Texas B.A.S.S. Nation, run by Bassmaster.

On THSBA tournament days, boat ramps are busy with teams backing their crafts into a lake in the dark well before dawn, their glowing red and green navigation lights reflecting on the water. The tournament organizer gathers the teams to announce the rules and time for weigh-in.

Then, as dawn’s colors creep into the sky, anglers stand on their bows as the national anthem is played over a loudspeaker. When the starting horn goes off, teams zoom off to their first fishing spots, which they had identified in their preparation for the day. Tournaments are typically won in the first hour of fishing.

The rules are similar at most tournaments: one or two anglers per boat, driven by a registered adult “captain” (usually a parent). One- and two-day tournaments will usually start at 6 a.m., with weigh-in starting mid-afternoon. Anglers keep fish in live wells in their boats, then transfer them into oxygenated water troughs using a perforated bag for weigh-in. The heaviest bag of fish wins. The fish are then released back into the lake.

Most tournaments hold a practice fishing day before the competition begins, offering crucial preparation for competitors learning a new lake. Experienced anglers will know the fish patterns for that time of year—a serious advantage. Another way to get a leg up: Rise early on tournament day.

“In the Angler of the Year tournament, we were in our spot just after 4 a.m. and waited there to hold that spot until we could start fishing at 6 a.m.,” Hunter Boren says. “Fishing tournaments is competitive, but after weigh-in, it gives you the opportunity to walk around and meet new people from around the state.”

More than 3,100 anglers from 300 Texas schools compete for more than a half-million dollars in scholarships.

Mark Hooker, coach for the high school fishing teams from Montgomery, north of Houston, calls his program the most decorated in the state. “This year we have 92 anglers and are very competitive within our own team,” he says.

That competitive spirit led one of his teams to a historic national championship.

Although most high school anglers are boys, more and more girls are getting out on lakes. Montgomery anglers Fallon Clepper and Wyatt Ford, students at Lake Creek High School and members of MidSouth Electric Cooperative, won the 2022 High School Bass Fishing National Championship—the top tournament in the U.S. for high schoolers—in June at Pickwick Lake near Florence, Alabama.

The team spent 11 days practicing at the lake, researching fish patterns and water levels. Their hard work paid off, and Clepper became the first female national champion. “We definitely had our game on,” says Clepper, who split the \$10,000 cash prize with Ford. “My parents and grandparents were jumping up and down and cheering at the weigh-in.”

There’s big money to be made in professional bass fishing. But these days, there’s another route for turning passion for the sport into a career.

Tyler Anderson founded the Lake Travis High School fishing team when he was a sophomore, finishing fourth at state his senior year, in 2015. When he got to Texas A&M University, he joined the school’s fishing team and started expanding a YouTube channel he started back in 2013. Nine years, 782 videos and a quarter-million subscribers later, Tyler’s Reel Fishing boasts more than 32 million views, and Anderson is able to make a living off his content and sponsorships.

“I’m pulling my new 2022 FXR21 Skeeter bass boat with a Yamaha 250-horsepower engine and Native Slayer 10 kayak on my truck roof rack—all sponsors of mine,” Ander-

son says over the phone as he drives to Michigan to film smallmouth bass fishing. “I get paid by them and from YouTube ads.”

Anderson, a Pedernales Electric Cooperative member, helps pro anglers Alton Jones and Alton Jones Jr. of Lorena, outside Waco, with their video content.

“I enjoy being outdoors with friends and family, making memories,” Anderson says. “As soon as I realized I could make a living fishing, I compared that to my friends’ jobs and realized that I could make a career out of my passion if I worked as hard as I could.” ■

ABOVE Wyatt Ford, left, and Fallon Clepper teamed up to win the 2022 High School Bass Fishing National Championship, making Clepper the first girl to do so.



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## Giving Thanks to Those Who Serve

NOVEMBER, AS YOU UNDOUBTEDLY KNOW, is a month in which Americans give thanks.

Naturally, what comes to mind is the holiday at the end of the month, when many gather with family and friends to count their blessings and enjoy a shared feast. I can think of many reasons to be thankful, including the fact that I am a member and employee of Medina Electric Cooperative, a business that exists to serve others. Spending every day alongside our talented employees who are focused on providing the best possible customer service to our members is truly a blessing.

However, there is another opportunity in the month to give thanks, and this one involves thanking others for making sacrifices on our behalf. This day falls on November 11, and it recognizes the men and women who have protected the freedoms we all enjoy.

This Veterans Day, I encourage you to thank the people you know—family members, friends or acquaintances—who have worn the uniform and served this country in the military. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our co-op employees and board members who have served, for everything they have done for our country and everything they continue to do for their fellow employees and for our members. Please take a moment to reflect on what this day is truly about: to appreciate and recognize those who serve today and who served in the past and to remember their sacrifices, service with honor and dedication—and those who love and support them. It is because of veterans and their families that we as Americans can enjoy the freedoms that we often take for granted.

No matter the branch of service or the conflict, we all owe these people our gratitude for preserving and defending our great nation. It's a debt that we cannot repay but one that we can honor by sharing with them our thanks.

Until next time,  
Trey Grebe

I would like to honor our employees and board members who have served this great country. Those employees and board members are:



**Doug Kindred**  
Chief IT Officer  
U.S. Marine Corps



**Jose Montalvo**  
System Administrator  
U.S. Navy



**Edward Varnador**  
Journeyman  
U.S. Army



**Ken Weynand**  
Board Member  
U.S. Army

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## Keep Your Winter Bills Low

**IT SEEMS INTUITIVE** that electricity use increases during winter, when sunlight is limited, days are shorter and temperatures are much lower. You're surely aware of the battle to keep your home a decent temperature during those colder months.

How can you also keep money in your wallet while being comfortable? Use the tips below to conserve energy and save money.

Reduce wasted heat by installing a programmable thermostat. Most importantly, be sure to program it after it is installed so that you won't waste energy and money heating your home when you aren't there. When using the heater, set the thermostat to 68 degrees when home—and lower when away—to save money. Be sure to change your filters to keep your heating unit running smoothly.

Turn off lights when not in use. Replace incandescent lightbulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75% less energy.

Lower the temperature on your water heater. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends using the warm setting (120 degrees) during fall and winter months.

Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep cold, drafty air out.

Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible. Turn off and unplug unused lights and appliances.

Be sure your home is sealed to keep the heated air you are paying for inside. Weatherstrip or caulk doors and windows, check the insulation levels in your attic, and be sure that skirting, if your home has it, is intact and well insulated.

Find more tips to help you save money this winter at [MedinaEC.org/Cold](https://www.MedinaEC.org/Cold). If you have questions on your bill, call our member service representatives at 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532).

Get tips on how to avoid high bills  
during cold weather  
at [MedinaEC.org/Cold](https://www.MedinaEC.org/Cold).



### CONTACT US

**Toll-Free** 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532)

**Email** [Info@MedinaEC.org](mailto:Info@MedinaEC.org)

**Web** [MedinaEC.org](https://www.MedinaEC.org) - Chat Feature Available

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Voting District 1

Larry Huesser, (830) 363-7651

Wayne W. Scholtz, (830) 426-1328

Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

#### Voting District 2

Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437

Jim Gates, (830) 334-7170

Kenneth White, (830) 232-6541

#### Voting District 3

Annette Sorrells, (361) 231-0173

J. L. Gonzalez, (956) 286-1863

Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

### CEO

Trey Grebe, 1-866-MEC-ELEC, ext. 1045

## Outage? Call us.

### TOLL-FREE

1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532)

**Option 2:** Report an outage

**Option 3:** Pay bill, get account balance

**Option 5:** Speak to a representative

### OFFICE LOCATIONS

**Bruni** 1300 FM 2050 N., Bruni 78344

**Dilley** 1718 W. FM 117, Dilley 78017

**Hondo** 237 Highway 173 N., Hondo 78861

**Rio Grande City** 601 N. FM 3167,  
Rio Grande City 78582

**Uvalde** 2604 Highway 90 E., Uvalde 78801

**Corporate Office** 2308 18th St., Hondo 78861

### VISIT US ONLINE

[MedinaEC.org](https://www.MedinaEC.org)



This institution is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

Información sobre todos los programas y servicios que ofrece Medina Electric Cooperative están disponibles en español al llamarnos al 1-866-MEC-ELEC o visitando una de nuestras oficinas.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: FRESHWATER FISHING SPOTS

ONE OF THIS MONTH'S FEATURES is about high school anglers and the competition of the fishing world.

Meet some of Medina Electric Cooperative's employees who are anglers themselves and hear about their favorite places to fish.

## MONTE TSCHIRHART

LAKE TAWAKONI (WILLS POINT, TX)

Lake Tawakoni is my favorite place to fish currently. My family comes from a long line of fishermen, particularly catfishing. We do not harvest the larger catfish in hopes of recatching them one day and reliving the excitement. We catch fish ranging from 2 to 60 pounds. My family likes to visit Lake Tawakoni in December when it is 32–38 degrees outside.



## SEB SUAREZ

CHOKE CANYON LAKE  
(CALLIHAM, TX)

One of my favorite places to go is Choke Canyon Lake. I usually go on a guys trip, and the fishing stories are bigger than the fish we catch.

## LEONARD GEYER

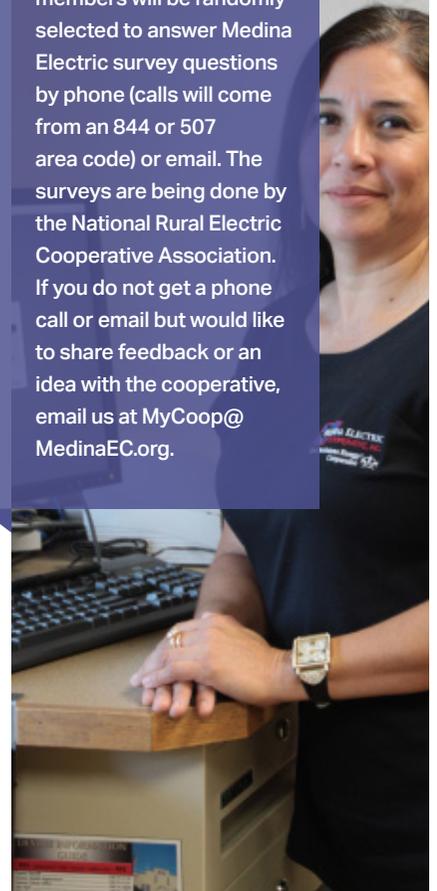
LAKE AMISTAD (DEL RIO, TX)

Lake Amistad is my favorite freshwater fishing lake for many reasons. The scenery on this 66,000-acre lake is beautiful and includes tall rock bluffs and Indian paintings along the Pecos and Devils rivers, large amounts of open, clear water on the main lake, along with a great view of the mountains of Mexico. Wildlife can often be seen along the banks, and if you're listening, birds can be heard singing their songs. Catching a trophy largemouth bass is always a possibility on Lake Amistad, and it's still a "wild" place where you can get away from it all.



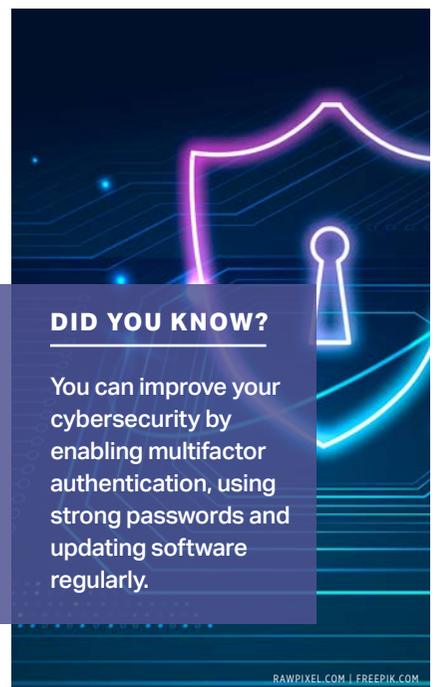
## WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

During November, 350 members will be randomly selected to answer Medina Electric survey questions by phone (calls will come from an 844 or 507 area code) or email. The surveys are being done by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. If you do not get a phone call or email but would like to share feedback or an idea with the cooperative, email us at [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org).



## DID YOU KNOW?

You can improve your cybersecurity by enabling multifactor authentication, using strong passwords and updating software regularly.





THE CITY OF ESCOBARES VFD RECEIVES A DONATED TRUCK IN SEPTEMBER. BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: FERNANDO GARZA AND LUIS GARCIA WITH THE ESCOBARES VFD; MEDINA EC BOARD MEMBERS LARRY HUESSE, R.H. RODRIGUEZ, WAYNE SCHOLTZ, JIMMIE RAINES, KEN WEYNAND, J.L. GONZALEZ, KENNETH WHITE, ANNETTE SORRELS AND CHRIS SURLS; AND LAURO E. CANTU WITH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT: TREY GREBE, MEDINA EC CEO, AND ESCOBARES VFD CHIEF LAURO CANTU.

## Retired Truck Awarded to VFD

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE AWARDED the city of Escobares Volunteer Fire Department with a retired truck as part of the larger Community Empowerment Program.

According to CEO Trey Grebe, "Medina EC has a history of serving the more rural areas of our service territory, and our members rely on the local volunteers to respond in emergency situations. Many of these departments, such as VFDs, provide critical resources in the communities they, and we, serve and we are happy to offer this program so that they can continue their efforts."

The city of Escobares VFD serves approximately 2,700 people in Starr County. The awarded truck, a 2015 Chevrolet Silverado 3500, will be used as a first attack vehicle, which is usually the first vehicle on scene for accidents and emergency events. It will be equipped with first-aid and other emergency response supplies.

When cooperative vehicles are retired from the fleet, they are generally sold at auction. In 2015, the board of directors made the decision to donate, when possible, retired cooperative trucks to volunteer fire departments that offer service in one the 17 counties in Medina EC's territory.

Past recipients of retired trucks offered through this program include San Diego, Devine, Sabinal, Nueces Canyon, Reagan Wells, Christine, El Cenizo, Atascosa-Bexar County Line, Bigfoot and Charlotte VFDs.

For more information about this program, visit [MedinaEC.org/VehDonation](https://www.MedinaEC.org/VehDonation).

# Operation Round Up Recipients

Medina Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up committee met in September and awarded donations to the following applicants.

- **Griselda and Greg Guerra** - \$500 H-E-B gift card
- **Dream Walkers Equine Therapy Center** - \$1,000

Operation Round Up is funded by Medina EC members who choose to round up their monthly electric bills to the next dollar.

If you or someone you know needs financial help, apply for a donation from ORU. Applicants do not need to be Medina EC members but must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC. ORU funds cannot be used to pay electric bills, solar panels or anything related to electricity. The 2023 application deadlines are Feb. 3, May 5, Aug. 4 and Nov. 3.

**Learn more and apply at [MedinaEC.org/ORU](https://www.MedinaEC.org/ORU).**



MEDINA EC BOARD MEMBER JIMMIE RAINES PRESENTS A CHECK TO LANE KALMRING AND DREAM WALKERS EQUINE THERAPY CENTER FOUNDER PAULINE GARCIA.

# ERCOT and Load Shedding

**THE ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL OF TEXAS** is responsible for monitoring the majority of the state's power grid and ensuring there is adequate power supply to meet consumer demand. In the event of an energy event, ERCOT may declare an emergency and issue alerts. Declaring an emergency allows the grid operator to take advantage of additional resources. Alerts help consumers, including Medina Electric Cooperative members, know that conservation is needed. If grid conditions continue to worsen, the grid operator can implement forced outages (load shed) across the state.

## Critical Care Accounts and Life Support Registry

If someone in your home depends on an electrically operated health aid, sign up for Medina EC's Life Support Registry online at [MedinaEC.org/Registry](https://MedinaEC.org/Registry). A physician's directive prescription is required. Please note, Medina EC's Life Support Registry does not guarantee there will be no power interruptions. Power outages happen for many reasons that may be out of the cooperative's control. It is recommended for members on the Life Support Registry to ensure they have an alternative power source or a backup plan in the event of prolonged outages.

If you believe your account meets the requirements for non-residential critical load status (critical load public safety, critical load industrial or critical load natural gas supply) please email us at [info@medinaec.org](mailto:info@medinaec.org).

## Notifications

As always, Medina EC will monitor ERCOT grid conditions and conservation requests or energy emergencies. If emergency requests that involve forced outages for consumers are made by ERCOT, Medina EC will comply with those as required and will send notifications as quickly as humanly possible. Please ensure the contact information on your account is correct. You can do that through SmartHub or by calling us at 1-866-632-3532.

If you wish to sign up to receive text alerts from Medina EC for ERCOT notifications, text **"ERCOT"** to **1-855-429-1119**. You are also encouraged to sign up to receive push notifications directly from ERCOT. You can do this by downloading the ERCOT app and enabling push notifications for alerts.

Learn more about ERCOT, load shed events, notifications and what to do during an event at [MedinaEC.org/ERCOT](https://MedinaEC.org/ERCOT) or by scanning the QR code.

Please know that our staff is always working hard behind the scenes; we know members expect the lights to come on when they flip the switch, and our staff wants the same. We will always do our best to restore power as quickly as safely possible.



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## Holiday Entertaining Safety Checklists

**AS THANKSGIVING** and Christmas approach, use these tips to ensure that your home is ready for festive activities.

### Fire Safety

- Test your smoke alarms monthly and make sure your house is protected by an adequate number of alarms.
- Share your fire escape plan, including the location of your outside meeting place, with any overnight guests.
- Keep halls, stairs and doorways properly illuminated and free of clutter and other objects that could hinder an escape during a fire emergency.

### Decorating Safety

- Avoid overloading electrical outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire.
- Do not place extension cords where they could be tripping hazards or under rugs or furniture.
- Keep decorations at least 3 feet away from heat sources, including space heaters and fireplaces.
- Turn off and unplug decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Use only weatherproof electrical devices for outside activities, information should be on the packaging. Protect outdoor electrical devices from moisture.
- Make sure live Christmas trees are watered daily. Pine needles are very flammable.

### Heating Equipment Safety

- Have your heating system inspected annually by a licensed, qualified professional.
- Keep space heaters out of high-traffic areas and at least 3 feet from anything flammable.
- Do not leave a space heater running unattended. Turn them off and unplug them when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Never leave a lit fireplace unattended.

# Summer 2023 Plans:

- ✓ Have unforgettable experiences
- ✓ See national treasures
- ✓ Make new friends
- ✓ Go on the trip of a lifetime!

Would your teen enjoy a **FREE** trip to Austin and Washington, D.C., in June 2023?

The Government-in-Action Youth Tour may be for them!

Apply Now!

Deadline is **January 6.**

Application and eligibility information can be found at [MedinaEC.org/YouthTour](https://MedinaEC.org/YouthTour).

**BONUS:** Winners will receive a \$500 college scholarship!



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Operation Round Up Applications Due**  
Friday, November 4

**Daylight Saving Time Ends**  
Sunday, November 6  
Set clocks back 1 hour

**Election Day**  
Tuesday, November 8

**Veterans Day**  
Friday, November 11

**Thanksgiving**  
Thursday, November 24  
Our office will be closed November 24-25 for the holiday. As always, crews will be on call.



# Medina EC Members Meet for 83rd Annual Membership Meeting

Medina Electric Cooperative held its 83rd annual membership meeting Saturday, September 24. Members and their guests gathered at Texas A&M International University in Laredo to partake in a breakfast buffet, enjoy the fellowship of friends and neighbors, hear an update on the business of the cooperative, and for a chance to win door prizes. At various booths throughout the banquet room, they also had the chance to learn about the co-op's distributed generation offerings and lightbulb energy efficiency and to test their skills and knowledge in cooperative-themed challenges. In the parking lot after the meeting, co-op linemen presented a live line demonstration about electrical safety.

Members also had the option to watch a livestream of the meeting. The employees and directors of Medina EC extend their thanks to all who attended in person and watched online. Below is a brief recap of the meeting.



Maria Alma Carrera celebrated winning the \$1,000 grand prize.

## Election Results

- District 1: Ken Weynand, uncontested
- District 2: Jim Gates, 1,007 votes (declared)  
Chris Surles, 994
- District 3: Annette Sorrells, uncontested

Eligible Voters: 20,373  
 Valid Votes: 2,001  
 Participation Rate: 9.8%

In-Person Attendance: 120  
 Zoom Viewership: 14  
 Total Memberships Represented: 134



**Left:** Board Vice President Larry Huesser conducted the business portion of the meeting. **Right:** Leo Rodriguez of Capital Farm Credit announced the 2022 board election results.

Scan this QR code to watch Medina EC's year-in-review video and learn more about the happenings of the co-op in the past year!






Children in attendance were asked to help draw prizewinners.



Safety coordinator Derly Carrizales and Medina EC linemen taught members about electrical safety during a live line safety demonstration after the meeting.



Members enjoyed answering co-op trivia questions and trying to screw on a bolt while wearing lineman gloves before the meeting.



Members learned more about Medina EC's solar and generator sales.

### Business Meeting Highlights

In his first annual meeting as Medina EC's CEO, Trey Grebe welcomed members in the room and online and introduced the cooperative's year-in-review video, in which co-op management and other personnel provided updates on the business of the cooperative and the opportunities and challenges it faces.

Leonard Geyer, chief operations division officer, addressed Medina EC's system growth, particularly the rapid development of the western part of the greater San Antonio area into the co-op's service area. Keith Calle, chief engineering division officer, also spoke about infrastructure upgrades, specifically the replacement of all 34,000 of the co-op's meters with advanced metering technology, which will help reduce the number of outages and reduce outage duration.

Laurie Van Damme, chief financial officer, presented highlights from Medina EC's 2021 annual report, which shows the co-op to be in a strong financial position. "Since Medina continues to maintain a strong financial equity position, your board has retired \$8.4 million in capital credits payments to you, our member-owners, in the past five years, which includes more than \$2 million in 2021," Van Damme said.

To close the video, Michael Harkins, business development coordinator, explained Medina EC's solar power system and Generac generator sales services, and Jackie Muennink, communications supervisor, described the co-op's contributions to the communities it serves, including employee volunteerism, monetary donations and grants to community organizations.

Employees were recognized for reaching service milestones, marked in five-year increments, in 2022. "Our employees and their dedication are a huge part of what makes electric service with the cooperative different than buying power from an investor-owned utility. As a member-owner, you are the reason we are here," Grebe said in his closing remarks. "I want to again thank you for taking the time to be here today. Cooperatives are better when members take an active role in them, and you have done that by attending or logging on this morning."



TAMIU's ROTC Color Guard members presented the colors for the Pledge of Allegiance and national anthem.



CEO Trey Grebe welcomed members to the meeting, his first at Medina EC.

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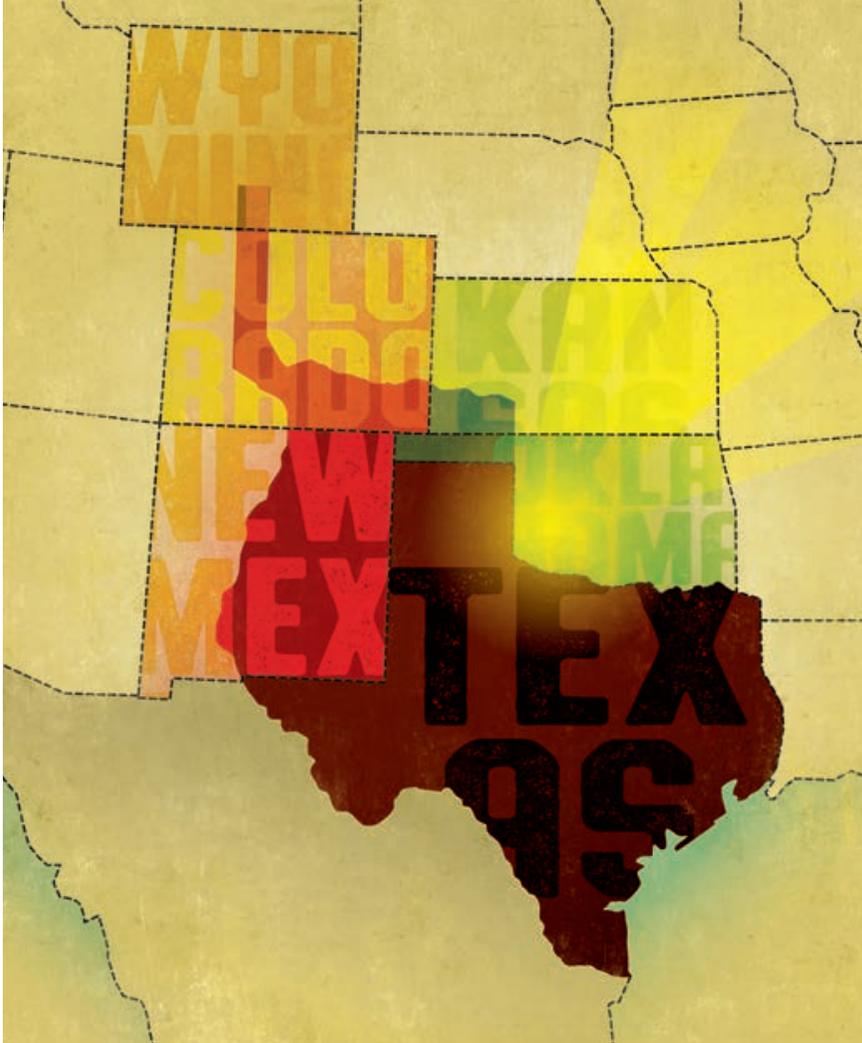
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# Everything Was Bigger ...

Lucky folks in modern-day Wyoming were Texans in 1845

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY TRACI DABERKO

**TEXANS HAVE** A kind of proverb that goes like this: “Driving across Texas isn’t a trip; it’s a damn career.”

Texas is big, no doubt about that. But it used to be a lot bigger—by about one-quarter.

When the Republic of Texas joined the U.S. in 1845, Texas’ borders were dramatically different. The northern boundary stretched all the way up into what is today southern Wyoming. The northernmost town in Texas wasn’t Kerrick; it was Rawlins—some 1,400 miles from Brownsville. A trip like that in 1845 would have been measured in seasons, not days. “We’ll leave in early spring and get there before

winter sets in.”

That slice of land was Texas’ original panhandle, encompassing part of the Rockies. They called that area the stovepipe because that’s what it looked like: a long skinny stovepipe jutting northward. You can still find vestiges of Texas up there. For instance, there’s a stream in Wyoming named Texas Creek.

Texas used to include what is today the panhandle of Oklahoma. That territory comprises three counties, one of them still named Texas County. So some Oklahomans still live in Texas—well, Texas County, anyway. Today the northern Texas border aligns with the latitude

**TCP** Listen as W.F. Strong narrates this story on our website.



established in the Missouri Compromise that restricted slavery to states south of that line.

The southwestern corner of Kansas was also originally Texas. That’s when Dodge City was in Texas. *Gunsmoke* always did seem like a Texas series. We know that Marshal Matt Dillon was born in San Antonio, and his father was a Texas Ranger. It’s all coming together.

New Mexico used to be about half its current size because Santa Fe, Taos and all of the eastern part of the state were Texas. In fact, Texas was so big in 1845 that if you had put a hinge on the northernmost part and flipped it northward, Brownsville would have been in Northern Canada, next to Hudson Bay.

So what happened to all our land? The U.S. government bought it in 1850 for \$10 million. They bought our claims in present-day Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas and Oklahoma for what amounted to 15 cents an acre. It may seem like we sold out cheap. But that’s \$380 million in today’s money, and Texas desperately needed the money.

Texas’ leaders had a state to build, but the only true assets were land—and a hardened people with unbreakable spirits. So we sold the land, paid off debts and got a much more appealing shape—one that fits nicely on T-shirts.

Even without all that land, we’re no slouch of a state. You know if you’ve ever driven it. We still measure distance in time. We still feel like we’re crossing an enormous frontier when driving Interstate 10 through West Texas or Interstate 35 north and south. And this old Texas saying is still valid: “The sun has riz, the sun has set, and here we is in Texas yet.” ■

# Holiday Sides

Tasty servings that just might take center stage

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

During the holidays, I gravitate toward the side dishes over any turkey or ham. Rolls are always a must at my house, and these Cheesy Ranch Rolls have become a family favorite. They're wonderfully soft with a zesty flavor, and any leftovers are perfect for sandwiches the next day. For a larger crowd, simply double the recipe.

## Cheesy Ranch Rolls

**2 cups flour, divided use, plus more as needed**  
**2 tablespoons sugar**  
**2 tablespoons (1 packet) ranch seasoning**  
**2¼ teaspoons (1 packet) instant yeast**  
**½ teaspoon salt**  
**¾ cup milk**  
**2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter, plus more for topping**  
**1 cup shredded Gouda or cheddar cheese**

**1.** In a bowl, combine 1 cup flour, sugar, ranch seasoning, yeast and salt.

**2.** In a microwave-safe bowl or liquid measuring cup, combine milk and butter. Microwave in 15-second increments until milk is warm to the touch but not hot. Butter does not need to completely melt; it will melt as you mix the dough.

**3.** Pour milk and butter into dry ingredients and mix well to combine. Add ¼ cup flour and shredded cheese and mix well. Stir in remaining flour in increments, just until dough forms into a ball. Scoop onto a lightly floured surface and knead dough 6–8 minutes, until smooth and springy, adding flour as needed to prevent sticking. Shape into a ball, cover with a towel and let rest 10 minutes.

**4.** Cut dough into 12 pieces and roll each piece into a ball, then place in a greased square baking dish. Cover again and let rise 30 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 375 degrees.

**5.** Once rolls have risen, bake 20–25 minutes, until golden brown. Let cool slightly, then brush with melted butter and serve.

**SERVES 12**

**TCP** Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at [stetted.com](http://stetted.com), where she features a recipe for Brussels Sprouts With Walnuts and Cranberries.





## Praline Sweet Potatoes

LANELL MCDANIEL  
SAM HOUSTON EC

This easy sweet potato dish has a wonderfully crunchy crumble topping. It's equally at home served as a side or dessert. You'll need 2–3 pounds of sweet potatoes. Excess potatoes can be used to make sweet potato waffles or pancakes.

### POTATOES

**3 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes**

**1 cup brown sugar**

**2 eggs, beaten**

**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

**½ cup milk**

**½ cup (1 stick) melted butter**

### TOPPING

**1 cup chopped pecans**

**½ cup brown sugar**

**⅓ cup flour**

**⅓ cup (¾ stick) melted butter**

**1. POTATOES** Preheat oven to 350 degrees and butter a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. In a large bowl, combine sweet potatoes with brown sugar, eggs, vanilla, milk and butter. Pour into prepared dish.

**2. TOPPING** In small bowl, combine pecans, brown sugar and flour. Stir in melted butter with a fork until a crumble forms. Scatter evenly over the top of the sweet potatoes.

**3.** Bake 30–40 minutes, until topping is golden brown and crunchy.

**SERVES 8**

[MORE RECIPES >](#)

\$500 WINNER

## Caramelized Onion Potato Medley Gratin

MARIAN EVONIUK  
PEDERNALES EC



Potato fans, this one is for you! With three kinds of potatoes, caramelized onions and a pop of dill, Evoniuk's gratin will have you reaching for seconds and thirds.

**SERVES 8–12**



- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) unsalted butter**
- 2 large sweet onions, peeled and sliced**
- ⅓ teaspoon pepper**
- 1½ teaspoons salt, divided use**
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced**
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill**
- 2½ cups heavy cream, divided use**
- 1 pound Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 1 pound red potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 2½ cups shredded Gruyere cheese, divided use**
- 1 green onion, chopped, or 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives**

**1.** Set a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat and add butter, onion, pepper and 1 teaspoon salt, and cover. Cook 25–30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onions are lightly caramelized. Add garlic and dill and cook uncovered 1 minute more.

**2.** Pour in 2 cups heavy cream and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 3–4 minutes, stirring, until mixture is slightly thickened. Remove from heat and set aside.

**3.** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with butter and set aside.

**4.** In a large mixing bowl, combine potatoes, remaining ½ teaspoon salt and 2 cups Gruyere. Pour in creamed onions and mix well, then pour into the prepared baking dish. Combine remaining ¼ cup cream and ½ cup Gruyere in a small bowl and spread over the top of the potatoes.

**5.** Cover with foil and bake 45 minutes, then uncover and bake until golden brown and bubbly, 30–45 minutes. Remove from oven and let stand 10 minutes, then garnish with chopped onion or chives and serve.

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

**INCREDIBLE EGGS** DUE NOVEMBER 10

Perfect for breakfast, lunch and dinner, eggs make for a versatile main. What great dish do you hatch? Submit your recipes on our website by November 10 for a chance to win \$500.





## Sweet Sour Red Cabbage

NANCY FILER  
COSERV

Filer's family has been serving this dish during the holidays for nearly 100 years, and it's easy to see why. Tangy and lightly sweet, it goes well with any of your favorite main dishes.

**1 head red cabbage, about 1½ pounds**  
**4 slices bacon, diced**  
**½ cup packed brown sugar**

**2 tablespoons flour**  
**½ cup water**  
**¼ cup white vinegar**  
**1 teaspoon salt**  
**¼ teaspoon pepper**

1. Shred cabbage and measure 5 cups. Boil a large pot of water and add cabbage; bring back to boil and boil 5 minutes. Drain, transfer to a mixing bowl and set aside.
2. In a large sauté pan, fry diced bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove and drain on paper towels.
3. Discard all but 1 tablespoon bacon drippings. Return pan to medium heat and whisk in brown sugar and flour, taking care to break up any lumps. Whisk in water, vinegar, salt and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until the mixture thickens, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the bacon and sauce to the cabbage, stirring gently to combine. Garnish with extra fried bacon if you like.

**SERVES 6-8**

## Planning Makes Perfect

BY MEGAN MYERS

**Wondering how much to serve at your next gathering? Use these guidelines when choosing dishes for the big meal.**

**Meat:** 6 ounces per person (not including bones).

**Appetizers:** 6 pieces per person.

**Potatoes:** ½ cup per person.

**Stuffing and casseroles:** ½ cup per person.

**Salad:** 2 cups per person.

**Vegetable sides:** 1 cup per person.

**Gravy and cranberry sauce:** ¼ cup per person.

**Rolls:** 1-2 per person.

Keep in mind that as the number of side dish options grows, guests will likely eat less of each. Also, don't forget to plan for your favorite leftovers.



## Fredericksburg

### Getaway Contest

Enter online for a chance to win a two-night getaway in Fredericksburg, including midweek lodging for two, dining and things to do.

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# HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

In the magazine and on [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com), we make it easy to shop for friends and family.



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Toe Tappin' in Turkey

Learn all about Bob Wills—the King of Western Swing—in his Panhandle hometown

BY CHET GARNER

IF YOU ASK someone to name the king of music, they'll likely mention Elvis Presley (the King of Rock 'n' Roll) or George Strait (the King of Country). However, true students of music genres will give credit to the everlasting King of Western Swing—Bob Wills. I took a trip to the Panhandle town of Turkey to pay homage to the legacy of this Texas-sized king.

Days generally pass by quietly in Turkey, unless you're here on the last Saturday in April, when thousands attend the Bob Wills Day celebration and keep string-pickin' circles going into the morning hours. I visited on a normal Thursday afternoon and found the main drag nearly empty, save for a few folks filling their bellies at Galvan's Restaurant. After polishing off a Mexican Platter No. 9, I scooted over to the old elementary school that's now the Bob Wills Community Center.

I wasn't too familiar with Wills other than a few of his hit tunes, like *San Antonio Rose* and *Bubbles in My Beer*. But inside this museum, I received a full-on education.

Wills spent much of his childhood in Turkey and began playing music right out of the crib, as his father was a champion fiddle player. Over time, Wills became enamored with musical styles that included jazz and blues. By the early 1930s, he had formed the Texas Playboys and created a new genre called Western swing, which blended all his favorite styles. It's a feat that landed Wills in both the Country Music and Rock & Roll halls of fame.

The museum is full of artifacts and stories of Wills' rise to stardom. Visitors are sure to leave with a new appreciation for the King of Western Swing—and a foot that won't stop stomping. ■

ABOVE Chet has fun fiddlin' around the tranquil town of Turkey.

**TCP** Chet tunes in to Turkey's pride and joy in his latest video on our website. Watch all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



## Know Before You Go

Call ahead or check an event's website for scheduling details.

## NOVEMBER

09

**Harlingen [9–13] Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival**, (209) 227-4823, [rgvbf.org](http://rgvbf.org)

11

**Fort Worth Tarrant County Veterans Day Parade**, [tcvc@tcvc.us](mailto:tcvc@tcvc.us), [fw2022parade.org](http://fw2022parade.org)

**Lubbock Lubbock Symphony Orchestra: Madam Butterfly**, (806) 792-8339, [buddyhollyhall.com](http://buddyhollyhall.com)

**Victoria Golden Crescent CASA Wine Pairing**, (361) 573-3734, [goldencrescentcasa.org](http://goldencrescentcasa.org)

**Salado [11–13] Scottish Gathering and Highland Games**, (254) 947-5232, [saladomuseum.org](http://saladomuseum.org)

**Ingram [11–Dec. 16] ArtMart**, (830) 367-5121, [hcaf.com](http://hcaf.com)

12

**Alvin Novemberfest**, [alvinrotaryclub@gmail.com](mailto:alvinrotaryclub@gmail.com), [alvinrotary.org](http://alvinrotary.org)

**Bastrop Red, White & Blue Veterans Appreciation Banquet**, (330) 418-9164, [rwbveterans.com](http://rwbveterans.com)

**Burton Big Star Texas Night**, (979) 251-4078, [burtontexas.org](http://burtontexas.org)

**Elgin Veterans Appreciation Parade**, (512) 281-5724, [etx150.com](http://etx150.com)

**Henderson Heritage Syrup Festival**, (903) 657-4303, [hendersontx.us](http://hendersontx.us)

**Kerrville Veterans Day Car Show and Parade**, (830) 792-2580, [kerrvilletexascvb.com](http://kerrvilletexascvb.com)

13

**Pearland Country Music Showcase**, (281) 997-5970, visitpearland.com

14

**Brazoria Henry Smith Day**, (979) 345-3335, brazoriahf.org

15

**New Braunfels [15-17] Festival of Trees**, (830) 832-0089, facebook.com/festivaloftreesnb

17

**Temple Taste of the Holidays**, altrusatemple.org

**Palestine [17-20, 23-27, Dec. 2-11, 16-Jan. 1] Walk of Lights**, (903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

18

**Bryan Lights On!**, (979) 721-9506, destinationbryan.com

**Alpine [18-19] Artwalk**, (210) 218-1114, artwalkalpine.com

**Henderson [18-20] The Magic of Christmas**, (903) 392-0691, visithendersontx.com

**New Braunfels [18-20] Weihnachtsmarkt**, (830) 629-1572, newbraunfelsweihnachtsmarkt.com

**Ingram [18-19, 25-27, Dec. 2-4, 9-11] A Christmas Carol**, (830) 367-5121, hcac.com

19

**Corpus Christi Wine Festival**, info@corpuschristiwinefestival.com, corpuschristiwinefestival.com

MORE EVENTS >

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We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your February event by December 1, and it just might be featured in this calendar.

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## Pick of the Month

### Texas Word Wrangler Book Festival

Giddings, November 18-19  
(979) 542-2716  
www.giddingspubliclibrary.org

Bookworms won't want to miss this free festival featuring Texas author talks and readings. When not speaking, authors will sell their books and sign autographs and be available for pictures.

## NOVEMBER EVENTS CONTINUED

19

**Henderson A Very Merry Market**, (318) 780-0620, kvne.com

**Luling Grinchmas Arts and Crafts Show**, (830) 875-0123, lulingcc.org

**Boerne [19-20] Fall Antique Show**, (830) 329-2870, ci.boerne.tx.us

**Fort Worth [19-20] Funky Finds Holiday Shopping Experience**, (903) 665-7954, funkyfinds.com

**Granbury [19-20] Winter Wine Walk**, (817) 488-6789, crosstimberswinetrail.com

22

**Wharton Christmas Holiday Parade**, (979) 532-1862, whartonchamber.com

26

**Jefferson Christmas Parade and Enchanted Forest Tree Lighting**, (903) 665-3733, visitjeffersontexas.com

**Nacogdoches Wassail Fest**, (936) 559-2500, nactx.us

**San Angelo Santa's Santa Fe Christmas**, (325) 486-2140, sanangelorailway.org

# DECEMBER

01

**Cameron Christmas Parade**, (254) 697-4979, cameron-tx.com

**Kerrville Symphony of the Hills: The Miracle of Christmas**, (830) 792-7469, symphonyofthehills.org

**La Grange Schmecken-fest**, (979) 968-3017, visitlagrangetx.com

**Tyler Rotary Clubs of Tyler Christmas Parade**, (903) 593-6905, visittyler.com

**Paris [1-3] Texas BBQ Blowout**, (903) 784-2501, cbabbq.com

02

**Fredericksburg Light the Night Christmas Parade**, (830) 997-5000, fredericksburg-texas.com

**Brenham [2-3] Christmas Stroll & Lighted Parade**, (979) 337-7580, jingle.cityofbrenham.org

03

**Bowie Fantasy of Lights Christmas Festival and Lighted Parade**, (940) 872-6246, cityofbowietx.com

**Fredericksburg Kinderfest**, (830) 990-8441, pioneermuseum.org

**Round Top Houston Masterworks Chorus**, (979) 249-3129, festivalhill.org

# Aerials

We're flipping over the bird's-eye view these reader photos offer. Come along as they soar to capture the beauty of the Lone Star State.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ

1 JIM BLAKE  
COLEMAN COUNTY EC

Springtime over Trickham, taken with a Typhoon H drone.

2 ROY O'REAR  
TRI-COUNTY EC

"Interference patterns in the waves made by a boat on Lake Arrowhead near Wichita Falls."

3 MIKE ZARELLA  
PEDERNALES EC

"A hawk's-eye view of the Pedernales River in Blanco County before the current drought."

4 MIKE PRESTIGIACOMO  
BARTLETT EC

Palo Duro Canyon State Park.



1



2



3



4

## Upcoming Contests

DUE NOV 10 **Land, Sea or Sky**

DUE DEC 10 **Riding the River**

DUE JAN 10 **Taking Flight**



Enter online at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://TexasCoopPower.com/contests).

**TCP** See Focus on Texas on our website for more Aerials photos from readers.



## The Arable Twos

Thankfulness and hope for a toddler's trials and travails on the farm

BY MARTHA DEERINGER  
ILLUSTRATION BY  
CHANELLE NIBBELINK

**MY GREAT-GRANDSON**, Waylon, is 2 and carries all the baggage that that designation suggests. His temper tantrums are epic, but he also finds joy in everyday things and loves with his whole heart—except when his little sister wants to play with his toy tractors and trucks. “Look!” and “Wow!” are his favorite expressions, although I fear that someday soon the dreaded “No!” will find its way onto this list.

But when I watch carefully, I can already see roots sinking into the earth beneath his constantly moving (and usually grubby) feet.

Waylon is a fourth-generation Texas farm boy finding his place among the hay fields and rocky cow pastures of his Coryell County home. When he hears the rattley roar of a diesel engine starting up,

he runs toward it as if the possibility of Grandpa or Uncle Justin leaving the machine shed on a tractor without him might mark the end of the world. When the mad dash works and I see his red hoodie perched on Grandpa's lap inside the cab of that big green tractor, I know he is in 2-year-old heaven. I can still hear the echo of our son's excited voice when he was that age, yelling for a yank on the throttle: “Pull the smoker, Daddy!”

It's not just the boys. My daughter, an elementary school librarian, can still drive a hay truck with the best of them, and granddaughter Hannah, helping scoop silage into a cow trough at the age of 8, once leaned on her shovel and announced, “You know, I may run this place someday.”

Waylon has already watched a calf being born. He has learned to be quiet so the livestock won't be disturbed. He has checked cows in the pasture from Grandpa's lap on the seat of the Kawasaki all-terrain vehicle, and he's learning to count calves (although so far, he's not very reliable beyond six).

This is how farm kids learn who they are and find their places in the world. They pick tomatoes and squash in the garden and see firsthand where their food comes from, feed and water livestock, and drop fresh eggs in the dirt on the way to the kitchen. Waylon has stepped on stickers, stirred up fire ants and been knocked down by the new Lab puppy, but none of these experiences discourage him from his never-ending quest to be outdoors.

Waylon may grow up to be an electrician or a brain surgeon, but right now he is developing a respect—perhaps even a love—for the land that feeds us. I hope that will last a lifetime. ■

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— Don W., Sherman, TX

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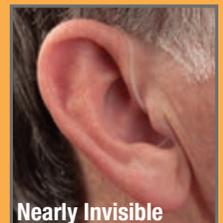
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## ADD BLAZING-FAST INTERNET! No Matter Where You Live!

# ~~\$59<sup>99</sup>~~ \$40

month for Internet

- ✓ Now with Unlimited Data!
- ✓ Speeds from 25Mbps - 1 Gbps
- ✓ Available Nationwide!



### Save up to \$20/mo.\*

\*\$ off discount offers vary by service address. TV service not required for Internet. Speeds and prices vary by provider. Call for details or visit [godish.com/internet](http://godish.com/internet).

### FREE Streaming on 5 Devices with DISH Anywhere App



Watching live and recorded TV anywhere requires an internet-connected Hopper w/Sling or Hopper 3 and compatible mobile device. On Hopper Duo, there is no live TV streaming for DISH Anywhere.

### Smart Remote w/ Voice and Google Assistant



Requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. Google is a trademark of Google LLC.



### Your Favorite Apps in One Place!



Netflix and Amazon Prime Video streaming memberships required. YouTube is a trademark of Google LLC. Amazon Prime only available on Hopper 3.

## ¡Se Habla Español!

[godish.com/pricelock](http://godish.com/pricelock) 🔍

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Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Advertisited price requires credit qualification, 24-month commitment, and eAutoPay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 11/16/22. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$69.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$79.99 for AT120+, \$89.99 for AT200, \$99.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. 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 or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. 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 \$10.99/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. Indiana C.P.D Reg. No. - 19-08615. ©2021 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly means that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.