

THE COWBOY ON THE  
CAPITOL GROUNDS

VETS BRING TO LIFE  
BUFFALO SOLIDERS

FINDING SERENITY  
DESPITE ALZHEIMER'S

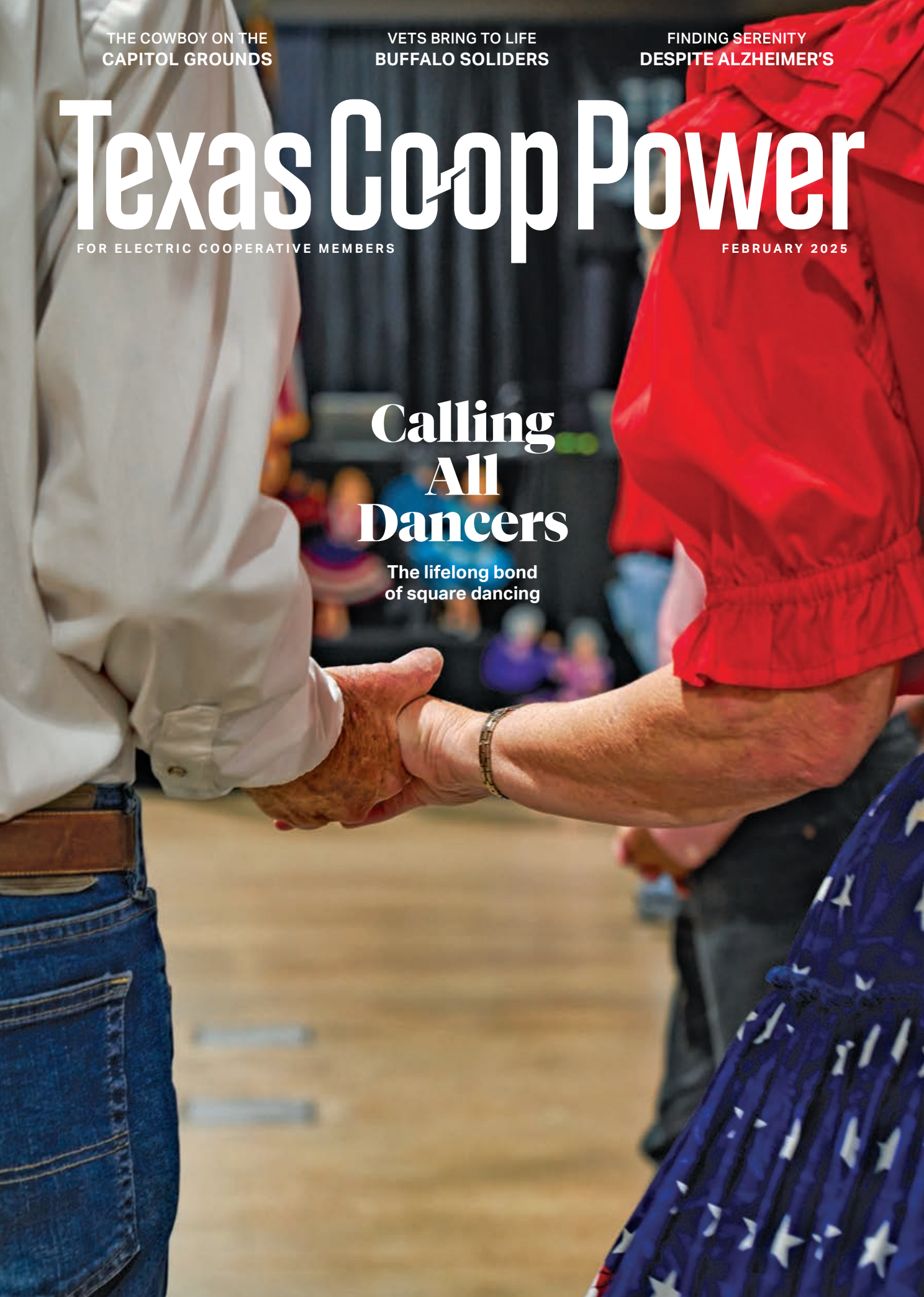
# Texas Coop Power

FOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

FEBRUARY 2025

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# February 2025



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Bill and Dolores Rowland prepare for the next dance.

*Photo by Dave Shafer*

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The Texas Cowboy Monument on the grounds of the Capitol.

*Photo by Caytlyn Calhoun*



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**RECOMMENDED READING**

Ten years ago we also looked at sculptures. Download our February 2015 issue and read about Daddy-O Wade's curious creations. Find it at [TexasCoopPower.com/magazine-archives](http://TexasCoopPower.com/magazine-archives).

# Houston Air Show

**BESSIE COLEMAN**, an exhibition flyer and Waxahachie native, performed in her home state for the first time nearly 100 years ago—June 19, 1925, in Houston.

Her greatest accomplishment came in 1921 in France when she became the first Black licensed pilot in the world. Check out *Queen Bess Soared* on our website to learn more about this aviation pioneer.

“True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.”

—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## Valentine's Cards

Lovers love Valentine's Day. So do creditors.

One study found that 1 in 3 people in relationships say they may take on credit card debt when shopping for their significant others this month. Among this group, about half won't tell their partners about the debt.



## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

### My first car was ...

**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.

Here are some of the responses to our December prompt: **My favorite holiday lights are ...**

The stars.  
SUSIE LICON  
FARMERS EC  
FARMERSVILLE

In Johnson City at Pedernales Electric Cooperative and the courthouse.

SHELIA BETZEL  
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES  
VENUS

Ones I don't have to put up or take down.

ED ROWLAND  
CECA  
CISCO

The ones reflected in my children's eyes.

JESSICA PAXTOR  
PEDERNALES EC  
LEANDER

Visit our website to see more responses.

DECEMBER 2024 Field of Beams

“After seeing the magnificent, illuminated pecan in Bartonville, I had to share another illuminated beauty, on Montclair Drive in Colleyville.”

JOHN GRAEVE  
TRI-COUNTY EC  
FORT WORTH



COURTESY JOHN GRAEVE

Sweet Memories

My grandfather (Erwin Kresta) had a farm in El Campo with an orchard of orange and tangerine trees that were so productive he let people come and pick fresh fruits [Everybody’s Beeswax, December 2024].

Next to that he had over 50 beehives, and the bees would visit the fruit trees daily—fruit-infused natural honey.

What I’d give to have some of Grandpa Kresta’s honey.

Ron Faldik  
Bryan Texas Utilities  
Bryan

A Step in the Right Direction

I’m new to going to a lease with my husband, and after reading this, I will be sure to pack a compass [The Lease of Our Concerns, November 2024].

Rosie Strode  
Tri-County EC  
Cresson

Y2K in Hindsight

I remember very well in 1999 the news media blowing the whole Y2K issue completely out of proportion [Black-Eyed Peace, December 2024]. This was nothing less than fearmongering brought on by the computer industry to get everyone to purchase billions of dollars’ worth of new computers.

Glenn Arthur Rebber  
Heart of Texas EC  
Valley Mills

You’ve given people like myself a huge compliment, and I’m glad you are so blissfully unknowing. I was one of thousands of software engineers working obscene hours ahead of the new year to keep the world running smoothly when the calendar flipped to the year 2000.

It was not a “supposed” glitch but very, very real.

Cindy Nichols  
Magic Valley EC  
Weslaco



TARA JACOBY

**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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# IT'S HIP TO BE A SQUARE

BY SAMANTHA BRYANT  
PHOTOS BY DAVE SHAFER

**IT'S MID-JUNE**, and the dance floor is hopping. Groups of eight dancers—two on each side of an imaginary square—turn, twirl, walk in time, and move in and out of a kaleidoscope of formations, skirts swirling and boots shuffling. A booming voice gives instructions over a loudspeaker: “Do-si-do, now promenade.”

One pair moves faster than the others in their square. Michael and Caroline Knight turn together and then Caroline takes an extra twirl before they start interweaving with the other three pairs.

“It’s style,” Caroline says. “It just makes it more fun. Like you can do dry, just do the moves as they are, but when you get really confident and you kind of have a muscle memory of what the moves feel like, then you start adding more spins and flair, and it just makes it fun.”

Among 272 dancers at the Brazos County Expo Complex in Bryan, Caroline, 26, and Michael, 33,



## The passionate square dance community makes room for new ideas to grow a grand tradition

are among the youngest on the floor one night at the Texas State Federation Square and Round Dance Festival. The couple, customers of Bryan Texas Utilities, met while square dancing and, after attending the same club for six years, dated then eventually married in December 2024. They say the social aspect of square dancing—the state folk dance of Texas—is one reason they do it.

“It’s like two-stepping in that you kind of have a community and that you find friends doing it,” Caroline says, “but it’s more of a community because you’re not dancing with one person, you’re dancing with seven other people.”

Square dancing is not a spectator sport nor is it a competition—it’s about having fun and developing friendships, all in time to music. And as some dancers are aging out, a

passionate corps—and even some younger folks—are getting the word out about the physical, mental and social benefits of a pastime that’s still finding its rhythm.

The 450 attendees at the four-day state festival are just some of the 2,500 square dancers who belong to more than 100 clubs across the state. That’s a lot of dancers—but a lot fewer than there used to be.

OPPOSITE The swirl of skirts and smiles that is square dancing at the Brazos County Expo Complex in Bryan.

ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Portraits of lifelong friends Mary Whitaker, Lewis Chumbley and Janet Arnold. Andrew and Elizabeth Chu. Jeff and Karen Nelson go for a spin.



“You have to leave your troubles at the door because there’s not room for your troubles and concentrating on the dance.”

“Back in the ’70s and ’80s, the state dances would have 7,000 or 8,000 people at them, and the national dances would have 30,000 to 40,000,” says Matthew Whiteacre, former president of the statewide square dance organization. “It’s down to 10% of that now.

“So in 50 years, we’ve lost 90% of our dancers.”

Whiteacre, a BTU customer, set the theme of the state festival in June: To Boldly Dance ... Into the Future, which allowed for an element of science fiction and some conversation about the trajectory of square dancing.

The clubs sustain a tradition of modern Western square dancing, which has its roots in dances, like the French quadrille, that came over with European settlers to the American colonies but has evolved over the years as it





spread and mixed with other dance traditions, according to *Smithsonian Magazine*.

A component of square dancing that sets it apart from most other forms is the caller, a person who says, sings or chants the set of moves, known as calls, for dancers to follow. Callers can sing along with the song lyrics and sometimes use humor and rhymes as they guide the dancers. It can take years to master.

“I have to interweave the calls in with the lyrics, which that’s a skill all in itself,” says Scott Bennett, who has been a caller for over 40 years. “That’s the thing that keeps me attracted to square dancing all these years—it forces me to use lots of different aspects of entertainment.”

Historically, square dancing is done to traditional country songs that feature fiddles and banjos. And while folks still dance to that music, some callers, like Bennett, call to a mix of genres—classic rock, jazz and pop—anything with the right beat. Bennett says one of the more popular songs in recent years was *Call Me Maybe* by Carly Rae Jepsen.

“I’d put that on, and young folks would just be jumping through the ceiling they were so excited,” Bennett says.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Portraits of Dolores and Bill Rowland, Karen and Jeff Nelson, 14-year-olds Arianna and Ezra, Ramona and Billy Grimsley, Gary and Claudia Lester, and Karen Gatherer.

ABOVE Caller Vernon Jones of Springtown.

## SQUARE DANCE 101

**ANGEL:** A higher-level dancer who helps beginners.

**CALL:** A set of moves that dancers perform when the announcer—the caller—says its name.

**CALLER:** The person who guides the dance by speaking or singing out the moves.

**CORNER:** The person on the other side of you who is not your partner (on your right if dancing the woman’s part, left if dancing the man’s).

**CUER:** The person guiding a round dance by telling dancers what steps to do.

**PATTER:** Calls that are spoken or chanted instead of sung.

**ROUND DANCE:** A choreographed ballroom dance for couples in which dancers follow a cuer and rotate around the dance floor.

**TIP:** A set of two square dances, generally consisting of a patter call followed by a singing call.

**YELLOW ROCK:** A hug between square dancers, particularly corners.

Dozens of calls are standardized through an international organization known as Callerlab. While some calls are fairly intuitive for dancers—such as circle left or forward and back—others have to be taught, such as flutterwheel, slip the clutch and box the gnat.

Most dancers take lessons and go through Callerlab's Mainstream program, says John Kephart, president of the Texas State Callers' Association. At this level, dancers learn 68 calls, but some have variations, equating to more than 130 total moves.

It sounds intimidating and may well stop some prospective participants, but any dancer will tell you to try it anyway, even if you have two left feet.

"If you can walk, you can square dance," says Caroline Knight, who lives in Bryan and is a member of the Brazos Barn Dancers. "I've seen young kids—6, 7—that know how to dance really well. And then there's people that are in their 90s that still dance."

The activity provides exercise—a two-hour dance can equate to more than 5,000 steps and burns potentially hundreds of calories. Studies even show the dancing may stave off dementia. Jimette Smith started dancing around 1975, and she said another mental benefit is stress relief.

"In square dance, a caller can call anything to any music," Smith says. "You have to listen—you can't anticipate—because he can call anything. So you have to leave your troubles at the door because there's not room for your troubles and concentrating on the dance."

For 30 years, Smith owned a square dance apparel shop, Rhythm Creations, in Houston. She designed and sold the multicolored dresses, skirts, blouses and frilly petticoats that are worn during dances. Men typically wear long-sleeved Western shirts and bolo ties.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- There are square dance clubs in other countries, including Japan and Germany, but all the calls are done in English.
- The 75th National Square Dance Convention will be held in Waco in 2026, 20 years after the convention was last held in Texas—in San Antonio in 2006.
- There are camping square dance clubs.
- Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, hosted square dances on the White House lawn while he was in office.
- You can find a square dance club that offers classes in your area by visiting [squaredancetx.com](http://squaredancetx.com).



ABOVE Sue Blanchard twirls.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Portraits of Nora Creed-McClaskey, 11-year-old Lexi LeBlanc and grandmother Lea Ann McGee, 12-year-old best friends Caroline Einkauf and Meg Rhinehart, Tim and Tam Austin, Jan Albers, and Linda and Don Prendercast.

In recent years, some clubs have relaxed the dress code requirements—one of several ways square dance clubs are trying to attract more participants, including updating music and programs, while preserving the traditions and community that have attracted so many.

Square dancing in clubs became popular after World War II, according to the International Encyclopedia of Dance, but participation has declined in recent years as dancers age out and young people enjoy a plethora of options for socializing and burning calories. The pandemic also dealt a blow as dancers dropped out while clubs paused their activities.

Some clubs have incorporated a Callerlab program called Social Square Dancing, released in 2021. It has a shorter training period to appeal to new dancers. The organization also is pushing to streamline some of its other programs.

In an age when people can feel more isolated than ever, the community and connection square dancing provides are enticing new participants. The family-friendly nature of the activity—there's no drinking or smoking allowed—enables multigenerational participation.

"Everybody here is part of what we call our square dance family," says Claudia Lester. She and her husband, Gary, found a community of unmatched camaraderie when they started dancing 15 years ago.

Some clubs are seeing an increase in numbers. Audrey Mansell, former president of the North Texas Square and Round Dance Association and a Tri-County Electric Cooperative member, said they've seen growth in their 26 clubs for the first time in 13 years, which she attributes to members intentionally inviting friends to join and adopting a relaxed dress code.

Ben Vinson, a freshman at Texas A&M University, danced in high school with the H-Town Squares, a club for teens and young adults in Houston geared toward homeschooled students. The club boasts 110 dancers, making it one of the largest in the state.

Vinson says the friendships he forged made the challenge



of learning the complicated moves worth his while.

“I do it mainly for the fellowship,” he says, “but it’s still a cool skill to have.”

Caroline Knight also got into square dancing as a teenager when friends invited her to join them, though at first she was skeptical.

“I thought it was going to be super folky and corny, and I was like, ‘I don’t know if I’ll like it, but I want to hang out with you so I’ll give it a try,’” Knight says. “And it is so much fun, especially when you’re dancing with people that are really excited about it.”

Once a dancer is hooked, they may be in for life. Charles Spoon, president of the Lubbock Area Square and Round Dance Federation, encourages anyone who’s curious about

square dancing to try it. The 81-year-old is on the dance floor about 150 nights out of the year and went to his first dance when his then-girlfriend Ellen, now his wife, asked him to give it a shot.

“She said, ‘Just try it one time. If you don’t like it, you don’t have to go,’ and I said, ‘OK,’” says Spoon, a member of South Plains Electric Cooperative. “So I tried it. That was back in 1968.

“And I’m still doing it.” ■

**TCP** Watch the video on our website and discover how square dancing is great exercise and an easy way to make new friends.



A New Yorker in Paris captured Texas  
and the West in an iconic statue

# A Cowboy's Distinctive Trail

BY CHRIS BURROWS

**T**here's a 15-foot-tall, 100-year-old mystery on the campus of the University of North Texas in Denton. In a tree-shaded area near the general academic building, a regal bronze sculpture of artist Diego Velázquez on horseback overlooks students and staff as they go about their days.

New Yorker Constance Whitney Warren sculpted Velázquez, a 17th-century painter, when she was living in Paris after World War I. The family of billionaire Harlan Crow donated the piece to UNT in 1994.

Nobody seems to know why.

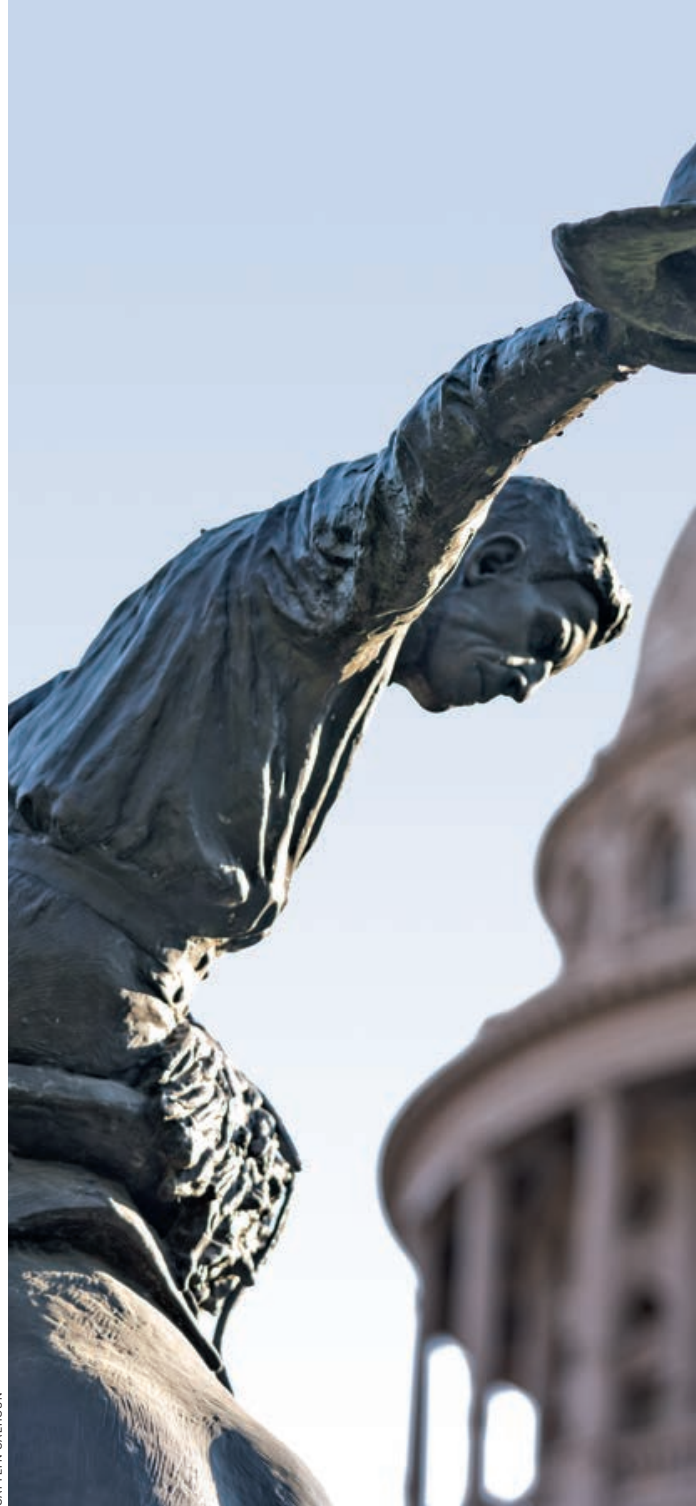
"I do not have the answers," says Holly Hutzell, art registrar for the university. "We do not have a record as to why the donor gifted it to UNT. Nor do we know why the artist depicted the Spanish master on horseback."

But 200 miles north and south of Denton, up and down Interstate 35, iconic Western statues by Warren on the grounds of the capitols of Texas and Oklahoma need no explaining. Both bronzes depict life-size wooly-chapped cowboys astride broncos rearing back over cactuses. Along the path of the former Chisholm Trail, these century-old works could not be more at home. Right?

It was 100 years ago—January 19, 1925—that *The Austin Statesman* reported several thousand Austinites, visitors and lawmakers gathered at the Capitol and watched as two men dressed in cowboy garb pulled a white sheet from the newly christened Texas Cowboy Monument—a "tribute to the rough and romantic riders of the range," reads a weather-worn plaque at its base.

It was the day before Texas' first female governor, Miriam A. "Ma" Ferguson, was sworn into office, and crowds were swarming in anticipation.

"There is not another place where the statue of a cowboy can with such fitness and such propriety be placed," said a representative of the sculptor's family, Charles Cason, at the unveiling. "Texas was the cowboy's home, and the very name



GAYLYN CALHOUN

'cowboy' brings to every American's mind the name of Texas with all her glorious traditions and romance of the endless ranges."

Warren was born in 1888 to an affluent New York family, and despite a weeklong honeymoon through the American West after her marriage to a French count, in 1912, there's no evidence that she ever set foot in Texas.

"At an early age, she gained a fascination for the West from stories told by her father of his experiences as a mining engineer on the frontier," writes *An Encyclopedia of Women Artists of the American West*. Warren moved to France after the honeymoon, and when World War I broke out, she chauffeured English officers.

After the war, she poured herself into sculpture, executing



COURTESY CATTLE RAISERS MUSEUM

LEFT The Texas Cowboy Monument has overlooked the southwest corner of the Capitol grounds for 100 years.

ABOVE The dedication of Constance Whitney Warren's bronze statue January 19, 1925.

No one has done more to unravel the mystery of Warren than Sullivan, former professor of art history at UNT and later dean of Texas Christian University's College of Fine Arts.

Cowboy No. 2 was shipped to New York from Paris several months before the dedication in Austin.

It wasn't long before Oklahoma decided it needed a Warren bronco. Its Tribute to Range Riders, installed in 1928, was that capitol's first art piece.

Warren and the count divorced in 1922, she returned to the U.S. a few years later and in 1930, she committed herself to Craig House, a discreet asylum in upstate New York. Almost nothing is known of Warren's later years. She died in 1948.

After UNT received the Velázquez piece in the 1990s, Sullivan went to work solving its mysteries.

He made contact with some members of Warren's family in Massachusetts, and during the course of his research that formed the basis of a 3,000-word article published by the *Gilcrease Journal* in 2015, he discovered that a sculpture of Velázquez by French artist Emmanuel Frémiet was installed at the Louvre from 1893 to 1933, likely inspiring Warren's Velázquez in Denton.

Sullivan's research brought much-deserved detail to Warren's life. She was among few female sculptors of the early 20th century with the skills, means or ambition to produce art that typified the American frontier. She was a pioneer accepted by pioneers of another sort.

"Warren deserves greater recognition for her work," Sullivan wrote, "and for her willingness to follow her imagination into a male-oriented and male-dominated arena largely unexplored at the time by female artists." ■

some 100 pieces—mostly horses—between 1920 and 1930.

"A sharp observer of anatomy and a vigorous modeler, she was at her best with figures in violent action," Stuart Preston of *The New York Times* wrote in 1953.

Among those works was Warren's Cowboy No. 2, sculpted in 1921. It was exhibited at the 1923 Paris Salon, a premier annual art exhibition, and missed a bronze medal by two votes, instead claiming an honorable mention.

"This was prestigious recognition for an American woman artist," wrote the late Scott Sullivan. "The Cowboy was praised in the French press and highly popular in Paris. Cason told Gov. [Pat] Neff that the artist wished to donate the bronze to a western state. The governor agreed to accept it on behalf of Texas."



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CEO  
HERBERT "TREY"  
GREBE III

# How We Balance Electricity Supply and Demand

**ELECTRICITY IS ESSENTIAL** for nearly every aspect of daily life—so essential that we rarely think about how it’s produced and delivered to our homes. You might be surprised to learn that, behind the scenes, a network of experts is working daily (and by the minute) to anticipate how much electricity you need before you even use it.

We’re all connected to the electric grid, so ensuring the right amount of electricity for all involves a complex process of forecasting energy demand, planning for capacity and securing enough supply to meet everyone’s needs.

## Powerful Sources

Electricity must be generated at a power plant using either traditional sources, such as coal, natural gas or nuclear energy, or from renewable sources, such as solar, wind or hydropower.

Medina Electric Cooperative works closely with a

common goods and services. Because your co-op works with our wholesale power partner, we’re able to pool resources and expertise to deliver affordable power to our local communities.

Electricity supply changes throughout the day because demand fluctuates based on consumers’ needs. For example, Medina EC knows that we need to ensure more electricity is available in the mornings when you start your day and in the evenings when you cook dinner, run appliances and watch TV. Demand also increases when it’s extremely warm or cold outside.

## Looking Ahead

As the energy sector undergoes rapid change, it’s important for consumers to understand the basics of electricity supply and demand.

Electricity use in the U.S. is expected to rise to record highs this year and next, with the demand

for electricity expected to at least double by 2050. At the same time, energy policies are pushing the early retirement of always-available generation sources, which will undoubtedly compromise reliable electricity.

Medina EC remains committed to providing affordable, reliable energy to the members we serve. That’s why we’re preparing now for increased demand and other challenges that could compromise our local electricity supply.

Managing electricity supply and demand is a com-

plex job, which is why we have a network of utilities, power plant operators and energy traffic managers in place to secure and manage the power we need and keep the grid balanced.

Until next time,  
Trey Grebe



EBI PRODUCTIONS + PHOTOGRAPHY

generation and transmission cooperative, South Texas Electric Cooperative, to secure enough electricity for our communities, using a diverse mix of energy sources to generate the power we deliver to your home or business. By maintaining a diverse energy mix, Medina EC has options to ensure reliable power at a competitive cost.

On a larger scale, across the country, electricity supply and demand are managed through a market that includes long-term planning agreements, where electricity is bought and sold just like other





MICHAEL BALLEW | SOUTHWEST TEXAS EC

**Car accidents and weather are the main causes of downed power lines. But even on the ground, lines can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or death.**

**Here are some rules to follow around downed lines:**

If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.

The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times.

If someone is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. Call 911 instead.

Don't try to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line.

Don't drive over downed power lines.

If you're in your car and it's in contact with a downed line, stay in your car and call 911.

**Medina EC encourages you to always practice safety.**

## Medina Electric Cooperative



### CONTACT US

**Toll-Free** 1-866-632-3532

**Email** Info@MedinaEC.org

**Web** MedinaEC.org - Chat Feature Available

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Voting District 1

Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

Larry Huesser, (830) 363-7651

Mickey Holzhaus, (210) 422-3310

#### Voting District 2

Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437

Joe Foley, (830) 261-1304

#### Voting District 3

Annette Sorrells, (361) 231-0173

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

Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

#### CEO

Trey Grebe, 1-866-632-3532, ext. 1045

## Call us.

### TOLL-FREE

1-866-632-3532

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



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 1-866-632-3532 o visitando una de nuestras oficinas.

# Upcoming Director Nomination

## Petition Deadlines

Any members interested in running for one of the three board positions up for election in the fall can be placed on the ballot through the petition process. Petitions will be completely online. Candidates wishing to run can find the online petition at [MedinaEC.org/Nominee](https://MedinaEC.org/Nominee). The board of directors represents the interests of members and governs the cooperative.

If you have questions about the process or need assistance, please contact us at [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org) or call 1-866-632-3532.

## Petition Details

Members who are interested in running for a position on the board of directors will need to get at least 30 valid member signatures from members who have service in the voting district the potential nominee wishes to represent. For example, members wishing to be nominated for the Voting District 1 board position will need signatures from members who have electric service in Voting District 1.

## Petition Deadline: March 3

Learn more and find the online petition link at [MedinaEC.org/Nominee](https://MedinaEC.org/Nominee). Nominations will be completed by online petitions only.

*In compliance with the United States Department of Agriculture, in reference to assurance of nondiscrimination among beneficiaries of Rural Utilities Service programs, the Medina EC bylaws pertaining to nomination and election procedures for the election of board members can be found at all Medina EC offices and at [MedinaEC.org/CorpDoc](https://MedinaEC.org/CorpDoc). The section that primarily pertains to nomination and election procedures is Article 4—Board of Directors.*

## ELECTION TIMELINE

### January 2

#### Online Petitions Open

Find petition link and paperwork at [MedinaEC.org/Nominee](https://MedinaEC.org/Nominee).

### March 3

#### Online Petitions Close

Nomination materials are due by 5 p.m.

### April 22

#### Certification Committee Meets

Certify nominees who meet the criteria and will appear on the ballot.

### May 1

#### Certified Nominee

#### Paperwork Due

Find paperwork at [MedinaEC.org/Nominee](https://MedinaEC.org/Nominee).

### August 26

#### Election Opens

### September 26

#### Election Closes

Ballots must be received by third-party election services provider by 5 p.m.

### October 4

#### 86th Annual Membership Meeting

Election results announced.

### Late October

#### New Board Members Seated

At the October board meeting.

# Last Chance: \$50,000 in Scholarships

Medina Electric Cooperative is offering 10 scholarships for adults pursuing higher education and 15 scholarships for high school graduating seniors\*\*. Each scholarship will be \$2,000!

Eligible applicants will be entered in a drawing, and scholarship winners will be selected at random during the March board meeting.

For more information and to apply, visit [MedinaEC.org/Scholarships](https://MedinaEC.org/Scholarships) or contact us at 1-866-632-3532 or [Scholarship@MedinaEC.org](mailto:Scholarship@MedinaEC.org).

## MedinaEC.org/Scholarships

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. March 7.\*

*\*Technical support will not be available outside of normal business hours. Encountering technical issues while turning in the application on the last day will not be grounds for an extension. \*\*The number of adult and high school senior recipients for the 2025 scholarship was misprinted in the January issue of Texas Co-op Power.*



ELENA GONZALES, 2024  
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



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## Stock Up for Emergencies

**DISASTERS CAN TAKE US** by surprise. Basic services that we've come to take for granted—electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment and phones—can be cut off, as most of the state learned during the winter storm in 2021.

Medina Electric Cooperative recommends keeping an emergency kit with food, water and supplies to help you and your family stay safe, healthy and comfortable during these outages. **A basic emergency supply kit should include the following items.**

### Water

- ▶ Store 1 gallon of water per person per day (keep at least three days' worth).
- ▶ Remember to stock additional water for pets.

### Food

- ▶ Keep handy at least a three-day supply per person of non-perishable food such as canned foods, dry mixes and other staples that don't require refrigeration or cooking.
- ▶ Be sure to include a manual can opener, paper towels, plastic cups, plates and utensils.
- ▶ If necessary include formula and food for infants and any other special dietary needs within your household, including those of pets.

### First Aid Kit

- ▶ Two pairs of latex or other sterile gloves
- ▶ Saline solution or soap and antibiotic towelettes
- ▶ Antibiotic ointment and burn ointment
- ▶ Sterile dressings and adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- ▶ Thermometer, scissors and tweezers
- ▶ Daily prescription medications and equipment
- ▶ Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment
- ▶ Pain relievers, antidiarrheal medication, antacids and laxatives

### Other Items

- ▶ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ▶ Battery-powered radio and weather radio, plus extra batteries
- ▶ Whistle to signal for help
- ▶ Dust mask to help filter air, plastic sheeting and duct tape to seal off a space
- ▶ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ▶ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ▶ Cellphone with a charger, inverter or solar charger

### Optional Supplies

Once you have gathered the supplies for a basic emergency kit, you may want to consider adding the following items:

- ▶ Prescription glasses, contact lens supplies, denture supplies
- ▶ Diapers, bottles, diaper rash ointment
- ▶ Cash or travelers' checks, copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records
- ▶ Sleeping bags and warm blankets
- ▶ Complete change of clothing including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes
- ▶ Fire extinguisher
- ▶ Matches in a waterproof container
- ▶ Toilet paper, feminine and personal hygiene supplies
- ▶ Paper and pencil, books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children.

# Co-op Careers Offer Paycheck and Purpose

EVERY DAY IN THIS COUNTRY, more than 73,000 men and women go to work at America's electric cooperatives to keep the lights on for 42 million energy consumers in 48 states.

It's challenging work, but in addition to a paycheck, co-op employees know they're helping to make their communities better places to live.

## It Takes a Team

A worker high atop a pole is the first image that comes to mind for most people who think about electric cooperative employees. It's true that lineworkers comprise the largest segment of the co-op workforce, but it takes a variety of talents to keep a cooperative running smoothly.

Information technology and engineering are two rapidly growing career opportunities at co-ops. The need for more high-tech workers is driven by the shift to a smarter electric grid and the growth of renewable energy sources that must be carefully monitored and managed.

Other in-demand career paths at electric cooperatives include finance, member services, equipment operators, energy advisers, communications and marketing, purchasing, administrative support, and human resources.

## Second Careers

Some people think the only time to start a new career is fresh out of high school or college. While the energy industry offers many rewarding careers to recent grads, it's also a great place to start a second or third career.



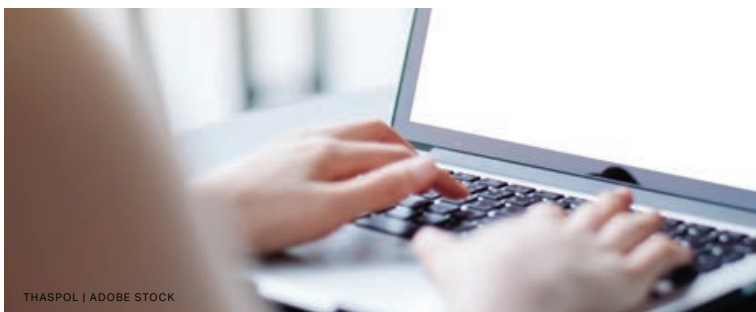
RITA BLANCA / ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Lineworker training programs offered through community colleges are growing in popularity among people who previously worked in oil and gas, manufacturing, mining, forestry, and other similar industries. Electric cooperatives are also eager to hire military veterans and their spouses.

As a not-for-profit, member-owned, locally based business, Medina Electric Cooperative—just like other cooperatives across the country—offers careers that allow employees to make a difference in the communities they serve. Co-ops are guided by a set of principles that put people ahead of profits and offer fulfilling work to those who enjoy serving others.

To learn more about the opportunities available across the cooperative network, visit [careers.touchstoneenergy.coop](https://careers.touchstoneenergy.coop). To find opportunities available at Medina EC, visit [MedinaEC.org/Careers](https://MedinaEC.org/Careers).

## Is Your Contact Information Up To Date?



MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE is asking members to contact the cooperative to update any changed account information.

This information includes:

- name on the account
- cellphone and landline numbers
- email address
- mailing address
- primary use for electricity
- gate code

It's important to inform Medina EC of any updates to your account so we can continue to provide better service and communication to members.

If at any time you have a change to your account information, please call us at 1-866-632-3532 or email [Info@MedinaEC.org](mailto:Info@MedinaEC.org).

## PREPAID ELECTRICITY

Medina Electric Cooperative offers members prepaid electricity!

You make an initial payment towards your account. Each day, we calculate the cost of the electricity you used that day, and we subtract it from the available amount in your account. When your account only has \$25 left, we will call, text and/or email based on your notification settings a reminder to make a payment. When you make a payment, we will add that to your account. If you choose not to make a payment, your account will be disconnected when your credit is zero. Learn more at [MedinaEC.org/Prepaid](https://MedinaEC.org/Prepaid).

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: FROM CORDUROY TO CO-OP

**NATIONAL FFA WEEK** is celebrated in February by chapters around the country. This year, the celebration takes place during the week of February 15–22.

As an electric cooperative that serves rural Texas, Medina Electric Cooperative knows how important FFA is to our members and to our employees. Learn more about some of Medina EC's employees who share a connection and appreciation of FFA, its impact on them and why it is important.



## KATIE HABY

### MANAGER OF KEY ACCOUNTS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO FFA AND HOW HAS IT IMPACTED YOU AS AN ADULT?** I participated in a radio broadcasting event, which I do think has been helpful to me in my career development. I also was an officer for my FFA chapter, and I think that helped me also gain confidence and leadership skills.

**WHAT DO YOU WISH MORE PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT FFA?** I wish more people knew that FFA is about more than agriculture. I think it gives young people some agency to gain skills that will benefit them as adults.



## CAROLINE LEE

### COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

**WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO FFA AND HOW HAS IT IMPACTED YOU AS AN ADULT?** I was involved with FFA beginning in the 3rd grade when I started showing pigs. I participated in judging competitions and speaking competitions in which my team won state in Chapter Conducting in 2016. I still refer to things I learned in FFA such as speaking skills, parliamentary procedure and responsibility.

**WHY IS FFA IMPORTANT TO YOUTH?** FFA teaches responsibility, teamwork and leadership. I would not have the speaking skills or confidence I have now without having participated in FFA. You learn many important lessons in FFA!

**WHAT DO YOU WISH MORE PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT FFA?** It's not all about farming and agriculture! I would say that's a small part of it these days. The National FFA Organization does not actually use the term "Future Farmers of America" anymore.



## MARTY DELEON

### SENIOR METER TECHNICIAN

**WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO FFA AND HOW HAS IT IMPACTED YOU AS AN ADULT?** I was in Eagle Pass High FFA chapter starting 1981 through 1985. I was involved in several judging teams all through high school. I received Star Greenhand my freshman year and also served in many officer positions. FFA has impacted us by helping us to appreciate and support the sacrifices full-time farmers and ranchers live through in their efforts to provide the food on our tables. God bless them.

**WHY IS FFA IMPORTANT TO YOUTH?** FFA teaches a lot of life lessons at an early age that will be helpful as adults. Examples are responsibility, commitment, career opportunities, caring for a living being, financials and work ethic, to name a few.

**WHAT DO YOU WISH MORE PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT FFA?** Agriculture is how the whole nation and world gets fed.



## SAVANNAH PERSYN

### ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST

**WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO FFA AND HOW HAS IT IMPACTED YOU AS AN ADULT?** In high school, I participated in learning, career and speaking development events which included public relations, livestock judging and showing livestock. Being in FFA has made me look at all sorts of things through a different lens. I pay more attention to what I am buying at the grocery store, especially where it is made, and the various marketing tactics used to sell it.

**WHY IS FFA IMPORTANT TO YOUTH?** It made me realize from a young age how much the things around us impact us both directly and indirectly. Before FFA, the products we purchased were just grown for humans to use. But after FFA, I saw cotton as a way to make clothing, corn being sent to the grocery store, and remaining pieces of rye and corn taken to the feed mills for livestock. I personally believe FFA can make a lasting impact on individuals who involve themselves with it.

**WHAT DO YOU WISH MORE PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT FFA?** FFA is not just cows, sows, and plows! It helps us understand how important the agriculture industry is. In simple words, if we didn't have the agricultural industry, we would be starving and naked. I found this saying in high school and still think about it to this day: "An industry that feeds and clothes us is an industry worth fighting for."



# Medina EC Celebrates Engineering Week

Medina Electric Cooperative's engineering department does a lot to maintain reliability and plan for system growth for the cooperative. In honor of National Engineers Week, recognized February 16–22, we're featuring our engineers. They utilize high levels of math, science and technology to be on the cutting edge of the utility industry.

## Generator Installation Requirements

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

Medina Electric Cooperative understands that sometimes you may need to use a generator to keep power on during an outage. If the proper steps aren't taken to ensure a generator is connected correctly, it could become hazardous and even deadly for our line crews and members.

Members interested in having a standby generator installed at their property need to follow the necessary steps to connect to Medina EC's distribution system. This is for the safety of the member and our crews. The requirements for noncommercial emergency and standby generation are available at [MedinaEC.org/Generators](https://MedinaEC.org/Generators).

Members with a 200-amp or smaller service who want the convenience of operating a standby generator without installing transfer switches, subpanels and rewiring work may want to have a GenerLink device. GenerLink is installed behind your meter by Medina EC crews and is billed monthly on your electric bill.

If you have any questions, please call 1-866-632-3532 or email [Info@MedinaEC.org](mailto:Info@MedinaEC.org).



**Keith Calle**

Chief Engineering Division Officer



**Clint Hopkins**

Senior Engineer



**Alexandra Noonan**

Graduate Engineer

BILLOVE | ADOBE STOCK

# How Could We Help Your Community?

Could your organization or community use money for a special project? Apply for a grant from Medina Electric Cooperative's Community Empowerment Program!

**Emphasis will be placed on projects that:**

- >> Encourage economic diversity.
- >> Contribute to community health and development.
- >> Improve the quality or quantity of services essential for the development of viable communities.

**\$5,500 in grants available!**

**Deadline to apply: April 1**



View eligibility information and apply online at [MedinaEC.org/Grant](https://MedinaEC.org/Grant).



## MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S POWER UP THE PANTRY Canned Food Drive

Please help us collect nonperishable food items and canned goods. Collected food will be given to organizations that help feed people in the 17 counties served by Medina EC.

### **DROP-OFF:**

Where: Any Medina EC office location  
When: February 1 - 28



### **WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK**

Beginning in February, 350 members will be randomly selected to answer Medina Electric Cooperative survey questions by email. The surveys are being done by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and should take less than five minutes. If you do not get an email but would like to share feedback or an idea with the cooperative, email us at [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org).



# SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



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

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

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and purchased it for our *Sedona Turquoise Collection*. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique, one-of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you



could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for just \$99.

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

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

## Jewelry Specifications:

• Arizona turquoise • Silver-finished settings

### Sedona Turquoise Collection

- |  |                    |              |      |                   |
|--|--------------------|--------------|------|-------------------|
| A. Pendant (26 cts)                          | <del>\$299</del> * | \$99         | +s&p | <b>Save \$200</b> |
| B. 18" Bali Naga woven sterling silver chain |                    | \$149        | +s&p |                   |
| C. 1 1/2" Earrings (10 ctw)                  | <del>\$299</del> * | \$99         | +s&p | <b>Save \$200</b> |
| <b>Complete Set**</b>                        | <del>\$747</del> * | <b>\$249</b> | +s&p | <b>Save \$498</b> |

\*\*Complete set includes pendant, chain and earrings.

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

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# History to a Tea

Reenactors go to great lengths to share the important story of buffalo soldiers

BY MARTHA DEERING • PHOTO BY KENNY BRAUN

IT WAS A tight squeeze for Michael Brown, wedging his large frame into a small picnic table for a children's tea party at Mother Neff State Park, outside Waco. Donning a plastic necklace over his uniform and handling tiny cups, dainty canapés and tea cakes, he charmed the socks off the children and parents clustered around the tables at an annual park event.

As a buffalo soldier reenactor, these experiences bring him joy.

About 150 years earlier, in 1866, Congress created six all-Black Army regiments—later consolidated to four—that became known as the buffalo soldiers. Their main charge was to support the nation's westward expansion, build roads and other infrastructure, protect settlers,

and guard postal routes throughout the Southwest and Great Plains.

That expansion often put the soldiers, some posted at forts in Texas, in direct violent conflict with the Native American tribes whose lands were being seized.

Originally commanded by white officers, the buffalo soldiers, numbering more than 40,000 in total, often faced extreme racism over 85 years of service. The last Black regiment was disbanded in 1951.

Differing accounts explain the buffalo soldier name. One is that Native Americans called the soldiers that because of their fierce fighting. Another is that Native people thought the soldiers' dark hair resembled buffalo fur. Still another says the name came from the buffalo-hide

coats the troops wore in cold weather.

The buffalo soldiers persevered through extreme weather; infectious diseases with little access to treatment; and rough, unfamiliar terrain. But in many cases, it was the first opportunity for formerly enslaved men (and at least one woman) to work as professional soldiers and be paid the same \$13 monthly salary that white soldiers received.

All these years later, reenactors like Brown keep the important story of the buffalo soldiers alive. The all-volunteer Bexar County Buffalo Soldiers Association in San Antonio to which he belongs provides speakers for youth groups, schools, churches, trail rides and other historical events.

"Each of our 40 active members portrays one of the original soldiers from the 19th century," Brown says. "All are Army and Air Force veterans."

Brown was deployed with the Army 2005–06 in Afghanistan. As a buffalo soldier, he represents Sgt. Thomas Boyne, who received the Medal of Honor—the U.S. armed forces' highest distinction—in 1882. All told, 18 African American soldiers earned a Medal of Honor during the American Indian Wars.

Brown, pictured left, who serves on the board for the group of reenactors, wears an 1874 Army field campaign uniform with a dark blue wool sack coat and sky-blue woolen pants, heavy enough to make a brave man melt into a puddle in the heat of a Texas summer.

It's worth the work for him.

"I especially love the educational portion of the program," Brown says. "We explain to the audience how the soldiers' past was tied into slavery and the honor of becoming the first professional soldiers. And for me, it's all about the kids."

The reenactors tell a broader story of what life was like on the frontier in Texas. While theirs is a serious mission, they make learning fun, including occasionally sitting down with a group of children to share tiny cups of tea. ■

# Easy Breads

Making cowboys and firefighters right at home (dessert lovers too)

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

*Pan de campo*, aka camp bread or cowboy bread, originated with the vaqueros of South Texas. My abuelita made it in a cast-iron skillet and enjoyed it with a steaming cup of coffee. It's a flatbread that resembles a thicker, flatter biscuit with a crispy outside and soft, chewy interior.



## Pan de Campo With Strawberry Butter

### STRAWBERRY BUTTER

**1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened**  
**2 tablespoons powdered sugar**  
**½ cup diced strawberries**

### PAN DE CAMPO

**2 cups flour, plus more for dusting**  
**2 teaspoons baking powder**  
**2 teaspoons salt**  
**10 tablespoons solid vegetable shortening, divided use**  
**¾ cup milk**

- 1. STRAWBERRY BUTTER** In a medium bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth and creamy.
- Add powdered sugar and mix until well combined. Stir in strawberries. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour or overnight before serving.
- 3. PAN DE CAMPO** Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt.
- Add 8 tablespoons shortening and use a pastry cutter or two forks to cut the shortening into the flour until the mixture resembles pea-sized coarse crumbs. Add milk, stirring just until dough forms.
- Turn dough onto lightly floured surface. Knead gently until dough comes together to form a ball. Using a lightly floured rolling pin, roll dough into a ½-inch-thick circle.
- Grease a 10-inch skillet with remaining 2 tablespoons shortening, then place in oven for 5 minutes to heat through. Remove from oven, carefully place dough into skillet and return to oven. Bake 10 minutes, then flip bread and bake an additional 5 minutes.
- Slice and serve topped with strawberry butter.

SERVES 8

**TCP** Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in *Cocina Gris* at [sweetlifebake.com](http://sweetlifebake.com), where she features a recipe for Banana Bread with Cajeta Cream Cheese Frosting.



## Firehouse Rolls

DENNIS BAUM  
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

When Baum was a cook at a fire station, he made these soft, fluffy rolls, which have a rich, buttery taste, daily for the crew. This easy recipe comes together quickly, delivering rolls baked to golden perfection that pair well with any dish.

**1 packet active dry yeast (0.25 ounces)**  
**1 cup warm water, roughly 110 degrees**  
**2½ tablespoons sugar**  
**2½ cups flour, plus more for dusting**  
**½ teaspoon salt**  
**1½ tablespoons solid vegetable shortening**

1. Coat an 8-inch round pan with cooking spray or butter.
2. In a large bowl, whisk yeast in warm water. Let the mixture stand 5 minutes. Add sugar, flour, salt and shortening, stirring until well combined.
3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead about 1 minute. Divide and form into 12 balls. Place into prepared pan and cover with a towel.
4. Place in a warm area and allow to rise about 1 hour. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
5. Bake 20 minutes or until tops are lightly browned.

MAKES 1 DOZEN ROLLS

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 >



\$500 WINNER

## Crusty No-Yeast Bread

CINDY HANDY  
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC



This is perfect for new bakers. It's quick and easy, requiring no rising time or fancy techniques. Made with simple ingredients, this bread delivers a satisfying, golden crust with a soft, flavorful interior. Whether you're short on time or just starting out, this no-yeast option ensures delicious, homemade bread in no time!

**1½ cups water**  
**2 teaspoons distilled white vinegar**  
**4 cups flour, plus more for dusting**  
**1 teaspoon salt**  
**1 teaspoon sugar**  
**2 teaspoons baking powder**  
**2 teaspoons baking soda**  
**1 tablespoon (⅓ stick) butter, softened**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a small bowl, stir together water and vinegar. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, salt, sugar, baking powder and baking soda. Add vinegar mixture to dry ingredients and stir to mix well.
3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead about 1 minute, sprinkling additional flour on the surface as needed to prevent sticking.
4. Shape the dough into an oval loaf. Place it on the prepared baking sheet and cut 3 diagonal slits across the top of loaf.
5. Bake 30–35 minutes. Remove from oven and brush with butter. Allow to cool 5 minutes, then slice and serve warm.

SERVES 4

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

**MAKE IT SPICY** DUE FEBRUARY 10

We're turning up the heat in our July issue, and we need your help. Send us your tastiest spicy recipes for a chance to win \$500. Enter by February 10.

**UPCOMING: BEEFY BURGERS** DUE MARCH 10



## Chocolate Orange Butter Bread

RITA HUIE  
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

This delightful treat brings together the rich, velvety taste of chocolate with the bright, citrusy notes of orange. The buttery texture makes each bite soft and indulgent, perfect for breakfast or dessert. This is a must-try for those who love the classic combination of chocolate and citrus.

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened, plus more for greasing the pan
- 2½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- ¼ cup dark cocoa powder
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¾ cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon orange extract



- 2 tablespoons orange juice concentrate, undiluted
- 2 tablespoons orange liqueur or 2 additional tablespoons orange juice concentrate
- Orange marmalade, for serving

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a loaf pan with butter.
2. In a large bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, orange zest, cocoa powder and brown sugar.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together egg, buttermilk, orange extract, orange juice concentrate, liqueur and ½ cup butter until smooth.
4. Make a well in dry ingredients, add wet ingredients and stir well. The batter will be thick.
5. Spread the batter into prepared loaf pan. Bake 35–40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
6. Remove pan from oven and allow to cool 15 minutes. Run a knife around edges of bread, and carefully remove from pan.
7. Slice and serve with orange marmalade.

SERVES 8

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What makes them iconic? The Morgan Silver Dollar is the legendary coin that built the Wild West. It exemplifies the American spirit like few other coins, and was created using silver mined from the famous Comstock Lode in Nevada. In fact, when travelers approached the mountains around the boomtown of Virginia City, Nevada in the 1850s, they were startled to see the hills shining in the sunlight like a mirror. A mirage caused by weary eyes?

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Tripping Through Time

Travel through the decades at the Jack Sisemore RV Museum

BY CHET GARNER

THE FIRST CROSS-COUNTRY “road trip” by car happened in 1903, and since then, Americans have been obsessed with the freedom and adventure of the open road. Near the center of America’s Mother Road (aka Route 66) is a museum that captures many of the ways we’ve traveled that road in style.

I pulled up to the drab aluminum building on the south side of Amarillo and had no idea I was about to enter a time portal. Inside the 18,000-square-foot Jack Sisemore RV Museum sit dozens of vintage recreational vehicles and trailers looking like they just rolled off the showroom floor. Classic motorcycles, cars and even boats add to the intrigue.

RV dealer Jack Sisemore and his son Trent, who loved hunting down and restoring old trailers, started the collection over 25 years ago. When they ran out of room in their driveways, they decided to open a museum. Each vehicle is displayed with memorabilia, old advertisements and an explanation of what makes each model unique, such as the 1935 Torpedo—the first Airstream.

I roamed through 30-foot-long coaches and peeked inside chrome pods that looked more like spaceships than RVs. Every trailer offered a look at the technology and style of the era, with plenty of linoleum and shag carpet to spare.

The museum, closed for the season but reopening in March, boasts rare specimens of the first Fleetwood and Itasca motor homes, and every turn revealed more treasures, such as the 1948 Flxible bus driven by Robin Williams in the 2006 movie *RV*.

While wandering through the museum, part of me yearned for the days before phones or GPS, when the road ahead was truly a mystery yet to unfold. But then I remembered that I would never have found a hidden gem like this one without the help of the all-knowing internet. ■

ABOVE Period clothing helps give Chet a feel for a camping experience from decades ago.

**TCP** Watch the video on our website as Chet turns back the clock on hitting the road. And find all his Explorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



## Know Before You Go

Call ahead or check an event’s website for scheduling details, and check our website for many more upcoming events.

## FEBRUARY

8

**Texas City Mainland Mardi Gras**, (409) 457-8080, [mardigrasmainland.com](http://mardigrasmainland.com)

11

**Lubbock [11–16] Les Misérables**, (806) 792-8339, [buddyhollyhall.org](http://buddyhollyhall.org)

13

**Bellville Chocolate Walk**, (979) 865-3407, [bellville.com](http://bellville.com)

14

**Brenham Sweet Dreams: Mandy Barnett Sings Patsy Cline**, (979) 337-7240, [thebarnhillcenter.com](http://thebarnhillcenter.com)

**Fredericksburg [14–16, 21–23, 28–March 2] Peter and the Starcatcher**, (830) 997-3588, [fbgtc.org](http://fbgtc.org)

15

**Ennis Czech Music Festival**, (972) 878-4748, [ennisczechmusicfestival.com](http://ennisczechmusicfestival.com)

**Lampasas Wild West Casino Night**, (512) 556-5172, [lampasaschamber.org](http://lampasaschamber.org)

16

**Fredericksburg Sabrina Adrian**, [fredericksburgmusicclub.com](http://fredericksburgmusicclub.com)

**Pearland Lunar New Year Festival**, (832) 788-8776, [facebook.com/pearlandchinese](http://facebook.com/pearlandchinese)

20

**Bandera [20–22] Cowboy Mardi Gras**, (830) 796-4849, [banderacowboycapital.com](http://banderacowboycapital.com)

**Port Aransas [20–23] Whooping Crane Festival**, (361) 749-5919, [portaransas.org](http://portaransas.org)

21

**Laredo [21-22] Jalapeño Festival**, (956) 722-0589, jalapenofestival.org

22

**Granbury Jazz Fest**, (817) 578-5585, granburyjazzfest.com

**Port Arthur Rotary Taste of Gumbo & More**, (409) 985-7822, visitportarthurtx.com

27

**Corsicana The Barricade Boys: London's West End**, (903) 874-7792, corsicanapalace.com

**San Marcos Mardi Gras Martinis**, (512) 392-4295, heritagesanmarcos.org

**Weatherford [27-28] Cheese 101**, (940) 682-4856, clarkgardens.org

**Brownsville [27-March 1] Charro Days**, (956) 542-4245, charrodaysfiesta.com

## MARCH

3

**Bandera [3-9] Texas Wool Week**, texaswoolweek.com

4

**Beaumont Taste of the Triangle**, (409) 782-5514, thetastebmt.com

6

**Fulton [6-9] Oysterfest**, (361) 463-9955, fultonoysterfest.org

7

**Corpus Christi Camo & Country**, (361) 883-5500, amissionofmercy.org

**Brackettville [7-8] Fort Clark Days**, fortclarkdays.org

### TCP Submit Your Event

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

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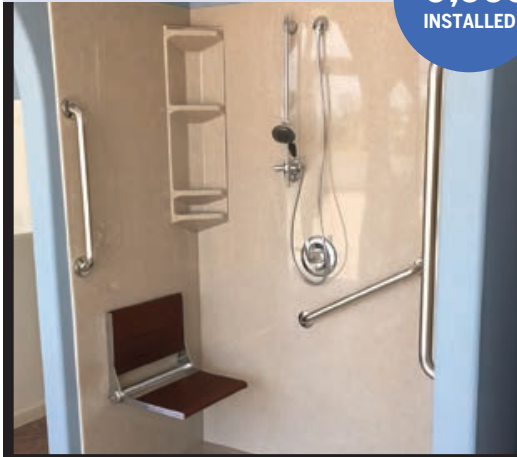


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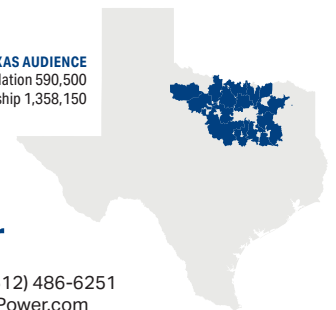
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Readership 1,358,150



## Texas Co-op Power

Contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251  
or [advertising@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:advertising@TexasCoopPower.com)



# I Love

There's a lot to love about Texas. From the diverse landscape to the fascinating wildlife, one can find beauty all around. But what makes it really special are the folks who call it home.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1

1 SHARON BURNS  
VICTORIA EC

A Texas sky captures the heart of a young boy.

2 ANGIE MANTOR  
BANDERA EC

"Weston, my grandson, and his sweet friend loving the beautiful weather at his home in Comfort."

3 SHEILA HOWARD  
WHARTON COUNTY EC

"Love was definitely in the air at the Tejas Ranch Horse Show, not only between the friends participating but also the horses."

4 PEGGY KUJAWA  
PEDERNALES EC

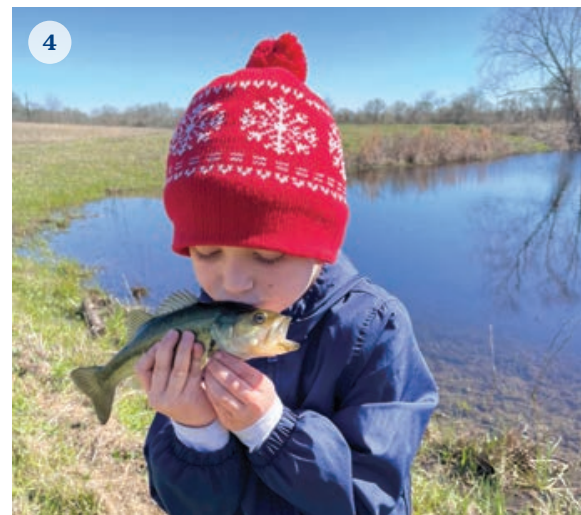
"When he found out it was too small to keep, he gave it a kiss before he released it."



2



3



4

## Upcoming Contests

DUE FEB 10 Family Vacation

DUE MAR 10 Catch of the Day

DUE APR 10 College Life



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

**TCP** See Focus on Texas on our website for many more I Love photos from readers.



## Peace of Mind

Setting a course for hope and serenity amid Alzheimer's anguish

BY MARK TROTH  
ILLUSTRATION BY  
ROCCO BAVIERA

**THERE WAS NO** doubt that my friends, colleagues and family members had noticed a marked difference in me—yet they remained mostly silent, perhaps out of courtesy.

Repeating myself frequently in conversations, asking questions that had already been answered just minutes prior, frustrations with recalling people's names and number sequences (phone, addresses, passwords)—all signals of early-onset dementia. Regardless of what was noticeable or not to others, I knew I was not the same.

I was referred to a neurologist who specializes in cognitive disorders and went through myriad memory-related tests in addition to MRI diagnostics. I'm 69 and over three years into the initial diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment,

confirmed as Alzheimer's disease.

There have recently been exciting research breakthroughs on the Alzheimer's front. Among them is a new drug being administered via infusion therapy. It has been proven in clinical trials to slow the disease's decline by breaking up the protein amyloid plaque build-up in the nerve cells. That build-up is responsible for brain dysfunction.

It isn't a cure but could add precious months of mental clarity to affected patients.

I was fortunate to qualify for the treatment after genetic testing and other requirements. My physicians, nurses and patient support group are a blessing to me and my wife.

Of course, as hopeful as I am for the potential to slow my cognitive decline and enjoy more quality time with my family, it is difficult to ignore the challenges they will soon endure.

I recently engaged a psychologist to help me cope better with the future. The initial sessions have proven highly educational and gratifying. I am positively in a better place now.

My doctor's advice is both simple and profound. His leading and listening skills allow me to reach deeper within and come to a quiet peace with regards to my future.

My prior mindset had been: It's the elephant in the room—heavy and ever present. But my doctor has me laser focused now on living for life and not for death.

Yes, I must surely take care of my family affairs so as to not place additional burden on my spouse and children. But most importantly my doctor implores me to strive for hope and peace of mind for whatever future I have.

Acceptance of this diagnosis and a renewed "living for life" mentality is my new North Star, guiding me home. Not so much for personal gratification but for serenity with my faith, family and friends. I have been blessed. ■



NEW! HORIZON IX HEARING AIDS

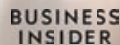
# The future of hearing aids has arrived



## What do Horizon IX hearing aids have to offer?

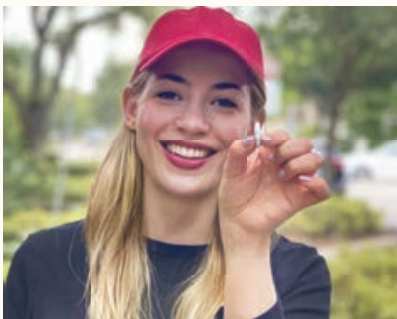
- **Amazing Speech Clarity™**  
Effortlessly understand every word, thanks to dual-processing
- **Bluetooth connectivity**  
Stream music and phone calls directly to your hearing aids\*
- **Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries**  
28+ hours of battery life and a portable case for on-the-go charging
- **Easy, comfortable fit**  
All-day wearing comfort, easy to combine with glasses
- **Free smartphone app**  
Adjust settings for every listening situation easily via smartphone

\*Bluetooth connectivity only available in Behind-the-Ear (BTE) models



**A**larming fact: More than 48 million Americans hear so poorly that their quality of life significantly suffers as a result.

The problem: Most wait too long to act, hoping their hearing will improve on its own. Sadly, it never does. But now, a game-changing device is making waves across the industry, and experts say it's the biggest breakthrough they've seen in over a decade. It's the new Horizon IX hearing aids.



Horizon IX is currently the best-selling device at renowned U.S. company, hear.com, developed by top audio engineers from Signia. Their goal was to combine the best possible speech clarity with a comfortable, invisible design using cutting-edge German technology.



"It's a hearing aid people actually want to wear," says hear.com co-founder Dr. Marco Viotor. "It offers amazing speech clarity and smartphone connectivity in a virtually invisible design – and all that for a reasonable price!"

### What makes Horizon IX so special?

It's one of the world's first hearing aids with dual processing. This is special because it's the first time engineers have been able to pack not one, but two state-of-the-art computer chips into a device this small. And with double the power comes double the clarity.



This means that Horizon IX hearing aids offer all of the usual benefits of modern hearing aids with the added bonus of something completely new: they can process speech and background noise independently, then combine them for unparalleled, crystal clear sound.

### Where can I get Horizon IX?

As of January 2025, hear.com has helped more than **540,000 Americans** enjoy life with better hearing, thanks to Horizon IX. Now, it's your turn!

Check if you qualify for a **45-day no-risk trial today**, and you could have a brand new pair of Horizon IX hearing aids on your doorstep in as little as 48 hours.

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