DONKEYS GET A
SECOND CHANCE

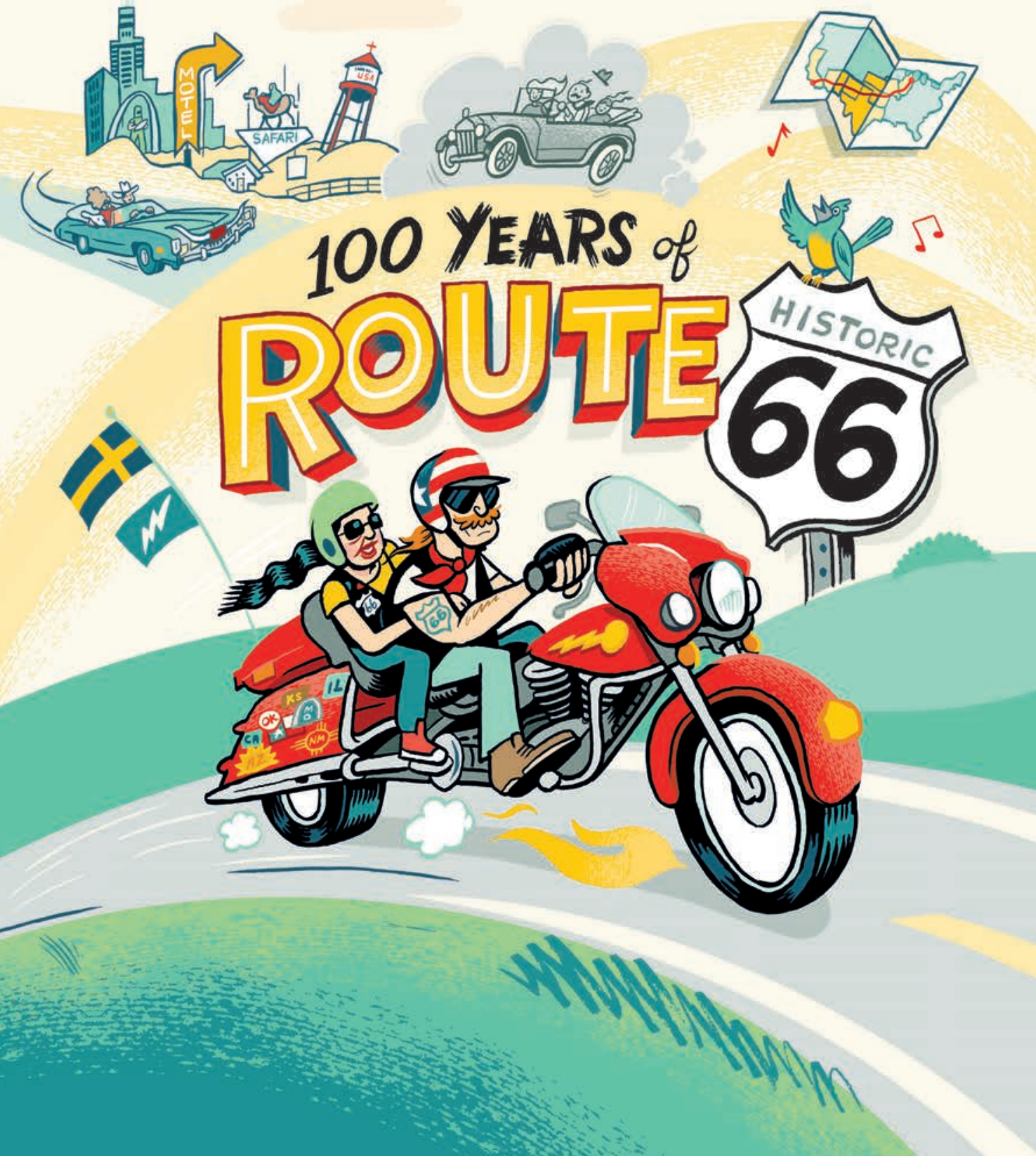
THE TASTE OF
CRANBERRY HARVEST

EASING
LIFE'S BAGGAGE

Texas Co-op Power

FOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

NOVEMBER 2026



RENEWAL by ANDERSEN
FULL-SERVICE WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENT

Get a **FREE** consultation!
Call **866-407-6791**

BLACK FRIDAY SAVINGS EVENT

Financing Made Easy!

BUY NOW AND PAY NOTHING UNTIL NOVEMBER 2028![1]

NO Money Down and **NO** Monthly Payments

NO Interest for **2 FULL YEARS**[1]

MINIMUM PURCHASE OF 6 – INTEREST ACCRUES DURING PROMOTIONAL PERIOD BUT IS WAIVED IF PAID IN FULL WITHIN 24 MONTHS



TESTED, TRUSTED, AND TOTALLY PROVEN.[2]

RENEWAL BY ANDERSEN HAS THE NATION'S BEST WARRANTY® -COVERAGE- Fully Transferable FIBREX® MATERIAL INSTALLATION HARDWARE GLASS

Offer Ends 11/30/2026

Call for your **FREE** consultation.

866-407-6791

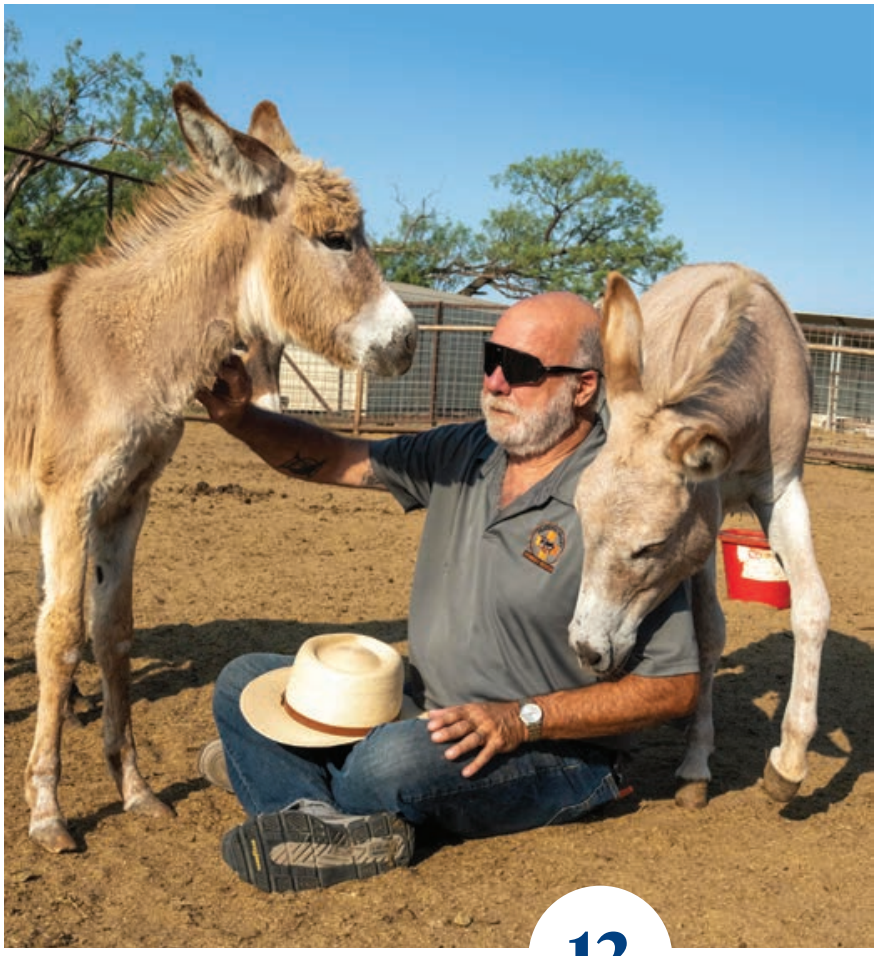
FINDYOUR**WINDOW**.COM

More 5-Star Reviews

Than Other Leading Full-Service Window Replacement Companies[‡]

[1]**DETAILS OF OFFER:** Offer expires 11/30/2026. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Get 24-months no money down, no monthly payments, no interest when you purchase six (6) or more windows or entry/patio doors between 11/1/2026 and 11/30/2026. Only valid on initial visit. Subject to credit approval. 24-month Promotional Period: when no payments are due, interest accrues but is waived if balance is paid in full before Promotional Period expires. Any unpaid balance owed after Promotional Period, plus accrued interest, will be paid in installments based on terms disclosed in the financing agreement. Financing is provided by various financial institutions without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or familial status. Savings comparison based on purchase of a single unit at list price. Available at participating locations and offer applies throughout the service area. See your local Renewal by Andersen location for details. License numbers available at renewalbyandersen.com/license. Some Renewal by Andersen locations are independently owned and operated. See Renewal by Andersen® Products and Installation Transferable Limited Warranty for details. [†]It is the only warranty among top selling window companies that meets all of the following requirements: easy to understand terms, unrestricted transferability, installation coverage, labor coverage, geographically unrestricted, coverage for exterior color, insect screens and hardware, and no maintenance requirement. Visit renewalbyandersen.com/nationsbest for details. [‡]Review aggregator survey of 5-star reviews among leading national full-service window replacement companies. Reputation.com March 2026. "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are trademarks of Andersen Corporation. ©2026 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved. RBA14201

November 2026



06 Still Kicking

A surge of travelers are getting their kicks during the Route 66 centennial.

By Jim McCarty, Samantha Bryant and Claire Stevens
Illustrations by Dan Zettwoch

12 From Punch Lines to Peaceful Paddocks

Kind hearts and tranquil acres await donkeys in need of a second chance.

By Jessica M. Ridge
Photos by Anna Mazurek

04 **Currents**
The latest buzz

05 **TCP Talk**
Readers respond

16 **Co-op News**
Information plus energy and safety tips from your cooperative

25 **Footnotes in Texas History**
Faces and Places
By W.F. Strong

26 **TCP Kitchen**
Cranberry Harvest
By Vianney Rodriguez

30 **Hit the Road**
How To Defeat a Creek
By Chet Garner

33 **Focus on Texas**
Photo Contest: Ride the Rails

34 **Observations**
Navigating Turbulence
By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

ON THE COVER
The Mother Road, which winds from Chicago to Los Angeles, takes in 178 miles of Texas.
Illustration by Dan Zettwoch
ABOVE
Mark Meyers with gentle friends at Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue outside San Angelo.
Photo by Anna Mazurek

The Last Marine Reaches Safety



JUAN JOSE VALDEZ of San Antonio was the final Marine to get out of Saigon on April 30, 1975. He almost didn't make it.

Master Gunnery Sgt. Valdez, who had helped evacuate thousands, was thrown off balance and fell on the rear boarding ramp as the final helicopter lifted off during the fall of the South Vietnamese capital.

"I looked at the back of the helicopter door, and I noticed two hands hanging there," said Staff Sgt. Mike Sullivan, already onboard. Valdez was grabbed and pulled to safety.

Valdez later worked as a civilian employee on a Marine Corps base. He died February 15 at his home in Tucson, Arizona. He was 88.



TCP *Contests and More*

$500 RECIPE CONTEST
Mac and Cheese

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
In the Garden

RECOMMENDED READING
Remember *Route 66*, the 1960s TV series that featured the Mother Road? One of our writers did in his May 2012 story *Getting My TV Kicks on 'Route 66.'*

ENTER ONLINE



Bullish on Brahmans

Armel Keeran, right, became interested in Brahman cattle as a child on her father's ranch. After college she moved back to the ranch and became a passionate advocate for the humpbacked cattle.

Keeran, born 125 years ago this month in San Antonio, on November 15, 1901, became the first woman to raise the breed and had the largest Brahman herd in the U.S. at the time.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

It's not Thanksgiving dinner without . . .

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

Here are some responses to our September prompt: **When I was a kid . . .**

My brother and I would catch lightning bugs and bring them in the house and let them go in our rooms. It would drive our mom crazy.
JUDY KAY KRANTZ
CECA
LAKE LEON

We played outside all day long, rode our bikes and drank out of the water hose.
REBECCA BERRY
TAYLOR EC
ABILENE

I wanted to be an adult. Now, as an adult, I really wish I could be a kid again.
ARZOLA YOSHIMI
VIA FACEBOOK

We didn't ask if it was safe. We just did it and found out.
RUTH ORLOFF SCLAWY
HOUSTON COUNTY EC
ELKHART

Visit our website to see more responses.

JUAN JOSE VALDEZ: COURTESY U.S. MARINE CORPS. MAC AND CHEESE: AZURITA | DREAMSTIME.COM. ARMEL KEERAN: COURTESY TEXAS COASTAL BEND COLLECTION



JASON DAVID PAGE

SEPTEMBER 2026 TCP Kitchen

"It is rare that I don't remove a page or get ideas from the recipes. The Sweet Potato Waffles are on my to-make list."

BARBARA MACHA
COSERV
HIGHLAND VILLAGE

Old Favorites

As young'uns growing up in small-town Mabank in the 1950s, my mother made Peanut Butter, Crackers and Marshmallows [TCP Kitchen, August 2026] for her four young boys. My wife and I made them for our children. As grandparents of now-grown grandchildren, we made them but had to give them a special name—Pawpaw's Favorite Treats.

Glenn Hyde
Trinity Valley EC
Mabank

Dining Defined

It's About Time [August 2026] is tops. A very informative, dawn-to-dark account.

It is common today in Texas to refer to the evening meal as dinner. But just like in Andy Adams' book *The Log of a Cowboy*, the Panhandle cowboys and farmers I know all call it supper. They call the noon meal dinner.

Rob Lee Roark
Lighthouse EC
Wichita Falls

Most Inspired

Thank you for *Giant Footsteps* [June 2026], the wonderful article on Miss Opal Lee. It was one of your best—super inspired.

Martha Sanchez
Magic Valley EC
McAllen

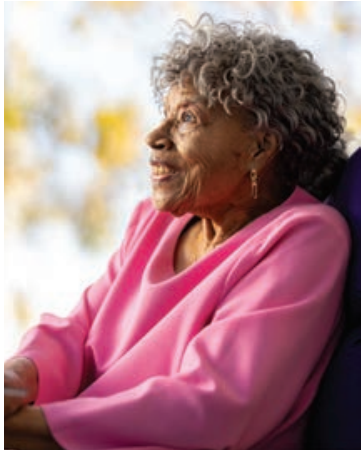
Monthly Motivation

I am deeply amazed and engaged by your publication. It keeps me motivated and provides invaluable information on subjects I hold dear.

Your articles consistently inform me about the beautiful geographical sites across our state and offer wonderful opportunities to learn about gardening, healthy cooking and better eating habits.

Furthermore, the magazine helps me discover ways to volunteer my time and services within my community, fostering a spirit of continuous learning.

Linda Gray
Farmers EC
Sachse



ROBERT SEALE

WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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

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

Texas Co-op Power

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Chair Cameron Smallwood, Burleson
Vice Chair Jim Coleman, Edna
Secretary-Treasurer Robert Walker, Gilmer
Board Members Ryan Bartlett, Merkel
Matt Bentke, Bastrop • Kerry Kelton, Navasota
Zac Perkins; Hooker, Oklahoma
PRESIDENT/CEO Mike Williams, Austin

COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE
Mike Ables, Bellville • Kathi Calvert, Crockett
Tachi Hinojosa, Fredericksburg
Kendall Montgomery, Olney • Trena Quinn, Corsicana • Bryan Story, Blossom
Grace Subealdea, Dalhart

MAGAZINE STAFF
Vice President, Communications & Member Services Martin Bevins
Editor Chris Burrows
Associate Editor Tom Widlowski
Production Manager Karen Nejtek
Creative Manager Andy Doughty
Advertising Manager Elaine Sproull
Communications Specialist Samantha Bryant
Senior Designer Stacy Coale
Assistant Production Manager Alex Dal Santo
Digital Media Specialist Noah Devereaux
Print Production Specialist Grace Fultz
Communications Specialist Erin Perez
Food Editor Vianney Rodriguez
Communications Specialist Claire Stevens
Communications Specialist Kelly Tran
Proofreader Louie Bond

TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 83, Number 5 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives. Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 77 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power*'s website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Subscription price is $5.53 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of $7.50. **Co-op members:** Please notify your co-op of address changes or other subscription requests.

POSTMASTER Send address changes to *Texas Co-op Power* (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of *Texas Co-op Power* showing old address and key numbers.

ADVERTISING Contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251 or esproull@texas-ec.org for information about purchasing display ad space in *Texas Co-op Power* and/or in our 26 sister publications in other states. Advertisements in *Texas Co-op Power* are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication.

COPYRIGHT All content © 2026 Texas Electric Cooperatives Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of it is expressly prohibited without written permission. Willie Wiredhand © 2026 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Texas Electric Cooperatives
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
Alliance for Audited Media
American MainStreet Publications

A surge of travelers are getting their kicks for the 100th birthday of Route 66

STILL KICKING

BY JIM MCCARTY, SAMANTHA BRYANT AND CLAIRE STEVENS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAN ZETTWOCH



Brenda Hammit Bradley weaves between tables at the MidPoint Cafe, coffeepot in hand, laughing and talking with diners and, when there's a language barrier, gesturing and pointing.

When she reaches his table, Juan José Sillas Blanco from Spain, dressed in an AC/DC T-shirt, points at his 5-euro bill and then the wall, and Bradley knows what he means. She grabs tape and a stepladder so he can add it to the collection of currency and license plates from around the world lining the upper walls, creating a visual guest book.

For travelers making the journey down Route 66, the café in Adrian, west of Amarillo, is a respite from the road and an important mile-marker—1,139 miles, to be exact—halfway between Chicago and Los Angeles. Across the Panhandle, 178 of those miles are in Texas.

"I could have 10 different countries in here at the same time," Bradley says. "I'm grateful for all the business I get, but most of it comes from overseas—and that's a blast."

Blue Miller from England browses the café's gift shop. She has traveled the entirety of Route 66 nine times but says she's "done thousands of shorter trips" and has written two books about the Mother Road.

"In Europe, Route 66 is kind of an encapsulation of the America that people grew up with—it's the diners, it's the cars, it's the small towns," she said. "And everybody's looking for what they saw in the movies."

Scenes like this play out every day along the remains of the most famous highway in the world. It originally traversed eight states along 2,448 miles, stretching from downtown Chicago to a pier at the Pacific Ocean in Santa Monica, California. Its official name is Route 66, and it's been busier in 2026 than any year since it was decommissioned in 1985.

This year Route 66 fans from around the world have been looking for new kicks as the celebrated road turns 100 years old. Larger cities along the road, including Amarillo; Joliet, Illinois; and Springfield, Missouri, hosted big celebrations earlier in the year.



Springfield earned the honor of hosting the national kick-off event through a competitive process but also due to its status as the birthplace of Route 66. It was there in 1926 that a telegram was sent by John Woodruff, a Missouri businessman, to Washington, D.C., asking that the new road be named Route 66 (he claimed it sounded catchier than the alternative, Route 62). The idea for the road—officially commissioned November 11, 1926—didn't originate in Missouri, but its iconic name did.

In anticipation of the centennial, communities all along the route spruced up their landmarks, planned events, relit neon and geared up for a major influx of visitors this year.

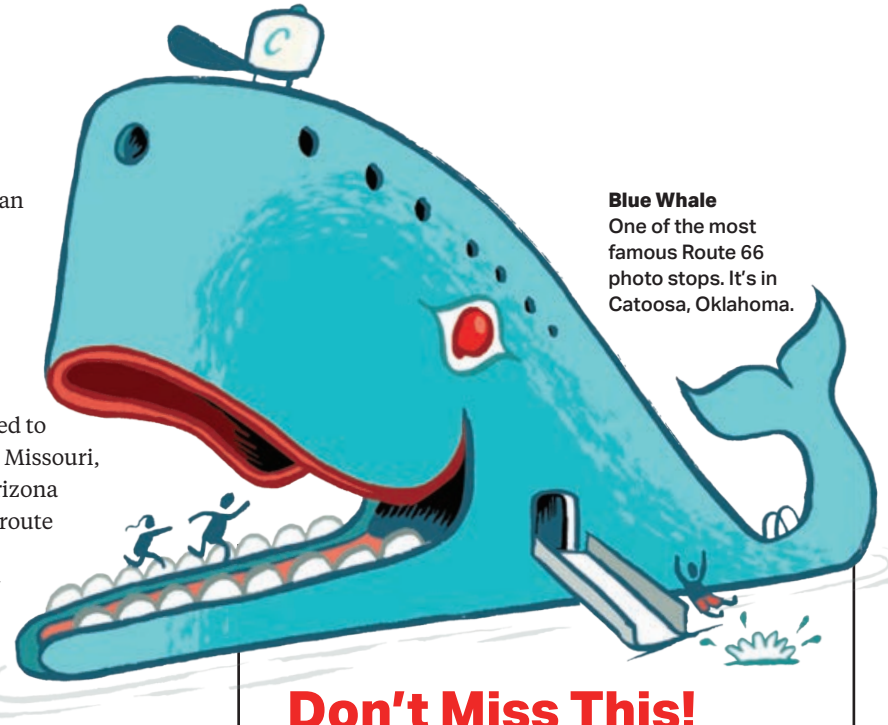
"I struggle to make a specific prediction, and part of that is because it's really hard to track specific routes," says Rhys Martin, president of the Oklahoma Route 66 Association, "but I would be surprised if traffic didn't double just because of the attention and the people planning their trips."

Gary Daggett, who manages the MidPoint gift shop and is president of the Route 66 Association of Texas, has seen a big increase in traffic at the shop.

"I'd say at least three times the normal, and our numbers are showing that in our guest book, sales, everything," he says. "We've been very busy so far this year."

Daggett first traveled Route 66 when he was 20 and says he wants to see the route preserved for future generations to enjoy. He and his wife planned to make their 30th trip this year, and he says they have friends who they now consider family all along the route.

"It's the people that make Route 66," he says. "A lot of people come to find that out. It's one thing to see it, but once you stop at little restaurants like this and the mom-and-pop gift shops, you get to know the people."



Blue Whale
One of the most famous Route 66 photo stops. It's in Catoosa, Oklahoma.

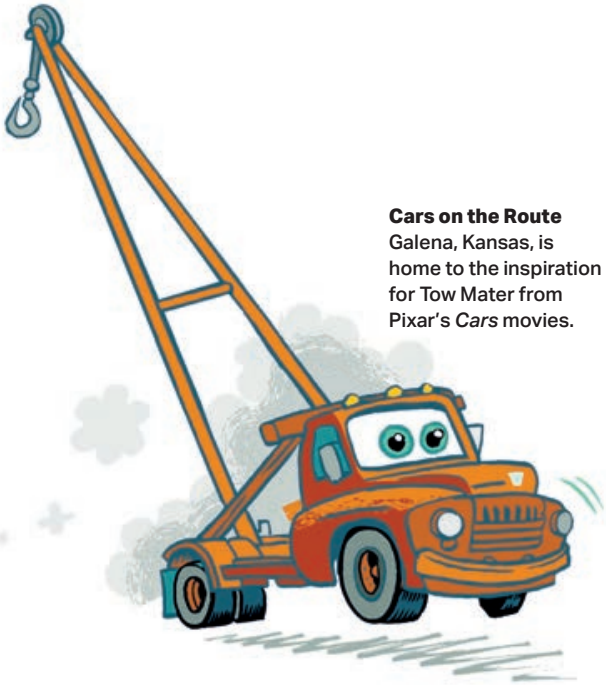
While Missouri can claim its birthplace, an Oklahoma man is known as the Father of Route 66. Cyrus Avery, a Tulsa realtor who owned a coal company, saw the need for a roadway from the Midwest to the West, connecting small towns and cities along the way. Appointed to the Joint Board on Interstate Highways in 1925, Avery managed to steer the route south from Illinois through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California instead of a more northern route through Las Vegas.

He also helped launch the U.S. Highway 66 Association in 1927 to encourage use of the new roadway. In the beginning, the route joined various existing state roads, with many of them still gravel. Besides paving the highway, the association's leaders also saw the need to encourage drivers to choose Route 66 over other transcontinental routes.

One of the first efforts to popularize the road was an epic footrace that followed Route 66 from its start in Santa Monica to Chicago, then on to New York City. The distance was 3,400 miles over just three months. It started with 275 runners, but 77 dropped out on the first day. Only 55 runners finished the race, with 20-year-old Andy Payne from Claremore, Oklahoma, the winner.

Through publicity like this, the nation learned of the new route, and traffic grew exponentially. Truckers favored its flat terrain, with elevations measured in hundreds of feet instead of thousands crossing the Rocky Mountains.

In the 1930s it became the road of migration as the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl displaced Midwesterners who sought a new life in California.



Cars on the Route
Galena, Kansas, is home to the inspiration for Tow Mater from Pixar's *Cars* movies.

Don't Miss This!

Stop at these spots in each state.

ILLINOIS: Gemini Giant (Wilmington)
If you only stop once before leaving Illinois, make it here. The 30-foot-tall Muffler Man is one of Route 66's most iconic photo ops.

MISSOURI: Meramec Caverns (Stanton)
A road-trip classic since the 1930s. Billboards and barn roof signs for this cavern once lined the entire Mother Road, and the attraction still feels like pure Americana.

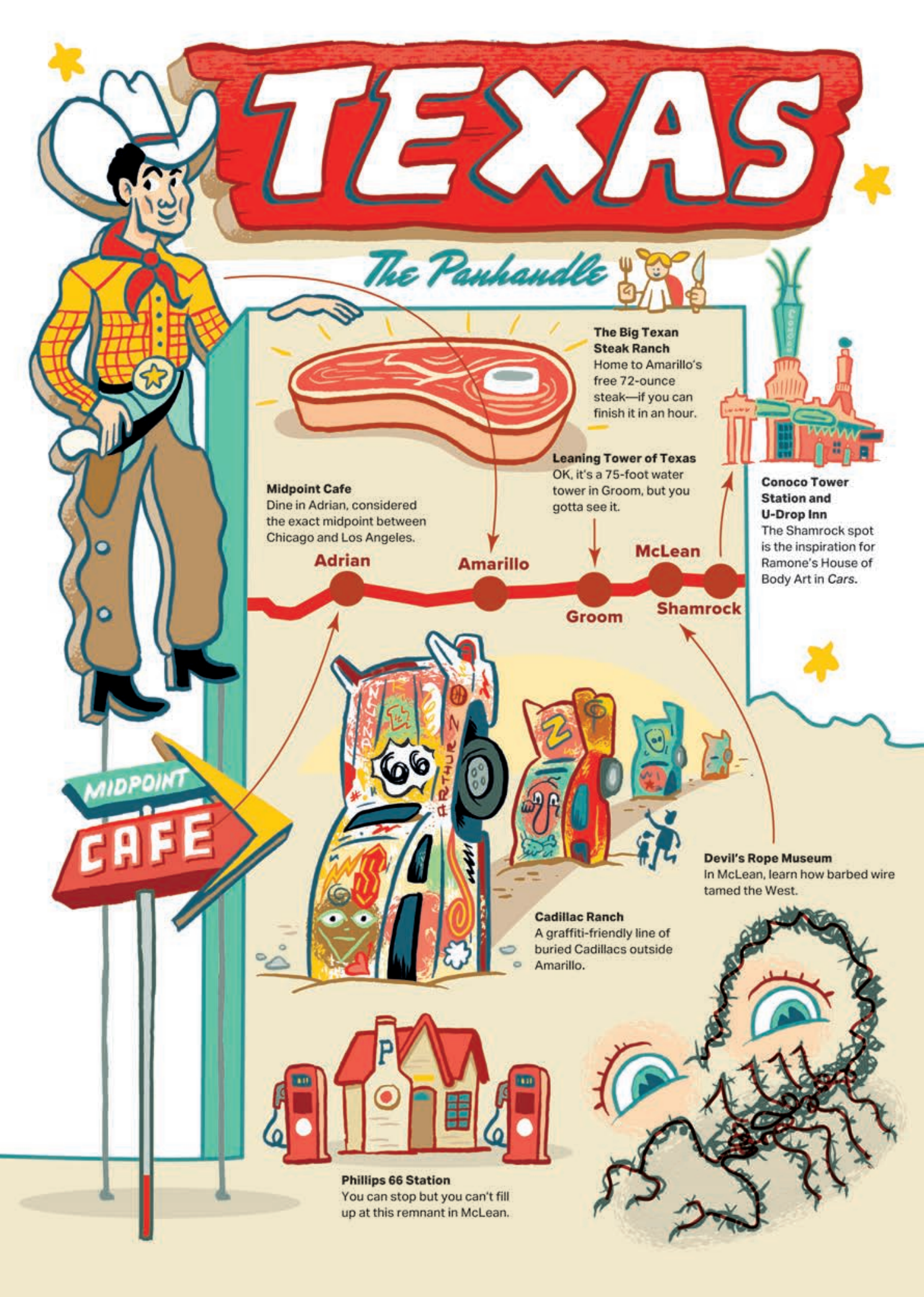
KANSAS: Cars on the Route (Galena)
Kansas has only 13 miles of Route 66, but this restored Kan-O-Tex gas station—home to the truck that inspired Tow Mater in *Cars*—is its standout.

OKLAHOMA: Blue Whale (Catoosa)
This 80-foot-long, smiling whale in a pond is one of the road's most beloved and quirky landmarks.

NEW MEXICO: Blue Swallow Motel (Tucumcari)
See beautifully preserved rooms and get a true 1940s motor court experience. Even if you don't stay, stop for the best neon on the entire route.

ARIZONA: Petrified Forest National Park
The only national park the Mother Road drives straight through—where classic roadside nostalgia meets staggering natural beauty.

CALIFORNIA: Roy's Motel & Café (Amboy)
A surreal desert time capsule with a legendary Googie-style neon sign.


TEXAS
The Panhandle
The Big Texan Steak Ranch
Home to Amarillo's free 72-ounce steak—if you can finish it in an hour.
Leaning Tower of Texas
OK, it's a 75-foot water tower in Groom, but you gotta see it.
Midpoint Cafe
Dine in Adrian, considered the exact midpoint between Chicago and Los Angeles.
Conoco Tower Station and U-Drop Inn
The Shamrock spot is the inspiration for Ramone's House of Body Art in Cars.
Adrian
Amarillo
Groom
McLean
Shamrock
MIDPOINT
CAFE
Devil's Rope Museum
In McLean, learn how barbed wire tamed the West.
Cadillac Ranch
A graffiti-friendly line of buried Cadillacs outside Amarillo.
Phillips 66 Station
You can stop but you can't fill up at this remnant in McLean.

When World War II gripped the nation, it became a strategic route for moving men and materials to support the war effort. This led to a major effort to rebuild the roadway for Fort Leonard Wood, an Army base in Missouri.

The highway was no match for the heavy trucks supplying the base, so a four-lane "superhighway" was planned with a deep cut near Devils Elbow that became the deepest highway excavation in the nation to date, and the four-lane, divided highway was the first of its kind. Ironically, it was completed in September 1945, the same month the war ended.

Other improvements included a reroute around a series of dangerous hairpin curves in western Arizona dubbed the Sidewinder. This 8-mile section has 191 curves with no guardrails and 12% grades.

By the 1950s, Route 66 was the thruway for a nation in love with the automobile. Cabins, motels, restaurants, roadhouses and all manner of highway kitsch sprang up to lure motorists off the pavement.

The road came to represent everything Americans hold near and dear: freedom, adventure, nostalgia and small-town values. Those themes were shared in the 1960s TV series *Route 66*, which helped fuel today's nostalgia for the road.

Championed in songs such as Bobby Troup's *(Get Your Kicks on) Route 66* and the Eagles' *Take It Easy*, immortalized by John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath,* and introduced to a new generation through Pixar's *Cars* movies, the Mother Road continues to fascinate those who prefer life in the slow lane.



Wigwam Motel
This historic landmark in San Bernardino, California, features 19 individual 30-foot-tall tipi-shaped concrete and wood cabins.

Folks like Dale and Lesley Finigan from Key West, Florida, who got in their RV and picked up the road in St. Louis. They stopped in Adrian for lunch.

"We both retired a couple of years ago, and it was on our bucket list of things to do," Dale says.

The road's demise came when the interstate highway system replaced it. Suddenly, small towns where Route 66 was the Main Street were bypassed, and many businesses couldn't survive as traffic moved away.

Mother Nature and the wrecking ball have taken their toll, but if you know where to look, you can still find the remains of the old route. Newer businesses, like the Devil's Rope Museum, have sprung from the ashes of those long-gone oases.

Travelers from California, Pennsylvania, Germany and Australia have signed the visitors log at the museum, which resides in what used to be a brassiere factory in McClean, east of Amarillo. Anita Day worked in the building when it was a factory and now works the front desk of the museum dedicated to barbed wire.

The museum's exhibits explain the history and role of barbed wire in conquering the West and include a collection of barbed wire sculptures and plenty of Route 66 memorabilia, including old newspaper clippings, road and business signs, and a re-creation of a classic café.

"When it opened, I thought 'Who would want to go?' " Day says. "Barbed wire is all you see along the highway. But here it is 35 years later." ■



Route 66 Start Sign
The starting point was at Adams Street and Michigan Avenue in Chicago until the city declared it to be closer to Lake Michigan this summer.

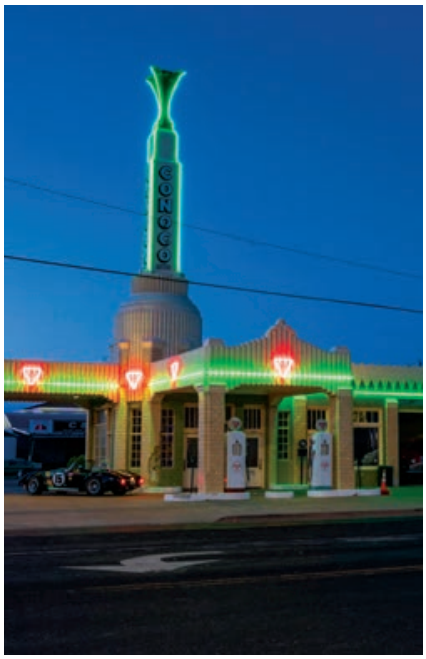


Gary's Gay Parita
A replica of a 1930 Sinclair gas station near Paris Springs, Missouri.

TCP Find this story on our website for a playlist of tunes that'll get you kicking no matter your route.

LONESTAR LANDMARKS

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ANNA MAZUREK



SHAMROCK

One of the most iconic Mother Road landmarks is the art deco **Conoco Tower Station** and **U-Drop Inn Cafe**, near the Oklahoma border. The unique geometric design, topped with a four-sided obelisk tower adorned with a metal tulip, was the inspiration for Ramone's House of Body Art in Pixar's 2006 *Cars* movie.

According to lore, the building started as a dirt sketch drawn with a nail by owner John Nunn and was later built in 1936 for $23,000. The structure was divided into three parts: a gas station, retail space and café, dubbed the U-Drop Inn by an 8-year-old boy who won a naming contest.

Over the decades, the building was a Greyhound station, then a barbecue joint and now houses the chamber of commerce visitors center.

In 2002, the city embarked on a comprehensive restoration to return the National Register of Historic Places-listed building to its original glory with red and green LED lighting that switches on from dusk to sunrise. The café, revived in 2021 by local restaurateur Osbaldo De Leon, serves homemade banana bread sundaes and brisket smoked on-site.

"The U-Drop Inn represents more than a historic building," says Crystal Hermesmeyer, Shamrock chamber director. "It's the front porch of Shamrock."

GROOM

In the early 1980s, Ralph Britten bought a 75-foot-tall water tower from a refinery for the truck stop he was building on Interstate 40 in Groom. The tower spent two years lying horizontal while construction was completed.

"Everybody was talking about how the water tower blew over," says Vince Britten, Ralph's youngest son, who helped paint the tower with the words "Britten USA."

When the Tower Fuel Stop opened and the tower stood upright, it stopped attracting attention. Realizing the advertising potential, Ralph decided to tilt the tower, anchoring two legs to concrete pillars attached to a buried beam to act as a kickstand for stability. Then, he cut



off the other two legs to dangle in the air. The newly created **Leaning Tower of Texas** attracted curious customers.

While a 1988 fire destroyed the truck stop, the tower remains and is repainted regularly by the family.



Ralph wanted to be buried under the water tower, which wasn't legal, so he compromised on a grave monument with a water tower in a local cemetery.

AMARILLO

Five spray-painted Volkswagen Beetles buried nose-deep in the ground are a play on Amarillo's Cadillac Ranch, created in 1974. These colorful cars were planted near the town of Conway by Ricky Crutchfield in the late 1990s to attract people to his family's tourist stop.

After Crutchfield's death in 2022, the future of Slug Bug Ranch was uncertain. The property sold, and the cars were moved off-site in 2023.

In 2024, the Big Texan Steak Ranch bought and relocated the beloved bugs adjacent to Starlight Ranch, an outdoor entertainment venue in Amarillo. The new **Slug Bug Ranch**, featuring paved walkways, was unveiled June 14, 2024, during Amarillo's annual Texas Route 66 Festival. While the collection of nine bugs is the star, it also includes nine limousines, formerly used to transport guests to the Big Texan.

The outdoor art installation is maintained by volunteers and is open 365 days a year. Of course, spray painting is encouraged.

Kind hearts and tranquil San Angelo acres await donkeys in need of a second chance

From Punch Lines to Peaceful Paddocks

BY JESSICA M. RIDGE • PHOTOS BY ANNA MAZUREK



On a sunny West Texas afternoon, a 1-year-old donkey with gray-brown fur nuzzles my thigh and gently nips at my jeans.

"That's how she says, 'Come pet me please,' " says Kim Elger, chief operating officer at Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue—one of the world's largest.

With a little help from Elger and general manager Jacob Caniglia, Mexia stands upright, which might seem unremarkable. But months earlier, a family in the Rio Grande Valley contacted the rescue to surrender the foal, which they'd found alone in the wild with hind legs made essentially useless by a toxin or vitamin deficiency.

Bereft, Mexia tried for months to rejoin her donkey family, which roamed just across the fenceline from where Mexia's human fosters cared for her. To donkeys, "family is everything," says Elger, a member of Concho Valley Electric Cooperative.

Once she got to Peaceful Valley, Mexia walked with the help of staff and a system of slings and straps until the rescue's chief veterinary tech had a game-changing idea. She customized a wheelchair intended for a Great Dane, adding bigger wheels and extenders to increase its height. "It's kind of a Frankenstein-type situation," Elger says.

The makeshift mobility aid enabled Mexia to rehabilitate her leg muscles to the extent that she hardly needs the device anymore, Caniglia says.

Stories as dramatic as Mexia's are atypical of most arrivals, he says. More often staff, which includes ranch hands, trainers and vet techs, welcomes donkeys to the facility outside San Angelo in a state of general ill health. The 172-acre ranch—PVDR's flagship facility and home to an average of 1,000 donkeys—serves as a stopover haven for abused, abandoned and neglected domestic donkeys. Once rescues are friendly toward humans and meet socialization milestones, including lifting each foot for a farrier, they graduate to one of Peaceful Valley's adoption centers across the U.S. or find respite in sanctuaries in Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas.

Patron saint of the punch line, donkeys get a second chance at Peaceful Valley—a reprieve from toiling under the burden of human misapprehensions and ignorance. "You've been told all your life that donkeys are stubborn," Elger says. "You call someone a jackass when they mess up—they're always the butt of the joke." It's a casual bit of cruelty and caricature the rescue works to dispel and amend.

Outcomes ordained by a lack of research ("donkeys are the forgotten equine," Elger says), conflation of donkey and horse care techniques, and ignorance of the animals' deep need for socialization and bonding converge at PVDR's intake facility, where arrivals receive vaccines, deworming, hoof trimming and a test for infectious equine anemia.

"They all come in needing something from us," Elger says. "There's no shortage of mistreated, abused or just neglected donkeys."

Peaceful Valley's off-site sanctuaries, which operate akin to grazing leases, each provide homes for 20–150 donkeys. That's also where the nonprofit rehomes burros (wild donkeys) from federal lands, where populations are closely managed.

"In the national parks, they're not protected," Caniglia says. "So we're their best bet. And so we take them out of that wide-open space—freedom—and we bring them here. And then we turn them out onto another wide-open space. That is meaningful to me."

Irrespective of a donkey's trajectory toward adoption or sanctuary, a baseline metric applies. "It's important that their first interaction at this facility, and then from every





OPPOSITE Donkeys in need of care get loving attention and 172 acres of ranchland at Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue.

TOP Mark Meyers, nuzzling with Calamity, started the rescue with his wife, Amy, as a backyard hobby more than 20 years ago.

ABOVE Misa rests in the nursery.

interaction on, is one of kindness," Elger says.

That ethos is evident to visitors who tour the rescue, alighting from golf carts at various enclosures and bays that dot the sprawling former dairy. Unfamiliar humans are regarded cautiously and quietly while tour guides introduce individual donkeys and share some of their idiosyncrasies, medical challenges and backstories. My guide recognizes one resident by his bray before we even pull up to greet him.

Several donkeys indulge my attempts to pet them, including Shasta, who basks beneath a tree that shades her pen. I also meet Casey, who was found running loose in a Kaufman County neighborhood in North Texas with a rope around his neck and a painfully damaged, unsalvageable hoof.

Despite that ordeal, Casey swiftly allowed PVDR staff to help him. "Usually it takes them a while, donkeys that are new to us and intake, to trust us and see what we're all about," Elger says. As soon as Casey arrived, he jumped into a trailer and allowed a farrier he'd never seen to lift and examine his injured leg and hoof, Caniglia says.

"Equine amputations are not typically a thing that you're going to do," Elger says. "But Casey, like Mexia, was such a sweetheart. He had such a will to live." After a two-month postoperative stint at a veterinary clinic and a few more weeks to heal and adjust, Casey scratched his ear with his new prosthetic, affirming his adaptation.

Casey and Mexia's sweetness and grit aren't uncommon among donkeys. Just widely unsung. And awe-inspiring.

"These animals are not what we've made them out to be," Elger says. "I had no idea that donkeys were so loyal. I had no idea that they were so social. I had no idea that they were so resilient.

"To be able to go from some of these situations that they come out of, where you would never blame them for not ever trusting a single even human-shaped object ever again, and they can bring themselves to a place where they open themselves up, and they can develop trust again … that they can make that choice."

Maybe that impulse is rooted in resilience. Or maybe it's a bit of grace donkeys extend to us, again and again. ■



Beachcombing at home.

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

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

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

SCAN TO BUY

From the publishers of
Texas Co-op Power

Please allow 4–6 weeks for delivery.

FINALLY ... LIFE INSURANCE YOU CAN AFFORD

TOTAL OFFER | DETAILS

BUY $100,000 LIFE INSURANCE | FREE INFORMATION

GLOBE LIFE AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE COMPANY — FREE INFORMATION

Globe Life

Non-Negotiable

7460

PAY THE AMOUNT OF One Hundred Thousand Dollars $100,000.00

MONTHLY RATES AS LOW AS:
ADULTS: $3.49
CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN: $2.17

EASY TO BUY
NO MEDICAL EXAM - SIMPLE APPLICATION
NO WAITING PERIOD
BUY DIRECT
SCAN QR CODE FOR A FREE QUOTE

SCAN TO VISIT US ONLINE

For **Immediate Service** Call **1-855-766-4181** Or Visit **ForGlobeLife.com**

$100,000 Adult Life Insurance

- Rate schedule is based on your current age and is guaranteed for the life of the policy.
- Monthly rates as low as $3.49.
- Coverage is also available for your spouse and other family members.
- Benefits will NEVER be canceled or reduced for the life of the policy if premiums are paid on time.

Policy Form #SRTCV/SRTCV R13 or R17, or #SRTCV90MA in MA

$30,000 Children's Life Insurance

- Rates are based on your children's or grandchildren's present age and never increase for any reason.
- Monthly rates as low as $2.17.
- Benefits will NEVER be reduced or canceled if premiums are paid on time.
- Give your children a financial head start right now. Your policy builds CASH VALUE for your family's needs.

Policy Form #GWL2001 or GWLA001

PERSONAL OFFER CODE: XCCX1APJ

(Offer may vary, $100,000 coverage not available in all states.)

CHOOSE $5,000, $10,000, $20,000, $30,000 OR UP TO $100,000 COVERAGE

PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST

$5 Gold American Eagles at COST! It's that simple. These Government issued coins are the easiest and safest way to protect your money and your family! A 5 minute call can change everything.

DON'T WAIT!

- Portfolio Diversifier.
- Free of dealer Markup.
- Inflation Proof.
- Ultimate Safety Net.

CALL TODAY:

(346) 445-6656



$429 per coin

Vault Code: TXX2611

24 HOUR PHONE LINE

"Gold is money. Everything else is credit." - J.P. Morgan

If you are buying as an investment, a gift, or just safeguarding your cash, this is the perfect way to do so! We are looking forward to EARNING your business, not just gaining it!

VISA MasterCard AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

LIMITED TIME OFFER - WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
(10 COIN MAXIMUM - NEW CUSTOMERS ONLY)

SUPREME COIN AND BULLION
Where family matters



CEO

HERBERT "TREY" GREBE III

Our Team Is Bigger Than It Seems

WHEN YOU THINK about Medina Electric Cooperative, you hopefully think of us as a local business. That's because we are.

Our management team, board of directors and employees live and work right here in the communities we serve. But you may not realize that your cooperative is part of a much larger co-op network that provides value, tools and knowledge that benefit you, the members.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

When severe weather is predicted for our region, we may call on our sister co-ops for assistance. Through this connection of mutual aid, we coordinate with them to bring additional trucks, equipment and crews to our area. We work together and share resources to more efficiently restore power to our community.



MEDINA EC JOINED OTHER CO-OPS TO HELP SUPPORT JACKSON EC FOLLOWING HURRICANE BERYL IN 2024.

And Medina EC reciprocates by assisting other electric co-ops when they request help.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives is a foundational principle of the co-op business model, in which co-ops work together to meet big challenges such as power restoration after severe weather.

Cooperation is also essential when it comes to cybersecurity. Training, resources and tools provided by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association strengthen our efforts to combat digital threats.

Medina EC's ability to tap into the nationwide network and access resources, products and leading practices from other cooperatives ultimately makes our co-op and community stronger.

Advocacy

Voices for Cooperative Power is another great example of the power of cooperation.

VCP is a nationwide grassroots network of co-op members that helps our elected officials better understand the many ways your co-op supports you and your community.

Challenges like affordability, energy security and reliability require flexible solutions that empower local utilities like ours to serve their people best.

Diversifying energy sources, collaborating on technologies and balancing progress with reliability are priorities that VCP advocates for in Austin and Washington, D.C.

Global Impact

Communities across the globe have benefited from the lessons learned and experience of co-ops in electrifying the American countryside.

NRECA International has put this knowledge to work, helping provide access to reliable and affordable electricity to 220 million people in 54 countries. This effort is made possible through the support of electric co-ops in Texas and across the country.

Hundreds of lineworkers (including some Medina EC linemen), engineers and other co-op employees have served as volunteers to bring first-time access to electricity and train local partners to help utilities be sustainable in their own communities.

November is a time for reflection and giving thanks. I'm grateful for our sister co-ops that enable us to better serve you and our broader community.

When electric cooperatives collaborate, we strengthen each other and the communities we serve—and that's something to be truly thankful for this Thanksgiving.

Until next time,
Trey Grebe



OLEGG13 | ADOBESTOCK

Prepare Now for Winter Weather

NOW IS PROBABLY THE time you're making plans for the holidays—arranging travel, finding gifts for loved ones and getting in the festive spirit. But now is also the perfect time to make a plan to keep your home safe this winter.

Cold weather, ice and snow can do real damage to your home if you don't prepare. Take the time to do some maintenance and winterize your home to make it more comfortable and safe in the coming months.

Insulate windows. Reducing drafts can lower your home's energy costs by up to 30% per year. You can get inexpensive supplies like weatherstripping, rope caulk, shrink film and draft stoppers at a hardware store.

Trim tree branches. Any tree limbs or branches hanging over your home should be cut back to at least 3 feet away from your house.

Inspect and repair your fireplace. In addition to your own visual inspection, you may want to have an expert inspect your chimney inside and out. Check that the roof flashing is tight against the chimney.

Check and repair the roof. Do a visual inspection or hire a professional. Check for cracked caulk or rust spots on flashing; shingles that are buckling, curling, blistering, missing or broken; cracked rubber boots around vent pipes; and masses of moss and lichen, which may indicate the roof is decaying underneath.

Clear out and repair gutters and downspouts. Clogged rain gutters or downspouts can damage your home's foundation or cause ice dams during a freeze. Make sure the gutters aren't sagging or trapping water, and tighten gutter hangers and downspout brackets.

By taking the time now to prepare your home for winter, you can prevent a headache—or serious damage—later on.

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
Mickey Holzhaus, (210) 422-3310
Larry Huesser, (830) 426-1539
Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

Voting District 2
Joe Foley, (830) 261-1304
Larry Neal, (210) 218-2367
Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437

Voting District 3
Dennis Gonzalez, (956) 218-8325
J. L. Gonzalez, (956) 286-1863
Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

CEO
Trey Grebe, 1-866-632-3532, ext. 1046

Call us.

TOLL-FREE
1-866-632-3532
Report an outage.
Pay your bill.
Get account balance.
Speak to a representative.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

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.



KOSSSMOSSS | ADOBESTOCK

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 emergency, ERCOT may issue conservation requests and alerts. If needed, ERCOT may declare an emergency which allows the grid operator to take advantage of additional resources. Appeals and alerts help consumers, including Medina Electric Cooperative members, know that conservation is needed. If grid conditions continue to worsen, the grid operator can mandate forced outages (load-shed) across the state.

Critical Care for Medical Necessity Accounts

If someone in your home depends on an electrically operated health aid, sign up for Medina EC's Critical Care for Medical Necessity designation online at MedinaEC.org/Registry. A physician's directive or prescription is required. Please note, Medina EC's Critical Care for Medical Necessity designation does not guarantee there will be no power interruptions. Power outages happen for many reasons that may be out of the cooperative's control. If your account has this designation, it's recommended to have a backup power source or an alternative plan in case of a prolonged power outage.

Nonresidential Critical Load

If you believe your account meets the requirements for nonresidential critical load status (critical load public safety, critical load industrial or critical load natural gas supply) please submit the appropriate documentation from the Railroad Commission to BusinessDevelopment@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 and verified. You can do that through SmartHub or by calling us at 1-866-632-3532.

You are 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. In addition, ERCOT has established the Texas Advisory Notification System to provide early notifications ahead of weather-related demand shortages. Learn more at ERCOT.com/TXANS.

Medina EC also has a resource page for ERCOT, load-shed events, notifications and what to do during an event at MedinaEC.org/ERCOT.

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.

Team Members Reaches Important Milestone

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CELEBRATED several special work anniversaries for employees between July and September.

Medina EC celebrates work anniversaries in five-year increments and honors each employee with an award for their years of service. For each service award, the cooperative also donates $100 to an organization of the employee's choosing. In 2026, Medina EC employees are on track to donate $1,900 to various local organizations.

Please join us in celebrating these Medina EC employees!



JOSHUA ROBERTS
Vegetation Management Coordinator
Hondo office
July | 10 years

DONATION TO
Meyer Elementary PTO



JUANITA MOLINA
Office Supervisor
Dilley/Uvalde offices
July | 25 years

DONATION TO
Dilley VFD



JOSE OLIVAREZ
Journeyman
Rio Grande City office
August | 5 years

DONATION TO
Rio Grande City Public Library



BENJAMIN GARCIA
Journeyman
Uvalde office
September | 15 years

DONATION TO
Operation Round Up



REUBEN AYALA
Journeyman
Dilley office
September | 25 years

DONATION TO
Cotulla FFA Booster Club

Is Your Contact Information Up To Date?



ZEE | ADOBE STOCK

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

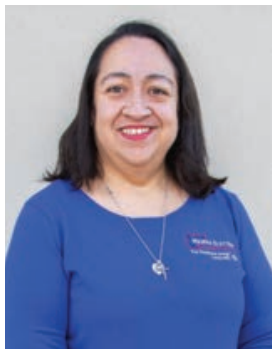
This information includes:

- 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.

Medina EC Celebrates World GIS Day



Rachel Solis
GIS Technician



Hope Tomlinson
GIS Technician

ON NOVEMBER 18, GIS professionals around the world are being put on the map (no pun intended). GIS stands for geographic information system—a scientific framework for gathering, analyzing and visualizing geographic data to help us make better decisions.

For Medina Electric Cooperative, GIS is vital. This team handles data and mapping for over 36,300 meters and 10,089 miles of line. Without GIS, Medina EC wouldn't be able to track equipment or outages or create certain lists we use to notify members of upcoming work.

We would like to give a shoutout to our GIS professionals, Rachel Solis and Hope Tomlinson!

Medina EC Celebrates Communication Week

IN HONOR OF World Communication Week, celebrated November 1-7, Medina Electric Cooperative is celebrating our communications team. This dedicated group handles all member and employee communications. They manage our communications materials—including this magazine, newspaper ads, our website and all of Medina EC's social media channels—as well as the annual election and membership meeting. They also coordinate all community support initiatives, such as scholarships, Youth Tour, Operation Round Up and the Community Empowerment Program, along with sponsorships, donations and community events.



Jacquelyn Muennink
Manager of Communications



Makenna Lange
Communications Specialist



Caroline Lee
Communications Specialist



SEVENTYFOUR | ADOBESTOCK

Inspire Hope This Holiday Season

THE HOLIDAYS ARE a time for family, friends and giving. If you're looking for ways to bring more meaning to your celebrations, these ideas are a great place to start.

Help out a neighbor. If you have a neighbor who needs help decorating, shopping or writing holiday cards, offer to lend a hand. This also is a great opportunity to get the whole family involved. Even young kids can pitch in to decorate—and help take the decorations down once the holidays are over.

Give gifts to teachers. Teachers work tirelessly during the school year, and the holidays are the perfect time to show your thanks. Give a gift card, custom stationery, or a personalized water bottle or tote bag. Don't forget to include a handwritten note from your child expressing why they appreciate their teacher.

Invite friends to a holiday dinner. Do you know any friends, acquaintances or coworkers who live far from family? If they aren't traveling home, invite them over for a holiday dinner. If they can't make it, consider cooking a larger portion than you'll need, freezing the leftovers and dropping them by the next day.

Donate to giving trees. What's a giving tree? You might find one displayed in a grocery store, library, school or community center. A giving tree is typically decorated with wish lists from kids in the area. Pick a wish list from the tree, purchase the gift and return it to the sponsoring organization.

Volunteer. Holiday-specific volunteer opportunities may include serving meals at a food bank or participating in a local toy drive. If you don't have the time to volunteer in person, you could sponsor a family instead. Many local organizations have holiday "adopt a family" programs, matching you with a family in need of basic necessities and gifts.

The holidays are a time filled with joy, but for some, they can be difficult. We hope that these tips inspire you to go out and make a difference in your neighbors' lives.

OPERATION ROUND UP

If you or someone you know needs financial assistance, apply for an ORU donation. Applicants must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC.

Applications due November 6.
MedinaEC.org/ORU

OPERATION ROUND UP®

FREEPIK | FREEPIK.COM

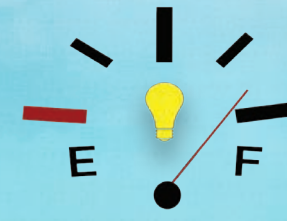
PREPAID ELECTRICITY

YOUR ACCOUNT.
YOUR SCHEDULE.
YOUR BUDGET.

NO DEPOSIT REQUIRED.

PAY FOR ELECTRICITY BEFORE YOU USE IT AND FILL UP YOUR "ELECTRIC TANK" BEFORE IT HITS EMPTY.

LEARN MORE AT MEDINAEC.ORG/PREPAID.



CHARLESPERRAULT | ADOBESTOCK



Philip Carleton
Lineman
U.S. Marine Corps



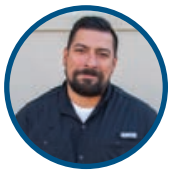
Rich Green
IT Technician
U.S. Navy



Matthew Gregor
System Operations Supervisor
U.S. Air Force & U. S. Army



Doug Kindred
Chief Information Officer
U.S. Marine Corps



Jose Montalvo
System Administrator
U.S. Navy



Ryan Tondre
IT Technician
U.S. Army



Edward Varnador
Journeyman
U.S. Army



Ken Weynand
Board President
U.S. Army

Co-ops Value Veterans

AT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES, we know that veterans and their families are an asset to our communities. This Veterans Day—November 11—Medina Electric Cooperative thanks those who have served our country and wants to spread the word that electric cooperatives need veterans to help power Texas.

Electric co-ops are not-for-profit, community-focused organizations that deliver safe, reliable and affordable energy to their member-owners. Unlike investor-owned utilities, co-ops are owned by those they serve and prioritize members' interests—not profits—above all else. This fundamental difference shapes every decision made by electric co-ops and provides employees with a unifying sense of purpose.

No matter which branch of the military you served with, there are three areas in which America's electric cooperatives can resonate with you as a veteran. Co-ops are:

Mission-driven. Our purpose is to power communities and empower members to improve the quality of their lives. This mission enables every co-op worker to perform their duties with a unified sense of purpose.

Using advanced technology. From cybersecurity and broadband to the many facets of electrification and turning data into actionable insights, technology plays a major role at electric cooperatives.

Operating in challenging circumstances. To power over 22 million homes, businesses, schools and farms, America's electric cooperatives work diligently to maintain service for their members no matter the challenges. Co-ops continue to do all they can to keep the lights on throughout hurricane season, during ice storms and floods, and amid global health and economic crises.

A wide variety of skills are required to keep operations running smoothly. Veterans can put their skills to work in jobs such as construction, equipment operation, engineering, member services, communications, human resources, software analysis, cybersecurity and more.

Check out job listings at careers.electric.coop to explore career opportunities at electric co-ops across the U.S.



Hondo Office Installs 24-Hour Self-Service Kiosk

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE IS excited to announce that the drive-thru at our Hondo office has a new self-service payment kiosk, giving members greater flexibility and more convenient ways to manage their accounts.

Located in the drive-thru, the kiosk provides secure, 24-hour access so you can make a payment anytime, with funds posting immediately to your account. Members can pay using cash, check, or credit and debit cards. While the kiosk does not dispense cash change for overpayments, any change will be automatically credited to your member account for future bills. You can also print a receipt at the end of your transaction for your records.

Medina EC remains committed to delivering convenient, hassle-free service options. Stop by and try the new kiosk next time you need to pay on the go.



JUNE 15–23 2027

150 TEXAS TEENS
7 DAYS IN D.C.
$2,000 SCHOLARSHIP

High school students*: Get ready to pack your bags! You can join 2,000 teens from across the U.S. to make new friends and share experiences in Washington, D.C., all paid for by your electric co-op.

Museums. Memorials. Monuments. Memories. Friends. History. There's something for everyone on this FREE trip of a lifetime!

*High school sophomores or juniors whose parents/guardians are Medina EC members.

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

LEARN MORE & APPLY AT MEDINAEC.ORG/YOUTHTOUR

DEADLINE TO APPLY: JANUARY 15, 2027

SEE THE VIDEO

EXPERIENCE THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME!

Stay Connected. Get Rewarded.

Complete these member-benefit steps for a chance to win a $100 bill credit.

As a Medina Electric Cooperative member, you have access to valuable tools, services and programs designed to help you manage your account and stay informed. Complete the steps below to earn entries for a chance to receive a $100 bill credit.

Entry 1: Register for SmartHub
Create your SmartHub account at MedinaEC.SmartHub.coop or download the SmartHub app. SmartHub allows you to report outages, view your electric use and manage your account.

Entry 2: Verify Your Mobile Number
Make sure your mobile phone number is up to date and verified in SmartHub. Go to Settings > Contact Methods to add or update your number. This helps ensure you receive important account alerts and notifications by text message. You can customize notification preferences under Settings > Manage Notifications.

Entry 3: Enroll in Automatic Payments
Save time and avoid missed payments by enrolling in Auto Pay. Payments can be automatically drafted from your bank account or charged to your credit or debit card each month. Sign up through SmartHub or call 1-866-632-3532.

Entry 4: Go Paperless
Choose paperless billing and receive your bill electronically instead of by mail. Update your billing preferences in SmartHub or call 1-866-632-3532 for assistance.

Entry 5: Join Operation Round Up
Support local communities through Operation Round Up. By rounding your monthly bill up to the next whole dollar, your spare change helps fund grants for families, individuals and nonprofit organizations throughout Medina EC's service area. Learn more or enroll at MedinaEC.org/ORU.

Complete more steps; earn more entries. Members enrolled for each option by December 1 will be entered. This includes members who have already signed up for these options and any new sign-ups by the deadline.

There will be five separate drawings, and five $100 bill credits will be awarded and automatically issued.

Winners in each category will be randomly selected and announced in the February issue of *Texas Co-op Power*.

Medina EC Celebrates Project Management Day

IN HONOR OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT DAY on November 5, Medina Electric Cooperative is recognizing our business development and key accounts team. This team is dedicated to supporting our largest commercial and industrial members, helping them optimize their energy use and improve efficiency. They also play a crucial role in securing new business relationships and fostering economic growth within the communities we serve by collaborating with local leaders and organizations. Their strategic project management ensures our cooperative's future success and helps our members thrive.



Katie K. Haby
Chief Member Relations Officer



Brandi Aranda
Business Development Coordinator



Michael Harkins
Business Development Coordinator



Liandra Lopez
Business Development Coordinator



Lindsey Muennink
Business Development Coordinator





FROM $9,995 INSTALLED

AFFORDABLE BATHROOM REMODEL

FROM $129 PER MONTH

Lifetime Warranty
Custom Sizes Available
100% Financing Available
A+ BBB Rating
Good Contractors List

BEST BUY WALK-IN TUBS
FEATURING "SEALTITE" TECHNOLOGY

Trusted by Texans for Over 20 Years
Tubs and Showers Made in America
Visit Our Texas Showroom

$500 OFF! Contact us TODAY for big savings with this limited-time offer.

CALL FOR MORE INFO
682-205-3532 • 877-416-5289
bestbuywalkintubs.com

9 Historic U.S. Nickels

A complete 20th-century collection



Wartime Nickel
Only silver U.S. nickel



Buffalo Nickel
Popular original



Liberty Nickel
Last minted 1912!

Only $4.95!



Ocean in View Nickel
Last dramatic new reverse



Keelboat Nickel
Honors Lewis & Clark



Jefferson Nickel
Traditional reverse



Return to Monticello Nickel
Forward-facing portrait



Bison Nickel
Recalls 1913 Buffalo nickel



Peace Medal Nickel
1st Westward Journey design

©2026 LCC, Inc.

Special Offer for New Customers Only

☑YES! Please send me the following:

QTY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
	Nickel Collector Set (limit 5)	$4.95
	Shipping	FREE!
	Sales Tax	FREE!
	TOTAL $	

ORDER MUST BE RECEIVED WITHIN 7 DAYS

☐ Check payable to Littleton Coin Co.
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Card #: Exp. Date ☐☐/☐☐

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name _____
Please print clearly

Address _____ Apt# _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Mail to:
Littleton Coin Company®
Serving Collectors Since 1945

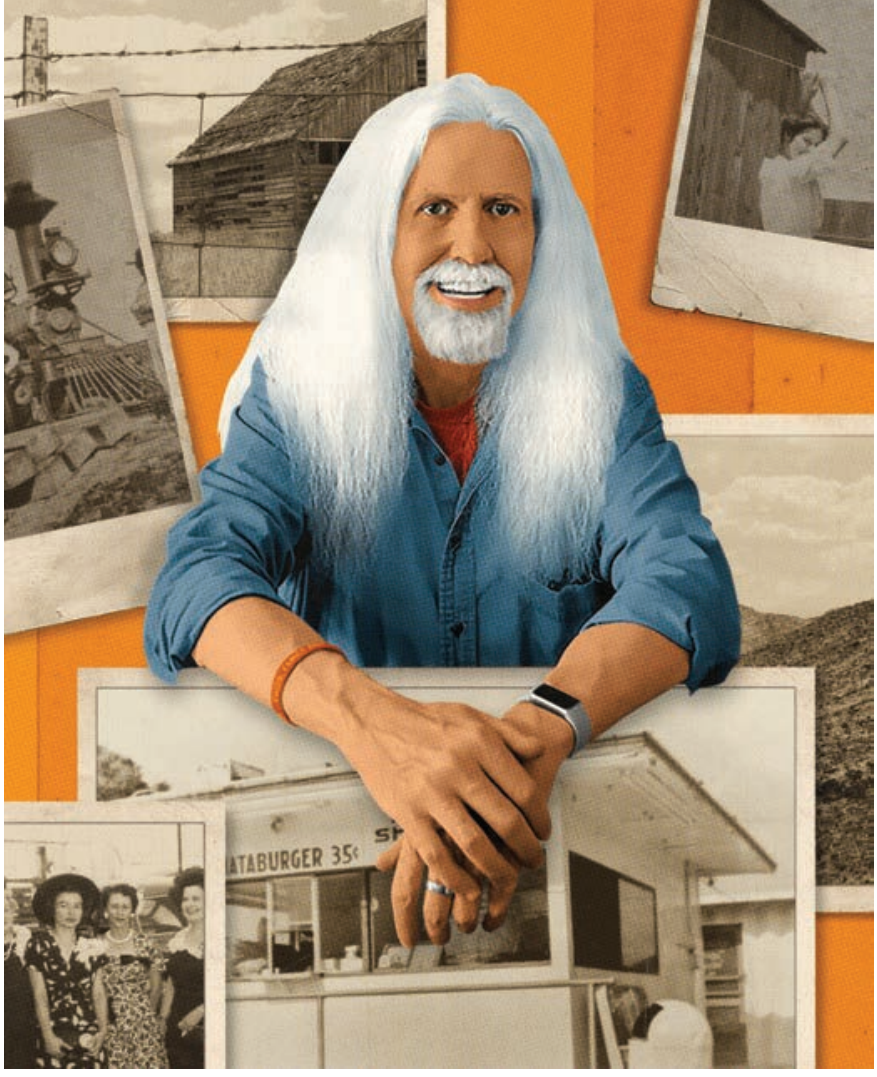
Littleton Coin Company
Offer Code: 57X101
1309 Mt. Eustis Rd
Littleton NH 03561-3737

Now you can own 9 collector coins spanning over 100 years of American history for only $4.95. Highly sought after, these classic nickels will never be minted again! Your complete collection includes every nickel design from 1900-2003 (dates our choice) and the Uncirculated 2004-2006 Westward Journey nickels. Act today, and you'll also get free shipping!

You'll also receive a handpicked trial selection of fascinating coins from our No-Obligation Coins-on-Approval Service, from which you may purchase any or none of the coins – return balance within 15 days – with option to cancel at any time.

Mail Coupon Today!
For Faster Service Visit:
LittletonCoin.com/Respond

Offer Code: 57X101



PORTRAIT: COURTESY JAK DARSNEK. HISTORIC PHOTOS: COURTESY UNT LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Faces and Places

And a big helping of gratitude power the viral wonder Traces of Texas

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY TAYLOR CALLERY

EVERY HOLIDAY SEASON I thank someone for a great gift to Texas. This time I'd like to thank Jac Darsnek, the much-loved creator and editor of the Traces of Texas Facebook page that has accrued more than 1 million followers since 2010.

Texas has always been more than a place. It's a memory, a voice, a photograph tucked into a drawer, a story shared across a kitchen table.

Darsnek didn't start out with a plan but simply an instinct, sharpened by experience, that Texans liked talking about Texas. By late 2012, something clicked. Not because of flashy trends or algorithms but because Darsnek leaned into history and let it speak for itself.

His breakthrough moment was publishing a black-and-white photo of the original Whataburger in Corpus Christi, which went viral.

Photographs became the heartbeat. The images, most of them taken long before color film was common, carry a gravity that modern photos often lack. These aren't stylized shots posed to impress; they're family photographs, photos of musicians before fame, pilots before they were legends, farmers before nostalgia softened the edges of real life. This was Texas unfiltered.

What's remarkable is not just the photos—acquired from the Portal to Texas History, the University of Texas at Arlington's Special Collections archive and other sources—but what happens after they're posted. The comments section becomes a living classroom, a town square, a reunion hall.

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

After a photo taken at Dyess Air Force Base in the 1950s was posted, readers identified the exact model of the cash register, the type of flight suit the pilots wore, even the materials that would later replace them. Darsnek said Texas has an astonishing depth of collective knowledge and a generosity and passion for sharing it.

That generosity mirrors Darsnek's own. Gratitude underpins Traces of Texas like cultural bedrock. Every contributor is thanked. Every artifact is treated as precious. Darsnek once shared that if someone takes time from their "one granted life" to send in a photo or a story, the least he can do is acknowledge it and thank them most sincerely. That attitude may be the secret ingredient.

Then there are the people. Centenarians. War veterans. Farmers. River guides. Storytellers like Mel Dart, who flew 35 missions over Europe in World War II and said he was "too dumb to be scared." Or Dorothy McQuary Callaway, born on a farm near Thorndale. Darsnek walked the property with her when she was 99, and she showed him an old well, saying she had pumped "a kajillion gallons of water out of that thing."

Sometimes, Traces of Texas reconnects people. Once, after the devastating 2013 explosion in West, a family photo was found and returned to its owners after being posted on the page.

Traces of Texas is a reminder that Texas is a community and that our stories and photographs are worth preserving, sharing and honoring. Traces of Texas is our shared digital archive. That is a wonderful gift. And Texas is better for it. ■

Cranberry Harvest

Sip and bake your way through the holidays with this traditional fruit

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

When I hosted my first Thanksgiving, I found myself with leftover cranberries I had trouble getting through. This holiday season, we're not letting any cranberry escape our holiday table. I'm transforming cranberries into a delicious agua fresca that can be enjoyed throughout the holiday season. It's tart, sweet and ideal for a crowd.



Cranberry Agua Fresca

1 bag fresh or frozen cranberries (12 ounces), plus more to garnish
10 cups water
1½ cups sugar
Juice of 1 lime
Lime slices, to garnish

COOK'S TIP The agua fresca can be made up to two days in advance and stored in the fridge. Stir before serving.

1. To a stockpot, add cranberries, water and sugar. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer on low until all cranberries have popped and softened and all sugar is dissolved, about 10 minutes.

2. Remove from heat and allow to cool. In batches, add cranberries and liquid to a blender and blend until smooth.

3. Strain into a punch bowl or pitcher. Stir in lime juice, add ice, and garnish with additional cranberries and lime slices as desired.

SERVES 10

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for a Cranberry Mezcal Paloma.



Cranberry Pecan Cornbread Muffins

NANCY DENNIS
BARTLETT EC

These corn muffins, warm from the oven and buttered, are heavenly! The combination of cornmeal, cranberries and pecans works for your Thanksgiving, Christmas or brunch table. The key to this recipe is to not overmix. I enjoyed these tender muffins with a cup of coffee and served the rest with dinner.

1 cup cornmeal
1 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted and slightly cooled
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
⅓ cup light brown sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
⅓ cup dried sweetened cranberries
⅓ cup chopped pecans

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a 12-count muffin pan with liners or coat with cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together butter, oil and brown sugar until completely smooth. Whisk in eggs and buttermilk until combined.

4. Pour wet ingredients into dry ingredients and whisk until combined. Fold in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 >

RECIPE PHOTOS: JASON DAVID PAGE. WINNER PHOTO: COURTESY BONNIE KOLIBA



$500 WINNER

Cranberry Nut Pie

BONNIE KOLIBA
FARMERS EC



Koliba buys an extra bag of fresh cranberries when they're in season. She freezes them just to make this pie throughout the year, and I'll be doing the same. I absolutely loved this pie for its ease and sweet and tart flavors. It's a recipe you'll get to know well.

2 cups fresh cranberries
½ cup chopped walnuts
1½ cups sugar, divided use
1 cup flour, sifted
2 eggs, lightly beaten
¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, melted
2 teaspoons almond extract
Sweetened whipped cream, for serving

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Coat a 10-inch pie dish with cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine cranberries, walnuts and ½ cup sugar. Spread into prepared pie dish.

3. In the same bowl, combine the remaining 1 cup sugar, flour, eggs, butter and almond extract. Stir well. The batter will be thick. Spoon batter over cranberry mixture in pie dish.

4. Bake 40–50 minutes. Allow to cool completely on a wire rack and serve with whipped cream.

SERVES 6

TCP *$500 Recipe Contest*

MAC AND CHEESE DUE NOV 10
What makes your ooey-gooey noodle dishes stand out from the crowd? Enter our contest. The best from Co-op Country will be featured in April, and the winner gets a load of cheddar: $500.
UPCOMING: SALSA DUE DEC 10

ENTER ONLINE

cranberries and pecans just until combined; avoid overmixing.

5. Spoon batter into muffin pan, filling each cup all the way to the top. Bake 5 minutes, then reduce heat to 350 degrees. Continue baking another 10–15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

6. Allow to cool in pan 5 minutes before serving. Store leftovers up to 1 week in an airtight container at room temperature or in the fridge. Leftovers can also be stored frozen up to 3 months.

MAKES 1 DOZEN MUFFINS

Cranberry Kuchen

SHELLEY FAHRENTHOLD
SAN BERNARD EC

This hearty, tart and comforting *kuchen*, German for cake, is meant to be enjoyed with a steaming cup of coffee. The batter is fairly thick, so be sure to grease your pan well. Fresh or frozen cranberries can



be used. Serve warm with a scoop of ice cream for a delightful fall treat.

CAKE

¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons milk
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries

TOPPING

½ cup sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ cup flour
¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

1. CAKE Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat an 8-by-8-inch pan with cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Stir in egg and milk. Slowly stir in flour, baking powder and salt. The batter will be stiff.

3. Fold in cranberries. Spread batter into prepared pan.

4. TOPPING In a bowl, mix sugar, cinnamon, flour and butter with a fork until crumbly.

5. Sprinkle topping evenly over batter. Bake 30–40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

SERVES 8

Give friends and family the Best of Texas.

Texas Co-op Power has combined favorite recipes from the *Typically Texas Cookbook* and *The Second Typically Texas Cookbook* into one delicious collection.

Inside this cookbook, you'll find more than 700 recipes, including over 300 desserts.

Put the *Best of Typically Texas Cookbook* in your kitchen for only only $29.95. Order online at TexasCoopPower.com.

To order by mail, send a check or money order payable to TEC for $29.95 to:

Best of Typically Texas Cookbook
1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

From the publishers of
Texas Co-op Power
Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

SCAN TO BUY



$29.95
includes tax, shipping & handling

HOLIDAY GIFT TCP GUIDE

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



The Perfect Taste of Texas

Looking for a gift that's always remembered? Berdoll's has been making pecan pies, honey glazed pecans, and chocolate favorites for 45 years. Stop by our store or let us ship Texas pecan goodness right to your door.

800-518-3870
berdoll.com



Fudge and Divinity for the Holidays

The Best Fudge in Texas. The Best Divinity in the World. Bring back those childhood memories of Christmas with the sweet gift of fudge and divinity from Holiday Farms.

HOLIDAY FARMS

holidayfarmscandy.com
divinitybydave.etsy.com



Texas Red Grapefruit and Avocados

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

1-800-580-1900
crockettfarms.com



Texas Bluebonnet Calendar

Large 20-by-15-inch calendar with 12 watercolor scenes. Enjoy nature's beauty year-round with this 2027 calendar by Texas State Artist George Boutwell. $20 plus tax and $4.50 shipping. See website for quantity pricing.

1-800-243-4316
gboutwell.com

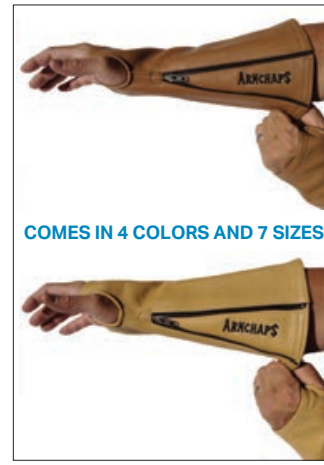


All Things Pecan Shipped to You!

6 Generations of Pecan Growers
3 Generations of Candy Makers
We use the finest Texas-grown, Orchard Fresh pecans to create handmade treats, including gift tins, candied pecans, honey butter, pies, chocolates and more! Shop in store or online!

OLIVER PECAN COMPANY
Orchard Fresh

325-372-5771
oliverpecan.com



COMES IN 4 COLORS AND 7 SIZES

Ideal Arm Protection for Any Activity

Helps Prevent Bruising and Protects Those With Thin Skin! Soft leather protective sleeves help protect you from 100's of injury-prone chores you do at work, home, farm, or ranch. Even has adjustable airflow!

(651) 492-4830
armchaps.com



COURTESY CHET GARNER

How To Defeat a Creek

Rusk's historic footbridge is the longest of its kind in the U.S.

BY CHET GARNER

THERE ARE MANY enormous bridges in Texas built to carry trains, trucks and oversized loads of every kind. Then there's the historic Rusk Footbridge, a narrow wooden walkway stretching 546 feet and built for something much humbler: helping folks get to town without getting their boots wet.

But what this East Texas marvel lacks in load bearing, it makes up for in length by being the longest wooden footbridge in the U.S. As soon as I heard about it, I had to cross it.

The bridge reaches far beneath a canopy of shade trees in Rusk, just off the Cherokee County Square and across a tributary to One Eye Creek, which must have its own interesting history. With every step, the span emanated a satisfying old-wood creak, the kind that makes you instinctively walk lighter, as if the bridge can feel your weight (and your thoughts).

The bridge was originally built in 1861 because residents on the east side of the creek were frequently cut off from life on the square every time it rained. Most Texans know the phrase "the good Lord willing and the creek don't rise" because every time the creek rose, they were at its mercy. But with this footbridge, they mastered the perils of nature.

Crossing the bridge today isn't exactly an adrenaline sport, although 546 feet is longer than I expected. And reaching the other side doesn't really take visitors anywhere of note, leaving everyone to simply turn around and hike back. But that's the charm.

It's not height or horsepower, it's longevity and the fact that this bridge has been carrying East Texans since the Civil War. By the time I reached the other side, I felt like I'd crossed more than a creek bottom. I'd crossed into the everyday history that holds small towns together, one plank at a time. ■

ABOVE Chet knew he had to walk across the 546-foot Rusk Footbridge soon as he heard about it.

TCP Watch the video on our website and see all of Chet's Texplorations 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.

NOVEMBER

7

Hillsboro Municipal Airport—Open House/Fly-In, (254) 337-7051, hillsborotx.org

Pipe Creek Turkey Shoot, (830) 535-6611, castlelakeranchvfd.org

12

Goldthwaite *The Stones Are Speaking* Film Screening and Talk by Director Olive Talley, (325) 648-2750, legacyplaza.org

14

Grapevine Candlelight Tour of Homes, (817) 410-3185, grapevinetexasusa.com

Mason Mason County Wild Game Dinner, (325) 347-5758, masontx.org

Smithville Smithville Garden Club Tour of Homes, (512) 237-2313, facebook.com/smithvillegardenclub

19

Corsicana Tree Lighting, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

Denton Homeless Veteran Stand Down, (817) 255-7150, bit.ly/veteranstanddown

Brackettville [21–Jan. 3] Legends at Las Moras, (210) 863-2355, legendsatlasmoras.com

21

Bluff Dale The Front Porch Christmas Market, (817) 946-0141, facebook.com/thefrontporchbluffdale

Henderson A Very Merry Market, (903) 521-3992, thechurchatlakecherokee.com

Kerrville **Holiday Lighted Parade,** (830) 257-7300, kerrvilletx.gov

Luling **Candy Land—Christmas Arts & Crafts Show,** (830) 875-0123, lulingcc.org

Grapevine **[21–22] North Central Ballet Presents *Nutcracker—Short and Sweet,*** (817) 410-3100, grapevinetexasusa.com

22 **Giddings** **Sip & Shop Christmas Market,** (979) 542-3455, giddingstx.com

27 **Fort Worth** **[27–28] Home for the Holidays,** (817) 665-6000, fwsymphony.org

28 **Mason** **Light Up Our Town—A Hometown Christmas,** (325) 347-5758, business.masontx.org

29 **Mineola** **Toys for Tots Dance,** (972) 979-2672, etsrda.com

DECEMBER

5 **Bertram** **Country Christmas,** (512) 882-2992, bertramchamber.com

Castroville **Candlelight Home Tour,** (830) 708-5680, castrovilleconservationsociety.org

Fairfield **Christmas on the Square and Parade,** (903) 389-5792, fairfieldtexaschamber.com

Submit Your Event

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.









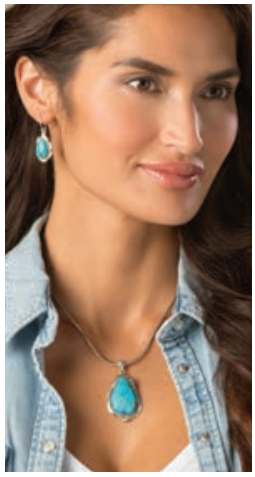
Hit the Road

Event Calendar

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

Plan now
TexasCoopPower.com/events

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.

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. Call today!



Jewelry Specifications:

• Arizona turquoise • Silver-finished settings

Sedona Turquoise Collection

Rating of **A+**

A. Pendant (26 cts)	~~$299~~*	$99 +s&p ***Save $200***
B. 18" Bali Naga woven sterling silver chain		$149 +s&p
C. 1 ½" Earrings (10 ctw)	~~$299~~*	$99 +s&p ***Save $200***
Complete Set**	~~$747~~*	**$249** +s&p ***Save $498***

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

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

1-800-333-2045

Offer Code SDT231-01

You must use the offer code to get our special price.

Stauer®

14091 Southcross Drive W.
Dept. SDT231-01, Burnsville,
Minnesota 55337 **www.stauer.com**

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

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

(Required by 39 USC 3685)

1. Publication Title: Texas Co-op Power
2. Publication Number: 0540-560
3. Filing Date: October 1, 2026
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: Twelve
6. Annual Subscription Price: $7.50
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Street, city, county, state and ZIP+4): 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, Travis, Texas 78701-2167
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, Travis, Texas 78701-2167
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor

Publisher: Texas Electric Cooperatives, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, Texas 78701-2167

Editor: Chris Burrows, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, TX 78701

Managing Editor: Karen Nejtek, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, TX 78701

10. Owner

Full Name / Complete Mailing Address

Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., is a nonprofit association of rural ECs organized as a cooperative membership corporation under Article 1528b, Texas Civil Statutes. Its members are: Bailey County ECA, Muleshoe; Bandera EC, Bandera; Bartlett EC, Bartlett; Big Country EC, Roby; Bluebonnet EC, Giddings; Bowie-Cass EC, Douglassville; Brazos EC, Waco; Bryan Texas Utilities, Bryan; Central Texas EC, Fredericksburg; Cherokee County ECA, Rusk; Coleman County EC, Coleman; Comanche County ECA, Comanche; Concho Valley EC, San Angelo; CoServ EC, Corinth; Deaf Smith EC, Hereford; Deep East Texas EC, San Augustine; East Texas EC, Nacogdoches; Fannin County EC, Bonham; Farmers EC, Greenville; Fayette EC, LaGrange; Fort Belknap EC, Olney; Golden Spread EC, Amarillo; Grayson-Collin EC, Van Alstyne; Greenbelt EC, Wellington; Guadalupe Valley EC, Gonzales; Hamilton County ECA, Hamilton; Harmon EA, Hollis, Oklahoma; Heart of Texas EC, McGregor; HILCO EC, Itasca; Houston County EC, Crockett; J-A-C EC, Bluegrove; Jackson EC, Edna; Jasper-Newton EC, Kirbyville; Karnes EC, Karnes City; Lamar County ECA, Blossom; Lamb County EC, Littlefield; Lea County EC, Lovington, New Mexico; Lighthouse EC, Floydada; Lower Colorado River Authority, Austin; Lyntegar EC, Tahoka; Magic Valley EC, Mercedes; Medina EC, Hondo; MidSouth EC, Navasota; Navarro County EC, Corsicana; Navasota Valley EC, Franklin; North Plains EC, Perryton; Northeast Texas EC, Longview; Nueces EC, Robstown; Panola-Harrison EC, Marshall; Pedernales EC, Johnson City; PenTex Energy, Muenster; Rayburn Country EC, Rockwall; Rio Grande EC, Brackettville; Rita Blanca EC, Dalhart; Rusk County EC, Henderson; Sam Houston EC, Livingston; San Bernard EC, Bellville; San Miguel EC, Jourdanton; San Patricio EC, Sinton; South Plains EC, Lubbock; South Texas EC, Victoria; Southwest Rural EA, Tipton, Oklahoma; Southwest Texas EC, Eldorado; Swisher EC, Tulia; Taylor EC, Merkel; Tex-La EC of Texas, Nacogdoches; Tri-County EC, Azle; Trinity Valley EC, Kaufman; United Cooperative Services, Cleburne; Upshur-Rural EC, Gilmer; Victoria EC, Victoria; Wharton County EC, El Campo; Wise EC, Decatur; Wood County EC, Quitman.

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders: ☒ None

12. Tax Status: ☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months

13. Publication Title: Texas Co-op Power
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 1, 2026

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies		1,731,326	1,725,830
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS 3541	1,720,634	1,715,277
	(2-4) In County, Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Other Classes of Mail through USPS	none	none
c. Total Paid Distribution		1,720,634	1,715,277
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	(1) Free Outside-County included on PS 3541	5,013	5,034
	(2-3) Free In-County/Other Classes	none	none
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	4,931	4,957
e. Total Free or Nomianal Rate Distribution		9,944	9,991
f. Total Distribution		1,730,578	1,725,268
g. Copies not Distributed		749	562
h. Total		1,731,327	1,725,830
i. Percent Paid		99.43%	99.42%

16. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	none	none
b. Total Paid Print and Electronic Copies	1,720,634	1,715,277
c. Total Print and Electronic Distribution	1,730,577	1,725,268
d. Percentage Paid	99.43%	99.42%

I certify that 50% of all my distribution copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership

☒ Publication required. Will be printed in the November 2026 issue of this publication.

Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner: Karen Nejtek, Production Manager — Date: October 1, 2026

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Ride the Rails

All aboard! Not to derail the conversation, but these Texans love to blow off steam by riding the rails. Let's get back on track. Have your tickets ready; this train's leaving the station.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ

1 BOB NORRIS
PEDERNALES EC
A freight train crosses New Mexico.

2 STEFAN GREENE
HEART OF TEXAS EC
"Departure from San Antonio as the train is backed up for its return to McGregor."

3 ANN ANTHONY
MIDSOUTH EC
"When my grandson, Buchanan Anthony, was 3 years old, he enjoyed his first train ride on the Texas State Railroad in Rusk."

4 JOHN MCLAIN
TRINITY VALLEY EC
"Union Pacific's Big Boy No. 4014 makes its way west in East Texas."









Upcoming Contests

IN THE GARDEN DUE NOV 10
COUNTRY CHURCHES DUE DEC 10
REPETITION DUE JAN 10

ENTER ONLINE

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for many more Ride the Rails photos from readers.



Navigating Turbulence

It only takes one person to ease life's baggage when all seems lost

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

ILLUSTRATION BY ALICE MOLLON

THE AIRPORT CONCOURSE stretched ahead for what seemed like miles. Everywhere, throngs of strangers scurried like ants, oblivious to me and our fellow travelers. Most stared at their phones.

After a long walk, I arrived at Gate 81 and leaned against a column to catch my breath. And people watch.

Near the waiting area, four men stood in a circle, chatting and laughing. Over in a seat, an older man scribbled in a notebook. A few chairs away, a slim woman wearing glasses charged her phone. Across from her, a little girl played on a phone while her weary mother stared into space.

A young woman hurrying past caught my eye. Strapped to her chest was a baby, swaddled tightly. As I discreetly watched, the mother strode over to an airline agent. They talked briefly, then the young mother burst into tears. So did the baby.

"This airport is horrible!" she wailed. "What am I going to do?"

My heart sank as her cries turned into gut-wrenching sobs. She had missed her flight.

Tears streamed down her face, and fear shone in her eyes. "Oh, that poor, poor woman," I thought.

Seconds later, the slender woman I'd noticed before leaped up from her chair, left her belongings behind and beelined for the mother. Without hesitation, she wrapped her arms around her in a fierce hug and held the young woman as she continued to cry. Then the woman cupped the mother's face in her hands and looked into her eyes. "It's going to be OK," the woman said calmly. "It's going to be *O-K*."

Soon a second woman hurried up and embraced the mother too. Another woman appeared and put some bills in the mother's hand. "This isn't much, but it's all I have," she said. "I hope it helps."

More and more women stepped up, each gifting their own salves of cash. It was if they were draping a communal blanket of love, warmth and protection.

Teary-eyed and deeply touched, I stood there, wanting to help, yet a little afraid and unsure of what to do. "You know what to do," a small voice told me.

Digging into my purse, I pulled out a white bank envelope with one last $20 bill folded inside. I walked over to the mother and tucked my envelope into her hand, which by then clutched a fistful of bills. "Here," I said, "you can use this envelope for your money." I gave her a quick hug and then hurried to board my plane.

On the flight, I searched for the slender woman but couldn't find her. To this day, I'll always wish I could have thanked her for her brave act of compassion.

That morning in a busy airport, she empowered one young mother with hope. And she showed strangers like me how kindness can ripple out and impact the world in the best kind of way. ■



Actual size is 38.1 mm

250 COLLECTION

A FIRST-EVER FOR THE ICONIC MORGAN SILVER DOLLAR!

One Legendary Design, One Extraordinary Finish, One Historic American Anniversary

For nearly 150 years, the Morgan Silver Dollar has been one of America's most beloved and collected coin designs. First introduced in 1878 and created by Assistant Mint Engraver George T. Morgan, the Morgan became a symbol of America's Gilded Age and an enduring favorite among generations of collectors. Now, the legend gets a spectacular modern makeover.

The 2026-P Morgan Silver Dollar Reverse Proof

Struck in 2026 especially for America's 250th anniversary this Morgan features the classic Liberty and eagle designs collectors know and love, enhanced with a stunning Reverse Proof finish. What exactly is Reverse Proof? Think of it as the Morgan design turned inside out. Instead of the traditional mirror-like background with frosted details, the fields appear frosted while Liberty, the eagle and other design elements shine with brilliant, mirror-like surfaces. The result is dramatic contrast that makes this historic design practically jump off the coin.

Two Firsts for America's 250th

For the first time, the Morgan Dollar bears a special 1776 – 2026 dual date commemorating the Semiquincentennial. It also carries a one-year-only "Liberty Bell 250" privy mark, adding another unmistakable connection to this once-in-a-generation American celebration. Each coin was struck at the U.S. Mint's historic Philadelphia facility, the nation's "Mother Mint," using carefully prepared planchets, polished dies, and multiple strikes to achieve its distinctive Reverse Proof appearance.

The Morgan Design You Know in 99.9% Silver

Look closely and you'll find the familiar artistry that made the Morgan legendary: Liberty wearing her cap, floral crown, and "LIBERTY" inscription, surrounded by 13 stars and the classic mottoes. Turn it over and the majestic eagle returns with wings spread clutching arrows and an olive branch. The difference? This modern Morgan is struck in highly pure 99.9% fine silver, giving collectors a contemporary interpretation of one of America's most recognizable silver dollar designs.

Only 250,000 Authorized

The U.S. Mint authorized a maximum mintage of just 250,000 for these 2026-P Morgan Silver Dollars. For Morgan enthusiasts, that's a remarkably small number considering the enormous following this classic design has built over generations.

One Legendary Design, One Extraordinary Finish, One Historic American Anniversary

If you're a longtime Morgan collector, a silver enthusiast or simply appreciate owning tangible pieces of American history, the 2026-P Morgan Silver Dollar Reverse Proof deserves a place in your collection. Supplies are extremely limited. Reserve yours before this modern Morgan becomes one you wish you hadn't missed.

Plus, you'll receive a special 250th Anniversary BONUS American Collectors Pack, a $50 Value, FREE with every order!



Order Now and Receive FREE Gift

FOR FASTEST SERVICE CALL TODAY TOLL-FREE

Limited Supply Maximum 20 Coins Per Household

1-888-201-7144

Offer Code MRP157-01
Please mention this code when you call.

GOVMINT

GOVMINT • 1300 Corporate Center Curve, Dept. MRP157-01, Eagan, MN 55121

GOVMINT® is a brand of Asset Marketing Services, LLC (AMS). AMS is a retail distributor of coin and currency issues and is not affiliated with the U.S. government. The collectible coin market is unregulated, highly speculative and involves risk. **Prices, facts, figures and populations deemed accurate as of the date of submission to the publication but may change significantly over time.** All purchases are expressly conditioned upon your acceptance of our Terms and Conditions (www.amsi-corp.com/terms-conditions); to decline, return your purchase pursuant to our 30 day Return Policy (www.amsi-corp.com/product-return-policy). ©2026 Asset Marketing Services, LLC.

Ownwell

OWNWELL.COM/HOME

