

# TEXAS CO-OP POWER

## CRAWFISH, Y'ALL

Mudbug-loving Texans pull up a seat at the communal table





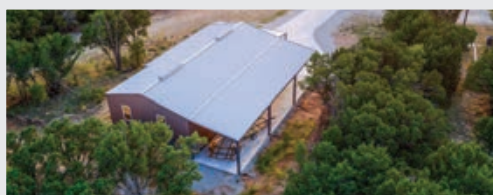
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Crawfish and good times at Repka's in Brookshire.

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CRAWFISH: ERIC W. POHL. CONJUNTO ARTIST: COURTESY TEXAS FOLK LIFE



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**ON THE COVER** For many Texans, a crawfish boil marks more than the arrival of spring. Photo by Eric W. Pohl

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## Keeping in Touch

I am 84 and rely on good reading material to keep in touch with "all."

Seldom have I enjoyed such fine articles as your November issue. I began with interesting Letters, then the woman behind Wreaths Across America and the magnificent photos accompanying the one-of-a-kind artists. Then comes my favorite subject—history.

BRENNA QUEBBEMANN | BLANCO PEDERNALES EC AND CECA

## Startling Conclusion

The star on the coin looks nothing like the lone star on the flag [*A Star Is Born*, December 2019]. There were stars for centuries on flags, shields and emblems of nations. Our Texas founding fathers . . . considered Texas a "lone star"—alone as a region fighting the tyrannical dictatorship of Santa Anna.

To try to stretch so far to connect these patriots to an insignificant star on a coin minted in 1817 is a thin presumption and certainly not clear. The Long Expedition in 1819, usually given credibility for being the first image of the lone star, is proven history.

COY PRATHER | MONTALBA TRINITY VALLEY EC

## Made in Texas

It is great that you are celebrating the makers in our areas [*In the Making*, November 2019]. Nice photos and nice story.

TRAVIS FROELICH | BASTROP BLUEBONNET EC

So many of us artisans here in Texas! . . . My husband and I have been making soap for

## Clip-and-Save Recipes

Being in my 20s, I know that

I am in the minority of

your readership, but that also

makes me the future of your

readership. I read your articles

monthly, but I only ever save the recipes, just like my mother and my mother's

mother before her. I clip them out and keep them in my homemade recipe

book/binder/scrapbook.

KASEY MENN | BRYAN | BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES



the past 17 years using the milk from our award-winning Nubian dairy goats.

CAROLINE LAWSON | VIA FACEBOOK  
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

Ryan Drapela [above] is an awesome young man. He works hard to be the best craftsman he can be.

MARK WOODS | VIA FACEBOOK

## Hamil to the Rescue

President Richard Nixon's failure to thwart REA was a huge

success for rural electrification nationwide [*Nixon's Attack on Co-ops*, December 2019]. Pictured behind Nixon was REA administrator Dave Hamil, a dear friend of mine.

Hamil almost single-handedly organized national leadership to save co-ops. Nixon was forced to sign legislation that restored federally funded loans and even greater financial health to co-ops.

BILL MULDOON | KERRVILLE CENTRAL TEXAS EC

## Co-ops and VFDs

I applaud your recognition of the critical importance and needs of volunteer fire departments in the communities they serve [*Putting Others First*, October 2019]. There are several volunteer fire departments served by our local co-op, Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative, including the McQueeney Volunteer Fire Department.

In October, the McQueeney VFD was the recipient of a Power-Up Grant of \$20,000 for the purchase of lifesaving extrication equipment. This is one of the many ways in which GVEC has helped our department to better serve our community.

MARILYN MARSHALL | NEW BRAUNFELS GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

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

Texas Co-op Power

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## HAPPENINGS

# Chopin and Friends

Classical music lovers are in for a treat when distinguished Canadian pianist Ryo Yanagitani performs **CHOPIN AND FRIENDS: ROMANTIC GENIUS** at the Cailloux Theater in **KERRVILLE** on **FEBRUARY 27**.

Frédéric Chopin was a 19th-century Polish composer and virtuoso pianist who was close friends with French composer Hector Berlioz and sometimes friend, sometimes rival of Franz Liszt. The concert will feature pieces by all three and one by Johann Sebastian Bach, one of Chopin's greatest influences.

"This concert is all about showmanship," says Eugene Dowdy, conductor and artistic director for Symphony of the Hills, host of the event. "Ryo is a wonderful showman as a performer, super energetic. And even Chopin, himself a famous piano performer, also hung out with other showy composers like Hector Berlioz—composer of a piece named *Symphony Fantastique*, by the way. Who writes a symphony and names it that?"

**INFO** ► (830) 792-7469, [symphonyofthehills.org](http://symphonyofthehills.org)

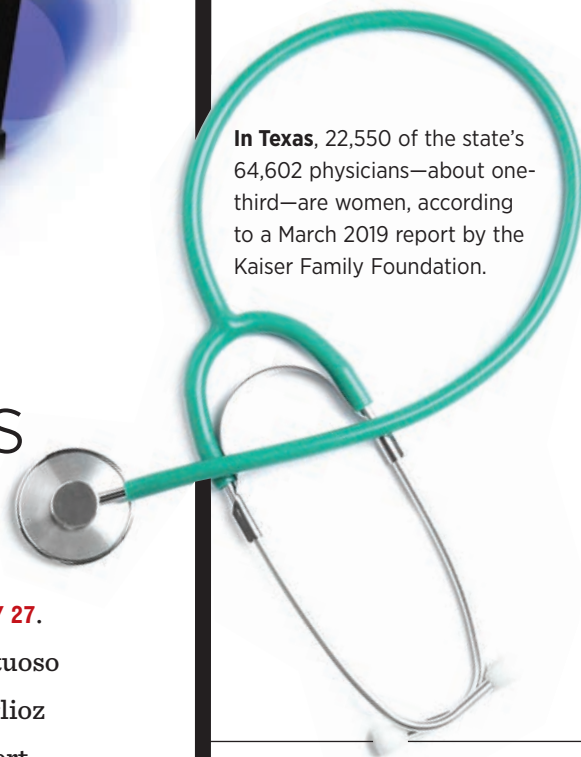
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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### PIONEERING M.D.

**National Women Physicians Day** is February 3. The date marks the birthday of Elizabeth Blackwell in 1821. When Blackwell graduated from New York's Geneva Medical College in 1849, she became the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States.

**In Texas**, 22,550 of the state's 64,602 physicians—about one-third—are women, according to a March 2019 report by the Kaiser Family Foundation.



## LIFESTYLE

### Cut It Out!

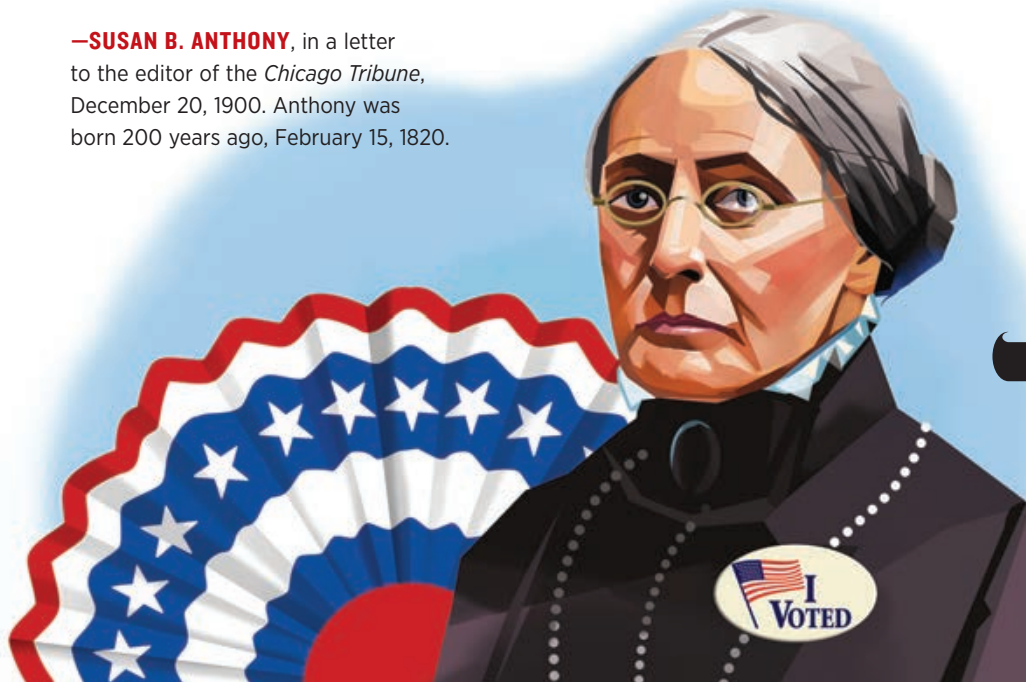
**Have you witnessed** crape murder—the horrific and drastic pruning of innocent crape myrtles? Or seen the gnarled, knotty scars left by previous crimes?

**Read *Crape Murder*** on Page 8, then tell us about your experience by emailing [letters@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:letters@TexasCoopPower.com) or posting on our Facebook page. Include your name, co-op and city. (We won't turn you in to the pruning police.)



*“There is no history about which there is so much ignorance as this great movement for the establishment of equal political rights for women. I hope the twentieth century will see the triumph of our cause.”*

—**SUSAN B. ANTHONY**, in a letter to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, December 20, 1900. Anthony was born 200 years ago, February 15, 1820.



BY THE NUMBERS

5,200

That's the number of choking deaths in the U.S. in 2017, according to the National Safety Council. Surgeon Henry Heimlich, who in the 1970s invented a technique used to help choking victims dislodge an obstruction from their airways, was born 100 years ago—February 3, 1920, in Delaware. The Heimlich maneuver is credited with saving thousands of lives.

➔ *Did you know?*

In 2016, at the age of 96, Heimlich himself used his technique for the first time to save the life of a woman choking at his retirement home in Cincinnati.

NATURE



## Desolate Skies

**The New York Times**, reporting on an analysis in the journal *Science*, said in September that there are 2.9 billion fewer birds in the United States and Canada than there were in 1970.

**While the study** was not designed to determine the cause of the 29% drop in population, scientists suggest likely culprits are habitat loss and pesticides.

## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

*My most unforgettable first date was . . .*

**Last month** we asked readers to finish a sentence that we started. Your snappy answers are still coming in, and we'll share them next month. Meanwhile, amid thoughts of romance and Valentine's Day, how would you finish the sentence above?

**Your answers** can be silly, serious, deep or superficial. Post your responses on our Facebook page or email them to [letters@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:letters@TexasCoopPower.com). Please include your name, city and co-op.



**EVERY FEBRUARY**, horticulturist Greg Grant dreads the sight of tree trunks topped by sawed-off limbs. The annual chain saw massacre generally targets only one kind of tree: crape myrtles. “I’m *never* going to get used to that horrifically wrong way of pruning them,” huffs Grant, a Texas A&M Agri-Life Extension agent for Smith County. “Someone’s *got* to stop the madness.”

That madness is known as “crape murder.” No one’s sure how or why the excessive shearing got started, though Grant, a member of Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative, has some theories. Despite efforts to counter it, the crime against nature continues.

Crape myrtles have long been loved in the South as ornamental shrubs and trees for their peeling bark, prolific blooms and colorful fall foliage. Their tolerance of hot, dry climates makes them especially suited for Texas landscapes.

**AS HEALTHY TREES** are hacked in the prime of their lives, an expert pleads: **“STOP THE MADNESS!”**

# Crape Murder

In part, their name refers to the flowers’ crinkly crepe paper appearance. However, crape myrtles, which are native to India and southeast Asia, are not true myrtle trees, which bear white, star-shaped flowers. Instead, crape myrtle blooms—which range from white to pink, red and lavender—look more like lilacs, hence its nickname, “Lilac of the South.” Today, more than 110 crape myrtle varieties range in size from 3 feet tall to more than 30 feet.

Their earliest cultivation traces back to the Chinese gardens of the Tang dynasty, which ruled from 618 to 907 A.D. In 1786, French botanist André Michaux planted crape myrtles in his gardens in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1799, the ship *George Berkeley* ferried plants and seeds from India, including crape myrtles, to George Washington for his Mount Vernon plantation in Virginia. Thomas Jefferson also planted them at Monticello, his home in Virginia. The tree’s popularity spread across the South.

Marilda Maxey, wife of Confederate Gen. Samuel Bell Maxey, is believed to have brought the first crape myrtles to Texas in 1857, when the couple moved from Kentucky to Lamar County.

A decade later, she tended a formal garden, which showcased crape myrtles, at their new Italian villa-style home in Paris, Texas, now the Sam Bell Maxey House State Historic Site. Paris residents planted crape myrtles after fire destroyed almost half the town in 1916. They planted more for the state’s centennial, in 1936.

In 1997, the 75th Texas Legislature declared the crape myrtle as the official state shrub. (Texas purple sage was deemed the official state native shrub in 2005.) It also designated Paris as the state’s official Crape Myrtle City and Lamar County as Crape Myrtle County Capital. Not to leave anyone out, the Legislature also named Waxahachie as the Crape Myrtle Capital of Texas and Brazos County as an official Crape Myrtle County. McKinney, billed as America’s Crape Myrtle City, boasts some 65,000 crape myrtles across the city and in its 7-acre World Collection Park.

Despite its official standing, not even Paris is immune to crape murder. “It’s an ongoing issue here,” sighs Billie Paskin, former president of the Lamar County Master Gardeners and a Lamar Electric member. “We talk to people, and they still cut







off their crape myrtles.”

Likewise, Grant—who’s introduced 49 plants, including two crape myrtle hybrids, to the nursery trade—regularly writes about the foibles of crape murder. “I’m not the crape myrtle police,” Grant says. “People can do whatever they want with their trees. But it’s the No. 1 horticultural phenomenon that you see, and there’s not a single word in any horticultural publication that condones the practice.”

Grant theorizes that the severe style of pruning originated in Europe, where upper branches of some trees were pollarded—cut back to the trunk—to provide fuel. “Perhaps the practice came with the Spanish, who brought it with them to Mexico,” he says. “From Mexico, it spread across the South.”

These days, motives for crape murder vary, depending on who’s wielding the saw. “Homeowners tell me they cut off their crape myrtles because they’re too tall,” Grant says. “So it’s important that people know what size crape myrtle they want and then buy the right one for the site. Don’t plant one that can

grow 30 feet high under a utility line.”

Crape murder disfigures the shrubs, spurs growth of more suckers (new shoots) at a tree’s base and decreases a tree’s cold hardiness. Grant also suspects that pruning wounds and new growth attract crape myrtle bark scale, an introduced pest that’s spread across most of the Southeast. Sooty black mold and white, feltlike encrustations on higher limbs indicate a likely infestation. Though not a death sentence, the scale can turn healthy trees into eyesores and reduce their vigor by about one-third.

Bottom line: Crape murder costs money, wastes time and adds debris to landfills. It’s dangerous, too—chain saws and ladders don’t mix. Left alone, crape myrtles grow into graceful sculptures worthy of admiration.

“The only pruning they need is removal of dead wood, branches that cross and suckers from the base,” Grant says. “The prettiest ones I’ve seen have never been touched. And I mean *never*.”

**Sheryl Smith-Rodgers** of Blanco blogs about her gardening adventures at [sherylsmithrodgers.blogspot.com](http://sherylsmithrodgers.blogspot.com).



A top-down view of a large pile of cooked crawfish, corn on the cob, and potatoes. The crawfish are bright red and glistening. The corn is yellow and cooked. The potatoes are red-skinned and cut in half. The food is piled on a surface covered with newspaper, with some text visible in the background. A yellow dashed circle is drawn around the central text.

# A TALE OF TEXAS CRAWFISH



# TASTY CRUSTACEANS

## CREATE A FEASTING FRENZY EVERY SPRING

**CRAWFISH. CRAWDADS. MUDBUGS.** Whatever you call them, they swim at the heart of a Southern tradition that's as much about eating the tasty freshwater crustaceans in a messy jubilee of divine spiciness as it is about bringing friends, family—and even strangers—together.

From out-of-the-way eateries and exuberant festivals to backyard shindigs and community celebrations, mudbug-loving Texans happily pull up a seat at a communal table and peel tails. Steam and aromatic spices fill the air as piping hot, bright-red crawfish tumble from giant pots onto paper-covered tables.

Then it's on! Time to twist off the tails and pull out the sweet, tender lobsterlike tail meat. The more adventurous devourers, keeping with time-honored crawfish tradition, suck the rich, flavorful yellow "fat" (it's actually a digestive organ called the hepatopancreas) from the head. Aficionados insist this is the best part.

Crawfish season varies depending on whom you ask, but it is usually in full swing by the start of Lent in late February, with the peak for size and quality covering March, April and May. Seasonal specialty restaurants like the Crawfish Shack in Crosby attract crawfish-crazed patrons by the dozens.

"The first day we open up for the year, we'll have 60 cars in line just to get to-go food," says owner Dan Meaux. "Some people are waiting two hours." The Crawfish Shack has erupted in popularity in the past few years, making it one of the top crawfish spots in the country.



**A crawfish boil encourages friends and family to dig in and eat from a shared plate or right off the table.**



"As of the last two years, we cook more crawfish than anyone in the country," Meaux says. He credits the explosive growth to the backyard party atmosphere and never compromising on quality.

Mudbug-themed festivals feature live music, parades, pageants, carnival rides and literal tons of crawfish. In 2017, Guinness World Records recognized the Bigass Crawfish Bash in La Marque for the most crawfish prepared in eight hours: more than 58,000 pounds.

Across Texas, every crawfish chef and backyard boiler has a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14





## THE TAIL TRAIL: WHERE TO FIND

# THE BEST CRAWFISH

### **BROOKSHIRE** **REPKA'S GROCERY**

What started as a 1940s icehouse and convenience store, Repka's, a member of San Bernard Electric Cooperative, serves Cajun-style cuisine year-round. If you blink, you'll miss the nondescript building even though it is packed during crawfish season. Wood-paneled walls boast bar swag and autographed headshots of famous diners, including country music star Tim McGraw. Pool tables, vintage arcade games

and a jukebox add to the dive bar vibe, and patron-inscribed dollar bills adorn the ceiling. Plan on trying fried gator, crawfish étouffée and home-made pork cracklings.

### **CROSBY** **CRAWFISH SHACK**

One could argue the Crawfish Shack is Texas' most popular BYOB boiling pot restaurant. During peak season, loyal patrons lug beer-filled coolers and happily endure 200-person lines to get their hands on Dan Meaux's

savory mudbugs. During the season (typically January–June), the Crawfish Shack serves more than 6,000 pounds of crawfish daily. The open-air, red steel building exudes a garage-party-meets-sports-bar energy characterized by football memorabilia on the walls and sports on big-screen TVs. Get ready for boiled crawfish, shrimp, snow crab and sausage with corn, potatoes and mushrooms.

### **EL CAMPO** **PINCHERS BOIL'N POT** **RESTAURANT**

With lakeside dining on a large deck and fresh-daily crawfish from their farm, Pinchers is a cut above your average crawfish shack. Just off U.S. Highway 59 South, the restaurant's conspicuous yellow facade and





**Left: Carl Kokemor and Isabell Cavazos dig in at a crawfish boil at Repka's in Brookshire.**

BYOB. For those who like to get saucy, JuJu's offers three dipping options: red sauce (ketchup and spices), pink sauce (ketchup, mayo and spices) and melted butter.

#### **GALVESTON BENNO'S ON THE BEACH**

On the island's far east end, Benno's serves fresh Cajun seafood on an outdoor patio with unencumbered postcard views of the Gulf of Mexico. Sea gulls and pelicans soar on the briny breeze while diners enjoy crawfish, shrimp po'boys, grilled oysters and deep-fried Cajun crabs.

#### **GROVES LARRY'S FRENCH MARKET & CAJUN RESTAURANT**

There's nothing like Cajun food and live Cajun music to spice up an evening in the Golden Triangle—an area known for its Cajun influence and anchored by Beaumont, Port Arthur and Orange. Tables covered by checkered cloth define the front half of Larry's. Walls are clad with vintage photos of local fishermen and mounted trophy fish. The restaurant's back half enshrines a dance floor featuring live music under a neon glow. Reserve a table on the dance floor and order crawfish in season or step up to the year-round Cajun seafood buffet groaning with fried seafood, frog legs, boudin, étouffée and barbecued crab.

#### **PORT ARANSAS CRAZY CAJUN**

This no-frills hot spot for Cajun cuisine has been a favorite among locals and tourists since 1987. Stepping inside the unassuming teal and pink hut reveals a boisterous atmosphere as patrons enjoy heaping mounds of steaming seafood on white butcher-papered tables. The menu is mostly à la carte but features the Hungry Cajun—a spicy sampler

of boiled crab legs, crawfish, shrimp, corn, potatoes and sausage. It's also known for gumbo, shrimp Creole and fresh sourdough bread.

#### **ROCKPORT THE BOILING POT**

Strings of colored lights, neon beer logos and loads of kitsch create a partylike setting in this lively establishment celebrating 35 years. Every surface, from the corrugated steel exterior to the inside walls and ceilings, is adorned with graffiti, art and caricatures. Hungry diners don white plastic bibs, smash open crab legs with wooden mallets and polish off loads of Cajun seafood, family-style. It has a sizable beer cooler offering more selections than typical seafood joints. One block from the beach, the fishing pier and marina are also within walking distance.

#### **SANTA FE POOK'S CRAWFISH HOLE**

In addition to boiled crawfish, this BYOB shack, about 20 miles west of Galveston, offers deep-fried boudin balls, crawfish pie and gumbo. Expect Pook's to be packed with patrons at wooden octagonal tables peeling crawfish or cracking open huge snow crab legs while listening to live music.

sparkling blue lake beckon passersby to a trifecta eatery, fuel station and RV park. Visitors are greeted by a life-size shark and a large sign inviting them to "EAT TAIL." The novelty lake, complete with ducks, geese and light-up palm trees, sprawls across the restaurant's front. Patrons can walk the adjacent pier, feed the catfish and koi, or watch as the staff bags the purged crawfish.

#### **FANNETT JUJU'S CAJUN CRAWFISH SHAK**

JuJu's does one thing and does it right. Along a pastoral stretch of FM 365, 15 miles southwest of Beaumont, JuJu's serves boiled crawfish, corn, potatoes and sausage. Ambiance of the modest red building is defined by exposed plywood walls and a blackboard menu. And it's







CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

recipe. Most popular is the Cajun style, which calls for infusing boiled crawfish with peppery spices and serving them with boiled corn and potatoes. Another popular offshoot is the Vietnamese-Cajun style, in which the boiled crustaceans are sautéed with butter, garlic and aromatic ingredients such as lemongrass and citrus.

**GETTING THE MUDBUGS** The first chapters of crawfish scripture were written in Louisiana's Atchafalaya Basin, where wild harvests began in the 1880s. By the 1950s, cold storage and the introduction of wire crawfish traps boosted harvest volume. Crawfish farmers found they could raise an excellent crop in flooded rice fields and produce consistently larger crops year over year.

That farming tradition continues with folks like Craig Radley, who converted 50 acres of rice fields near El Campo, in Wharton County Electric Cooperative's service area, into a swampy crawfish heaven.

#### WEB EXTRAS

► Crawfish watch the weather. Read this story on our website to learn more.

Radley calls his operation Pinchers Crawfish Farm, and on one sunny afternoon, he readied his flat-bottomed aluminum boat for harvesting mudbugs. He navigated the specially designed craft through the muddy water with help from a hydraulic, cleat-studded wheel that pushed along the slushy bottom.

Radley hoisted each pyramid-shaped, crawfish-filled trap from the water and emptied the catch into a sorting area in front of his cockpit. As he went, he rebaited each trap with commercial crawfish pellets and put it back into the water to capture more.

As he sorted and cleaned his harvest, Radley removed debris and tossed the smaller mudbugs back so they could grow larger. With a full load, he motored back to his nearby seafood restaurant, Pinchers Boil'n Pot. The crawfish are submerged in fresh water for 24 hours to purge them of internal impurities. After that, they get weighed and are ready for their starring role in the restaurant.

Writer and photographer **Eric W. Pohl**, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Dripping Springs.

**Craig Radley of Pinchers Crawfish Farm empties a crawfish trap into a boat's sorting area.**



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On May 18, 1980, the once-slumbering Mount St. Helens erupted in the Pacific Northwest. It was the most impressive display of nature's power in North America's recorded history. But even more impressive is what emerged from the chaos... a spectacular new creation born of ancient minerals named Helenite. Its lush, vivid color and amazing story instantly captured the attention of jewelry connoisseurs worldwide. You can now have four carats of the world's newest stone for an absolutely unbelievable price.

Known as America's emerald, Helenite makes it possible to give her a stone that's brighter and has more fire than any emerald without paying the exorbitant price. In fact, this many carats of an emerald that looks this perfect and glows this green would cost you upwards of \$80,000. Your more beautiful and much more affordable option features a perfect teardrop of Helenite set in gold-covered sterling silver suspended from a chain accented with even more verdant Helenite.

**EXCLUSIVE  
FREE**

**Helenite Earrings**  
-a \$129 value-  
with purchase of  
Helenite Necklace



**Limited Reserves.** As one of the largest gemstone dealers in the world, we buy more carats of Helenite than anyone, which lets us give you a great price. However, this much gorgeous green for this price won't last long. Don't miss out. Helenite is only found in one section of Washington State, so call today!

**Romance guaranteed or your money back.** Experience the scintillating beauty of the *Helenite Teardrop Necklace* for 30 days and if she isn't completely in love with it send it back for a full refund of the item price. You can even keep the stud earrings as our thank you for giving us a try.

Helenite Teardrop Necklace (4 1/4 ctw) ~~\$299\*~~ ..... Only \$129 +S&P  
Helenite Stud Earrings (1 ctw) ..... \$129 +S&P

**Helenite Set** (5 1/4 ctw) ~~\$428\*~~ ..... Call-in price only \$129 +S&P  
(Set includes necklace and stud earrings)

Call now and mention the offer code to receive FREE earrings.

**1-800-333-2045**

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**Stauer®** 14101 Southcross Drive W., Ste 155, Dept. HEN262-01,  
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\* Special price only for customers using the offer code versus the price on Stauer.com without your offer code.

- 4 1/4 ctw of American Helenite and lab-created DiamondAura®
- Gold-finished .925 sterling silver settings
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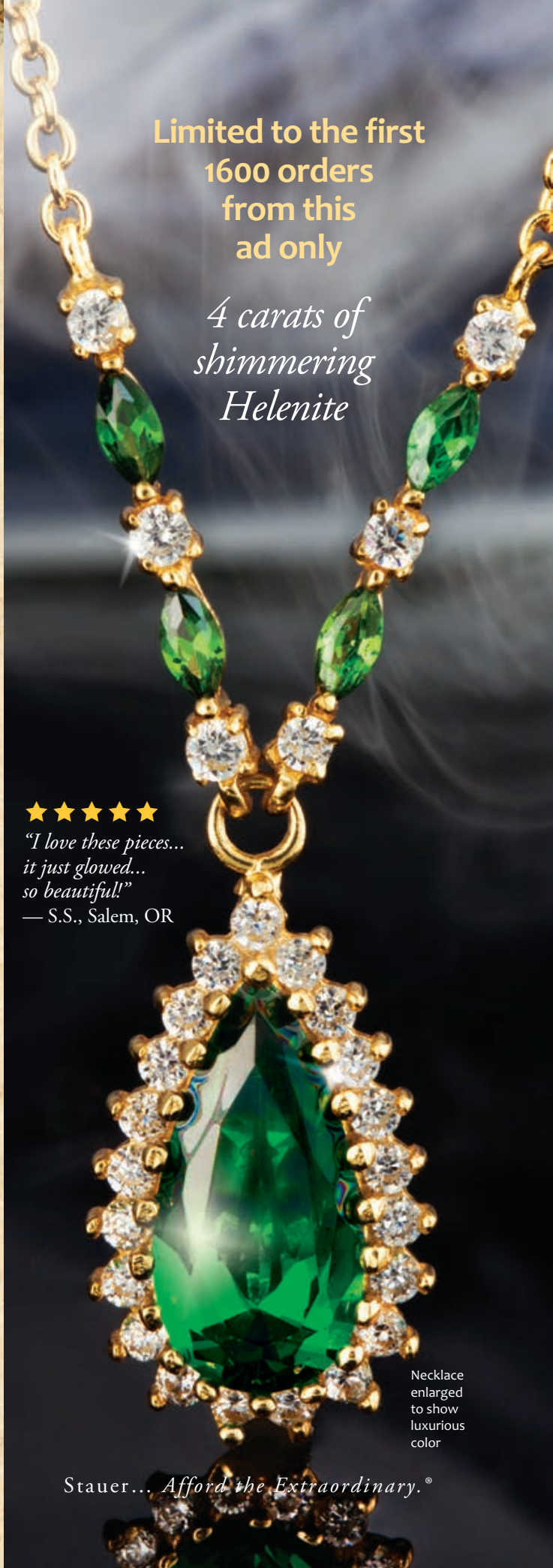
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*4 carats of  
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*"I love these pieces...  
it just glowed...  
so beautiful!"*

— S.S., Salem, OR



Necklace  
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to show  
luxurious  
color

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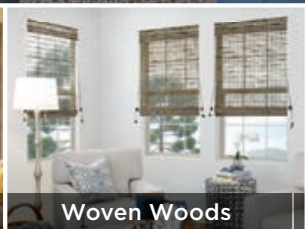
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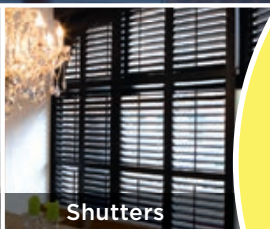
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# Democratic Member Control



## MESSAGE FROM CEO MARK ROLLANS

**IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN:** the time when we see Cooperative Principle No. 2: Democratic Member Control in action at district nominating meetings around our service area.

Per our bylaws, nominating meetings are held annually. They are designed to take care of important business: nominating members who want to run for one of the open board seats in the fall board election. Medina EC is owned—and governed—by every member that gets a bill from us each month. Since the board of directors ultimately determine the direction of the cooperative through their votes and input, it's important that all cooperative members are involved in the nomination process. Directors do, after all, represent you and your interests. Each year, one seat on the board is open in each of the cooperative's three voting districts.

If you're interested in serving on the board of directors, these nominating meetings are a great opportunity to visit with current board members and staff to understand the time requirements of board membership. The meetings are also your opportunity to be nominated for one of the candidate positions. You can nominate yourself or ask another member to nominate you for the position.

If you can't make the meeting, you can get on the ballot through the petition process, which involves gathering 30 signatures from members located in your voting district. Learn more about that process and download a petition form at [MedinaEC.org/Nominee](http://MedinaEC.org/Nominee).

Whether you are interested in running for a board position, want a chance at winning the \$50 prize at the meeting or if you just want to meet some of the cooperative staff and myself, make plans to spend about 30 minutes and come visit with us.

Sincerely,  
Mark Rollans

## Cooperative Principles

1. **Voluntary and Open Membership**
2. **Democratic Member Control**
3. **Members' Economic Participation**
4. **Autonomy and Independence**
5. **Education, Training and Information**
6. **Cooperation Among Cooperatives**
7. **Concern for Community**

## DISTRICT NOMINATING MEETINGS

**VOTING DISTRICT 1:** Wednesday, February 19, 5:30 p.m. | Medina EC corporate office, 2308 18th St., Hondo  
Counties in VD1: Medina

**VOTING DISTRICT 2:** Tuesday, February 18, 5:30 p.m. | Medina EC Dilley office, 1718 W. FM 117, Dilley  
Counties in VD2: Atascosa, Edwards, Frio, Kinney, Real, Uvalde and Zavala

**VOTING DISTRICT 3:** Monday, February 17, 5:30 p.m. | Medina EC Rio Grande City office, 601 N. FM 3167, Rio Grande City  
Counties in VD3: Brooks, Dimmit, Duval, Jim Hogg, La Salle, McMullen, Starr, Webb and Zapata

**ATTEND YOUR DISTRICT NOMINATING MEETING FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A CASH PRIZE! AT EACH MEETING, WE WILL AWARD ONE \$50 PRIZE.**

**MORE INFO: [MEDINAEC.ORG/NOMMTG](http://MEDINAEC.ORG/NOMMTG)**





## Medina Electric Cooperative

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### VOTING DISTRICT 1

Larry Huesser, (830) 363-7651  
Wayne W. Scholtz, (830) 426-1328  
Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

#### VOTING DISTRICT 2

Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437  
Chris Surles, (830) 965-5538  
Kenneth White, (830) 232-6541

#### VOTING DISTRICT 3

Annette Sorrells, (361) 231-0173  
J. L. Gonzalez, (956) 286-1863  
Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

#### CEO

Mark Rollans, 1-866-MEC-ELEC, ext. 1045

### COOPERATIVE OFFICES

#### Headquarters

2308 18th St., Hondo 78861

#### Area Offices

Hondo Office  
237 Hwy. 173 N., Hondo 78861

Dilley Office  
1718 W. FM 117, Dilley 78017

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

Uvalde Office  
2604 Hwy. 90 E., Uvalde 78801

Bruni Office  
1300 FM 2050 N., Bruni 78344

## CONTACT US

### CALL US

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

**Option 2: Report an outage**

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

**Option 5: Speak to a representative**

### EMAIL

**Info@MedinaEC.org**

### FIND US ONLINE AT

**MedinaEC.org**

 **Facebook.com/MedinaEC**

 **Twitter.com/MedinaECtalks**

 **Instagram: @OurMEC**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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

# Medina EC Celebrates Employees

**MEDINA ELECTRIC CELEBRATES THE WORK ANNIVERSARIES** of its employees in five-year increments, also known as Service Awards. The cooperative donates \$100 for each employee to an organization of their choice, giving a total of \$2,000 last year to various community organizations.

Please join us in celebrating these Medina EC employees, who received service awards between October and December 2019.



#### **Jackie Muennink**

Communications Specialist  
General office  
5 years

**Donation to**  
Hondo Lions Club



#### **Albert Vela**

Construction Foreman  
Bruni office  
15 years

**Donation to**  
Bruni Lions Club



#### **Armando Castillo**

Working Foreman  
Bruni office  
15 years

**Donation to**  
Operation Round Up



#### **Greg Zapata**

Facilities Coordinator  
General office  
5 years

**Donation to**  
Painless Butterfly Project



#### **Joel Gonzales**

Engineering Equipment  
Supervisor  
General office  
15 years

**Donation to**  
Hondo Food Pantry



#### **Chris Muennink**

Journeyman  
Hondo office  
15 years

**Donation to**  
Operation Round Up



# Solar Installations Available

**MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE** we are offering solar arrays and installations for members. This is a project that cooperative staff spent a long time researching, and we are excited to be able to offer this new service.

Through Solar by Medina EC, members can purchase a 5-kilowatt, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic system with installation for \$15,000 plus tax. There can be additional installation charges, but those will be determined by cooperative staff during the free site visit. Members will be informed of any additional costs before they make a purchasing decision. Full payment is due before materials can be ordered.

All construction and installation will be done by Medina EC staff or an approved contractor. Medina EC's licensed staff electrician will perform the final inspection and connect the system to the location and grid.

## PRODUCTION

The amount of energy produced by a 5-kW system varies based on the time of the year and hours of sunlight. A good rule of thumb when looking at all solar PV systems is that for every kW of capacity, the system should produce about 125 kilowatt-hours per month. Using those figures, a 5-kW system should produce about 625 kWh per month.

## SELLING POWER BACK

With all distributed generation systems, whether they are purchased from Medina EC or another vendor, the cooperative will purchase electricity generated in excess of electricity consumed at an avoided cost rate.

The avoided cost rate is the cost the cooperative would have incurred had it been required to purchase the energy from a wholesale power supplier. It varies each month and is based on the prior 12 months' total wholesale power purchase cost, excluding some fees.

The cooperative does not allow banking, or storing, of electricity. That means that you cannot save excess power to offset use later in the same day or billing period; if it is not consumed, electricity is purchased at the avoided cost rate when it is generated.

Because of that, savings will vary depending on when you are producing and using power. A 5-kW system would equate to about \$62.50 in savings each month if you are producing the energy at the same time you are using it, but those savings would be lower if you are putting power back on the grid and selling it at the avoided cost rate.

If you have been considering a solar PV system, there are various resources to determine if it is the right purchase for you. Do your homework, and research what you are told by salespeople. Even if you are looking at another vendor and don't intend to purchase a system from Medina EC, our staff is happy to answer questions to help you.

**More information on Solar by Medina EC: [MedinaEC.org/Solar](https://MedinaEC.org/Solar)**

**More information for installing any distributed generation system: [MedinaEC.org/DG](https://MedinaEC.org/DG)**

**Contact us: 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532) | [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org)**

**NEW  
CHAPTER?  
MAYBE WE  
CAN HELP!**

**TWENTY-FIVE \$1,000**

**SCHOLARSHIPS** are

offered to members, including

five for adults pursuing higher

education and 20 for high school

seniors. Applications must be

completed online and submitted

by 11:59 p.m. March 6.\*

## MORE INFORMATION:

Visit [MedinaEC.org/Scholarships](https://MedinaEC.org/Scholarships),  
or contact us at

1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532) or  
[Scholarship@MedinaEC.org](mailto:Scholarship@MedinaEC.org).

*\*Technical support will not be available outside of normal business hours. Encountering technical issues turning in the application on the last day will not be grounds for an extension.*



# HOW CAN WE CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR COMMUNITY?

## Community Empowerment Grants Now Available

### What You Need To Know

This year, up to **\$5,500** will be awarded.  
The application deadline is 5 p.m. **April 1**.



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.

### Counties Where Grants Can Be Awarded

ATASCOSA	FRIO	MEDINA	ZAPATA
BROOKS	JIM HOGG	REAL	ZAVALA
DIMMIT	KINNEY	STARR	
DUVAL	LA SALLE	UVALDE	
EDWARDS	MCMULLEN	WEBB	

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



In 2019, the Children's Advocacy Center of Laredo received \$1,850 for updates to their air conditioning system. You can read about the important work the center does at [CACLaredo.org](https://CACLaredo.org). Since the Community Empowerment Program began in 2015, nearly \$57,000 has been put back into area communities through the program.

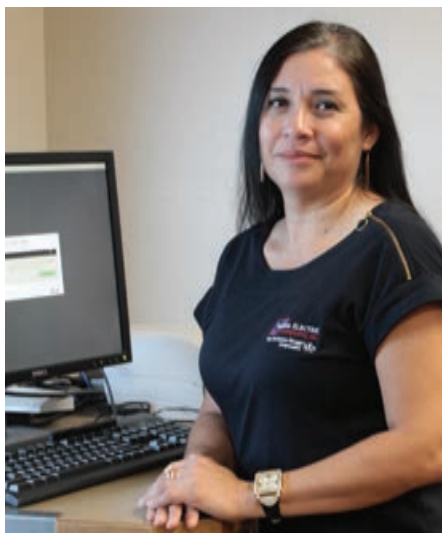
**February is  
Food Pantry Month  
Help Us Fill  
the Bucket  
Truck!**

**Drop off canned goods or other  
nonperishable food items  
at any of our offices during  
February. We will take them,  
along with a co-op donation, to  
a local food pantry.**

**Every member who donates  
items will be entered into a  
drawing for a \$20 bill credit.**

**We're collecting items  
until Monday, March 2.**





## We Want Your Feedback

**STARTING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 3,** 350 members will be randomly selected to get a call or email to answer some survey questions about Medina Electric. Your answers will help the cooperative to see how we can improve service to and better communicate with our members.

The survey, email or phone call, should take less than 5 minutes. This feedback is important to the cooperative and we appreciate members taking time out of their busy schedules to provide it to us.

The surveys are being done by National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Phone calls will either come from an 844 or 507 area code. Emails will show Medina Electric in the "From" line.

Throughout the year, the cooperative will be doing these surveys quarterly, so additional surveys will take place in May, August and November.

If you do not get a phone call or email to do a survey but would like to share feedback or an idea with the cooperative, email us at [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org).

# Lighten Your Laundry Load



**LAUNDRY ISN'T A TASK THAT MANY PEOPLE RELISH.** But if the process can be tweaked to save money, conserve electricity and prolong the life of your clothes, some minor adjustments may be worth your time. Here are some suggestions from *Consumer Reports*.

**Opt for cold water.** Hot water is only needed for laundering oily stains, cloth diapers, and sheets and towels used by a family member who has been sick.

**Use high-efficiency detergent for front-loaders,** high-efficiency top-loaders and where otherwise recommended by the machine's manufacturer. Conventional detergents create more suds, which can cause the washer to repeatedly rinse laundry, wasting water and time.

**Increase the spin speed to extract more water from your laundry, reducing dryer time.** Shake clothes out before transferring them from the washer to the dryer to avoid wrinkles.

**Clean the dryer's lint screen before every load.** This improves air circulation and prevents fires. Dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, so if you use them, scrub the filter with a brush monthly.

**Clean the dryer duct regularly to increase airflow,** which dries your clothes faster and prevents fires.

**Clean the dryer's moisture sensors.** Dryer sheets can leave residue on the sensors that affects their ability to gauge how dry laundry is. Check the owner's manual for instructions on how to clean them.

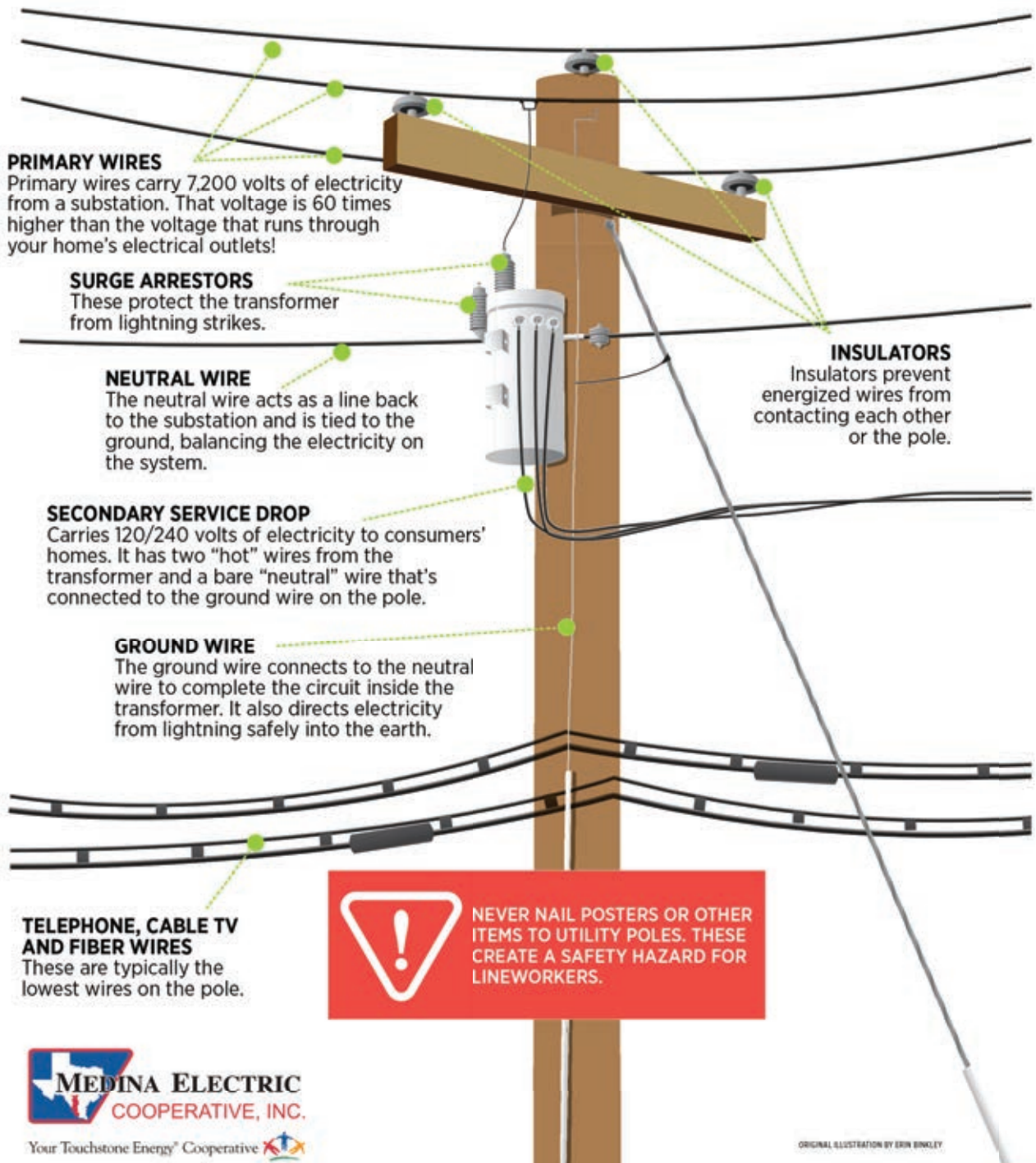
**Dry similar items together.** Don't mix heavy cottons with lightweight fabrics. Wash and dry towels and sheets separately, for example.

**Use the automatic cycle instead of timed drying.** If the moisture sensors are working properly, the automatic cycle avoids overdrying, which shortens the life span of clothes and can shrink them.

**And for the least expensive, most efficient method, dry your laundry on a clothesline or use a drying rack indoors.** This approach takes a bit more time but is gentler on your clothing, keeping it nicer looking for longer—a savings in itself.


# WHAT'S ON THAT POLE?

This illustration shows the basic equipment found on electric utility poles. The equipment varies according to the location and the service they provide.





# WE TO BE SOCIAL WITH YOU!



ourmec

Liked by opencountryhomes and 18 others

ourmec More than happy to support Luv Ya Uvalde Organization with a donation. We are also thankful for our staff members who helped out today preparing and serving food. #Thankful #Thanksgiving #Uvalde


November 27

Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc.

December 11 at 7:59 AM





It pays to be a member of Medina Electric Cooperative. At their November meeting, the board of directors voted to return \$1.85 million in capital credits to members of the cooperative.

We are a not-for-profit organization. Any revenue above the cost of doing business is considered "margins." These margins represent an interest-free loan of operating capital by the membership to the cooperative. This capital allows us to finance operating costs and expenses, with the intent that excess capital will be repaid to the members in later years through capital credits. Capital credits are an important part of our business model and are just one of the things that makes the cooperative different than many other utilities. Learn more at [www.MedinaEC.org/CapitalCredits](http://www.MedinaEC.org/CapitalCredits).



11

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-  @Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc.

3 Shares



These are just a few of the November and December highlights from Medina EC's social media pages. Join Medina EC in the community appreciation and fun by commenting, liking and sharing with us today!





# Pain and Aging?



## Just Ask Christina.

Christina Walker  
Chief Science Researcher

## STABBING FOOT PAIN?

Do you suffer from burning, tingling, or stabbing foot pain? You should know help is available. 20 million Americans suffer from these symptoms and put up with the pain, because they are not aware of this proven treatment.

MagniLife® Pain Relieving Foot Cream contains Gnaphalium to relieve pain, while natural moisturizers restore cracked, damaged, and itchy skin. *"It's the ONLY product that helps relieve the burning, and tingling feeling in my feet!"* - Mable NY.

MagniLife® Pain Relieving Foot Cream is **available at Walgreens, CVS/pharmacy, Rite Aid, Target, Walmart and Amazon**, located in the footcare and diabetes sections. Order risk free for \$19.99 +\$5.95 S&H for a 4 oz jar. **Get a FREE jar** when you order two for \$39.98 +\$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife NC-TC2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call **1-800-428-1890**. Money back guarantee. Order now at **www.MDFootCream.com**

## FIBROMYALGIA PAIN?

Are you one of 16 million people suffering from deep muscle pain and tenderness, joint stiffness, difficulty sleeping, or the feeling of little or no energy?

You should know relief is available. MagniLife® Pain & Fatigue Relief combines 11 active ingredients to relieve deep muscle pain and soreness, arthritis pain, aching joints, and back and neck

pain. Although this product is not intended to treat fibromyalgia, it can help with the pain and fatigue caused by fibromyalgia. *"These tablets have just been WONDERFUL. I'd recommend them to anyone and everyone!"* - Debra, WV.

MagniLife® Pain & Fatigue Relief is **sold at CVS/pharmacy, Rite Aid Pharmacy and Amazon**. Order risk free for \$19.99 +\$5.95 S&H for 125 tablets per bottle. **Get a FREE bottle** when you order two for \$39.98 +\$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife F-TC2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call **1-800-428-1890**. Satisfaction guaranteed. Order now at **www.PainFatigue.com**

## LEG CRAMPS AT NIGHT?

If painful muscle cramps in your legs, back, feet or hips are interrupting your sleep, you should know relief is available. Over 100 million people suffer from unnecessary muscle cramps because they are not aware of this proven treatment to relieve and prevent symptoms.

MagniLife® Muscle Cramp Pain Reliever contains eight active ingredients, such as Magnesia Phosphorica to help prevent and relieve cramps and radiating pains that are worse at night. *"Your product has severely helped me and I thank you so very much."* - Marie L., MT.

MagniLife® Muscle Cramp Pain Reliever is available at **Rite Aid, CVS and Amazon**. Order risk free for \$19.99 +\$5.95 S&H for 125 tablets per bottle. **Receive a FREE bottle** when you order two for \$39.98 +\$5.95 S&H. Send payment to: MagniLife L-TC2, PO Box 6789, McKinney, TX 75071 or call **1-800-428-1890**. Satisfaction guaranteed. Order now at **www.LegCrampsRelief.com**

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- ✓ Difficulty Falling Asleep
- ✓ Restlessness
- ✓ Pain
- ✓ Discomfort

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**Non-Greasy Formula**

**Relieves:**

- ✓ Unpleasant sensations
- ✓ Difficulty falling asleep
- ✓ Restlessness
- ✓ Discomfort

## Burning Leg Pain?

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The Zinger Chair is a personal electric vehicle and is not a medical device nor a wheelchair. Zinger is not intended for medical purposes to provide mobility to persons restricted to a sitting position. It is not covered by Medicare nor Medicaid. © 2020 firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc.

# Meat and Greet

Two of Texas' legendary pitmasters meet for the first time

STORY AND PHOTO BY WYATT MCSPADDEN

ON AN OVERHEATED SATURDAY IN EARLY October, I drove Roy Perez, the venerable pitmaster at Kreuz Market in Lockhart, and Kreuz Market owner Keith Schmidt to Snow's BBQ in Lexington. Snow's, a tiny barbecue joint in a tiny town, is often mentioned as one of the best barbecue destinations in the state. Of course, Kreuz Market vies for the same title and has been a legendary barbecue purveyor for more than a century.

Roy is the first pitmaster I photographed nearly 25 years ago. Since then, as I created images for two photography books on Texas barbecue, I've had the honor to make more pictures of Roy along with photographs of dozens more folks who do the hot, hard work of making Texas barbecue the best in the world.

Even though Roy remains one of my favorite subjects, I will admit that in the past six years, a rival for my lens's attention has charmed me through several sessions. She is a grand woman named

Tootsie Tomanetz, who handles much of the cooking in the early hours of every Saturday in Lexington. Now in her 80s, Tootsie's fame rivals that of Roy. But

## WEB EXTRAS

► Win a copy of Wyatt McSpadden's photography book *Texas BBQ*. Go to [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://TexasCoopPower.com/contests).



neither one lets the acclaim go to their head.

Tootsie arrives at Snow's well before sunup each Saturday and works through lunchtime, exhibiting her natural work ethic as well as a genuine love of people and the pit skills she has honed over decades.

I had set the goal to deliver Roy to Snow's for lunch, so he could meet his fellow barbecue icon, Miss Tootsie. Roy is not widely traveled but agreed to go along.

Once Roy, Keith and I arrived in Lexington, we were greeted by Snow's owner, Kerry Bexley. We enjoyed a brilliant sampling of Snow's smoked goodies.

After lunch, we took a few minutes to capture this image of two barbecue legends who will live forever in the barbecue museum that exists only in my mind.

Wyatt McSpadden's two photography books on Texas barbecue are *Texas BBQ* and *Texas BBQ: Small Town to Downtown*.



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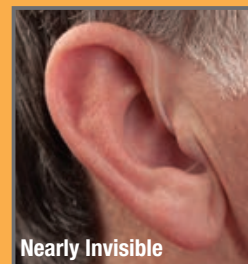
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# Forget Chocolate, My Sweetie Likes...



I MOVED TO TEXAS 14 YEARS AGO AND was surprised at first by the amount of fresh, local produce available. Eager to expand my cooking horizons, I embraced all of it in my cooking. On my recipe blog, Stetted, I look to everything that Texas has to offer each season, from summer peaches to winter citrus.

When it comes to desserts, my family gravitates toward anything with fruit—my kids are especially fond of strawberry shortcake any time of year. But when strawberries aren't in season, I look to other ingredients.

Meyer lemons are perfect for celebratory desserts because they are sweeter and less acidic than standard lemons. This Meyer Lemon Meringue Pie is suitable for all tastes, including the littlest valentines in your house. Gingersnaps are used in the crust for a contrasting kick, but you can swap in graham crackers.

MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

## Meyer Lemon Meringue Pie

- 1¾ cups crushed gingersnap cookies
- ¼ cup (½ stick) melted butter
- 1½ cups plus ¼ cup sugar, divided use
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup Meyer lemon juice
- 4 eggs, separated

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix together gingersnaps, melted butter and ¼ cup sugar until well combined. Press mixture into a 9-inch pie dish, using the bottom of a measuring cup or glass to press down, making sure to keep the crust even. Bake crust 10 minutes, then set aside.
3. In a small saucepan over medium

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



# Recipes

## Forget Chocolate, My Sweetie Likes...



### THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

LAMONT PETERSEN | NAVARRO COUNTY EC

Our testers enjoyed the winning pie so much that one said it was her new favorite dessert (and she loves chocolate!). It's got everything you want in a coconut pie: rich filling with plenty of coconut flavor, a lightly sweet whipped cream topping and the added kick of freshly toasted coconut on top. Petersen makes it for the senior citizen residents at Brookdale Corsicana. "They rave about this pie," Petersen says, "and the facility administrator thinks it is over the moon!"

### Oma's Dreamy Coconut Pie

- 1 9-inch pie crust, premade or homemade
- 2 cups sweetened coconut flakes, divided use
- 1½ cups coconut milk (not low-fat)
- 1½ cups half-and-half
- 5 egg yolks
- ¾ cup sugar
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup (¼ stick) butter
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons coconut extract, divided use
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ⅓ cup powdered sugar

1. Prebake pie crust and set aside. Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Spread ½ cup coconut flakes evenly on a baking sheet. Place sheet in oven 8–10 minutes or until coconut begins to toast. Remove from oven to cool and set aside.

3. Pour coconut milk and half-and-half into a medium-size bowl. Add egg yolks and whisk together. Set aside.

4. Combine sugar, cornstarch and salt in a medium-size saucepan. Whisk egg mixture into pan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the custard thickens and boils, about 15 minutes. Boil 1 minute. Remove from heat and stir in remaining untoasted coconut flakes, butter, vanilla and 1 teaspoon coconut extract.

5. Pour filling into pie crust and refrigerate until cool.

6. Whip cream in a stand mixer on high speed. Once it begins to thicken, add powdered sugar and remaining coconut extract. Mound whipped cream on top of cooled pie. Sprinkle with reserved toasted coconut. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

► Serves 8.

**COOK'S TIP** A graham cracker pie crust works well, too.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

heat, whisk together 1 cup sugar, flour, cornstarch, salt, water and lemon juice, and cook until dissolved.

4. Beat egg yolks in a small bowl, then slowly whisk in ¼ cup of the warm sugar mixture. Once combined, slowly whisk egg mixture into the saucepan.

5. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook about 5 minutes, whisking constantly, until mixture is thick and coats the back of a spoon. Pour filling into prepared crust.

6. In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat egg whites until frothy. Turn mixer to high and pour in remaining ⅓ cup of sugar. Beat until stiff peaks form.

7. Spoon meringue onto pie filling, spreading to the edges of the crust to prevent shrinkage. Return the pie to the oven and bake 10–15 minutes, until meringue is lightly browned. Let cool completely before serving. ► Serves 8.

**COOK'S TIP** Meringue pie is best served as soon as it has cooled but can be stored in the refrigerator. Meringue may release moisture (weep) after being exposed to humidity.

Follow along with **Megan Myers** and her adventures in the kitchen at [stetted.com](http://stetted.com).

### Pecan Pie Muffins

SHARI MCWILLIAMS | UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium-size bowl, stir together pecans, brown sugar, flour, baking powder and salt.

2. Add melted butter, eggs and vanilla to bowl and stir to mix well.

3. Spoon batter into a foil-lined muffin pan. (Batter will stick to regular paper muffin cups.) Fill each cup about ¾ full. Bake 20–25 minutes. ► Makes 12 muffins.

**COOK'S TIP** These will not rise much and the finished product will be flat on top.

### \$100 Recipe Contest

July's recipe contest topic is **Hot Off the Grill**. Tell us your favorite way to fire up a dinner of shrimp, steak, ribs, chicken thighs or fish. The deadline is **February 10**. Readers whose recipes are featured will receive a special *Texas Co-op Power* apron.

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





## Valentine Stack

MARION EVONIUK | PEDERNALES EC

### FILLING

- 8 ounces mascarpone cheese, softened
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream, divided use
- 2 ounces white chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ½ cups raspberries, plus 5 for garnish

### PANCAKES

- 2 cups flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 1½ cups milk
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, divided use
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

**1. FILLING:** Add the mascarpone, cream cheese and vanilla into a medium-size glass mixing bowl. Beat with a hand mixer on medium speed until soft and creamy, about 1–2 minutes.

**2.** Into a small, microwave-safe bowl, add the 2 tablespoons whipping cream and microwave on high 25 seconds. Add the white chocolate and stir until creamy. If necessary, microwave an additional 15–20 seconds to melt chocolate. Immediately add to the cream cheese mixture and beat on medium speed until incorporated, 15–20 seconds.

**3.** Add the powdered sugar and remaining cup of whipping cream and continue beating an additional 1–2 minutes until mixture is thick and creamy. Do not beat on high or overmix—the mascarpone can separate. Gently fold in 1½ cups raspberries and set aside.

**4. PANCAKES:** In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.

**5.** In a medium-size glass mixing bowl, whisk the eggs slightly, then add the

milk, ¼ cup vegetable oil and vanilla, and whisk to combine. Pour over dry ingredients and, using a large spoon, stir briefly to just incorporate. There will be lumps of dry ingredients. Set aside 10 minutes.

**6.** If using a griddle to prepare pancakes, preheat it to 350 degrees. Gently stir pancake batter just until combined. Pour 1 tablespoon oil onto griddle or into nonstick pan over medium-high heat and spread it evenly, then pour ½-cup portions of the batter onto the griddle or pan and cook until golden brown, about 2 minutes on each side. Remove pancakes onto a large platter and cover with foil to keep warm.

**7.** To serve, place one pancake onto a serving platter and spread it with ⅓–½ cup of the filling. Place another pancake on top and continue layering the filling and pancakes until you've used up the pancakes. Top with remaining filling and garnish with remaining raspberries. Serve immediately. ▶ Serves 4–6.

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Chet Garner pokes around the Devil's Rope Museum in McLean.

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# Power

WE KNOW THE POWER of a good country song, and rocker Huey Lewis knows the power of love—but we wondered how power moves Texans. Here are some of the ways. **GRACE FULTZ**

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

◀ **DANNY PICKENS**, Cherokee County EC: “A Ferris wheel at the East Texas Fair is powered up for fun.”

▼ **LAUREN MCCLAIN**, PenTex Energy: “Abigail McClain, 6, shows Mom how a pushup is done.”



▼ **JIM BROWDER**, HILCO EC: “A woodpecker inspects a HILCO power line.”



◀ **JACQUELINE ACUFF**, Nueces EC: “Lightning shows the power of nature right in my backyard.”

▼ **MARK HUSFELD**, Navasota Valley EC: Near a substation in Navasota after a thunderstorm.



## UPCOMING CONTESTS

JUNE STATE PARKS	DUE FEBRUARY 10
JULY EXPLORATION	DUE MARCH 10
AUGUST ON THE WATER	DUE APRIL 10

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



## Pick of the Month

### Michael Carbonaro Magic Show

**Victoria February 15**

(361) 788-9271, visdfoundation.org

Michael Carbonaro is known for his hidden-camera magic. His illusions, along with his absurd, matter-of-fact explanations, leave audiences bewildered. Proceeds from this show support the Victoria Independent School District.



## February

7

**Alpine [7-9, 14-16] Nat Turner in Jerusalem,** (432) 837-8218, sulross.edu/theatre

**Fredericksburg [7-23] Wine Lovers Celebration,** (872) 216-9463, texaswinetrail.com

8

**Avoca Swedish Smorgasbord,** (325) 668-2796

**Lufkin The Choir of Man,** (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

9

**Bandera St. Stanislaus Church Faith Heritage Dinner,** (830) 460-4712, ststanislausbandera.com

14

**Luckenbach [14-15] Hug-In and Valentine Ball,** (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

**Port Lavaca [14-15] South Texas Square & Round Dance Association February Frenzy,** (361) 575-2665, stsda.org

February 21-23  
New Braunfels  
Troutfest Texas



15

**Fredericksburg Cave Creek School Open House,** (830) 990-1017, historicsschools.org

**Richardson Mu Delta Alpha Changemaker Award Dinner,** (469) 712-7716, mudeltaalpha.org/events

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16

**Harlingen** Ms. South Texas Senior America Pageant, (956) 357-1636

20

**Edinburg** [20-23] Fiesta Edinburg, (956) 383-4974, edinburg.com/events

**Nocona** [20-23] Mardi Gras Nocona Style, (940) 825-3526, nocona.org

21

**Alpine** [21-22] Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering, (432) 216-2167, lonestarcowboypoeetry.com

**Brenham** [21-22] Nature's Blessings Quilt Show, (979) 525-1128, friendshipquiltguild.weebly.com

**New Braunfels** [21-23] Troutfest Texas 2020, (830) 964-3455, grtu.org/troutfest

22

**Crockett** *One Night in Memphis*, (936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

**Boerne** [22-23] Spring Antiques Show, (830) 329-2870, visitboerne.org

27

**Boerne** [27-29] Just Between Friends Sale,

(830) 282-6133, nwsanantonio.jbfsale.com

**Brownsville** [27-29] Sombrero Festival, (956) 550-9682, sombrerofestival.com

28

**Luckenbach** Barbara Leatherwood Fight for the Cure Concert for Ovarian Cancer, (254) 833-2444, luckenbachtexas.com



February 27-29  
Brownsville  
Sombrero Festival

**New Braunfels Lone Bellow: Half Moon Light Tour**, (830) 606-1281, gruenehall.com

29

**Streetman** Southern Oaks VFD Chili Supper/Cake Auction, (903) 599-6022

**Wichita Falls** Red River Valley Square & Round Dance Association Teen Scholarship Dance, (940) 733-2782, rrvsda.org

March

6

**Marble Falls** [6-7] Austin Square and Round Dance Association Square Thru the Wildflowers, (830) 613-9054, asrda.org

7

**Crockett** Jeanne Robertson, (936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

## Submit Your Event!

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

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# The Height of Deceit

Oil boom scam created world's littlest skyscraper in Wichita Falls

WHETHER IT'S HATS, TRUCKS OR HAIR, WE Texans expect things to be big. So when I saw a building in Wichita Falls advertised as the world's littlest skyscraper, it piqued my interest in a Texas-sized way.

I was amazed at the revitalization in downtown Wichita Falls, which includes a craft brewery, a farmers market and a fancy chocolatier. At the northern edge of downtown, I found my destination: the Newby-McMahon Building.

From the street, the building looked like a well-kept, historic single-story structure. A glance down the alley identified the addition of a thin, four-story tower—like an elevator shaft built for floors never completed. The tower looks strange, but the story of its origin is even stranger.

To unravel the mystery, I walked into the building that now houses Hello Again, a consignment shop whose owner encourages visitors to climb the world's littlest skyscraper. I found the thin staircase with a sign directing me upward. Even though I felt like I had stepped into a large closet, I was actually inside the skyscraper. It measures only 9 feet by 12 feet. I climbed three flights of stairs and arrived at the top floor museum that recounts an epic tale of swindling, greed and manipulation.

The story began in 1918, when the oil boom hit nearby Burkburnett. The town was rocked by overnight success, but most of the deals took shape in Wichita Falls, which was desperate for office space. J.D. McMahon proposed a solution that included what he described as the business



**Chet makes sure you can't miss the world's littlest skyscraper.**

opportunity of a lifetime. McMahon pitched the city's residents on a skyscraper that would be 480 feet high—the tallest in Texas and rivaling the tallest in the world. Investors were eager, and McMahon raised \$200,000 (well over \$3 million in today's money).

Construction started and questions soon followed. The building was not as "Texas-sized" as promised. Instead of the monumental structure the investors expected, they received a skinny tower with no elevator or stairs. The investors were enraged and sued McMahon for fraud.

When the judge reviewed the approved blueprints, he found that everything was in order and that the building was being built exactly according to plan. The final plan was laid out and approved—in inches instead of feet. So, instead of getting the 480-foot skyscraper investors had dreamed of, builders erected a 480-inch embarrassment. McMahon had executed the con of the century by simply adding an apostrophe. Turns out that when people see dollar

signs, they tend to overlook punctuation.

The angry investors wanted to tear the building down immediately, but before the demolition took place, a nationally syndicated newspaper column called Ripley's Believe It or Not dubbed the ill-conceived project the world's littlest skyscraper. That publicity quickly transformed the eyesore into an international tourist attraction.

I stood at the top of the diminutive structure that now sits in the shadow of taller buildings and wondered how this skyscraper, if it had been built to expectations, might have changed the trajectory of Wichita Falls. Would it now sit abandoned? Or would Wichita Falls have become a city more like Dallas?

The world will never know. But what is certain is how much fun it is to climb the world's littlest skyscraper and take in one of the littlest views in Texas.

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

**WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of his visit to the world's littlest skyscraper.

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## PREDATOR BEATS HONDA

### 2000 WATT SUPER QUIET INVERTER GENERATOR



4.7 HOURS	RUN-TIME	3.4 HOURS
2000	MAX. STARTING WATTS	2000
1600	RUNNING WATTS	1600
61 dB	NOISE LEVEL	59 dB
48 LBS.	WEIGHT	45.6 LBS.
1.2 GAL.	TANK SIZE	.95 GAL.
3	OUTLETS	3
YES	OVERLOAD PROTECTION	YES
79.7 cc	ENGINE SIZE	90.5 cc
YES	LOW OIL ALERT	YES
YES	PARALLEL CAPABLE	YES
YES	POWER SAVER	YES



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

COMPARE TO HONDA EU2000i  
PRICE \$1,009  
ITEM 62523

HONDA EU2000i  
\*HONDA EU2000i stated specs  
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## U.S. GENERAL SUPER COUPON

### 30", 4 DRAWER TECH CARTS

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

CUSTOMER RATING  
★★★★★  
SAVE \$740



COMPARE TO Snap-on BLUE-POINT  
\$880  
MODEL: KBC107BPC  
Item 56387, 64096, 56386, 56392, 56393, 56394

NOW \$179.99  
YOUR CHOICE OF 6 COLORS  
\$139.99  
Side tray sold separately.  
ITEM 56387, 64096, 56386, 56392, 56393, 56394

60270816  
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## BRAUN SUPER COUPON

### 5000 LUMEN, 4 FT. LED HANGING SHOP LIGHT

- 30,000 hour LED life



SAVE 33%  
ITEM 64410

NOW \$19.99  
\$29.99  
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## FRANKLIN SUPER COUPON

### 17 FT. TYPE IA MULTI-TASK LADDER

- Versatile - 24 configurations
- Safe + Secure + Stable
- Super Strong - Holds 300 lbs.
- Weights 34 lbs.

COMPARE TO LITTLE GIANT  
\$298.99  
MODEL: XE M17

NOW \$109.99  
SAVE \$189  
Customer Rating  
★★★★★

ITEM 63419/67646/62514/63418/63417 shown  
60276327  
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## PITTSBURGH SUPER COUPON

### 40 PIECE, 1/4" AND 3/8" DRIVE SAE AND METRIC SOCKET SET



LIFETIME WARRANTY  
COMPARE TO CRAFTSMAN  
\$499.8  
MODEL: CMHT12918

NOW \$4.99  
SAVE 90%  
\$5.99  
ITEM 47902/975/61328/63015/62843 shown  
60276942  
LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## HaulMaster SUPER COUPON

### 18" x 12" MOVER'S DOLLY

- 1000 lb. capacity



COMPARE TO BUFFALO TOOLS  
\$22.99  
MODEL: HDFOOLLY

NOW \$7.99  
SAVE 65%  
\$10.99

ITEM 60497/61899/63095/63096/63097/63098 shown  
60280198  
LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## PITTSBURGH #1 SELLING JACKS SUPER COUPON

### RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINUM FLOOR JACK

- Weights 33 lbs.



SAVE \$91  
NOW \$59.99  
COMPARE TO K TOOL  
\$151.42  
MODEL: KT163094

ITEM 64552/64832/64980/64545 shown  
60282349  
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## 10" PNEUMATIC TIRE SUPER COUPON

### 10" PNEUMATIC TIRE



NOW \$3.99  
\$5.99  
SAVE 50%

COMPARE TO FARM & RANCH  
\$8.09  
MODEL: FR1055  
ITEM 69385/62388/62409/62698/30900 shown  
60285777  
LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## HaulMaster SUPER COUPON

### 3/8" x 14 FT., GRADE 43 TOWING CHAIN



COMPARE TO MIBRO  
\$64.99  
MODEL: 426920

NOW \$19.99  
SAVE 69%  
\$39.99  
ITEM 40462/60658/97711 shown  
60286082  
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## FREE SUPER COUPON

OVER 5,000 5 STAR REVIEWS

### SUPER BRIGHT LED/SMD WORK LIGHT/FLASHLIGHT

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

ALL IN A SINGLE SUPER POWERFUL LIGHT

COMPARE TO PERFORMANCE TOOL  
\$13.52  
MODEL: W2364

ITEM 63878/63991 64005/60566 63601/67227 shown

60269897  
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## 20% OFF SUPER COUPON

ANY SINGLE ITEM\*

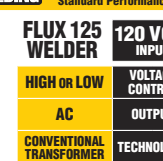
60270055

Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. \*Cannot be used with other discounts, coupons or any of the following items or brands: Inside Truck Club membership, Extended Service Plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day Parking Lot Sale item, compressors, floor jacks, sales, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, welders, Admiral, Ames, Atlas, Bauer, Central Machinery, Cobra, CrownPro, Dayton, Diamondback, Earthquake, Fisher, Hercules, Icon, Japhar, Lynx, Poulsen, Predator, Tailgator, Viking, Walrus, Zurich. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original amount must be presented. Valid through 4/1/20.

## GOOD WELDING SUPER COUPON



FLUX 125 WELDER  
HIGH OR LOW  
AC  
CONVENTIONAL TRANSFORMER  
90 AMP @ 20%  
32 LBS.



120 VOLT INPUT  
VOLTAGE CONTROL  
OUTPUT  
TECHNOLOGY  
DUTY CYCLE  
WEIGHT

## BETTER TITANIUM SUPER COUPON



EASY FLUX 125 WELDER  
EASY TO USE  
DC  
CLEAN WELDS  
ADVANCED INVERTER  
POWERFUL & EFFICIENT  
90 AMP @ 30%  
LONGER RUN TIME  
15 LBS.  
LIGHT & COMPACT



ITEM 56359/56355 shown  
COMPARE TO LINCOLN ELECTRIC  
\$439  
MODEL: K2513-1  
SAVE \$259

## CENTRAL PNEUMATIC SUPER COUPON

### 3 GALLON, 100 PSI OIL-FREE AIR COMPRESSORS



Air delivery: 0.6 CFM @ 90 PSI  
HOT DOG  
ITEM 69269 97080 shown

PANCAKE  
ITEM 61615/60637 95275 shown  
\$98.62  
COMPARE TO PORTER-CABLE  
MODEL: PCFP02003  
\$189.99  
SAVE 59%  
60277251  
LIMIT 2 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## 4 PIECE ANTI-FATIGUE FOAM MAT SET SUPER COUPON

### 4 PIECE ANTI-FATIGUE FOAM MAT SET



Each pad measures 25" x 25"

NOW \$6.99  
\$8.99  
SAVE 65%  
COMPARE TO NORSK  
\$19.99  
MODEL: 00119346  
ITEM 40187/61607/62389 94635 shown  
60279295  
LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## BADLAND SUPER COUPON

### 2500 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL



- Weights 14.3 lbs.
- 11-1/8" L x 4-1/2" H

SAVE \$140  
COMPARE TO SUPERWINCH  
\$189.99  
MODEL: 1125220

NOW \$49.99  
\$69.99  
ITEM 61258/61297/63476/61840 shown  
60283280  
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## PREDATOR SUPER COUPON

### 6.5 HP (212 CC) OHV HORIZONTAL SHAFT GAS ENGINE



NOW \$99.99  
\$119.99  
COMPARE TO HONDA  
\$329.99  
MODEL: GX200UT20X2

SAVE \$230  
ITEM 60363/69730 shown  
ITEM 68121/69727 CALIFORNIA ONLY  
60283718  
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## CENTECH SUPER COUPON

### 3-IN-1 PORTABLE POWER PACK WITH JUMP STARTER



NOW \$49.99  
\$59.99  
SAVE 44%

COMPARE TO SUPER START  
\$89.99  
MODEL: 55001  
ITEM 38391/62376/64083/56349/62306 shown  
60286823  
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*

## WARRIOR SUPER COUPON

### 29 PIECE TITANIUM DRILL BIT SET



NOW \$10.99  
\$18.99  
SAVE 83%  
COMPARE TO DEWALT  
\$68.14  
MODEL: DW1369

ITEM 5889/62281/61637 shown  
60287254  
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 4/1/20\*



# Save a Bundle on TV and Internet!

# dish

# 2-YEAR TV PRICE LOCK!

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

month  
for TV

# +

**Add Internet!**

# Blazing-Fast Internet

~~\$59<sup>99</sup>~~  
month  
for Internet

**\$39<sup>99</sup>**  
month  
for Internet

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

## It's All Included!

- ✓ Includes 190 Channels with Locals
- ✓ Includes Hopper Smart HD DVR
- ✓ Includes HD Programming
- ✓ Includes One TV, Add More for \$5/ea.
- ✓ Includes Voice Remote Requires internet connected Hopper.



## FREE Premium Channels

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

# NETFLIX

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Just Change The Channel  
And Watch!  
Netflix subscription required.

## Save up to \$20/month!\*

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

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Visa® Prepaid Card

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Get \$100.  
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Expires 01/25  
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Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and 24-month commitment. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 7/15/20. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$59.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$74.99 for AT120+, \$84.99 for AT200, \$94.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D Reg. No. – 19-08615. ©2020 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$39.99 price refers to 25Mbps plan. Restrictions apply. 25 Mbps internet service available nationwide, but may become temporarily unavailable to certain addresses based on local beam capacity. Availability is subject to change without notice. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately. Call for details.