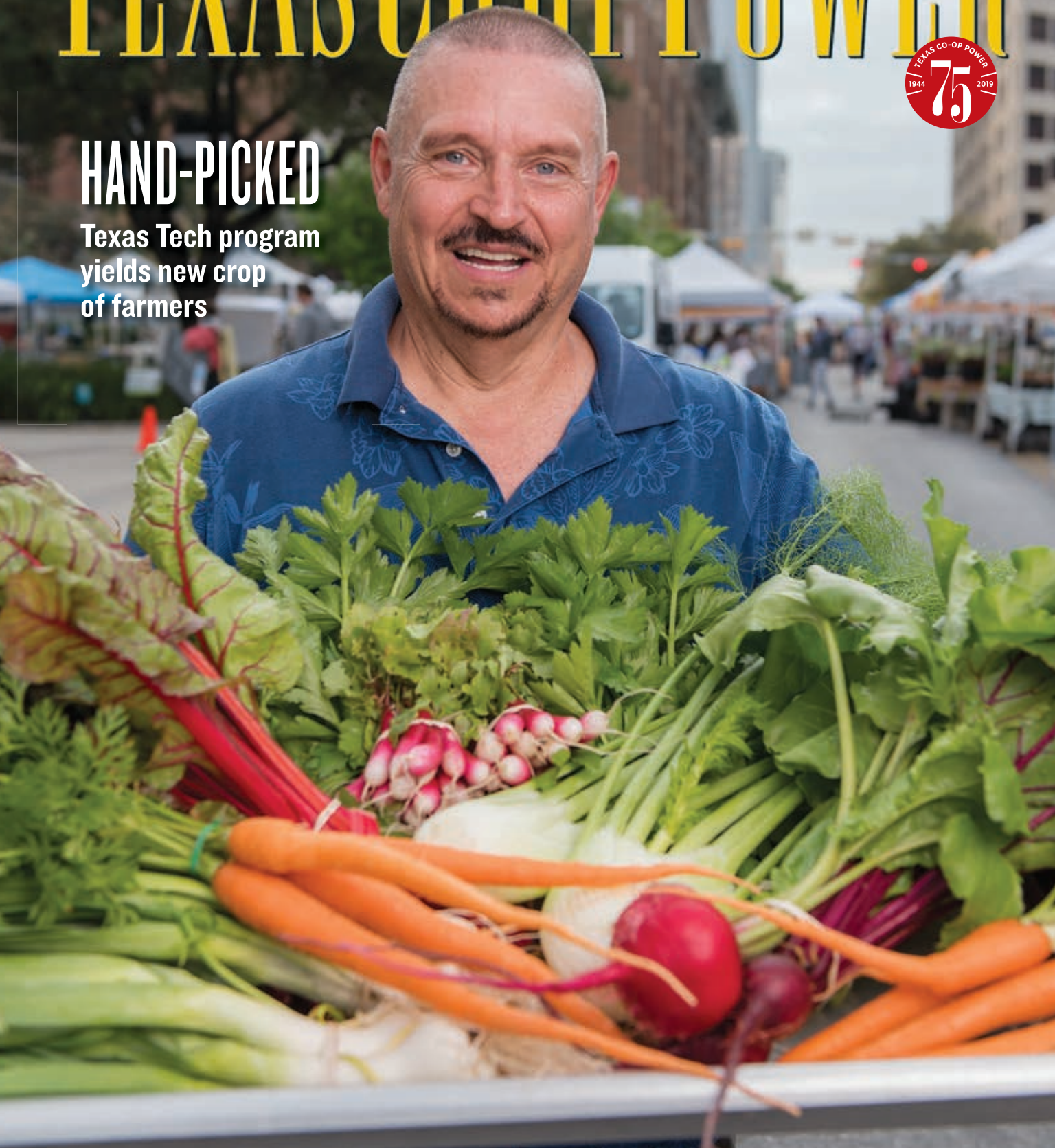


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A class in a Texas Tech vineyard weighs pruned clippings.

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Pig Rescues

These people are doing a wonderful thing. They spend their time rescuing unwanted piggies and giving them a safe home [*This Little Piggy*, May 2019].
KAREN SUSIE GILCREASE | VIA FACEBOOK

Pot-bellied pigs are often given up or abandoned in the first months of ownership. It's essential to thoroughly research any pet/animal before one gets it and not base it on what's trendy.

SUE LATTERELL-ALLEN | VIA FACEBOOK

Hike to the Desk

On Google Street View, you can take a virtual hike up to the teacher's desk referred to in Chet Garner's *Higher Education* [May 2019], thanks to some kind (young and healthy) soul who carried a 360-degree camera while hiking up to the desk. A pretty view, volcanic rocks, cacti and even some notebooks in the desk drawers are visible. To see the desk, search "30.370752, -103.644667" in Google Maps and drag the Street View icon onto the map.

Pardon me, while I catch my virtual breath after such a strenuous hike.

KEN KONVICKA | GRAHAM UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Tumbleweed Memory

The article about tumbleweeds [*Russian Interference*, May 2019] brought to mind an incident concerning a dear departed friend, Dana Dickey. In 1984, she picked up a brand-new Buick Riviera convertible in Lubbock and immediately started off to Midland for sales calls. En route, she was unable to

Life With Pet Pigs

I was given my first little pig for my 40th birthday, some 40 years ago [*This Little Piggy*, May 2019]. A friend took me to see the litter, and I chose the runt. He was wild as a deer but gentled down with his first belly rub. After he moved into my barn and my heart, I went on to rescue more.

Over the last 40 years, I have been appalled at the greed surrounding these wonderful creatures and the lies told. I love my pigs and have homes for them, assuming they outlive me, but I know that they aren't suitable pets for everyone.

NANCI FALLEY | LOCKHART | BLUEBONNET EC



avoid a very large tumbleweed.

She stopped the car to check for damage and found the huge plant had torn off the radio antenna and severely scraped the pristine maroon finish of the Buick. She described in vivid detail how she, on the shoulder of the highway, cursed and cried and stomped on the offending tumbleweed until it was a fine powder.

Since that day, when I see a tumbleweed, I think of Dana.

RJ BROSELOW | SOUTHLAND LYNTGAR EC



Wide-Open Secret

Shhhh...don't tell everyone! [*Wide-Open Spaces*, April 2019]
CHERYL COOPER COTTON | VIA FACEBOOK

First-Class Cookies

You published a recipe for Brown Butter Oatmeal Raisin Cookies in September 2018. I tore the page out to try it, but then wadded it up and pitched it due to a sad review/letter. But before the garbage went out, another review came through praising it.

Oh, the indecision. I dug the recipe out and tried it. This is a devastating cookie! No one can get enough of them. They are absolutely first class.

MIKE OTTEN | CEDAR PARK PEDERNALES EC

Dance Hall Days

It was most refreshing to read about the dance halls of my

time—I am 88 [*Hail the Halls*, February 2019]. I used to go to Appelt's Hill Hall, Recreation Hall and Wied Hall in and around Hallettsville. The Bill Mraz Hall in Houston was the best of all. I met my husband during intermission.

RITA CEJKA WACHEL | HALLETTSVILLE

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TEXAS CO-OP POWER VOLUME 76, NUMBER 1 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power's* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com. **SUBSCRIPTION PRICE** is \$4.20 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. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each. **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:** Advertisers interested in buying display ad space in *Texas Co-op Power* and/or in our 30 sister publications in other states, contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251. 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. Product satisfaction and delivery responsibility lie solely with the advertiser.

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HAPPENINGS

Celebrate Littlefield

Littlefield's annual festival was developed by its chamber of commerce as a way to celebrate the community's centennial in 2013. The town began as a settlement in 1913, when it had a station on the railroad that became the Panhandle and Santa Fe Railway.

Today, Littlefield, home to Lamb County Electric Cooperative, is in the heart of the largest cotton-producing region in the world, the South Plains of Texas. **CELEBRATE LITTLEFIELD, JULY 19-20**, features live music, a sanctioned barbecue cook-off, parade, and food and merchandise vendors.

INFO ▶ (806) 385-5331

CO-OP PEOPLE

FROM INTERN TO TOP JOB

Alan Lesley grew up in Downing, northeast of Brownwood, in the 1980s, planning to become a peanut farmer like his father. He went to Tarleton State University and studied agricultural business.

Lesley spent his final semester, in the fall of 1997, as an intern in the member services department at Comanche Electric Cooperative.

It changed his life. Comanche hired Lesley, who became general manager in 2009. "I think the internship was a step in the right direction," he says. Words of wisdom for today's interns as we mark National Intern Day on July 25.



◀ LOOKING BACK AT COMMERCE THIS MONTH



SINCE 1944, the year *Texas Co-op Power* debuted, the Texas economy has flourished. Sure, Texas produces oil, but we also are major players in computers, coolers and hair care products.

1940s



1945 Academy Tire Shop in San Antonio changes its name to Academy Super Surplus. Today, Academy Sports and Outdoors has more than 250 stores in 16 states.

1946 Texas-based Tote'm Stores changes its name to 7-Eleven to reflect newly extended hours—7 a.m.-11 p.m. seven days a week.

1950s



1950 A hamburger stand named Whataburger opens in Corpus Christi, the first of what has grown into a chain of more than 800 restaurants.

1951 A 55-acre site in Hurst, near Fort Worth, is selected for Bell Aircraft Corporation's helicopter division, Bell Helicopter.

1954 James Avery starts his jewelry business in a two-car garage in Kerrville. There are now 86 stores in five states.

1960s

1963 Mary Kay Ash, born in Hot Wells, launches her business, now called Mary Kay Cosmetics, in Dallas.



1965 The Astrodome debuts as the first domed stadium ever built.

1965 NorthPark Center in Dallas opens as the largest shopping mall in the country.

Giants in Their Community

DONNA STOTTLEMYER has always had a soft spot for animals. But the longtime Farmers Electric Cooperative employee's goodwill extends to humans, too. Since 2015, she has led the Rockwall/Royse City chapter of Love on a Leash, a nonprofit that brings free pet therapy services to people.

Stottlemeyer coordinates visits to hospice centers and assisted living facilities and, along with other volunteers, deploys the

POWER OF OUR PEOPLE recognizes co-op members who improve their community's quality of life. Nominate someone by emailing people@texascooppower.com.

organization's 16 trained, certified canines to lift moods and soothe souls. One hospice patient who often experienced agitation would calm as soon as the therapy team

entered her room. "She would chat with us, and she had a beautiful smile ... and she would pet the dog," Stottlemeyer said.

Odin, Stottlemeyer's 175-pound Irish wolfhound, has brightened spirits at a children's bereavement program in Rockwall, northeast of Dallas, and encourages a love of books as a reading education assistance dog at local libraries. Odin and other dogs serve as nonjudgmental listeners for children to read to, building their confidence and skills.



Odin listens patiently and accepts hugs with equal aplomb, according to Stottlemeyer, who described him as a "sweet and gentle giant."

Paxdin Rees reads to Odin at the Rockwall County Library.

His handler has a heart for service to match.

INFO ▶ loveonaleash.org

LOOKING BACK AT RURAL LIFE NEXT MONTH ▶

1970s

1972 Half Price Books launches as a secondhand bookshop in an old laundromat in Dallas.

1973 The first Michaels store opens, at Northtown Mall in Dallas.

1973 USAA unveils its new headquarters in San Antonio. The main building is three-fourths of a mile long.

1978 Felix Stehling founds Taco Cabana in San Antonio.



1980s

1980 John Paul DeJoria of Austin and Paul Mitchell launch hair care empire John Paul Mitchell Systems.

1984 As a pre-med freshman at the University of Texas at Austin, Michael Dell starts his computer business, then called PCs Unlimited.

1986 Oil prices plunge by two-thirds, putting 50,000 Texans out of work within a year.



1990s

1997 Bert "Tito" Beveridge of San Antonio creates Tito's Vodka.

1997 Alamo Drafthouse Cinema opens its first theater, in Austin. Twenty-five cities, from New York to San Francisco, now have an Alamo.

1999 The Texas Department of Agriculture begins its Go Texan campaign to promote Texas business and agriculture.



2000s

2001 Texas becomes the top exporting state in the U.S.—a position it has held ever since (\$264.1 billion in 2017).

2006 Yeti is founded in Dripping Springs, west of Austin.

2017 Amazon buys Austin-based Whole Foods for \$13.7 billion.

2018 Apple announces plans to build a new \$1 billion campus in Austin, where it could eventually employ 15,000 people.



NATIVE SOIL



I grew up in Texas, but I've now spent more than half my life away from my home state. When people ask me where I'm from, I don't say New York, where I work, or New Jersey, where I've lived for the past 18 years. I haven't lived in Galveston since 1975, but when asked, that's where I say I'm from: Proudly born on the island—BOI.

But work and life take us places, and journalism moved me to jobs in New York and Washington, D.C. I'm not complaining. These days, I work for *The New York Times*, happily. But I'll never not be a Texan and miss home. I've wanted my own kids to have a sense of belonging to the Lone Star State, from the time of their births onward.

And that's how a bag of dirt became a part of our lives and of the lives of several of our friends.

When my wife, Jeanne, was pregnant with our first child, in 1987, of course we couldn't fly to Texas for the delivery. After

thinking about it, I came up with a plan: Get some dirt from Texas to put under the delivery table.

That might sound crazy—and maybe it is—but it's not new, or unique to Texans. I first heard of it during a study abroad program in Siena, Italy, in the 1970s. The Sieneese have fierce loyalty to their neighborhoods, or *contrada*. Since there was, historically, only one hospital per *contrada*, people from the others would bring some dirt from their own neighborhood into the delivery room for births.

I'd loved that part of Sieneese life, along with the excellent espresso and gelato, and so I started planning for a Texan delivery, *contrada* style. I gathered dirt from various parts of the state, including Galveston. A friend also sent some—he said he chipped a piece off the Alamo, too, but I don't believe him. The resulting mixture fit neatly into a baggie.

When I asked the doctor about bringing it into the hospital,



BY JOHN SCHWARTZ

How a simple bag of Texas dirt connects distant newborns to a beloved land

she was, luckily enough, charmed. She's Italian. She said it would be fine so long as it was in a sterile container and under the delivery table.

Unfortunately, that baby, Elizabeth, was born without the benefit of the dirt because she was delivered in an emergency procedure, and I was stuck in traffic trying to get to the hospital. The dirt was the least of our worries, but it all turned out OK: Elizabeth is 31 now, with a daughter of her own—who was born in Texas! So something must have worked.

Being born over a baggie confers no official status, of course. I was, however, able to get a friendly member of the Texas Senate to pass a resolution that mentioned the dirt and declared Elizabeth “a child of the Lone Star State.” (The resolution did not, alas, declare her eligible for in-state tuition.) And I held on to the bag, which was present for the births of our second and third children, born in 1990 and 1996, in New York and Maryland.

They got resolutions, too. Resolutions are fairly easy to get when your father is the late A.R. “Babe” Schwartz, a former member of the Texas Senate.

That much-traveled bag of dirt has taken on a life of its own. My friends Jay and Alice had their first child at St. Vincent's hospital in New York City. Jay, born in El Paso, called the night of the delivery and asked if I could bring it to him. I raced downtown. He stepped out of the delivery room to meet me in a hospital hallway. I tossed the bag. He snapped it out of the air and ran back to the delivery room.

St. Vincent's is gone now. Jay and Alice are back in Texas, and their daughter, Lily, is going strong.

The bag of dirt has also been pressed into service within the newsroom of *The New York Times*. Last October, *Times* metro reporter Emma Fitzsimmons borrowed the bag for the birth of her first child, Hudson. Her dad wrapped the bag in a little Texas flag and, she tells me, “touched the flag to his cute little baby toes within a few hours of his birth so that he would step foot on Texas soil before any other.” More recently, the dirt made its way into the hospital room of *Times* business reporter Amy Chozick, a San Antonio rose, to help Texanize the birth of Cormac Aidan Ennis.

I held on to the Texas flag wrapper that Emma's dad provided, so the dirt looks classier now. After all, there are worse ways to start out in life than with this slightly silly but meaningful ritual.

John Schwartz is a science writer for *The New York Times*.



BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS | PHOTOS BY WYATT MCSPADDEN



Eric Hequet grew up eating fresh-picked tomatoes bought at farmers markets near his home in Paris, France. To this day, he can still taste their juicy goodness, topped with a drizzle of olive oil and a dab of salt. Fast forward to where he lives now, and shopping for vegetables at big-box grocers makes him grimace.

“Many tomatoes today don’t have a true tomato flavor,” says Hequet, chairman of the plant and soil science department at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. “They’re round and red like tomatoes, but they’re tasteless because they’ve been bred to be hamburger-



TEXAS TECH PROGRAM PUTS STUDENTS ON A PATH TO FARM-TO-TABLE CAREERS

friendly. That means they have a long shelf life and very little juice so they won’t get a bun wet. Unfortunately, fruits and vegetables with little to no taste are common in the marketplace.”

To change that, Hequet, an award-winning researcher in cotton genetics, led efforts to establish a new undergraduate degree specialization at Texas Tech for 2018. The new program allows students to focus on local food and wine production systems.

Texas Tech University’s local food and wine production program reflects increasing demand for regionally grown foods produced sustainably by small-scale farms.

This study concentration, the first of its kind in Texas,

will prepare students for farm-to-table careers, such as an urban farmer, orchard manager, crop consultant, winery cellar master, or fruit and vegetable marketing specialist.

Such forward thinking has kept Texas Tech at the cutting edge of ag education. In 2010, motivated by the rapidly growing wine industry in Texas, the university established the state’s first viticulture and enology degree program. The new local food and wine production program is a response to an increasing demand for fruits, vegetables and other edibles produced by small farms using earth-friendly practices. According to one report published by Packaged Facts, a source of market research for the food industry, local foods generated \$11.7 billion in sales in 2014 and are predicted to reach \$20.2 billion this year.

What makes a food “local”? It depends on whom you ask. “Locavores,” a term coined in 2005, encourage people to eat food



The business of local production IS NOT JUST ABOUT GROWING CROPS BUT WORKING WITH WINERIES AND RESTAURANTS TO ENHANCE THEIR CUSTOMERS' EXPERIENCE WITH THE BEST LOCAL PRODUCTS.

grown within 100 miles of home. But under the 2008 Farm Act, a product may be considered local if it's shipped within the same state or less than 400 miles from its origin. Consumers want more.

But given food producers' thinning ranks, who will produce that local food? In the U.S., more than 31% of farm operators were 65 or older in 2012, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Texas Tech University officials hope that an ag degree with a focus on small-scale farming will entice more young people into the field.

"Cotton production is very important around Lubbock," explains Hequet, who researched cotton fiber technology in Africa and France before joining Texas Tech in 1997. "However, a young person lacking an ag background or family in the business can't spend millions of dollars to get started in growing cotton. It's impossible.

"However," he adds, "they could buy a few acres and grow high-quality vegetables for sale to restaurants and high-end stores in the city."

Hequet stresses the importance of introducing city kids—not just the sons and daughters of row-crop producers—to agriculture. He suggests that growing fruits and vegetables to feed local markets is more appealing and more marketable, because of the growing urban agriculture trend.

HILL COUNTRY CAMPUS

The local food and wine production program, which kicked off in fall 2018, enrolls students both in Lubbock and at Hill Country University Center in Fredericksburg. Texas Tech partners with several Central Texas colleges so students can seamlessly transfer credits. Ed Hellman, a viticulture and enology professor at Texas Tech since 2000 and member of Central Texas Electric Cooperative, moved from Lubbock to Fredericksburg to oversee the program, which could expand to encompass animal products.

"Our program is unique in that we include wine because it is such an important component of the farm-to-table movement," Hellman says. "The local wine and food connection is really strong, especially here in the Hill Country. Human connection is another driving force. It's reassuring to people to know that their food was grown or made with care by someone local they can talk to."

Under Tech's new program, coursework focuses on the sustainable production of fruits and vegetables and introduces students to wine science, grape growing, wine marketing and hospitality management.

"The business of local production is not just about growing crops but working with wineries and restau-

Dabs and John Hollimon, who own 1851 Vineyards near Fredericksburg, earned viticulture and winemaking certificates through Texas Tech.



Above: Instructor Kirk Williams shows how to make a final pruning cut at a Texas Tech vineyard. Right and below: Richard Ney, front, and Alik Hovhannisyan of Texas Food Ranch near Fredonia sell their produce 100 miles away, at the Sustainable Food Center's farmers market in downtown Austin.



program teaches students, and Ney underscores the importance of the small producer. “People want to know their farmer,” Ney says, “so they know the vegetables are not pumped full of chemicals.”

MOVE OVER, PEACHES

Two decades ago, tourists flocked to Fredericksburg for peaches, not wine. Back then, only four wineries and one wine tour company operated in the area. Today, Hill Country wine tourism is booming, and the area around Fredericksburg includes more than 50 wineries and 18 tour companies.

rants to enhance their customers’ experience with the best local products,” Hellman notes. He explains that the program emphasizes sustainable practices, which use products and methods that are considered to be safer for the environment but still economically feasible.

Nelson Avila, a Lufkin native who completed most of his general education classes at Austin Community College, chose to specialize in Tech’s program. At 43, he’s working toward earning a Bachelor of Science degree because he wants to make a difference.

“We’re running out of land because it’s being developed or overtilled,” says Avila, who paints houses in Austin to help pay his family’s bills. “The world is growing, and people need to eat. I want to grow sustainable crops on a small farm and teach my kids how to care for the land.”

Central Texas EC member Richard Ney and his partner grow a selection of vegetables, fruits and berries on the Texas Food Ranch, their property near Fredonia, 100 miles west of Austin. They practice what the Texas Tech



“Peaches are still important, and they still are a driver in the local farming and agritourism industry, but vineyards and wineries are now leading through sheer numbers,” says Jim Kamas, associate professor and extension specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife in Fredericksburg. “With that, peach grower demographics are changing. They’re getting older, and they’re wanting to grow fruit crops on a smaller scale that emphasize quality over quantity.”

Toward that goal, Kamas, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative, evaluates pears, figs, raspberries, blackberries and pomegranates at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Viticulture and Fruit Lab near Gillespie County Airport. He also helps small producers identify varieties of specialty fruit crops uniquely suited for their local markets.

ALTERNATE SCHOOLING

Food producers and people wanting a career change can get a boost from professional certificate programs earned through Texas Tech. The two-year viticulture certificate program, which started in 2008, has graduated 177 students, many of whom have started their own vineyards and wineries. Since 2014, the two-year Texas winemaking certificate program has awarded 53 professional certificates.

In the near future, the school plans to offer a small-scale farming course on sustainably producing fruits and vegetables for local markets. All certificate programs are a mixture of online classes and hands-on sessions in Fredericksburg and Lubbock. For example, viticulture students plant and propagate grapevines at the on-site vineyard at the

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website for more about the small producer program and farmers markets.

Hill Country University Center.

“For doctors, lawyers, engineers and other people who don’t want to go back to college, our continuing ed programs allow them to get up to speed,” Hellman says. “Many of our students want to work at a winery, but they don’t want a college education. This is a way for them to get an education without the full commitment and cost.”

Dabs and John Hollimon, who own 1851 Vineyards, south of Fredericksburg, respectively earned a winemaking and viticulture certificate. With help from their grown children, they resurrected a vineyard that Dabs inherited. In 2013, they planted 600 grapevines followed by 5,000 more the next year. Five years later, their medium-sized winery has an annual capacity of 10,000 cases of bottled wine.

“Our 2016 Estate Tannat was a double gold winner in the 2019 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition,” says Dabs, a retired schoolteacher and member of Central Texas EC. “That’s a lot of validation for what we’re doing with our grapes and winemaking. We couldn’t make the quality wines that we do if we hadn’t taken the Texas Tech courses.”

Their 1851 Vineyards label is among more than 25 Texas wine-makers carried at the Cabernet Grill in Fredericksburg. Since 2006, chef Ross Burtwell has offered a Texas-only wine list, which he combines with locally sourced ingredients to create what he calls his Texas Hill Country cuisine.

“As they say, what grows together goes together,” says Burtwell, a member of Central Texas EC. “It’s fantastic what Texas Tech is doing. We’re facing a labor shortage, and to be able to hire passionate people who are knowledgeable about local food production will be great for our industry.”

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Blanco.

Fennel and beets for sale at the Sustainable Food Center’s farmers market in downtown Austin.



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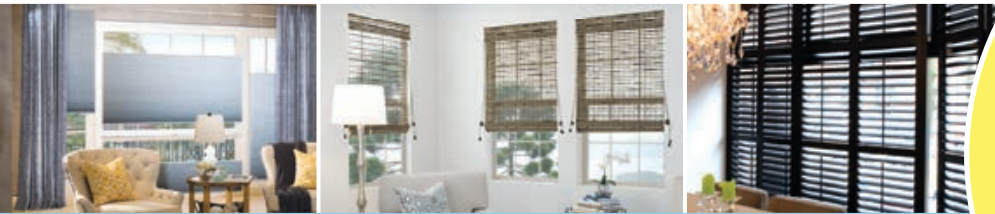
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I AM 83 YEARS OLD AND HAVE ARTHRITIS IN EVERY JOINT IN MY BODY - ESPECIALLY MY FEET - WHICH ACHE AND CRAMP DURING THE NIGHT - SERIOUSLY DISTURBING MY SLEEP. YOUR AMISH ARTHRITIS CREAM (SMITH'S) (4OZ JAR) IS THE ONLY PRODUCT THAT HAS PROVIDED ME WITH ABSOLUTE RELIEF FROM THE PAIN

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Sincerely, *Yancy S*
CONCORD, NH

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RELIEF FOR PAINFUL
MUSCLES AND JOINTS

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*LIMIT 5 at this special price (Free S&H over \$45)		S&H	\$3.95
		TOTAL	

PAYMENT METHOD

Check or money order enclosed (Make payable to Smith Amish)

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Exp. Date

____/____/____
m y y

Signature _____

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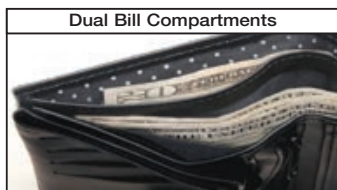
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Celebrating Employees



MESSAGE FROM CEO MARK ROLLANS

YOUR POWER IS PROVIDED BY THE BEST IN

the energy business. I am confident of that. With 128 employees on staff, there are a lot of years of service and knowledge behind your energy. From new hires to 35-year veterans, our team is made up of dedicated

individuals committed to the cooperative business model, our members and communities.

I'd like to take this time to recognize some employees who have recently celebrated service milestones—work anniversaries in five-year increments—during the first half of the year.

ISRAEL BAZAN, STAKING TECHNICIAN

For 10 years, Israel has been meeting with new members and introducing them to the cooperative as they apply for new service. He's dedicated to the cooperative difference and providing exceptional service.

MICHAEL HARKINS, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

In 10 years, Michael has served our members in a variety of ways. A former lineman, he now works with key accounts and our energy efficiency programs.

PATTI TAYLOR, MANAGER OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Over 20 years, Patti has learned the ins and outs of Medina EC. Her dedication to our employees and making sure information is communicated timely is important to the cooperative business.

PHILIP CROW, SMART GRID SUPERVISOR

Philip has been with the cooperative for five years and has proved to be a dedicated team player. He works behind the scenes, making sure our metering technology is communicating with our system.

RICKY CERNA, ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN

Ricky has seen a lot of change in 30 years! But one thing that hasn't changed is his determination to serve our members and to be a great co-worker.

RICKY GARZA, LINEMAN

Ricky has been serving our members and community for 25 years. There isn't an outage situation that Ricky hasn't seen and he is dedicated to keeping our members powered.

TAYLOR STACY, JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN

Taylor has been with us for five years and has served in our Dilley and Hondo offices. Storms, heat, cold and all weather elements can't keep him from ensuring your lights are on.

As a way to give back to our employees and our communities, Medina EC makes \$100 donations to organizations on behalf of employees celebrating service awards. You can see recent choices by employees to the right.

I'd like to thank these team members for their continued hard work and dedication to our members, communities and their co-workers. I'd also like to thank all employees for making Medina EC a great co-op, providing our service area with safe and reliable energy. I look forward to celebrating more service awards in the future with our staff.

Sincerely,
Mark Rollans

Thanks for

AFTER YEARS ON THE MEDINA EC TEAM, THESE EMPLOYEES HAVE PUT AWAY THEIR HARD HATS, LOGGED OUT OF THEIR COMPUTERS AND PASSED ON THEIR FILES.

THANKS FOR YOUR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE. ENJOY YOUR MUCH-DESERVED RETIREMENT!



Israel Bazan
Staking Technician
Rio Grande City Office

Donation to
Operation Round Up



Ricky Cerna
Engineering Equipment
Technician
Dilley Office

Donation to
Operation Round Up



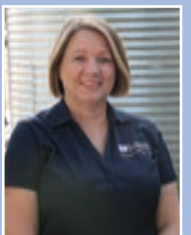
Michael Harkins
Business Development
Coordinator
General Office

Donation to
Relay For Life, Medina
County



Ricky Garza
Lineman
Rio Grande City Office

Donation to
Relay For Life, Starr County



Patti Taylor
Manager of Human
Resources
General Office

Donation to
Uvalde Humane Society



Taylor Stacy
Journeyman Lineman
Hondo Office

Donation to
Devine Volunteer Fire
Department



Philip Crow
Smart Grid Supervisor
General Office

Donation to
St. Jude Children's
Research Hospital



Medina Electric Cooperative

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Wayne W. Scholtz, (830) 426-1328
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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.

for the memories



*David
Atwood*

MANAGER OF
ENGINEERING
3 YEARS



*Fernando
Rodriguez*

SERVICE
TECHNICIAN
34 YEARS



*Rolando
Falcon*

SERVICE
FOREMAN
42 YEARS



*Cynthia
Stein*

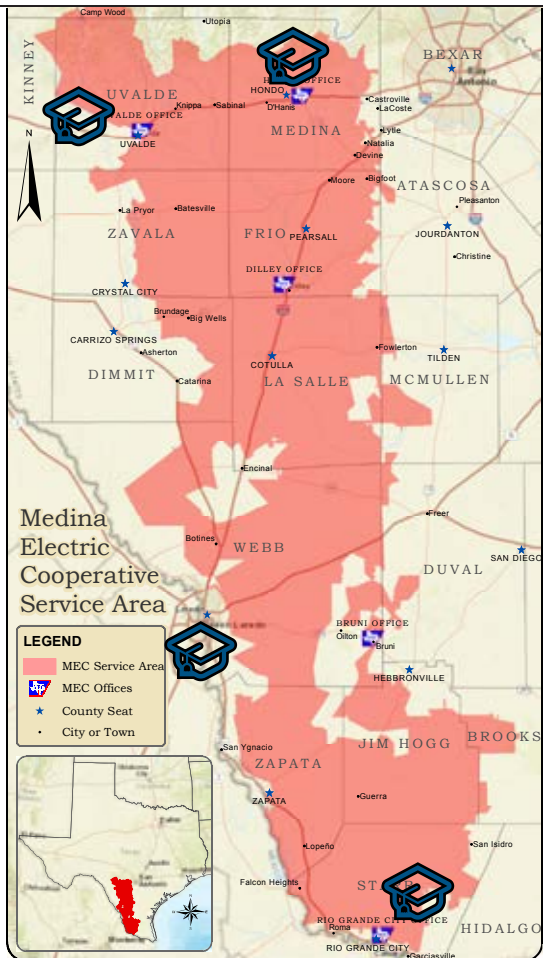
HUMAN RESOURCES
SPECIALIST
35 YEARS

Back To School








AN INVESTMENT IN KNOWLEDGE PAYS THE BEST INTEREST, an astute observation credited to Benjamin Franklin.

Medina EC staff noticed a large number of our members are pursuing continued education as part of scholarship applications available each year. If you want to pursue your education but don't want to pack up and move—which, why would you?!—there are multiple opportunities for post-secondary education within driving distance of our service area. If you've been considering finishing out a degree or expanding your skill set, consider all the options available close to home. Fall registration is around the corner, so start your research now if you are considering going to school.

Watch MedinaEC.org/Scholarships in early 2020 and we may be able to help you fund a portion of your educational dreams.



Postsecondary schools are located within driving distance of most Medina EC members.

- 
SOUTHWEST TEXAS JUNIOR COLLEGE—UVALDE | swtjc.edu
 Offers adult education and literacy programs, associate degrees, and certificate and technical programs, including automotive, cosmetology, criminal justice, welding, nursing and more.
- 
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY—UVALDE | sulross.edu/rgc
 Offers various bachelor's degrees, a B.S. in nursing program for registered nurses and master's degrees in business administration and education.
- 
SOUTH TEXAS REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER—HONDO | hondo-tx.org
 Offers associate degrees, GED diploma and English as a second language classes, and certified medical administration assistant certification and other technical certificate programs. Certified nursing assistant classes are available for high school students. A new annex, slated for completion this summer, will house vocational and technical training opportunities.
- 
LAREDO COLLEGE—LAREDO | laredo.edu
 Offers certificate programs, technical and academic associate degrees, short-term training, non-credit community interest courses and adult education courses that help students obtain English skills, job skills or a GED diploma. Has two campuses for convenience.
- 
TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY—LAREDO | tamiu.edu
 Offers a host of options for undergraduate and graduate degrees, along with undergraduate and graduate certificates. Also offers non-degree educational opportunities through continuing education, the International Language Institute, and outreach and precollege programs.
- 
SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE—RIO GRANDE VALLEY | southtexascollege.edu
 Offers certificate programs, associate and bachelor's degrees, dual-credit opportunities, online programs, industry training and economic development, and continuing, professional and workforce educations. Campuses are located throughout Hidalgo and Starr counties.
- 
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY—RIO GRANDE VALLEY | utrgv.edu
 Offers a host of options for undergraduate and graduate degrees through 13 colleges, along with a school of medicine, online learning, continuing education and various certificate programs.

BONUS Medina EC offers presentations on safety, energy efficiency and more for students at the primary and secondary education levels. Contact the cooperative to have us present at your next school event.



Record Electricity Use Expected This Summer

ELECTRIC DEMAND CONTINUES TO GROW throughout the Electric Reliability Council of Texas region, which represents about 90 percent of the state’s electric load. According to ERCOT, “demand growth remains especially strong in West Texas due to oil and gas development and along the coast where new industrial facilities are being constructed.”

ERCOT released its final summer report, which said “the agency expects that it may need to use emergency alerts this summer in order to keep up with the demand for electricity.” Once alerts are issued by ERCOT, they can take advantage of additional resources that are only available during scarcity conditions. If that doesn’t work, ERCOT will issue public alerts asking for conservation. If neither of those options work, ERCOT will be forced to implement rotating outages across the state.

Medina EC offers programs to encourage consumers to reduce energy use during summer peak hours—3–7 p.m., June through September. Load management is a program offered to members on the irrigation rate class. By participating in this program, irrigators allow the co-op to shut off power to their irrigation pumps. In 2018, the load management program shed an average of 20.5 MW throughout the summer with a high of 32.9 megawatts on August 7. Not only does the load management program help reduce energy demand on the grid, it also helps us save on power costs the following year. By reducing our demand on the system during peak hours, it helps us buy energy at a lower cost.

Members not on the irrigation rate class interested in helping reduce energy use this summer are encouraged to sign up for the Do Your Part program by texting **ENERGY** to **830.423.5032**. This program will send energy saving tips on high demand days.

These programs are just two ways the co-op helps encourage energy conservation during summer months. If ERCOT predictions hold to be true, even with our current conservation programs, it is likely they will have to issue emergency conservation alerts this summer.

Save the Date

81ST ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & FELLOWSHIP

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
GRAFF 7A DANCE BARN
HONDO

JOIN US TO

- » HAVE A CHANCE AT WINNING \$1,000
- » GET UPDATES ON YOUR COOPERATIVE
- » MEET WITH MEDINA EC STAFF
- » MINGLE WITH OTHER MEMBERS
- » ENJOY BREAKFAST ON US
- » ACCESS THE ICONIC GRAFF 7A RANCH GROUNDS AND MAZE* OR RECEIVE A MEDINA EC UMBRELLA**

REGISTRATION GIFTS WILL BE LIMITED BY MEMBERSHIP. MEMBERS MAY CHOOSE THE TICKET OPTION OR UMBRELLA, BUT CANNOT HAVE BOTH.
 *MAX 2 TICKETS PER MEMBERSHIP
 **MAX 1 UMBRELLA PER MEMBERSHIP

PHOTO | ADOBE STOCK



Caulk Your Windows in 8 Easy Steps

IT SEEMS AS IF EVERY ARTICLE ABOUT SAVING ENERGY tells you that caulking around windows and doors is the simplest way to keep air from leaking into and out of your home.

That claim is true but only if you know how to do it correctly. Here are some simple instructions for using caulk around your home to keep your expensive cooled or heated air indoors where it belongs—and the weather outside.

1. CHOOSE A CAULK. Caulk is a flexible sealant made from silicone or paintable acrylic latex that can be worked into cracks and gaps around your house, filling them in to prevent air from leaking into or out of the building. You can find caulk at a hardware store in a plastic or cardboard tube or cartridge.

If you want to paint the caulk to match your window frames, buy one that's paintable. If you want to caulk less often, silicone might be a better choice, as it's less prone to cracking. It's not paintable, but it comes in a variety of colors. You'll use about a half cartridge on a typical-size window.

2. USE A CAULKING GUN. Applying caulk directly from the tube is a headache unless you're just filling in a tiny area. Instead, purchase a caulking gun, usually available for less than \$15 at a hardware or paint store.

3. DECIDE WHERE YOU WILL CAULK. Any hole, gap, crack or opening on the inside or outside of your house needs caulking. The biggest gaps often are around windows and

doors. Seal gaps and cracks around exterior light fixtures, outdoor taps, openings for exhaust fans and places where cable and phone lines pierce the wall.

4. PREPARE THE SURFACE. Clean and dry the area you will caulk. You will apply caulk between the window frame and the stucco or siding on the outside of your house or at the joint between the frame and the drywall indoors. Scrape away any old caulk and loose paint, and scrub off dirt from that area. Allow the surface to dry thoroughly before caulking.

5. SLIDE THE TUBE OF CAULK INTO THE GUN. Snip the tip off the tube, making as small a hole as possible so you can control the amount of caulk that squeezes out of it. Secure the tube snugly into the gun.

6. APPLY THE CAULK. Hold the gun at a 45-degree angle and squeeze a small bead of caulk into the tiny line that separates the window frame from the stucco, brick or siding. Use your finger (you may want to wear thin rubber gloves) to carefully smooth the caulk into the tiny opening. Repeat the process until you have caulked all the way around the window frame.

7. LET IT DRY. Allow the caulk to set for 24 hours before painting it to match your window frame.

8. DON'T STOP NOW. Repeat the process on any gap or crack that exposes your home to the weather. You'll save more on your energy bill than you spent on the caulk and caulking gun.

LUCK OF THE DRAW

You have **FIVE** chances to win a \$100 credit on your electric bill.

CHANCE 1 Register your account on SmartHub.

Sign up at MedinaEC.SmartHub.coop or download the app and register your account there. SmartHub allows you to report outages with one click, view past electric use and see your use before you get your monthly bill.

CHANCE 2 Sign up for an automated payment.

Have your bill automatically charged to your credit card or bank account each month. Set it up online through SmartHub or by calling 1-866-MEC-ELEC.

CHANCE 3 Choose paperless billing.

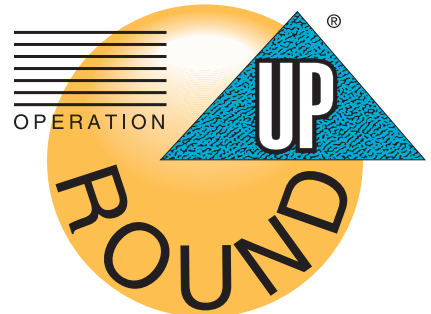
Opt out of receiving a paper bill every month and have your bill emailed to you instead. Change your account settings in SmartHub or call us at 1-866-MEC-ELEC, and staff will change it for you.

CHANCE 4 Join Operation Round Up.

Sign your account up for Operation Round Up and have your monthly electric bill rounded up to the next whole dollar. That spare change is used to make donations to community organizations and families in need. Sign up at MedinaEC.org/ORU or by calling 1-866-MEC-ELEC.

CHANCE 5 BONUS drawing for all four programs!

If you are signed up for all four programs, you will be entered into an additional drawing for a \$100 bill credit.



ORU Deadline: August 2

OPERATION ROUND UP has awarded almost \$129,000 to various causes since it began making donations in 2006.

ORU is just one of the member-supported programs Medina EC uses to give back to the communities we serve.

Applications are being accepted for the next round of donations. Applications can be filled out anytime, but to be considered at the September committee meeting, they must be turned in by Friday, August 2. The funds can be used to help individuals pay for medical bills, better their lives, recover after home fires and more.

If you know of someone who could use assistance, consider submitting an application on their behalf. Applicants do not need to be a member of Medina EC but must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC.

You can fill out applications entirely online. If a paper application is needed, you can print one off of our website or drop by one of our offices to pick one up.

You can find the application and additional details at MedinaEC.org/ORU.

MedinaEC.org/ORU

All members signed up for any of the four programs listed above as of 5 p.m. on September 16 will be entered. This includes members who are already signed up for these options and any new sign-ups between now and September 16.

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

Winners in each category will be randomly selected and announced at the 81st Annual Membership Meeting at Graff 7A Ranch/South Texas Maize in Hondo on September 28. You do not need to be present at the meeting to win.

Field Guide to Power Lines

What You See Is ... What?

Take a drive with a lineman, and they can tell you about every piece of electrical equipment you see—most of which you never even notice. They can also tell you if it is a cooperative line or

belongs to a different utility, just based on how the line is built. Here is a very brief look at the major parts of the electric system, in case you ever wondered what you're looking at.

TRANSMISSION LINES >>

Large amounts of power, measured by watts, are delivered by transmission lines. These lines are energized with very high voltage in order to move the power long distances. Insulators on the towers prevent the power from flowing to the towers or the ground.



<< SUBSTATIONS

The substation is the connection between the transmission and distribution systems. That's one reason so much equipment is seen in them: transformers, insulators, circuit breakers, lightning arrestors and more. Transformers at distribution substations and large industrial sites reduce the voltage to a lower level, typically 7,200 or 14,400 volts.

DISTRIBUTION LINES >>

The lines seen along rural roads can be three-phase distribution lines, as seen in this picture, or single-phase distribution lines, which are commonly seen next to homes. These lines are energized at 7,200 or 14,400 volts. Transformers on the utility poles lower the voltage to between 120 and 480 volts to serve residential homes and small businesses.



Medina EC Trivia

DID YOU KNOW...

The cooperative owns and maintains more than 9,500 miles of distribution line. That's enough to stretch from Rio Grande City, where Medina EC's southernmost office is, to Anchorage, Alaska, and back and still have line left over.

ASK THE CO-OP

Small Business Rates

BY CEO MARK ROLLANS

RATES FOR EACH CLASS are set based on the expenses that are incurred in order to serve them. This is determined by a cost-of-service study, during which an unbiased outside firm looks at costs and determines the appropriate rate for fair cost recovery within and between classes.

With an April bill, we got a note addressed to me requesting that I answer a few questions in the next magazine. The member asked, "Why are the electric rates so high for small business. Why can't you cut them a break?"

Rate classes consist of accounts with similar energy use patterns, load requirements and cost impacts, and are outlined in Medina EC's tariff. Businesses that are on three-phase lines and use less than 50 kilovolt-amperes fall within the small commercial rate class, shown in the table. While most small businesses fall here, keep in mind that businesses can also be on the general service rate if they are on a single-phase line or large industrial rate if they use more than 50 kVa.

Small Commercial Rate	
Customer Service Charge	\$25 Applied per meter per month
Capacity Charge	\$1.50 Applied per kVa of required kVa
Energy Charge	\$0.095881* Applied per kWh for all kWh *Adjusted monthly by PPC. PPC is set based on the actual cost of purchased power.

In essence, small commercial rates have been designed so that they pay the expenses that are incurred to serve them with energy. Medina EC has historically performed cost-of-service studies every few years. The cooperative's goal when setting rates is to minimize cross-class subsidies, or instances where one group of meters is paying more than their fair share in order to offset another group paying less than their fair share.

To answer the second part of the question—why can't we cut them a break?—the cooperative business model and cross subsidy explanation both get to the heart of that. As a cooperative, there are easy-to-identify consequences of cutting one group a break. As a not-for-profit entity, if we give one group of members a break and allow them to pay less than their fair share of expenses, we must charge another group of members more to cover those expenses. It has been the cooperative and board's approach to avoid that as much as possible.

Our last cost-of-service study was completed in the fall of 2018, and the next one will be done in 2020. With each cost-of-service study, our consultants and staff review existing costs and rates, determine if they are still set as fairly as is possible and make recommendations for changes to the board if needed.

You can see the rates for all classes at MedinaEC.org/Rates. If you have specific questions on how your account is billed, you can contact us at 1-866-MEC-ELEC or at Info@MedinaEC.org, and one of our member service representatives will be happy to explain your bill to you.



#DondeH2O

As part of our community involvement, Medina EC donates bottled water to community events and organizations.

Now you can win \$250 by showing us where you drink Medina EC water by posting to Instagram using #DondeH2O.

To enter:

1. Instagram a photo with bottled water featuring a Medina EC logo and tag it with #DondeH2O.
2. Tag @ourMEC in the description or on the photo.
3. Follow @ourMEC on Instagram.

For more information and to see entries, visit MedinaEC.org/DondeH2O. Learn more about our community involvement at MedinaEC.org/Involvement.

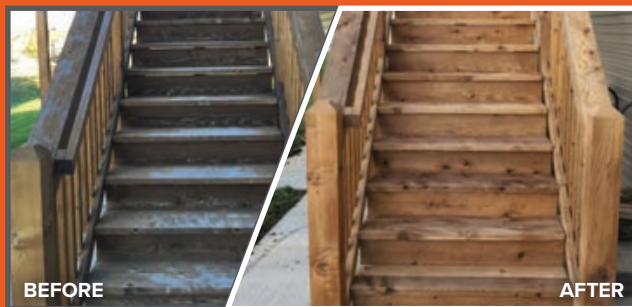
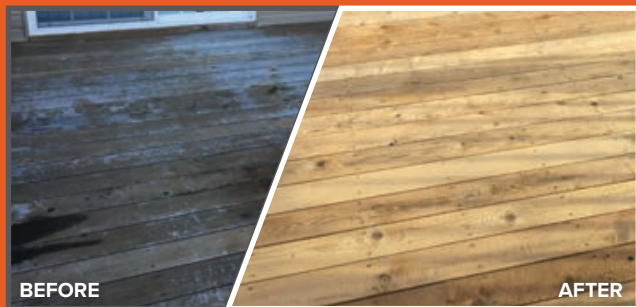


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YEAR
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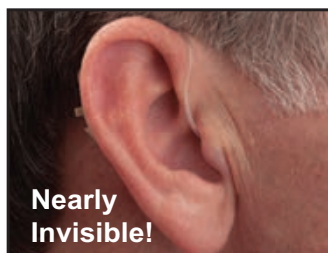
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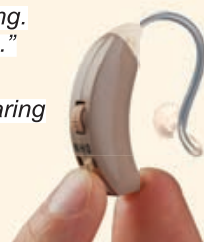
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Geronimo in San Antonio

After his final capture by the U.S. Army, the Apache leader was detained at a military post

BY CYNDY IRVINE

MIDDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1886, A SPECIAL train from Fort Bowie, Arizona, arrived at San Antonio's Sunset Depot. On board, under heavy guard, were prominent Apache leader Geronimo and 33 fellow Native Americans, en route to Florida as prisoners of the United States government.

Geronimo was a Chiricahua Apache who fought settlers and soldiers throughout the tribe's homeland in what is now Arizona and New Mexico. He was a spiritual leader and formidable warrior who led the fight against settlers' incursions into Apache lands. He had an uncanny ability to evade capture and frequently retreated into Mexico before reappearing to continue his battle.

After multiple surrenders and subsequent escapes, Geronimo and a small band of his followers, outnumbered and weary, surrendered for the last time to U.S. Army personnel September 4, 1886.

When these captives arrived in San Antonio, they were taken to the military post at Government Hill, part of present-day Fort Sam Houston, a few miles northeast of downtown. Here they were confined to the 8 acres within the limestone-walled supply depot known as the Quadrangle.

Newspaper coverage of the spectacle reflected the jingoist attitudes of the time and included this headline in the September 11 *San Antonio Daily Express*: "Arrival of Geronimo, Nachez, squaws and papooses—the meanest nest of cut-throats in America." That very evening, soldiers guarded against an unruly crowd "that peered and surged and ... kicked around the entrance to the government build-



ings," according to the paper.

"After the Civil War, federal officials forced unrelated Apache bands to live on reservations in bleak, desolate places," says Catharine Franklin, assistant professor of history at Texas Tech University. "Geronimo and his followers faced dire poverty, isolation, hunger and illness. It's no wonder they fought outsiders whom they viewed as their enemies."

Local reporters sensationalized the captives. The *Daily Express* described Geronimo as 50 years old, of medium height, with long black hair. His face was "seamed and furrowed" and his legs "bowed by their long grip on the saddle," the paper reported.

"The residents of San Antonio didn't know, and seldom cared, about the difficult choices faced by indigenous people," Franklin says.

The prisoners were detained in the Quadrangle for six weeks while the government decided whether they were to be maintained as prisoners of war or returned to civil authorities in Arizona anxious to try them. During this time, local newspapers criticized the military officers for their

leniency with the captured Apache.

The prisoners were housed in tents pitched on the lawns of the Quadrangle campus. The *San Antonio Daily Light* reported that they were fed "with all the luxuries of the season, fresh fruit included." They passed time playing cards and were allowed visitors. Geronimo was driven on at least one carriage ride and "shown the city and its surroundings." The women were granted a shopping excursion to "a store on the Plaza in San Antonio... [where they] bought all the red calico in the shop" and posed for photographs in front of the building.

On October 22, the captives were sent to join their fellow Chiricahuas in Florida. Geronimo and his warriors were detained at Fort Pickens, and the women and children were sent farther east to Fort Marion. Large numbers of Chiricahua died in Florida from disease and the tropical humidity. The survivors were eventually relocated to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where Geronimo died in 1909 from pneumonia after a horse-riding accident. He is buried in the Apache cemetery there, never having been allowed to return to his homeland.

Cyndy Irvine lives in San Antonio.



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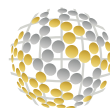
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Gulf Shrimp

THE HEART OF SUMMER IS PEAK season for two of my favorite pastimes: grilling and eating shrimp from the Gulf. This recipe for Grilled Shrimp With Herb and Wine Butter first appeared in *Texas Co-op Power* in June 1988, but its appeal is timeless. It's easy enough to prepare at a beach house and makes for the perfect light summer meal—especially when paired with a pile of angel hair pasta, crackly bread or warm steamed rice. To deepen the smoky nuance, use juice from lightly charred lemons in the butter sauce. The original recipe suggests skewering the shrimp or cooking them in a grill basket. I prefer to fire the shrimp in a preheated paella pan to retain all the buttery juices.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Grilled Shrimp With Herb and Wine Butter

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh chives
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh tarragon
- 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1½–2 pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- Olive oil
- Lemon wedges, for serving (if desired)

1. In a heavy saucepan, heat the butter and garlic over very low heat, just until the butter sizzles. Stir in the chives, parsley, tarragon and rosemary and cook 1–2 minutes more, then whisk in the wine and lemon juice (charred or fresh) and remove from heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

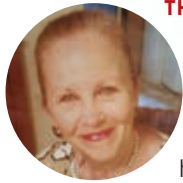
2. Place the shrimp in a large bowl and drizzle with enough olive oil to lightly coat. Season with salt and pepper and toss to combine.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



See a video online to watch Paula make this recipe.

Gulf Shrimp



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

KATHRYN TUMA | NUECES EC

This salad can feed a crowd. It's perfect for a hot day, although Tuma has served it at Christmas, too. "I love to garden, and two of my favorite herbs to grow are fresh dill and arugula," she says. "The best dill is fresh dill. If you don't have it on hand, go to your local farmers market or borrow it from a neighbor—tempt them with some salad afterwards."

Texas Gulf Shrimp and Dill Salad

- 1 large lemon, divided use
- 5 pounds Gulf shrimp, shelled and deveined (reserving a few shells)
- 1 package (3 ounces) Zatarain's Crawfish, Shrimp & Crab Boil
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- ¾ cup green olives stuffed with pimientos, plus ½ cup liquid from jar
- 1 tablespoon horseradish
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- ¾ cup chopped fresh dill
- 1 head iceberg lettuce, chopped
- 2 cups arugula
- 6 cups spring greens
- 1-2 cups chopped celery, to taste
- ½-1 cup chopped green onions, to taste

1. Zest lemon to get approximately 1 tablespoon of zest; then cut in half and juice 1 half, reserving juice. Cut other half into slices.
2. Boil shrimp, reserved shells and lemon slices in water with Zatarain's, according to package directions. Drain and cool shrimp in a refrigerator at least 1 hour.
3. In a quart-size container with a tightfitting lid, add mayonnaise, lemon juice, lemon zest, olives, olive liquid, horseradish, kidney beans and dill. Shake to mix. This bean dressing can be made ahead and refrigerated until needed.
4. In a large salad bowl or on a platter, mix lettuce, arugula, spring greens and celery. Top with green onions. Spread cooled shrimp over greens and top with bean dressing. Serve with dinner rolls, potato chips and a refreshing beverage.
▶ Serves 14-16.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

3. Grill the shrimp in a preheated paella pan (or in a wire basket or on skewers) about 5-7 minutes total, stirring frequently, until the shrimp is pink and just tender. (Do not overcook or shrimp will be tough.) Serve warm with additional lemon, if desired. ▶ Serves 4-6.

Shrimp and Grits With Beer Sauce

JAMES FELDMAN | BANDERA EC

This classic combination gets a boost from the beer sauce. "Meant for breakfast, but good all day," Feldman says.

GRIT CAKES

- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup stone-ground grits
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- ½ cup flour

SAUCE

- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4 ounces beer

SHRIMP

- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 pound jumbo Gulf shrimp, peeled and deveined

1. GRIT CAKES: Bring broth, milk and salt to a boil. Add grits and cook over medium heat about 20 minutes, stirring constantly. Pour into an 8-by-8-inch or similar size baking pan, so grits are about 1 inch thick. Let cool on counter or in refrigerator for quicker use. Once cool, cut into 4 equal squares.
2. Heat ½ inch of oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Coat the squares with flour, then fry in skillet about 2 minutes per side, until edges are golden brown.
3. SAUCE: Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in garlic and all spices, then add beer and reduce heat to low. Let simmer 5-10 minutes, stirring occasionally.



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\$100 Recipe Contest

December's recipe contest topic is **Cookies and Candies**. We know you'll be making these for family and friends over the holidays. Share them with our readers, too. The deadline is **July 10**.

ENTER ONLINE at 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.



4. SHRIMP: Melt butter in skillet over medium heat. Add lemon juice and shrimp, cooking shrimp about 2 minutes per side.

5. When ready to serve, put 1 grit cake on a plate, top with 1/4 of the shrimp and pour 1/4 of the sauce over grit cake and shrimp. Serve warm. ▶ Serves 4.

Sweet and Tangy Pickled Shrimp

HONEY HARRELL | UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

- 3 quarts water
- 4 tablespoons Old Bay seasoning
- 4 pounds large Gulf shrimp
- 2 cups vegetable or olive oil
- 1 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 2 cups ketchup
- 1/2 cup chili sauce
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 3 jars (6 ounces each) whole button mushrooms, drained
- 3 cups whole pearl onions, sliced into very thin rings (or 2 cups

- thinly sliced onion)
- 2 bay leaves
- Saltine crackers (optional)

1. Bring water to a boil and add Old Bay seasoning and shrimp, cooking 4 minutes. Do not overcook. Drain, cool and peel shrimp.

2. In a bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, mustard, ketchup, chili sauce and paprika.

3. Pack shrimp, mushrooms, onion slices and bay leaves into a large jar or container with a tightfitting lid. Pour oil and vinegar mixture into container. Refrigerate at least 2 days, but preferably longer. Several times a day, turn jar over to marinate evenly. Keeps 1 week.

4. Remove bay leaves before serving. Serve in a chilled bowl with saltine crackers, if desired. ▶ Serves 12-14.

Shrimp Pilaf Florentine

MILLIE KIRCHOFF | NUECES EC

- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper

- 2 tablespoons sliced green onion
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 cups uncooked orzo
- 2 teaspoons fresh chopped dill (or 1/2 teaspoon dried)
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup water
- 2 cups shredded spinach
- 1 1/2 cups medium Gulf shrimp, shelled and deveined

Grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

1. Heat oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Cook pepper, onion and garlic in oil for 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until they are tender.

2. Stir in orzo, dill, lemon zest, salt, broth and water. Heat to boiling, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 8-10 minutes or until orzo is tender.

3. Stir in spinach and shrimp. Cover and cook 2-3 minutes, until shrimp are pink. Sprinkle with Parmesan, if desired.

▶ Serves 4.

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63066/66383 shown



12831036
LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 11/1/19

Lynxx SUPER COUPON

40 VOLT LITHIUM CORDLESS 14" BRUSHLESS CHAIN SAW

Customer Rating
★★★★★
NOW **\$154.99**
Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE \$25
COMPARE TO \$179.99
MODEL: H-21
ITEM 64715/64478/63287 shown



12834144
LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 11/1/19

HaulMaster SUPER COUPON

18" WORKING PLATFORM STEP STOOL

Customer Rating
★★★★★
350 lb. capacity
NOW **\$19.99**
Customer Rating
★★★★★

COMPARE TO \$51.45
MODEL: H-21
ITEM 62515/66911 shown



12837957
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 11/1/19

HaulMaster SUPER COUPON

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

Customer Rating
★★★★★
NOW **\$19.99**
Customer Rating
★★★★★

COMPARE TO \$64.99
MODEL: 428920
ITEM 40462/60658/97711 shown



12845734
LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 11/1/19

SUPER COUPON

200 LUMENS LED SUPER BRIGHT FLIP LIGHT

Wireless, tool-free and easy installation
Customer Rating
★★★★★
NOW **\$2.99**
Customer Rating
★★★★★

COMPARE TO \$4.99
MODEL: SW-SWITCH-12/24
ITEM 64189/64723/63922 shown



12852556
LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 11/1/19

SUPER COUPON

7 FT. 4" x 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE/WEATHER RESISTANT TARP

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Customer Rating
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COMPARE TO \$8.78
MODEL: 668X10-Y
ITEM 69115/69121/69129/69137/69249/877 shown



12852691
LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 11/1/19

COVERPRO SUPER COUPON

10 FT. x 10 FT. PORTABLE SHED

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Customer Rating
★★★★★

COMPARE TO \$299.99
MODEL: 70833
ITEM 56184/63297 shown



12857012
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WEB EXTRAS ▶ See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.



◀ **CHAD PRAHL**, CoServ: "This hardworking Chevy now rests in Gladewater on my in-laws' land."



▲ **LINDA LEE BICKFORD**, Grayson-Collin EC: "A sweet couple sitting close in the old Ford driving in Texas."

▼ **MARILYN BRUNT**, Deep East Texas EC: "A 1952 Ford rests in Austin after over a half-century of traveling the back roads in the Hill Country."



▲ **TINA WEBB**, Bluebonnet EC: "An old red barn in Fayetteville with a neat, old Chevrolet truck with an American flag."

▼ **MELISSA FONTENETTE-MITCHELL**, Pedernales EC: "Driving down a rural road in Round Rock, I spotted this beautiful old truck resting in the Texas bluebonnets."



UPCOMING CONTESTS

NOVEMBER	UP THE CREEK	DUE JULY 10
DECEMBER	DESERTS	DUE AUGUST 10
JANUARY	FENCES	DUE SEPTEMBER 10

All entries must include name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo.

ONLINE: Submit highest-resolution digital images at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.
MAIL: Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We do not accept entries via email. We regret that *Texas Co-op Power* cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.

Pick of the Month Spicer Gripp Memorial Roping

Hereford August 1-4
(806) 364-5362, spicergripp.com

This event includes roping, dummy roping for youngsters, golf and a barbecue cook-off and honors Spicer Gripp of Hereford. Deaf Smith Electric Cooperative sponsors some of the events. Proceeds help fund scholarships at West Texas A&M University.



July 11

Sachse Space Magic With Brett Roberts,
(972) 530-8966, cityofsachse.com

12

Kerrville [12-13] Kerrville Open Pro Rodeo,
(830) 997-1864, lmrodeo.com

Mason [12-14] Mason County Roundup
Weekend, (325) 347-5758, masontxcoc.com

13

Palacios Poker in Palacios and Seafood
Dinner, (361) 972-2615, palacioschamber.com

Weatherford Parker County Peach Festival,
(817) 596-380, peachfestivaltx.com

18

Athens [18-27] *Beauty and the Beast Jr.*,
(903) 675-3908, hcpac.org

19

Palestine Romance on the Rails,
(855) 632-7729, texasstaterailroad.net



July 13
Weatherford
Parker County Peach Festival

Dumas [19-20] D'Town Barbecue Cook-Off,
(806) 935-2123, dumaschamber.com

Paris [19-20] Balloon and Music Festival,
(903) 782-6215, parisballoonandmusicfestival.com

Temple [19-20] Wildflower Quilt Guild Quilt
Show, (254) 220-5597, wildflowerquiltguild.com

Ingram [19-20, 26-27, Aug. 2-3] *Mamma
Mia!*, (830) 367-5121, hcac.com

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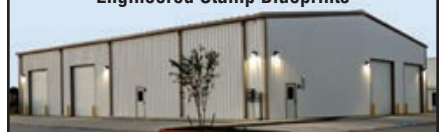
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Tell us about somebody who improves the quality of life in your community. Email your nomination to people@texascooppower.com. Include the person's name, co-op affiliation and a short description of his or her work in the community. Featured nominees will receive a \$100 donation for their cause.

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Brazoria Santa Ana Ball, (979) 248-8323, brazoriahf.org

Caldwell Texas Czech Genealogical Society: Tracing Orphans and Adoptions in Genealogy, (214) 577-0029, txczgs.org

Fredericksburg Night in Old Fredericksburg, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.net

Santo Christmas in July, (940) 659-3990

24

Levelland [24-27] Junior Rodeo Cowboy Association Finals, (806) 894-4161, malleventcenter.com

26

Kerrville Movies in the Park, (830) 257-7300, kerrvilletx.gov

Bonham [26-27] Quilt Hop, (903) 583-9830, visitbonham.com

Huntsville [26-27] East Texas Thimble Trail, (936) 594-1237, easttexasthimbletrail.com

Fredericksburg [26-28] Hill Country Auto Swap Meet, (254) 751-7958, earhartproductions.com

Palestine [26-28, Aug. 2-4] My Son Pinocchio, (903) 922-1126, thetexas theater.com

30

Boerne Abendkonzert, (830) 248-1635, visitboerne.org

31

New Braunfels [31-Aug. 4] Lone Star Gourd Festival and Art Show, (210) 468-9924, texasgourdsociety.org



July 26-27
Huntsville
East Texas
Thimble Trail

South Padre Island [31-Aug. 4] Texas International Fishing Tournament, (956) 943-8438, tift.org

August

1

Jacksonville [1-4] Back to School Bash, (903) 724-4100, riverrunpark.com

2

Levelland [2-4] Texas Best Show Series: Lamb Show, (806) 894-4161, malleventcenter.com

3

Corpus Christi South Texas Summer PolkaFest, (361) 215-9163, chssouthtexas.org

4

Frelsburg Sts. Peter & Paul Country Festival, (979) 732-7603

Submit Your Event!

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

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What Lies Beneath

Buffalo Bayou's forgotten cistern returns to public life

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, ON A VISIT TO ISTANBUL, I descended into a damp underground labyrinth of stone columns known as the Basilica Cistern, which dates to Roman times. The scene was otherworldly, and I thought I would never again see anything like it. Little did I know that I would visit another subterranean marvel that would recall this otherworldly sensation—only this time it would be in Houston.

To understand Houston, one must understand Buffalo Bayou. This muddy waterway flows through the heart of the city and once drove Houston's economy. Simply put, without Buffalo Bayou there would be no Houston. In recent decades, a partnership between the city and a dedicated bayou nonprofit has reclaimed the long-neglected waterway, which now runs through world-class parks and green spaces. The Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern, however, was ignored.

The cistern was built in 1926 to hold approximately 15 million gallons of water for the residents of Houston. It did its job well for more than 80 years, until an irreparable leak caused it to be decommissioned in 2007. With no need for a leaking water tank, the city condemned the space and scheduled it for demolition. While the city searched for a demolition crew, members of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership discovered the space and decided it should be saved. One architect called it "The Cistern" because it reminded him of the one in Istanbul. The name stuck.

At ground level, the only evidence of the Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern is an unremarkable door set into a small hill. That's why it went virtually unnoticed for eight decades. And it is the reason I missed the



The Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern is about the size of 1½ football fields.

entrance three times when I first tried to visit. However, as soon as I stepped through the door and descended into the mysterious sunken world, I knew I was standing somewhere special, in one of only two underground cisterns in the world open for public tours.

I felt dwarfed by the massive room, which measures approximately one and a half football fields. The cistern's 221 concrete columns, each 25 feet tall, gave me the sense that I was standing in an underground Greek temple or even a subterranean Lincoln Memorial. That was a jaw-dropping experience. Then came the light and sound show.

Our tour guide bounced a single flashlight beam off the ceiling and into the 4 inches of water covering the cistern floor. Suddenly, the ground became an entrance into another dimension. OK, not really, but it did transform into a huge reflecting pool with a perfect upside-down reflection of the cistern. Our guide prompted us to be quiet, and when everything was still, she let out a single shout that reverberated off the walls for a full 17 seconds. I've been in

dozens of canyons, including that grand one in Arizona, and I've never heard anything like it. We spent the next hour yelling and shining our phone lights into the abyss.

Even though the room feels like a work of art itself, the cistern lives a new life as an art space. With guidance from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, artists from around the world visit the Bayou City to take advantage of the cistern's unique sound and light capabilities for their own installations.

In Texas, we have countless buildings, including our Capitol and many county courthouses, that were built to impress. Isn't it ironic that one of our most unique and awe-inspiring spaces was built as a functional reservoir that was never intended to see the light of day? I left the Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern inspired to keep exploring because if something so cool can go unmentioned for 80 years, imagine what other treasures await discovery.

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 Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern.



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