

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Happy Trails to You

PLUS:

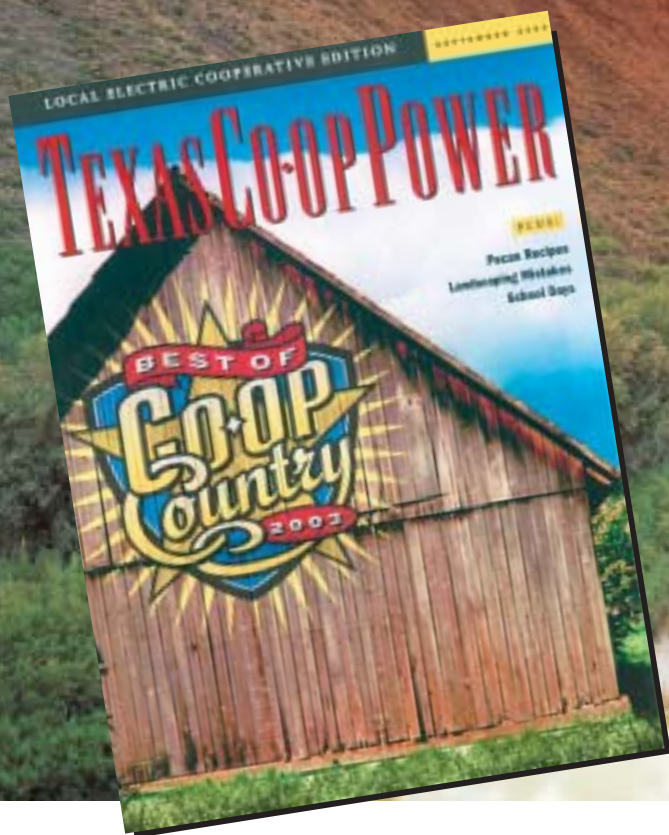
Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail

East Texas Forest Trail

**National Parks
in Texas**



TEXAS CO-OP POWER



SHARE THE POWER!

Texas Co-op Power is the Texas living magazine with a rural, suburban and small town focus. Each month you will read entertaining articles about Texas people, Texas history, Texas nature, Texas travel and Texas food.

And, in every issue we feature a personal look at chosen towns in "Texas, USA" along with "Around Texas," featuring selected events around the state.

For just \$15 a subscription, you can share *Texas Co-op Power* with friends and family members who live far away or in big cities!

Please send a 12-month gift subscription to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Gift subscription sent by:

Include a \$15 check for each subscription made out to *Texas Co-op Power*. Mail to Subscriptions, *Texas Co-op Power*, 2550 South IH-35, Austin, TX 78704

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

A MAGAZINE ABOUT TEXAS LIVING

Travel Our Trails

Our readers consistently say in surveys and focus groups that they love traveling within the state, especially to obscure nooks and crannies of rural Texas. So we decided to produce a travel issue. One idea led to another and this month's issue is the largest we've ever published—56 pages. (Our typical issue is 40 pages.)

We highlight two different types of touring—one viewing wildlife and the other visiting historic sites. Vacationers could spend the rest of their lives following the trails and destinations recommended by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, the Texas Historical Commission and the National Parks of Texas. Just for a taste of what's out there, we concentrated on short legs of long trails in West and East Texas. You can order a package designed especially for *Texas Co-op Power* by all three agencies. The free packet of information can be ordered by visiting www.authenticictexas.org.

The home-cooking contest on bake sale favorites attracted scores of submissions, and we had a grand, if fattening, time testing the finalists. The festival of the month is Buccaneer Days in Corpus Christi. Landscape architect Owen Yost digs up some practical advice on plants that can handle Texas weather. Texas, USA, is a recollection of growing up in the tiny town of Avery written by a schoolteacher who has never before been published.

Enjoy!



Peg Champion
Vice President, Communications/
Publisher

Prairie dog towns are a highlight of the wildlife trail.



Russell Graves



Betty Zorn's big hair was all the rage when she and husband Fred got spiffed up for a Christmas party. The Zorns belong to San Bernard EC. For more "big hair," turn to page 51.

Drive Yourself Wild6

By Elaine Robbins, Photos by Russell Graves and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

The new Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail gets you up close to pronghorns and prairie chickens.

Into the Woods16

Story and Photos by Stephan Myers

Find history and hospitality like nowhere else on the Texas Forest Trail.

Texas Living36

Bake sale favorites. Attractive tough plants. Buccaneer Days in Corpus Christi.

Focus on Texas51

Big hair days, Texas style.

Texas, USA54

I Remember Avery, by Ruby Mayhew.

Texas Co-op Power is published by your electric cooperative to enhance the quality of life of its member-customers in an educational and entertaining format.

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Harbin, Floydada, Chair
Debbie Robinson, Quitman, Vice Chair
Mark Rose, Giddings, Secretary-Treasurer
Gerald W. Lemons, Itasca
Audie Morris, Decatur
Leroy Skloss, Karnes City
Carl Thompson, Roby

PRESIDENT/CEO

Mike Williams, Austin

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Rick Haile, McGregor, Chair
Charles Castleberry, Tulia, Vice Chair
John Q. Adams, Bellville
Barron Christensen, Douglassville
Kim Hooper, Bluegrove
Larry Oefinger, Hondo
Roland Witt, Coleman
Audie Morris, Decatur, Board Liaison

COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

Peg Champion, Vice President, Communications/
Publisher

Kaye Northcott, Editor
Carol Moczygamba, Managing Editor
Suzi Sands, Art Director
Martin Bevins, Advertising Director
Louie Bond, Copy Editor/Writer
Andy Doughty, Production Artist
Sandra Forston, Communications Assistant
Karen Nejtek, Production Coordinator
Shannon Oelrich, Food Editor/Proofreader
Tracy Paccone, Communications Assistant
Carol Powell, Graphic Designer
Cheryl Tucker, Field Editor/Website Manager

Subscription price: \$15 per year for individuals (\$3.72 per year to member organizations of Texas Electric Cooperatives). \$3 for individual copies of issues. Periodicals Postage Paid at Austin, TX and at additional mailing offices.

Texas Co-op Power is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., the statewide association that represents 75 electric cooperatives. Texas Co-op Power's website is www.texascoopower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or e-mail editor@texas-ec.org.

POSTMASTER Send address changes to Texas Co-op Power (USPS 540-560), 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704. 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, should contact Martin Bevins at (512) 486-6249.

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. Questions or comments about advertising in this publication should be directed to Martin Bevins, Advertising Director.



© Copyright 2004 Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of it is expressly prohibited without written permission. Willie Wiredhand © Copyright 2004 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Texas Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Medina Electric Gets 2004 Top Community Service Award

In October 2002, several tornadoes hit Medina and Uvalde counties, inflicting human injury and losses exceeding \$10 million in Medina County alone. Medina Electric Cooperative, which serves those counties and 15 more, lost 184 poles and suffered \$500,000 in damages; some of Medina's member-consumers were without power for as long as four days.

In cities, residents take advance weather advisories for granted. But many residents in the Medina Electric service territory, which includes remote areas of South Texas, didn't have access to critical weather advisories. The folks at Medina discovered that there was a lack of funds and facilities needed to operate a weather radio network to alert rural residents and businesses of approaching tornadoes and other severe storms. When they learned that the U.S. Agriculture Department's Rural Utilities Service offered grants for installing National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather warning transmitters, Medina Electric's board and management sprang into action.

These actions were recognized by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) during its 2004 Annual Meeting in February when Medina Electric Cooperative was named as the recipient of the 2004 National Community Service Award. The co-op was honored for spearheading an award-winning campaign to site national weather and all-hazards radio transmitters in isolated communities throughout its 17-county service area. Medina Electric was recognized for going the extra mile in living the cooperative business principle of "concern for community."

Winning a \$210,000 grant required a lot of research, as well as effort to raise matching funds and services. Co-op staffers Sandra Schott and Patti Taylor and their colleagues went to work on a fundraising plan, finding allies in local and state government agencies to help the co-op gather census and technical data needed to win the federal support to install the systems.



Alan Moller

Bill Moffett, Medina's manager of marketing and member services, headed the team assigned to determine if the co-op could provide tower space, operating power, standby generators and control room facilities for housing National Weather Service equipment. "We offered 15 tower sites as possible locations in our system," said Larry Oefinger, Medina's general manager. "Four of the sites were available: near the towns of Uvalde, D'Hanis, Rio Grande City and Dilley, giving us radio coverage of 90 percent of our service area. We are now working with the City of Hebbronville in Jim Hogg County to install a fifth transmitter. Once this site is successful, we will be able to close that gap."

Medina Electric also helped consumers obtain personal weather radios at cost. "You'd be surprised how many radios were purchased by our members as Christmas gifts," Oefinger remarked. "We initially purchased the radios to promote awareness and to encourage our members to use the weather alert system. We were delighted that the radios were such a hit." Medina also donated weather warning radios to schools, hospitals and local law enforcement agencies.

Continued at right

Quite a Life

Texas Co-op Power magazine is great! I read the magazine as soon as it arrives. Your article on the cattle drive ["The Last Big Herd," January 2004] was of special interest to me since my father, Willie "Bill" Lehmann, went on a cattle drive to Kansas in 1880 when he was 19. My dad told me about singing to the cattle when stormy weather came up to keep them from stampeding.

My dad had quite a life. When he was 8, he and his brother Herman were captured by the Apache Indians. Bill was abandoned close to San Angelo, and picked up five days later. Herman was with the Indians for nine years, then spent a year alone wandering in the desert. He then joined the Comanche Tribe, where he later was made chief. Bill was later returned to his parents.

Esther Lehmann, Central Texas EC

We want to hear from our readers. Send letters to:

Editor, Texas Co-op Power
2550 S. IH-35
Austin, TX 78704

Please include the name of your town and electric co-op. Letters may be edited for clarity and length and will be printed as space allows.

TEXAS CO-OP PRINCIPLES

Continued

The co-op's efforts to mitigate the potential for loss of life and property has now prepared the region to fight against severe weather conditions. The National Weather Service and the NOAA earlier recognized Medina Electric's efforts with public service awards.

The co-op isn't resting on its laurels, however; the emergency network is currently being expanded. "We are adding the AMBER Alert and Hazardous Chemical Safety Alerts and Bulletins to this warning system as well," Oefinger said. The national AMBER Alert is a national emergency response system to help rescue kidnapped children via radio, TV and the Internet. Local authorities use the Chemical Safety Alert system to broadcast emergency response information in the event of a serious chemical emergency that poses a significant threat to public health or safety.

Right Up There With the Best of Them

The January 2004 reminiscence by Leo Turner, "The Last Big Herd," had a great deal of meaning to me. He was a contemporary of my father, who also worked horses and had been in several cattle drives. I wish Charles Schreiner had brought the working herd dog to Texas along with sheep and goats. My father, mother and sisters spent many, many hours trying to round up Angora goats that were as wild as deer during shearing time through the cedar stands so eloquently described in the article. Eventually, my father built fencing around the water tanks so the goats could be enclosed when they came in for water, but it was still a long and hard-won battle to get them into the shearing pen. As an adult, I discovered the border collie. Now with my small herd of Nubian goats, all I have to do is say, "Put the goats in the pen" to my border collie and in five minutes flat it is done.

Sadly, the small family farm is disappearing in America. When artificial

fibers were introduced, the mohair and wool of my father's sheep and goat herds sat in his storage barn as he could not even get the price of gasoline to haul it to the selling points. He hung onto his herd, though, and eventually people came back to natural fibers (at a higher price because so many producers had disappeared). To this day, I will not wear artificial fibers, maybe in reaction to the loss of those beautiful animals, even though they cost me chiggers, scratches, scraped arms and legs, and a wearily sore, exhausted body.

Carol Grosser, San Antonio

Made in the United States

While Mr. Gilbert ["Bay Shrimpers Blues," February 2004] was complaining about imported shrimp, I noticed he was wearing a pair of mesh deck/wading shoes, which are all made offshore. I wonder if he would want to pay the price for those shoes if they were made in the United States?

Randy Davis, Magic Valley EC

SHARE THE POWER!

Share what 2.5 million Texans already enjoy. Send Texas Co-op Power to a faraway friend or family member.



Send a 12-month subscription to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please include a \$15 check made out to Texas Co-op Power. Mail to Subscriptions, Texas Co-op Power, 2550 South IH-35, Austin, TX 78704

DRIVE YOURSELF

THE NEW
**PANHANDLE
PLAINS
WILDLIFE TRAIL**
GETS YOU UP
CLOSE TO BALD
EAGLES AND
BUFFALO,
PRONGHORNS
AND PRAIRIE
CHICKENS.

BY ELAINE ROBBINS



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department



ELF

Wild

Palo Duro Canyon at sunset. The second largest canyon in the U.S. (after the Grand Canyon) is home to wild turkeys and white-tailed deer.



“See them coming through those trees?”

Frank Hommel asks as we sit in his pickup truck on the Bar-H Dude Ranch near Clarendon. I focus my binoculars on the distant trees. “They’re right here—can’t you see them?” I lower the binoculars and gasp. A big, shaggy bison with surprisingly trim hindquarters is glaring at me from four yards away.

Behind it, a three-month-old buffalo calf with wimpy horns hovers shyly on delicate legs, his coat recently turned from rust to a respectable buffalo brown. Hommel laughs at my wildlife-spotting abilities. “They brag that you can see Charles Goodnight’s bison herd at Caprock Canyon, but there, the animals are a mile away if you’re lucky. Here, you can get right up close to them.”

Hommel is one of dozens of landowners in the Panhandle who are jumping on the nature tourism bandwagon. For a Wild West experience, he offers not only horseback rides and

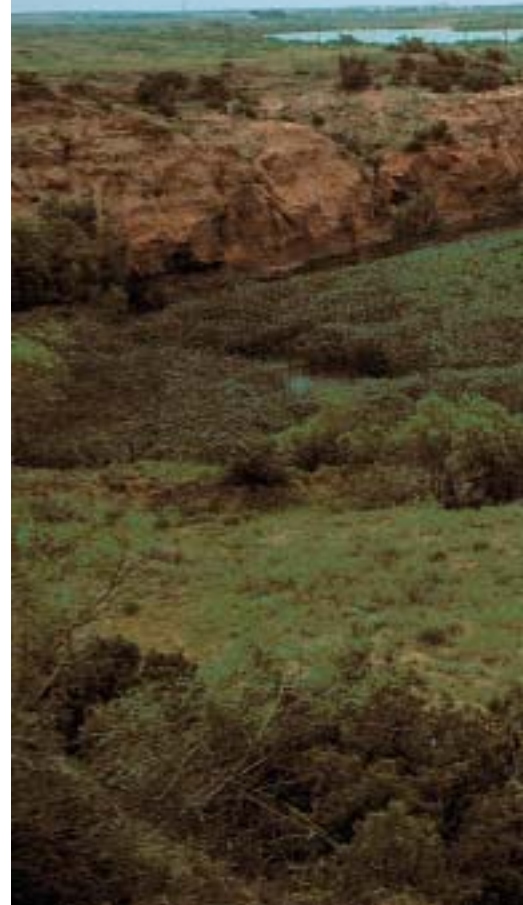
chuck wagon dinners, but also nocturnal wildlife tours and birding on a 4,000-acre tract that’s home to red-headed woodpeckers and 60 other species of birds.

The ranch is one stop on the new Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail, a driving route that stretches through miles and miles of Texas, from Abilene through the Panhandle to the Oklahoma border. From the wide-open spaces and playa lakes of the High Plains to the endless grasslands and canyons of the Rolling Plains, the trail includes stops at state parks and wildlife management areas, vast private ranches, and bed-and-breakfasts. While opening up new recreational opportunities for the growing number of wildlife watchers, the trail also provides landowners like Hommel a way



Western Diamondback.

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

White-tailed deer.



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

to diversify farm and ranch income and brings a much-needed boost to rural economies.

Armed with binoculars and a trail map, I am here to explore the new wildlife trail—or at least a small section of it. I want to see how much wildlife has actually survived the loss of native shortgrass and mixed-grass prairie. More than half of the Panhandle’s 16 million acres of prairie has been developed into ranches, farms and cities over the past 100 years. Wildlife in the Panhandle? It sounds like some kind of elaborate joke.

Indeed, as I head east out of Amarillo, the landscape doesn’t look promising. The land is a study in straight lines: wide horizon, flat land,



Russell Graves

Prairie dog.



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Wood duck.



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Bobcat.



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Green jay.



Caprock Canyon.

While opening up

new recreational

opportunities for

wildlife watchers, the

trail also provides a

much-needed boost

to rural economies.



Caprock Canyon prairie.

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

straight highway alongside straighter railroad tracks—all intersected by the verticality of utility poles and grain elevators. But as I pass through Pampa on my way to Canadian, the prairie, which some have compared to an ocean, starts to develop rolling swells. The first cottonwood tree appears, its yellow leaves shimmering like topaz

in the autumn sun. The prairie grasses are at their prettiest in the fall, especially the little bluestem and Indian-grass, which glows golden in the sun. I slow down, roll down the window, and feel the unseasonably warm autumn air on my face. I listen to the sweet song of the meadowlarks that are perched on roadside fences, their



Lesser prairie chicken.

canary-yellow breasts matching the fall color scheme.

I have arrived in Canadian at a prime time to see fall foliage, but at the wrong time to see the area's most famous resident, the lesser prairie chicken. Each spring hundreds of travelers descend on Canadian to watch male lesser prairie chickens on their breeding grounds, or leks, perform one of the most impressive courtship displays in nature. They inflate the orange sacs on their necks, produce a drumming sound, and thump their feet on the ground in a series of moves that is said to have inspired the dances of the Plains Indians.

I desperately want to see a prairie chicken, but Remelle Farrar of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce just shakes her head. "Except during mating season, they're really hard to find," she says. She points to a photo of a lesser prairie chicken that is framed on her wall where you might expect to see the portrait of a bank



Pronghorn antelope.

president. "Even if you stumbled on one, you might not know what it was. It just looks like a quail." I imagine the birds hidden away in the brush, rehearsing their moves in preparation for mating season.

Willing to give up on my prairie chicken aspirations—at least on this trip—I head down the road to the Gene Howe Wildlife Management Area. There, wildlife biologist Bob Rogers shows me the new prairie dog town he established last year. Rogers and another biologist relocated 150 prairie dogs from a prairie dog town



Coyote.

tunnels, stands sentry at one hole. This new piece of real estate is clearly a success. In the year since it was established, nine burrowing owls, a rattlesnake, two jackrabbits and several ground squirrels have become new neighbors for the prairie dogs.

A few miles down the road from Gene Howe, I come upon Black Kettle



Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

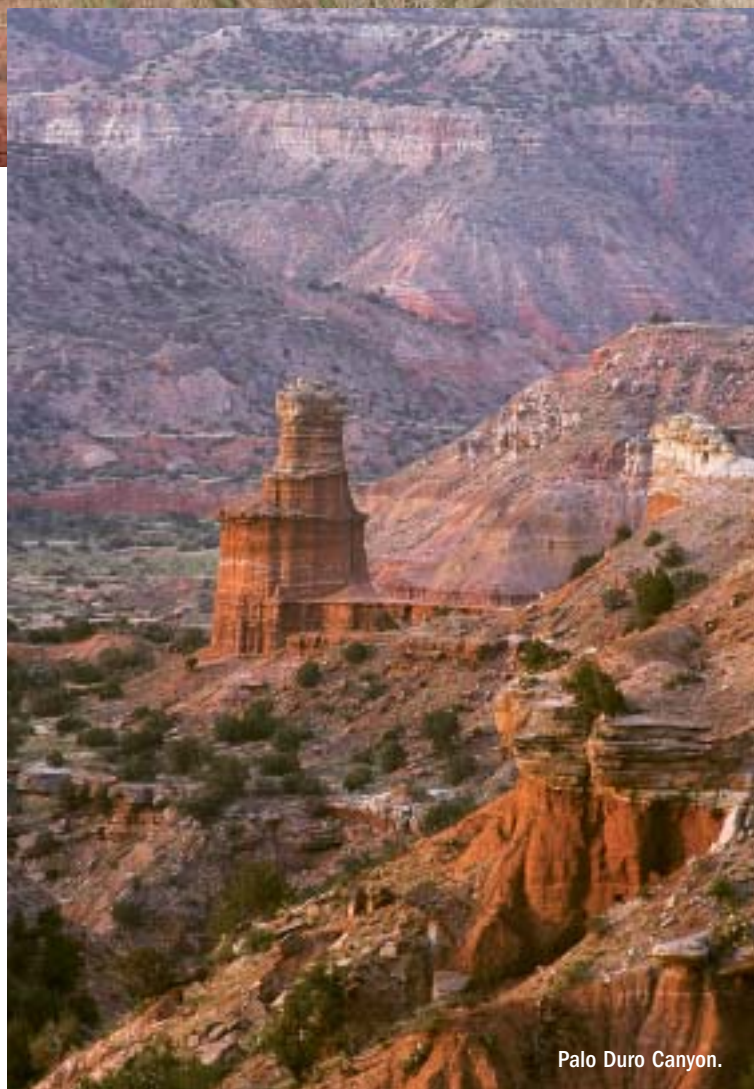
National Parks in Texas

- Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument
- Amistad National Recreation Area
- Big Bend National Park
- Big Thicket National Preserve
- Chamizal National Memorial
- Fort Davis National Historic Site
- Guadalupe Mountains National Park
- Lake Meredith National Recreation Area
- Lyndon B. Johnson National

Historical Park

- Padre Island National Seashore
- Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Site
- Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River
- San Antonio Missions National Historical Park

For detailed information on all of the above go to www.nps.gov and click on "search." Key in part of the name of a park.

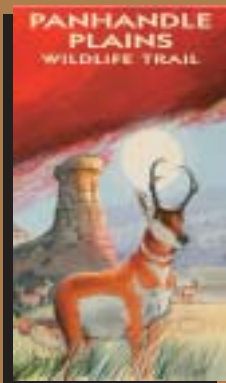


Palo Duro Canyon.

After the drive through miles of farm fields, the sudden appearance of this vast **canyon** couldn't be any weirder than if the Grand Canyon were dropped in the middle of Iowa.

National Grasslands, where the early arriving ducks and geese are enjoying the warm fall day on Lake Marvin. It may be a small lake, but Lake Marvin is considered one of the best spots in the Panhandle for year-round birding. You never know who's coming to dinner here: Last year observers spotted native ducks mingling with white pelicans, a bald eagle, an osprey and a least

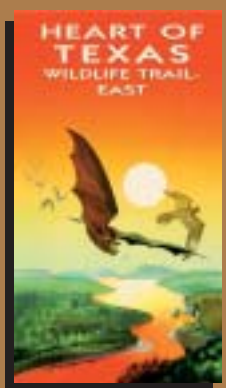
The Great Texas Wildlife Trails



The **Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail** is one of four wildlife trails being developed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The award-winning **Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail**, which opened in 2000, links premiere birding sites along the Texas coast and the Rio Grande Valley. Birders from all over the world flock to the trail to see everything from endangered whooping cranes at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge to dazzling tropical species like the green jay.

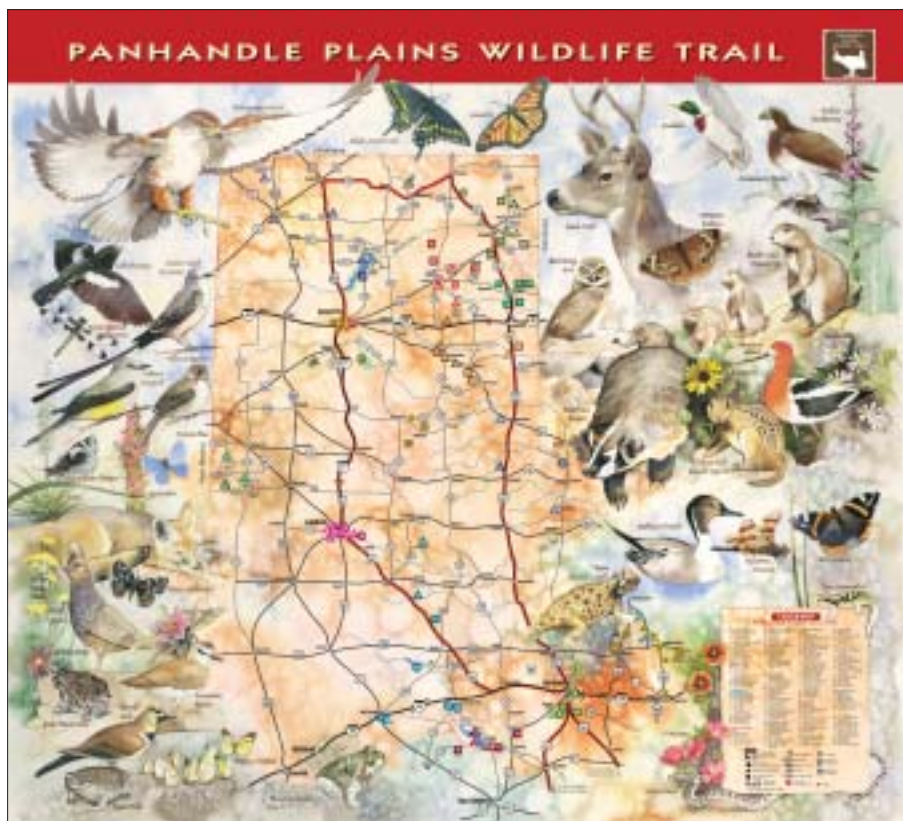
The new **Heart of Texas Wildlife Trail East**, which opened in October



2003, takes travelers from the Hill Country, with charming birding B&Bs and green cypress rivers, south to excellent birding and butterfly spots in Laredo.

The **Prairies and Pineywoods Wildlife Trail** through East Texas is due to open in late 2004.

To purchase maps of the Great Texas Wildlife Trails (\$3 each), order online through the Texas Cooperative Extension Bookstore, <http://tcebookstore.org>, 1-888-900-2577. For more information on the trails, go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us/birdingtrails.



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

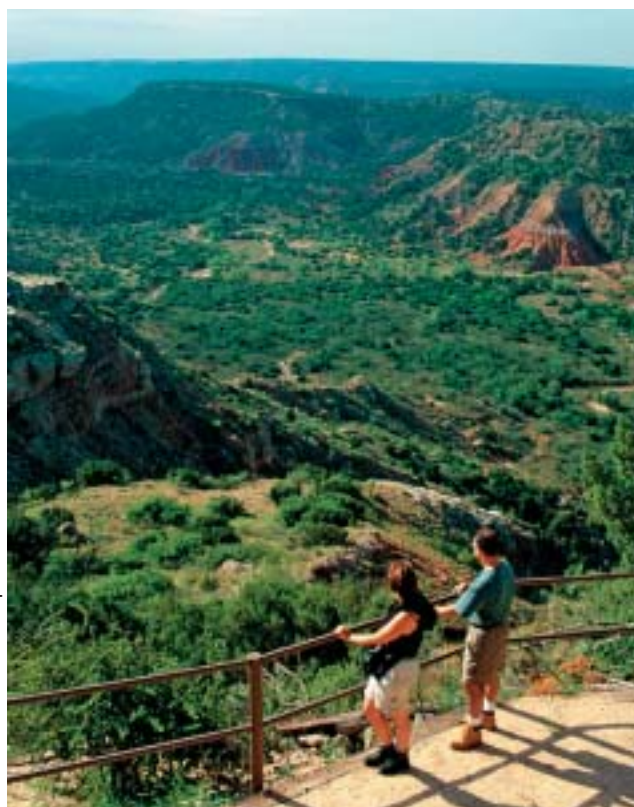
I imagine a time a century ago when great numbers of these creatures inhabited vast stretches of the southern portion of the Great Plains.

tern—an unlikely gathering at any time of year.

To look for pronghorn antelope, I drive out the next morning on U.S. 83 between Canadian and Perryton. Keeping a lookout for their telltale white rumps, I spot a herd near the highway and pull over for a look. They watch me warily, then one at a time squeeze under a barbed-wire fence, trotting toward some mildly curious cows before heading into the next field. Unlike white-tailed deer, pronghorns don't know they can jump fences, which makes them easy prey for coyotes. I drive back to Canadian. That night I sleep in a 100-year-old house on the Arrington Ranch, another stop on the Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail.

Visitors to Palo Duro Canyon.

For sheer scenery, you can't beat the Turkey-Quitaque-Silverton route, so I'm looking forward to the next day's



Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

drive. My first stop is Turkey, the birthplace of Bob Wills and the historic Hotel Turkey. Then I head to Quitaque (pronounced KITTY-kway) and stop at Caprock Canyons State Park. The park is home to the official Texas State Bison Herd, mule deer, white-tailed deer, pronghorns, raccoons, coyotes, bobcats, porcupines, gray foxes and more than 175 species of birds. (Ask for the bird checklist at headquarters.) The 64-mile converted rail-trail that starts at the park provides hikers, bikers and equestrians a true wildlife experience far from the madding crowds.

I'd like to linger, but I press on to make Palo Duro Canyon State Park by dusk. After the drive through miles of farm fields, the sudden appearance of this vast canyon couldn't be any weirder than if the Grand Canyon were dropped in the middle of Iowa. Without warning, the earth opens up and plunges to an 800-foot abyss that extends 120 miles south to Silverton. No wonder so few people know that

on the trail, I return to my campsite to find wild turkeys and a herd of tame white-tailed deer grazing nearby.

That night I fall asleep to the yipping of coyotes echoing eerily in the canyon. My mind is filled with images of the animals I've seen over the last few days—bison, pronghorns, prairie dogs—and those I didn't see, like the lesser prairie chicken. I imagine a time a century ago when great numbers of these creatures inhabited vast stretches of the southern portion of the Great Plains. All of these creatures are seri-

ously threatened by the destruction of their native grasslands, but I am heartened to have found what I was looking for. As more people follow my footsteps on this trail, and landowners put a greater premium on wildlife, they are more likely to restore native prairie and brush. Like the old song goes: "Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam, where the deer and the antelope play."

Elaine Robbins covers nature and travel from her base in Austin.



Quanah Parker's memorial at Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

the nation's second-largest canyon (after the Grand Canyon) is in the Texas Panhandle: It just doesn't fit the image. I pull over to admire the canyon walls, which are layered in rock formations of red, white, yellow and lavender. Driving down into the canyon, I find my campsite and hike along a park trail to look for wildlife. The last light of day clings to the red canyon walls and seems to hover there forever. Although I see no wildlife out



SEVERE WEATHER! ARE YOU READY?

Tornadoes

More tornadoes strike Texas than any other state. Sophisticated warning systems exist, but they're no substitute for preparedness and smart action.

Tornado Safety Rules:

- At home or in the office, go to the lowest floor. Stay away from windows.
- Go to a place in the center of the building, such as a closet, bathroom or interior hallway. Protect your head with a pillow.
- If you live in a mobile home, go outside. Lie down in a ditch or low spot. Cover your head.
- If you're in a car, get out. Never try to outrun a tornado. Take shelter in the nearest building, or lie face down in a ditch.
- Know the difference between a "warning" and a "watch."
Tornado Watch: Conditions are right for a tornado. Watch the sky. **Tornado Warning:** A tornado has been spotted.

Tornadoes kill. Know what to do to avoid weather-related tragedy.



Texas Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

This public service message is brought to you by your local electric cooperative. See your local co-op for details.

PHOTO ©ALAN MOLLER

Where To Stay and Eat in the Panhandle

ABILENE AREA

Sweetwater

🍷 **Allen's Family Style Meals**, 1301 E. Broadway St., (325) 235-2060. Southern food served family-style at a long table. Lunch only, but the fried chicken, brisket, sweet potatoes, green beans and peach cobbler should hold you through dinner. Could you please pass the rolls?

Amarillo

🍷 **Big Texan Steak Ranch**, on I-40 at the Lakeside exit, 1-800-657-7177. Wild West memorabilia adorns the walls, and the 72-oz. steak is free if you can eat the whole thing in one hour. Sure, it's a tacky tourist experience, but would you want to say you missed it?



Abilene

🍷 **Joe Allen's Pit Bar-B-Que**, 1233 S. Treadaway Blvd., (325) 672-6082. Classic Texas barbecue—brisket, sausage, chicken, ribs and mesquite-smoked steaks don't get much better than this.

Buffalo Gap

🍷 **Perini Ranch Steakhouse**, 3002 FM 89, (325) 572-3339. A great place for authentic Texas steaks. Save room for the famous bread pudding with "sinful" whiskey sauce.

Albany

🏠 **Stasney's Cook Ranch**, call for directions, 1-888-762-2999. Stay in the lodge or cabins and see spring migrants, wintering waterfowl, and summer beauties such as the painted bunting.

AMARILLO AREA

Amarillo

🏠 **Auntie's House B&B**, 1712 S. Polk St., (806) 371-8054. Sleep in a 1912 Craftsman-style house in a historic neighborhood in downtown Amarillo.

Clarendon

🍷 **Bar H Dude Ranch**, FM 3257 off U.S. 287, 1-800-627-9871 (reservations) or (806) 874-2634. Chuckwagon breakfast and mesquite-grilled steak dinner (reservations required). Ask about nocturnal wildlife



Bar H Dude Ranch in Clarendon.

tours. Heck, you may even dine under the watchful eyes of buffalo.

Quitaque

🏠 **Caprock Canyons State Park**, from Quitaque, take FM 1065 3.5 miles north, (806) 455-1492. Developed campsites with showers, backcountry walk-in sites—this park even has sleeping quarters for your horse.

Claude

🍷 **Cowboy Morning Breakfast**, Figure 3 Ranch, on FM 1258 outside of Claude, 1-800-658-2613 or (806) 944-5562. Sourdough biscuits (don't forget the eggs and sausage) cooked in iron skillets and strong cowboy coffee are served up as part of the chuckwagon cowboy experience. What, no skinny mocha cappuccino? A chuckwagon steak dinner is also offered.

Turkey

🏠 **Hotel Turkey**, Third and Alexander Streets, (806) 423-1151. With a front parlor furnished with cozy sofas and guest rooms filled with antiques, this historic hotel is like visiting your grandmother's house—if your grandmother happened to be loaded.

Canyon

🏠 **Hudspeth House Bed and Breakfast**, 1905 Fourth Ave., (806) 655-9800. Georgia O'Keeffe took her meals here when she taught at West Texas State (now West Texas A&M). For a fine O'Keeffe landscape, head to nearby Palo Duro Canyon.

🏠 **Palo Duro Canyon**, 12 miles east of Canyon on TX 217, (806) 488-2227. Stay in a campsite or one of the rustic cabins—all with breathtaking views of the colorful canyon walls.

CANADIAN AREA

Canadian

🏠 **Arrington Ranch House Lodge**, 9765 CR 5, (806) 323-6924. This two-story ranch house, which has been in the Arrington family for 100 years, appeared in the Tom Hanks film, "Cast Away."

🏠 **Baker House, Brooks House, Lewis House B&Bs**, (806) 323-5527. Three cozy B&Bs that make good bases for wildlife-viewing excursions around Canadian.

🍷 **Cattle Exchange**, Second and Main streets, (806) 323-6755. Famous barbecue in a historic building with a high ceiling and big windows that look out on downtown Canadian.

Wheeler

🏠 **Britt Ranch**, call the Wheeler Chamber of Commerce for directions, (806) 826-3408. Two guest houses provide front-row seats for the lesser prairie chicken breeding grounds in springtime.

🏠 **City Drug Bed and Breakfast Hotel**, 400 S. Main St., (806) 826-3790. The old drugstore has been converted into a comfy new B&B filled with antiques and historic photos. The lobby has a fireplace and piano, and some rooms even have Jacuzzis to cure what ails you.

McLean

🍷 **Red River Steakhouse**, 101 W. Hwy. 66, (806) 779-8940. This roadhouse restaurant, a local favorite, serves up sizzling steaks and old-timey country-western music.

LUBBOCK AREA

Post

🏠 **Hotel Garza Historic Bed & Breakfast**, 302 E. Main St., (866) 495-2880 or (806) 495-3962. This inn, housed in a historic brick building on the main street, attracts travelers to this town founded by cereal magnate C.W. Post.

Ranch Mallory



Hotel Garza in Post.

For more information on Panhandle Plains accommodations, sights and places to eat, contact the local chambers of commerce, which are listed on the wildlife trail map.

The Places



The Parks



The People



Discover the authentic Texas.

Friendly. Diverse. Legendary. There's just no place quite like Texas. With 120 state parks and historic sites, 13 national park areas and eight unique heritage driving trails through many of the state's most cultural regions, the Lone Star State is rich in natural beauty and history. Where else can you experience everything from rugged mountains, picturesque beaches and scenic rivers to restored turn-of-the century courthouses, presidential homes, Spanish missions and frontier forts? Discover all there is to see and experience.

Texas. It's like a whole other country.

Request a free "Authentic Texas" information packet, with colorful brochures, maps and a 104-page Texas State Park Guide from www.authentic texas.org



www.tpwd.state.tx.us
(800) 792-1112

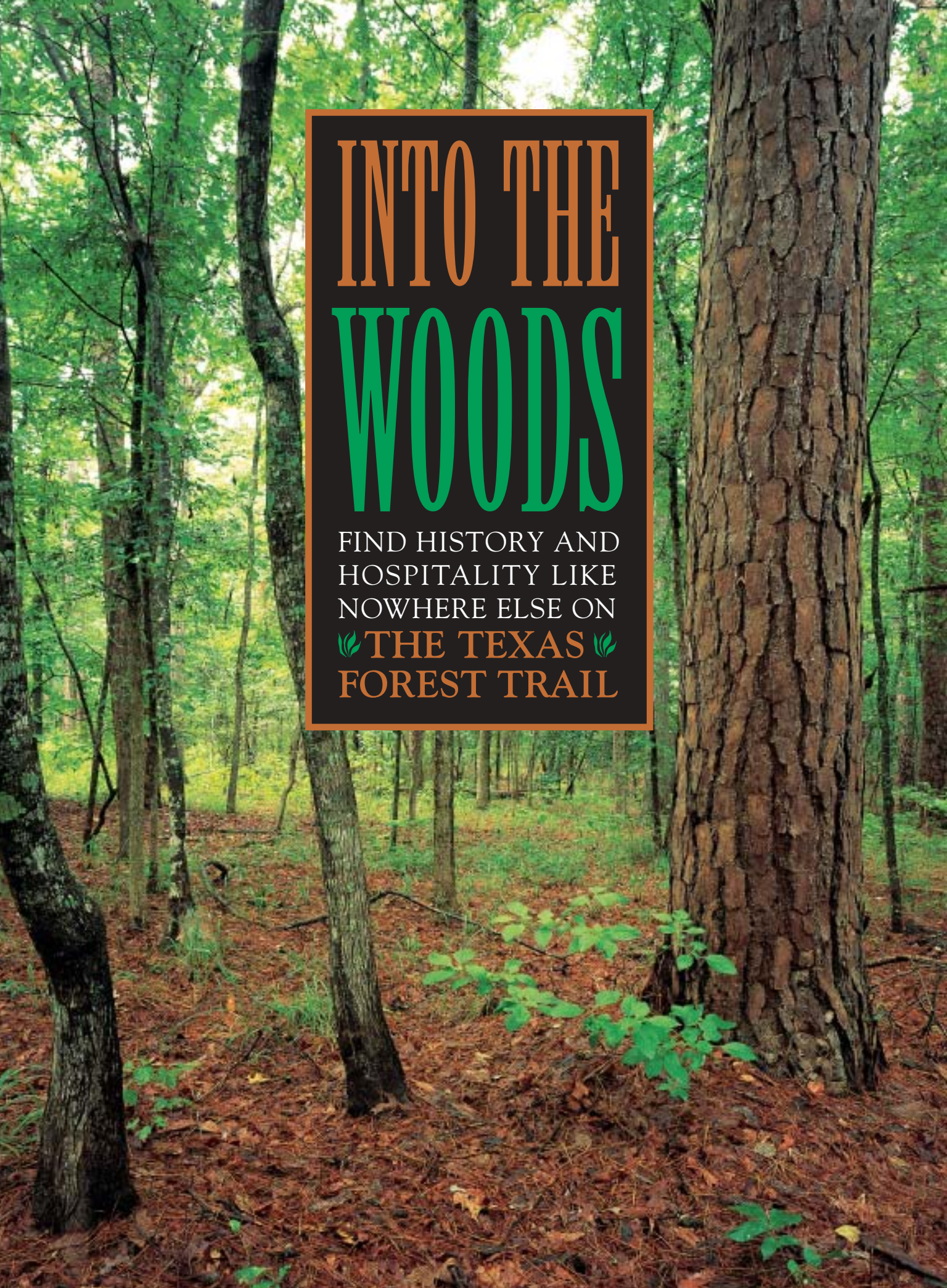


www.nps.gov/texas
(830) 868-7128, x245



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

www.thc.state.tx.us
(866) 276-6219



INTO THE WOODS

FIND HISTORY AND
HOSPITALITY LIKE
NOWHERE ELSE ON
🌿 **THE TEXAS** 🌿
FOREST TRAIL

MY DECISION TO LIVE IN AND WRITE ABOUT THE BACKWOODS OF EAST TEXAS OFTEN PUZZLES MY OUT-OF-TOWN FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES. Sure, they know there is an East Texas, and they've heard that it has lots of tall pine trees. But many outsiders never penetrate the piney woods barrier to discover the history and cultural curiosities hidden here.

East Texas still has roots planted deep in Southern culture. Plantation and Victorian-style homes on streets lined with magnolia trees and resplendent azaleas stand as proud symbols of Southern gentility. Younger folks routinely address their elders with the deferential "Yes, ma'am" and "No, sir." Adults frequently refer to those considered more socially prominent than themselves as "Mr." or "Mrs."

East Texas' roots are also hardy. With ax blade, muscle power and sheer determination over the past 100 years, East Texans have hewn the forests to fit their needs. These woodlands have, in turn, shaped the people living here.

The Texas Forest Trail, designated one of the state's 10 "Texas Heritage Trails" by the Texas Historical Commission, wends through the small towns and countryside of East Texas. I explored a small stretch of the trail, beginning my trek in Nacogdoches, a picturesque city of 30,000 that calls itself "The Oldest Town in Texas." From there, I meandered east to San Augustine, a tiny community that claims distinction as the "Oldest Anglo Town in Texas." I also ventured to Rusk, home of the Texas State Railroad, and ended my small sampling of the Texas Forest Trail in a town called Palestine. **STORY AND PHOTOS BY STEPHAN MYERS**



NACOGDOCHES

With its old-fashioned, red brick streets and turn-of-the-century buildings, downtown Nacogdoches gives visual clues to its status as "The Oldest Town in Texas." According to legend, twin Caddoan Indian brothers, Nacogdoches and Natchitoches, were sent by their father to travel for three days from a certain point along the Sabine River. Nacogdoches headed west and his brother headed east, each instructed to establish a community. The route between the two villages eventually became the eastern end of the road known as El Camino Real (The King's Highway). It has also been called the Old San Antonio Road, but today it's better known as Highway 21.

In 1716, the Spanish established a mission called Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches, which they abandoned when the French armies in Louisiana were no longer a threat. In 1779, a group led by Spanish trader Antonio Gil Y'Barbo returned to the region to officially establish the



The stunning Victorian architecture of the Jones House Bed & Breakfast.



site as a town. In all, nine different flags flew over Nacogdoches until 1845, when Texas became the 28th state of the union.

Today, little remains of Nacogdoches' Spanish heritage. Rows of refurbished 1800s and early 1900s brick-and-plaster buildings dominate the downtown district. As I strolled down the narrow streets, I could almost hear the clip-clop of horse hooves along the ruddy brick roads.

On the north side of town, I spent half a day exploring the charming Millard's Crossing Historic Village. The

The brick streets of Nacogdoches' downtown historic district.

complex features 19th century East Texas buildings ranging from log cabins to a stately Victorian home and a wooden schoolhouse, complete with desks.

Nacogdoches feels like a place on the move. With the campus of Stephen F. Austin University here, you'll see lots of young people (and the good restaurants and retail shops that serve them) throughout the community. Perhaps it is this juxtaposition of youthful vigor and rich history that gives Nacogdoches so much charm. Whatever the appeal, you'll need an entire weekend to sample it all.

SAN AUGUSTINE

Driving east on Highway 21, my next destination was San Augustine, a tiny town of 2,400. What this community might lack in size, it makes up for in history. San Augustine is on the 500-mile Camino Real that stretched to the Rio Grande River. Strolling down that historic road, I felt the spirits of Spanish and Anglo settlers accompanying me. The road slices through the middle of downtown San Augustine and passes directly in front

of the building that was once Sam Houston's law office.

San Augustine has a trait peculiar to rural East Texas and much of the Old South. For several blocks around the town's main square, you'll find a few elegant, well-kept, Southern plantation and Victorian-style homes. But right next door (sometimes on both sides) and across the street sit neglected properties, patiently waiting their turn at renovation.

San Augustine is a place of churches. Church steeples seemed to crop up about every

two blocks on my drive through the town. Built in the late 1800s or early 1900s, the churches are still in use today and represent an interesting variety of architectural styles.



Above, the First United Methodist Church was built in 1909. It is the oldest continually operating Methodist church in Texas. At top right, the original San Augustine Catholic Church was built on this site in 1881; the present structure was built in 1937. Right, the Memorial Presbyterian Church, built in 1887, marked the beginning of Presbyterianism in Texas.



SEVERE WEATHER! ARE YOU READY?

Lightning

Lightning strikes kill more Americans than tornadoes or hurricanes. Don't take chances with this deadly force of nature.


Lightning Safety Rules:

- Move to low ground.
- Avoid open fields.
- Do not seek shelter under a tree. Trees are easy targets for lightning.
- At the beach, or in a swimming pool, get out of the water immediately.
- Go inside a building and stay away from windows and doors.
- Stay away from metal objects.
- Avoid electric appliances and metal plumbing.
- Get off the phone.
- Do not touch metal objects, such as golf clubs or bicycles.
- Inside a car is relatively safe, but don't touch interior metal.
- If your hair stands on end, you may be a target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands.

Stay aware and play it safe during thunderstorms. Don't be a lightning rod.



**Texas Electric
Cooperatives**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

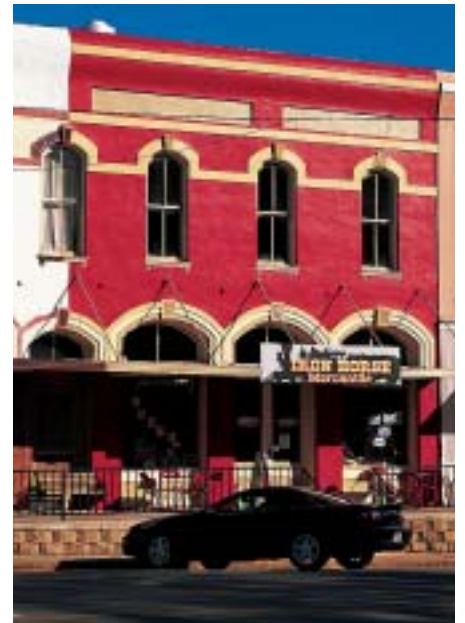
This public service message is brought to you by your local electric cooperative. See your local co-op for details.

RUSK

As I drove from my home near Jasper north and east to Rusk, I was struck by an abrupt change in the color of the soil along the highway. In contrast to the café-au-lait hues of the sandy loam around Nacogdoches and San Augustine, the earth of this gently rolling countryside was deep red, the hallmark indicator of soils rich in iron. The pine trees appeared to be an unusually deep green, perhaps because iron is an essential nutrient for that type of tree.

The restored brick buildings in Rusk's town square house shops and offices with a 1950s "Leave-It-to-Beaver" look. Homes from the turn of the century stand next to post-WWII brick houses and Depression-era wood cottages, lending the central neighborhoods an ambiance of Americana.

On the western outskirts of town is Rusk State Park, a heavily wooded preserve with a beautiful 15-acre lake. The park is the home of the enchanting Texas State Railroad, outfitted with restored passenger cars and trundled through the forest by an old-time steam engine. A low and lonesome w000-w00-w000000, accented by thunder-



Rusk's Footbridge Park and, right, restored town square buildings that are used by local businesses. Below, the Texas State Railroad at the Rusk depot.

ous pistons, announces the locomotive's arrival long before it appears at the depot. Then, an ear-splitting whistle pierces the air, quickly followed by the brassy clanging of a bell. Brakes squeal and the train slides to a stop, clouded in steam. Travelers of all ages clamber aboard, clutching one-way or round-trip tickets for their rollicking rail-ride through the sun-dappled East Texas countryside.

The Texas State Railroad State Historical Park is 25.5 miles long and 50 to 200 feet wide—the narrowest park in the Texas park system. Two trains, one leaving from the Palestine depot and one from the Rusk depot at the other end of the line, make the trip simultaneously on most days. In spring, blooming dogwoods, yellow jasmine and pink redbud create a colorful backdrop for the two-hour train ride



to Palestine. In autumn, the forests are ablaze in the crimson of red maple and sweet gum trees.

Built by prisoners in 1893, the Texas State Railroad's original line was 5 miles long and transported wood along with low-grade iron ore to a mine smelter at the Rusk State Penitentiary. The inmates made common items like cast-iron pipe as well as one remarkable item—the dome for the Capitol building in Austin. In 1903, the convicts extended the railroad line 12 miles west to provide better distribution of the prison's iron products. In 1909, the line was extended all the way to Palestine. But products from out-of-state mills soon made operations at Rusk unprofitable. The smelter closed in 1913 and the penitentiary at Rusk soon followed suit. From 1921 to 1969, the state leased the rail line first to the Texas & New Orleans Railroad, then to Texas Southeastern Railroad. After that, the line deteriorated until the Legislature turned it over to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department in the early '70s. Again using convict labor, the state restored the line for recreational use in 1976.

PALESTINE

Palestine, the other terminus of the Texas State Railroad, has a Victorian look. With many historic homes converted into charming bed-and-



The "Old Palestine" business district.

breakfast destinations, Palestine is a town you simply don't want to miss, even if all you have time for is a quick motor tour. Lined with narrow streets and corridors, the historic Palestine downtown district features three-story brick buildings with big picture windows now serving as shops for antiques, collectibles, shoes, dresses, garden ornaments, stained glass and unique jewelry.

Comanche, Waco, Tahuacana, Kickapoo and Kechai Indians originally settled the Palestine area, but a grant

from the Spanish government in 1826 allowed European colonization under empresario David G. Burnet. Fort Sam Houston was constructed in 1835 to protect the settlers from Indian raids, but just one year later, settlements west of the Trinity River were destroyed during Santa Anna's invasion.

After 1840, Palestine grew rapidly and in 1846, Texas' first State Legislature granted a petition to create Anderson County. The opening of the International and Great Northern Railroad in 1875 helped Palestine double



Flooding

Don't mess with floods. Flooding is the leading cause of weather-related fatalities in Texas. The simple decisions you make can mean the difference between life and death.

Flood Safety Rules:

- Never drive through water on a road. It can be deeper than it appears. Floodwaters can damage roadways.
- Quickly leave your car if it stalls in water. It takes only 2 feet of water to push a 3,000-pound car downstream.
- Don't attempt to walk through rapidly running water. As little as 6 inches can knock adults off their feet.
- Keep an emergency kit in your car, including a flashlight with extra batteries, drinking water and a battery-operated radio.
- If you have a cell phone, program the number for police or fire department rescue.

Take the high road when it comes to flood safety. Your life depends on it.



**Texas Electric
Cooperatives**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

This public service message is brought to you by your local electric cooperative. See your local co-op for details.

WHERE TO EAT & STAY

IN EAST TEXAS

N A C O G D O C H E S

🍷 **Auntie Pasta's**, 211 Old Tyler Road, (936) 569-2171. Mouth-watering Italian entrées in large servings to satisfy the heartiest of appetites. The fresh-baked Italian bread dipped in olive oil and toasted garlic shavings is so delicious you could make a meal of it alone.

🍷 **Butcher Boy's Smokehouse-Deli**, 603 North Street, (936) 560-1137. A modestly priced eatery that serves hamburgers, sandwiches and fabulous barbecue.

🏠 **John M. Sparks House, the Barret House, and the Rosewild House**, Route 4, Box 9400, (936) 569-1249. Three meticulously restored, museum-like, mid-19th century houses in a 600-acre pine forest plantation. Period furnishings include rope beds with feather mattresses and antiques once owned by the families that built the houses.

🏠 **Jones House B&B**, 141 N. Church Street, (936) 559-1487. Victorian architecture and beautiful rooms furnished with walnut and mahogany antiques. An unusual "keyhole" staircase entry often serves as the backdrop for gorgeous wedding photos.

🏠 **Llano Grande Plantation B&B**, 433 Phillips Road, (936) 569-1249. Two 18th century buildings in a bucolic setting south of town with a compelling "settler" ambiance.

🏠 **Mound Street B&B**, 408 Mound Street, (409) 569-2211. An 1899 Victorian house with columns, galleries and sun porches, and a collection of about 200 clocks. Located in the Washington Square Historic District near the last remaining Caddo Indian historic ceremonial mound and within walking distance of downtown.

🏠 **Pine Creek Lodge B&B Country Inn**, Pine Creek Road (off FM 2872), Route 3, (409) 560-6282 or toll free 1-888-714-1414. Four rustic buildings on a wooded hill in the middle of a 140-acre farm. Two fishing ponds, flower gardens, rockers, hammock, hot tubs, pool and driving range.

S A N A U G U S T I N E

🏠 **Capt. E.D. Downs B&B**, 301 E. Main, (936) 275-2289.

🏠 **The Columns B&B**, 703 S. Liberty, (936) 275-3031. These two delightful B&Bs, with 1800s architecture and interiors filled with beautiful antiques, are within a couple of driving minutes of the historic downtown district.

🍷 **Fausto's**, 606 W. Columbia Street, (936) 275-3201. Serves primarily fried chicken, shrimp and assorted side dishes.

🍷 **Wagon Wheel Café**, 109 Highway 96, (936) 288-0408. A quaint restaurant with an unusual western/agricultural motif that serves mostly home-style food and barbecue.

R U S K

🍷 **Bodacious Barbeque**, 1006 Dickinson Drive, (903) 683-2611. Part of a regional chain serving tasty, charcoal-grilled meals in a simple setting.

🏠 **Cherokee Rose**, 708 Lone Oak Street, (903) 683-6322 or (903) 658-1721. A dogtrot cabin in the pines on 11 acres just half a mile west of the Texas State Railroad Park. You are invited to collect eggs from the chicken house, catch or feed catfish in the stocked lake, relax on the porch or in the lakeside gazebo, or hike on trails around the property.

🏠 **The Gables**, 212 Main Street, (903) 683-5641. A beautifully restored and decorated Victorian house near the town square offering three large suites. Guests enjoy the parlor, library and dining room, which feature antiques and collections whimsically displayed.

🏠 **The Quarters at Gregg House**, 808 East 5th Street, (903) 683-8922. Bed-and-breakfast in a pre-Civil War house that is thought to be the oldest in Rusk. Servant quarters have been restored and converted into luxurious accommodations including a library with fireplace.

🏠 **Rusk State Park**, 3 miles west of Rusk, adjacent to the Texas State Railroad Rusk Depot off U.S. Highway 84, (903) 683-5126. Facilities for tent and RV camping.

P A L E S T I N E

🏠 **Apple Annie's B&B**, 1014 N. Sycamore Street, (903) 729-7900.

🏠 **Bailey Bunkhouse**, 8 miles north of Palestine off Texas Highway 155 toward Tyler, Route 7, Box 7618, (903) 549-2028 or (903) 549-2059. A rustic, two-story, Dutch-style cabin on 28 acres. Two downstairs rooms and a loft, decorated with hunting trophies. Groups of 8 or more get a hayride.

🏠 **Bowers Mansion B&B**, 301 S. Magnolia Street, (903) 723-7263. Both Apple Annie's and the Bowers Mansion are 1800s structures with wonderful, period furnishings.

🍷 **Little Mexico**, 2025 W. Oak Street, (903) 723-3143. Serves standard Tex-Mex fare and is a favorite of locals.

🍷 **The Ranch House**, 305 E. Crawford, (903) 723-8778. Specializes in steaks and is very popular with visitors and residents.

🏠 **Wiffletree Inn**, 1001 North Sycamore, (903) 723-6793. A 1911 Victorian house with a floral theme—pansies abound. The hosts hold overnight murder mystery getaways that include meals from hors d'oeuvres to breakfast and arrange "Walk-Around Palestine Murder Mystery" tours for groups of eight.

in population over the next few years. By 1928, the first successful oil-producing well went into operation, helping to dampen the impact of the Great Depression.

Palestine's Civil War Exhibit is an impressive display of Civil War memorabilia, including firearms, photographs, documents and uniforms (open the third Saturday of each month). The Museum of East Texas Culture, located in the old Reagan High School building, is a great way to revisit the 1940s and '50s.

My new favorite destination in Palestine is a place that—when the wind is right—I can sniff out with my eyes closed. Just outside the Eilenberger Bakery, the heavenly aroma of fresh pastries rises in the air. The bak-



A selection of mouth-watering pastries from the Eilenberger

ery, famous since 1898 for its Texas Pecan Cakes, has a small retail shop where visitors can purchase cakes, cookies and pies.

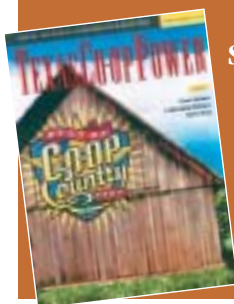
Though each of the four communities I toured had distinct texture and local color, they all seemed woven together by a tapestry of common threads—Southern hospitality, a strong sense of community, and love of small town life. They all shared something else, too—the look of “a land that time forgot.” It seemed as if those dense pine forests were filtering the modern world, allowing these East Texas communities to cling a little while longer to a slower pace of life.

Stephan Myers is a photographer and writer who lives in Deep East Texas.



ger Bakery.

Share *Texas Co-op Power* with a far-away friend or family member.



Send a gift subscription today.

Order Form

Send a 12-month subscription to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Gift Subscription Sent by: _____

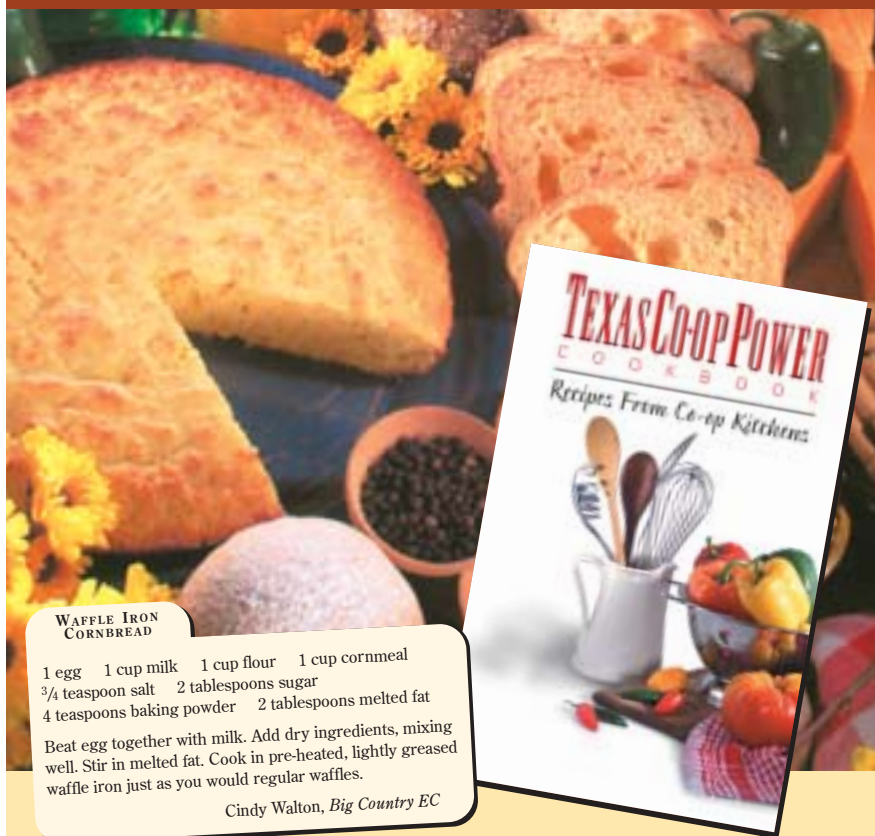
Include \$15 check payable to *Texas Co-op Power*.

**Mail to: Subscriptions, *Texas Co-op Power*,
2550 South IH-35, Austin, TX 78704**

FOUR STAR FARE *for the LONE STAR STATE*

★★★★

Mouthwatering recipes from the heart of Texas



WAFFLE IRON CORNBREAD

1 egg 1 cup milk 1 cup flour 1 cup cornmeal
3/4 teaspoon salt 2 tablespoons sugar
4 teaspoons baking powder 2 tablespoons melted fat

Beat egg together with milk. Add dry ingredients, mixing well. Stir in melted fat. Cook in pre-heated, lightly greased waffle iron just as you would regular waffles.

Cindy Walton, *Big Country EC*

Order Form

Please send me _____ cookbooks at \$18.75 each for a total of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to Texas Electric Cooperatives

Send your order to:

Cookbook, Texas Electric Cooperatives, 2550 S IH-35, Austin, TX 78704

Kill a What?

Ever pretend you knew what the electrician was talking about when he told you what needed to be fixed? If so, or if you just want to expand your “electrical” vocabulary a bit, here’s a glossary of common electrical terms:

Ampere (or amp) is the measure of the rate of flow of electricity—comparable to the flow of water through a hose. Branch circuits, fuses and circuit breakers are rated in amperes to indicate the amount of electricity they can carry safely.

Circuit breakers and fuses are safety devices that automatically cut the flow of electricity when a circuit is overloaded.

In a fuse, an element melts when overloaded, stopping the flow. In a circuit breaker, a switch is tripped when it is overloaded. Whereas a fuse must be replaced, a circuit breaker can simply be reset after the cause of the overload has been corrected.

Circuit breakers and fuses are preset to appropriate amperage ratings, and it is important for the safety of your home or business that the amperage ratings in the main service panel be observed.

Electric service entrance normally consists of wires enclosed in conduit, a proper ground, your electric meter base and the main service panel—essentially the entire apparatus necessary to safely take electricity into your home.

Main service panel (referred to as the “fuse box” in many homes) is a metal box that houses the circuit breakers or fuses. The main service panel serves as the point from which the electricity is distributed to branch circuits throughout your home for appliance, equipment and lighting outlets.

Peak demand is the highest requirement that an electric utility can be expected to experience. To a large extent, peak demand determines how much generating capacity must be in place to serve our customers.

Volt is a measure of electric force. The volt is the force behind the current, or amps, flowing through a wire. Just as the amp can be compared to the amount of water flowing through a hose, the volt can be compared to the amount of pressure that is pushing that water.

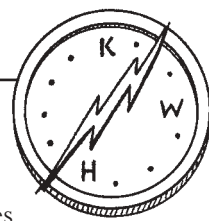
Watt is a unit of power that does

work electrically. Mathematically, the watt is the product of amperes times volts.

Watt-hour is the measurement of electrical energy used—measured as one watt of electricity used for one hour.

Kilowatt-hour is 1,000 watt-hours, abbreviated “kWh.” On electric bills, this indicates the amount of electric energy used. A 100-watt lamp operated for 10 hours (100 watts x 10 hours) uses 1,000 watt-hours—or 1 kWh.

Source: MP Electric



Help Your Office Become Environmentally Friendly

A few simple steps can turn an energy-inefficient, environmentally unfriendly workplace into an eco-employer.

- Make two-sided prints and copies so you use your printer and copier less often. Copy and paste information into a word processing document that you can store on the computer rather than printing it out.
- Recycle paper, bottles, cans, phone books and anything else your local authorities will haul away.

Return print and copy cartridges to the manufacturer for recycling. Buy recycled paper for office use.

- Buy computers, printers, scanners and copiers that bear the federal government’s Energy Star label. The label guarantees that the machine uses electricity efficiently.
- Buy multi-function machines rather than stand-alone copiers, faxes and scanners. Some scanners, for instance, can be used to copy and fax.

Spring Celebrations Focus on Environment

The spring-time observances of Earth Day and Arbor Day remind us to be kind to the environment.



To do your part:

- Plant a tree in your yard or neighborhood, but look up first: Never plant trees—even small ones—close to power lines, as they can cause power outages if they reach the lines when they grow.
- Save energy at work by setting your computer to “sleep” mode when you leave for the day.
- Shop online to save trips to the store. Less driving means less air pollution.
- Replace your charcoal or gas grill with an electric model that generates less air pollution.

Beware of Counterfeit Power Tools

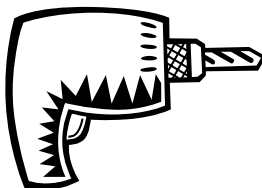
A scam that began in Europe is traveling across the United States: People claiming to work for tool manufacturers are selling power tools from the trunks of their cars for bargain-basement prices.

The problem: The tools, often marked to appear that they came from a legitimate manufacturer, are fakes without safety features and have not been approved by Underwriters

Laboratories or another safety testing agency.

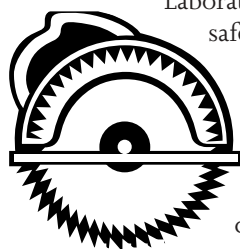
The counterfeit rotary hammers, grinders and cordless drills do not

operate well and cannot be repaired by the manufacturers' service centers.



If the price of a power tool appears too good to be true, the Power Tool Institute (PTI) warns, it probably is. PTI recommends that consumers buy power tools only from reputable dealers. The institute also is asking consumers to tell police about anyone they suspect of selling counterfeit tools.

Power tool knockoffs, PTI says, can malfunction and electrocute or otherwise harm the user.



Utility Poles Are for Climbing, Not for Posting Signs

Having a yard sale? Advertise it someplace besides the nearest utility pole.

Cluttering a utility pole with signs advertising yard sales, open houses, parties and lost pets puts repair crews in peril because they have to fight nails, staples and tacks when they climb them. If a protruding object tears a lineman's glove or protective clothing, the crew could be delayed or the worker could risk injury. Nails and staples can catch on a boot, causing a climber to lose his balance and fall.

Utility poles have a single purpose: to support the lines that bring electricity, cable TV and telephone service to your home. They weren't meant as posts for advertising.

And they surely weren't meant as a jungle gym for children to climb. One teenager suffered burns over most of his body when he climbed up a utility pole and onto a transformer.



Your electric cooperative urges parents to keep their children at least 10 feet away from power lines and not to bring kites, ladders, poles or other tall objects near them.

**Some of
the Things
We Do
Will Shock
You.**

As your electric cooperative, our main job is to deliver electric power to local homes and businesses at a fair price. And, of course, to be there 24 hours a day should your service be interrupted. That's what people expect of us.

But we do a lot of things you may not expect. Each year, we help dozens of stranded motorists. Our line workers are always keeping a vigilant eye out for suspicious activities. We also participate in local charities and team events.

In short, we're always looking for ways to do our part as your neighbors and as members of this community. So don't be shocked if you see us doing something that has nothing to do with electricity. To us, it's just part of the job.

**Your Local
Electric Cooperative**

City on Fire

BY MARY LENZ

The firefighter heroes who rushed to the scene and died in the terrible explosion are not forgotten. Their names are read aloud each year in a moving ceremony. The sound of a bell tolling their memory rings out across the land.

This ceremony takes place each year, not in New York City in September, but on the Texas coastline, 40 miles south of Houston, in April. It honors scores of citizens who died in the worst industrial disaster in United States history.

On April 16, 1947, the French freighter *Grandcamp* blew sky high, touching off a series of explosions and fires that killed as many as 800 people and ripped the heart out of the economic powerhouse of Texas City. This disaster was an industrial nightmare of blood and flames unlike anything that had ever happened on U.S. soil.

Bill Minutaglio, who has researched the disaster in a fascinating book called *City on Fire*, said the event turned ordinary people into heroes, bringing out the best in folks across the nation as they flocked to the burning city to render aid. Soldiers, doctors, movie stars, morticians and a famous Galveston gambler were moved to volunteer to help the stricken town.

Ironically, the story of Texas City begins with a miracle fertilizer called ammonium nitrate. The life-giving nitrogen compound doubles or triples the productivity of the soil. It also served as the chief ingredient for bombs and explosives that helped win World War II.

When the war was over, American military plants continued to churn out ammonium nitrate—not to kill, but to restore the ruined farmlands of Europe. But the volatile compound could be highly dangerous, sometimes catching fire spontaneously.

That's exactly what happened in Texas City, a town that itself was something of an economic miracle. In 1947, the city of 15,000 was the heart of a prosperous industry that had sprung up along the Texas coast. Refineries and petrochemical plants created new jobs, new opportunities and a cornucopia of new products. The downside

was the danger: Labs and plants containing flammable products were clustered near the docks in a town with only a small fire department nearby.

Although April 16, 1947, was a chilly 55 degrees, longshoremen loading more than 2,000 tons of fertilizer onto the *Grandcamp* noticed many of the bags were unnaturally warm, even hot, to the touch.

Residents of the town began to see an unusual sight they remember as remarkably beautiful—kelly green and orange smoke snaking skyward from the docks. “The neon rolls of smoke linger for a few seconds, then begin to



Frank Sinatra, who raised funds for Texas City victims, is greeted at Galveston Municipal Airport in April 1947 by Texas City Mayor Curtis Trahan and Col. Paul Wakefield, coordinator of the relief fund.

flatten into carpets, then simply disintegrate,” Minutaglio writes. “It’s like the afterglow of a spectacular fireworks show.”

To Texas City firefighters, the smoke signaled a chemical fire. By 8:45 a.m., 28 firefighters were on the docks, struggling to contain the blaze. The fire was so hot, the sea near the ship began to boil.

Shortly after 9 a.m., the explosion that rocked Texas occurred.

The Texas City fire department “was essentially obliterated” in the deadly explosion, Minutaglio said.

Huge segments of the 14-million-pound *Grandcamp* were blasted into the sky, some pieces landing two miles away. Oil storage tanks, chemical factories and nearby ships began to burn in a nightmarish chain reaction that went on for a week.

People across the bay in Galveston were knocked off their feet. Windows 40 miles away blew out. A Southwestern Bell Telephone supervisor sent a frantic plea for help to Houston at 9:12 a.m.

Texas and the rest of the nation began to respond almost immediately. Everyone from bus and truck drivers to citizens whose family cars were still intact pitched in to deliver the more than 5,000 injured to hospitals and clinics in Galveston, Houston and beyond. Minutaglio describes the sound of tinkling glass in operating rooms as doctors extracted shards from wounds and dropped the pieces into metal buckets.

Within 30 minutes, Red Cross volunteers from Galveston had arrived. Firefighters and rescue workers from Texas and Louisiana flocked to the area, along with nurses, doctors and medical students. Hospital ships were dispatched, as were military planes and vehicles. The news media was soon on the scene as well, but photographers were taken aback when their snapping flashbulbs caused traumatized residents to drop to the ground in fear.

“People all over Texas rose to the occasion. Children collected coins at school. People got a box of clothes together and shipped it—in care of Texas City,” Minutaglio said.

Galveston gambler and nightclub kingpin Sam Maceo sponsored a series of fundraisers featuring Frank Sinatra, Alice Faye and other Hollywood stars. The effort eventually brought in over \$1 million for the Texas City survivors.

When the destruction was finally tallied, there were 800 dead, 5,000 injured, 2,000 homeless and \$4.5 billion in property damage. But what shines through is the “quiet courage of the people of Texas City. Ordinary people behaved in extraordinarily courageous ways,” Minutaglio said. “They were focused on helping each other in the biggest and worst industrial tragedy in American history.”

City on Fire was published in 2003 by HarperCollins. The paperback version was published in January 2004.

Writer Mary Lenz lives in Austin.

Our Heroes

If you missed last month's Marvin and D-Wayne safety comic strip, you probably don't know that Marvin has a favorite comic book starring Electrillo, the master electrician who senses danger through a pointy thing on top of his helmet.

From time to time, we will treat our readers to the adventures of Electrillo and his sidekick, Jackrabbit Jr. In this episode, their electro-copter has crashed over Lake Texaroni, and it looks like they could use some help themselves. But more often than not, we expect the duo to be rescuing others because they have such a keen sense of danger and they know a lot about electricity.

Your electric cooperative workers play much the same role as Electrillo, but without the pointy helmet. Sometimes they sense danger or problems on your electric lines before you or your family even sees a power blink, much less a power outage. Other times, the lights go out or a line is downed in a storm and you have to call your cooperative to report a problem. In either case, cooperative workers are on call day and night—in the office and out in their trucks—to help you.

Leave the heroics to Electrillo and your electric cooperative. Don't try to fix anything electric yourself. Never go near downed lines, for example, or try to pull something from a tree that is touching an electric line. Don't use frayed electric cords or blackened electric outlets or broken plugs. Never throw water on an electric fire—you could be electrocuted instead. Tell your parents or another adult if you see smoke or smell an outlet burning. Electricity is a great invention, but leave its maintenance to the professionals.

Cartoonist Keith Graves is a popular artist and author of children's books. Among his greatest hits are Frank Was a Monster Who Wanted to Dance, Uncle Blub-bafink's Seriously Ridiculous Stories and Loretta: Ace Pinky Scout. He lives in Austin with his wife, Nancy, and the twins, Max and Emma.



Pickin' and Grinnin' in Kerrville

Even though I moved to New York City after college, as a fourth-generation West Texan I cannot resist a trip back home, especially in early summer. Last year, I invited a group of long-time Texas friends to meet me in Kerrville for Memorial Day weekend. We congregated deep in the Hill Country, about 20 miles southwest of Fredericksburg, at the Kerrville Folk Festival.

BY GINGER MILES, PHOTOS BY JODY HORTON



Terri Hendrix is a regular at Kerrville.

We were all first-timers at the festival, but the 32-year-old institution is so reminiscent of years spent socializing on porch swings to the crickets' chorus, I immediately felt I was back home. Perched on a grassy hillside under a sky full of stars, I was transported back to my childhood when our whole family sat

outside on thick pallets after supper and stared up at the Big Dipper.

The Kerrville festival draws almost 40,000 visitors each year for all or part of 18 days, beginning the Thursday before the Memorial Day weekend. Although the festival has a reputation of being a haven for hippies, don't let this fool you. Inside those comfortable, colorful clothes are music fans of all ages and occupations who share two

passions: the love of outdoors and the love of music.

The music reaches far beyond genres like Texas and folk. Any given day you may hear traditional folk, blues, country, acoustic rock, jazz, Celtic and reggae. Some days there are workshops in songwriting, performing, recording, and booking and management for touring artists. The fiercely competitive New Folk songwriting contest draws 32 of the best of America's emerging songwriters. The winners appear in a special concert the first weekend. Mini-concerts occur each afternoon at the Ballad Tree, and jam sessions fill the air with music all night long.

At the main stage concert, we listened to singer/songwriter Susan Warner from Philadelphia put a spell on the crowd with "Sorry About," a song about a reunion with a childhood friend. There I was, sitting with my best friend from high school, my best friend since college, and friends I haven't seen for more than 20 years. This was just as it should be. The Kerrville Folk Festival is one giant reunion, for both musicians and fans.

Perhaps because of that spirit of reunion, it's not uncommon to see



Django Walker grew up surrounded by great Texas musicians.

performers mingling with their fans. A lot of socializing is done behind the audience area, which has a long row of wooden stalls selling food and Texas-made crafts. The campgrounds are crowded with tents, shade tarps, trucks and RVs, but the advantages outweigh the disadvantages for those who enjoy the outdoors. A tributary of the Guadalupe River flows nearby, and there are group canoe trips on Fridays. On Sunday mornings you can join the musical worship service on Chapel Hill.

Although both are Texas musicians, Karen Abrahams and Django Walker took different routes to the Kerrville Folk Festival main stage. Abrahams is a long-time festival fan turned performer, whereas Walker is a second-generation Texas musician (son of Jerry Jeff Walker).

Originally from Taft, now residing in Austin, Abrahams sings and plays with a bluesy Americana sound. She started playing at the Kerrville all-night jam sites eight years ago and now proudly takes the main stage with her band.

The festival is sprinkled with clusters of “folkies” who love to jam around campfires. Last year, due to a burn ban, campers had to gather their folding chairs and instruments around fireless circles. As a first-timer, I would never have been able to find Abrahams’ campsite jam if someone hadn’t led me through a sea of tents. Some sites have whimsical names like “Frog Pond,” “Duct Tape,” “Palm Tree” and “Camp Cuisine.” As we arrived at our destination, Abrahams had just begun to play a Beatles song. One by one, campers picked up their instruments and joined in. A camper in the circle spoke to me about Abrahams: “Even though she has a hotel room when she performs, she and her husband go through the land rush to get a campsite. That’s one of the reasons a lot of folkies like her, because she comes out of the Kerrville scene.”

Abrahams is now an inspiration to new musicians like Idgi, an exuberant young singer who was at Kerrville for the first time on a songwriting scholarship to the festival’s Songwriting School. Idgi was working at a truck stop in Buda when she received her acceptance from Kerrville, and a lot of her regular customers pooled their resources to leave her a special tip—a new tent, lantern, sleeping bag and a gift certificate for food. Now that’s Texas generosity!

As I headed from the campsites to the main stage to find Django Walker, I passed a friendly young woman, nicknamed Princess. She’s a “Kerrvert,” a Kerrville convert who returns to the festival yearly. Princess and her family from Lubbock have attended the festival since she was 14 years old. In fact, she and her fiancé met at the festival as crew leaders for the First Aid Team, part of a staff of hundreds of volunteers who work the festival. Now 21, she and her love planned to marry on the last Saturday of the festival and everyone was invited!

Walker and I stood backstage, listening to Terri Hendrix and Lloyd Maines and reminiscing about Jerry Jeff Walker, his famous father. Walker told me that his father had been playing the Kerrville Folk Festival for 30 years. Django grew up during his dad’s “outlaw music” days, getting his start at a tender age. He remembers meeting Willie Nelson for the first time when he was 6 years old at one of Willie’s celebrated Fourth of July picnics: “Willie came up

to me and said, ‘Hey, little boy, who are you here with?’ I just looked at him and I just started cryin’. My dad had to stop playing his concert in front of 20,000 people to come and pick me up and take me back to the stage. He introduced me, ‘This is my son!’”

Django Walker was not the only second- or third-generation musician at the festival. Sarah Lee Guthrie, daughter of Arlo Guthrie, performed, as did Tao Rodriguez-Seeger, grandson of Pete Seeger. The names Seeger and Guthrie are synonymous with American folk music. True to the traditions of those two music pioneers, the Kerrville Folk Festival continues to nurture the talent and insight of today’s musicians, and share those blessings with new generations.

This year, the Kerrville Folk Festival will run from May 27 to June 13. For more information, call (830) 257-3600 or check out www.kerrville-music.com.

Ginger Miles wrote about Texas Music in the October 2002 issue of Texas Co-op Power.



Karen Abrahams started as a volunteer and now commands center stage.

Bake Sale Favorites

Bake sales are inevitable facts of life. At some point, your child, friend or neighbor is going to ask you to contribute to one at the last minute. When they do, you can be prepared by keeping some key items on hand. Of course you'll need all the staples: flour, sugar, brown sugar, salt, butter and vanilla. But if you have some chocolate chips, raisins and rolled oats in the pantry and some chopped nuts in the freezer, you'll be ready for action.

The keys to successful bake sale items are that they be "easy to prepare, easy to divide and easy to transport," says Sally Sampson, author of *The Bake Sale Cookbook* (Fireside Books, 2000). The following recipes fit the bill perfectly. The recipe for Chewy Chocolate Marble Bars comes from Pioneer Mills, a Texas-based company. For more recipes and information on Pioneer Mills, visit www.pioneer Mills.com. The other recipe is a family favorite, and one of the first things I learned how to make because they're so easy. We call them Hello Dollies, but I've heard them referred to as Six-Layer Bars and Sin City. Take them to the bake sale immediately, or you'll eat them yourself!



Pioneer Mills

Chewy Chocolate Marble Bars

- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 2/3 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 cups light brown sugar, packed
- 3/4 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups Pioneer Original or Buttermilk Biscuit & Baking Mix
- 1 cup uncooked old-fashioned rolled oats

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In 4-cup glass measuring cup, combine chocolate chips, sweetened condensed milk and 1 tablespoon butter. Microwave on high for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring after every 30-second interval. Stir until chocolate is melted.

In large mixing bowl, stir together brown sugar, 3/4 cup butter, eggs and vanilla until smooth. Stir in Pioneer Biscuit & Baking Mix and oats until well combined. Spoon 2/3 of the batter into a 9x13-inch baking pan that has been coated with nonstick spray; press to flatten. Drop chocolate mixture by teaspoonfuls over batter. Drop teaspoonfuls of remaining batter over top of chocolate; swirl together with tip of knife.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until

bars are light golden brown and center is almost set. Cool completely. Cut into bars. Makes 36 small bars.

Serving size: 1 bar. Per serving: 151 calories, 2 grams protein, 7 grams fat, 21 grams carbohydrates, 135 milligrams sodium, 24 milligrams cholesterol

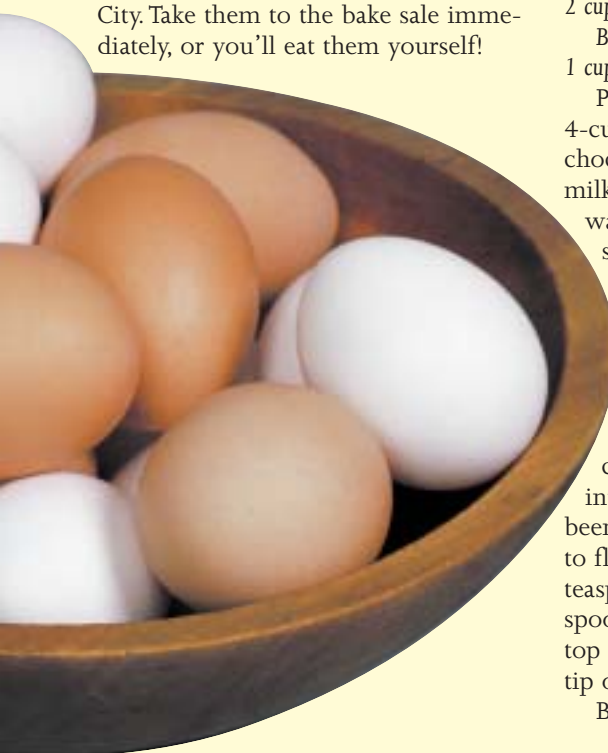
Hello Dollies

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1 1/2 cups flaked coconut
- 1 cup chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped nuts (pecans or walnuts)
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt butter in a 9x13-inch cake pan. Remove from oven, and spread the melted butter evenly over the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle the graham cracker crumbs evenly over the melted butter. Spread coconut evenly over the graham cracker crumbs, then add a layer of chocolate chips, then a layer of chopped nuts. Drizzle sweetened condensed milk evenly over top. Return to oven and bake for about 25 minutes, until lightly browned on top. Cut into small squares when completely cooled.

Yield: 36 small bars.

Serving size: 1 bar. Per serving: 131 calories, 2 grams protein, 9 grams fat, 13 grams carbohydrates, 67 milligrams sodium, 10 milligrams cholesterol



July's recipe contest subject is Let's Grill. My husband and I love to throw a summertime barbecue. What do you make when you fire up the grill for friends and neighbors? Send in your grilling recipes by April 10. The winner will receive a copy of the Texas Co-op Power Cookbook. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, as well as your co-op affiliation. Send recipes to Home Cooking, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704. You can also fax recipes to (512) 486-6254 or e-mail them to recipes@texas-ec.org.

Chocolate wins it every time! Three out of five of our winning recipes for the subject Bake Sale have chocolate in them. If they were the favorites here, you can bet they'll be a smash hit at your next bake sale. Or make them for your family and watch them fly off the plate. Beth Smith, a member of Lamar Electric Cooperative, is the winner with her gooey German Chocolate Brownies. She wrote, "This plate of brownies brought \$100 at the local volunteer fire department chili supper and bake sale." Talk about "rich" brownies! She will receive a copy of the Texas Co-op Power Cookbook.

German Chocolate Brownies

1 package German chocolate cake mix
3/4 cup margarine, melted
2/3 cup evaporated milk, separated (1/3 and 1/3)
1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
1 package (14 ounces) Kraft caramels
1 package (6 ounces) semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine cake mix, melted margarine, 1/3 cup evaporated milk and nuts. Melt caramels and 1/3 cup evaporated milk in a double boiler or microwave, stirring often, until completely melted. Pat 1/2 of cake mixture in a greased and floured 9x12-inch baking dish and bake for 6 minutes.

Remove from oven and sprinkle chocolate chips over hot cake. Spread hot melted caramel mixture over this. Crumble remaining cake mixture on top of caramels and press down lightly. Bake another 20 minutes. Don't overbake. Cool completely

before cutting into squares. Yield: 16 large squares.

Serving size: 1 square. Per serving: 458 calories, 5 grams protein, 24 grams fat, 63 grams carbohydrates, 372 milligrams sodium, 6 milligrams cholesterol

Mint Chocolate Cookies

3 packages Andes mints (28 in each package)
3/4 cup margarine
1 1/2 cups brown sugar, packed
2 tablespoons water
1 package (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate morsels
2 large eggs
2 1/2 cups flour
1 1/4 teaspoons baking soda

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Unwrap the mints and set aside. In a saucepan, heat and mix together margarine, sugar and water. Add chocolate chips and stir to partially melt. Remove from heat and continue to stir until melted. Pour into a bowl and let cool for 10 minutes. Beat in eggs at high speed. Add remaining ingredients and beat to blend.

Chill dough in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

Line baking sheets with foil. Roll the dough into small balls (about 1 inch in diameter). Bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Place a mint on each cookie as you remove them from the oven. Remove the cookies from the baking sheet to a cooling rack. As soon as the mints have softened, spread them over the tops of the cookies to coat. Yield: 84 cookies.

Serving size: 1 cookie. Per serving: 84 calories, 1 gram protein, 5 grams fat, 11 grams carbohydrates, 42 milligrams sodium, 4 milligrams cholesterol

Judi Giangiulio, Hamilton County EC

Peanut Butter-Toffee Cookies

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

Continued

SAFE LIVING

Play It Safe During Spring Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms can occur anywhere and at any time of the day. All thunderstorms produce lightning and thunder. Some have the potential to produce damaging straight-line winds, large hail, heavy rain, flooding and tornadoes.

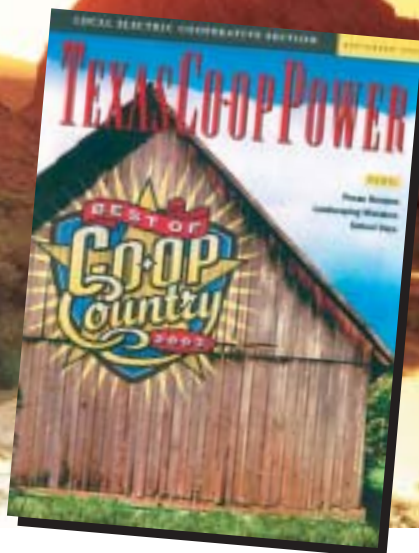
The National Severe Storms Laboratory classifies a thunderstorm as severe when it contains one or more of the following phenomena:

- Hail 3/4" in diameter or greater
- Winds gusting in excess of 50 knots (57.5 mph)
- A tornado

When a storm approaches:

- **Find shelter in a building or car (avoid convertibles). Keep car windows closed.**
- **Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances.** (Leaving electric lights on, however, does not increase the chances of your home being struck by lightning.)
- **Avoid taking a bath or shower, or running water for any other purpose.**
- **Turn off the air conditioner.** Power surges from lightning can overload the compressor, resulting in a costly repair job!
- **Draw blinds and shades over windows.** If windows break due to objects blown by the wind, the shades may prevent glass from shattering into your home.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER



SHARE THE POWER!

Texas Co-op Power is the Texas living magazine with a rural, suburban and small town focus. Each month you will read entertaining articles about Texas people, Texas history, Texas nature, Texas travel and Texas food.

And, in every issue we feature a personal look at chosen towns in "Texas, USA" along with "Around Texas," featuring selected events around the state.

For just \$15 a subscription, you can share *Texas Co-op Power* with friends and family members who live far away or in big cities!

Please send a 12-month gift subscription to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Gift subscription sent by:

Include a \$15 check for each subscription made out to *Texas Co-op Power*. Mail to Subscriptions, *Texas Co-op Power*, 2550 South IH-35, Austin, TX 78704

2/3 cup creamy peanut butter

1 large egg

2 cups Bisquick baking mix

2/3 cup almond toffee bits

2/3 cup coarsely chopped peanuts

2/3 cup milk chocolate morsels

10 ounces vanilla caramels

3 tablespoons whipping cream

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

2/3 cup milk chocolate morsels, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Beat butter, sugar, brown sugar and peanut butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Add egg; beat until blended. Add baking mix; beat at low speed just until blended. Stir in toffee bits, peanuts and 2/3 cup milk chocolate morsels. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Flatten dough with hand. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool cookies on baking sheets 1 minute; remove to wire racks.

Microwave caramels and whipping cream in a glass bowl at high 1 minute. Stir. Continue to microwave at 30-second intervals, stirring until caramels melt and mixture is smooth. Stir in vanilla. Spoon caramel mixture evenly onto tops of cookies. Drizzle each with melted chocolate. Yield: 3 dozen.

Serving size: 1 cookie. Per serving: 210 calories, 3 grams protein, 12 grams fat, 25 grams carbohydrates, 140 milligrams sodium, 20 milligrams cholesterol

Frances Schulz, Bluebonnet EC

Pineapple-Orange Sunshine Cake

1 box yellow cake mix

1/4 cup applesauce

4 eggs

1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges in syrup

Frosting

1 container (8 ounces) light Cool Whip

1 package (3.4 ounces) vanilla pudding mix

1 can crushed pineapple

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a bowl, stir together cake mix, applesauce, eggs and mandarin oranges (including syrup) until moist. Beat by hand for two minutes. Coat a 9x13-inch cake pan with nonstick spray. Pour batter into pan. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool completely before frosting.

Combine all frosting ingredients in a large bowl and mix until well blended. Spread over cake. Serves 16.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 238 calories, 3 grams protein, 7 grams fat, 41 grams carbohydrates, 325 milligrams sodium, 47 milligrams cholesterol

Diana Sandoval, Nueces EC

Vanishing Oatmeal Bars

1 cup (2 sticks) margarine or butter, softened

1 cup firmly packed brown sugar

1/2 cup granulated sugar

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

3 cups uncooked rolled oats (quick or old-fashioned)

1 cup raisins

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Beat together margarine and sugars until creamy. Add eggs and vanilla; beat well. Add combined flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Mix well. Stir in oats and raisins; mix well. Bake 30 minutes in ungreased 9x13-inch baking pan. Yield: 24 medium bars.

This also works well with dried cranberries or dried cherries. One-half cup of chopped nuts can also be added.

Serving size: 1 bar. Per serving: 210 calories, 3 grams protein, 9 grams fat, 31 grams carbohydrates, 195 milligrams sodium, 16 milligrams cholesterol

Barbara Franklin, McLennan County EC



WAFFLE IRON CORNBREAD

1 egg

1 cup milk

1 cup flour

1 cup cornmeal

3/4 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons sugar

4 teaspoons baking powder

2 tablespoons melted fat

Beat egg together with milk. Add dry ingredients, mixing well. Stir in melted fat. Cook in pre-heated, lightly greased waffle iron just as you would regular waffles.

Cindy Walton, Big Country EC

FOUR STAR FARE *for the* LONE STAR STATE

★★★★

*Mouthwatering
recipes from
the heart of Texas.*



ORDER FORM

Please send me _____ cookbooks at \$18.75 each for a total of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip _____

Make checks payable to
Texas Electric Cooperatives
Send your order to:

Cookbook
Texas Electric Cooperatives
2550 S IH-35
Austin, TX 78704



AROUND TEXAS

April

- 1-3. Ogallala Quilters Festival, **Dimmitt**, (806) 647-0465 or www.ogallalaquilters.org
- 2-3. Fine Art Show, **Mineola**, (903) 569-8877 or www.mlota.org
- 2-4. Texas SandFest, **Port Aransas**, 1-800-45-COAST or www.texassandfest.com
- 3. Ole Time Music, **Pearl**, (254) 865-6013
- 3. Billy the Kid Day, **Hico**, 1-800-361-HICO
- 3. Rambling Roses Anniversary Square Dance, **Tyler**, (903) 566-2254
- 3. Dogwood Festival, **Woodville**, (409) 283-2632
- 3. Agape Dinner Theater, **Canton**, (903) 340-1330
- 3. Easter Carnival & Egg Hunt, **Kyle**, (512) 268-5341 or www.cityofkyle.com/parks
- 3. Spring Art & Craft Show, **Burnet**, (512) 765-0834

- 3. Great American Cleanup, **Denton**, (940) 349-8537 or www.KDB.org
- 3. Texas Rio Grande Valley Onion Festival, **Weslaco**, (956) 968-2102 or www.weslaco.com
- 3. Salsa Festival, **Three Rivers**, 1-888-600-3115 or www.threeriverstx.org/salsa.htm
- 3. Arts & Crafts Day, **Kyle**, (512) 396-2054
- 3-4. Air Show, **Jasper**, (409) 384-2626
- 3-4. Wildflower Art Show, **Salado**, (254) 847-5040 or www.salado.com
- 3-4. Great North Texas Kite Festival, **Cedar Hill**, (972) 291-5130
- 3-4. Easter Eggstravaganza & Pet Adoption, **Pipe Creek**, (830) 510-6879
- 3-4. Runaway Scrape Re-enactment, **Richmond**, (281) 343-0218 or www.georgeranch.org
- 3-4, 10-11. Bluebonnet Trail Arts & Crafts Show & Sale, **Buchanan Dam**, (512) 793-2858
- 4. Spring Gala, **Cyclone**, (254) 985-2393

- 6. Brush Country Music Jamboree, **George West**, (361) 786-3334
- 9. Moseley Log House, **Eustace**, (903) 425-3924
- 9-10. Easter Fest on the River, **Kerrville**, (830) 864-4614
- 9-10. Antique Lamp Show & Sale, **Bowie**, (940) 872-2639
- 9-11. Flea Market Days, **Jewett**, (936) 348-5475
- 10. Hill Country Wildflower Spring Festival, **Johnson City**, (830) 868-7684 or www.lbjcountry.com
- 10. Trade Days, **Conroe**, (936) 788-5652
- 10. VFW Fish Fry, **Cassie**, (512) 792-2926
- 10. Fanthorp Inn Stagecoach Days, **Anderson**, (936) 873-2633
- 10. Main Street Egg-Stravaganza, **Huntsville**, (936) 295-2150 or www.huntsvillemainstreet.org
- 10-11. Kiwanis Trades Day, **Bonham**, (903) 640-1972
- 12. Lobsterfest, **Beaumont**, (409) 838-6581

FESTIVAL OF THE MONTH

BY JIM GRAMON, PHOTOS COURTESY BUCCANEER COM

Buccaneer Days: Corpus Christi, April 8-May 5

Shiver me timbers! There has been a flurry of reported sightings of swashbuckling pirates in the general vicinity of Corpus Christi Bay. For the last 66 years, swarthy

buccaneers have arrived in a fleet of galleons at this time of year in historic Corpus Christi.

The first reports of the real predecessors of these modern-day buccaneers surfaced in the early 1820s, when Jean Lafitte and his band were first spotted on the Texas coast. Never fear, matey. Although you may not find Lafitte's booty, which he is reported to have buried somewhere in this area, you will discover a whole treasure chest of fun at the Buccaneer Days festival.

A small group of businessmen celebrated the opening of summer tourist season in 1917 with "Splash Days," featuring a bathing beauty contest and a picnic. In 1938, the 100th anniversary of the founding of Corpus Christi by Col. Henry L. Kinney, the celebration grew larger and more elaborate, taking on a pirate theme. Every April since, marauding pirates have sailed into Corpus Christi Bay, captured the mayor, and proclaimed the city under a state of siege. Revelry is the order of the day—they even make the mayor walk the plank. The pirates historically capture the most beautiful maidens and stage a parade to display their spoils.



Above, a beautiful Buccaneer Queen. Left, swashbuckling Corpus Christi style. Right, barrel racing, a nontraditional pirate sport.

- 15-18. Great Race Texas, vintage car race, **San Marcos**, 1-888-200-5620 or www.sanmarcoscharms.com
16. Country Opry, **Victoria**, (361) 552-9347
16. Ranch Roundup Charity Golf Tournament, **Austin**, 1-888-926-2253 or www.downhomeranch.org
- 16-17. Magnolia Festival, **Kirbyville**, (409) 423-5827
- 16-17. Antique Tractor & Engine Show, **Henderson**, (903) 889-2671
- 16-17. Spring Expo Home & Outdoor Show, **Paris**, (903) 785-1068
- 16-17. Habitat for Humanity Yard Sale, **Granbury**, (817) 408-3357
- 16-17. Antique Tractor & Engine Show, **Henderson**, 1-866-650-5520 or www.HendersonTX.us
- 16-18. Crawfish Festival, **Mauriceville**, (409) 745-1202
- 16-18. Ole Tyme Days, **Dayton**, (936) 258-2642
- or www.oletymedays.com
- 16-18. Hill Country Thunder Motorcycle Rally, **Wimberley**, (512) 847-3787 or www.lavfw-wimberley.org
- 16-18. Founders Day Festival, **Dripping Springs**, (512) 858-4725
- 16-18. Heritage Jubilee, **Terrell**, 1-800-877-TERRELL or www.terrelltexas.com
- 16-18. Trade Days, **Fredericksburg**, (830) 990-4900 or www.fbgtradedays.com
- 16-18. Trade Days, **Livingston**, (936) 327-3656 or www.cityoflivingston-tx.com/tradedays
- 16-18. Bluebonnet Festival & Spring Garden Tour, **Ennis**, 1-888-366-4748 or www.visitennis.org
- 16-19. Antique Alley and Yard Sale, 15 miles of sales, **Grandview to Cleburne**, (817) 866-3987
17. Spring Fling & Butterfly Festival, **Wimberley**, (512) 847-6969 or www.emilyann.org
17. Early Iris Show, **Lubbock**, (806) 797-6913



Photo courtesy EmilyAnn Theatre

Just-released butterflies sample the watermelon to the delight of children at the EmilyAnn Theatre Spring Fling and Butterfly Festival in Wimberley.

MISSION, INC.

This year's festivities run from April 8 through May 5, with events including a rodeo, trail ride, barbecue cook-off, two parades, folklore competition, scholarship pageant, 12 days of carnival rides and games, fireworks at night, and several sporting and athletic events. There are too many events to list here, so be sure to check the website or call for the schedule.

For more information, contact the Buccaneer Commission Inc. Website: www.bucdays.com; e-mail: info@buckdays.com, phone: (361) 882-3242.

Jim Gramon is the author of several books on Texas festivals and storytellers. Jim@JimGramon.com, www.JimGramon.com.



17. Bluebonnet Festival, **Tehuacana**, (254) 395-4385
17. Doll & Toy Show & Sale, **Austin**, (512) 219-6616
17. Quilt & Craft Show, **Brady**, (325) 597-2946
17. Up The Creek Art Festival, **Gun Barrel City**, (903) 498-0138 or www.accesscedarcreek.com/utcaf
17. Run For Your Heritage Fun Run/Walk, **Dripping Springs**, (512) 858-7411 or www.dsbandoosters.org
17. Mostly Native Plant Sale, **Boerne**, (830) 249-2616
17. North Texas Book Festival, **Denton**, (940) 240-1123
17. Trade Days & Garage Sale, **Wheelock**, (979) 828-4627
17. Lions Club Auction, **Utopia**, (830) 966-3778
17. Lone Star Stomp, **Richmond**, (281) 342-1256 or www.georgeranch.org
17. 5K Eagle Run, **Terrell**, (214) 887-6354 or www.terrellchristian.com
17. Cherokee Heritage Day, **Aubrey**, (940) 482-3381
17. Spring Concert, **Mesquite**, (972) 216-8125
- 17-18. Celtic Heritage Festival, **Kilgore**, (903) 759-9017
- 17-18. Market Days, **Merkel**, (325) 928-1649
- 17-18. Bluebonnet Festival, **Chappell Hill**, 1-888-BREHAM
- 17-18. Wine & Wildflower Trail, **Hill Country**, (830) 868-2321
- 17-18. Walkfest, **Canyon Lake**, (830) 964-3003
18. Blooms Above the Blanco, **Kyle**, (512) 268-9981
- 20, 22, 27, 29. Deaf Smith Historical Program/Luncheon, **Hereford**, (806) 363-7070
- 22-25. Fiddlers Frolics, Texas State Championship, **Hallettsville**, (361) 798-5934 or www.fiddlersfrolics.com

Continued

AROUND TEXAS continued

- 22-25. Highland Lakes Arts & Crafts Competition & Show, **Buchanan Dam**, (512) 793-3102
 23-24. Boer Goat Show, **Sonora**, (325) 387-7046
 23-25. Shrimpfest, **Port Arthur**, (409) 963-1107
 23-25. Jump! Jive! & Jamfest, **Texarkana**, (903) 792-4992
 24. Wild Basin Winds, **Waxahachie**, (972) 938-8965
 24. Dewberry Festival, **Cameron**, (254) 697-4979 or www.cameron-tx.com
 24. Bar-B-Que Cook-Off, **Canyon Lake**, (830) 964-2223 or www.canyonlakechamber.com
 24. Wild-Connections Butterfly Festival/Grand Opening, **Austin**, www.wild-connections.com
 24. Fruehling Saengerfest (Spring German Singing Fest), **Bellville**, (979) 865-3407
 24. LBJ Ranch Roundup, **Johnson City**, (830) 868-7128 or www.nps.gov/lyjo
 24. Coshatte Agricultural Society BBQ Cook-Off, **Bellville**, (979) 865-5576
 24. Hot Stuff Chili & BBQ Cook-Off, **Coldspring**, (936) 653-2184
 24. BBQ & Goat Cook-Off, **Goldthwaite**, (325) 648-3619 or www.goldthwaite.biz
 24. Trade Day, **Coldspring**, (936) 653-2009
 24. Jim Reeves Jamboree, **Carthage**, (903) 693-6634 or www.johnrexreeves.com


24. Festival of Flags, **Navasota**, (936) 825-3162
 24. East Texas Arboretum Spring Fair, **Athens**, (903) 675-5630
 24. Hunter Road Market Days, **New Braunfels**, (512) 396-2054
 24-25. Festival of Ethnic Cultures, **Ballinger**, (915) 365-2333 or www.ballinger.tx.org
 24-25. Texas Gun & Knife Show, **Kerrville**, (830) 257-5844
 24-25. Country Fair & Cook-Off, **Buda**, (512) 295-3496
 24-25. Historic Homes Tour, **Gonzales**, 1-888-672-1095
 24-25. Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show, **Lubbock**, (806) 894-1584
 24-25. Mesquite Days, **Anson**, (325) 823-3259
 24-25. Red Poppy Festival, **Georgetown**, 1-800-436-8696 or www.redpoppyfest.com
 24-25. Cornbread Festival, Texas State Knife & Tomahawk Championship, **Malakoff**, (903) 489-1518
 24-26. Old West Fest, **Montgomery**, (936) 448-4285
 24-May 1. Neches River Festival, **Beaumont**, (409) 835-2443
 29-May 1. Texas Bar-B-Que Festival, **Vidor**, (409) 769-6339
 29-May 1. Viva! Cinco de Mayo, **San Marcos**, 1-888-200-5620 or www.sanmarcoscharms.com
 30-May 2. General Sam Houston Folk Festival,

- Huntsville**, (936) 294-1832 or www.samhouston.org
 30-May 2. Cotton Gin Festival, **Burton**, (979) 836-3695
 30-May 2. Birdfest, **Chappell Hill**, 1-888-BRENHAM
 30-May 2. Wildflower Trail Ride, **Mason County**, (325) 347-5598
 30-May 2. General Sam Houston Folk Festival, **Huntsville**, www.SamHouston.Memorial.Museum
 30-May 3. Texas Songbird Festival, **Lago Vista**, 1-888-328-5246 or www.lagovista.org

May 2004

1. Ice Cream Festival, **Brenham**, 1-888-BRENHAM or www.BrenhamTexas.com
 1. German Sausage Dinner, **Pattison**, (281) 934-8218
 1. Ole Time Music, **Pearl**, (254) 865-6013
 1. Market Day, **Wimberley**, (512) 847-2201
 1. Puttin' on the Ritz, Blanco County Courthouse Gala, **Johnson City**, (830) 833-2211
 1. Nativescapes Garden Tour, **Fredericksburg**, (830) 685-3811
 1. Tall Pines Airing of the Quilts Show & Sale, **Huntsville**, (936) 295-8322
 1. Kite Fest, **Kyle**, www.cityofkyle.com/parks
 1. Garage/Bake Sale, **Uhland**, (512) 396-2355
 1, 8, 15, 22, 29. Cross Timbers Country Opry,

TRAVEL TEXAS



BEAUMONT ROCKS
 ★★★
 (AND ZYDECOS, TOO!)

For more information on exciting things to do in Beaumont, call us at 1-800-392-4401 or visit us on the web at www.beaumontcvb.com.

BEAUMONT ★
 TEXAS WITH A LITTLE SOMETHING EXTRA.

The **King's Orchard**
 PICK YOUR OWN
Fresh Fruit



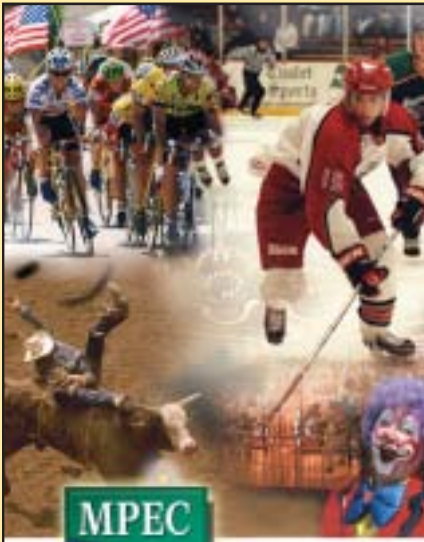
Strawberries, Blackberries
 Blueberries, Figs
 and Fresh Cut Flowers



OPEN Tuesday-Sunday
8:00 am-5:00 pm

In Plantersville off Hwy. 1774
 between Hwy. 105 & FM 1488
 Call ahead for availability or directions

936-894-2766
www.kingsorchard.com

MPEC
 THE TOTAL PACKAGE

Home of Texas' newest
 State-of-the-art
 Convention & Events
 Complex, MPEC

**WICHITA FALLS
 CONVENTION &
 VISITORS BUREAU**

J.S. Bridwell Agriculture Center
 State-of-the-art Exhibit Hall
 10,000 seat Coliseum - **All On Common Ground!**
 RV Hookups for 1,000 rigs; ample free parking
 5 minutes from 1,500 premiere hotel rooms
 Less than 2 hours from Dallas by car...35 minutes by air

800-799-MPEC • www.wichitafalls.org

- Stephenville**, (254) 965-4132 or www.countryopry.com
 1-2. St. Joseph's Bazaar, **Livingston**, (936) 967-8385
 1-2. Central Texas Airshow, **Temple**, (254) 298-5770 or www.centraltexasairshow.com
 1-2. Gullo Kidzfest, **Conroe**, (936) 788-KIDS
 2. St. Stanislaus Festival, **Bandera**, (830) 460-4712
 4. Flower Show & Plant Sale, **Brenham**, (979) 421-9212
 7-8. Maifest, **Brenham**, (979) 836-3695 or www.BrenhamTexas.com
 7-9. Bluegrass Festival, **Flomot**, (806) 469-5278
 7-9, 21-23. Chicken House Flea Market, **Stephenville**, (254) 968-0888
 8. Market Days, **Georgetown**, (512) 868-8675
 8. Garden Tour, **Wimberley**, (512) 847-2201
 8-9. Rod Run Car Show, **Jefferson**, 1-888-GO RELAX or www.jefferson-texas.com
 12-16. Texas State HOG Rally, **Conroe**, (936) 441-3375
 13-14. Community Garage Sale, **Kirbyville**, (409) 423-5827
 14-15. World Championship Bison Cook-Off, **Santa Anna**, (325) 348-3826
 14-15. Quilt Show, **Bluegrove**, (940) 895-3731
 15. Legends of Texas Swing Music Festival, Alamo movie set, **Dripping Springs**, (512) 826-4707



Photo courtesy Weslaco Chamber of Commerce

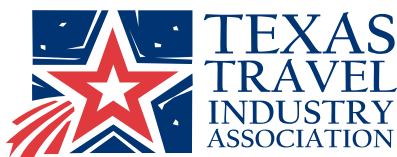
Their faces tell the story—children participate in the Onion Eating Contest at the Texas Rio Grande Valley Onion Festival in Weslaco.

or www.legendsoftexaswing.com
 15. Zingha-Wee-Thay Powwow, **Springtown**, (972) 285-3847

Event information can be mailed to Around Texas, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704, faxed

to (512) 486-6254, or e-mailed to aroundtx@texas-ec.org. All information must be submitted by the 10th of the month two months prior to publication. E.g., June submissions must be received prior to April 10. Events are listed according to space available.

TRAVEL TEXAS

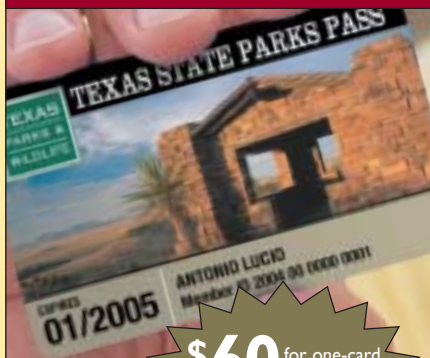


- ★ One-of-a-kind marketing programs
- ★ Exclusive publications
- ★ Networking with travel and tourism peers
- ★ Educational seminars and conferences
- ★ Updates on legislation that affects our industry

Join us, and profit by association!

www.ttia.org
Call (512) 476-4472

ALL THE PARKS. EXTRA PERKS.



\$60 for one-card membership
 or only **\$75** for two-card membership

BUY YOURS TODAY

AT ANY TEXAS STATE PARK OR HISTORIC SITE!

Call (512) 389-8900 or visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park for more information.



SCHULENBURG

Halfway to Everywhere

Schulenburg is known as the "Home of the Painted Churches," lovely reminders of our past built by German-Czech immigrants in the 1890s.

Also of interest are the Navidad Valley Historical Museum and the state-of-the-art Stanzel Model Airplane museum, along with a variety of other local historical sites.

Contact us at the Schulenburg Chamber of Commerce for maps and tour information.

866-504-5294

www.schulenburgchamber.org



Ten Tough Plants That Look Good Even in Bad Times

You don't need a meteorologist to tell you the hot and dry Texas summer is just around the corner. High temperatures and low precipitation bring many commonly used plants to "the point of permanent wilting," the scientific term for "dead and gone." Many a water bill has escalated along with the thermometer to prevent green landscapes from going brown.

For the climate-savvy gardener, there's another solution. There are a few landscape plants that do just fine in the heat and drought of a Texas summer. They save their owners big bucks when translated to lower utility costs, fewer plant replacements and minimal soil amendments. Aesthetically, they generally provide a cooler and more welcoming environment for humans, as well as birds and butterflies.

Here are ten tough plants that hold up incredibly well to the oppressive heat, and require little (if any) extra water. There are others, of course, but these ten have proven themselves a good match for the Texas summer landscape.

1. Lantana This is one of my favorites for color all summer long. It's available in red, orange, yellow, white, purple and multi-colors. For some reason, the orange and yellow ones take the heat and sun better. Using a large mass of them—planted in unamended soil about a foot apart—shows them off best. They'll die to the ground each winter, but will return enthusiastically late each spring, if mulched.

2. Native oaks The oaks in our area include several species, like the bur oak, chinquapin oak, shumard oak, lacey oak, post oak and chestnut oak. An introduced variety—the sawtooth oak—has done quite well, too. These are big trees (when they mature) and tantalize you with a promise of cooling shade. In my designs, I often use a bur or chinquapin oak (with a trunk about 2 inches in diameter) as a replacement for a native oak that's in decline.

3. Flameleaf sumac In the fall and early winter, the flameleaf sumac is true to its name. The leaves turn a



Lantana and, below, flameleaf sumac.

brilliant, glowing red when most other plants are fading into oblivion. It prefers some moisture (such as in a low spot) as long as the ground drains well. It can become a cluster—a natural mass of many "plantlets"—if left alone for several years. Birds flock to it for food and cover.

4. Lindheimer's muhly This is a prairie grass, with a natural height of roughly

2 to 5 feet. It has bushy plumes, like the imported pampas grass, but its leaves won't cut you. I often use a mass of Lindheimer's muhly in my designs as an alternative to traditional plantings, where the heat and sun can mean doom for ordinary plants. There are other native grasses, like sideoats grama, Gulf muhly, Indian-grass and bluestem that are also

tough and certainly worth planting.

5. Coralberry Whether it's 100 degrees in the shade or below freezing, this plant looks good! The coralberry is a short shrub, with attractive berries (coral-colored, of course) all winter. Like most plants, it does best with a thin layer of mulch (like fallen leaves) left over the entire root area.

6. Mexican buckeye This is not really a buckeye, nor is it from Mexico (as we know it). From about 5 feet away it

looks just like a redbud tree. But it withstands our normally dry conditions far better than most trees. The soil it likes is whatever's available; sand, clay or whatever—with hardly any fertilizer. It does well in full sun or semi-shade, with delicate pinkish-purple flowers in the spring and leaves that turn yellow in the fall.

7. Red cedar Often called an eastern red cedar, it isn't a true cedar at all. It's a juniper with needles that stay

green all winter and an uncanny ability to put up with a hot, dry Texas summer. Within a few decades it can become a full-sized tree, but is normally used in the landscape as a short tree or large shrub. Its dense, evergreen foliage is home to many birds, especially during the winter.

8. Yaupon holly The traditional yaupon holly keeps its leaves all winter long. The one I like best, however, is the "possumhaw holly," a species of yaupon. It isn't evergreen, but is festooned with hundreds of red/orange berries, even in the coldest weather. Being native, the yaupon does best without water, spraying, pruning, fertilizing or soil "improvement."

9. Buffalograss This is the only native Texas lawn grass—and the only lawn grass that needs hardly any water. Its roots go down 3 or 4 feet, whereas most lawn grasses have much, much shallower roots. Since other lawn grasses need a lot of water, they're far more susceptible to drought. To the eye, it looks like a traditional lawn, but won't demand a huge chunk from your water bill.

10. Agarita This shrub is so tough you could probably drive a truck over it several times, and it would just keep growing. Plus, it's evergreen except in an unusual panhandle winter. Its thick, spiny leaves make it an excellent security hedge and a safe place for small animals to find shelter.

These are just 10 native plants that will do quite well in rough conditions, when almost everything else in the landscape is looking pretty sad. There are others, of course, including horseherb, maximilian sunflower, salvia, mealy blue sage, mistflower, beautyberry, ironweed and blackfoot daisy. Jonquils are a tough, showy substitute for more tender bulbs in early spring.

Most of these tough plants are native to Texas and do best with a layer of mulch to simulate the forest floor. Located wisely, they should require less maintenance and reduce your utility bills.

G. Owen Yost is a frequent contributor to Texas Co-op Power, and a licensed landscape architect from the Denton area. E-mail him at OwenYost@advantexmail.net if you have a landscape design question. We regret that all questions cannot be answered by mail, but may be covered here in future issues.

SEVERE WEATHER! ARE YOU READY?

Lightning

Lightning strikes kill more Americans than tornadoes or hurricanes. Don't take chances with this deadly force of nature.

Lightning Safety Rules:

- Move to low ground.
- Avoid open fields.
- Do not seek shelter under a tree. Trees are targets for lightning.
- At the beach or in a swimming pool, get out of the water.
- Go inside a building and stay away from windows and doors.
- Stay away from metal objects.
- Avoid electric appliances and metal plumbing.
- Get off the phone.
- Do not touch metal objects, such as golf clubs or bicycles.
- Inside a car is relatively safe, but don't touch interior metal.
- If your hair stands on end, you may be a target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands.

Stay aware and play it safe during thunderstorms. Don't be a lightning rod.



Texas Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

This public service message is brought to you by your local electric cooperative. See your local co-op for details.

PHOTO ©ALAN MOLLER

No Teasing—This Is Some Big Hair

If you thought the days of sky-high hairdos were long gone, think again. Some of our readers had to look way back for photos, as you can see here, but we learned that not all bouffant hairstyles are "hair today, gone tomorrow." We received plenty of current photos as well. Take a look, and count yourself lucky if you don't have to comb and style "big hair" yourself.

The topic for June is water towers, so send us your favorite photo to "Water Towers," Focus on Texas, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704. Digital photos will also be accepted at focus@texas-ec.org. Image files should be high resolution (at least 300 pixels per inch or ppi) or very large low-resolution images (72 ppi, minimum size is 13x20 inches). Snapshots may be any size. All entries must include name, co-op name, daytime phone, mailing address, and description or story. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you'd like your photo returned.



Mid-South Synergy member Sharon Johnson sent this photo taken in the '60s. Sharon, left, and Gladys Strakos have been friends for 37 years. Sharon says they have gone "from 'big hair' to 'silver hair' together."



When Helen Imber and her three sisters got together during the holidays in 1973, it was big hair times four! From left are Helen (a member of Pedernales EC), Mary Ann, Katherine and Leona.



Comanche EC member Dale Henderson submitted this photo of her and her husband, Peril, that was taken at the Fort Worth Stock Show in 1971. Sadly, Peril passed away in January.



Magic Valley EC members Richard and Delores Alaniz submitted this photo of Lorena S. Jasso's big hair. Lorena admits that it isn't easy spending all the extra time grooming her full head of hair, but, she says, "Better lots than not enough."



Sometimes it hurts to be beautiful! That's what Sarah-Ashlee must have been thinking as she "endured the pain" of getting ready for a beauty pageant. Her aunt, Elizabeth Burris, a Sam Houston EC member, was the photographer.

UPCOMING in Focus on Texas

Subject	Issue	Deadline
Water Towers	June	April 10
Family Fun	July	May 10
On the Farm	August	June 10
Caught Napping	September	July 10
The Big Game	October	August 10
Fish Story	November	September 10



I Remember Avery

If I close my eyes very tight and sit very still, the mist begins to clear ... and there before me is the small town of Avery, just as I saw it through my little-girl eyes.

I can smell the clean air. In the distance, I hear the whistle of the afternoon train. Look, the smoke stack is puffing black smoke into the blue sky. If I stand on the end of the depot platform, I can see all the way down the tracks. It's the 3 o'clock central of the Missouri Pacific Railroad, coming in from Annona.

My name is Ruby Jean, and I live right in the middle of town. I can play anywhere I want. Today, I'm playing around the railroad depot. It's the big

building painted yellow and brown across the tracks from my parents' grocery store. The depot has a funny smell, like an old charcoal furnace, or the smell of creosote on my feet when I walk barefoot on the crossties. It's that kind of smell, antiseptic and tar mixed together.

I like to play at the depot. I like to hear the tap, tap, tap of the telegraph handle. It never seems to stop tapping. The old rolltop desk sits against the wall, huge and dark, with lots of hidden compartments. You can find lots of different sizes of paper inside. Some of it's been in the desk so long it has a musty smell. You'd remember it if you ever smelled it.

My friend Timmy's granny is the stationmaster. Sometimes she lets us type a letter on the typewriter. We sit on tall stools and punch the round keys that make a clicking sound like the telegraph handles.

On the front end of the depot is the office, and behind it is the storage area. Timmy and I play there a lot. Sometimes there are big boxes of freight. The storage room has two huge sliding doors with long black handles. When the train comes up beside the open doors, it's so close you can reach out and touch it. But that's very dangerous. Timmy's granny won't let us do that. She's the only one who can slide the freight boxes into the open doors of the boxcars. There's about a foot of empty space across from the platform to the boxcars. If you were to fall down there, the train would run over you.

There are two big wheelbarrow dollies that Timmy and I take turns pushing each other around on. We sometimes put a penny on the rails and when the train runs over it, it smashes the penny flat. If you put your ear on the rail, you can hear the train a long way off.

One time when it snowed a lot, my other friend, Brenda, and I built a tall snowman on the end of the platform. We used two pieces of coal for its eyes. No one in Avery used coal for heating in the winter, but the train would have large cars filled with it. The coal was used to make the engine run, and you could pick up the fallen pieces on the tracks. We would use it to write on the sidewalk.

Today the depot is gone. Even the rails have been taken up. The 3 o'clock central runs only in my memory. But the love and affection of the people of that little town still remain in the hearts of all who grew up there.

Avery, in eastern Red River County, has a population of 430 people, give or take a few. The Avery area is served by Lamar EC.

Ruby Mayhew lives in Texarkana. She teaches reading and social studies at Maud Elementary School. This is her first time to be published.



Young Ruby Mayhew and her friend Timmy.