

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

PLUS:

The Windmill Farm

Geothermal Gains Ground

Ice Box Pies



Renewable Texas

COOL SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Swimming

**Don't be all wet.
Remember these rules
for safe pool-time fun
this summer:**

- Keep electric radios, TVs, clocks, barbecues, lights and other electrical appliances at least 10 feet from a pool and wet surfaces. Use battery-powered appliances whenever possible.
- Electric appliances should not be used outdoors unless they are equipped with a heavy-duty cord and three-prong plug.
- Swimming pools should be well away from electric wires to avoid the risk of hitting the wires with long-handled cleaning equipment.
- All outdoor electrical outlets should be weatherproof and equipped with a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). This is especially important in damp locations where more protection is necessary.
- Check with your electric co-op before you dig to make sure you know the location of buried electrical lines.
- Label power and light switches for pool, hot tub and spa equipment.
- If you think you are being shocked while in the water, move away from the source of the shock. Get out of the water, if possible, without using a metal ladder.

**Stay safe this summer.
Don't swim with shocks!**



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TEXAS CO-OP POWER

A MAGAZINE ABOUT TEXAS LIVING

Renewables on the Rise

Texas follows only California in producing wind-powered electricity, and there is immense potential to produce more. Some say wind is the future of energy in America. As we report in our first article, "Renewable Texas," huge wind farms are bringing a boom to the West Texas economy, the first since the oil bust. In contrast to quaint 19th century windmills, these new metal monoliths require 200-foot climbs just for maintenance. Only the big sky and broad mesas bring the gargantuan structures into human perspective.

Perhaps because of their smaller scale, people still love old-style windmills. In our second feature, we visit Chuck and Ruby Rickgauer and their antique windmill collection near Granbury. In addition, we take a brief look at geothermal products, another promising renewable energy source.

In sync with the season, our recipe section this month features "Cool Pies for Hot Months." They require little or no time in front of a hot stove. Our Festival of the Month is equally suited to August—the Waco Margarita and Salsa Festival. "Fish Stories" are highlighted in Focus on Texas where big fish and little children steal the show. Texas, USA, tells how the people of Pilgrim made newcomers feel completely at home during a special wedding. Enjoy!

Peg Champion
Vice President, Communications/
Publisher

Windmill farms are becoming a common sight in West Texas.



Pedernales EC member Lisa Ryan sent in this photo taken in the early '70s of her husband, John Patrick, and his little brother, Kenny. She says, "Their mom took this photo and caught a great 'catch' of boyhood!" Turn to page 31 for more "fish stories" from our readers.

Renewable Texas 6

By Soll Sussman, Photos by Greg Smith

A United Nations study found that Texas has more renewable energy in wind, solar and biomass than any other state in the country. Add in the potential for geothermal energy as well as hydroelectric, wave and tidal energy, and it's clear that Texas need not rely solely on conventional energy sources.

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By Kaye Northcott

Geothermal heating and cooling systems are the most energy-efficient, environmentally friendly and cost-effective systems available.

The Windmill Farm 14

By Soll Sussman, Photos by Glen Ellman

The Windmill Farm, the largest privately owned collection of windmills in the state, was started on a whim and turned into a passion.

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Ice box pies, Waco's Margarita and Salsa Festival.

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Fish in a puddle, fish in the sea, our photographers find them wherever they be.

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By Jana Deming
Pilgrim Wedding

TEXAS Co-OP POWER

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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.

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LETTERS

Kudos on UIL Article

I am writing to let you know how delighted our family was to see the "Noble Scholars of the UIL" on the cover of your May 2004 issue. It came at such a perfect time, as our three children were preparing for the State University Interscholastic League competition in Accounting. As I read through the article, all of the comments rang so true. The quote by Bobby Hawthorne about there not being any pep rallies when these kids go off to compete hit the nail right on the head. The UIL competitions don't have the draw of the local sports events, but these kids work every bit as hard to advance in the competitions. The hours they spend preparing outside of their regular school day goes unnoticed for the most part, except by their families and sponsors.

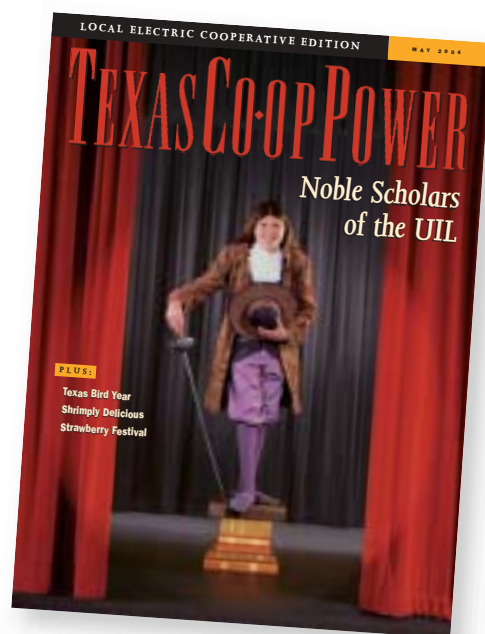
Our children have had the extreme pleasure of competing under the sponsorship of a very wonderful Accounting teacher at Trenton High School. Dortha Rounsaville has taken individuals or teams to the UIL State meet for 18 consecutive years in Accounting. Her dedication to our children is beyond comparison, and the article was also correct in saying that those teachers who sponsor the UIL events become as close as a second set of parents. I proudly share my title as "Mom" with Ms. Rounsaville during the crunch time between District and State UIL Competitions.

Jan Flowers, Fannin County EC

Dedication Recognized

It was such a pleasure to read Louie Bond's "Noble Scholars of the UIL" in your May issue. Many times academic coaches wonder if anyone else knows how much UIL academic competitors learn and grow through their participation. When I read this article, I realized that here was someone who knew the program and its benefits as well. As an academic competitor in the 1950s and a UIL coach for the past 33 years, I know firsthand the long hours of practice it takes to prepare students to compete. I have also had the satisfaction of knowing that sometimes in this process they have found a career through their competition.

Carole Farris, Rita Blanca EC



UIL Article a 'Thrill'

It was such a thrill and surprise to see an extensive article about the UIL program in our Texas public schools! It brought back many memories of the many UIL competitions I sponsored over my 42 years in teaching and counseling. School personnel sacrifice a lot to coach various events, often without additional pay.

Ann Parrish Duke, Navasota Valley EC

Pinkie Lee Struck by Lightning

After reading the January 2004 issue concerning "The Last Big Herd" and seeing the picture of [cowboy] Pinkie Lee, [I wanted to tell you that] Pinkie Lee was my great uncle. Pinkie worked for the Y.O. Ranch until his death a few years later, when he and his horse were struck by lightning.

I really enjoy the articles and look forward to receiving your magazine monthly.

Mike Behnsch, Pedernales EC

Focus Topics Change

Can you clarify if one of the upcoming topics for "Focus on Texas" in your Texas Co-op Power magazine has changed? My mother thought she had read in a previous issue that one of the next few months' topics was "Caught Napping"; however, it is not listed in the May 2004 issue. Any

information you can share on this would be appreciated.

Teddie Brown, Wood County EC

Editor's Response: Yes, sometimes the topics change if there is a compelling reason to do so. We received so many "Best Friends" photos that we sorted them into two groups (humans and animals) and bumped some topics back to make room for "Animal Friends" in the September 2004 issue. "Caught Napping" is now the topic for May 2005. We had already received some entries for "Caught Napping" and have saved them for that issue. It's always a good idea to check each issue, just in case.

Judge Bean Facts in Question

The article titled "What Law There Was, West of the Pecos" by Juddi Morris in the June issue of *Texas Co-op Power* contained several historical inaccuracies.

Judge Roy Bean was not known as "the rope necktie judge" as the article indicated, and there is no historical evidence that "hang 'em first, try 'em later" was his motto (if he even knew what a motto was). Judge Roy Bean never did hang anyone. He was an unorthodox justice of the peace, but he did not "sentence horse thieves to death."

Bean was justice of the peace only in western Val Verde County and his jurisdiction did not "extend 400 miles."

Also, Morris stated that Bean died "after a night of drinking in Del Rio." According to newspaper reports and a letter written by the doctor who came to Langtry to treat Judge Bean, he had a stroke on March 15, 1903, and died at 3:00 the following morning.

Jack Skiles, Langtry

Editor's response: We typically use *The Handbook of Texas*, a publication of the Texas State History Association, as the final source on state history. The *Handbook* does not identify Bean as "the rope necktie judge." It says that Bean died of "lung and heart ailments" in Langtry and was buried in Del Rio. Bean's post was created, according to the *Handbook*, in order to eliminate the 400-mile round trip to deliver prisoners to the county seat at Fort Stockton. Since

there are discrepancies in the historical record, we will try to identify our sources more specifically in the future.

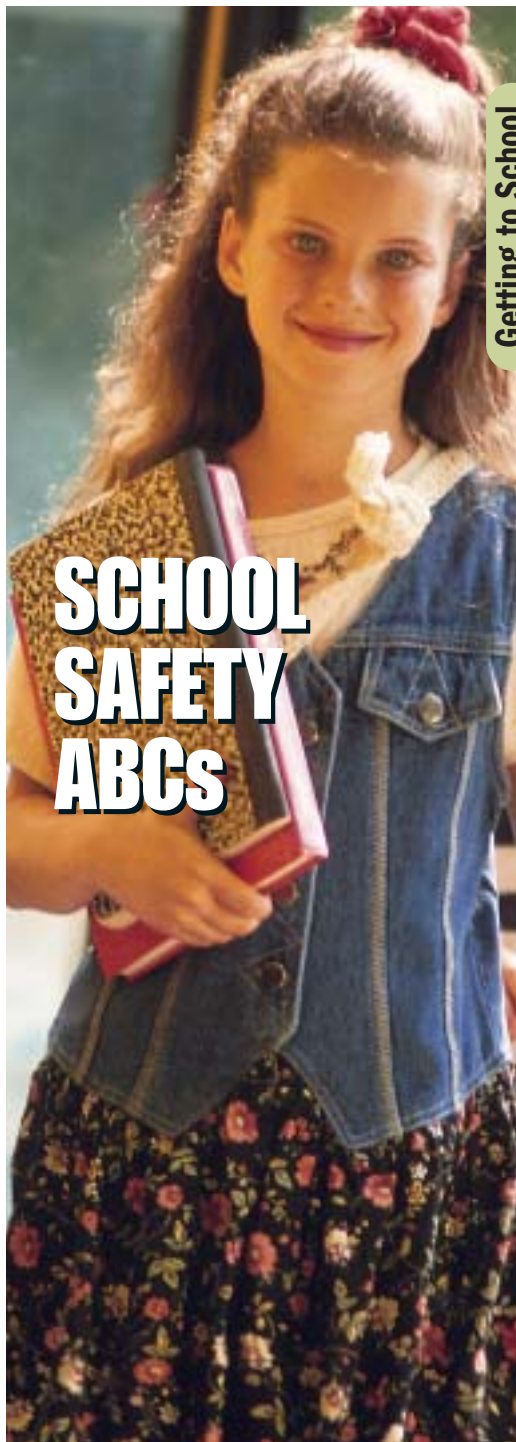
United 'Best Co-op Ever'

My electric company is United Co-operative Services out of Stephenville in Erath County. I want to send my praise and thanks for our nighttime, storm-

Continued on page 36

We want to hear from our readers. Send letters to: Editor, Texas Co-op Power, 2650 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.



Getting to School

The school buses are rolling and excited children are on their way to and from classes. It's time to start thinking about back-to-school safety!

Safety Comes First:

- Look left, right, then left again before crossing the street.
- Take directions from crossing guards.
- Cross in front of the bus only after the driver signals it's OK to do so.

Riding the school bus:

- Find a safe place for your child to wait for the bus, away from traffic and the street.
- Teach your child to stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals that it's safe to enter.
- When your child is dropped off, make sure he/she knows to exit the bus and walk 10 giant steps away from the bus and to be aware of the street traffic in the area.



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A row of wind turbines on a hill against a clear blue sky. The turbines are white with three blades each, and they are positioned on a dark, vegetated ridge. The sky is a uniform light blue.

r e n e w a b l e

It's hard to decide which is more remarkable in McCamey, the new “wind energy capital of Texas”—the number of mesas already topped by hundreds of whirring wind turbines or the number of mesas yet to be developed.

If you can see this much power and potential within range of McCamey, one small West Texas town, how much wind and other forms of renewable energy could be tapped throughout the state?




TEXAS

by Soll Sussman photos by Greg Smith

Just follow the country roads to what feels very much like the top of the world, a ridge hosting a line of gargantuan wind turbines; stand among the pepper grass, mesquite and nopales; feel the rush of the wind coming over the edge, and the elaborately detailed, highly technical answer comes to you in an instant.

A lot.



*"It's not an
obnoxious sound
—especially if you get a
little royalty off of it."*

Since 1998, in three counties within 20 miles of McCamey in the heart of the Permian Basin, developers have built five wind farms with approximately 800 turbines capable of producing about 860 megawatts (MW) of electricity—enough to power a quarter-million homes.

"This is our second industry in 75 years," said Sherry Phillips, mayor of the town of 1,800 people. "It's been oil field, period." From the time of the oil bust in the 1980s to the recent wind boom, she said, "We nearly bled to death, is what we did."

Now she can talk enthusiastically about how a small motel may be built in McCamey, so visitors will no longer need to stay up the road in Crane or 20 miles to the east in Rankin, and how the wind companies have provided jobs for young people.

Although access to the wind farms usually is restricted, the town has talked about buying a van to drive tourists to the most impressive vistas, or locating a visitors' center on a convenient ridge with a view.

From a distance, the wind farms are forests of toothpicks sticking up from the mesas. Closer up, they are almost otherworldly—an army of monolithic metal giants with three-pronged revolving blades. Stand immediately below one of the gargantuan towers and you can see why it's mostly young people who have the maintenance jobs, climbing up the interior of the 200-foot columns to the tops. They work in two-person crews. The first climbs up, lets the winch down to haul up the tools, then the second one climbs up so they can work together on the computer-controlled turbine and its 97-foot blades.

Many of the 242 wind turbines on Woodward Mountain are clearly visible—bigger than a child's pinwheel but not close enough to make out the details—from the tiled office and sun-room of Eddie Mae and Louis Woodward's ranch home. The sound drifts

over, especially at times when wind speed changes, but at this distance it's hard to make out the swoosh of the blades over the sound of the normal West Texas wind.

"It's not an obnoxious sound—especially if you get a little royalty off of it," said Louis Woodward, who describes his age as being in the "very low 80s."

"I haven't found it a disadvantage," Eddie Mae agreed. "The livestock adjust to it—the deer and the wildlife."

There are some public concerns, however, about wind turbines being somewhat dangerous for birds and bats. Bats seem unable to detect huge structures in their flight path.

By the mid-1990s, wind developers were checking out the area looking for potential sites. "Walt Hornaday [from Cielo Wind Power] came to this area and saw the flat-top mesa and the road coming down here," Louis said. "We got serious and negotiated for quite awhile."

"It felt like he was one of my kids, he was here so much," Eddie Mae said.

The Renewable Portfolio Standard, signed into law by then-Governor George W. Bush, clinched it for wind energy to become part of the West Texas landscape. Mandating that Texas add 2,880 MW of renewable energy by 2009, it was considered one of the country's boldest steps to diversify energy sources. Nearly 20 percent of all the new wind power in the world came from Texas in 2001, and the 912 MW of wind generation capacity installed that year was more than had been installed in the entire country in any previous year.

By 2002, wind energy produced \$13.2 million in tax revenue for schools and counties, while Texas landowners hosting the sites received about \$2.5 million in wind royalty income.

It wasn't good topography alone that made the McCamey area so attractive. As Hornaday tells it, it was the transmission lines. In the days of the oil boom, McCamey had a refinery and a thriving population exceeding 10,000. Long after the refinery burned down and the citizens headed out, the network of electric lines remained. "They actually had a pretty good transmission infrastructure," he said.

Getting wind power from the rural areas where it originates to the urban areas where it's most in demand presents

Continued on page 12



WAFFLE IRON CORNBREAD

1 egg
1 cup milk
1 cup flour
1 cup cornmeal
 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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*

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the heart of Texas.*



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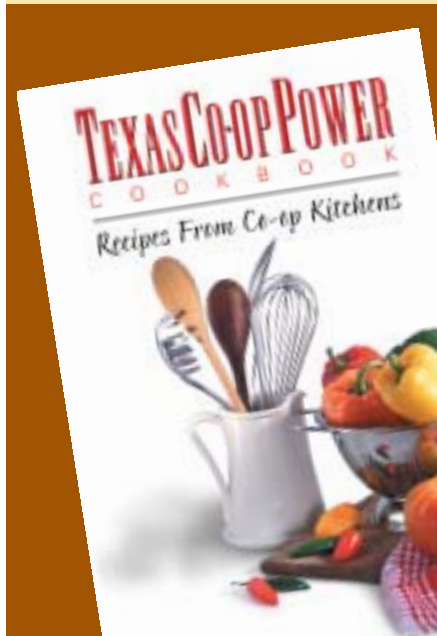
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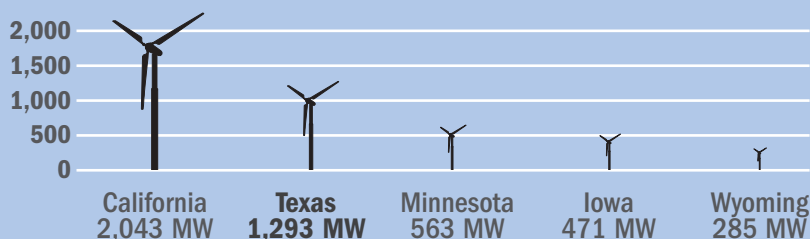
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gale-force growth

Wind power in the U.S., now 6,374 MW of installed capacity, has been growing by 28% per year since 1999. Here are the leading states.



Source: Rural Electric Magazine

co-ops are testing the wind

When the Brazos Wind Ranch opened with 160 one-megawatt (MW) turbines in Borden and Scurry counties on the Panhandle Plains, the management at **Big Country Electric Cooperative** was cheering.

"It will definitely help the area as far as the tax base and jobs," said Fredda Buckner, the co-op's general manager. Big Country became the first cooperative to join the Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association. Big Country powers the wind ranch's offices in Fluvanna and provides grid power to their substation.

Golden Spread Electric Cooperative also worked with Big Country to provide construction and start-up power for the new wind ranch. So far, the power generated by the wind ranch goes to customers elsewhere in Texas. Buckner says that all of Big Country's power needs are currently under contract, "so we don't have the luxury of looking for alternative power sources right now."

The Hale County Farm and Ranch Museum in Hale Center has a pilot 3.5-kilowatt wind project whose 40-foot tower is visible from the interstate between Lubbock and Amarillo. "This was our first attempt with wind power," said Monte Wolgamott, director of operations and engineering for **South Plains Electric Cooperative**. Partly funded by the Texas State Energy Conservation Office, the project serves as a way to gain experience producing wind power and also shows what can be done on a smaller scale than commercial wind farms.

Two of the museum's five buildings get power for lighting, heating and climate control from the wind project. "We wanted to demonstrate what some reasonable payback ideas would be if you tried this on your own," Wolgamott said.

Taylor Electric Cooperative provides auxiliary power for the 150-MW Trent Mesa wind farm near Abilene.

Bandera Electric Cooperative offers a "Choose to Renew" voluntary option, letting its members purchase 100 kilowatt-hour blocks of wind energy obtained through the Lower Colorado River Authority for an additional \$1 per block. "We've had a good response," said Stephen Williams, member services safety adviser at Bandera EC.

TAME YOUR TREES

Tree Trimming

We love our trees, but when branches are too close to power lines, they can cause power outages, fire hazards and safety concerns.

Here are some rules to follow:

- If a tree or a large branch is touching or falls on an electric line, call your electric cooperative immediately. Tree sap is an excellent conductor of electricity, so a downed branch on a line is an electrocution hazard as well as a fire hazard.
- Never trim trees that grow close to power lines; that is a job for professionals. Call your electric co-op for assistance and guidance.
- Don't allow children to climb trees or build tree houses close to power lines.
- When planting a tree, plan ahead. A tiny tree may eventually grow large enough to damage power lines and possibly interrupt power during storms. At maturity, your trees should not be within 10 feet of a power line.
- Plant appropriate distances from all power lines—those along the street or right-of-way, as well as those running to your home and outbuildings.



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Because many pieces of farm equipment reach heights of 14 feet or higher, always remember to look up when entering fields and barn lots to make sure there is enough room to pass beneath electric lines. Electric contact accidents can result in loss of limbs or even death.


Farm Safety Rules:

- The number one electrical farm hazard is the potential contact from a grain auger to a power line. Always look up before raising or moving an auger.
- The same is true of metal irrigation pipe, often stored along fence lines under an electric line. Never raise or move irrigation pipe without looking up. A few seconds of caution can mean the difference between life and death.
- Be sure hand tools are in good working order and use them according to manufacturers' instructions.
- Ensure that the wiring in your workshop is adequate to handle your tools. And never operate any electric tools near water.
- Read labels and handling instructions carefully and follow them when using chemicals and herbicides. Never leave chemicals where children or animals can get into them; store them in a locked cabinet if possible. Safely dispose of containers.

CULTIVATE FARM SAFETY



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geothermal

gaining ground

By Kaye Northcott

Did you know that in Texas, the ground temperature 6 feet down stays a constant 68 to 72 degrees? That makes the state a good candidate for geothermal heating and cooling. Indeed, some cooperatives actively promote use of "heat pump" systems, whether they transfer heat to the air or into the earth.

Geothermal systems make use of the earth's ability to store natural heat. In winter, the heat pump uses water and environmentally safe antifreeze to pump the earth's heat into the home. In summer, the process is reversed.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognizes geothermal systems as the most energy-efficient, environmentally friendly and cost-effective comfort systems available.

Installing a high-quality geothermal system could cost more than a conventional heating and cooling system, but energy cost savings provide a payback in 3.5 to 5 years, according to one estimate. And the estimated life of a unit could be 20 years. In this case, "geothermal" does not tap into hot springs such as those used at mineral spas. These systems use the sun's rays that have been transferred to Earth's outer layer. The only other energy required is a small amount of electricity.

The heart of a system is an "earth loop" that transfers heat to or from the ground. The ground heat is transferred by circulating water and environmentally safe antifreeze through the system. It can then be used to transfer heat into the house or remove it. Loops can be closed or open.

closed loops For a horizontal loop, a chain trencher or backhoe is used to dig one or more trenches 4 to 6 feet deep and 100 to 300 feet long. High-density polyethylene pipe is then buried in the ground.

If surface area is limited, vertical loops can be inserted into vertical boreholes drilled to a depth of about 125 to 250 feet. U-shaped loops of pipe are inserted into the holes, which are backfilled with a sealing solution. Or the loops can be coiled and placed on the bottom of a nearby body of water such as a lake, river, pond or ocean. A half-acre, 8-foot-deep pond is usually sufficient for the average home.

open loops Open loops can be installed where there is an abundant supply of well water. Proper discharge sites can include ditches, streams or ponds if the discharge meets local codes. This is usually the least expensive system to install. However, pumping costs and water with high mineral content should be considerations.

"Heat pumps save you money," said Ricki Keeling, manager of member services for Rusk County Electric Co-op.

For more information on geothermal systems, contact the U.S. Department of Energy, 1-877-337-3463, www.eere.energy.gov.

Kaye Northcott is editor of Texas Co-op Power.



Closed Horizontal



Closed Vertical



Closed Body of Water



Open Well System

Continued from page 9

challenges. The issue has caused enough debate to prompt one joke that the easiest solution to Texas' transmission problems would be to simply move Dallas to Midland.

Limited transmission infrastructure is just one of the issues slowing wind power development since the 2001 boom year. A federal Production Tax Credit for wind, making it considerably more viable to produce, expired, and its eagerly expected renewal has been caught up in the Congressional wrangling over the national energy bill.

At Cielo's Austin headquarters, Hornaday, 36, showed off the corner room with a Capitol view and a foosball table ready for celebration after each new project. "This room doesn't see as much action as it used to," he said. Despite layoffs of some Cielo staff and the delay in starting new projects, Hornaday and many others in the renewable energy industry believe that Texas' enormous potential makes more development inevitable. Although most of the turbines in the current crop of West Texas wind farms range from 1.3 to 2 MW each, a 3 MW experimental turbine is firmly planted on King Mountain near McCamey.



"The wind power resource will never be capped," Hornaday said. "There will always be potential." Cielo's survey of Carson County in the Panhandle found viable locations that could handle 20,000 MW of wind production.

A United Nations study found that Texas has more renewable energy in wind, solar and biomass than any other state in the country. Add in the hopes for geothermal energy as well as hydroelectric, wave and tidal energy, and boosters can hardly contain their enthusiasm. A Rural Alliance for Renewable Energy recently formed and held an economic development expo in Amarillo.

"Every area has a different set of opportunities," said Russel Smith, founder of the Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association. Drawing a general outline, West Texas and the Gulf Coast have enormous wind potential, East Texas has a huge native biomass resource, and South Texas has its solar option. Expansion of the transmission grid to reflect the new regional opportunities as well as an increase in the Renewable Portfolio Standard to 10 percent are at the top of Smith's wish list.

Texas is hardly alone in pushing for more emphasis on renewable energy. At the recent North American Energy Summit in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Governor Bill Richardson, a Democrat, and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, a Republican, issued

program for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, encouraging electric co-ops to apply.

Members of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association have endorsed fuel diversity, encouraging all co-ops "to support research and development to promote the utilization of all existing and new fuels and technologies including those that utilize domestic resources."

The fifth annual Renewable Energy Roundup and Green Living Fair, scheduled for September 24-26 in Fredericksburg, puts a broader array of technologies on public view, from a bio-diesel fueled train ride to rainwater harvesting and straw bale construction. Kathryn



*"All of us involved in renewable energy in Texas believe it is **the future of energy in America,** but there is a great deal still to do to finally realize the potential."*



a joint call to develop at least 30,000 MW of sustainable energy resources in the West by 2015 and to increase the efficiency of energy use by 20 percent by 2020. The U.S. Department of Agriculture opened a \$23 million grant

Houser, the Roundup's coordinator, said, "All of us involved in renewable energy in Texas believe it is the future of energy in America, but there is a great deal still to do to finally realize the potential."

Soll Sussman reported from Mexico, Central America and Canada for The Associated Press before returning to Texas. He now is a freelance writer in Austin.

The Windmill Farm

By Soll Sussman Photos by Glen Ellman

The windmills flanking the beaten path to Chuck and Ruby Rickgauer's home are the first clue to the couple's interest in the graceful devices that allowed the settlement of much of Texas. But once you reach the barn, you realize this is no mere interest. It's a passion.

Stacked and crammed with metal belts and chains, tools, spare parts, widgets, gears, and gadgets of every variety, the barn is windmill heaven, the nerve center that turned the Rickgaues' 26 acres west of Granbury into the Windmill Farm and Bed and Breakfast.

The Windmill Farm, the largest privately owned collection of windmills in the state, started more or less on a whim. On a visit to Ruby's



family farm in South Dakota, Ruby said her husband noticed the old, unused windmill and asked her mother if he could have it. They hauled it back to Tolar 12 years ago, where it's now identified as No. 30 on the tour, a 6-foot Aermotor Model 702 "circa 1933 and still going."

"Until I was in the seventh grade, that was the only source of water we had," Ruby said. "When I was a kid on the farm and the wind didn't blow, I had to pump—because the cows had to have water." She still remembers pumping water often and having the job of turning the pump on and off, especially in storms. Chuck pointed out the pump's safety switch, a simple homemade rig of baling wire.

"My dad was good with baling wire," Ruby said.

Now, more than 150 windmills later, they are definitely "windmillers," hobbyists who rescue and restore a technology that's right up there with railroads and barbed wire at the core of the American frontier.

"I started buying them and bringing them home. One thing led to another," Chuck said. An electrical engineer by trade, he is entirely self-taught in the intricacies of windmill restoration, happy to put the machinery in working order and back on top of their 25- to 35-foot platforms. The windmills themselves range from 5 to 12 feet in diameter.

The sculpture of a climbing cowboy dramatizes this Eclipse windmill.

**Diehard windmill fans
can stay at the Windmill
Farm Bed and Breakfast.**



There are 36 on display at the Windmill Farm, and each is unique. The rest have been sold after restoration, mostly for yard art. "Of the 159 we've restored, there are maybe five that pump water—maybe 10," Chuck said. "Not many people are pumping with these old things."

Windmills were developed in Europe in the 12th century to grind grain and have had a long and varied history since then.

Chuck explained that windmills played a major part in the settlement of rural America because they let farmers and ranchers pump water up from 100 or 200 feet below the ground, allowing people and cattle to live away from the surface water of coasts, rivers and lakes where population had clustered until the latter half of the 19th century. Windmills especially thrived from the 1880s to the 1950s but became increasingly less important as the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and the nation's rural cooperatives started bringing electricity to the nation's farms more than 60 years ago.

"Most [windmill] companies were out of business by the '50s," Chuck said.

The only remaining American manufacturers are Aermotor, based in San Angelo, and Monitor, based in Kansas.

"I can tell you a story about every windmill," Chuck said on a walk up the dirt lane leading from their home to the front gate, with a windmill every 10 feet along the way. "I love that little clicking sound it makes," he said as one model's wheel closed down automatically as wind speed increased. He stopped at No. 20 on their simply printed guide, a 10-foot Monitor Vaneless with wood blade mills and a cast-iron disc for a counter weight, trying manually to get it to start spinning. "C'mon, I know you're old," he coaxed it with a gentle shake.

He talked about the technological advances that made windmills easier to use over the decades, pointing out the Wonder A model and the steel ball that was used to shift its gears. "That's how they still make them today," he said. The improvement meant that the windmills only needed to be oiled once a year, instead of as often as once a week, a big step ahead for those who had the task of clambering up to the platforms, oil can in hand.

Windmills were designed in different sizes, with varying types of gears and wheels. There was a full range of models from deluxe to economy, depending on the farmer's budget or whether water needed to be pumped from a shallow or deep well.

About 400 people turn out annually for a national windmillers' convention, where collectors can swap lore and parts. Since the materials are generally no longer made, Chuck has a multitude of parts in his barn or on the "bone pile" of miscellaneous larger parts and rescued bits and pieces just outside.

The bed and breakfast was Ruby's idea. Two guest cabins—each filled with antiques—take advantage of the appeal of the Rickgauers' location in the Texas Brazos River Valley. From the porch, guests can sit and reflect on a piece of living history in the old windmills that stretch as far as the eye can see.

The grounds of the Windmill Farm are open to those who want to drive through and look at the windmills. There's a contribution box by the gate to help defray some of the restoration expenses. Guided tours are available by calling ahead for an appointment: (254) 835-4168 or cell (817) 279-2217. Double occupancy at the bed and breakfast is \$125 a night. www.thewindmillfarm.com

United Cooperative Services provides electricity for the farm.

Vintage windmill motors from Monitor and Aermotor, the last remaining windmill manufacturers.



Hit the Wind Power Trail

By Soll Sussman

The Windmill Farm is the southeasternmost stop on a new "American Wind Power Trail" through West Texas and Oklahoma, attracting tourists' attention to the past, present and future of wind energy.

The trail tells "the entire story of the wind as the historic energy source that allowed people to live in the Great

Plains," said Seth Davidson of Wildsteps, a Texas Panhandle-based marketer for rural tourism projects. "It's a trail that lets people look at vintage windmill collections."

The project, outlined at www.windpowertrail.com, lists its goals as attracting visitors to the Plains, educating people about wind energy, and educating people about vintage windmills and pioneer history.

Among the stops are three modern wind farms, including Blue Canyon

Wind Farm, operated by Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, north of Lawton, Oklahoma. In addition to vintage collections, museums and wind farms, manufacturers and assorted other wind-related attractions like the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, also are on the map.

"We had so many things, we had to pick and choose," Davidson said. "We finally got to the point when we had to put a period at the end of it."

With a first edition of the American Wind Power Trail map published in April and an audio CD out in June, Davidson already is working on a second edition for 2005. He said wind-related sites in three other states have approached him about joining the trail.

"The more the word got around, the more communities wanted to be a part of it," Coy Harris, executive director of the American Wind Power Center in Lubbock, said of the new project. "We hope they [visitors] will learn some things and see some things they've never seen before."

The Lubbock center claims the world's largest collection (130) of vintage windmills.

Tree Climbing

Your safety is a top priority at your electric co-op. And it's even more important when it comes to our kids. It's up to all of us to watch out for their safety.

Safety Rules for Trees:

- Don't plant trees or install tall playground equipment under or near power lines.
- Don't build tree houses in trees near electric lines.
- Don't allow children to climb trees growing near electric lines.
- Teach your children always to look up to check for power lines before climbing trees or any tall objects.
- Keep children away from ladders, poles or work equipment that may be near power lines.
- Set a good example by following these rules yourself.

And the Number One safety rule for everyone to remember is this: Don't touch a power line or anything that's touching the power line. No one can tell simply by looking at a line whether it is energized or not, and contact with a power line can be deadly. Look up and live!



Texas Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

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DON'T GO OUT ON A LIMB!



SMOOTH SAILING

Don't let a safety accident spoil your boating fun. Remember these important rules and make sure that others observe them, too:

Safety Rules for Sailing:

- Before you put your boat in the water, take time to visually survey your marina or favorite launching area. Note any overhead wires and share the information with others.
- Stepping your mast or sailing anywhere near an overhead power line is dangerous! Masts, fishing poles or tall radio antennae could contact overhead wires.
- Make a habit of looking up to check for lines before moving or rigging your vessel.
- Check navigation charts for the location of any underwater cables, and don't take the chance of disturbing these cables by anchoring your boat near them.

And always stay out of the water—whether boating or swimming—during a storm. If you're already in the water when a storm threatens, get out as quickly, and safely, as possible.

Follow these rules when boating and you'll always have more fun.



**Texas Electric
Cooperatives**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

This public service message is brought to you by your local electric cooperative. For more information, visit your local co-op.

INSTALL CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

You may remember the great tennis player Vitas Gerulaitis. He died while sleeping at the home of a friend whose swimming pool heater malfunctioned, leaking carbon monoxide (CO) into the air.



If you don't have carbon monoxide detectors in your home, now is a good time to install them. While carbon monoxide poisoning is usually associated with malfunctioning gas furnaces in the winter, any gas appliance can cause a problem.

A carbon monoxide detector can alert you to a leak before it makes you sick or kills you.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that forms when an appliance fails to fully burn the natural gas or other fossil fuel that runs it.

Estimates of the number of carbon monoxide victims vary: Some say tens of thousands suffer from low-level exposure to the invisible gas but don't seek treatment because its symptoms—which very often strike during heating season—mimic the

flu, which also attacks during cold weather.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 2,000 people die from carbon monoxide exposure every year, and that the gas, which can come from a furnace, stove, water heater, fireplace, generator or even a barbecue grill used indoors, is the leading cause of accidental poisoning.

Carbon monoxide detectors range in price from around \$15 to \$60. It's a small investment that can protect you in a big way.

PAY THE BILL; CHANGE THE FILTER

Every month when you write your check to pay your electric bill, change or clean your air conditioner's filter as well.

Clean filters allow air to pass through easily and uninterrupted. The easier the flow of air, the less work your air conditioner has to do—and the less energy it uses to do it. That means more money in your pocket.

It's also a healthy habit to form. Air that passes through clogged, dirty filters carries dirt through your ducts and into your rooms. Dirty indoor air can affect family members, especially those with allergies.

You'll find the filter for your central air conditioner in the wall or ceiling, usually behind a grate; filters also are contained within window units.

There are two kinds of filters: reusable filters that you can rinse, dry and replace (be sure to thoroughly dry a reusable filter before replacing it); and disposable filters that you replace with fresh ones each month.

ATTEND YOUR ANNUAL MEETING

It's not every company that invites its customers to an annual meeting to elect the board of directors and help set policy.

But your electric cooperative does just that.

When you signed up as a consumer of the electric cooperative, you



automatically became a member and a part-owner of that utility.

Cooperatives use a business model that's different from other companies. They don't sell stock on Wall Street, so there are no out-of-town investors.

Control of a cooperative utility is local.

Each customer of a cooperative is an equal partner in that utility. You may run for a seat on the board of directors, if you'd like. You may vote for the candidates who do run—and know that every candidate is also a consumer of the co-op.

So it's important to attend your cooperative's annual meeting. It's a place where you can meet the manager and staff who run the cooperative and get to know the consumer/directors who advise the staff and decide on important policy matters.

It's also where you can vote for the board of directors and learn what kinds of business issues your cooperative is dealing with.

Membership in a cooperative comes with these privileges. It also comes with the responsibility to keep on top of cooperative matters and cast your vote for the directors you think will do the best job.

TURN OFF SMALL APPLIANCES

Your electric appliances need a vacation this summer as much as you do.

After you clear your calendar and pack your suitcase so you can enjoy a week or two away from home and work, sweep through your home to unplug appliances that will sit idle while you're gone. If you don't, they could still guzzle electricity—and add to your electric bill—while your house is empty.

Electronic devices like your television, VCR, and cable or satellite TV box continue to draw electricity even when your TV is turned off. The lighted clocks and timer displays on the devices are electrically operated.

Same goes for the microwave oven, automatic coffee maker, electric alarm clocks and any small appliance that displays numbers. And those battery chargers you have all over the house for your cell phone, hand-held vacuum cleaner and power tools will keep the electric meter spinning as long as they're plugged into an outlet.

So unplug them, and unplug



power strips from the wall. Simply turning them off does not stop them from gobbling kilowatts while you're gone.

You won't save a pile of money that way, of course. Small appliances draw just a tiny bit of electricity. But the draw is constant. And whereas a single device might use an undetectable amount of power, dozens of them can contribute to a slightly higher-than-necessary electric bill for an empty home.

In fact, even when nobody's using them, each small electric appliance—left plugged in—can add from 25¢ to \$3 per month to your electric bill.

WATER AND ELECTRICITY DON'T MIX

If you've got a pool or a sprinkler in your backyard, remind your kids: Water and electricity never mix.

- Keep power tools and electric toys away from water—and that includes rain, wet ground and garden hoses.

- Install weatherproof covers and ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) on outdoor electrical outlets to protect yourself and others against shock. Put GFCIs on indoor electrical outlets in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry room.

- Before you allow children to play in your yard, take a look around. Do not place pools under power lines or let kids climb trees near power lines. And if a kite gets stuck in a power line, call your electric cooperative for help. You could get shocked, injured or even killed if you try to remove the kite yourself.



CLEAN GARAGES ARE SAFER

The two-car garage often is so crowded with household items and trash that there's no room for even a single car.

Get in there and clean it out!

Most garages harbor many hazards. Make yours a safer place.

- Keep raccoons, chipmunks, mice and rodents out of the garage by keeping garbage and uneaten food away from it. Such pests can nest in air intakes and vents and chomp on wiring.
- If you must store fuel in the garage, keep it in proper containers that are free from corrosion and sealed tightly.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the garage.
- Clean up spills. They could be flammable or dangerous to children and pets.
- Discard old batteries by taking them to a recycling center.
- Keep power tools, extension cords and adapters unplugged and stored out of the reach of children.
- Ventilate your garage with fans or ceiling vents.
- Check with your insurance agent to make sure the contents of your garage are covered in case of fire or other damage.

In the Boat With LBJ

BY JOHN L. BULLION

Somehow LBJ had gotten his hands on an amphibious car. To the uninformed eye, it looked like a squat, broad, ugly blue convertible. It had no ornaments identifying it as the product of any manufacturer, which enabled him to describe it to his guests as an experimental automobile, a prototype of future vehicles. ... In practice, it was a seriously underpowered motorboat, more akin on the water to a slow golf cart than something capable of pulling water skiers. ... That this hybrid mess was never mass-produced should not astonish anyone. But for practical jokers, an amphibious car was a seductive product indeed.

When newly married couples came to the ranch, LBJ would take them for a test drive in this “experimental” car. Husband and wife were in the back seat; Johnson drove, and someone in on the joke rode in the front passenger seat. As they toured the countryside, the president would drop into the conversation his general dissatisfaction with the car. Not enough power—although that means we can get a good look at the country, it won’t do for the road. The steering, it seems loose—but at this low speed, so what? The brakes aren’t very tight—we’ll have to ease into these turns. This was accompanied by presidential frowns and shaking of his head, and then he would again start pointing out wildflowers or deer or cattle. Before it was time to go back home, the passengers had become aware that there were problems with the car, but the president had adjusted to them.

Finally, LBJ reached the last leg of the journey toward the house. The route he had chosen approached it from the other side of the Pedernales, so he had to go over the low water dam. At this point, the Secret Service vehicle ahead of him would speed up, leaving plenty of room for his maneuvers. As he came toward the dam, LBJ would floor the accelerator, making

the car go as fast as it could manage. At the same time, he would begin swinging it back and forth, cursing the unreliable steering. The final step was to suddenly yell that the brakes weren’t working, just as he careened onto the low water crossing. With one hand, of course, he was surreptitiously pointing the car at the deep side of the dam. Then he drove it into the water, shouting that he couldn’t control it and urging everyone to jump. The real test on this drive had begun.

For the joke to work perfectly, at least one person had to bail out.



LBJ driving friends in his floating car (April 15, 1965). Courtesy of the LBJ Library in Austin.

Ideally, it would be the wife, because then the husband had to decide whether he would plunge in after her. If he did, then Johnson would laugh and announce it was obvious that he really loved her, because he was prepared to risk his life to save hers. Should the husband jump first, the president would note that he clearly was more interested in preserving his own neck than his bride’s. The wife, if she leaped in after her spouse, received the praise she had earned. If each one jumped out of the side of the car closest to them, LBJ’s reactions varied according to how rapidly they sought each other out in the water. There would be some comment about looking out for one’s own hide first, to be sure; whether he judged them to be truly in love depended on the speed with which they looked for one another and swam closer. After he’d delivered his judgment, soaked guests were hauled back into the car by the passenger in the front seat and taken on

a brief water cruise up the Pedernales.

What if no one responded to his commands? I suppose then there might be sardonic remarks from LBJ about people frozen in fear. I can’t say, because I believe the trick always had the result he hoped for. What he could count on was the understandable and natural apprehension people felt at the prospect of being trapped in a car and drowning. ... This exploiting of primal and acquired fears reveals how vicious the joke was. LBJ had designed it to activate those fears, and the nearer one’s reactions approached unreasonable terror, the better. Moreover, it posed a test of marriage that could have profound implications for the future of the relationship.

Everyone wants to believe that in moments of physical danger the partner closest to him or her would react immediately to protect and to save. This doesn’t always happen, because people do not confront actual emergencies every day, and the shock of such a crisis can immobilize as often as it energizes. Freezing up leaves both the unresponsive one and the one in trouble feeling awkward, angry, guilty, or a combination of those deep emotions. Without question, the feelings generated by an unrescued leap of faith would be intensified at the moment and cemented in their memories by the laughter and comments of the president of the United States.

The amphibious car can be seen during bus tours of the LBJ Ranch National Historical Park near Stonewall. For information, go to www.NPS.gov/lyjo.

John L. Bullion’s father, Waddy, was a close business associate of Lyndon Johnson. Bullion’s intimate account of that association, in *The Boat With LBJ*, was published by Republic of Texas Press in 2001 (RepublicofTexasPress.com). Bullion is professor of history at the University of Missouri–Columbia.

Photo tinting by Sarah Bond

Don't Get Zapped!

What did dumb ol' D-Wayne feel when he got caught up in that electric fence? If he was lucky, it just felt like a bee sting. Or the shock might have hurt really bad. It just depends how much of an electrical charge the fence holds.

Any electric shock is too much!

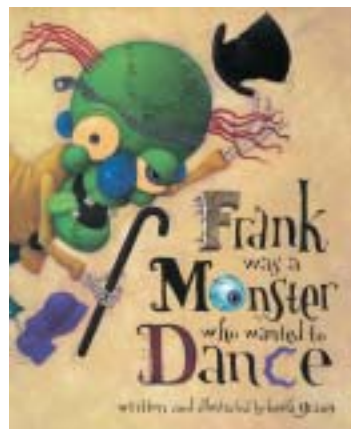
Electric fences are used to keep deer and other pests out of gardens and to keep domesticated animals penned up. A fence charged to keep cattle or horses in a pasture is going to feel a lot worse than a bee sting. That's because a cattle or horse fence has a charge high enough to penetrate an animal's fur and tough hide. Even cows and horses quickly learn not to brush up against an electric fence because it hurts! They remember how it felt.

You don't have a thick hide and fur, and even if you did, you wouldn't want to touch an electric fence. There's nothing fun about it.

Fortunately, electric fences give only short bursts of energy that last about a thousandth of a second, so there's time for a person or an animal to move away from the wire before the next burst of energy comes. Pull back immediately if you are shocked.

The best advice for you, as well as for Marvin and D-Wayne, is: **STAY AWAY FROM ELECTRIC FENCES!**

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*, below, *Uncle Blubbafink's Seriously Ridiculous Stories* and *Loretta: Ace Pinky Scout*.



Iodine



A.J. Garces

By Mary Gordon Spence

We were afraid of splinters, hangnails, scrapes or scratches, at least when Daddy was home. His first-aid treatment was always the same—iodine. It burned, and we screamed.

“Blow,” Daddy would say.

And we’d blow, hoping the fierce sting would quickly subside if we blew hard and fast enough.

When Daddy was out of town, we didn’t worry much about cuts. Mother would wash them off and apply Mercurochrome, or

monkey blood, as we called it. Monkey blood didn’t burn. But the dreaded iodine burned like crazy and left a rusty stain. Some of our friends showed up at school with their cuts glowing in the dark. Their parents had treated them with the neon pinkish Merthiolate. Our parents sanctioned only monkey blood and iodine.

While Daddy made liberal and regular use of iodine his guidepost for life, Mother leaned more toward warnings.

“Don’t run with scissors. You might fall down and poke your eye out.”

“Don’t run with that sucker in your mouth; you’ll poke out your eye.”

There were so many ways to poke out our eyes, and Mother knew them all.

Once, when I was feeling a little rebellious, and Mother wasn’t around, I ran down our long hall with a grape sucker in my mouth. Nothing bad happened, but that was certainly because I had recited the Twenty-third Psalm

before embarking on this daring adventure.

While Mother sternly delivered the poke-your-eyes-out warnings with regularity, her most adamant one concerned cats. “Don’t ever pet stray cats.”

Know what happens when you pet stray cats? You get ringworm.

And my brother came down with a bunch of them the week after he spent the night with Tommy Pollard.

“Look at me,” my mother commanded him.

"Did you pet a stray cat while you were at Tommy Pollard's?"

Her young son remorsefully admitted that he had indeed petted a stray cat. I guess he didn't repeat the Twenty-third Psalm beforehand. Now he was paying the price.

Although we worried about the ringworm, what really troubled us was the notion that my brother might have to put on one of those white cotton caps that his friend Charles Hicks had to wear when he got ringworm. Lucky for my brother, he stayed at home during his ringworm episode so he was spared the humiliation of the cap. But the ringworm lingered.

After weeks of unsuccessful conventional treatment, Daddy decided to tackle the problem more aggressively. He got a needle from his Singer sewing machine cabinet, held it in the flame of a burning match and scraped open the hundreds of little blisters on my brother's head. That's when he put his favorite product to good use: iodine. He saturated the blisters with iodine, dunking the glass applicator in the bottle time after time. I can still hear that poor five-year-old screaming at the top of his lungs while Daddy yelled at me to blow. Within a week, the ringworm had disappeared.

Another iodine nightmare occurred the evening before the first day of my fourth grade school year. My brother, sister, father and I had gathered around our kitchen table, peeling and slicing pears, participating in our fall ritual of making pear preserves. The knife Daddy assigned to me had been

with him since his Navy days—a six-inch, silver blade with a razor sharp edge.

The big, crisp pears from my grandparents' tree were hard to peel, and as I struggled with the task, the knife slipped and cut a deep gash in my left thumb.

"No stitches, no stitches," I screamed between sobs as Daddy led me into the bathroom.

I'd never had stitches, but the stories that circulated about getting sewn up at the Brownwood hospital were not pretty.

"Give me your hand," he ordered.

Because he stood more than six-foot-five, and I a mere three-foot-five, Daddy's grasp stretched my arm upward as far as it would reach. He examined my thumb, washed it under the running water, and then opened the bottle of iodine he had taken down from the medicine cabinet.

"No iodine; no iodine," I screamed. "I need stitches! Get me some stitches!"

Holding my hand firmly, he poured the dreaded potion onto my throbbing thumb. I screamed bloody murder. Stitches from Daddy's old black Singer sewing machine couldn't have caused as much pain as the iodine did. My thumb still bears the scar from that gash.

This wasn't the first time that my thumb had borne the stain of iodine. My parents had used it as an anti-thumb sucking remedy years earlier. The theory? Douse the favorite digit with iodine, and presto—the nasty thumb-sucking habit would be broken.

But my brother and I

were smart. Smart and tough. We learned that if we licked hard and fast and were willing to endure the horrible burning on our tongues for a few seconds, our beloved thumbs would once again be ripe for sucking, cleansed of the taste of iodine. The stain, however, remained for days.

Thoroughly convinced of iodine's curative powers on human beings, Daddy started using it on our pets. Our dogs got ringworm soon after my brother's incident. Instead of the needle he had used on my brother's head, Daddy selected steel wool to do the trick on Cindy and Tiger Lilly. He scrubbed the sores and doused them with iodine while the poor dogs howled in pain. Sure enough, within a few weeks, shiny new skin had replaced the lesions. I don't know if the dogs learned not to pet stray cats, but they surely learned a lesson about my daddy.

You can imagine my relief when the American Medical Association, or some other auspicious group, revealed that a thorough rinsing with soap and water was enough to cleanse most abrasions. Now I was free—free to make my own decisions about first-aid treatment. I made a big production of tossing out the bottle of iodine I had used over the years, all the while trying to ignore that nagging warning about death from an infection.

You can also imagine how relieved my children were. Each time I tended their cuts and scrapes, I gently rinsed the affected spot and told them about the iodine treatment of my childhood. They thought of

me as a brave little girl who had endured great torture.

I struggle not to revert to that little girl when I go back to my parents' house. Like I've always done, however, I scope out the house to make sure nothing has changed. I notice each picture, chair and knick-knack. While subtle changes have occurred over the years—things have been moved from shelf to shelf, or room to room—there's one thing that remains exactly the same. The skull and crossbones on the little brown bottle of iodine still stares down at me from the middle shelf of the medicine cabinet. Neither rulings by the American Medical Association nor the turning of a new century has altered the first-aid treatment in this household. And I'm oh so careful while I'm there. I avoid using scissors, knives and ice picks, and I never, ever pet stray cats.

My father's family has a custom at funerals of surreptitiously dropping items particularly treasured by the dear departed into their casket or burial space. I've watched him tenderly put in small bottles of whiskey or special tokens to accompany his father, sister and brother as they began their journeys through eternity. I intend to honor that tradition when my daddy dies. Along with the half-pint of Wild Turkey, I'll be dropping in a bottle of iodine—just for good measure.

Some of Mary Gordon Spence's essays, including this one, have been published as Finding Magic in the Mundane.

To order a copy of the book, go to www.askmarygordon.com, e-mail mg@askmarygordon.com or mail Mary Gordon Spence, P.O. Box 151986, Austin, TX 78715.

Cool Pies for Hot Months

Twice a year, I make Lemon Ice Box Pie for my father. I make it for Father's Day and for his birthday in December, so he gets it about every six months. In fact, I have to make two pies each time—one for him to share with others on the day we celebrate, and one for him to eat by himself during the week afterward. For that week only, he has a slice with his coffee at breakfast and maybe another one before bed with milk. We call it “Daddy’s Pie” because I’ve been making it for him ever since I took over the tradition from my mother at about 11 years old. He says it tastes just like the pie his mother used to make, so I never deviate far from the recipe, although I’ve tried a little change here and there over the years. Once I put cinnamon in the pie crust; another time I topped the pie with candied lemon peel. I always go back to the original, though, which must have come off the back of a can of Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk because I received two of almost the exact same recipe from readers. I have started buying the crust these days; it saves time and tastes just as good to me.

Correction: The recipe for Easy Peach Cobbler in June’s Recipes in Review should have said “self-rising flour” instead of just “flour.”

Lemon Ice Box Pie

9-inch graham cracker pie crust

1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk

3 eggs, separated

1/2 cup lemon juice

1/3 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a bowl, mix together sweetened condensed milk, egg yolks and lemon juice. Continue mixing until lemon juice is fully incorporated and mixture thickens. Pour into pie shell. Using a mixer, beat egg whites until soft peaks form, then gradually add sugar and beat until stiff. Spread meringue over pie, making small peaks with your spatula. Bake until peaks brown. Serves 12.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 245 calories, 5



grams protein, 9 grams fat, 38 grams carbohydrates, 170 milligrams sodium, 58 milligrams cholesterol

One of my coworkers, Tracy Paccone, makes a mean Mississippi Mud Pie. Her mom, Pedernales EC member Kathy Green, gave her the recipe. Tracy says, “My mom or a neighbor would always make it for summer barbecues. All of us kids looked forward to it. It was definitely a summer dessert favorite with our family and our neighbors.” Try making it for your family and neighbors this summer.

Mississippi Mud Pie

Crust

1 stick margarine, softened

1 cup flour, self-rising

1 cup pecans, chopped

Mix together and press into ungreased square pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Set aside to cool.

First Layer

1 cup powdered sugar

1 cup Cool Whip

8 ounces cream cheese

Mix together until smooth. Spread onto cooled crust.

Second Layer

1 package (3 ounces) vanilla instant pudding

Mix using directions for pie filling on package and spread over cream cheese layer.

Third Layer

1 package (3 ounces) chocolate instant pudding

Mix using directions for pie filling on package and spread over vanilla pudding layer.

Fourth Layer

Top with whipped cream and garnish with grated Hershey bar. Chill thoroughly. Serves 16.

Serving size: 1 square. Per serving: 286 calories, 3 grams protein, 18 grams fat, 28 grams carbohydrates, 209 milligrams sodium, 16 milligrams cholesterol

November's recipe contest subject is Party Food. I know it's hard to think of now, in the heat of summer, but we want to know what dishes you bring to holiday parties. Dips, casseroles, hors d'oeuvres ... all are welcome. Send in those holiday favorites by August 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.

What a fun recipe testing this was! We loaded our plates with many different kinds of ice box pie and did some serious eating. The one with the most votes was the rich and creamy Chocolate Turtle Cheesecake Pie submitted by Linda Anders, a member of Fayette Electric Cooperative. She will receive a copy of the *Texas Co-op Power Cookbook*.

Chocolate Turtle Cheesecake Pie Crust

1/2 cup chocolate cookie crumbs
3 tablespoons melted butter

Mix cookie crumbs with melted butter. Press into a 9-inch pie pan and bake at 350 degrees for 6 to 8 minutes (or use a ready-made 9-inch chocolate crumb pie crust).

Filling

1 package (7 ounces) caramels
1/4 cup evaporated milk
3/4 cup chopped pecans, divided
2 small packages (3 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup sour cream
1 1/4 cup milk
1 package (3.9 ounces) chocolate instant pudding mix
1/2 cup fudge topping or chocolate syrup

Place caramels and evaporated milk in heavy saucepan. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring continually, until smooth (about 5 minutes). Stir in 1/2 cup chopped pecans. Pour into pie crust. Combine cream cheese, sour cream and milk in a blender or mixer. Process until smooth. Add pudding mix; process for about 30 seconds longer. Pour pudding mixture over caramel layer, covering evenly.

Chill loosely covered until set, about 15 minutes. Drizzle fudge topping over pudding layer in a decorative pattern. Sprinkle top of cake with remaining pecans. Chill loosely covered until serving time. Serves 12.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 313 calories, 5 grams protein, 19 grams fat, 36 grams carbohydrates, 289 milligrams sodium, 34 milligrams cholesterol

Frosted Blackberry Pie

9-inch pie crust (regular pie crust or graham)
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
1/3 cup lemon juice (fresh or reconstituted)
1 1/2 cups fresh blackberries (save a few big ones for garnish)
Cool Whip or whipped cream

Mix sweetened condensed milk and lemon juice together until thickened. Very gently, fold in blackberries. Spoon into crust and top with Cool Whip or whipped cream. Garnish with a few big berries. Chill several hours or overnight. Serves 12.

Note: In a pinch (like in the winter), I will make it with frozen berries. I have satisfactorily made this with strawberries, blueberries, peaches and bananas.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 233 calories, 4 grams protein, 10 grams fat, 34 grams carbohydrates, 158 milligrams sodium, 18 milligrams cholesterol

Carla Fullerton, Fort Belknap EC

Chocolate Bar Pie

20 large marshmallows
1/2 cup milk
1 large Hershey bar with almonds (need 1/2 pound)
1/2 cup whipping cream
9-inch graham cracker crust

Put marshmallows and milk in a saucepan over low heat. Stir until melted. Break up Hershey bar and add to mixture, stirring until completely melted. Set aside to cool. Whip 1/2 cup whipping cream and fold into cooled mixture. Pour into crust. Chill. Serves 12.

Note: If you like nuts, sprinkle 1/4 cup chopped nuts on top of pie. If you don't like nuts, use a plain Hershey bar.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 297 calories, 4 grams protein, 16 grams fat, 35 grams carbohydrates, 145 milligrams sodium, 20 milligrams cholesterol

Jimmie Dee Conner, Sam Houston EC



SAFE LIVING

Help Prevent Electrical Fires

Do you know what to check for in your home or business to help prevent electrical fires? Here is a list of easy-to-check items and situations:

- **Danger signs.** Check for hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow easily or for no apparent reason, flickering lights, and scorch marks on sockets or plugs.
- **Badly wired plugs.** If wires are sticking out of the plug or look loose, water and debris can get inside the plug.
- **Overloaded outlets.** Too many appliances plugged in can cause overheating.
- **Cords in vulnerable positions.**

Don't leave electric or extension cords where they can be tripped over or near a water source.

- **Water near appliances.** Don't let wires or plugs get wet, and keep all liquids away from electric appliances.
- **Maintenance.** Electrical appliances, especially those that run at high speeds and contain motors (like washing machines and clothes dryers) should be regularly serviced.

Texas summers are hot enough without an unnecessary and destructive fire. Call your electric cooperative if you have any questions about electric safety; they'll be glad to help you.

AROUND TEXAS

August

1. Holy Cross Catholic Church Annual Celebration, **D'Hanis**, (830) 363-7268
1. Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church Festival, **Frelsburg**, (979) 732-3430
- 2-7, 9-14. Shakespeare Under the Stars, **Wimberley**, (512) 847-6969 or www.emilyann.org
3. Brush Country Music Jamboree, **Three Rivers**, (361) 786-3334
- 4-5. Texas International Fishing Tournament, **South Padre Island**, (956) 943-8438 or www.tift.org
- 6-7. Post Barrel Race, **Glen Rose**, (254) 897-4509 or www.glenroseexpo.org
- 6-7. Lone Star Cutting Horse Show, **Athens**, (903) 677-6354
- 6-8. Old Mill Trade Days, **Post**, 1-866-433-6683
- 6-8. Fireman's Fiesta, horseshoes, water polo,

- dances, steak dinner, **Brenham**, 1-888-BREHAM or www.brenhamtexas.com
7. Market Day, **Wimberley**, (512) 847-2201
7. Women in the Outdoors, dutch oven cooking, archery, birdwatching, **Spicewood**, (830) 693-7669
7. Ole Time Music, **Pearl**, (254) 865-6013
7. Cove Country Opry, **Copperas Cove**, (254) 547-5966 or www.covecountryopry.com
7. Arts and Crafts Day, **Kyle**, (512) 396-2054
7. School and Community Homecoming, **Newcastle**, (940) 846-3210
7. Corsicana Opry, **Corsicana**, (903) 872-8226
7. Antique and Collectible Show, CASA benefit, **Decatur**, (940) 627-7535
7. Oil Patch Day Celebration, **Sundown**, (806) 229-3741
- 7-8. NHRA Sport Compact Finals, **Waxahachie**, (972) 878-2641
- 7, 28. Saddle and Buckle Play Day, **Wills Point**, (903) 848-7777

- 13-15. Trade Days, **McKinney**, (972) 562-5466 or www.tmtd.com
- 13-15. Trade Days, **Livingston**, (936) 327-3656 or www.cityoflivingston-tx.com/tradedays
- 13-15. Auto Swap Meet, **Hico**, 1-800-361-HICO
- 13-15. Good Old Days Festival and Barbecue Cook-Off, **Hitchcock**, (409) 986-9224
- 13-15, 27-29. Chicken House Flea Market, **Stephenville**, (254) 968-0888
14. Seguin Birthday Party, **Seguin**, (830) 303-2464
14. Main Street Softball Tournament, **Clifton**, 1-800-344-3720 or www.cliftontexas.org
14. Fun Run, **Waxahachie**, (972) 291-2958
14. Texas Country Music Show, **Kirbyville**, (409) 423-5744
14. Trade Days, **Conroe**, (936) 756-JAVA or www.conroedowntown.com
14. Market Days, **Georgetown**, (512) 868-8675 or www.discovergeorgetowntx.com
14. Market Trail Days, **Castroville**, (830) 741-5887

FESTIVAL OF THE MONTH

BY JIM GRAMON

Margarita and Salsa Festival: Waco, August 28

August in Texas means most activities have moved indoors, are near some water, or involve cool drinks. And nothing works much better for me than a pitcher of frozen margaritas. And of course, if you have margaritas, you have to have some chips and salsa. For the last eight years, about 10,000 folks have gathered in Waco, deep in the heart of

Texas, to celebrate the heavenly combination of margaritas, chips and salsa at the Margarita and Salsa Festival.

Contest categories include the best salsa, queso and margaritas. It will come as no big surprise that there are always some very interesting contestants in these events. One of my favorite groups is the Waco Rita Zetas. Each year they compete in the best

margarita category. Above their booth is a purple banner adorned with a margarita, lime and salt-shaker. The booth itself is decorated with papier maché masks and a hat about 5 feet in diameter and made mostly of purple paper flowers. Drop by and say, "Hi." Tell them Jim sent you.

This year's featured performers at the Margarita and Salsa Festival include Pat Green, Cross Canadian Ragweed and Janie Feliz. The proceeds from all this fun benefit the Arthritis Foundation, a wonderful organization that funds research on a disease that afflicts mil-



lions of folks, including my lovely wife, Sally.

Events take place at the Heart of Texas Fair Complex. For more information contact the Waco Convention



Rick Patrick

- 14-15. North East Texas Paint Horse Show, **Athens**, (903) 677-6354
 14-15. Three Rivers Gun Show, **Port Arthur**, (409) 752-5999
 15. Ice Cream Smorgasbord, **Brenham**, 1-888-BREHAM or www.brenhamtexas.com
 18-21. Sutton County Days and Sonora Outlaw Pro Rodeo, **Sonora**, (325) 387-2880 or www.sonoratx-chamber.com
 20. Country Opry, **Victoria**, 1-800-926-5774 or www.victoriatexasinfo.com
 20. Bluegrass Show and Jam Session, **Cleburne**, (817) 373-2541 or www.geocities.com/ntbbbluegrass
 20-22, 27-29. Harvest Wine Trail, **Hill Country**, (830) 868-2321 or www.texaswinetrail.com
 20-22. Trade Days on the Avenue, **Port Neches**, (409) 722-4023
 20-22. Trade Days, **Fredericksburg**, (830) 990-4900 or www.fbgtradedays.com
 21. Naturally Yours Dance Platform, Ranch Dance Fiddle Band, **Lipscomb**, www.ranchdance.com

21. Summer Model Train Show, **New Braunfels**, (830) 935-2517
 21-22. Triangle Bird Show, **Port Arthur**, (409) 962-3969
 22. St. Louis Day, **Castroville**, (830) 931-2826
 28. Goat Races and Chili Cook-Off, **Leakey**, (830) 232-5451
 28. Western Cowpunchers Association Reunion and Dance, **Amarillo**, (806) 383-9985
 28. Trade Day, **Coldspring**, (936) 653-2009

- 31-Sept. 4. Red River Valley Fair, **Paris**, (903) 785-7971 or www.rrvfair.org

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. It must be submitted by the 10th of the month two months prior to publication. E.g., October submissions must be received prior to August 10. Events are listed according to space available. We appreciate photos with credits but regret that they cannot be returned.



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& Visitors Bureau, P.O. Box 2570, Waco, TX, 76702-2570; 1-800-WACO-FUN, www.wacocvb.com.

Jim Gramon is the author of FUN Texas Festivals and Events. Jim@JimGramon.com, www.JimGramon.com.



COOL TIPS FOR HOT WEATHER

Hot Weather

Keep cool—you could save a life

- Take frequent cooling-off breaks in the shade or air conditioning.
- Drink plenty of water before starting any outdoor activity, and drink water during the day. Drink less tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothes.
- Limit your physical activity during the hottest part of the day.
- Kids, cars and heat make a deadly combination. Never leave a child—or pet—in a vehicle, even for “just a few minutes.” That’s long enough for a closed vehicle to heat up to dangerous levels, even on a 60-degree day.

If someone has heatstroke-related symptoms—nausea, fatigue, muscle cramps, confusion, dizziness—act rapidly: Remove excess clothing and lower the person’s temperature with cold, wet sheets or a cool bath. Call a doctor immediately and transport the person to the nearest hospital—this is an emergency. This summer, don’t sweat it. Keep cool.



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.

time troubleshooters. At 11:30 p.m. on June 2—when stormy weather came through—my electricity went off. I called my co-op and left a message and my telephone number. In 50 minutes our power was back on, thanks to these guys. They even called to see if we had our power back. All of this was happening while it was raining, thundering and lightning. Thanks for the best co-op ever and thanks for a great magazine with wonderful articles and recipes.

Elizabeth Tatsch, United Cooperative Services

Pedernales EC Comes Through

I just had to take a moment to say THANKS!

We recently purchased a piece of property near Campwood and had to have an electric pole and transformer installed for construction. It was such a pleasure to deal with the people at Pedernales Electric Co-op. We were able to handle everything over the phone. PEC did the job quickly and without messing up our trees! Everyone from the receptionist to the

engineer was extremely friendly. I felt as if I was talking with family! You can't imagine what a pleasure that is for me.

I am a home builder in Brownsville, Texas (429 miles south), and whenever we want electricity, whether it's a temporary pole or permanent power, it seems as though I have to call all the way to New York City and talk to 20 grouchy people who could care less about my project.

It was such a pleasure to see that there are still big companies with big hearts. My only regret is that you all don't come to South Texas!

Thanks again. You actually make it bearable to pay the electric bill!

Richard T. Walter Jr., Pedernales EC

Editor's note: Magic Valley Electric Co-op is located in the Valley, but does not serve the city of Brownsville.

Jeff Abbott Deserves Mention

Your June article on Texas mystery writers was quite enjoyable, but the

author who probably should have been at the top of your list, particularly if you maintained alphabetical order, is Jeff Abbott.

Jeff, a native Texan, is an award-winning author who has penned several "Texas mystery" bestsellers. His sleuth, Jordan Poteet, appears in *Do Unto Others*, *The Only Good Yankee*, *Promises of Home*, and *Distant Blood*; their setting is "Mirabeau, Texas."

And Judge Whit Mosley is Jeff's sleuth in *A Kiss Gone Bad*, *Black Jack Point*, and *Cut and Run*; their setting is the Texas gulf coast town of "Port Leo."

Montie Monzingo, Wood County EC

Corrections

Bird photos for "Mark Adams and His Very Big Bird Year" and "Backyard Birding" in the May 2004 issue should have been credited to KAC Productions.

The First United Church in San Augustine is the oldest continually operating church in San Augustine, not in the state of Texas.

COMING IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF *TEXAS CO-OP POWER*



**Chicken-Fried Steak
State Park
Texas Movie
County Courthouse
Dance Hall
Barbecue
and More!**

THE BEST OF TEXAS, CHOSEN BY OUR READERS

The Ones That Didn't Get Away

We anticipated photos of big catches for this month's "Fish Stories," and we did receive plenty of those. What we didn't expect were the stories, the many memorable tales that account for the popularity of the sport, whether you bring home a trophy catch or not. We think you'll enjoy this month's selections.

The topic for October is "Chow Time." Send your yummy, funny or memorable mealtime photos—with your name, address, daytime phone, co-op affiliation and a brief description—to Chow Time, Focus on Texas, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704 before August 10. For digital photo requirements and e-mail instructions, go to www.texas-ec.org/tcp/faq.html. We can no longer return photos unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included with your entry.



We dare you to tell him this isn't one big fish! Jesse Dale Gandy has loved to fish since he was big enough to hold a pole, says his grandmother, Cleva Gandy. The Gandys are members of Bluebonnet EC.



FEC Electric members Jim and Cindy Bird submitted this photo of Shorty Powers, an avid hunter and fisherman, taken during a fishing trip sponsored by Turning P.O.I.N.T. (Paraplegics On Independent Nature Trips). Powers is the founder of the organization whose mission is to develop self-esteem and confidence in the physically challenged through participation in adapted outdoor adventures.



Two-year-old Shelby Jo Young shows off her very first fish "caught" during a family outing. "She didn't realize it was just the bait her pop, Bill Alcorn, had put on her line," says Betty Alcorn. "She was anxious to catch more!" The Alcorns belong to Sam Houston EC.



True fishermen will take advantage of every opportunity. Three-year-old Cade Orsak is determined to catch a fish during an impromptu fishing trip to a puddle in the driveway. One-year-old Reese appears to be a bit skeptical as he joins his big brother. Shannon and Tara Orsak, Jackson EC members, are the boys' parents.

Lyntegar EC member Edrie Gruben submitted this photo taken in 1950. Pictured are C.D. Reid, Gilbert Write, Elvin Roquemore, Melvin Stevens and William Martin, all Lyntegar members at the time. Although those pictured have passed away, Gruben notes that C.D.'s son, Glen, still lives in Lyntegar country. All the fish were caught on one day's trip.



UPCOMING in Focus on Texas

Subject	Issue	Deadline
Chow Time	October	August 10
On the Farm	November	September 10
School Plays	December	October 10
First Car	January	November 10
Romance, Texas-style	February	December 10
Insects & Bugs	March	January 10



Pilgrim Wedding

I paced nervously outside a tiny country church just south of Gonzales on a fall Saturday in 1979. And country this was. Next door a handful of cows grazed peacefully, and across the gravel road, long metal chicken barns shimmered in the sunlight. I reread the church's historical marker, anxious for my cue. Finally, I stepped inside.

Rows of parishioners turned to look at me, but I knew none of them. The moment bordered on the surreal: A thousand miles from home, I'd never been here before, and had lived in Texas only a month. Yet there I stood, dressed for my wedding in a lace-

David had taken a job near Bulverde, and we were moving to Texas. So we decided to marry again, this time at Pilgrim Presbyterian Church, where my new father-in-law had recently become pastor.

That morning we left Austin for Gonzales, an agricultural town rich in Texas pride. The words "Come And Take It," which first appeared on a revolutionary flag, are painted in large letters on their municipal building. We wound along FM 1116 past open fields dotted with live oak and mesquite as we made our way to Pilgrim Church. In the mid to late 1800s, Pilgrim was a popular trading post,

But the spirit of community was anything but vanished on our wedding day. Even though Pastor Bob and his wife, Alice, were just getting to know their congregation, the little flock at Pilgrim welcomed us with the open arms so typical of rural Texas. With ribbons and wildflowers, they had transformed the church's plain interior into a festive sanctuary, aglow in hues of gold as the morning sun streamed through the windows. Alice performed her magic at the piano, and Bob guided us through our vows, his voice rich with wisdom and comfort. When the ceremony ended, we faced the congregation, who beamed at us with a warmth shared freely among old friends.

At the reception, we found guests who were strangers no longer, ready to talk and laugh and share of themselves. They were straightforward people, farmers and ranchers who lived their entire lives in this little corner of Texas. They brought gifts—practical things like linens and kitchen items, many lovingly handmade. We received \$20, a princely sum in those days, from a family struggling to earn a living on a local chicken farm. From a cassette player, Willie Nelson crooned "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain." And a new love affair was launched that day with our first taste of Texas barbecue!

Finally, we packed our little Chevy Vega with gifts and leftover wedding cake. As I watched the lush, rolling countryside shrink to nothing in the rear-view mirror, I marveled at how different our two weddings had been. The first had been safe and familiar, among people we'd known forever, the second with those we'd never met in a church we'd never seen. Yet the people at Pilgrim had welcomed us into their church and their hearts. Maybe there's something about weddings that brings out the best in people. Or maybe it's just small-town Texas. Whichever is true, we walked into Pilgrim Church as strangers, but we walked out feeling newly Texan, feeling we belonged.

Writer Jana Deming lives in Austin and Blanco County with her husband and golden retrievers.



A thousand miles from home, I'd never been here before, and had lived in Texas only a month. Yet there I stood, dressed for my wedding in a lace-covered gown, surrounded by strangers. I felt like a mail-order bride.

covered gown, surrounded by strangers. I felt like a mail-order bride.

At least I knew the groom. And the pastor and his wife, but only because they were the groom's parents. David and I had actually married a month earlier at our home in Illinois, but David's plan to be married by his father, a Presbyterian minister, had fallen through. My new in-laws couldn't come to Illinois because of a previous commitment, and we couldn't change the wedding date.

with more than 30 homes and farms, blacksmith shops, cotton gins, a doctor, and a drug store. The church drew so many parishioners that some had to sit outside during services.

But in 1907 the railroad bypassed Pilgrim, building depots instead in Smiley and Sample. "Cotton-as-King" faded, farmers took a beating during the Depression, and the population of Pilgrim dwindled. Today the U.S. Geological Survey lists Pilgrim as a "vanishing community."