

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

*All the
Bests!*



PLUS:

Texas Bridges
Creamy Cheesecakes

Getting to School

SCHOOL SAFETY ABCs

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.

Riding a bike:

- Mind traffic signals and the crossing guard.
- Always wear a bike helmet.
- Walk the bike through intersections.
- Ride with a buddy.
- Wear light-colored or reflective material.



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TEXAS CO-OP POWER

A MAGAZINE ABOUT TEXAS LIVING

Quest for the Best

And now, we present for your reading pleasure—the 2005 Best of Co-op Country winners!

This is one of my favorite issues, albeit one of the most difficult and time-consuming to produce. Every year we receive hundreds of entries from our readers who—this year—voted for their favorite Golf Course, Hamburger, Place To Take the Kids, etc. These submissions are compiled, then tallied to determine the winners. That's when the real work begins, because this feature story is written entirely by members of the magazine staff and the TEC family. We visit each co-op country winner, usually with a photographer, for on-site interviews and research before writing about them.

Sometimes the bests are already familiar to us, but thanks to you, we often learn about a new place to include in our future travels. And so, we'd like to return the favor: Editor Kaye Northcott has introduced a new addition to the Bests this year, Editors' Choice. And next year's contest comes with another bonus—one lucky participant will be selected by a drawing to receive a weekend for two at Messina Hof in Bryan, whose Vintage House restaurant was the winner of this year's Dining Worth the Drive. We hope you enjoy this issue and all that co-op country has to offer!

This month's Focus on Texas features bridges from all over the state. Roy Hamrick treats us to a visit to magical Marfa in Texas, U.S.A., and—look out for your waistline!—we give you our delicious cheesecake recipes.

Enjoy!

Peg Champion
VP, Communications/Publisher

Best of Co-op Country



PHOTO COURTESY TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT ©2003

Balmorea State Park is one of our choices for Best Place To Take the Kids.



"This bridge over the Pedernales River at Stonewall may not be the prettiest bridge," writes Central Texas EC member **BARB SCHERER**, "but it was quite breathtaking to watch the old parsonage from St. Paul Lutheran Church, Cave Creek, descend the steep decline and go over the bridge on its way to a new home in Stonewall." For more reader photos of bridges, turn to pages 44-45.

FEATURES

Co-op Principles in Action 5
A win-win situation for environment and energy.

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By Texas Co-op Power Staff and Co-op Contributors
This year we offer both readers' and editors' favorites.

DEPARTMENTS

Texas Living 32
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Focus on Texas 44
Our readers submit their photos of bridges both grand and humble. Each has a story to tell.

Texas, USA 46
By Roy Hamrick
Marfa: Where the Artists and Antelope Play.

COVER: OUR FRIEND AND MODEL, NATIVE TEXAN J.R. RUIZ, SPORTS A BEST OF CO-OP COUNTRY LOGO ON HER JACKET. PHOTO BY GENO ESPONDA.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

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VOLUME 62 SEPTEMBER 2005 NUMBER 3

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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Texas Co-op Power (USPS 540-560) is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical Postage Paid at Austin, TX and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. Texas Co-op Power's website is www.texascoopower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or e-mail editor@texas-ec.org.

Subscription price is \$3.72 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the non-member rate of \$15. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each.

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.

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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.

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All roads in Bosque and Erath counties seemed to lead to the Broumley Dairy Farm near Hico on a windy, cloudy Monday morning, June 13. The grass verge beside the dairy barn was packed with pickups. On the



Dairyman Keith Broumley (left) shakes hands with Sen. Kip Averitt after the ribbon cutting for the \$1.6 million experimental waste-to-energy project on his property near Hico.

plateau above a new manure lagoon and electric generating shed, media members, elected officials, environmental and river authority executives, and employees from United Cooperative Services were inaugurating a unique anaerobic digester/phosphorus removal project.

The \$1.6 million project recycles cattle waste and removes some of the phosphorous-stimulating algae that builds up in the Upper Bosque River and Lake Waco. As a bonus, the waste-cleaning process will generate electricity. This is the first such project in the

nation designed specifically to reduce phosphorous while providing a new energy source.

United Cooperative Services, along with its power supplier, Brazos Electric Cooperative, has provided monetary and technical assistance to the project. United has contributed approximately \$20,000 toward infrastructure and will purchase the electric power produced.

“United, Brazos Electric, the Brazos River Authority, dozens of state and federal agencies, local elected officials, and others have worked closely together on this project,” said United CEO/General Manager Ray Beavers. “This effort is a perfect case of cooperative principles in action.”

The City of Waco had sued Broumley and other area dairies over the quality of city

drinking water. The phosphorous removal effort is expected to reduce phosphorous content at the Broumley Dairy by 80 percent.

This is a rare win-win effort. “The environmental issues facing the dairy industry are a reality that needs to be resolved ... but the positive economic impact those same dairies bring to our area needs to be protected as well,” said Beavers.

“This project could not have happened without the folks at United Cooperative Services,” added State Sen. Kip Averitt (R-McGregor).

SAFE LIVING

School Bus Safety for Kids

School buses are one of the safest forms of transportation around. The greatest hazard isn't riding the bus, but getting on and off.

Here are some safety tips:

- **Yellow flashing lights:** The bus is getting ready to stop and load or unload. This means cars need to slow down and get ready to stop.
- **Red flashing lights:** The bus has stopped and children are getting on or off. This tells motorists to

stop their cars.

- **Danger zone:** It's never safe to walk close to the front, sides or back of the bus because the driver may not see you. Walk five giant steps ahead of the bus before crossing in front of it. Walk three giant steps to the side of a school bus. Never, ever walk behind a school bus. Stay away from the bus wheels and watch out for moving cars!

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All's Right With the World

I was just swept away by the photo of that sweet child on your July cover. It was an artistic triumph. She seems to be telling us that life is good, I am content, I am well, my parents love me, God's in His heaven and all's right with the world. I will keep that picture and look at it whenever I want to feel a little bit better.

TOM DUNNAM, Bluebonnet EC

The Loveliest Bloom of All

During my 73 years, I have seen a lot of magazine covers featuring a lot of cover girls, but the young lady featured on your July edition "out-blooms" them all! Hannah Rose is also more lovely than any flower the Arnosky family (lovely in themselves, as the inside pages showed) will ever harvest from their farm. May God bless Pamela and Frank as they love

and nurture both the children and the flowers that will bring joy to so many in days and years to come.

LORETTA HORNER, Bluebonnet EC

What One Must Accept

Blessings to Jim Comer for his thoughtful and touching article, "Parenting Your Parents" [July 2005]. We are also caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's. We've cried as we've watched her mind slip away from the vibrant, energetic Texas lady who managed her own life and gave so much to ours. It helps to know that we are not alone in our anguish and that acceptance of "what one can do, and what one must accept" is the lesson of love in these circumstances.

NANCY WHEELER, Pedernales EC

Roles Have Reversed

I love your magazine and always read it from cover to cover. However, "Parenting Your Parents" by Jim Comer [July 2005] really touched my heart. We're just in that beginning stage of my denial that our mother needs help, and her denial that she's beginning to need our help. I can see this more clearly now. The article so wisely points out many things to consider in caring for parents.

We remember, also, that Mother and Dad took care of us when we were sick, bought us clothes, etc., and I never heard them complain. I know we repeated things a lot: "We're hungry." "Can we go?" "Can I have some money?" "Are we there yet?" Thank you for such a good article and for reminding us that we can do this, even if the roles are reversed.

LINDA AND ROY MCMURTRAY
United Cooperative Services



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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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.

Hurricanes

Any time a hurricane approaches the Texas coast, you're likely to be reminded to take precautions. But the time for planning should begin well before hurricane season arrives.


Follow these tips to prepare yourself and your home for hurricanes:

- Develop a plan for installing covers for windows.
- Don't waste time taping windows. When a 100 mph wind blows an object at your window, tape won't stop it.
- Remove weak and dead trees and tree limbs on your property.
- Know whether your home is in a zone that could be flooded.
- Have a "grab and run" bag ready with important papers (like your homeowner's insurance policy) and prescription medicines in the event you have to evacuate.
- Have a plan in place for where you will go if you evacuate, the route you will take, and how others can contact you.
- Have a survival kit ready with nonperishable food, water, a first-aid kit and other things you may need.
- Keep a battery-powered radio handy. And don't forget the extra batteries.
- Don't hesitate to evacuate, especially if you are living in a manufactured home or a house that may not be sturdy enough to stand up to the wind.

DON'T BLOW OFF HURRICANES



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All the Bests of 2005

Has it been a year already? The results of our third annual Best of Co-op Country contest follow, and we're looking ahead to the 2006 competition. Look on page 19 for the 2006 "Best" categories.

Thanks to all the readers who participated in the contest this year. In addition to readers' choices, we have made editors' choices to share some of the wonderful places we have discovered in our travels around co-op country. We will do the same next year.

The rules are stricter for 2006, but there's a reward for one lucky participant. Co-op members who make nominations in at least half the categories on the 2006 entry form (page 19) are eligible for a drawing. (This form will also be published in several future issues.) The winner of the drawing will receive a free weekend for two at Messina Hof in Bryan. Messina Hof has a winery, a bed and breakfast and a restaurant, The Vintage House, chosen by readers for Best Dining Worth the Drive this year.

Now for the rules: No petitions, each form must be mailed separately, and establishments promoting themselves cannot provide stamps or envelopes for entries. In short, no stuffing the ballot box. Sharpen your pencils and put on your thinking caps!



Place To Take the Kids

READERS' CHOICE

Devil's Sinkhole, Rocksprings



PHOTO COURTESY TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT ©2003

The yawning mouth of Devil's Sinkhole.

Did you see the commercial in which several guys jump out of a car in the middle of nowhere, hook a rope to their bumper, and rappel into a deep, dark hole? Actually, that hole is a collapsed underground cavern called Devil's Sinkhole, located in Edwards County on the western edge of the Hill Country. Formerly part of the Whitworth Ranch, it is now a National Natural Landmark, protected and maintained by Texas Parks and Wildlife.

In reality, only scientists descend into the cave's depths, but you and your family can arrange for a safe, entertaining and educational above-ground tour by contacting the Devil's Sinkhole Society, based in Rocksprings.

Did we mention bats? Every evening at dusk from April through October, millions of Mexican free-tailed bats swarm counterclockwise out of this massive hole in search of food. With the bats out for the night, the cave is free to house

3,000 to 4,000 cave swallows. Nice timeshare, guys! A large population of the endangered Tobusch fish-hook cactus also flourishes on the nearly 2,000-acre park site.

Pedernales EC serves much of Edwards County.

U.S. Hwy. 377, Rocksprings, 78880
(830) 683-BATS (2287) or
(830) 683-3762
tpwd.state.tx.us/park/sinkhole

JO JOHENNING, Production Assistant



Place To Take the Kids

EDITORS' CHOICE

Davis Mountains State Park/Fort Davis National Historic Site/Balmorhea State Park/ Monahans Sandhills State Park/McDonald Observatory, West Texas

A family getaway that includes scuba diving, hiking, bird-watching, stargazing and sand-surfing is bound to appeal to even the most diverse family. All this and more is practically at your doorstep when staying at Davis Mountains State Park just north of the Big Bend in West Texas. You can camp under the stars or stay at the Indian Lodge.

When you're ready to explore beyond the park, your options abound. A five-minute drive (or a short hike through the park) brings you to the Fort Davis National Historic Site. Time to cool off? Balmorhea State Park's San Solomon Springs Pool—just 45 minutes away—is the place to be. The artesian spring-fed pool is almost 2 acres in size, reaches 25 feet in depth, and boasts a 72- to 76-degree constant temperature. Scuba divers enjoy exploring the depths of the pool, but just paddling around affords an up-close view of the plants and animals that call the springs home. The park, also noted for its bird-watching, offers lodging through campsites and a

motel, San Solomon Springs Court.

Next, take a two-hour scenic drive for a "hot time" at Monahans Sandhills State Park. It was a little odd to see more sand in the middle of West Texas than down at the coast, but it made for a wonderful day trip. Sand-surfing was the highlight, but the park also includes an equestrian area, nature trails and campsites—and for the truly adventurous, the Texas Camel Corps offers camel treks across the dunes.

Rounding out our trip was a visit to the McDonald Observatory. We began with a solar viewing and a very close-up tour of the enormous telescopes perched high atop the Davis Mountains. Starting just before sunset, the Twilight Program offered an educational warm-up to the main event—the Star Party. As we gazed at the breathtaking array of stars that blanketed the sky, our guide led us on a "tour" of the constellations. With what looked like nothing more than a large flashlight aimed at the sky, he traced the paths of the stars contained in a variety of constellations.

The Star Party concluded with telescope viewings of star clusters and planets—and our newfound appreciation for the night sky.

Davis Mountains State Park

Hwy. 118 North, Fort Davis, 79734
(432) 426-3337

tpwd.state.tx.us/park/davis

Fort Davis National Historic Site

101 Lt. Henry Flipper Dr., Fort Davis, 79734
(432) 426-3224

nps.gov/foda

Balmorhea State Park

9207 Hwy. 17 South, Toyahvale, 79786
(432) 375-2370

tpwd.state.tx.us/park/balmorhea/

Monahans State Park

I-20, Exit 86, Monahans, 79756
(432) 943-2092

tpwd.state.tx.us/park/monahans

McDonald Observatory

Hwy. 118 North, Fort Davis, 79734
(432) 426-3640 or

1-877-984-7827

mcdonaldobservatory.org

KAREN NEJTEK, Production Coordinator

PHOTO COURTESY TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT ©2003



Balmorhea State Park



Indian Lodge

PHOTO COURTESY TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT ©2003

BEST Hamburger



TOMÁS PANTÍN

Ryan Collity sits down to a Leeburger and fries.

READERS' CHOICE

Lee's Almost by the Lake, Spicewood

Pace Bend Park visitors and longtime locals alike know that a good burger makes great fuel for a day on Lake Travis. These are the folks who crowned Lee's Almost by the Lake as our winner for Best Hamburger. They love the hot, fresh burger and the company of friendly people at this local hangout.

Sadly, after operating the restaurant for 17 years, Lee Smith passed away in 1999. Ryan Collity, Lee's stepson, took over the business, which has remained a popular stop on the way to the lake as well as a neighborhood gathering place with a loyal fan club.

Hungry patrons place their orders at the counter, then have a seat in the small dining room (featuring its own white picket fence and painted flower garden) or at a picnic table on the veranda out front. On a recent

Saturday afternoon, a steady flow of customers, many of them obviously regulars, stopped by to visit and fill up on burgers and fries, as well as Philly cheesesteaks, pizza, subs and other lake-friendly munchies. The burgers are cooked to order and prepared Texas-style, with soft, toasted buns, fresh veggies (lettuce, tomato, onion and pickles) and mustard (as it should be in Texas).

If you're feeling extra manly, try the "Leeburger," with double meat, double cheese and jalapeños. Ryan and the crew at Lee's are ready and waiting to fire one up for you.

Pedernales EC serves the Pace Bend Park area.

801 Pace Bend Rd. South
Spicewood, 78669
(512) 264-2552

ANDY DOUGHTY, Production Designer

EDITORS' CHOICE

Whataburger, Texas

What should a burger be? First, let's talk about what a burger should NOT be. A burger should not be left ignored and unloved under a heat lamp. No microwaves, either. No precooking allowed. No limp veggies. No soggy bun. No tasteless, gray meat. I think we all agree—that's not what a burger should be.

The ideal burger is simple: made-to-order with a freshly grilled patty, a toasted bun, dill pickles, crisp lettuce, tomato and onion. Personal preference may dictate details like cheese, mayo or mustard, jalapeños and bacon. Get the basics right, and you have what a burger should be.

That's a Whataburger. Born in 1950 as a tiny, portable stand in Corpus Christi, Whataburger focused on building a bigger-and-better burger from the start. Now, 55 years later, Whataburger is Texas' premier hamburger chain, with 650 locations in 10 states. The familiar orange-and-white striped roofs topping the retro A-frames can be found throughout Texas, in small towns and big cities alike. The chain, with its Texas-friendly staff, continues to build success one delicious burger at a time. That's what a burger should be.

SUZI SANDS, Art Director



© WHATABURGER INC.

Whataburger founder Harmon Dobson.

BEST
Scenic Bridge

READERS' CHOICE

Loop 360 Bridge, Austin

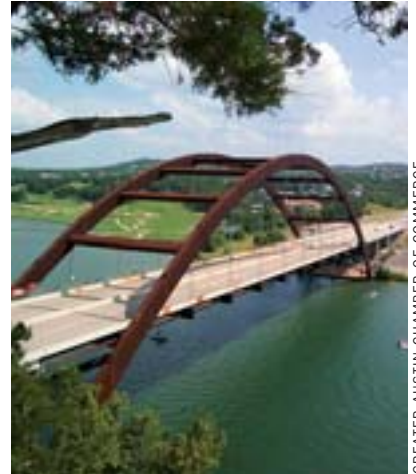
It's easy to understand why readers selected the Loop 360 Bridge as their favorite bridge. The 1,500-foot-long arch suspension bridge over Lake Austin is a piece of modern sculpture. Seventy-two cables hold the bridge's 600-foot central span of sandblasted, weathered steel. Boaters and water-skiers zip to and fro some 100 feet below as walkers and bikers enjoy the scenery from the bridge on a 6-foot-wide lane set aside for them.

Also known as the Pennybacker Bridge in honor of a Texas Highway Department pioneer, this graceful

amber structure, completed in 1982, sits as naturally in its setting as the surrounding limestone cliffs and deep green cedar.

Loop 360, or the Capital of Texas Highway, was first planned as a freeway, but aesthetics won out in the end, and the loop became a parkway rather than a heavily traveled commercial zone with access lanes. Driving the loop (which isn't really a loop at all, but rather a scenic cut through Austin's western hills) is a treat, and the bridge is a wonder.

KAYE NORTHCOTT, Editor



GREATER AUSTIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Loop 360 Bridge lifts the spirits.

EDITORS' CHOICE

Queen Isabella Memorial Causeway, Port Isabel to South Padre Island

Nearly 8 million vehicles cross the state's longest bridge each year as visitors make their way from Port Isabel to South Padre Island and back again. At 2.369 miles (12,510 feet), the curving four-lane Queen Isabella Memorial Causeway is one of the most scenic bridges in Texas. The causeway is named for Queen Isabella of Spain, the monarch who

financed Christopher Columbus' first voyage of discovery to the New World.

More than just an elegant bridge, the causeway serves as the only land-link to the state's southernmost island. Just four days after 9-11, in the early morning hours of September 15, 2001, a towboat pushed a string of four loaded barges that veered out of control in the strong currents and struck

one of the bridge's supports. A 240-foot midsection of the bridge was knocked into the bay 80 feet below, and motorists drove blindly into the chasm. That tragic event took eight lives and cost untold millions of dollars in economic impact to the area. Ferries and passenger boats were used for transportation until the bridge was repaired.

After \$4.3 million in bridge repairs, the causeway reopened on November 21, 2001. "Memorial" was added to the name of the bridge to honor those victims.

Last year a computerized fiber-optic warning system, the first of its kind, was installed at the causeway. The system activates when the stability of the bridge is shaken: barriers and flashing lights stop motorists from driving across.

Magic Valley EC serves much of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

CHERYL TUCKER, Field Editor



WILL VAN OVERBEEK

The Queen Isabella Memorial Causeway is a romantic sight at dawn.



Dining Worth the Drive



SANDRA FORSTON

Messina Hof owner Paul Bonarrigo and Executive Chef Ken Ruud.

READERS' CHOICE

The Vintage House—Messina Hof Winery and Resort Bryan

Our readers picked a luxurious European-style getaway for Dining Worth the Drive: Messina Hof's Vintage House Restaurant in Bryan. The Vintage House is an unexpected jewel tucked away in Central Texas' version of Tuscany. We were pampered with exquisite service and hospitality at the restaurant as well as the tasting room and villa.

The Vintage House lives up to its name with a décor of wine-filled barrels and antique furniture. From our table at the restaurant, we could survey the Messina Hof vineyard. For lunch, we enjoyed a shrimp appetizer served with cornbread and a wonderfully complex sauce, as well as the largest club sandwich I have ever seen. Trying to save our appetite for the evening meal at the chef's table was difficult, but we managed.

A dinner tailored to our personal tastes was served at the chef's table. For birthdays, anniversaries or other

special occasions, this is an extraordinary treat. Executive Chef Ken Ruud served us an out-of-this-world meal. Each course included a Messina Hof wine. From the rosemary lamb chops (merlot), through the dijon-crusted halibut (semillon) and the roasted venison tenderloin (shiraz), to the finale of strawberries Romanoff (muscat), we could not have asked for a finer meal.

The Vintage House is just one attraction at the Messina Hof Winery and Resort, which includes the 10-room Villa bed and breakfast, perfect for romantic weekends.

Bryan Texas Utilities serves Messina Hof.

4545 Old Reliance Rd., Bryan, 77808
(979) 778-9463
messinahof.com

SANDRA FORSTON
Communications Assistant

He's from Aviano, Italy, and she is from a small town 20 miles from Venice. It's best to make reservations. If you want a heaping helping of Lasagna della Mamma, available only Saturday nights, make a reservation for that as well. Once it's gone, it's gone.

As one would expect, fresh seafood is one of the restaurant's specialties, but it also offers astonishingly good specials made with veal and lamb. Even the simplest salads and side dishes are worth the drive. The Hot Plate, named for the sizzling cast iron plates on which some dishes are served, has the perfect Caesar salad, a great polenta, and heavenly spinach in lemon juice, olive oil and garlic.

Sinton, headquarters town for San Patricio EC, is 67 miles from Port Aransas.

232 Beach St., Port Aransas, 78373
(361) 749-7617

KAYE NORTHCOTT, Editor

EDITORS' CHOICE

Venetian Hot Plate Port Aransas

Getting there is half the fun of going to Venetian Hot Plate, our Editors' Choice for Dining Worth the Drive. Port Aransas is on Mustang Island just north of Corpus Christi. We prefer taking the free ferry ride from Aransas Pass to Port Aransas. There's just enough time on the short crossing to get out of your car and stretch, savor the sea breeze, and watch the pelicans swoop overhead while the dolphins play in the ferry's wake. You can also take JFK Memorial Causeway from Corpus Christi to the island and proceed north on Highway 361 for 17 miles to Port Aransas.

Seating is limited and meals are leisurely at this homey Italian bistro run by Linda and Maurice Halioua.



THOMAS TERRY

Linda Halioua of Venetian Hot Plate displays Gamberetti al Chardonnay.

BEST
Historic Site



MARK L. STEPHENSON

The Alamo belongs to Texans for the ages.

READERS' CHOICE

The Alamo, San Antonio

Jhe Alamo, originally known as *Misión San Antonio de Valero*, has been fought in and fought over, ignored and abandoned, renovated and revered during its 287-year history. Its succession of incarnations includes a Freemason's Lodge, grocery store, warehouse, police station and election polling site.

Secularized in 1793, the Catholic Church left the mission empty and deserted for a decade. Its next life was as a military post.

Texas troops occupied the Alamo in 1836, valiantly holding off Santa Anna's Mexican troops long enough to help create the fledgling Republic of Texas. After an on-site burial of the defenders' ashes in February 1837, the property again was abandoned.

The Confederate army occupied the Alamo during the Civil War. Near the end of the war, in 1864, the United States leased the buildings from the Catholic Church.

The church sold the convent building to a private company in 1877 and the Alamo chapel, with its

emblematic façade, to the State of Texas in 1883.

In 1905, when the state gained title to the entire compound, the Alamo was truly saved.

300 Alamo Plaza, San Antonio, 78212
(210) 226-1391
thealamo.org

PEG CHAMPION, Publisher

EDITORS' CHOICE

Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site Near Brenham

If you were sleeping during your seventh grade Texas History class, you may be wondering what the heck George Washington has to do with the birth of Texas, and what exactly happened to him on the Brazos River.

Well, nothing, really. But one outing to Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site and you will forever remember that on a frigid March day in 1836, five dozen delegates gath-

ered in an unfinished building in the tiny town of Washington, and, in the spirit of that founding father, declared Texas' independence from Mexico. Down the road in San Antonio, Santa Anna's troops had finished off the Alamo, and panic-stricken residents were fleeing from the oncoming Mexican army. Led by Sam Houston, the delegates stayed, adopted a Constitution for the Republic of Texas, and named an interim government. Washington served as the capital of Texas from 1842 to 1845.

At the site today, enjoy a picnic in the pecan grove on the Brazos River, tour the Star of the Republic Museum and the reconstructed Independence Hall. Save plenty of time for the Barrington Living History Farm, home of Anson Jones, last President of the Republic of Texas.

Bluebonnet EC serves part of Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site.

12300 Park Road 112, Washington, 77880
(936) 878-2461
birthplaceoftexas.com

LOUIE BOND, Copy Editor



Authentically garbed interpreters perform the daily chores of an 1850 farm.

PHOTO COURTESY TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT ©2003

BEST
Golf Course



BARTON CREEK RESORT

You won't find a better place to tee off than the three golf courses at Barton Creek Resort.

READERS' CHOICE

**Barton Creek Resort
 Austin**

Jhe luxury golf courses at Barton Creek Resort and Spa, located about 15 minutes from downtown Austin, set a standard of excellence and beauty for Texas golf courses. No wonder *Texas Co-op Power* readers selected it as their favorite golf course. Be warned, though: You have to be a member or a resort guest to play.

The three championship courses of Barton Creek were designed by architect Tom Fazio and retired pros Arnold Palmer and Ben Crenshaw. Readers did not specify which course they preferred, so we tried the resort's newest jewel, the Fazio Canyons course. It offers a challenging layout amidst plush fairways, fast greens, beautiful landscaping and a spectacular view. All of this is achieved while preserving the surrounding natural landscape.

Starting at the second hole, your group feels alone on the course. The only sound is the rushing water of small waterfalls along the way. Rolling elevation changes and strategically placed sand traps challenge the golfer and

reward good play.

A first-class course with first-class service—a well-deserved choice for number one.

8212 Barton Club Dr., Austin, 78735
 (512) 329-4000 or 1-800-336-6158
 bartoncreek.com

CARLOS STAUDT
 Member Services Manager
 Central Texas EC

EDITORS' CHOICE

**Texas Tech University-
 Rawls Course, Lubbock**

Jhe dusty, wind-whipped plains of the Panhandle offer an unlikely spot for a choice round of golf, but determined golf architect Tom Doak overcame the elements and created a Scottish clone in Lubbock in 2003. The Texas Tech University Rawls Course is so popular that it made several Top Ten lists in national golf magazines last year, an auspicious feat for what began as a flat cotton field.

Doan moved 1.3 million cubic yards of soil to create a barrier of 15-foot berms around the course, blocking out noise, wind and neighborhood

homes. Rawls is 38 feet below sea level at its lowest point, and sports a 4.5-acre lake at its heart. More than 3,000 trees dot the landscape.

Don't be fooled by the beauty of this golf oasis—one unlucky drive can punish you beyond belief. While the undulating fairways and greens earn high praise for lushness and playability, sand bunkers and roughs lurk around every bend—count on losing a stroke or perhaps even your ball if you falter. There's not a straight putt on the greens, so be ready for a new challenge each time you play. Despite the berms, there's a prevailing southwest wind that adds another dimension to particular holes. Rawls is definitely the most difficult—but also the most fun—of all the courses in West Texas.

Rawls has quickly become one of the state's destination golf courses. It's worth packing up your clubs (or renting theirs) and making a trip to the Panhandle just to try your luck.

South Plains EC is based in Lubbock.

3720 Fourth St., Lubbock, 79415
 (806) 742-4653
 texastechgolf.ttu.edu

TIFFIN WORTHAM
 Vice President, Member Services
 Texas Electric Cooperatives



Summer Camp



CAMP LONGHORN

Camp Longhorn features fun water activities.

READERS' CHOICE

Camp Longhorn, Burnet

ah, the memories! Swimming, campfires, crafts, putting your bunkmate's hand in a pan of warm water while she's asleep ... it's summer camp! At Camp Longhorn, which our readers chose as Best Summer Camp, tradition is everything. It has served as a summer home-away-from-home for boys and girls from second-graders on up since 1939.

Longhorn is a residential summer camp with two locations just outside Burnet in Central Texas. The Inks Lake camp specializes in sailing. The Indian Springs camp is known for its horseback riding program. And, of course, both locations offer as many other activities as they can pack into each two- or three-week session.

A former camper, 13-year-old Taylor Nolan, says "The Blob" is one of the camp's best activities. Campers jump from the dock onto a giant, air-filled mattress floating in the lake. "The people on the dock say, 'Ready, Freddie?' and the ones on the Blob say, 'Go, Joe!' and then you jump," says Taylor. "The point is

to try to stay on. It's really fun."

A mentor system allows older campers to watch over younger ones, and the camper-to-counselor ratio is 4 to 1. The lessons learned—and the lasting friendships created along the way—keep campers, counselors and staff returning summer after summer.

Pedernales EC serves Burnet and both Camp Longhorn locations.

Indian Springs Camp

1000 Indian Springs Rd., Burnet, 78611
(512) 756-4650
camplonghorn.com/indian_springs

Inks Lake Camp

1 Longhorn Rd., Burnet, 78611
(512) 793-2811
camplonghorn.com/inks_lake

ELLEN STADER, Proofreader

EDITORS' CHOICE

Camp Summit, Argyle

Like summer camps everywhere, Camp Summit means swimming, horseback riding, games and ghost stories by a campfire. For many campers, it's also a chance to forget the wheelchair and push unaccustomed boundaries.

Camp Summit is the only camp in Texas with no limits on a camper's disabilities or age. In fact, each session is planned around the campers' ages and abilities. Young campers are ready for fun and games. For teenagers, dances are added to the mix. Older campers enjoy swimming and nature walks.

The ratio of campers to counselors is 2 to 1, and higher for swimming, horseback riding or doing the ropes course. Whatever it takes is what is given.

Camp Summit, supported by prestigious organizations, focuses on abilities. Or as one camper said: "What I like about camp is leaving my disability at the gate. You treat me like a person."

The camp takes all who apply, regardless of disabilities or the ability to pay, as long as their physician has approved the outing. If the camp is full for the current year, the camper is put at the top of the waiting list for next year.

After nearly 60 years at its current location, Camp Summit is raising funds to move 20 miles north of Decatur.

CoServ Electric provides power for Camp Summit.

921 Copper Canyon Rd., Argyle, 76226
(972) 484-8900
campsummittx.org

SUZI SANDS, Art Director



CAMP SUMMIT

Camp Summit visitor Craig Irby (left) and counselor-in-training Cody Jacobs wait for a nibble.

BEST
Romantic Getaway



WILL VAN OVERBEEK

WISTERIA GARDEN BED AND BREAKFAST

The Hayloft is perfect for privacy.

Wisteria Garden is the quintessential Victorian getaway.

READERS' CHOICE

**Hayloft at Lake Travis
Austin**

Located near Spicewood, off State Highway 71, the Hayloft at Lake Travis is billed by owners Debra McCormick and Arvin Weaver as a “couples only” retreat. The rustic log cabin, built by Debra and Arvin with a little help from their friends, sits two stories high, secluded in a copse of oak, cedar elm and sycamore trees.

The spacious interior of cypress and milled cedar is reminiscent of a little house on the prairie. But this one has a Jacuzzi for two and a king-size bed with an adjustable mattress. A small balcony equipped with two comfortable chairs overlooks a woodland tableau and seasonal pond. It's the perfect spot for nighttime stargazing as well.

Although an ample, country-style breakfast is included as part of the stay, this is not a typical bed and breakfast. Debra is so protective of guests' privacy, the breakfast of eggs, thick slices of ham, buttery biscuits, potato pancakes and fresh fruit arrives on a dumbwaiter. The small oak table with its red-checked

tablecloth sets the scene for a breakfast tête-à-tête with a beloved partner.

There's lots of space just outside for a pleasant, hand-in-hand stroll among the trees and along a stream that runs most of the year. Abundant birdlife and an occasional gray fox make it especially appealing to nature lovers.

Pedernales EC serves the Hayloft.

2819 Pace Bend Rd. South
Spicewood, 78669
(512) 264-2381
hayloftatlaketravis.com

CAROL MOCZYGEMBA
Managing Editor

EDITORS' CHOICE

**Wisteria Garden Bed
and Breakfast, Marshall**

My husband and I spent a romantic evening last October at Wisteria Garden Bed and Breakfast, an East Texas Victorian getaway in the historic downtown district of Marshall. The two-story home was constructed in 1884; three families have owned it over the years.

John Vassar, who welcomed us, said that his wife, the “mistress of the manor,” was away on business and had left him, a charming professor at LSU-Shreveport, to care for us. We were in capable hands.

After an eight-hour motorcycle ride from Austin to Marshall, we were ready for a rest and a hot cup of tea. When we retired for the evening to the East Lake Room, we discovered fudge brownies by the bed. I took an hour-long bubble bath in the large, clawfoot tub to wipe the road weariness from my body and mind, and settled in for a lovely night's sleep.

In the morning, we were greeted by sunshine, freshly brewed coffee and a pleasant view from the upstairs balcony. John prepared our breakfast: fresh fruit, omelettes, bacon, waffles and orange juice. We could see the wisteria vines climbing over 30 feet to cover the trees in the side yard, enticing us to return next spring and see them in bloom.

Panola-Harrison EC is based in Marshall.

215 E. Rusk, Marshall 75670
(903) 938-7611
wisteriagarden.com

SANDRA FORSTON
Communications Assistant

BEST Essay

Utopia I.S.D. Students

Utopia is another word for paradise, as many student essayists from the Utopia Independent School district pointed out. But it's not the town name that won some 87 students, grades five through 12, Texas Co-op Power's "Best Town To Live In" contest. It was the quality and spirit of their essays. The one-campus I.S.D. that serves several towns in the Texas Hill Country will receive a \$1,000 award from Texas Co-op Power for its students' exemplary efforts.

Several other stellar submissions from small-town schools were testament to students' love for their hometowns. There seemed to be a consensus that rural areas are safer than urban areas and that children like living where everyone is friendly and where many on the streets can call them by name. Churches' contributions to community life were also high on students' lists of reasons for valuing their towns.

We didn't grade the essays as an English teacher would. Originality

and enthusiasm counted more than grammar and spelling. Parents and teachers were expressly forbidden from correcting students' work. The younger children's block-letter essays were ample evidence that adults had not put the red pencil to their budding essayists' work. For example, the sixth-grader who loves to jump on her "tramiling." One fifth-grader thinks the "good-est" thing about the Utopia school is the cafeteria food. Now there's an unconventional view.

We wanted the feel of the town, not a Fodor's travel report. That said, we did learn just about all you need to know about Utopia (pop. 250), 90 miles west of San Antonio.

As Rosalie L. Bomer wrote, Utopia has "lush rolling hills, clear sparkling springs and deep clean refreshing rivers. Oh, and the wildlife. There are always deer bounding in the fields, birds serenading you every time you step outside, and squirrels and rabbits zipping around."

Nearby Garner State Park and Lost Maples State Natural Area attract an influx of tourists. We learned that those who come to see the leaves turn in the fall are known locally as "leaf peepers."

Visitors are a boost to the economy, Jacob Calk pointed out. "If you were to set up a lemonade shack, you would make a fortune."

Many students like the small size of Utopia I.S.D. and the fact that they can go from pre-K through 12th grade with the same group of friends. Kelli Rhodes said there are advantages to a small school population. "I think the reason so many kids in Utopia do so well in school is because the classes are so small, the teachers are able to help kids more efficiently," she wrote.

Young and old come together in Utopia. Cody Gobert wrote: "Even in the morning, you can go to the store or to the café and just talk to all the old people, and they just tell jokes, tell stories, talk about their ranches and animals. Then they ... leave and go to work, but the retired people, they go home and go back to bed, because they wake up like at 5 a.m. just to talk to all the other people."

The town has a strong sense of community, according to Carla Sheedy, who wrote, "Utopia's small population can account for everyone coming together in bad situations."

Chase Hathorn pretty well summed up the students' feelings about their town when he concluded: "Utopia is the ideal place for any normal person. If you don't enjoy the stuff I mentioned in my story, then you are just crazy."

Bandera EC serves Utopia.

utopiatexas.com

KAYE NORTHCOTT, Editor



JODY HORTON

A sampling of Utopia essay writers stand in the cool waters of the Sabinal River.

Best of Co-op Country Contest 2006

Win a weekend for two at Messina Hof Winery, valued at \$1,000!



We invite you to participate in our fourth Best of Co-op Country contest. Print your choices on the form below in whatever categories you wish. Please include the location and a phone number if possible. Provide your name, address, telephone number and co-op. Mail this page or a copy to "Best of Co-op Country," 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704.

Entries will be judged on the number and persuasiveness of nominations received. Co-op members who provide nominations for at least half the categories are eligible for a drawing. The form will also be published in several future issues. The winner of the drawing will receive a free weekend for two at Messina Hof Winery and Resort in Bryan, valued at \$1,000. Messina Hof has a bed and breakfast and a restaurant, The Vintage House, which was the readers' choice for Dining Worth the Drive this year.

Now for the rules: No petitions, each form must be mailed separately, and establishments promoting themselves cannot provide stamps or envelopes for entries.

Tours, Tastings, Gift Shop, Bed and Breakfast, Fine Dining, Picnic and Events

A visit to Messina Hof Winery and Resort is like a romantic journey to the European Wine Country. You'll find the perfect blend of Italian and German cultures, resulting in premium wines made in Texas. One hundred acres of rolling hills and two picturesque lakes help make Messina Hof unforgettable. Our wines have received many accolades, including Best Texas Wine in 2004 and 2005 in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's International Wine Competition. Among other destination awards, The Villa, our 10-room luxury country inn, was voted most Romantic Hideaway in the U.S. by Arrington's *Book of Lists*, and The Vintage House Restaurant was chosen one of Texas' Best Restaurants by the East Texas Tourism Association.



Best of Co-op Country General Contest Entry Form

Enchilada: _____

Water Tower: _____

Fourth of July Parade: _____



Lake: _____

Your Name: _____

Public Mural: _____

Co-op: _____

Riding Trail: _____

Address: _____

Spa: _____

City/Zip: _____

Texas Musician: _____

Phone: _____

The deadline for submitting nominations is January 15, 2006. The results will be published in the September 2006 issue of *Texas Co-op Power*.



'LIGHTEN UP' FOR SAFETY

Strategically placing a few lights around your home and yard can deter vandals, help you and your guests find your way to the front door, show off your home after dark, and extend the number of hours you can use your yard and deck.

Here are some tips for lighting your yard and home:

- Install lights on both sides and on top of each door so the steps, door, house number and lock are easy to see.
- Aim directional lights away from the front door. Pointing lights at the door can obstruct your view of visitors.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs in post lanterns and porch light fixtures with long-life compact fluorescent light bulbs.
- Uplight trees and line walkways with low-voltage bulbs in weatherproof packages. Buy bulbs and fixtures rated for outdoor use by Underwriters Laboratories.
- Light gardens and shrubbery that you can see from your living room window. They can become part of the room's décor after dark.
- Add safety lighting to the driveway and yard with spotlights and floodlights.

Outdoor lighting is decorative and practical, and can make your home safer.

HIRING A CONTRACTOR FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Choosing a contractor is an important consideration when planning energy-related improvements for your home. Start with a list of names that you gather from friends and neighbors who have completed energy-related projects. Ask managers of lumber, hardware and appliance dealers who they trust to work on their homes.

Ask the best contractors on your list to give you a cost estimate or bid. Be as specific as you can about exactly what benefits you want from the job and what technical details are important to you. Note differences between the suggestions and comments each contractor makes.

The more informed you are about the details, the better job you're likely to receive. Here are some suggestions:

- Accompany contractors on their inspections. Ask questions and take notes.
- Don't purchase on price alone.
- Compare the warranties offered by the contractors you're considering.
- Get a written bid that includes all the important details.
- Work with the successful bidder to convert the details on the bid to a written, legally binding contract.
- Monitor the job for compliance with the contract.
- Help your contractor formulate a payment plan that ensures completion and performance while being fair to the



contractor. This plan should be part of the contract.

Avoid contractors who display the following characteristics:

- Willing to do the job at an unusually low price.
- Won't provide references.
- Won't provide a written estimate or contract.
- Require full or substantial payment before work begins.
- Use high-pressure sales methods.
- Ask you to obtain the necessary permits.

Source: Saturn Resource Management



AVOIDING HOME EQUITY SCAMS

You could lose your home and your money if you borrow from unscrupulous lenders who offer you a high-cost loan based on the equity you have in your home. Certain lenders target homeowners who are elderly or who have low incomes or credit problems, and then try to take advantage of them by using deceptive practices. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) cautions all homeowners to be on the lookout for:

Equity Stripping: The lender gives you a loan based on the equity in your home, not on your ability to repay based on your income. If you can't make the payments, you could end up losing your home.

Loan Flipping: The lender encourages you to repeatedly refinance the loan and/or borrow more money. Each time you refinance, you pay additional fees and interest points. That only serves to increase your debt.

Credit Insurance Packing: The lender adds credit insurance to your loan, which you may not need.

Bait and Switch: The lender offers one set of loan terms when you apply, then pressures you to accept higher charges when you sign to complete the transaction.

Deceptive Loan Servicing: The lender doesn't provide you with accurate or complete account statements and payoff figures. That makes it almost impossible for you to determine how much you have paid or how much you owe. You may pay more than you owe.

Some of these practices violate federal credit laws dealing with disclosures about loan terms; discrimination based on age, gender, marital status, race or national origin; and debt collection. You also may have additional rights under state law that would allow you to bring a lawsuit.

The FTC suggests that if you're thinking about using your home as collateral for a loan, be careful. Unless you can make the loan payments out of your current income, you could lose your home as well as the equity you've already built up. Contact your local Fair Housing Office, legal aid or senior services organization for information and help.

Source: Federal Trade Commission

ENERGY STAR SCHOOLS CREATIVELY CUT ENERGY USE

Some students are returning to classrooms recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for creative energy efficiency.

So-called Energy Star® schools have creatively modified their electricity use to save energy. The Energy Stars are assessed based on the modifications they make and on how inventive their approaches are.

One private elementary school upgraded its building's insulation and water flow. Administrators there also substituted compact fluorescent lamps for incandescent bulbs and metal halide for the building's security lights.

Elsewhere, students got involved in the effort by monitoring dripping faucets and recycling. They also adopted energy-smart habits such as turning off the lights when they leave the classroom.



**YOUR LOCAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
WILL BE CLOSED
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5,
IN OBSERVANCE OF
LABOR DAY.**

Texas Almanac: Fount of State Knowledge

Now and then, people from other states call the *Texas Almanac* office in Dallas and ask Editor Elizabeth C. Alvarez for advice on how to compile one for their own state.

"I think, 'Oh, boy, good luck!'" laughs Alvarez, who's edited the massive encyclopedia of Texas since 2003. "As far as I know, no one else has an almanac with the scope of topics that we do. Ours has stories and photos, plus listings of museums and events in addition to political and governmental listings."



Not to mention the latest population statistics, county profiles and maps, weather and crime data by county, information on the state's varied soils and geology, a brief but thorough sketch of Texas history, a bona fide pronunciation guide to Texas places, plus thousands and thousands of other facts, all bound into more than 600 pages.

"But not dry facts," stresses Mary G. Ramos, *Almanac* editor from 1994 to 2003. "Where else can you learn what's the highest hourly wage in manufacturing in Texas? Petroleum? No! Malt beverages. People who make beer make more than people in the oil field."

This fall, the *Texas Almanac* will mark 150 years of fact gathering with the release of its Sesquicentennial 2006-2007 edition. To celebrate, 50,000

copies (hardbound and paperback) of the edition have been printed in full color for the first time.

"It's going to be fabulous," Alvarez says. "The *Almanac* has had a lot of updating over the years, but this one will have the most changes. We've had an artist working for more than a year on recreating all the maps in color."

The special edition also includes such highlights as a historical perspective on cattle ranching written by Western author Elmer Kelton, a profile of mesquite, a look at mineral springs across the state, and even the cultural impact of Lebanese-Syrian families in Texas.

Historical and interpretive narratives have been a part of the *Texas Almanac* since the *Galveston News* printed the first edition in January 1857. The 159-page premier volume included biographical sketches of Texas notables James Bowie, Benjamin Milam and Deaf Smith.

Publisher Willard Richardson's "untried experiment," as he later called it, was such a success that the *News* bought another press expressly for publishing a second *Almanac* the following year.

"This first edition of the *Texas Almanac* was avidly read by those who lived more than a century ago," states the foreword in a 1966 reproduction of the original version. "For many families in Texas or those heading for the new, rich lands of the Southwest, the *Texas Almanac* and *Holy Bible* represented their entire library."

Early editions primarily focused on history and state government. Compilations of information listed land deeds and land claims, statistics for the state's then-116 counties, government expenses, taxable properties, school laws and monies, a listing of newspapers and post offices, and the "latitude and longitude of certain places in Texas."

Publication was sporadic, with a 30-year hiatus after Richardson's death in 1875. In 1929 the economics of the Depression caused a change

to the present biennial cycle.

Today, a staff of only two, Alvarez and Associate Editor Robert Plocheck, produce the *Texas Almanac* with assistance from freelance writers and proofreaders. Marketing and advertising staff from the *Dallas Morning News*, where the *Almanac* is headquartered, also assist.

Readers sometimes confuse the *Texas Almanac* with two other well-known titles—the *Old Farmer's Almanac* and *Farmers' Almanac*, which both claim to have secret weather-predicting formulas.

"People who were planning weddings or family picnics would call me, wanting to know what the weather was going to be like the following year," Ramos recalls with a chuckle. "I'd tell them, 'I have no idea!'"

Besides the occasional misguided event coordinator, a rich diversity of other researchers—librarians, attorneys, trivia buffs, travelers, hunters, students and reporters, to name a few—rely on the *Texas Almanac* to answer questions. However, readers in some places won't find the book. Ever.

"We got a notice one time that the *Texas Almanac* has been banned in the state prison system," Alvarez says. "The maps are so good, prison officials are afraid prisoners will use them to try and escape!"

To order the *Texas Almanac* 2006-2007, call 1-800-826-8911 or go online to www.texasalmanac.com. Copies are also available in major bookstores.

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers wrote our cover story on

TEXAS TOWNS DATABASE

The *Texas Almanac* maintains a "Texas Towns Database," compiled by Robert Plocheck, at www.texasalmanac.com. The searchable database lists more than 16,000 towns and places that once existed or still do, including county, population information where available, and other names associated with that place.

Lighting Bills Can Be Scary, Too

There's another monster Marvin and D-Wayne aren't even thinking about—monster electricity bills!

Nightlights are a great invention, giving you just enough light to scare away the shadows. This is known as “task” lighting, that is, using only the amount of light you need.

When you consider that lighting is the fourth largest user of energy in your home, it pays to conserve it when you can. Here are suggestions to help your family use lighting more efficiently.

- **Go fluorescent.** A 25-watt fluorescent light will generate as much light as a 100-watt incandescent bulb for one-fourth the energy. Fluorescent lights cost more to buy, but far less to operate. They last longer, too.

- **Turn out the lights.** Don't waste energy by leaving lights on when you're not using them. Consider installing timers or sensors to reduce the amount of time your lights are on.

- **Use task lighting.** Focus the light where you need it for reading, studying, sewing and other tasks, rather than just brightly lighting the entire room.

- **Avoid long-life incandescent bulbs.** They are the least efficient of all incandescent light bulbs.

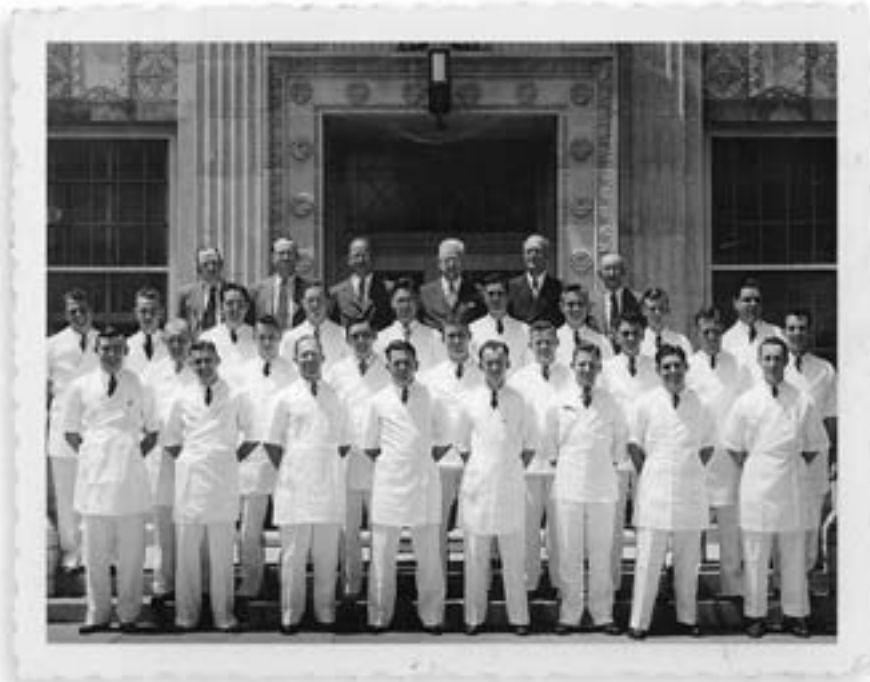
- **Buy fixtures with fewer bulbs.** A 100-watt bulb glows with nearly 50 percent more light than four 25-watt bulbs.

- **Look for the Energy Star®.** Light bulbs and light fixtures are eligible for the Energy Star rating. Energy Star lighting uses two-thirds less energy and lasts six to 10 times longer than traditional lighting.

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 Blubbafink's Seriously Ridiculous Stories* and *Loretta: Ace Pinky Scout*. He lives in Austin with his wife, Nancy, and the twins, Max and Emma.



My Travels With Doc



*Graduating seniors veterinary class, 1946, Texas A&M College.
Sibley is fourth from left, front row.*

Dad was a veterinarian—an Aggie veterinarian. During his lifetime he also was a successful rancher, owned and operated a large dairy farm, became an independent oil drilling wildcatter, and was both director of the Texas Animal Health Commission and port veterinarian for the federal government in Laredo. Ambition, for a poor East Texas farm boy who came of age during the Depression, was as obvious an aspect of my father's character as having two arms, two legs and a head of black, shiny hair.

Dad put himself through Texas A&M. He had to. There was no family money, and his mother and stepfather weren't convinced he was "college material" in the first place. This, of course, had the effect of waving a bone at a terrier. Tell Hobart Quinton Sibley he couldn't do something, then stand back and watch a steam engine go into overdrive. In between carrying a full course load and juggling work duties, he also was elected Yell Leader by the A&M Corps of Cadets.

Dad graduated from the A&M College of Veterinary Medicine in May 1946, one of 25 students that year from what is still considered one of the finest veterinary schools in the world. The war was over; he'd married my mom by then and life was going in new directions. One of Dad's first jobs was as a veterinarian for the huge Borden's dairy

enterprise in Corpus Christi. One of his duties was to haul Elsie, the venerable bovine corporate symbol, to county fairs and rodeos.

This was pretty heady stuff for a preschooler. In the '50s, Elsie and her "husband," Bruno the bull, and their "son," Junior, were the corporate celebrity icons of their day. You heard them on radio, saw them on TV, in newspaper ads and magazines, and on every Borden's milk bottle, ice cream carton and box of butter.

But frankly, our Elsie was a fractious old Jersey, and I think it began to wear on Dad having to haul a cartoon model around. He left Borden's and started his own veterinary practice in Robstown, and then later in Alice. It was during this time he started branching out—buying a cattle ranch and starting an independent oil drilling firm. To say that Dad was driven would be stating the obvious. "Workaholic" probably comes closer to the mark.

My parents divorced when I was in the fourth grade. Mom later remarried and the three youngest Sibley siblings moved with her to upstate New York, my oldest brother staying in Texas. But we spent every summer back with our father, and I finally got to know him as an individual. Our time together was purposely concentrated. We had to cram a whole year's worth of experiences into a matter of weeks.

Dad took us with him everywhere he went. Work was his “hobby.” The idea of golf or fishing was about as alien a concept to him as quantum physics. Here was a man in utter bliss when he could stand out in the blazing August sun and size up a barbed wire fence that needed repairing. With a mouthful of staples and the rest of us dragging behind, he’d hum tunes and tell jokes and stories, the most contented fellow you ever met.

I soon became an expert on South and East Texas livestock sale barns. My brother Jeff and I would accompany Dad as he made his rounds testing cattle for brucellosis, tuberculosis, etc. We’d help him take blood samples, place them in a centrifuge, and examine the results as the platelets separated from the plasma. Although each sale barn had its own peculiarities, they shared the same smells, sounds, worn façades and macho aura. To this day I can’t pass one and not want to stop, go inside and just poke around. All that manure, sweat, cigar smoke and cowhide gets tangled up in a powerful wave of memory. It attaches to your nostrils and never leaves.

Dad hit a rough patch in the late ’60s. The drilling firm went under, he lost the ranch in Alice, and his second marriage failed. Whereas others might have taken this opportunity to have a complete breakdown, Dad simply loaded up what remaining cattle he had and returned home to the piney woods of East Texas and started over again. He went back to being a full-time veterinarian, sharing an office with an elderly doctor who good-heartedly tolerated the Sibley siblings showing up every day and commandeering his workplace. We “assisted” in spaying and neutering dogs and cats, vaccinating, suturing, and taking blood and skin samples, but mostly we participated in extended exercises involving a broom, mop and scrub bucket.

Most nights Dad would get a call from some poor farmer who had a downed cow or a horse with colic, and we’d all pile into his pickup and drive off into the dark. It used to amaze me how he ever found those rural residences on spooky backwoods dirt roads.

On the long rides back home, Dad would tell us stories about his childhood and ask us what we wanted to be when we grew up. Mostly he’d tell us that he was proud of

us and he loved us, no matter what we decided to do with our lives. Somehow, it didn’t matter that we never got to go to Six Flags or the beach each summer. Just being able to ride around with “Doc Sib” was good enough.

As we got older, high school and college activities began pulling us in different directions. Quality time with Dad grew less and less frequent. The road to adulthood became lined with perceived obstacles and grievances, and it took mastering a new attribute—maturity—to eventually sort

everything out. Whenever we did need our father, though, we knew exactly where to find him—out building pens, branding heifers, or reevaluating the Civil War with some long-distance trucker at a gas station.

By the time Dad was about to turn 70, we realized he’d never had a birthday party his whole life, having been born close to Christmas. He was living in South Texas by then, so we decided to rent a ballroom at a hotel in Laredo, cater a banquet, hire musicians, and invite well over a

hundred friends and relatives to attend. When he walked into the room that evening with our stepmother, Bobbi, his face lit up brighter than an Aggie bonfire. He became the very life, heart and soul of the party—laughing, joking and entertaining everyone with his mischievous sense of humor and vast store of tall Texas whoppers.

Then, four days later, he was gone. Dead from pulmonary edema. The shock of his sudden passing was hard to comprehend. A person so full of life and joy in one instant, and then gone so quickly.

For a man who experienced his fair share of sorrow and struggle, my father was never defeated. Obstacles in life were as indispensable as joy and achievement. Or as he might put it, “That old ice cream always seems to taste a little better when your arm gets sore from turning the hand crank.”

I’m sure there were those who might have felt that with all his ambition and determination, Dad must have died an unfulfilled man. But to have witnessed his face on the last night I saw him alive, I’d have to say, truthfully, my father died of happiness.



Dr. H.Q. Sibley working cattle, Laredo 1983.

William Jack Sibley is a novelist, screenwriter and playwright. His screenplay, “Where All the Rattlesnakes Are Born,” is due to be filmed in Texas this winter by Academy Award-winning director Arthur Hiller.

Cheesecake Heaven

When we have a special event at the office (baby shower, 50th birthday), we ask Communications Assistant Sandra Forston to make one of her delicious cheesecakes. She makes the creamiest, most delicious cheesecakes I've ever tasted. When the chocoholics among us tried her Chocolate Kahlúa Cheesecake, we thought we'd died and gone to heaven. Her Perfectly Plain Cheesecake is also amazing. She's been making cheesecakes for years, so I asked her to share her tips for heavenly cheesecake:

- Use a food processor to mix ingredients—it cuts preparation time.
- Don't overbeat your ingredients—overbeating can cause the top of the cake to crack and the filling to become mealy.
- Line the bottom of the springform pan with foil or parchment paper, cutting off excess.
- When the cheesecake is done, run a knife between the cake and pan sides to separate, then return it to the oven. Turn off the oven and leave the cheesecake in there for half an hour, then crack the oven door to cool until you can handle the pan without oven mitts (about another half hour).
- Let the cheesecake “cure” in the refrigerator for one to three days. (Cheesecakes absorb refrigerator odors—clean your fridge and replace your baking soda before storing a cheesecake.)
- Although you may be tempted to substitute lower-fat ingredients to make a cheesecake less fattening, don't do it! Cheesecakes should be a special occasion treat, not a weekday dessert.

Sandra's Perfectly Plain Cheesecake Crust

1 cup graham cracker crumbs
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup finely chopped nuts



CHANDLER PRUDE

Mix all ingredients and press into bottom of 9-inch springform pan.

Filling

3 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese
4 eggs, beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup sugar

Beat cream cheese until fluffy. Add eggs, vanilla and sugar; mix until smooth. Pour into pan. Bake in 350-degree oven for 45 minutes or until center is no longer wobbly. Leave oven on. Cool for 10 minutes on counter, then add topping.

Topping

1 pint sour cream
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Mix and spread on top of cheesecake. Return to hot oven for 5 minutes. Turn oven off and cool 1 hour. Refrigerate overnight or for up to 3 days. Serve plain or with your favorite fruit topping. Serves 12-16.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 388 calories, 6 grams protein, 31 grams fat, 23 grams carbohydrates, 260 milligrams sodium, 126 milligrams cholesterol

Sandra's Chocolate Kahlúa Cheesecake

Crust

1 package chocolate graham crackers, crushed (about 1 1/3 cups)
1/4 cup softened butter

1 tablespoon granulated sugar

Pulse in food processor until combined. Press into bottom of 9-inch springform pan.

Filling

1 large package (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1/4 cup kahlúa
2 tablespoons butter
2 large eggs, beaten
1/3 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup sour cream
2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In double boiler, melt chocolate with kahlúa and butter over medium heat, stirring until smooth. Set aside. In mixing bowl (or food processor), combine eggs, sugar and salt. Add sour cream and blend well. Add softened cream cheese to egg mixture, beating until smooth (in food processor this takes only a few seconds; do not overbeat). Gradually blend in chocolate mixture. Pour into crust. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes, then turn oven down to 200 degrees and bake for 1 hour. Let stand for 1 hour, then refrigerate overnight or for up to 3 days. Serves 12-16.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 341 calories, 5 grams protein, 25 grams fat, 27 grams carbohydrates, 221 milligrams sodium, 72 milligrams cholesterol

The December recipe contest is our **Holiday Baking Contest**. See the ad on this page for instructions on how to enter, then look for the winning recipes in the December issue. The grand prize winner will receive \$3,000, with four runners-up receiving \$500 each!

This may have been my favorite recipe testing ever! Imagine 10 kinds of cheesecake, from plain to chocolate, every one of them creamy, sweet and delicious. It was divine. And it was difficult to make a decision. Chocolate won out in the end, though, and lemon and praline made the cut. An intriguing cheesecake flan rounded out the judges' selections.

MARTHA KOTHMANN, a member of Central Texas EC, won this month's top prize with her Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cheesecake. Wow, is it decadent! Serve this with a dollop of

whipped cream and some strong coffee, and your guests will be talking about it days later. Martha will receive a copy of the *Texas Co-op Power Cookbook*. Everyone whose recipe is published below will receive a gift pack compliments of Adams.

Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cheesecake

Crust

- 1 1/2 sticks butter
- 2 cups chocolate graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup chopped almonds
(toasted 10 minutes at 350 degrees)

Melt butter and mix together with other ingredients. Spray 11-inch springform pan with nonstick cooking spray and press crumb mixture in bottom and up sides of pan.

Filling

- 6 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese
- 3 eggs

- 2 cups sugar
 - 1 pint sour cream
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla
 - 2 tablespoons flour
 - 8 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
 - 1/4 cup whipping cream
 - 1 package (12 ounces) mini chocolate chips
- Beat cream cheese with sugar and eggs until well blended. Add sour cream, vanilla and flour. Melt 8 ounces of semisweet chips in microwave for 1-2 minutes with 1/4 cup of whipping cream. Stir to blend. Add to cream cheese mixture, beating with mixer for 2-3 minutes. Stir in package of mini chocolate chips. Pour mixture into springform pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool.

Topping

- 8 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup whipping cream

Combine semisweet chocolate

Continued on page 34

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Holiday Baking Contest

\$5,000 in Total Prizes!

SPONSORED BY ADAMS EXTRACT

GRAND PRIZE WINNER TAKES HOME \$3,000.

FOUR RUNNERS-UP WILL EACH WIN \$500.



**Last chance to enter!
Contest deadline
September 10!**

We're looking for the best baked goods from your holiday celebrations. All recipes must be original and the ingredients must include an Adams Extract flavoring. Winners will be announced in our December issue.

Up to three entries are allowed per person. Each should be submitted on a separate piece of paper and include your name, address and phone number, plus the name of your electric cooperative. All entries must be postmarked by September 10, 2005. Send entries to Holiday Baking Contest, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704, or fax to (512) 486-6254. To enter by e-mail (recipes@texas-ec.org), you must include "Holiday Baking Contest" in the subject line and submit one recipe per e-mail, not an attachment.

For official rules, visit texascooppower.com and click on **Baking Contest Official Rules**, or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the address above.

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MANUFACTURER'S COUPON EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

Continued from page 33

chips with whipping cream. Melt in microwave for 1-2 minutes. Stir and spread on top of cool cake. Place in refrigerator for 8-24 hours before serving. Serves 20-24.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 597 calories, 8 grams protein, 44 grams fat, 49 grams carbohydrates, 300 milligrams sodium, 116 milligrams cholesterol

Sunsational Cheesecake

Crust

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons melted butter

Combine and press in bottom and up sides of springform pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 minutes. Allow to cool.

Filling

- 3 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon rind
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 4 eggs

Combine cream cheese, sugar, flour, lemon juice, lemon rind and vanilla. Mix well. Add 3 eggs (one at a time), mixing well after each. Separate last egg. Beat in white (reserve yolk for glaze). Pour filling in crust. Bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes. Reduce temperature to 250 degrees and continue baking for 30 minutes. Loosen cake from rim but allow to cool before removing rim.

Glaze

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- Reserved yolk

In a saucepan, combine sugar and cornstarch. Add water and lemon juice. Cook until clear and thick. Temper yolk by adding a small amount of hot mixture to it, stir for a few seconds, then add back to hot mixture. Cook 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Cool slightly. Spoon over cheesecake. Chill several hours before serving. Garnish with lemon slices. Serves 12-16.

Helpful hints: Allow ingredients (especially eggs and cream cheese) to come to room temperature before mixing. Mix well after adding each ingredient.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 309 calories, 5 grams protein, 19 grams fat, 32 grams carbohydrates, 194 milligrams sodium, 99 milligrams cholesterol

MARY ALICE WEST, Taylor EC

Praline Cheesecake With Warm Praline Sauce

Crust

- 1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, melted

In small bowl, combine crumbs and sugar. Stir in melted butter. Press crumb mixture over bottom and 1 1/2 inches up sides of a 9-inch springform pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. (If using an 11-inch springform pan, use 1 1/2 recipes of crumbs, filling and sauce.)

Filling

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 can (5 1/3 ounces) or 2/3 cup evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3 eggs

Beat together cream cheese, brown sugar, milk, flour and vanilla. Add eggs; beat until well blended. Pour into baked crust. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-55 minutes or until set. Cool in pan 30 minutes. Loosen sides and remove. Cool completely, then keep in refrigerator until served. Serve with warm Praline Sauce.

Praline Sauce

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1/2 cup half-and-half
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup pecan halves

Combine ingredients in saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly for 10 minutes or until sauce is smooth and thick. May be stored in fridge. Reheat in microwave

15-30 seconds. Serves 12-16.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 383 calories, 5 grams protein, 22 grams fat, 43 grams carbohydrates, 226 milligrams sodium, 84 milligrams cholesterol

JEAN KEARNEY, Mid-South Synergy

Cheesecake Flan

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 5 egg yolks
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Strawberries, kiwis, pecan halves

About 4 1/2 hours before serving or early in the day: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease 9-inch round cake pan. In 1-quart saucepan over medium heat, heat sugar until melted and light caramel in color, stirring constantly. Immediately pour syrup into prepared cake pan to coat bottom of pan. In large bowl, with mixer at low speed, beat cream cheese and egg yolks until smooth. Gradually, beat in sweetened condensed milk, milk, vanilla and salt until blended. Pour mixture into prepared cake pan. Place cake pan in 10x14-inch baking pan; fill baking pan with hot water to come halfway up side of cake pan. Bake 50 minutes or until set. Remove flan from pan of water. Cover and refrigerate until well chilled, at least 3 hours.

Halve or slice strawberries. Peel and slice kiwis. With metal spatula, loosen flan from side of cake pan. Invert pan onto dessert platter with rim, allowing caramel topping to drip from pan onto flan. Garnish with strawberries, kiwi slices and pecan halves. Makes 12 servings.

Note: To cut calories, use Neufchatel cheese (NOT fat-free cream cheese), fat-free sweetened condensed milk and 1 percent milk.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 376 calories, 8 grams protein, 22 grams fat, 39 grams carbohydrates, 256 milligrams sodium, 144 milligrams cholesterol

BONNIE DeVULT, Medina EC

September

- 1-5. Old Mill Marketplace, **Canton**, (903) 567-5445 or www.oldmillmarketplace.com
- 2. Knights of Columbus Fish Fry, **Dripping Springs**, (512) 894-4470
- 2-3. Oatmeal Festival, **Oatmeal** and **Bertram**, (512) 355-2197
- 2-4. Hamilton County Dove Festival & Rodeo, **Hamilton**, (254) 386-3216
- 2-4. Old Mill Trade Days & Wine Tasting, **Post**, (806) 495-3529
- 2-4. Kendall County Fair, Centennial Celebration, **Boerne**, (830) 537-4096
- 3-4. Westfest, Czech Festival, **West**, (254) 826-5058 or www.westfest.com

- 3-4. Labor Day Rodeo, **Mt. Vernon**, (903) 632-0122
- 3-4. Rock, Gem & Mineral Show, **Jasper**, (409) 381-8018
- 4. Sausage Festival, **New Berlin**, (830) 420-3185
- 4. St. Mary's Festival & Homecoming, **Nada**, (979) 758-3218
- 2-4. Wine & Music Festival, **Kerrville**, 1-800-435-8429 or www.kerrvillefolkfestival.com
- 5. Labor Day Watermelon Social, **Granbury**, (817) 573-5299 or www.hgma.com
- 6. Vintage Apron Show, **Shiner**, (361) 594-3185
- 6-9. National Cowboy Symposium & Celebration, **Lubbock**, (806) 795-2455 or www.cowboy.org
- 8. Dutch Oven Cook-Off, **Kermit**, (432) 586-2507
- 8-10. Lions Club Rodeo, **Conroe**,

- (936) 760-1666
- 8-10. Creative Memories Quilt Show, **Caldwell**, (979) 567-0126
- 8-11. GrapeFest, **Grapevine**, 1-800-457-6338 or www.grapevintexasusa.com
- 8-11. Colorado County Fair, **Columbus**, (979) 732-9266 or www.coloradocountyfair.org
- 9-10. Roundup Cowboy Gathering, **Seguin**, (830) 401-7375 or www.roundupcowboygathering.com
- 9-10. Brazos Bluebonnet Quilt Show, **Bryan**, (979) 846-7995 or www.bbqg.org
- 10. Destruction Derby, **Spicewood**, (830) 693-4726
- 10. Sellabration & Barbecue Cook-Off, **Sanger**, (940) 458-7702 or www.sangertexas.com
- 10. Mountain Springs Bluegrass Festival,

FESTIVAL OF THE MONTH BY JIM GRAMON

West Texas Book and Author Festival: Abilene, September 20-24 Big Country Balloon Festival: Abilene, September 23-25

Some months it's hard to pick just one event to feature—there are hundreds of wonderful festivals, but only a dozen monthly columns. In September there are two very special events taking place back-to-back in the oft sung-about town of Abilene. So, why not go to both? Make it a “two-fer” trip.

First, the fifth annual **West Texas Book and Author Festival** begins on Tuesday, September 20, with several days of events culminating in big festivities on Saturday at the Abilene Civic Center. About 20 Texas authors will speak or participate in panel discussions that day. Featured authors include Elmer Kelton and Liz Carpenter, as well as a host of other Texas literary luminaries. In addition to workshops, panel discussions and more, the A.C. Green Literary Award will be presented at the Boots and Books Luncheon.

On Thursday check out wines from featured Texas vineyards and chef/authors Ty Thoren, Rebecca Rather, Robb Walsh and Nolan McKey at the Texas Cookbook Gala. Friday, authors will speak at elementary schools, and Brown Bag Luncheons with authors will be held every day. Events are held at the Abi-

lene Public Library Auditorium (202 Cedar Street) and Abilene Civic Center (1100 North Sixth Street).

September 23-25 is the 11th annual **Big Country Balloon Festival**. If you've never attended a hot air balloon festival, you need to correct that right away. My favorite part is the “glow” in the evenings on Friday and Saturday, when they light the inside of the balloons. Take your camera! And of course, these balloons are just as photogenic in the daylight. The winds are normally best for hot air balloon flying early in the mornings, when the sun is heating the ground and the warmed air is rising.

There will be a variety of live entertainment throughout the weekend. Other events include a “hare and hound” balloon race, balloon

parade, power chute exhibitions, several fun runs, silent auction, food and crafts booths. Events are held at Red Bud Park (3125 South 32nd Street).

For more information on the book festival, call (325) 676-6328 or see www.abilenetx.com/apl. For more information on the hot air balloon festival, call (325) 795-0995 or go to www.BigCountryBalloonFest.com

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



Watch hot air balloons glow at twilight this month in Abilene at the Big Country Balloon Festival.

AARON WINTERS, STUDIO NG

AROUND TEXAS



The Texas Mountain Bike Racing Association will host the Huntsville Classic, an event on the Texas Fall Cup Mountain Bike Series, September 24-25. Find out more about this sport at www.tmbra.org.

- 10. Waller County Patriot's Day, **Hempstead**, (979) 826-6964
- 10. Freedom Street Dance, **Comanche**, (325) 356-1352
- 10. Septemberfest & Wild Game Cook-Off,

- Cranfills Gap**, (254) 597-2756
- 10-11. Apple Butter Festival, **Idalou**, (806) 781-1753 or www.applecountryorchards.com
- 10-11. Bead Bazaar, **Seabrook**, (281) 474-3869 or www.backbaymarket.com
- 10-17. Hopkins County Fall Festival,

- Sulphur Springs**, (903) 885-8071
- 13. Hay Show, **Mineola**, (903) 569-2087 or www.chamber.mineola.com
- 15. Fall Festival, **Midlothian**, (972) 723-8600 or www.midlothianchamber.org
- 15-18. Hummer/Bird Celebration, **Rockport**, 1-800-242-0071
- 16-17. Barbecue Cook-Off, **El Campo**, (979) 543-3179
- 16-17. Storytelling Festival, **Frisco**, (972) 335-5510 or www.friscofest.org
- 16-17. Quilt Show and Live Auction, **Sulphur Springs**, (903) 994-2570
- 16-17. Silk Purse or Sow's Ear, **Victoria**, (361) 582-2511
- 16-18. Reunion Celebration, **Brownwood**, (325) 641-1182
- 16-18. B-17/Big Bird Fly-In, **Monaville**, (281) 498-7935 or (979) 764-9067
- 17. Texas Star Civic Dinner & Auction, **San Augustine**, (936) 275-3610 or www.sanaugustinetx.com
- 17. Founders Day Festival, **McGregor**, (254) 840-0123
- 17. Northeast Texas Music Festival, **Winnsboro**, (903) 342-3666
- 17. Cowboy Symposium, **Camp Wood**, (830) 234-3322
- 17. Fish Fry, **Terrell**, (469) 595-9302
- 17. Taste of East Texas, **Mineola**, (903) 473-2614



COMING IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF
TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Tyler's Rose Royalty

Set your course for Tyler where, for a few days every year, royalty rules in the dazzling display of pomp and splendor known as the Texas Rose Festival.

Here's to the Hippos, Ducks and Wampus Cats

School mascots, like towns, are commonly named after a person, landmark or industry. But some mascots are mighty peculiar.

Plus:

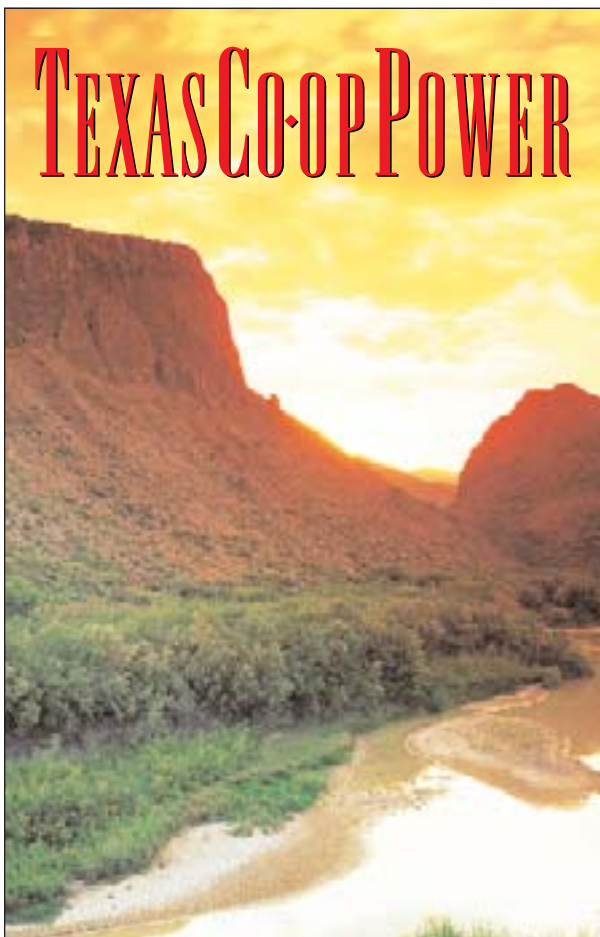
German food, Floydada Punkin Day and more!

- 17. Heritage Day, **Blanco**, (830) 833-1442
- 17. Spurfest, **Gatesville**, (254) 865-5007 or www.coryellmuseum.org
- 17. Medina County Fair, **Hondo**, (830) 426-5406
- 17. Livestock Show, **Hico**, 1-800-361-4426
- 17. Lions Fest, **Manor**, (512) 278-1932
- 17. Gulf Coast Film & Video Festival, **Nassau Bay**, (281) 335-5804 or www.gulfcoastfilmfest.com
- 17. Rose-Ted Pepper Fest, **Independence**, 1-800-441-0002 or www.weAREroses.com
- 17. World Champion Hopkins County Stew Festival, **Sulphur Springs**, 1-888-300-6623
- 17. Texas Country Reporter Festival, **Waxahachie**, (972) 938-9617
- 17. Antique Tractor and Machinery Show, **Hamilton**, (254) 386-3862 or 386-8752
- 17-18. Coin Show of the Concho Valley, **San Angelo**, (325) 465-4615
- 17-18. Medina County Fair, **Hondo**, (830) 426-5406
- 18. Music Hall of Fame Hoedown, **Bandera**, (830) 796-4213
- 18. VFD Auction & BBQ, **New Ulm**, (979) 992-3373
- 18-24. San Jacinto County Fair & Rodeo, **Coldspring**, (936) 653-2184
- 20. Comal County Fair, **New Braunfels**, (830) 625-1505
- 22. Ducks Unlimited Banquet, **Victoria**, (361) 578-2721
- 23-24. Busy Bee Quilt Show, **Post Oak**, (940) 567-2771
- 24. Cajun Festival, **Lakehills**, (830) 751-3130 or www.cajunfestival-medinalake.com
- 24. Last Chance Chili Cook-Off, **Rockne**, (512) 542-6672
- 24. Sheep Run, **San Angelo**, (325) 481-2646
- 24. County Fair, **Alba**, (903) 765-3278
- 24. Chicken Supper & Country Store, **Knippa**, (830) 934-2132
- 24. Texas' Last Frontier Ranch Heritage Tour, **Levelland**, (806) 894-4062
- 24. Coal Miners' Heritage Festival, **Bridgeport**, (940) 683-4341
- 24. Oktoberfest, **Lincoln**, (830) 774-7568
- 24. Heritage Day, **Driftwood**, (512) 694-8156 or www.driftwoodtx.org
- 24-25. Oak Tree Festival, **League City**, (281) 332-3953 or www.oaktreefestival.com
- 24-25. Huntsville Classic Mountain Bike Race, **Huntsville**, (281) 440-6100
- 25. Wendish Fest, **Serbin**, (979) 366-2441
- 25. Czech Heritage Festival, **Victoria**, (361) 575-0820
- 29-Oct. 2. Wild Horse & Burro Expo, **Belton**, (405) 790-1009
- 30-Oct. 1. Haunted Hollow, **Riesel**, (254) 896-3901
- 30-Oct. 23. State Fair, **Dallas**, (214) 421-8715

October

- 1. Chicken & Bread Days Festival, **Bowie**, (940) 872-6246
- 1. Fiddlin' Fest, **Georgetown**, 1-800-436-8696 or www.fiddlinfair.com
- 1. Wild Game Benefit Dinner, **Johnson City**, (830) 833-5335
- 1. Fall Festival, **Jasper**, (409) 384-2762
- 1. Vintage Button Show and Sale, **Tuleta**, (361) 375-2558
- 1. Indian Summer Day, **Sulphur Springs**, (903) 885-2387
- 1. Pet Fair & Blessing, **Wimberley**, (512) 894-0105
- 1. Archaeological Fair, **Lincoln**, (830) 774-7568
- 1-2. Fishermen's Seafood Festival, **Palacios**, 1-800-611-4567 or www.texasfishermensfestival.net

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., November submissions must be received prior to September 10. Events are listed according to space available. We appreciate photos with credits but regret that they cannot be returned.



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.

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Making the Connection via Bridges

Bridges have always attracted photographers. Along with the many lovely photos submitted by our readers this month, we were also treated to impromptu history and geography lessons. Take a little trip across Texas and through time with this month's offerings.

The Big Hunt is the topic for our November issue. Send your photos—along with your name, address, daytime phone, co-op affiliation and a brief description—to “The Big Hunt,” Focus on Texas, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704, before September 10. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). If you use a digital camera, e-mail your highest resolution images to focus@texas-ec.org (check your camera's operating manual if you have questions).



▲ Pedernales EC member LAURA TREZISE took this photo of a railroad swing bridge over a shipping canal in Freeport. “We were on a photo hunt for shrimp boats when we found this,” she said. “The railroad worker let us cross and watch him swing the bridge out and back for a train to pass. It was very cool to see.”



▲ One of the many rewards of the 8.4-mile hike to the summit of Guadalupe Peak is the spectacular view along the way. CoServ Electric member DANIEL WARSCHUN took this photo of a bridge on the trail in Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

When San Bernard EC member BETH HERCHEK was a girl, she and family members would have stick races from this old bridge north of Columbus. Stick races? “Drop sticks of different lengths on one side of the bridge into the water below, then go to the other side to see which stick beats the others under the bridge,” she explains. Her parents, QUINTON and ELSIE KAHLDEN, were married on the bridge in 1953, as was her niece several years ago. The bridge was in use until 1955 and crosses Cummins Creek on FM 109. ►



◀ CHARLES A. WRIGHT submitted this shot of Baytown's Fred Hartman Bridge over the Houston Ship Channel. “I got lucky when the flying birds, fisherman, light levels, bridge lights and depth-of-field objects all came together at one time,” said the Sam Houston EC member.



▲ Deep East Texas EC member DONNA DUNHAM took this photo of the Rusk Footbridge, the longest footbridge in the United States at 546 feet. Located—appropriately—in Footbridge Garden Park in Rusk, it is a replica of the original built in 1861 to connect the town’s residential area with the downtown business district.



▲ This lovely bridge in western Palo Pinto County, photographed by United Cooperative Services member JANICE A. THOMPSON, is one of the few still standing from the Bankhead Highway, once known as the Broadway of America. The Bankhead Highway opened in 1919 and was part of the first transcontinental highway from Washington, D.C., to Birmingham, Alabama, to San Diego, California. In 1930 it was renamed U.S. 1. Still in private use today, the bridge is on Thompson’s property and crosses Ioni Creek.

During World War II, KATHLEEN HEFFLEY DOVE and WANANO MCGEEHEE WILLIAMS regularly sent photos of themselves to their husbands who were serving in Saipan in the South Pacific. “This is one of my favorite bridge pictures,” writes Cooke County EC member Kathleen Dove. The old bridge crosses a small creek in southern Cooke County. ▶



◀ Before this bridge in Pine Forest—one of the longest in Hopkins County—was torn down in 1990, JAN FLOYD took this photo of her grandson, BRIAN FLOYD, 3, with his best pal TINY. The photo was submitted by Farmers EC member (and Brian’s mother) TINA FLOYD.



▲ COLBY MARON was in seventh grade and on a spring break family vacation when he took this photo of the Pecos River Bridge. Because he was working on a school history project, “the running gag on this trip was ‘historical marker, one mile ahead!’” said his mother, BECKY, who submitted the photo. “We stopped and photographed nearly every historical marker from Bandera to Del Rio and back again.” And this beautiful shot of the Pecos River Bridge as well! The Marons belong to Pedernales EC.

UPCOMING in Focus on Texas

ISSUE	SUBJECT	DEADLINE
November	The Big Hunt	September 10
December	Santa Claus	October 10
January	Windmills	November 10
February	Car Wash	December 10
March	“Oops!”	January 10
April	Bluebonnets	February 10



Marfa: Where the Artists and Antelope Play

At first glance, the main street of Marfa looks desolate and empty, like the windswept Chihuahuan Desert plateau that surrounds the town.

But driving through Marfa, you begin to notice dozens of discreet art galleries and stylish adobe homes of white, pale apricot or tan nestled behind courtyard walls.

Since the classic movie "Giant" was filmed here in 1955 and brought atten-

tion to this small town (pop. 2,078), Marfa's mystique has inspired visitors.

Even before "Giant" came to town, Marfa was known for its mysterious lights. For more than a century, Presidio County residents have seen twinkling lights between Marfa and Paisano Pass on clear nights. They have been attributed to electrostatic discharge, swamp gas, moonlight shining on veins of mica, even ghosts of conquistadors looking for gold. The

ments. The Marfa Book Company offers Wi-Fi computer access and *The New York Times*, while half a block away you can buy coils of barbed wire at Livingston's Ranch Supply.

Marfa also has a bona fide theatrical community. Recent performances in the Goode Crowley Theatre, an elegant space in a remodeled feed store, include "Edge," a one-woman play based on the life of Sylvia Plath, starring Angelica Torn (daughter of Geraldine Page and Rip Torn); a reading by local writers and townsfolk for Aids Awareness Week; and a production of "The Glass Menagerie" starring local residents.

The late minimalist artist Donald Judd is Marfa's patron saint of art. Judd bought most of the abandoned 340-acre Fort D.A. Russell military base in the early '70s, installing his own art and that of his friends on the sprawling complex now known as The Chinati Foundation. The foundation's international reputation in contemporary art draws pilgrims from across the globe.

In the tradition of other chic hotspots such as Santa Fe and Taos, out-of-towners are snapping up the best of Marfa's old adobe homes; even derelict homes and businesses are now hot properties.

Marfa's artistic and natural charms are real. A jaded soul might take the ever-changing sky and limitless horizons for granted, but most visitors are awestruck. Throw in an array of desert flora and the occasional sightings of solitary mountain lions, golden eagles, antelope and elk in the higher mountains, and you have an intriguing destination.

Add a night sky that sparkles like a queen's jewel box, and you might even want to move there.

For more information, see www.marfacc.com or www.chinati.org, or call 1-800-650-9696.

Roy Hamric was editor of *The Desert-Mountain Times* in Alpine. It recently ceased publication.



ROY HAMRIC

Out-of-towners have discovered Marfa and are renovating adobe homes.

most rational explanation is that the lights are similar to a mirage, produced by the interaction of warm and cold layers of air in the atmosphere, bending light that can only be seen from a distance.

In addition to the Marfa lights, celebrity sightings are commonplace. Recent visitors include actors Frances McDormand, Tommy Lee Jones and Dwight Yoakum, newscaster Dan Rather and publisher Samuel "Si" Newhouse.

Some of the state's largest ranches occupy the open, empty spaces of the high desert plateau around Marfa, so artists, writers and working cowboys rub shoulders daily at local establish-

ment. Roy Hamric was editor of *The Desert-Mountain Times* in Alpine. It recently ceased publication.