

# TEXAS CO-OP POWER

## DIG IN!

Fall Vegetable  
Gardening in Texas





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Optional equipment may be shown.

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## FEATURES

### 8 Dig In FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING IN TEXAS

Photos by Will van Overbeek  
and Ann Richburg

*Our staff's modest labors on a variety of fall gardens have given us a profound appreciation for genuine farmers. From the guerilla garden to the whiskey barrel garden, we had good luck and bad.*

### 14 A Bookish Paradise

By Jeff Tietz

*There's no telling what you'll find when browsing the four buildings that make up writer Larry McMurtry's antiquarian bookstore in Archer City.*

## FAVORITES

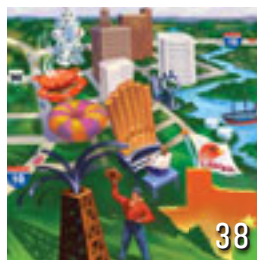
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## TEXAS CO-OP POWER

*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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# POWER TALK



## QUEBE SISTERS STORY A THRILL

It was thrilling to see the cover photo and article on the Quebe sisters in your June 2009 issue. They are doing a fine job of preserving a part of Texas' music culture. We need more articles on such wholesome, family-oriented influences. I have had the opportunity to hear them perform at social and cultural meetings. They have always done a fine job and are deserving of the publicity you have given them.

**JEFFREY MURRAH**

*Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

## QUEBE SISTERS' TEACHER DESERVES MORE CREDIT

That was a great article about the fiddlin' Quebe Sisters Band, but the story didn't give near enough credit to Sherry McKenzie (she is married to band member Joey McKenzie and helped teach the sisters how to play fiddle). It couldn't happen without her. She has an ear for music you wouldn't believe. She stays behind the scenes mostly. When she and Joey got married they went to a fiddle contest at Athens that day. You have to do what is important to you on your wedding day.

**BOB PARK**

*Sam Houston Electric Cooperative*

## IN DEFENSE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As a longtime supporter of public schools, I must question the author and editor who decided to include the flippant remark made by one of the Quebe sisters in your June 2009 issue disparaging a rural-area school system. The comment was that the sisters were home-schooled to "get us away from the bad influences of public school."

Most folks who receive your magazine send their children to public schools. The public schools are a cornerstone of our country, but sadly, some folks feel free to verbally trash them at will. Public-school students not only learn in the classroom, but they learn to work with and understand people with different beliefs, ideas, cultures and ethnicities other than their own.

**ROY MITCHELL**

*Bryan*

## PETRIFIED WOOD IN LULING

I really enjoyed the article on Glen Rose's petrified wood in the June 2009 issue ("Irreplaceable Works of Art"). There was a man in Luling who had such a love for petrified wood, he went all over the state collecting it. He used the wood to build a retainer wall and fence running down the sides of his home in the 1000 block of South Laurel Avenue. If you are ever that way and are interested, you might take a look.

**RODNEY AND SHIRLEY DECOU**

*Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

## DUCK FOR NINEPINS

As a former pin boy for ninepin bowling at the Marion Bowling Club, your article about the sport in the May 2009 issue ("Still Standing After All These Years") brought back a lot of memories of flying pins from both alleys when farmers from the area came up to bowl. In



WYATT MCSHODDEN

1953, there were no partitions between alleys to keep pins from flying from one alley to the other—or even out the open windows that allowed some air circulation to cool off the bowling alley. Ninepins are farther apart, and that made for flying pins instead of them being stopped by another pin. Pin boys knew which bowler had the most power and would crawl as far forward in the alley as they could to avoid being hit by a pin.

**HAROLD HUTH**

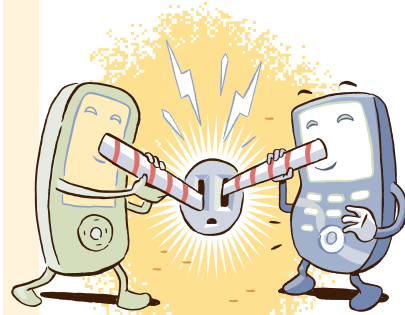
*Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

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## GLUTTONOUS GADGETS

The Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that by 2030, new electronic gadgets will account for triple their current energy consumption, climbing to 1,700 terawatt-hours, the equivalent of today's home electricity consumption of the United States and Japan combined. One terawatt equals 1 trillion watts.



The IEA estimates that the growth in the use of consumer electronics will require the equivalent of 200 new nuclear power plants just to power all the TVs, iPods, personal computers and other gadgets expected to be plugged in by 2030—when the global electric bill to power them is expected to rise to \$200 billion a year. Most of the growth of demand for consumer electronics will occur in developing countries.

# H A P P E N I N G S

At the **AUSTIN BATFEST**, the celebrities don't come out until it's almost dark. When the fifth annual event gets under way during the heat of the day on August 22, its stars—more than a million of them—will be sound asleep or resting, snuggled wing to wing in the cool, concrete crevices under the Ann Richards Congress Avenue Bridge.

But at sunset, with thousands of human onlookers angling for the best view, the world's largest urban colony of Mexican free-tailed bats will pour out from under the bridge, skimming through the summer sky like a massive cloud of black smoke.

Late summer is the best time to see the night flights of Austin's bats because the young, called juveniles when they start to fly, are now old enough to join the adults as they venture out in search of insects for supper.

And the Batfest, slated to run from 1 p.m. to midnight on the bridge just south of the Capitol, is quintessential Austin with live music from 18 bands and food, arts and crafts and other offerings from 150 vendors.

For more information, call (512) 441-9015 or go to [www.roadwayevents.com](http://www.roadwayevents.com). For more information about Austin's bats, visit the Bat Conservation International website, [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org), or call the Austin bat hotline at (512) 416-5700, category 3636.

## WHO KNEW?



A storm that generates winds exceeding 57 mph is called a *derecho* (pronounced day-REY-cho), a Spanish word that means straight. Unlike the rotating winds of a tornado—which is thought to be derived from the Spanish word *tornar*, which means “to turn”—the sustained, straight-line winds of a *derecho* do not revolve or spin. But these storms can be just as dangerous as tornadoes.

Most common in warm seasons, *derechos* are created by bands of showers or thunderstorms called bow echoes, meaning they are curved, or crescent-shaped. Together, these storms generate damaging, straight-line winds that often occur near the center of a bow echo.

## THE MULTIPURPOSE YUCCA

ANDY AND SALLY WASBURN



“Along with lechuguilla, prickly pear, and sotol, yucca was one of the most useful plants to early humans in our state. Literally every part of the plant yields something of value, whether a foodstuff, fiber, soap, tanning agent, medicine, building material, or fuel. Amid hundreds of representations of animals and humans, yucca is one of the few wild plants depicted in prehistoric petroglyphs.”


—Matt Warnock Turner, *Remarkable Plants of Texas: Uncommon Accounts of Our Common Natives*, University of Texas Press, 2009

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## CO-OP PEOPLE

### EASING UP ON WILDFLOWERS

**CATHEY MILLER**, a member of Mid-South Synergy, loves sunflowers and wanted to decorate the roadway in front of her house with them. But she didn't realize she was using the

utility's easement as a flower bed. She wrote *Texas Co-op Power* to thank the thoughtful co-op workers who came to trim trees and heeded her pleas to spare her newly planted flowers. “They could have saved

themselves a lot of extra work,” she wrote. “Instead, they carefully trimmed the trees, making sure to not trample the (sunflower) seedlings.” This photo of Miller and her handiwork in Montgomery testifies to her green thumb and Mid-South Synergy's light tread.



# Carbon Capture

*The realities of carbon capture and storage*

By Jennifer Taylor and Megan McKoy

**E**LECTRIC COOPERATIVES NOT ONLY lead the utility industry in implementing energy-efficiency programs and supplying power from renewable energy, they also are on the cutting edge when it comes to testing and deploying carbon capture and storage technology (CCS).

This technology involves isolating carbon dioxide—a gas blamed for contributing to climate change—from coal- and gas-fueled power-plant emissions. The collected gas is then compressed, pumped down into spent oil and natural gas wells, saline reservoirs or inaccessible coal seams and, in theory, entombed forever.

As we strive to meet increasing demands for safe, reliable and affordable electricity in an environmentally responsible fashion, CCS stands, according to a Massachusetts Institute of Technology report, “as the critical enabling technology to reduce carbon dioxide emissions significantly.”

A 2007 study released by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), a nonprofit, utility-sponsored organization whose members include electric

co-ops, finds that CCS technology is the most significant among seven principal areas where U.S. electric utilities can help cut carbon dioxide emissions.

If electric utilities are to implement CCS on a commercial scale by 2020—the cornerstone of EPRI’s framework for keeping the lights on and rates affordable as the nation tackles climate change—in-depth research and demonstration projects are needed.

The 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the stimulus bill, provides \$3.4 billion for CCS programs. These funds will support fossil-energy research and development, carbon capture and energy-efficiency improvement projects.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative secured a \$300 million federal loan in early 2009 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a CCS demonstration project at its 900-megawatt (MW) coal-fired Antelope Valley Station. The Bismarck, North Dakota-based generation and transmission (G&T) co-op supplies wholesale power to 126 member co-ops in nine states.

Approximately 1 million tons of car-

bon dioxide will be captured annually from the 120-MW project, making this demonstration, expected to go online in 2012, one of the largest in the world. But a CCS venture of this scale faces significant technical and economic challenges: Transferring this technology to a large-scale, existing coal-fired power plant has never been done.

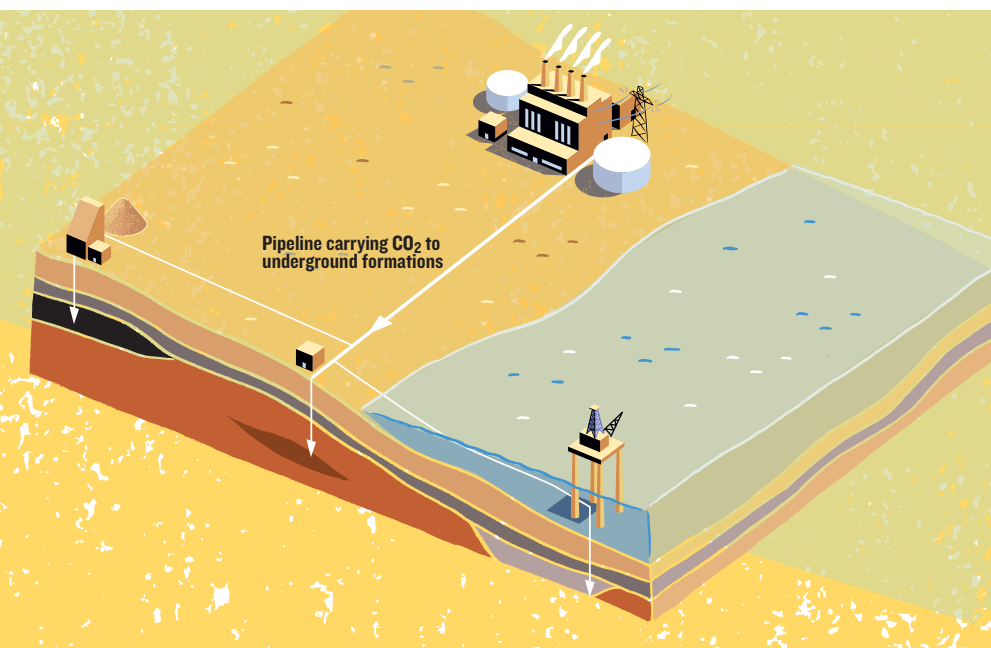
“We’ve been pushing the technology envelope for years, while keeping an eye on consumer electric costs. But these efforts take time and a huge financial commitment,” said Basin Electric Power Cooperative CEO and General Manager Ron Harper. “Our demonstration project has the potential to create a viable path for coal in our nation’s energy future. The conundrum for us lies in paying for the technology and research necessary to do this work, while keeping electricity affordable for our member-owners.”

The Great Plains Synfuels Plant, a natural gas plant owned and operated by Basin Electric Power, started delivering captured carbon dioxide in 2000 to a Canadian oil producer. The plant starts the process with coal, which is turned into a synthetic natural gas. Every day, the Synfuels plant sends 8,700 tons of captured, compressed carbon dioxide via a 205-mile-long underground pipeline to depleted oil fields in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, where the gas helps bring more oil to the surface.

Great River Energy—a Maple Grove, Minnesota-based G&T co-op—is one of five electric utilities taking part in a 2009 EPRI study to evaluate the impact of retrofitting existing coal-fired power plants with CCS technology. “We want to learn how we can capture carbon dioxide from our existing coal plants and thus continue to have a fleet of power plants that is productive, cost-effective and fulfills our duty to be good environmental stewards,” says Rick Lancaster, Great River Energy’s vice president of generation.

Here in Texas, the Legislature recently approved tax breaks for “clean-coal” plants to capture and store carbon dioxide.

*Jennifer Taylor and Megan McKoy write about consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*



# KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR UP HERE



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Pipeline operators constantly maintain their lines, but in the event of a leak, there are important signs to know. If you detect any of the following, leave the area immediately and call 911:

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- SEE dirt blowing upward
- SEE flames coming from the ground

For more information about pipeline safety, visit [www.pipeline-safety.org](http://www.pipeline-safety.org).



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# DIG IN!

## Fall Vegetable Gardening in Texas

Americans around the country—rural, suburban and urban—are responding to our country's economic and environmental challenges by looking for solutions in their own backyards, or front yards. More and more grassy lawns are being replaced by vegetable gardens. More communities are establishing farmers markets. Locally grown is becoming the gold standard for produce.

We took this to heart at *Texas Co-op Power* and persuaded several staff members, whether experienced or not, to plant fall gardens and let us know what happened. We do confess that one staff member let his neighbor do the dirty work, but she's a co-op member so that's OK.

Our modest labors have helped us develop a profound appreciation of the many genuine farmers who receive this magazine. So bear with us as we tell you what happened when veggies went into the flower bed, and front yards sprouted entirely too much broccoli.

### From a Humble Home, a Verdant Feast

OUR VEGETABLE GARDENS—BOTH ARE THE RAISED-BED VARIETY—are hardly works of art. One is rimmed by old cinder blocks left behind by our home's previous owners. The other one my wife, Lisa, and I built using rot-proof landscape bor-

**Art Director Suzi Sands helps Kevin Hargis tend his raised vegetable garden, which is bordered with landscape timbers and concrete blocks.**



WILL VAN OVERBEK

ders made from recycled automobiles with a few old cedar porch posts filling in the gaps.

We had to build the raised beds and haul in our own garden soil because where we live, a few miles southwest of Austin, we have only a few inches of topsoil. Underneath is a rocky underbelly of limestone.

We surrounded our gardens with old pieces of cardboard topped by spoiled hay. It keeps the weeds down and gives us nice footing around the beds. A plastic deer fence has kept the hungry white-tails from feasting on our plants.

What the garden lacks in aesthetics, it more than makes up for in production. In the summers, we enjoy bushels of tomatoes, baskets of squash, spicy radishes, okra and peppers.

A couple of years ago, we tried our first fall garden, pulling up the spent summer plants and adding tomatoes, a lettuce patch, a bed of spinach and root vegetables like green onions, carrots and even a few potatoes.

After nursing them through a warm September and October, the plants, the ones that survived, were stable. A few crops were wildly successful. We had spinach coming out of our ears and enough lettuce to enjoy a salad nearly every day.

Last year, a particularly hot and dry summer and our decision not to run up our water bill left us with a disappointing summer harvest. By the time the last few sad little tomato plants were toast, our fall garden planning was in full swing. The spinach and lettuce made return appearances and were joined by parsnips, broccoli, cauliflower, Swiss chard and Napa cabbage.

The vegetables were surprisingly hearty. When the forecast was for 33 or 34 degrees, Lisa and I found ourselves out in the evening gloom armed with a ragtag collection of old blankets and poly sheeting, propping the materials above the plants to form an insulating pocket of air.

Again, the greens seemed to be the biggest successes. The



spinach thrived and the cabbage grew into huge, oval heads, which were sweet and tasty both stewed and in slaw. The broccoli never formed those great big heads like you'd see in the grocery store, but it was the sweetest I'd ever tasted. The chard made it through the winter and thrived even when hot weather returned.

Now that we know what works, we'll plant more this year—plus give one or two more things an audition.

Putting in a fall garden for the first time can be intimidating, but once you see the products of your labor, you'll be hooked.

KEVIN HARGIS, *Food Editor*

## Front-Yard Bounty

AS A CHILD, I ALWAYS LOVED GOING TO MY GRANDMOTHER'S house in the summer. She had vegetables growing everywhere—the side yard, the backyard and yes—the coveted FRONT YARD. Ripe, red tomatoes, velvety okra, shiny, green cucumbers, black beauty eggplants and tepees of green beans were all part of her “Secret Garden” home. So, this past winter, inspired by my grandmother and the trend away from water-guzzling lawns, I thought to myself, why not?

If we could transform our carpet of grass into a beautiful, lush oasis of veggies, maybe some of our neighbors with large, manicured yards would do the same. So off we went.

First, we fenced the front yard to keep out deer. Then my husband got busy making garden boxes for my raised beds. Our soil in Northwest Austin is so rocky, raised beds were our only option. I pored through my garden books to see what would grow successfully in the Texas winter. My children and I were impatient to get our garden up and growing, so we “cheated” a little and bypassed seeds for seedlings. We planted

**Ann Richburg's aesthetically pleasing garden, filled with veggies and flowers, is in her front yard for all her neighbors to enjoy.**



ANN RICHBURG

**Daughter Emma Richburg holds a bouquet of Carnival Blend carrots.**

cabbages, Packman broccoli, cilantro, parsley, spinach, carrots—of the Carrot Carnival Blend variety—leeks, radishes, asparagus and a variety of lettuces.

I never covered a thing even during our crazy two-day freezes followed by 80-degree weather. Bugs were nonexistent, and watering was minimal. We watched our garden grow more bountiful by the day. The neighbors complimented us as the plants grew bigger and produced a bumper crop. I was harvesting so much that my family and pet bunny have never eaten so well. The front-yard garden was a hit!

After it was all said and done, I let many things flower and go to seed just for the fun of it and to feed the honeybees. We can hardly wait to start planning for our next year's harvest!

ANN RICHBURG

## The Whiskey Barrel Garden

I DIDN'T KILL MY GARDEN. WELL, NOT ALL OF IT, ANYWAY.

Granted, there wasn't much garden to kill, considering I planted—foolishly crammed in is more like it—three pepper plants and a tomato plant in a half whiskey barrel.

My thumb is about as green as a ripe, red tomato, but I figured I could handle such a tiny container garden. Besides, as a co-worker says, the way to grow a green thumb is to keep it on the water hose.

So, on September 8, 2008, two days after buying my barrel and all-purpose potting mix with fertilizer, I planted habanero, jalapeño, African red bullet and tomato plants, deciding I wasn't qualified to start with seeds. With such an easy beginning, what could possibly go wrong? Add water, sunshine and a little TLC, and soon I'd be eating the fruits of my labor, including the hotter-than-habanero African red bullet peppers. My mouth watered.

WILL VAN OVERBEEK



WILL VAN OVERBEK

**Visions of fiery salsa dance in Camille Wheeler's head as she harvests some of her homegrown peppers and tomatoes.**

Plus, I was ahead of the game; upon planting, the habanero plant was already bearing a couple of peppers.

And so began my fall gardening adventure. I watered (almost every day), talked to the plants, gently touched them and oohed and aahed when the slightest growth occurred. I patted myself on the back for putting the barrel on the east side of my covered back deck, where the plants would get lots of morning sun and not so much of the burning afternoon rays. I loved looking out my back door at my budding little garden just 5 feet away.

And miraculously, my two Labrador retrievers—one has been known to rip siding off the back of the house—left my easy-to-get-to garden alone.

I tracked growth on my calendar: On September 21, I had four jalapeños, eight habaneros and several blooms on the patio tomato plant. And my September 25 garden diary read: "Gasp! I have a tomato!"

By October 27, I had 15 green tomatoes, some the size of a small fist, slowly turning red. But I had a problem: My seemingly steroid-fueled tomato plant was overtaking the barrel and suffocating the African red bullet planted too close to its fruit-laden limbs.

Soon, some of the tomato plant's thick, sprawling branches were hanging over the edge of the barrel and starting to break under their own weight. I had to do something—and fast. So I drove wooden stakes into the dirt and lashed the limbs to the stakes with strips of cloth.

Catastrophe avoided. On November 13, I counted a whopping 33 tomatoes and started picking the juicy red beauties, slicing them for sandwiches or sharing them with co-workers.

I also enjoyed setting my mouth on fire with the jalapeños and habaneros—the African red bullet plant never recovered from its trauma—but it's the tomato plant that did my soul good. The tomatoes smelled like the summers of my youth, when we planted gardens in a cotton field.

And even though a whiskey barrel can't compare in beauty with a wide-open farm field, it was good to dig my fingers in the dirt and be reminded that food doesn't grow in grocery stores.

My tomatoes survived several freezes in December when I draped blankets over the taller wooden stakes, creating a warm cocoon underneath. But on December 22, when the temperature dipped to 28 degrees and I forgot to cover them, the tomatoes were gone.

I mourned their loss. But a seed has been planted: Even I can grow a fall garden.

CAMILLE WHEELER, *Staff Writer*

## Guerrilla Garden

LOTS OF PEOPLE IN TEXAS HAVE ROOM TO ROAM. SO DO THEIR vegetable gardens. I drive out in the country and see the perfectly weeded long rows of beans, lettuces and squash marching into the distance. The caged tomatoes stand at attention. This army of veggies would pass muster with the harshest drill sergeant.

Someday I may get to be that drill sergeant, keeping things in lock-step order.

But in the meantime, I have a guerrilla vegetable garden. Or at least it is slightly subversive, sneaking in amid suburban xeriscape flowers and shrubs and crawling up fences and trellises. Guerrilla vegetables cleverly disguise themselves as ornamentals.

If you're like me and want to enjoy fresh vegetables but do not have the time or energy or space for a full-on vegetable garden, the solution may be adding a few guerrilla veggies and herbs to your current landscape. Here are several simple suggestions:

Grow vegetables as ornamentals. Scarlet runner beans and hyacinth beans are grown for flowers as well as beans. Chard has gorgeous, brightly colored stalks. Show off the pole beans on a beautiful trellis.

Grow attention-getters. Brussels sprouts have tall stalks

**That's a mighty large cucumber nestled next to a Pride of Barbados plant in what we call the 'guerrilla' garden.**



WILL VAN OVERBEK

with miniature cabbages stuck on the sides. Once kids see these they might actually want to eat them. Chinese long beans are tasty and fun to grow. Chunky cabbages and cauliflower flowers are superb accent plants.

Grow vegetables you can't find in the store. And harvest them young. Talk to friends and neighbors to find out what grows in your area. Find out about heirloom varieties. Grow vegetables developed for taste, not transportation.

Go easy on yourself and plant a salad right outside your door. Microgreen seeds germinate quickly, almost like sprouts. A single packet of seeds can produce several teeny-tiny harvests. With a little care, lettuce, spinach, collards, mustard and cabbages can be pot-grown and harvested a few leaves at a time all winter long.

Key tactics for guerrilla gardening should include taste, as in tasteful design and tasty on the tongue. First and foremost, grow what you want to eat. Mingle the garden plants in with your ornamentals. Just remember where they are. Tiny markers can help here.

Don't line up your vegetables as in a traditional vegetable garden. Grow them more like flowers in informal clusters. Pollination is often better in clumps than in the long rows.

Think about leaf textures, shapes and colors when planting. Treat the vegetables as you would flowers when planting. A delicate red-leafed mustard would look stunning against the pale, solid cabbage.

Go ahead. Be subversive and plant a vegetable or two or more in the front yard.

By the way, this guerrilla tactic can work in the spring garden, too. Asparagus becomes a beautiful, feathery border plant once the harvest is over.

SUZI SANDS, *Art Director*

## The Never-Ending Garden

WHEN WE STARTED OUR FALL GARDEN, I NEVER EXPECTED TO still be harvesting cabbage, broccoli and cilantro in March. Despite the extreme drought we continue to experience here in Central Texas, we enjoyed a wonderful yield—thanks in part to cooler temperatures.

I finally was able to use an idea I had years ago of turning an old, metal mattress frame into a bean trellis. We moved the rusty 1930s relic from the side of the house and propped it up against the fence. Voilà, an instant trellis.

Since we had an established plot, getting started was easy. The hardest part was having to wait to buy plants and seeds when we wanted the instant gratification of growing greenery. But soil prep is critical for a healthy and bountiful yield, so that's where we began.

Then we visited our local nursery and picked up three varieties of tomatoes and some rosemary, sage, thyme, dill and jalapeño pepper plants. We also selected seeds: green beans, cabbage, cilantro and broccoli. Dealing with the fall heat in Central Texas can be tricky, so we used our pop-up awning to shade the tender vegetation from the late summer sun for the first couple of weeks.

The beans started growing just like in "Jack and the Beanstalk." Watching the difference a day made was fascinating: The little beans would grow an inch a day until ready to pick. Picking was also fun and challenging. Trying to spot



WILL VAN OVERBEK

An antique bed frame makes a dandy trellis for Sandra and Mark Forston's unending bean crop.

green beans in a sea of green is hard, but the reward of a bowl of fresh-picked beans for dinner was well worth the effort.

During the weeks to follow, we continued to pick beans and watch our tomatoes set buds. Seeing the yellow flowers blossom made me think of the fresh tomato dishes soon to be enjoyed with the family. The broccoli, cabbage and cilantro continued to grow and required thinning.

Here, however, is a precautionary note: Beware of rats! Their love of the tender seedlings was intensified by the drought, and they went after the premature cabbage and broccoli. We got out the traps and eliminated eight of the furry munchers in a six-week period. And in an effort to not to give in to the vermin, we planted more seeds.

The dill, rosemary, cilantro, thyme and sage stood us in good stead for a variety of favorite fall dishes. There was sage for Thanksgiving dressing, rosemary for roasted chicken and dill for jazzing up relish plates and pickled items. Best of all, we had jalapeños, cilantro and tomatoes ripening during the same week in mid-December. You know what that meant? Fresh pico de gallo. Just add a little lime juice, and you're in business. It was a taste of summer, even with Old Man Winter starting to nip at our heels.

Gardening in the fall made us spend more time outdoors enjoying our beautiful backyard and garden—we were drawn outside even when the weather started to become chilly.

For me, having a fall garden is a no-brainer. Got to go: We are having a stir-fry tonight featuring the last of the broccoli and cabbage—and the wok is hot. It's mid-April, no less.

SANDRA FORSTON, *Communications Assistant*

# The Peanut Sun-Times



August 2009

News from the Texas Peanut Producers Board

## Back-to-school time is peanut butter time!

It's that time of year again - the kids will be going back to school and parents will be making important decisions about what to pack in their lunch boxes.

This school year, make sure peanuts and peanut butter are a part of your child's daily diet.

Studies have shown children who have a healthy diet of protein-packed foods like peanut butter perform better at school. Texas peanuts and peanut butter are smart options for your kids because they are filling, contribute more than 30 essential nutrients and phytonutrients — like protein, vitamin E, magnesium, phospho-

*continued on next page*



## Texas peanut farmers promote healthy lifestyles at triathlon



*"Peanut butter is always a part of my training. It gives me the energy I need to perform my best."*

*- Mike Greer, age 70  
Ironman competitor*

It's no secret — peanuts and peanut butter are packed full of energy and important nutrients. So, it's no wonder peanut butter makes the perfect energy-packed snack for athletes and active lifestyles.

To help spread the word about the nutritional benefits of peanut butter, the Texas Peanut Producers Board was the leading sponsor of this year's Buffalo Springs Lake Ironman held June 28.

The Ironman is a 70.3 mile race where athletes swim, bike and run their way through the terrain of the Texas South Plains. Over 1,500 competitors from all over the world came to test their strength and endurance during the 20th anniversary race.

TPPB sponsored the food tent at the event and provided Texas peanuts and peanut butter to competitors. The TPPB logo was also visible on all 13 mile markers along the running portion of the race.

"Peanuts are a great source of energy, and anyone competing in a 70-mile race certainly needs a food source that will keep them going," said Shelly Nutt, TPPB executive director.

Seventy-year-old Ironman competitor Mike Greer, who is also the race's coordinator, eats peanut butter during every race. "Peanut butter is always a part of my training. It gives me the energy I need to perform my best."

## Campaign educates urban media about agriculture

The Hand That Feeds U.S., is a new farmer-led project to improve relations with urban reporters, and some powerful U.S. lawmakers are asking the media to give farmers a chance.

The multi-year effort will consist of a webpage, as well as a series of face-to-face meetings with reporters across the country.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad (D-ND) and Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) asked the news industry to take the time to learn more about this effort, U.S. farm policy, and the farm and ranch families that keep America fed.

Go to [TheHandThatFeedsUS.org](http://TheHandThatFeedsUS.org) to learn more about how farmers feed and clothe every person in this country.

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[www.TexasPeanutBoard.com](http://www.TexasPeanutBoard.com)

## Back to school, *continued from previous page*

rus and manganese — and have zero cholesterol and no trans fats. Plus, kids love the great taste of peanut butter!

There are many ways parents can incorporate peanuts and peanut butter into their child's diet.

Besides its great taste and nutritional benefits, the trusty peanut butter and jelly sandwich is quick and easy to make. To make the PB&J even healthier, consider using whole-grain breads instead of white bread. Whole-grain bread is low in saturated fat and low in cholesterol, while providing an additional source of 20 vitamins and minerals.

Great peanut butter snacks are not limited to just peanut butter and jelly. You can promote healthy eating in the lunch box by pairing peanut butter with apples, celery or even dried fruits. Sixty-four percent of kids eat more fruits and veggies when paired with peanut butter, according to a Weekly Reader survey. Another pairing idea is a breakfast raisin-banana tortilla roll-up with a peanut butter apple spread.

Peanuts and peanut butter are just what kids and adults alike need to power through daily tasks and adventures.

## Recipes

### Peanut Butter Quesadillas

**Ingredients:** 4 - 6" whole wheat tortillas, 4 tablespoons peanut butter, 1 thinly sliced banana, and non-stick cooking spray

**Directions:** Spray sauce pan with non-stick cooking spray. Spread peanut butter evenly over two of the tortillas. Place thinly sliced bananas over the peanut butter. Cover each tortilla with peanut butter with another tortilla and heat in a skillet until warm on both sides. Cut both quesadillas into quarters and serve hot. Makes 2 quesadillas.



Go to [www.texaspeanutboard.com](http://www.texaspeanutboard.com) for nutritional information for this recipe



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## A B O O K I S H P A R A D I S E

BY JEFF TIETZ

Readers from around the world flock to Archer City and Larry McMurtry's immense, eclectic bookstore.

IN THE CENTER OF ARCHER CITY, POPULATION 1,800, stand four plain, one-story brick buildings that hold roughly 200,000 antiquarian books. Together, the buildings compose Booked Up, a bookstore owned by novelist Larry McMurtry, who was raised on a cattle ranch near Archer City, the seat of Archer County.

McMurtry's books, residing in their buildings indecorously, in library-style stacks, draw serious readers and book dealers from many parts of the world—such as California, New York, Ireland and Australia—to the tiny town of Archer City, which lies on the Rolling Red Plains northwest of Dallas. The four Booked Up buildings, which either face the county courthouse or sit within

a block of it on the town square, give Archer City's downtown area a distinct personality.

Archer City's economy is lean, depending on oil, natural gas and cattle, and the town is showing some signs of struggle, like the recent closures of a Sonic Drive-In and a Chevrolet dealership. But bookstore customers boost business here. For a few days or a week, they stay at the Spur Hotel or the Lonesome Dove Inn, which rely on their patronage, and they nudge up profit margins at Allsup's Convenience Store, Oodles Supermart and the Wildcat Cafe.

Booked Up's manager, 31-year-old Khristal Collins, who has worked here since she was a teenager, seems to have

internalized some of the store's suffusing stillness. When I visited recently, she was patient and gracious and helpful, but said no more than she had to, and after showing me into the main room of the first building, she left soundlessly, before I realized she'd gone.

Tall bookcases of simple white wood, stabilized by two-by-fours nailed to their tops, extended in vertical, monotonous rows in both directions. Colored construction-paper signs, hanging by hairy twine, listed subject categories in diverse, upbeat fonts: Nature, Trees, Animals, The Sea ... Texas, Wildflowers, Cacti, Fungi.

Tame caprice governs the Booked Up collection. The first thing you see when





KENT BARKER

you walk into the second building is a fact sheet pinned to a bookshelf:

**Q: How are the books arranged?**

A: Erratically/Impressionistically/Whimsically/Open to Interpretation

**Q: Do you have a list of these books?**

A: No.

In building No. 1, I found a chair and sat. On the shelves all around and on a display table and cart I saw: *Bee Flies of the World: The Genera of the Family Bombyliidae* (1973); *In Search of Ali Mahmoud: An American Woman in Egypt* (1973); *The Charles* (1941), from a series of books called *Rivers of America*; *Hit to Kill: The New Battle over Shielding America from Missile Attack* (2001); and *A Social History of the American Alligator* (1991).

I walked out of building No. 1 and onto Center Street, which is wide and windblown. Although there has been one recent business closure downtown—the Sonic, near the courthouse—other structures, such as the First Baptist Church and 129-year-old First United Methodist church, are perfectly maintained.

The bookstore's second building, just across Center Street from building No. 1, has thousands of fiction and poetry and art books, but its core, the big front room, features rare and unusual books. Here, you can study Rasputin, Nero, Nehru and Kublai Khan. I saw that in the darkly cathartic year of 1968, a Purdue University professor named Peter Georgeoff had published a work

called *The Social Education of Bulgarian Youth*. In the introduction, he writes that Bulgaria is part of “the Shatter Belt, a narrow strip of land between the USSR and Western Europe occupied by weak, disorganized nations.”

I left building No. 2 to eat some pizza at the Lucky Dollar convenience store and gas station. While I ate, I read *The Archer County News*. “Having hog problems?” a prominent ad in the classifieds section asked. “We will trap your property or keep them run off with dogs,” it promised. The front-page headline read: “Scotland-Windthorst VFW and Ladies Auxiliary announce Voice of Democracy essay winners.”

Buildings Nos. 3 and 4, right on the courthouse square, house a huge

amount of 19th-century magazines and books. In 1858, I learned, *Harper's Magazine* commissioned a travelogue called "Winter in the South" that it illustrated with engravings of a steamboat loading cotton bales, Native Americans carving canoes and the sun setting over Spanish-mossy Lake Pontchartrain. *Memoirs of M. de Blowitz* caught my eye. It has a fine-leather front cover, color-embossed with the de Blowitz crest: crown, lion, eagle. It was strange to read de Blowitz's first sentence: "My origin, infancy, and youth have been narrated so often that no one will, I hope, find fault with me if ... I myself give an account of them." The next paragraph begins, "On December 28th, 1825, at the Chateau of Blowsky, in the region of Pilsna, in Bohemia, there was born a child with a big head and a feeble body."

Next door to building No. 3 is the abandoned Berry Building, whose awning still reads "coffee community culture conversation." On its picture windows, students from Archer City High School had painted "WILD-CATS." On the other side of building

No. 3 are Archer Flowers Gifts & Jewelry, American National Bank, an Allstate insurance office and a State Farm Insurance office, its picture window sloganeered "Fire Up To Win," ringed with Wildcat paw prints. The Booked Up buildings, moored to the earth by the cubic bulk of McMurtry's eclectic repertoire, have a diminishing effect on the surrounding structures.

Building No. 4 is broad, high-ceilinged and heavily informational. In all the Booked Up buildings, but especially in No. 4, the scantily labeled shelves are so long and high, the books so tightly compressed, the dates and styles and colors and sizes so diverse, the multiple copies so few, that to take a book from a shelf and skim it for a moment is to lose all sense of its place. I often had to stand in front of a bookcase for a long minute, retracing the track my eyes had first traveled.

THE LAST PLACE I STOPPED BEFORE LEAVING town was the Allsup's, just down the street from building No. 1. I was chatting with the cashier when the store manager, Donna Marney, came

in. I asked her about Booked Up. "It's amazing where people come from to go to these stores," she said. "New York—way out of state. I'm thinking, 'My God! Talk about avid readers!'"

It turned out that Marney's son-in-law is Larry McMurtry's nephew. Like everyone else I talked to, she had good things to say about McMurtry, including that he still acts like he's from Archer City. As popular as McMurtry's bookstore is with people from other places, Marney said she couldn't think of many locals other than McMurtry's family who visit Booked Up. "I'm not a reader," she said, "and I don't have the time."

Out in the car, on my way out of town, I thought about time. When you look into a Booked Up window, from the sidewalk or from a car, you see a dully forbidding block of volumes, McMurtry's sensational, mercurially amassed collection: no sheen, no evident order.

Without the luxury of time, what can you do with that?

*Jeff Tietz has written for Harper's Magazine, Rolling Stone and The New Yorker. He lives in Austin.*



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**GOOD CALL.**

## Need Help Saving Electricity? Put Kids on Energy Patrol

Stop nagging your kids to turn off the lights, TV or water when they're finished with them. Instead, make them official officers in your energy-efficiency "police force." Or superheroes with a mission to save the planet. Or even kings and queens of the Land of Low Electric Bills.

If you want your kids to help you in your quest to save energy, make it fun.

Spend an afternoon decorating badges that declare they are in charge of "Operation: Save Energy."

Then take them on a "raid" of the house, looking for ways your family is wasting energy. Explain that when they hold the refrigerator door

open or leave the front door ajar when they run outside, they are forcing your appliances or air conditioner to suck more electricity out of the outlet.

Then put them in charge of "policing" others in the family who use energy inefficiently.

Here are some ways to make it fun to save energy.

- Set up an energy-efficiency obstacle course. Send your kids on a race through the house to find other family members or friends acting out energy-wasting activities. Tell your kids they have to find culprits in each room and correct the energy wasters

before they can move on. Time them as they inspect each room and award points each time they correct an offending action.

- Each week, post a chart on the refrigerator and tally each time a family member gets caught wasting energy. The person with the fewest tallies on Friday night gets to pick the movie.

- Illustrate the monetary savings of conserving energy by setting up an energy piggy bank. Give your younger kids a nickel or dime each time they do something to help save energy. Take one away each time they leave a light on or leave their video games running. For older kids, give them a small bonus on their allowance each month they help lower the household energy bill.

- Help your kids find games and other educational sources on the Internet that teach them about energy savings. At [WWW.PROJECTSUPERPOWERS.ORG](http://WWW.PROJECTSUPERPOWERS.ORG), they can select or invent superheroes and help them harness their powers for energy efficiency.

If you make saving energy a game rather than a chore, you might get your kids excited about your cause. Soon enough, they'll be correcting you when you forget to flip the switch.



## DON'T GET LAZY ABOUT SUMMERTIME SAFETY

Don't let the "lazy daze" of summer make you drop your guard when it comes to electrical safety. With swimming pools, camping trips and an abundance of other outdoor activities, extra caution is in order.

Here are some potentially hazardous situations to watch out for this summer (and always):

- ✗ Extension cords used outside and plugged into an outlet not protected by a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

- ✗ Extension cords being used outdoors that are not approved for outdoor use.

- ✗ Electrical toys, appliances, tools or cords being used less than 10 feet away from pools and wet surfaces.

- ✗ Improperly installed or the wrong kind of pool wiring and connections.

- ✗ Extension cords running through doorways or traffic areas.

- ✗ Common sense not applied around the use of electricity.

And, the National Electrical Code requires outside power receptacles to be protected by GFCIs. These devices will shut off power if a ground fault occurs, protecting you from electric shock.

If you are not sure whether your outside receptacles are protected by GFCIs, hire an electrical contractor to check them out and ensure your family's safety.

Summer is a great season; let's all enjoy it together by thinking about safety first.



# ON BOARD WITH BOATING SAFETY

## Boating

Did you know that people who hunt or fish from boats have one of the highest boat fatality rates? Or that more people die from falling off small boats (16 feet and under) than larger ones? Here are some tips for accident-free boating:

### Safety Rules for Boating:

- Be weather-wise. Bring a portable radio to check weather reports.
- Bring extra gear you may need. A flashlight and extra batteries, matches, map, flares, first-aid kit, sunglasses and sunscreen should be kept in a watertight container or pouch.
- Tell someone where you're going, who is with you, and how long you'll be gone.
- Ventilate after fueling. Open the hatches, run the blower, and carefully sniff for gasoline fumes in the fuel and engine areas before starting your engine.
- Anchor from the bow, not the stern. Use an anchor line at least five times longer than the water depth.
- Know your boat's capacity. Don't overload it or put an oversized motor on it.

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# Sage Advice

*Grow wild,  
gardeners, with  
showy, fragrant  
salvias*

By Sheryl  
Smith-Rodgers



We planted the long, green spikes with deep blue flowers two summers ago. The following spring, the plant sent up vigorous shoots and quickly bloomed. Originally, we'd chosen the plant for its striking beauty. Now we had another reason to feel enamored: *It came back!*

Generally speaking, salvias do that—return full speed in the spring. They're also drought-tolerant, deer-resistant and *very* easy to grow. What's more, their colorful blooms attract hummingbirds. But that's really all I knew about our showy garden resident: It was a "salvia" that grew alongside other kinds of salvia we'd planted as part of our certified Texas Wildscape.

Detail person that I am, I wanted *names*. Common and botanical, please. So I decided to do some sleuthing. In my research, I read about salvias *and* sages. The terms seemed interchangeable. But were they? And what's the difference, if any? Time to dig deeper and find out.

In one area of our gardens, we grow a bushy green sage alongside bee balm, lemon thyme, lemon verbena, chives and other herbs. Nearby, another bed encircles our collection of ornamental salvias that includes cedar sage (*Salvia roemeriana*). So, I still wondered, what's the connection between sages and salvias? Greg Grant, a horticulturist at the Stephen F. Austin State University Pineywoods Native Plant Center in Nacogdoches, offered his ... uh ... sage thoughts on the perplexing matter.

"All salvias are sages," he told me, "but not all sages are salvias. For the record, there's only one true culinary sage."

More than 900 species compose the genus called *Salvia*, the largest member of the mint family (*Lamiaceae*). Add to that several hundred natural hybrids and cultivated varieties, and it's no wonder we gardeners get dizzy sometimes. Several common traits, however, make it easy to identify a salvia: Look for square stems (which can turn round with age), opposite pairs of leaves (usually hairy) and a corolla—the flower's colorful tube—that bears two lips of unequal length.

Break off a leaf, then take a whiff. Fragrant, eh? Aromatic salvias have long been valued for their medicinal uses. As far back as the first century, Pliny the Elder, a Roman scientist, wrote about *Salvia*, a name derived from the Latin verb *salvare* (to heal). And what about that other name, sage? It traces its roots to medieval England, where herbalists likely took the name from the French word for the same herb, *sauge*.

In 1597, English botanist John Gerard described several salvia species and detailed their healing powers in his book, *The Herball*. One was the common garden sage (*Salvia officinalis*), Grant's aforementioned culinary sage. Then and now, chefs and gardeners like us grow this shrubby perennial with woolly green leaves as part of a basic bed of culinary herbs. Other sage cultivars, such as tricolor, golden and purple, add a splash of color in the garden. In recipes, they all taste the same.

So what about those sages that aren't salvias? Grant's right. I found some: white



PHOTOS 1, 4, 9: ANDY AND SALLY WASOWSKI; PHOTO 3: NORMAN G. FLAIGG; PHOTO 5: CAMPBELL AND LYNN LOUGHMILLER; PHOTOS 2, 7, 8: COURTESY OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN GROW GREEN; PHOTO 6: JEFF GAGE/FLORIDA MUSEUM

sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), Jerusalem sage (*Phlomis lanata*), pitcher sage (*Lepechinia fragrans*) and Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*), to name a few. In most cases, they're likely called a sage because they resemble or smell like a salvia. (Jerusalem, pitcher and Russian sage belong to the mint family.)

Dawn Stover, a research associate at the Stephen F. Austin Mast Arboretum, adores growing salvias of all colors and shapes. One of her favorites—*Salvia Indigo Spires*—boasts deep blue blossoms from April to October. She also loves varieties of *Salvia coccinea*. We do, too. All of our pink-cream Coral Nymph and crimson Lady in Red salvias reseeded and bloomed within the same growing season!

Last summer, we bought a beautiful cultivar: *Salvia x jamensis* Sierra San Antonio that bears peach-and-butter-colored flowers. It grows near a white blooming *Salvia greggii* Stampede Citron, several red shades of *Salvia greggii*, *Salvia farinacea* Victoria Blue and the mysterious green-spiked salvia with deep blue flowers.

I was still determined to figure *that* one out. To speed up the process, I photographed it, then compared the images to similar specimens in my research. Determining its scientific name proved easy. However, settling on a common name made me dizzy. *Salvia guaranitica*, like many salvias, sages and other plants, has more than one name: blue anise sage, Brazilian sage and black and blue sage. Which one?

Finally, I decided on blue anise sage. After all, I had other things to do. For one thing, I needed to figure out the name for a bushy lantana that we'd just planted in our wildscape ...

*Sheryl Smith-Rodgers is a frequent contributor to Texas Co-op Power and wrote about wildscapes in the March 2008 issue.*

#### OUR FAVORITE SALVIAS ...

1. Cedar sage (*Salvia roemeriana*)
2. Majestic sage (*Salvia guaranitica*)
3. Mealy blue sage (*Salvia farinacea*)
4. Autumn sage (*Salvia greggii*)
5. Mountain sage (*Salvia regia*)
6. Forsythia sage (*Salvia madrensis*)
7. Mexican bush sage (*Salvia leucantha*)
8. Big red sage (*Salvia penstemonoides*)
9. Scarlet sage (*Salvia coccinea*)

#### TEXAS WILDSCAPES

Texas Wildscapes, a program sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, encourages landowners to create habitat for birds, small mammals, reptiles and butterflies. To get certified, a yard must have at least 50 percent native plants, plus offer food, shelter and water for wildlife year-round. For more information and planting tips, go to [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wildscapes](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wildscapes).

# An Ode to the Bandana

*When it comes to versatility, this handy accessory wipes away the competition.*

BY KENNETH L. CANION

**T**he other day while doing yardwork, I noticed that my wife and helpmate was perspiring. I whipped out my trusty bandana for her to dry her face with and keep the stinging sweat out of her eyes. If you are outside in summer on the Texas Gulf Coast, you sweat, which is a good thing. It's like nature's sauna.

I slipped into one of those nostalgic moments and started thinking about my long relationship with the bandana: a large handkerchief bearing some type of patterned western motif, usually in shades of red or blue. The red-diamond ones remind me of John Wayne movies.

I can recall as a child always having a handkerchief in my back pocket, usually balled up and wet. I was never able to keep one white, and I used it on a runny nose. My mom didn't like seeing the sleeve of my shirt or the cuff of my jacket stiff with dried—how can I be delicate here?—snot.

But the handy accessory had many other uses. It was great for wiping skinned knees and elbows. I could wet an end to clean dirt from my eyes. It served as a dandy headband that held a feather in its knot when I played Tonto; it was an eye patch when I became Blackbeard, the dreaded pirate.

Occasionally, it became a flag at my soldier fort or a banner on my fake bicycle antenna. I even used it as a slingshot to hurl the rock with which David killed Goliath.

In high school, I fancied myself a cattleman, and the bandana was a good wrap for injuries caused by barbed-wire fences. I even used it to wrap around the eyes of my show calf, Sugar, as I administered some treatment or other under the direction of our agriculture teacher.

During my Air Force days with all the survival schools and emergency medical training, I was amazed to find that emergency medical treatment was assisted with a basic issue of a cravat, another form of a bandana. It was used for everything from splinting a broken leg to making a sling for an injured arm, to serving as a constriction or tourniquet, to being part of a stretcher. Drably colored, it was the military version of the age-old and proven bandana.

When I retired from the Air Force and the National Guard and began teaching, I noticed that the students in my classes were not acquainted with the form or function of a handkerchief, much less a bandana. Boys, I mean, come on. A handkerchief or bandana is a sign of masculinity.

John Wayne, Hopalong Cassidy, the Cisco Kid and even Roy Rogers wore ban-

danas. With all these good role models, where had our society gone wrong?

Well, I guess all this is lost now. Nowadays, you can just reach for a lanolin-laced tissue, use it, throw it away and enjoy a non-chapped nose. I checked the oil in my pickup with a tissue once, but I made sure no one was looking. A tissue has its purposes, but you have to admit that they are extremely limited.

(Sergeant on the battlefield: "Quick, hand me a tissue! I've got to tend to this man's wound!")

Like the bandana, I feel obsolete. But the bandana really can't be replaced with anything but another bandana. Even after it wears out, it can be cut up and used as a rag.

I read about a most interesting use of the bandana: A young lady was trying to train her newly purchased horse that had the bad manners to bite her on the backside whenever she was about to throw the saddle on its back. So she boiled a potato, wrapped it in a bandana while it was still hot and stuck it in her back pocket. This time when she started to throw on the saddle, the horse bit into the potato and was instantly cured of its bad habit.

---

*Kenneth L. Canion and his wife have a permanent residence in West Columbia, Texas, and spend part of each summer in Port O'Connor.*



Here are some of the uses that Kenneth L. Canion has discovered for the bandana. Perhaps you can think of others:

- Dipstick wipe
- Hot pad for oven
- Sweatband or wipe
- Tourniquet
- Grip for opening jars
- Face cloth
- Washrag
- Nose blowing
- Pet apparel
- Wound dressing
- Western clothing accessory
- Dust mask
- Gun-cleaning wipe
- Moisture collar
- Head cover
- Distress signal flag
- ID marker on car antenna
- Napkin
- Baby bib
- Sun protector for neck
- Poultice pouch
- Liquid strainer
- Patch for holes in clothing
- Glass-cleaning rag
- Shoeshine rag
- Doll clothes

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# The Forgotten Pandemic

BY SHANNON OELRICH

In October 1918, El Pasoans couldn't congregate in public places, go to school, church or the theater. They were even required to wear face masks in public. Even with such precautions, by the end of the year, 600 citizens were dead. Was it the bubonic plague, scarlet fever, an early strain of Ebola? It was none of those infamous killers—it was the flu.

The 1918 influenza, also called the Spanish flu, killed at least 50 million people around the globe. That's a conservative estimate; experts such as Alfred W. Crosby, professor emeritus of American studies, history and geography at the University of Texas, say the number may be more like 100 million. The deadliest virus ever known took El Paso, a West Texas town of 75,000, by storm.

El Paso had some factors that made it especially susceptible: a large population with a dense urban core; overcrowded Mexican-American neighborhoods that did not have hospitals or other health services; and Fort Bliss, which housed soldiers in close quarters, many of whom had recently returned from Europe where the flu had already taken hold as fighting raged in the battles of World War I.

El Paso historian Fred M. Morales wrote about the city's oldest neighborhood, Chihuahuita. He said that ambulances had to come to the area four to five times a day to transport the ill and dying to makeshift hospitals.

On November 9, the ban on public gatherings was lifted; two days later, more than 8,000 people came out for the Armistice Day parade. The virus had run its course, and the Great War was over.

Commemorating the end of a war is always bittersweet, even for the victorious, tempered by respect for those who died in service. In 1918, an aching irony marred the celebrations as many young men returned from war only to be stricken with the flu. It killed swiftly, in a matter of days, and proved most deadly for those aged 20 to 40. In fact, this strain of influenza killed more Americans in one year than had died in battle during the war.

Crosby published harrowing accounts of the illness in his 1976 book, *Epidemic and Peace, 1918*.

But until the mid-1970s, this killer was largely unknown by those born after 1918. Families, for the most part, didn't pass down stories about it. Historians didn't tell its tale. Yet it was the single biggest worldwide pandemic ever.

Why was the story of this frightening illness so slow to emerge from the shadows of history? For those who lived through 1918, the war and the flu are inextricable from each other. Both brought death to the young and healthy. Perhaps those who lived through this terrible time didn't tell its tales because they wanted to forget.

For some time, Crosby's book was the only one written specifically about the epidemic. Largely ignored in its first



Influenza ward at Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D.C., November 1918

edition, the book was revised for a 1989 edition, titled *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918*, as viruses such as HIV/AIDS, SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome or "bird flu") and Ebola began to appear in headlines. Other researchers thought that the tragedy of 1918 might give us knowledge to stave off a future epidemic, and public health officials began planning for one. We can only hope that swine flu will not reach epic proportions.

In 1918, families were overwhelmed, sometimes losing several members within days. Judy Shubert, a Texan who writes family history pieces, knew the flu had affected her family but didn't know how until she found some old letters. Her Great-Aunt Lucy died of the flu while traveling. Lucy's parents, living in Millsap, received this devastating letter from a family friend she was visiting:

"Dear friend it is with a sad, sad heart, one that is broken—broken to tell you that we laid your darling at rest with our darling boys all in one lot and at the same time, Jan. Sat. 4 at 3 o'clock. Lucy died Dec. 30 and my little darling baby went home Dec. 31, and my two boys went New Year's day. O you can't know how hard it was to give up three at once and a true friend, too. All that loving hands could do was done. They all looked like they was asleep and so they were in the arms of our savior. We can't understand why the Lord does these things but he will make all clear some day."

The double blow of "the war to end all wars" and history's deadliest illness left a wake of devastated families across the globe—families who, for the most part, didn't pass down the stories of their tragedy. It didn't matter how death came; its finality silenced a generation.

*Shannon Oelrich, former Texas Co-op Power food editor, is a freelance writer who lives in Pflugerville.*

# Have a Plan Before You Go to the Store

**BY KEVIN HARGIS** Stretching your food budget takes time, planning and work, but if your goal is saving money, the effort will be well spent. Even if you are not concerned about saving a bunch, you can shave a buck or five off your grocery bill by following a few simple tips.

Advice abounds on the subject of supermarket savings, including a library full of books containing tips, recipes and advice.

Buying the cheapest ingredients just because they are cheap might not always serve you or your family in the best way. The biggest factor to consider in putting your food money to work in the most efficient way is nutrition per dollar.

Think fresh fruits and vegetables in season. Think foodstuffs you can buy in large quantities—volume results in more savings per serving—and store without spoilage. Think loss leaders, those advertised items that grocery stores discount heavily to get you in the door—but stick only to those things on sale.

Consider banding together with friends and neighbors and join a warehouse club or food cooperative. That way, you can buy in bulk and split up the food.

One of the most recent in a large crop of meal savings books comes from author Jennifer Maughan, a mother of three whose book *100 Meals for \$5 or Less* (Gibbs Smith, 2009) shares her strategies for shopping, cooking and efficient use of every morsel of food.

The first move you should make in your grocery-store battle plan, she advises, is to think. Before you go to the store, plan a week's worth of meals. Then make a list of everything you will need. You can plan meals at that time based on the best sale prices.

If you get a newspaper, the grocery store circulars inside are a valuable source of intelligence. In addition, Sunday papers can pay for themselves in coupon savings alone. But you have to be careful with coupons. What might look like a great deal on paper doesn't always translate into real savings at the dinner table.

Many coupons are for prepackaged foods. Although these can seem cheap, remember that premade foods include the price of the labor and energy it took to make them. Plus, many prepared foods are loaded with sodium, fat and calories. That can negate your savings at the store with money spent later at the doctor's office.

Maughan's book advocates doing even more homework, which could be a pain at first, but practices such as keeping a price list will net you the best savings whenever you go grocery shopping. She advises keeping track of what the different stores in your area charge for different grocery items, because sometimes stores run "sales" that seem good, but are not really values if you crunch the numbers.

Take a spiral notebook and pen along whenever you go shopping. Put column headings for date, store, item, price, unit price and sale price. The date is important, because it will help you keep track of price cycles at different stores. You should be specific about brand names, sizes and price per ounce. Whenever a store has a sale on an item, write that down. That way, if its sale improves later in the year, you'll know that it's really a great bargain.

Maughan also provides strategies for preparing food, storing leftovers and using them in creative ways and not allowing food to go to waste.

One intriguing dish from the book is a cool delight that can be made most cheaply in the late summer when melons abound.

## MELON BOATS

In late summer, when the stores and farmers markets are overflowing with melons, try different combinations of melon, fruit and gelatin.

- 1 large melon (such as cantaloupe or honeydew)
- 2 (3-ounce) packages flavored gelatin
- 1 cup boiling water
- ½ cup applesauce
- 1 cup sliced fresh fruit

Cut melon in half lengthwise and scoop out seeds. Cut a thin slice off the bottom of the melon so the half will sit firm and level. In a bowl, dissolve gelatin in boiling water, then stir in applesauce and fresh fruit. Pour gelatin mixture into the scooped-out center of the melon halves. Cover melons with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Just before serving, slice each melon half into three wedges.

Serving size: 1 wedge. Per serving: 217 calories, 3.6 g protein, 0.3 g fat, 53.8 g carbohydrates, 171 mg sodium, trace mg cholesterol





## **MOLLIE HEJL** *Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

Prize-winning recipe: **Tasty Tuna Tacos (Tacos Viernes)**

Texas cooks are pretty talented at stretching their food budgets with creative and yummy recipes. Contest entries made good use of common pantry staples and leftovers, and many included a Mexican flair. On paper, the winning recipe raised a few eyebrows among the judges, but the crunchy and unique Tasty Tuna Tacos reigned supreme in the voting.

You might remember our winner, Mollie Hejl, from her creative and tasty Texas Today Cake published in the January 2009 issue. Mollie has certainly proved her recipe-writing prowess with this simple and inexpensive main dish.

### TASTY TUNA TACOS

- 1 box taco shells, 12 count
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) chunk light tuna in water
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup finely chopped yellow bell pepper
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro (rinsed, dried, stems removed)
- 1/2 cup finely grated carrots
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice (half of 1 large lime)
- 2 cups thick and chunky mild salsa
- 8 ounces grated Monterey or pepper jack cheese
- 1 can (4 ounces) sliced ripe olives

Preheat oven (or toaster oven) to 350 degrees. Line baking sheet with foil and arrange taco shells in single layer. Warm for 5 to 7 minutes.

For filling, drain and chop tuna and place in medium-sized bowl. Add onions, peppers, cilantro and carrot. Add lime juice to tuna mixture. Thoroughly mix all ingredients using large mixing spoon.

Remove taco shells from oven and add a quarter to a third of a cup of filling mixture to each taco shell. Follow with 2 tablespoons salsa and 2 tablespoons grated cheese. Garnish with 10 to 12 black olive slices. Serve immediately.

Serving size: 1 taco. Per serving: 256 calories, 14.5 g protein, 12.2 g fat, 20.5 g carbohydrates, 2.3 g fiber, 562 mg sodium, 28 mg cholesterol

### SPICY MEXICAN CASSEROLE

- 1 1/2 pounds ground meat
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoons seasoning salt
- 1 tablespoon dried minced garlic

- 2 tablespoons chili powder
  - 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
  - 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
  - 1 can (10 ounces) cream of mushroom soup
  - 1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes and green chilies
  - 1/2 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
  - 2 cups cooked rice
  - 1 1/2 cups grated Mexican blend cheese
- Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Brown ground meat with onion and bell pepper. When done, add remaining ingredients except grated cheese and gently combine. Place in buttered 13x9-inch casserole dish and top with cheese. Bake until hot and bubbly.

We always eat this with tortilla chips while we watch a Cowboys game on television. It is a meal in itself. I came up with this recipe when my kids had friends over and I needed to feed a crowd.

Serving size: 1/12 of casserole. Per serving: 239 calories, 15.6 g protein, 12.1 g fat, 12.4 g carbohydrates, 1.3 g fiber, 635 mg sodium, 53 mg cholesterol

**DEBBIE GREEN**

*Comanche Electric Cooperative*

### MEATY MEXICAN PIZZA

- 4 8-inch flour tortillas, any flavor
- 3 to 4 tablespoons picante sauce
- 1/4 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- Fajita meat, taco meat, chicken or pork (whatever you have left over)
- Thinly sliced onions and jalapeños

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cover a cookie sheet with foil and spray with nonstick spray. Place the tortillas on the foil and add a layer of picante sauce, cheese, meat, onions and jalapeños to each tortilla. Bake 15 to 20

### MORE STRATEGIES FOR WINNING THE BUDGET BATTLE:

**Play Freeze Tag:** Your freezer is one of your most important appliances in the battle against waste. If fruits or veggies appear on their way out, chop them up, put them in the freezer and use for cooking later. Squeeze the juice from citrus fruits, or purée berries and freeze them in ice trays. Before squeezing, be sure to save the zest in a bag in the freezer for later use.

**Think Locally:** If your town has a farmers market, visit it. In many rural neighborhoods, you can also find small-scale farmers who keep bees, grow extra fruits and vegetables for sale or keep chickens. Local honey has allergy-fighting benefits, and locally grown produce and eggs will often be fresher and cheaper than the ones you'll find in the grocery store. You'll also be decreasing your carbon footprint by not buying produce shipped in from far-away farms.

**Grow Your Own:** If you have the space, plant a vegetable garden. A packet of seeds often costs less than buying even just 1 pound of fresh veggies. You might have to invest in water, soil or fertilizer, but a carefully planned and tended garden can more than pay for itself in one growing season. Even apartment dwellers who have a balcony can grow peppers, tomatoes or herbs in pots and save.

**Let It Rot:** If you have the space, start a compost pile and squeeze every bit of value out of your food. The most successful piles have a mixture of leaves, grass clippings and kitchen scraps. But you can add anything organic—fireplace ashes, yard trimmings and even old meat (although many people avoid this because of the smell and problems with scavenging animals). Keep a covered bucket on your kitchen counter and save fruit rinds and vegetable peels, plate scrapings, eggshells, coffee grounds and other organic material and add to the pile. Cut the pieces small and keep the pile stirred up and moist, and before you know it, you'll have made your own rich dirt to add to your garden beds.

—Kevin Hargis

minutes until heated through and cheese is melted.

You can add any vegetables your family likes. I sometimes make these with mushrooms, peppers and sausage.

Serving size: 1 pizza. Per serving: 193 calories, 7 g protein, 6.5 g fat, 25.2 g carbohydrates, 2.1 g fiber, 521 mg sodium, 12 mg cholesterol (Nutrition values will vary with kind and quantity of meat used.)

**GAIL VOGEL**

*San Bernard Electric Cooperative*

## BACON AND EGGS SPAGHETTI (AKA SPAGHETTI CARBONARA)

- 1 pound spaghetti
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 8 slices bacon, diced and chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup dry white wine (optional)
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Pinch salt

Black pepper, to taste

Cook spaghetti according to package directions until al dente. Drain.

Toss spaghetti with 1 tablespoon olive oil and set aside.

In large skillet, cook bacon until crisp. Remove and drain on paper towels. Don't clean skillet. Discard all but 2 tablespoons of bacon grease. Add remaining olive oil. Add onion and cook until tender; add garlic and cook 1 minute more. Deglaze pan with wine (if desired) by adding wine to onion and garlic mixture and cooking for 1 additional minute. Pan may also be deglazed with water. Return bacon and spaghetti to pan. Toss to coat. (If it seems dry or sticky, add a little more olive oil.) Add beaten eggs and cook

until set, tossing constantly. Add Parmesan cheese, salt and pepper. Toss to combine.

Serve with chopped parsley and extra Parmesan cheese sprinkled on top.

Serving size: 1/6 of dish. Per serving: 474 calories, 21 g protein, 13.7 g fat, 60 g carbohydrates, 2.9 g fiber, 467 mg sodium, 157 mg cholesterol

**KELLI FEST**

*Central Texas Electric Cooperative*

Past recipes are available in the Recipes Archive at [www.texascoopower.com](http://www.texascoopower.com).

### HOLIDAY RECIPE CONTEST

**Attention, cooks: The 2009 Holiday Recipe Contest deadline is fast approaching. This year's contest, sponsored by the Texas Peanut Producers Board, is for recipes featuring peanuts or a peanut product such as peanut butter. You must be a member of a Texas electric cooperative to be eligible. See the official rules at [www.texascoopower.com](http://www.texascoopower.com).**

Send recipes to Texas Co-op Power Holiday Recipe Contest, 1122 Colorado, 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You may also fax them to (512) 763-3408 or e-mail them to [recipes@texas-ec.org](mailto:recipes@texas-ec.org) (you must include "Holiday Recipe Contest" in the subject line and the recipe must be in the body of the e-mail, no attachments). Please include your name, address and phone number, as well as the name of your electric co-op. The grand-prize winner will receive \$3,000. Four runners-up will receive \$500 each. Entry deadline is September 11.



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**Attention, cooks:** We'd like to share your best original holiday recipes with 2.8 million *Texas Co-op Power* readers and give you a chance to win cash prizes and the acclaim of your friends and family. All recipes must include peanuts or a peanut product. **Deadline for receipt of entries is September 11, 2009.** Winners will be featured in our December 2009 issue.

Each entry **MUST** include your name, address and phone number, plus the name of your Texas electric cooperative, or it will be disqualified. Send entries to: *Texas Co-op Power*/Holiday Recipe Contest, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You can fax recipes to (512) 763-3408 or e-mail them to [recipes@texas-ec.org](mailto:recipes@texas-ec.org). E-mails must include "Holiday Recipe Contest" in the subject line and contain only one recipe (no attachments). Up to three entries are allowed per person/co-op member. Each should be submitted on a separate piece of paper if mailed or faxed. For official rules, visit [www.texascoopower.com](http://www.texascoopower.com).

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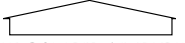
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▲ Three-year-old **Audrey**, left, and 5-year-old **Kara Curtis**, didn't mind one bit sharing this frozen rainbow treat from the ice cream truck. Thank you to their mom and CoServ Electric member **Nicole Curtis** for sending this picture and reminding us of childhood's simple pleasures.



▲ Sisters **Betty Zorn**, left, and the late **Estelle Thibodeaux** had some fun dressing up for the holidays. "This was taken Christmas 2001," said Zorn, a member of San Bernard Electric Cooperative. "What a great sister Estelle was. I miss her very much."

Upcoming in Focus on Texas

ISSUE	SUBJECT	DEADLINE
Oct	Cowgirls	Aug 10
Nov	Daredevils	Sep 10
Dec	Roughin' It	Oct 10
Jan	Snow Daze	Nov 10
Feb	Firsts	Dec 10
Mar	Backyard Gardens	Jan 10

COWGIRLS is the topic for our OCTOBER 2009 issue. Send your photo—along with your name, address, daytime phone, co-op affiliation and a brief description—to Cowgirls, Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701, before August 10. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We regret that Texas Co-op Power cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline. Please note that we cannot provide individual critiques of submitted photos. If you use a digital camera, e-mail your highest-resolution images to focus@texas-ec.org, or submit them on our website at www.texascoopower.com.

► San Bernard Electric Cooperative member **Lyndell Aschenbeck**, right, supplied this photo of herself and her sisters **Kay Sander**, left, and **Barbara Leonard** taken on a family vacation in Freeport. "My daughter took the photo as we were enjoying the sun and sand," she said.

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— BARBARA ALPERT, author

Thank you for sending us more than 200 wonderful pictures depicting love, life and happiness. We hope you enjoy these as much as we did. —ASHLEY CLARY



◀ **Kelly**, left, and **Rebecca Keith**, daughters of CoServ Electric members **Dean** and **Kathy Keith**, said they really enjoyed feeling the grapes squish between their toes during a visit to Becker Vineyards in the Hill Country.

► "**Mackenzie** and **Hailey** very rarely fight, but trying to take pictures with the new kitty showed a different side of both girls," South Plains Electric Cooperative member **Paige Bowman** says of her 5-year-old and 23-month-old daughters. "They both wanted to be the one to hold the kitty, and little sis was not about to back down."



# AROUND TEXAS AROUND TEXAS

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7

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**22 RIVIERA**  
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**22**

**TYLER**  
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**29**

**MONTAGUE**  
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**HALLETTVILLE**  
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**23**

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**29**

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**05**

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## SEPTEMBER

**04**

**WEST** [4-6]  
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**05**

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\$500 Cash Rewards Card	\$300 GASPASS Card	\$300 Grocery Rewards Card

• Flyaway Vacation for 2 • Fantasea Cruise for 2

Promotions may change on August 1, 2009. Programming offers: require participation in Digital Home Advantage with 24-month commitment. After promotional periods, customer must call to downgrade or then-current prices will apply. 6-Month Programming Credit: Requires subscription to qualifying programming. Customer receives a credit for each of the first 6 months. Credit amount will depend on programming package selected. 3-Month Premium: Customer receives a credit for each of the first 3 months. Digital Home Advantage: Requires 24-month qualifying programming purchase, Social Security Number, valid major credit card and credit approval. If qualifying service is terminated prior to end of 24-month period, a cancellation fee equal to the lesser of \$300 or \$12.50 per cancelled month of service will apply. Equipment must be returned to DISH Network upon termination of qualifying service. Limit 4 tuners per account. Monthly package price includes an equipment rental fee of \$5.00 or \$7.00 for first receiver, based on selected model. A monthly equipment rental fee of \$5.00 or \$7.00 will be charged for each receiver beyond the first, based on selected model. A \$5.00/mo. TV2 receiver connection fee applies for each dual-tuner receiver; fee will be waived monthly for each such receiver continuously connected to Customer's phone line. HD programming requires HD receiver and HD television (sold separately). Customer must subscribe to qualifying HD programming or a \$5.00/mo HD Enabling fee will apply. Lease upgrade fee will apply for select receivers based on model. Cinemax: Requires qualifying programming and AutoPay with Paperless Billing. If AutoPay with Paperless Billing is removed, Cinemax will be removed from the account. Offer ends 7/31/09 and is available in the continental United States for new, first-time DISH Network residential customers. All prices, packages and programming subject to change without notice. Local and state sales taxes may apply. Where applicable, equipment rental fees and programming are taxed separately. All DISH Network programming, and any other services that are provided, are subject to the terms and conditions of the promotional agreement and Residential Customer Agreement, available at www.dishnetwork.com or upon request. Local Channels packages by satellite are only available to customers who reside in the specified local Designated Market Area (DMA). Local channels may require an additional dish antenna from DISH Network, installed free of any charges with subscription to local channels at time of initial installation. Social Security Numbers are used to obtain credit scores and will not be released to third parties except for verification and collection purposes only or if required by governmental authorities. All service marks and trademarks belong to their respective owners. Showtime® and related marks are registered trademarks of Showtime Networks Inc. HBO® and Cinemax® are service marks of Home Box Office, Inc. InfinityDISH charges a one-time \$59.95 non-refundable processing fee. TV Guide Magazine subscription has a cash value of \$10. Gift with purchase supplied by www.PremierChoiceRewards.com. Please see www.InfinityDISH.com for terms, conditions, and privacy policy.