

LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EDITION

FEBRUARY 2011

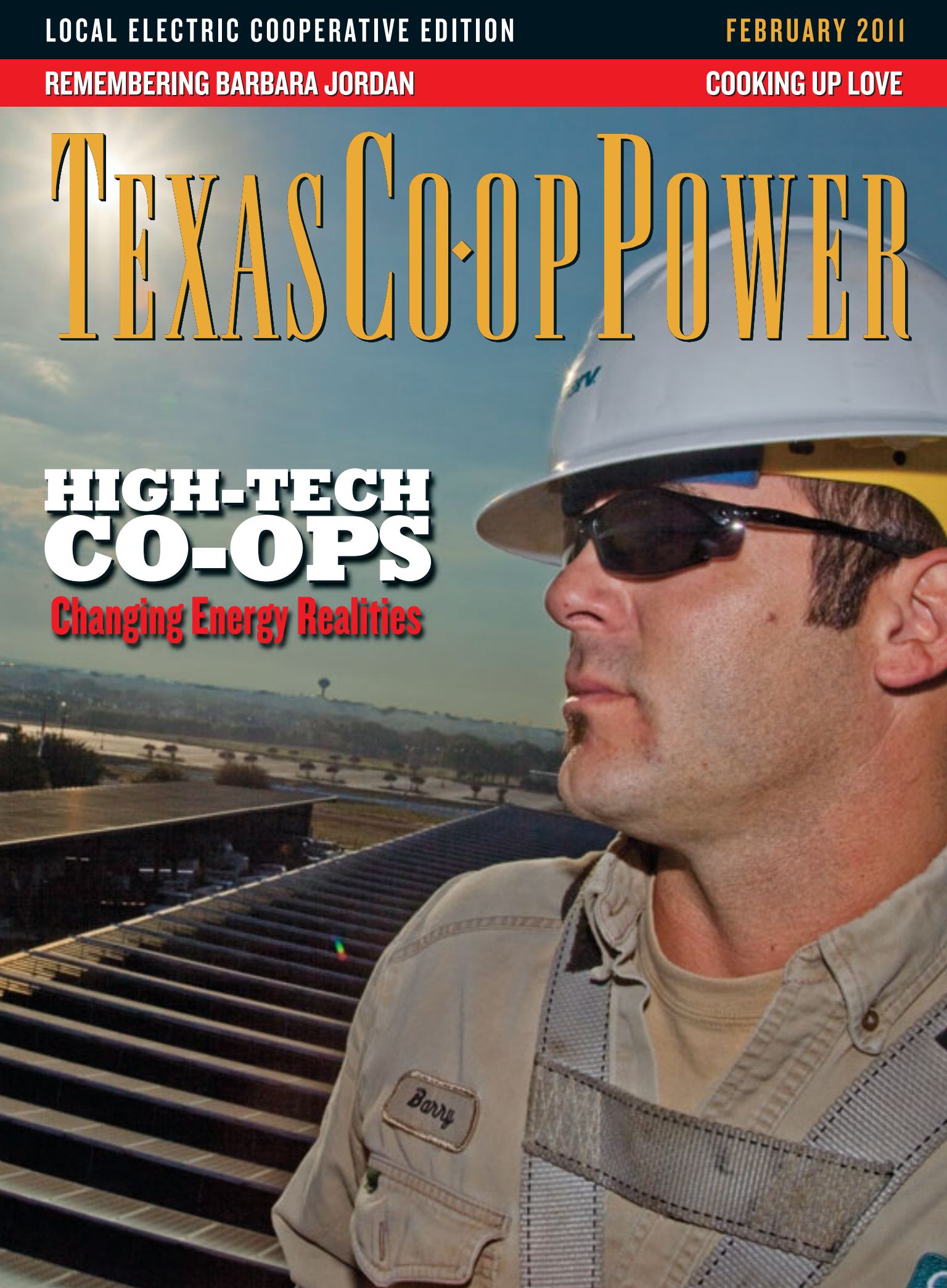
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6 High-Tech Co-ops

By Carol Moczygemba

Photos by Will van Overbeek

Since their inception in the 1930s, electric cooperatives have been problem solvers. Now, some Texas co-ops are meeting energy challenges through smart-grid technologies. The stakes—the availability, reliability and cost of electricity—couldn't be higher.

16 Reappearing Act

By Spike Gillespie

Photos by Will van Overbeek

Psychologist Jim Dunn's magical touch brings a joyful spark of life to his nursing home patients. It's not an illusion—folks respond to this vivacious 78-year-old who sports a wild mane of white hair.

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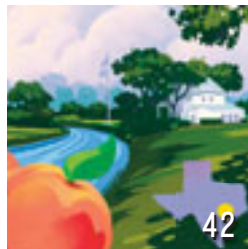
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TEXAS CO-OP POWER

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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letters

STARRY-EYED

I just read "Starstruck" in the December 2010 issue of Texas Co-op Power. Great article. I visit Big Bend and the surrounding area every November and never get used to the fabulous night skies. Gorgeous is a serious understatement. Everyone should see it at least once in their lifetime!

ED O'NEILL

Concho Valley Electric Cooperative

Your "Starstruck" article was really interesting. However, you missed a prime opportunity to inform electric co-op members of the steps that they can take to cut down light pollution all over the state. When we bought our place in north Collin County 16 years ago, we could see the Milky Way on most clear nights. Now, because of rural security lights, we rarely get to see it. We see the lights of McKinney to the west and Greenville to the east.

One neighbor about three-quarters of a mile away has installed a new light; now when

POWER TALK

we look out on the west pasture, we don't see a dark field but rather a bright light through the trees. There are shields that can direct security light down to illuminate the grounds around the

thing to him that was "out yonder," pointing as I explained. Looking somewhat confused, he waited until I had finished and asked, "Dad, where is 'Chonder?'"

Diction has never been one of my strong suits, but after all, I am a Texan. (Every day a pile of magazines lands on my desk. Yours is the only one I read from cover to cover and share with others.)

STEVE MARTINDALE

President, Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington

READ MORE LETTERS

See "Letters to the Editor" in February's Table of Contents at

TexasCoopPower.com

house without sending the light up into the sky. Co-ops should encourage their use.

BILL MARSH

Fannin County Electric Cooperative

DAD, I'M REALLY LOST NOW

Reading Richard Husby's truly Texan lexicon ("Scootch Over a Tad Bit," December 2010) took me back 20 years to when my son was only 4 years old. I was describing some-

THAT ABOUT COVERS IT

In reference to the "Big Cover-up" article (December 2010), I believe there are better ways to have a warm bed with no power usage. I sleep on a featherbed with a down comforter. Other options are silk filled, wool filled and cotton filled—all natural fibers and quite com-

fortable. When the power is out, the bed is still warm.

This is an old-time alternative power solution that works phenomenally well, with only the initial cost, and lasts for decades.

TERRY FITZGERALD

Karnes Electric Cooperative

My wife and I are retired senior citizens living in west Hamilton County where winter temperatures dip quite significantly. As most men are aware, it is not uncommon for wives to be more sensitive to the central air thermostat being set a few degrees lower.

In an effort to keep peace in the family, I bought my wife an electric blanket for when we are sitting in our living room recliners. She can easily adjust the blanket temperature, and I can remain comfortably warm with the central air set at 68 degrees. She loves this compromise, while I enjoy a lower heating bill.

We just use traditional blanket layers on our bed. The thermostat is then adjusted around 64 degrees at night, producing even more savings.

I highly recommend your readers consider this proven option for keeping their wives warm and happy in the winter-time in Texas ... or anyplace else for that matter.

JOHN W. ROBERTS

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative

Ah, yes, electric blankets are grand. Even more so if the first one jumping into bed has only his/her side percolating, ready to snuggle the loved one arriving later!

MARIE KIENLEN

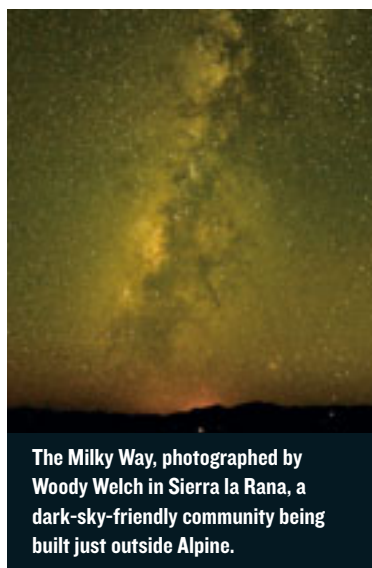
Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative

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HEAVENLY VIEW

One of the "blessings" of the Great Ice Storm in East Texas a decade ago, when the power was out several days, was being able to see the stars again like they looked to me as a country child back in the '40s. We spent many a night looking at and talking about the Milky Way, planets and constellations back then. I never thought I could be deprived of the night sky, but my children and grandchildren don't even have the memory of such grandeur. I am so glad to learn of the efforts being made in West Texas to preserve the heavenly view ("Starstruck," December 2010). To visit there is on my bucket list—and it is a lot closer than the Australian Outback.

Betty Farrar, *Bowie-Cass Electric Cooperative*



The Milky Way, photographed by Woody Welch in Sierra la Rana, a dark-sky-friendly community being built just outside Alpine.

H A P P E N I N G S



If ever a city deserved a celebration, it's Galveston, a famed Gulf Coast destination that refuses to take a knockout punch from hurricanes. And if ever a city knew how to throw a party, it's Galveston, which, once again, has dusted itself off and put on its festive clothes.

Ike, the most recent hurricane to blow through, battered the popular coastal locale. But more than two years later, the resilient city is rebuilding, healing and gearing up for one of Texas' biggest and most historic events: **MARDI GRAS! GALVESTON!**, which lives up to the exclamation points in its name.

Set for February 25 through March 8, the event is punctuated by loud crowds, parades, bead throwing and open-throttle revelry. This year's Mardi Gras party—the 100th since its inception in 1867—promises to be extra special. For more information, go to www.mardigrasgalveston.com or call 1-888-425-4753.

CO-OP PEOPLE

BY ASHLEY CLARY

When Mike Myers ran his first marathon at age 50, he packed light: one kidney light, to be exact.

Myers, operations manager for Jackson Electric Cooperative, got into running when his daughter, Susan, encouraged him to join her in a half-marathon. She then challenged him to go for the full 26.2-mile distance. That was six marathons ago. And Myers completed his first one, in 2003, only seven months after donating a kidney to his sister, Sudi Hamilton.



Mike Myers with sister Sudi, left, and their mom, Martha Gene.

The story begins in 1993. Hamilton's kidneys were failing from polycystic kidney disease, and she received a kidney from her mother, Martha Gene Myers, during transplant surgery. Her three brothers tested as qualified donors as well but were a tad bit overzealous in their desire to help. "The doctors actually told us that we weren't a good match just so that we'd stop arguing about

Run a Marathon, Donate an Organ: All in a Day's Work

it," Myers chuckled. "We're a very close family."

Fast-forward 10 years: Hamilton again needed transplant surgery. Her sole kidney was failing, and Myers, along with his brothers, underwent another round of donor testing. Hamilton felt guilty about taking a brother's kidney, but Myers and his wife, Holly, insisted. "I told her what a privilege it was for me, and I would give her my heart if she needed it," said Myers, who was the closest donor match.

Myers, who lives in Edna, returned to work four days after donating the kidney during minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery, which diminishes patients' pain and speeds recovery. "It's a small price to pay for a life," he said. "If people realized how easy it was to give a kidney, then there would be no waiting list for kidneys."

Seven years later, Hamilton's transplanted kidney is healthy.

Fellow Texans may join the deceased donor registry through the Texas Organ Sharing Alliance (TOSA).

To learn more about the TOSA, go to www.txorgansharing.org. For more statistics on organ donation and a donor family's testimonial, visit our website at www.TexasCoopPower.com.

Ashley Clary is field editor for Texas Co-op Power.

Have a suggestion for a future Co-op People? Contact editor@texascooppower.com.

WHO KNEW?

In 1993, the Texas Legislature designated the Texas red grapefruit (*Citrus X paradisi*) as the state's official fruit.

Around 1929, an accidental discovery of red grapefruit growing on a pink grapefruit tree spawned the Texas Red Grapefruit Industry. The fruit later was marketed under the name "ruby," and the Ruby Red Grapefruit was the first grapefruit to be granted a U.S. patent.

The November 2008 issue of Texas Co-op Power—see www.TexasCoopPower.com—featured Texas red grapefruit.




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HIGH-TECH CO-OPS

Changing Energy Realities

BY CAROL MOCZYGEMBA • PHOTOS BY WILL VAN OVERBEEK

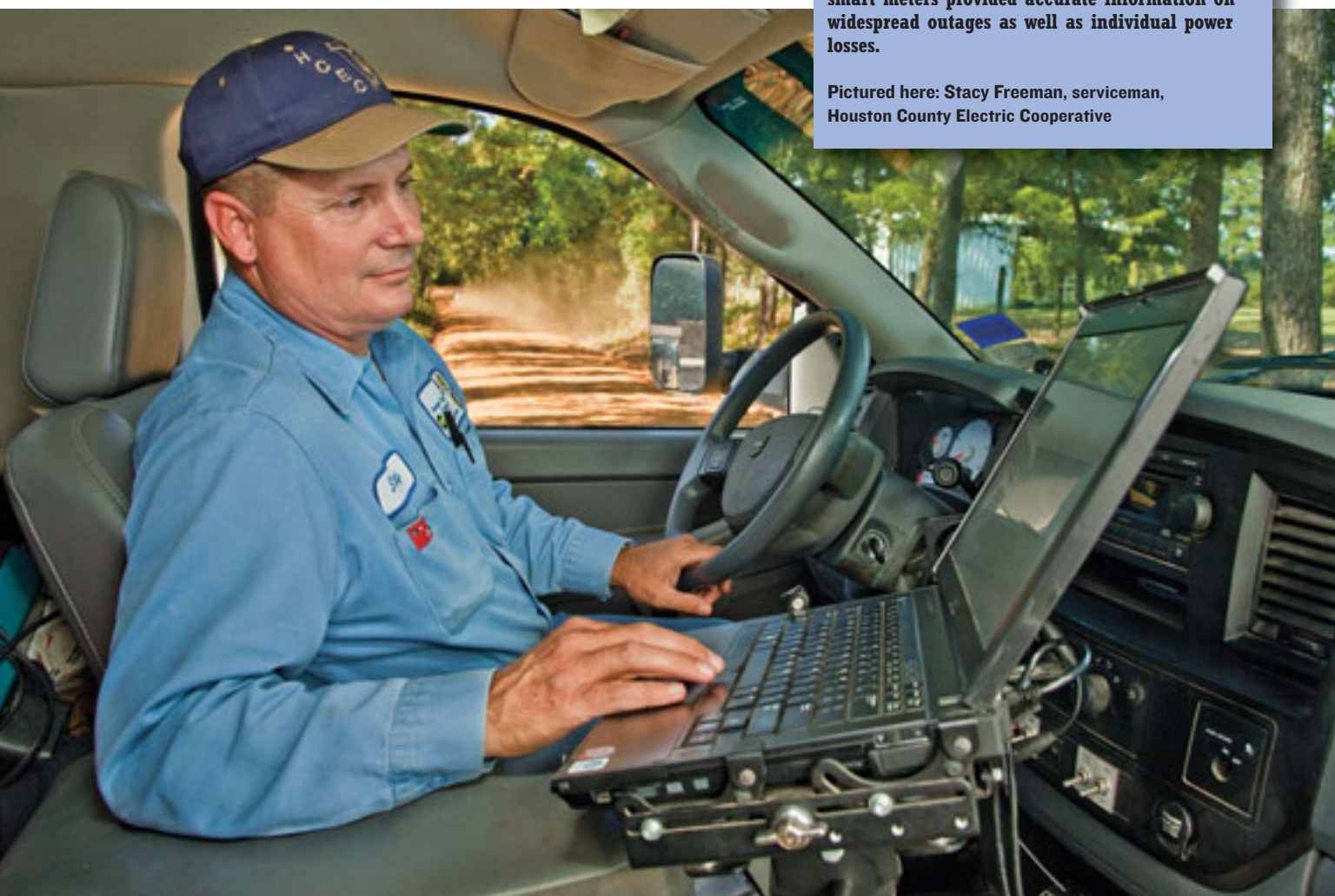
As an electric cooperative member, you have a stake in the future of electricity availability, reliability and cost—all of which the new smart grid technologies are intended to manage. To be most effective, these new technologies also give you the tools to monitor and control your own energy use.

With that in mind, envision the smart grid as many systems talking back and forth, each component playing a role in getting electricity from the source of generation, through hundreds of miles of transmission lines, to your co-op's distribution lines to your coffeemaker, as efficiently as possible.

From their inception in the 1930s, electric cooperatives have been problem solvers. The problems of the 21st century require action that will assure all of us have the electricity we need in the future. In this story, we'll show you how some co-ops in Texas are meeting the challenge.

When Hurricane Ike snuffed out power throughout large areas of East Texas in 2008, the co-op's smart meters provided accurate information on widespread outages as well as individual power losses.

Pictured here: Stacy Freeman, serviceman, Houston County Electric Cooperative



TEXAS HELPING LEAD THE WAY

Today, according to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, electric co-ops across the country lead the industry in the deployment of smart meter infrastructure with an advanced metering penetration of 16.4 percent in 2008—well above the industry as a whole. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association estimates that about half of the nation's more than 900 electric co-ops have implemented advanced technologies of some fashion. Here in Texas, generation and transmission and distribution cooperatives from the Panhandle to the Piney Woods have deployed “smart” technologies such as advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and online energy-monitoring programs for members.

In this story, we've taken a sampling of co-ops in Texas to highlight some of the smart grid technology and educational efforts that are duplicated at co-ops throughout the state.

'LIKE STEPPING OUT OF THE DINOSAUR AGE'

In the dense woodlands of East Texas, just a pinecone's throw from the Davy Crockett National Forest, Houston County Electric Cooperative was a pioneer in deploying smart meters to its 15,000 members. In 2004, before the idea of a smart grid was popularized, the Crockett-based co-op recognized that meters with two-way communication capabilities could significantly improve efficiencies and reliability.

With an average of slightly more than four meters per mile and 4,800 miles of line, Houston County's service area is too spread out to make regular meter reading by employees economical. Instead, members used to report their own meter readings, with periodic follow-up checks by contract workers. Now that the smart meters send usage data directly to the co-op, revenue losses from inaccurate readings and instances of electricity theft have been virtually eliminated.

In a part of the state often hit hard by hurricanes, an even more important advantage of AMI is realized during massive weather-related outages. Prior to the days of AMI, members had to call in their outages to be tracked by the co-op and added to a list for power restoration. But likely as not, the phone lines went down along with the utility poles. With no phone service, members still without lights after power was restored in some segments had no way of notifying the co-op. The service trucks would have already pulled out, with officials thinking everyone was back up.

When Hurricane Ike snuffed out power throughout large areas of East Texas in 2008, the co-op's smart meters provided accurate information on widespread outages as well as individual power losses. Service trucks equipped with vehicle location devices showed up on digital maps at the co-op's headquarters. Outages detected by the meters likewise were pinpointed on service area maps.

Carleen Brister, a dispatcher who has been with Houston County EC more than 12 years, says smart meters made all the difference in managing the aftermath of the hurricane. Much of the overwhelming work involved in restoring power—from tree removal to energizing substations and transformers, to bringing power back to members—could be directed and monitored from Brister's desk. “When AMI came, it was like stepping out of the dinosaur age,” she says.

A GLOSSARY OF 'SMART' TECHNOLOGY

AMI—Advanced Metering Infrastructure (“smart meters”): Two-way, real-time electronic communication between meter and electric cooperative.

AMR—Automated Meter Reading: One-way electronic communication from meter to co-op (first-generation “smart meter”).

Demand Response: System that responds to peak energy demand by automatically reducing electric consumption for short periods. Participation in this energy-efficiency program by residential, commercial and industrial member-customers is voluntary.

TWACS—Two-Way Automatic Communications System: Transmits data over power lines. Two-way communication to electric meters provides for timely billing, load control, demand response, and outage detection and assessment. Co-ops can effectively manage customer data and reduce costs.

Time-of-Use or Real-Time Pricing: A method for pricing retail electricity based on wholesale cost at any given time. For example, during peak-load hours, costs are higher due to more demand. On the retail, or consumer level, this pricing structure is available only if the wholesale power provider breaks down cost by time of use for the distribution cooperative.

SCADA—Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition: This system uses computers to monitor and control office functions and the entire electric distribution process.

AVL—Automatic Vehicle Location: Tells dispatchers exactly where repair trucks are. This helps in the efficient dispatch of equipment to problem sites and gets power restored more quickly.

GPS—Global Positioning System: Allows dispatchers to locate workers and provide them with directions and instructions. In-vehicle GPS makes navigation a breeze.

GIS—Geographic Information System: Integrates area geography into a co-op's software and hardware for many forms of troubleshooting. Paper maps are passé. Using GIS, headquarters can pinpoint the location of every pole and the type of equipment on the pole.

OMS—Outage Management System: Works with GIS to identify and resolve outages and report on repairs.

As more improvements are added to the “smart” system, even greater efficiencies will be realized, says General Manager Melody Pinnell. Her plans for the future include researching technology for digitally controlling system inventory. But, she says, “Before we adopt any technology, we look at how it will make us more efficient and benefit our members.”

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY GATEKEEPERS

Bandera Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Bandera, has just completed a systemwide deployment of smart meters, or AMI, a sophisticated two-way communication technology in which the co-op and members' meters can exchange information. One system made possible by this is



'Years ago, it was just a dream that utilities would do something on the customer side for controlling and evaluating usage and cost.'

DICK EARNEST, *member,
Bandera Electric Cooperative*

a Web portal called “smartWATCH,” which was first tested with the co-op’s Member Advocacy Committee. Dick Earnest is one of about a dozen Bandera EC members who serve on the committee. You might call them the gatekeepers who find out how the new technology works for real people before it gets approved by the board for the rest of the co-op’s nearly 30,000 members.

From the front porch of his Hill Country home near Concan, Earnest can play with his dog, Ginger, visit with neighbors and his wife, Jerilyn, and use his laptop to log on to the co-op’s smartWATCH site, where he checks his energy consumption during the preceding days, weeks or months. Earnest, a congenial retired marketing manager from an investor-owned utility, admits he is somewhat of an energy-consumption nerd. In fact, he installed his own meter to monitor monthly electricity use by his water heater.

“Years ago, it was just a dream that utilities would do something on the customer side for controlling and evaluating usage and cost,” he says. These days, it’s a reality.

Earnest will soon have more control over his energy cost with Bandera EC’s time-of-use rate structure set to be imple-

mented in late 2011. With time-of-use rates, electricity used during the peak hours costs more than that used very late at night through the wee hours of the morning. This type of rate structure is possible only when the co-op and member can see usage in 15-minute intervals, one function of smart meters.

With Bandera EC’s recently completed, totally digitized system control center, vital data appear on one of six monitors at the click of a mouse. System operators Erlinda Escamilla-Pina and Cheri Smith can “ping” a meter and receive immediate data on energy use. From their desks, they can determine whether there is an outage before they send a crew out in the field. If it’s a transformer problem, they go to the service truck locator map and dispatch the closest lineman. Each of these functions saves money and time—both the co-op’s and the member’s.

Member education is a vital factor in Bandera EC’s formula for sustainability in a rapidly changing industry. Anticipating a future in which increasing numbers of members will want to produce at least some of their own electricity, the co-op has installed a solar, or photovoltaic (PV), panel

in front of its Bandera office so members can see a renewable system in action. Members can view the system's production in real time in the lobby, along with the cost, to give them the tools necessary for making informed decisions.

MEMBERS TAKE CONTROL OF ENERGY USE REDUCTION

Just north of Dallas, Corinth-based CoServ Electric serves more than 130,000 members across a diverse area of ranches, farmland and suburbs. In 2009, the co-op applied for, and received, a \$17.2 million U.S. Department of Energy grant to support deployment of advanced metering and electric distribution technologies.

To get the most out of the new, sophisticated operating and monitoring systems, the co-op has engaged in a robust educational effort for employees and members. A series of demonstrations and exhibits teaches about the information gathering and sharing capabilities of "eCoGrid," the co-op's brand name for the advanced meter network.

With all that information zipping around in cyberspace, some have raised security and privacy concerns. Stacia Sims, CoServ's senior vice president of information services, reassures members that the system is safe.

"Using various encryption and authentication methods similar to those used in the banking industry, CoServ's eCoGrid is designed to help prevent system identity theft, such as drive-by hacker attempts," Sims explains. "Should someone intercept meter data without the unique 'key' held only by CoServ, the data is simply a scrambled mess. Should someone try to inject information into the data stream, the system will recognize that it is not from an authorized source, not accept the information into the system, and alert CoServ of the situation."

Increasing numbers of CoServ members are investigating individual measures for offsetting energy costs, such as installing PV panels. To encourage members' use of renewables, the co-op offers rebates and, last year, installed a 95-kilowatt array of its own solar panels to better inform members about the efficacy of investing in PV.

"We want more hands-on experience with solar so we can gather the data ourselves and help members make good investment decisions," says Shane Laws, director of retail programs. The co-op's solar installation provides about 130,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of energy annually to supply a portion of the headquarters building's electricity needs.

Already, 49 members who generate their own power and are properly interconnected with CoServ's system are realizing savings for the amount of electricity they produce—a practice called "net metering."

Curtis Trivitt, CoServ's senior vice president of energy services, says, "Historically, cooperatives have been innovators in using technology to help members. What we're doing is not new, but the capabilities have advanced."

He adds, "When we look at investing in technology, we ask the question: How does this benefit the member? CoServ recognizes its responsibility to partner with members in reducing costs through using technology that puts them in control of reducing their usage."

GIVING MEMBERS ENERGY EFFICIENCY TOOLS—AND ANSWERS

Ray Beavers saw it coming. Even before he became CEO/general manager of United Cooperative Services (UCS), he was paying attention to signals that portended major shifts in the utility industry. "In 2003 and 2004, when power costs started going up, I thought, 'this is not just an aberration.' The more we looked at it, the more we knew we were in for future increases. After a long period of rate stability, how would members react to increasing costs?"

Today, Beavers is nationally recognized as a co-op leader in energy efficiency education and a thoughtful analyst of the benefits of new technology.

Last fall, UCS, headquartered in Cleburne, was one of nine entities nationwide selected by the U.S. Department of Energy to participate in an energy efficiency pilot, the Home Energy Score program, to measure the effectiveness of certain energy-efficiency practices.

"Members expect the co-op to be the problem solver," Beavers explains. "That's how co-ops were born, and we are morally responsible for giving our members answers."

Before launching their comprehensive energy conservation

'We want more hands-on experience with solar so we can gather the data ourselves and help members make good investment decisions.'

SHANE LAWS, *director of retail programs, CoServ Electric*

Pictured here: Brian Harwell





'Members expect the co-op to be the problem solver. That's how co-ops were born, and we are morally responsible for giving our members answers.'

RAY BEAVERS, *CEO/general manager, United Cooperative Services*

program, for example, members of the UCS team tried to put themselves inside their 54,000 members' heads: Where are they? How can we prepare them for inevitable cost increases? What can we do?

The answers provided the design for the co-op's rebate program, free energy audits, extensive education efforts and consumer grants to help pay for qualifying upgrades, such as new insulation, solar screens, skirting and ductwork repair. Marty Haught, vice president, Communications, says UCS, along with its power provider, Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, invested close to \$500,000 in member-directed energy efficiency efforts during 2010, including 1,500 energy audits.

Energy innovation, Beavers says, will bridge the old supply-side dynamic to a new demand-side model encompassing energy conservation, distributed generation, energy efficiency and demand response. "Our industry has been dictated by a supply-side perspective," he says. "Now, the focus is on transitioning to the demand side, where consumers and members have more control in how they use electricity."

What about the role of technology and the promise of a smart grid? UCS already has smart meters in place systemwide and has had them for seven years. The co-op will

continue to implement technological advances as appropriate, but Beavers cautions: "Technology can't fix inefficiencies in conservation behavior. That takes a lot of communication, working first on awareness, education, practice and behavioral changes. When that happens, technology will be useful. We're driven to do what's in the best interest of our members, and we know what the future holds."

WIND TURBINES PART OF ENERGY REDUCTION PACKAGE

Walter and Brenda Engelmann enjoy sitting on the back porch of their hilltop home outside Seguin watching their two wind turbines make electricity. They delight in these 2.4-kilowatt turbines as if they were children whose every action elicits joy. "Listen," says Brenda. "You can hear the whine change pitches as the wind picks up speed." And you can see each turbine head turn slowly into the wind, tracking its course like a weather vane. Yes, it's mesmerizing.

But more important to the Engelmanns—who purchased the turbines from their co-op, Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative (GVEC) in Gonzales—they are producing their own electricity from a renewable energy source. "We felt very strongly that we wanted to do something to reduce our [Americans'] dependence on fossil fuels," says Brenda. "It's just the right thing to do. I wish more people would do it."

Each turbine is connected to a meter that reads the amount of electricity generated. If that amount ever exceeded the Engelmanns' total usage, they would get credit based on wholesale cost from the co-op. On average, together the turbines produce 250 kWh a month. The average home uses between 1,000 and 1,500 kWh a month, but the Engelmanns have reduced their total monthly consumption to around 600 kWh by observing energy efficient practices in everything from the way their home was built to drying laundry outdoors.

"Our members were calling and asking for information about wind turbines," says General Manager/CEO Darren Schauer. "In order to educate them, we had to educate ourselves, so we decided to find what we believed was the best turbine on the market, train our service team to install and maintain them, and offer members a product they could trust."

The co-op is also investigating solar technology, with plans to sell and service PV systems if it finds a model that delivers up to its expectations.

GVEC has been aggressive in promoting energy efficiency practices among its nearly 66,000 members. In 2010, the co-op gave out more than \$1 million in rebates for energy efficient upgrades, appliances and the installation of renewable energy sources.

EMPOWERING MEMBERS TO MAKE WISE ENERGY DECISIONS

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative has positioned itself as a leader in moving toward a smart grid and, beyond that, to what General Manager/CEO Mark Rose calls a "sustainable" grid—one that neutralizes, and perhaps even reduces, the co-op system's impact on the overall state grid.

"In June 2010, we introduced the Net Energy Market, our consumer Web portal, where our members can access the

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Be one of three co-op members to win up to \$10,000 worth of energy efficient improvements to their homes.

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- Improved insulation
- Weatherization
- Energy efficient appliances
- Use of CFLs
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MAKEOVER**



'Our members were calling and asking for information about wind turbines. In order to educate them, we had to educate ourselves, so we decided to find what we believed was the best turbine on the market, train our service team to install and maintain them, and offer members a product they could trust.'

DARREN SCHAUER,
*general manager/CEO,
Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative*

Walter and Brenda Engelmann enjoy watching their two wind turbines make electricity at their home outside Seguin.

same information about their energy use we have in our control center and our billing system," Rose says. "This empowers our members to make informed decisions about when and how to use electricity. No longer will our members be surprised by a high electric bill they didn't know was coming."

In December, the co-op began a yearlong pilot project in partnership with Consert, Inc., and the Lower Colorado River Authority. The pilot uses Consert's demand-management solution and equipment, which includes a programmable thermostat and energy-control devices on electric water heaters and pool pumps. Bluebonnet EC's members set up their home energy profiles and have the ability to change their settings from any computer with Internet access. During periods of high energy demand, the co-op can reduce demand on its system by controlling its members' consumption based on their energy profiles.

This past fall, U.S. Reps. Michael McCaul (R-Austin) and Lloyd Doggett (D-Austin) visited Bluebonnet's headquarters in Bastrop and saw firsthand how smart grid technology benefits their constituents—who are the cooperative's members—and the utility.

"I was very impressed with Bluebonnet's facility, which is in the heart of my district," McCaul said. "It has one of the most advanced distribution systems with smart grid technology in the nation in terms of saving money, increasing energy efficiency and creating a positive impact on the environment."

"Responsive consumer service and cutting-edge demand-management technology is the very type of innovation all of America needs," Doggett said. "Bluebonnet is leading the way by recognizing the value of co-op members using as little electricity as possible to satisfy their individual needs. The smart grid will empower each member with timely information to enable an informed decision about energy use."

Bluebonnet EC's Sustainable Grid initiative incorporates smart grid technology and regional economic development activities to encourage environmentally responsible commercial and residential developments and job growth.

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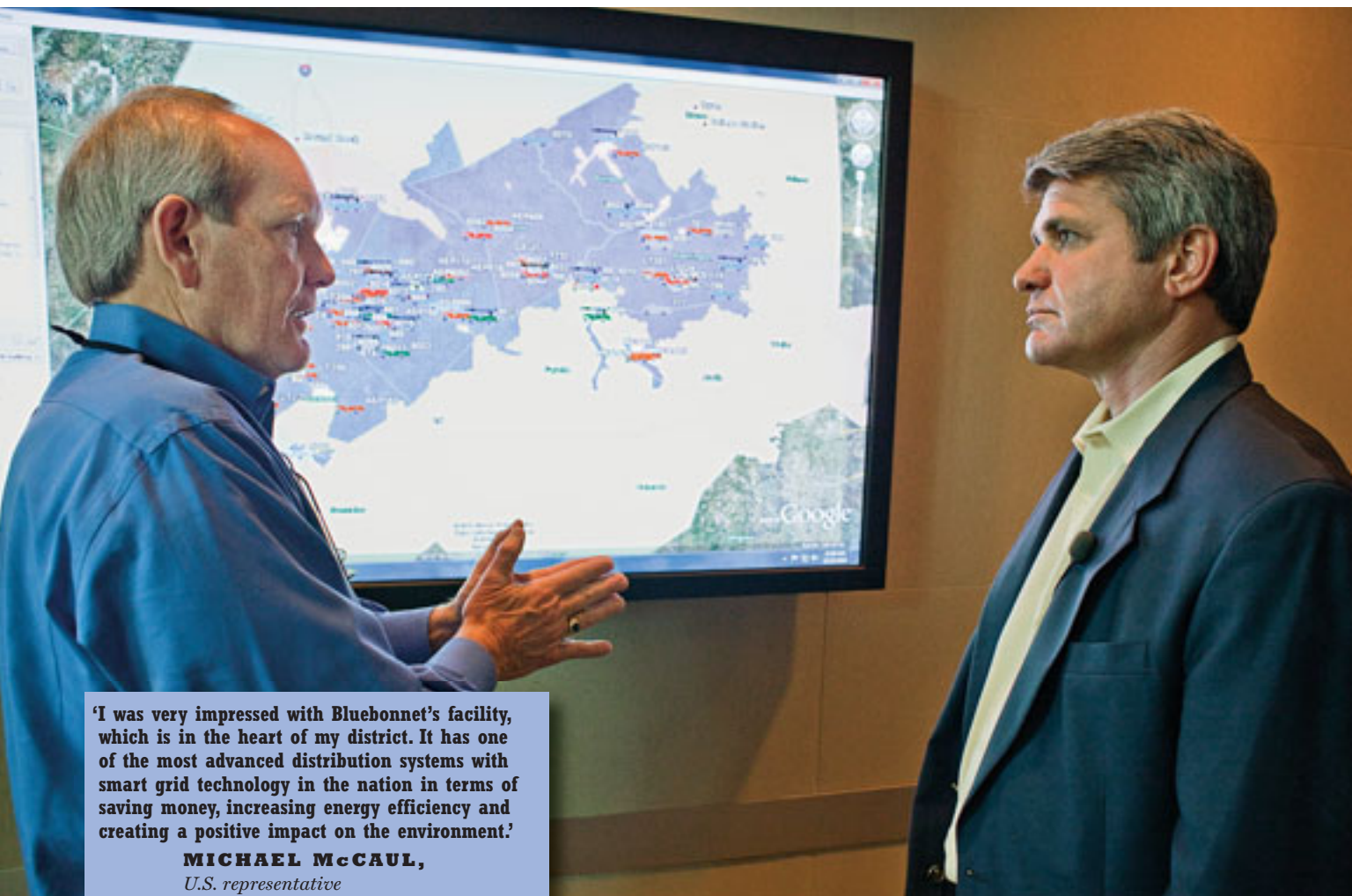
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'I was very impressed with Bluebonnet's facility, which is in the heart of my district. It has one of the most advanced distribution systems with smart grid technology in the nation in terms of saving money, increasing energy efficiency and creating a positive impact on the environment.'

MICHAEL McCaul,
U.S. representative

Bluebonnet EC General Manager/CEO Mark Rose (left) visits with McCaul.

southeast of Texas A&M University in College Station. But you'd be wrong if you thought that was the only place to find the electric co-op. Look on Facebook. Subscribe to Twitter. Find it on YouTube. Go to its website and see just how much space the co-op is occupying beyond the borders of its service area.

When it comes to social networking, Mid-South Synergy has jumped in with both feet. General Manager Kerry Kelton recognizes social networking's potential for keeping members informed and connected with the co-op.

Want to learn the history of Mid-South Synergy? Go to www.youtube.com/user/midsouthsynergy.

Looking for updates on an outage? Go to www.twitter.com/midsouthsynergy.

Needing some ideas on how to lower your energy costs? Go to www.facebook.com/MidSouthSynergyCoop.

"There was a time when we could go to the local café or feed store and find out what our members were thinking," Kelton says. "Times have changed, and so have our members. But we still want to know what they are thinking, and by using the tools of social media we can listen to what they are

saying and share ways to help meet their needs."

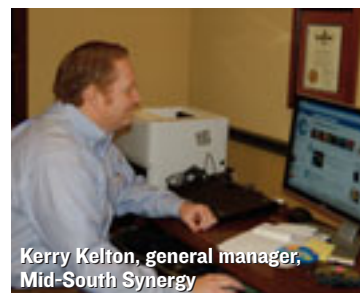
Social media is not simply another advertising channel for Mid-South. Members ask questions, comment on issues, and encourage the work of the cooperative. The various social media channels are monitored so comments can be acknowledged and questions answered.

"Using social media to encourage member participation helps Mid-South Synergy to be committed not just to great service, but to the people we serve," Kelton says.

Carol Moczygemba is executive editor of Texas Co-op Power.

WEB EXTRA:

Go to www.TexasCoopPower.com to learn how electric cooperatives are integrating the digital components of smart electrical systems. The desired result: improve affordability, efficiency and reliability for customers.



Kerry Kelton, general manager, Mid-South Synergy

GOLDEN SPREAD MEMBER CO-OPS PAVING HIGH-TECH FUTURES

BY KAYE NORTHCOTT

Smart grid incentive grant provides 'more bang for the buck'

In 2009, Golden Spread Electric Cooperative (GSEC)—a generation and transmission cooperative that provides wholesale electricity to 16 member distribution co-ops—applied for and won a \$17 million smart grid incentive grant from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The goal is to increase reliability of service, improve the efficiency of the electric grid, and manage the cost of electricity.

That goal is particularly important in GSEC's territory, which covers about 24 percent of Texas' land area, including parts of the Panhandle, South Plains and Edwards Plateau regions. With an average of only four electric customers per mile, the cooperatives must invest more in electric lines and service per capita than what city utilities typically spend.

Golden Spread, along with 10 of its member distribution co-ops, agreed to participate in the grant, pledging \$26 million in matching funds (60 percent) to the DOE's \$17 million (40 percent). As Greg Henley, general manager of member co-op Lyntegar Electric Cooperative, said, "It enabled us to get more bang for the buck."

With the grant money, the cooperatives have already accomplished many tasks. For example, Big Country Electric Cooperative, based in Roby, was scheduled to install 4,000 advanced meters in 2010, with the goal of having all of its 12,000 meters installed within three years as required by the grant.

Big Country Electric Cooperative General Manager Fredda Buckner said the co-op's \$1.9 million share of the grant will enable the co-op to have real-time information on its electric system. "It lets us match up our loads to power supply and monitor each circuit separately," Buckner said. "We think we will cut down on costs. We just want to operate as efficiently as possible."

In addition, the new technology will allow co-ops to turn on or shut off an account without sending a worker to the site. Bill Harbin, general manager of Lighthouse Electric Cooperative in Floydada, said, "It will save us a lot of transportation expenses because we won't be going out to read meters."

The participating co-ops will learn how effective the new technologies are on their home turfs. "We will evaluate the cost benefit to our co-op and determine just how useful smart meters are to us," said Chuck Smith, engineering supervisor at Bailey County Electric Cooperative in Muleshoe.

The collected data from all the participating cooperatives will be available to Golden Spread, which has to ensure each co-op has the electricity it needs when it needs it. Monitoring GSEC's electric load is complicated by the fact that it plans to make greater use of the area's rich wind corridor. It recently purchased a 78.2-megawatt wind generation project that's under development in Potter and Oldham counties west of Amarillo.

Although the wind is a renewable source of electricity, it is intermittent and must be backed up with more reliable sources of power. Golden Spread is developing a gas-fired power plant, Antelope Station near Abernathy, with quick-start generators that can quickly be brought into service when the wind dies down. It will supplement the gas turbines already generating power at Mustang Station outside Denver City.

Currently, electric rates are the same day and night, but some GSEC cooperatives are planning to develop time-of-use price schedules to help regulate the electric load in agriculturally productive areas. Electric irrigation pumps account for 60 percent of Golden Spread's peak load—or maximum electric use—on the system. And the load varies seasonally, requiring

the heaviest use during the summer. If some of the peak irrigation load could be shifted to off-peak times, or when the wind is supplying a lot of power, the pressure on the system would be reduced, and fewer new power plants would have to be built.

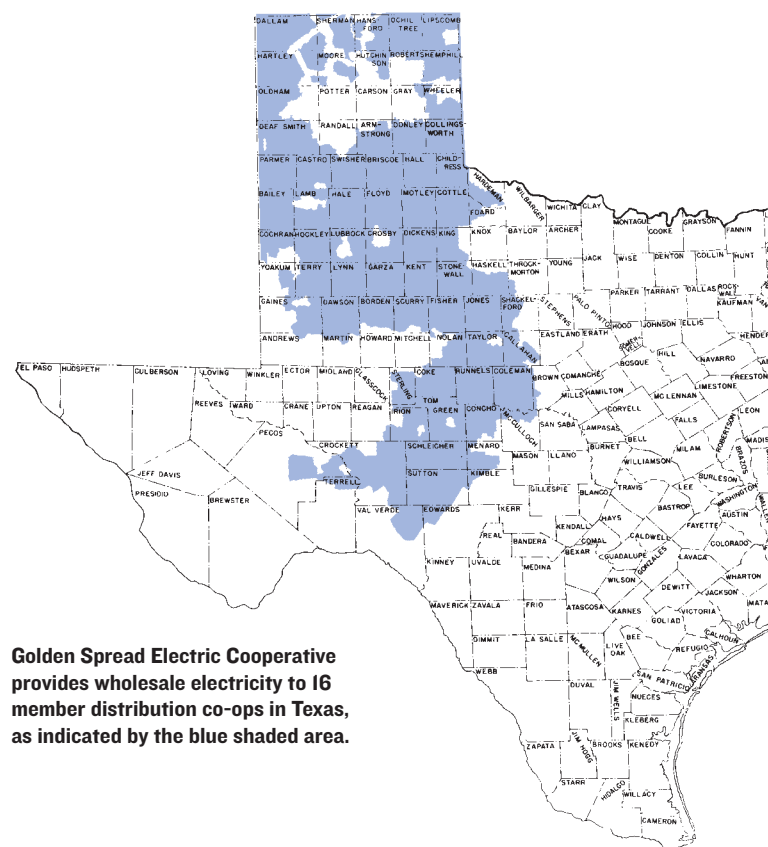
"The smart grid will provide the technology needed for load control and swift communication among Golden Spread, the cooperatives and member-consumers," said Mark W. Schwartz, president and general manager of GSEC.

In addition to load-control switches for irrigation, Taylor Electric Cooperative in Merkel will use smart grid technology to enable the use of the next generation of GE appliances in members' homes. The "smart" appliances will communicate with members' meters wirelessly and provide usage data to help members make informed energy consumption decisions.

Schwartz said that almost all of the DOE smart grid funds will go to the electric distribution systems owned by GSEC's participating members. "Our focus will be on upgrading control systems to make use of the additional information and capabilities from the smart grid upgrades that members will make to their distribution systems," he said.

The participating Golden Spread distribution co-op members are: Bailey County, Big Country, Deaf Smith, Lamb County, Lighthouse, Lyntegar, North Plains, Rita Blanca, South Plains and Taylor electric cooperatives.

Kaye Northcott recently retired after 10 years as editor of Texas Co-op Power.



Golden Spread Electric Cooperative provides wholesale electricity to 16 member distribution co-ops in Texas, as indicated by the blue shaded area.

Psychologist's magical touch brings a joyful spark of life to nursing home patients.

Reappearing Act

To say there's something magical about Jim Dunn is to speak two truths at once. There is, for starters, the magic of his being—at 78 he exudes an energy for life one might sooner associate with someone in his 20s. His eyes sparkle as he speaks, and his wild mane of white hair lends animation to his lively conversational style.

And then there is the magic he has been performing for going on seven decades now. Together, Dunn's gift for talking and his gift for tricks join forces in his day job. For this magician—who lives with his wife, Ellen, on a sheep ranch in Coryell County south of Copperas Cove—is also a psychologist who uses his magic act to gain the trust of his geriatric clients.

Performing as his alter ego, Professor Whatsit, and assisted by his puppet sidekick, Witch Hazel, Jim helps his nursing home patients in Copperas Cove and Killeen open up and cheer up. Transitioning to life in a facility can be hard for them, he says, particularly dealing with feelings of loss: “You’ve given up your car, your friends; maybe your partner has died. There’s a lot of depression.”

Dunn explains that magic can help his patients focus, especially those suffering from delirium or delusion. “They will speak to the puppet and enjoy it,” he says, noting that in addition to Witch Hazel, he has 50 other puppets and marionettes to call on when he needs a little help breaking the ice.

“Marionettes and puppets and magic bring a smile and a belly laugh,” he says. “Some of these people haven’t laughed in a while. I feel that relating to a magician gets them into a good mood, and life’s a little better when you feel better.”

Jim joined The Society of American Magicians—founded in 1902, it’s known as the oldest and most prestigious magical society in the world—over half a century ago. His passion for magic was sparked long before that, though, when he was 8. “I was given a wooden ball and vase trick. I was fascinated by it,” he recalls.

From then on, Dunn’s birthday and Christmas gifts were magic tricks (they still are, his wife says), including the popular Gilbert Mysto Magic Sets. He honed his skills during his childhood in Rochester, New York, and scored his first paying gig when he was 12, during World War II. “During the war, most of the entertainers were gone into the service and USO,” he remembers. This shortage worked toward his advantage.

Dunn recalls that after earning \$12 for his first paid show, at Rochester’s Powers Hotel, he “went right to the magic store and spent every penny of it. I bought an AmazRing box, a little red box with a ribbon through it. Drop a wedding ring in the box, and moments later it’s threaded on the ribbon. I

still have that—it’s one of my prize possessions.”

But the young magician wasn’t just learning how to create illusions—he was discovering something that would ultimately shape his work as a psychologist. “I was a very shy young boy and found with magic I could show something, and people were entertained,” he says.

Around the age of 30, Dunn—who by now had plenty of performances under his belt—saw a comic magician, Professor Irwin Corey, on “The Ed Sullivan Show.” Inspired, he spent the next 10 years searching for the perfect frock coat so he could emulate Corey’s look. When he did, Professor Whatsit was born.

Of his alter ego, Dunn says, “He’s always a little confused and trying to figure out how a trick works. The audience helps him. He may be a professor, but he’s always out of touch.”

As for Witch Hazel, well, she’s best described as pleasantly grouchy. When Dunn found her years ago in a teachers’ supply store, he decided she’d make a great addition to his act. “Audiences love her,” he says. “She’s a grump. She lost her broom, and she’s stuck here. She asks people if they’ve seen her broom. One woman came to me and said, ‘You know, I think she doesn’t want to find it.’”

As with any audience, sometimes it takes a little time for Dunn to get his elderly patients warmed up. For example, if people are watching television in a dayroom, he’ll perform a magic trick to get their attention.

“Sometimes, I can engage them and hook them to where they’re interested in responding with a nod or a word or two,” he says. “Eventually, they’ll tell me their story. Then, when I come back, they’ll look forward to sharing their thoughts and ideas.” Establishing trust and getting patients to open up, Dunn explains, is part of the psychological process of building rapport.

Though most magicians won’t reveal their secrets, Dunn is happy to explain his. In his early days as a magician, Dunn taught a workshop called The Magic of Therapy and the Therapy of Magic. “People came to the magic show to learn what we did with it and how it could work in courts, jails and ministries,” he says. “The common denominator was that I was teaching them how to listen.”

And when Professor Whatsit and Witch Hazel listen, Dunn sees what this stirs in his clients. That’s when the magic really kicks in. “I watch things happen that are awesome,” he says.

Spike Gillespie, who lives in Austin, has written several books and is a frequent contributor to Texas Co-op Power.



MAGIC TRICKS

To see videos of Jim Dunn's magic tricks, visit www.TexasCoopPower.com.



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Truly Unique



Time travel at the speed of a 1935 Speedster?

The 1930s brought unprecedented innovation in machine-age technology and materials. Industrial designers from the auto industry translated the principles of aerodynamics and streamlining into everyday objects like radios and toasters. It was also a decade when an unequaled variety of watch cases and movements came into being. In lieu of hands to tell time, one such complication, called a jumping mechanism, utilized numerals on a disc viewed through a window. With its striking resemblance to the dashboard gauges and radio dials of the decade, the jump hour watch was indeed "in tune" with the times!

The Stauer 1930s Dashtronic deftly blends the modern functionality of a 21-jewel automatic movement and 3-ATM water resistance with the distinctive, retro look of a jumping display (not an actual



True to Machine Art esthetics, the sleek brushed stainless steel case is clear on the back, allowing a peek at the inner workings.

jumping complication). The stainless steel 1 1/2" case is complemented with a black alligator-embossed leather band. The band is 9 1/2" long and will fit a 7-8 1/2" wrist.

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A 'Two-Pronged' Approach to Home Electrical Safety

BY CHRISTINE SMITH

Consumers can depend on a pair of important safety devices to protect them from electrical hazards in the home: ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs). Each device protects against different dangers: GFCIs address shock hazards while AFCIs fight fire hazards.

Get Grounded!

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), GFCIs have cut the number of home electrocutions by half. A GFCI protects you from severe or fatal electric shocks by detecting ground faults, an unintentional electric path between a source of current and a grounded surface—essentially, current leaking to the ground. It can also prevent some electrical fires.

If you have ever experienced an electric shock, it probably happened because part of your body contacted an electrical current and provided a path for the current to go to the ground. If your body provides the path, you could be seriously injured.

GFCIs constantly monitor electricity moving through a circuit. If the current flow differs from the amount returning, the device quickly switches off power.

Fighting Fire

AFCIs, a relatively recent technology, help prevent home fires caused by arcing faults in damaged or deteriorated wires and cords. Home wiring problems, like sparking, are associated with more than 40,000 home fires each year, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. These fires kill more than 350 and injure 1,400 annually.

Nominal arcs may happen in the brushes of a vacuum sweeper or light switch; dangerous arcs can occur in frayed cords. When unwanted arcing occurs, it generates high temperatures that can ignite nearby combustibles.

Conventional circuit breakers only respond to overloads and short circuits. By the time a fuse or circuit cuts power to defuse these conditions, a fire may have already started. AFCIs use unique current-sensing circuitry to distinguish between normal and unwanted arcing conditions. In the event of an arcing fault, the AFCI shuts off electricity flowing through a circuit.

For more information on GFCIs and AFCIs, visit www.cpsc.gov and search for GFCI or AFCI.

Christine Smith writes on electrical safety for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



A clothesline reduces wear and tear on your dryer and saves electricity.

Give Your Washer and Dryer a LONGER LIFE

You can extend the life of your washer and dryer—and your clothes, too—by treating your appliances with care on laundry day. Here's how:

- Clean the dryer's lint filter after every use. Occasionally vacuum the chute that houses the filter.
- Unfasten the duct from the dryer at least once a year and vacuum it.
- Cut down on drying time if your clothes consistently come out wrinkled. That means you're overdrying.
- On nice days, skip the dryer completely by installing and using a clothesline.
- Avoid overloading your washing machine with comforters, rugs and large blankets. Look in your owner's manual to learn how much weight your washer's tub can handle.
- Balance your load. Washers can fail when heavy loads bang around in an unbalanced machine.
- Replace your incoming water intake hoses every five years, even if they look OK. Older hoses are prone to bursting.

COMMON TYPES OF GFCIs

TYPE	BENEFIT	USE
Receptacle	Can protect electrical outlets farther downstream in branch circuit	Protects a user against ground faults when a product is plugged into the outlet
Circuit Breaker	Protects the wiring and each outlet	For homes with circuit breakers and installed in panel boxes, shuts off electricity when a ground fault, overload or short circuit is sensed
Portable	Found in electrical cords	Flexible application

Inspect Ductwork Before Having It Cleaned

BY JAMES DULLEY

DEAR JIM: When my furnace was serviced, the technician asked if I'd had the ducts cleaned. I am concerned about my family's health and clean indoor air. How can I tell if they need to be cleaned, and how do I select a company?

—Michael N.

DEAR MICHAEL: Healthy indoor air should be a goal for any family. This is particularly true in today's more energy-efficient, airtight houses where the air quality is often worse than outdoor air. In addition to some dust from the ducts, there are many sources of indoor pollutants, including cleaning, cooking and outgassing from synthetic materials. Many of these can be removed from indoor air with a combination of whole-house, furnace-mounted air cleaners and smaller individual room air cleaners.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), much of the dust in heating and air-conditioning ducts tends to adhere to the duct surface, and it never gets into the indoor air circulating throughout the house. Just because you see some dust collecting on the grill over air registers does not necessarily mean the ducts are very dirty and need to be cleaned.

Other than just a benign, fine layer of household dust inside the ducts, there can be some potentially harmful particles inside them. Especially in humid areas, mold spores inside the ducts can cause serious allergic reactions in some people.

Bacteria can also live in some ducts under certain conditions. Very fine particles, from cigarettes or wood-burning fireplaces, can become airborne and cause respiratory problems. Test kits are available to take a sample of the dust from inside the ducts and have

the sample tested for mold and other potentially harmful contaminants.

Although the procedure commonly is referred to as "duct cleaning," if you choose to have it done, it is important to have the entire HVAC (heating, ventilation and air-conditioning) system cleaned. This includes the furnace and air-conditioner blower, heat exchanger/coils and drain pans in addition to the ductwork. Air-conditioner evaporator coils can collect a lot of dirt because they get damp when the unit is running, and dust in the air



This duct is being cleaned with an air whip and vacuum unit. Joints and protrusions are likely places for dirt to collect in a duct.

sticks to the wet surfaces. This reduces the efficiency of the entire system.

If the contractor who services your HVAC system also does duct cleaning, you may get a discount by having the service and cleaning done at the same time. The typical cost for a complete cleaning ranges from \$500 to \$1,000, depending on the size of your home and the complexity of the duct system.

You might want to have the duct system inspected before going to the full expense of a cleaning. Look for a company that will deduct the inspection cost from the total project cost should you choose to have it cleaned. Technicians conduct the inspection by looking into ducts and the furnace blower unit and using mirrors at bends. They can also move a mini-television camera through the ducts.

When selecting a duct-cleaning company, there are several factors to consider. As with any project, the reputation of the company is highly important. Although the ducts can be inspected afterward to see how well they have been cleaned, your best assurance is to start with a reliable contractor. Always check references with former customers.

The National Air Duct Cleaning Association is the trade group that certifies HVAC system cleaning contractors. The certification is legitimate and requires extensive training. For a company to be certified, it must have a certified specialist on staff. Find a national listing of certified companies, along with each company's number of specialists, at www.nadca.com.

Also, when selecting a contractor, ask about the type of cleaning equipment each uses. If an indoor vacuum unit is used, it must have a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter on the exhaust to trap all the particles. Some of the particles dislodged from the

duct walls can be very fine, and a lesser quality filter will not remove them from the exhaust air.

Another option is an outdoor truck with a built-in vacuum unit and a long hose. Because it is located outdoors, the exhaust filter is not crucial. These large vacuums are very powerful to overcome the air flow resistance in the long hose. One drawback is that during winter, they suck quite a bit of the heated air out of your house during the cleaning process.

Some duct-cleaning companies may suggest spraying a chemical biocide inside the ducts to kill mold and bacteria and to keep them from growing. If you do have this procedure done, make sure they use EPA-approved chemicals designated for sheet metal ducts.

© James Dulley

FREDERICKSBURG

Five-and-Dime Happy Times

*Let the cities keep
their malls: In
Fredericksburg,
loyal shoppers still
flock to Dooley's.*

**By Sheryl
Smith-Rodgers**



Shiny red firetrucks. Sleek derby race cars. Flower-power hippie vans. Piled in glass-paneled bins on the toy counter, the metal, four-wheeled trinkets enchant little Caiden Williams, who eagerly touches one after another. The 2-year-old wraps a pudgy hand around a toy school bus and rolls it across the other playthings.

"This is our new tradition," beams his grandmother, Debbie Ryman. "Whenever he comes to see me, I'm taking him to Dooley's."

Visiting an authentic dime store at least once should, arguably, be a part of every child's life. One of the few such places left in Texas is Dooley's 5-10 & 25¢ store in downtown Fredericksburg. Since 1923, folks of all ages have browsed the aisles for embroidery thread, hairnets, cast-iron skillets, lacy doilies, cat-eye marbles, cotton undies, stationery, pants stretchers and countless other sundries. No doubt, the old-fashioned merchandise, coupled with scuffed hardwood floors and pressed tin ceilings, enhances the sense of nostalgia at Dooley's.

In the 19th century, before dime stores came along, people bought necessities at dry-goods stores. Behind counters, clerks fetched merchandise and priced it, usually at whim. Then, starting in 1879, Frank W. Woolworth introduced a new way to shop when he marketed nickel-priced items on self-serve tables at his Great Five-Cent Stores in New York and Pennsylvania.

For decades, Americans frequented Woolworth's and other "variety" stores. In the 1960s and '70s, large discount stores and suburban malls gradually replaced many dime stores. By the late '90s, big-box stores, touting huge selections and fast checkouts, had shuttered most of the last remaining survivors.

Except for a few, like Dooley's.

"We're an antique store," says owner Tim Dooley, 57, seated in a back storeroom. Then he cracks a grin. "We don't sell them; we're an antique! We've survived because we own our own building and don't have to pay rent. Plus, we're hardheaded!"

He and his father, John Dooley, 84, who's sitting nearby, grew up in the family business, housed in a circa 1914 building on Main Street.

"At the end of World War I, my father, Charles, got drafted, but he didn't serve because he could type," John Dooley says. "So he ended up at an office in San Antonio. Later, he sold real estate. Then a family friend, who owned a chain of Texas dime stores, offered to finance my father in the variety business."

After settling on Fredericksburg, Charles Dooley opened his new five-and-dime in 1923. Two years later, the business moved a few doors down into a two-story building vacated by a hardware store. In 1964, the Dooleys knocked out a common wall and expanded into the adjoining building.

Staying afloat ever since, especially as an independent, hasn't been easy. "Walmart has put the middleman out of business. When I can't find a supplier who can sell me one or two items at a time, then I'll be in trouble," Tim Dooley says.

In recent years, Dooley's has relied on a distribution company in Iowa to stock



shelves. Among the store's best sellers are cast aluminum toys, such as tractors and implements. There's more: Corks in every size for saltshakers and wine bottles. Novelty hats for costumes and make-believe. Laundry sprinkle gadgets, used for steam ironing, and spatterware, a line of enamel mugs and plates.

Vintage perfume, too. "Blue Waltz was popular back in the '30s and sold for 39 cents," Tim Dooley says, holding up a tiny, heart-shaped flask with a blue rosebud cap. In 2003, *Country Living* magazine listed Dooley's as one of three known places nationwide that still carried the perfume.

"After that mention, I bet I shipped 2,000 bottles, coast to coast," he says. "And I'm still shipping it. But not for 39 cents!"

Speaking of money, Dooley's only accepts cash and checks. Absolutely no credit or debit cards, please. "We don't scan our stuff at the register, either," Tim Dooley says. "Because if we did, we wouldn't be who we are. Our inventory control are the ladies on the sales floor who check stock and make orders."

They also dust and straighten their assigned areas several times a day. And answer questions. "What's this?" asks a customer, holding up something that resembles an unpainted Mexican maraca. Emma Jean Ransleben—who at 68 has worked at Dooley's for 25 years—pauses from folding ladies' scarves and nods. "That's a sock darter," she replies. "Some people still mend their own socks."

Betty Rabke watches over the counter of crazy hats and Pegboard wall of picture frames. "I've worked here since I graduated from high school in 1951," says the 77-year-old native. "What's changed? Oh, the prices! And at Easter, we used to sell little colored chicks—blues, pinks, yellows. But not any more."

No matter. Locals and tourists alike still flock to Dooley's, especially Saturdays, when as many as 750 come and go (the store is closed Sundays). "People who went to five-and-dimes as a child bring their children and grandchildren in to see what they grew up with," Tim Dooley says.

"Other than going from an old adding machine to computers," says 79-year-old Rose Fiedler, who's kept the books since 1950, "Dooley's has stayed pretty much the same."

Meanwhile, across the store, little Caiden is still happily playing at the toy counter. "A while ago, his mother and I had to figure out how to get him to come into the store," his grandmother muses. "Now we've got to figure out how to get him out."

At Dooley's 5-10 & 25¢ store in downtown Fredericksburg, virtually everything shoppers can imagine is well within reach: flyswatters, embroidery thread, hairnets, cast-iron skillet, lacy doilies, cat-eye marbles, cotton undies, stationery, pants stretchers and countless other sundries.

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers of Blanco is a frequent contributor to Texas Co-op Power.

Puppy Love

*Sometimes,
romance is all about
not barking up the
wrong tree.*

BY HARRY NOBLE

M

y first attack of puppy love occurred at age 7 in the third grade at Rosevine, a country school in Sabine County. One morning my teacher had a yellow rose tucked over her right ear, and I swooned at this sudden bloom of beauty! Her face was radiant—why had I not seen this before? In that instant, she became my queen, and I donned a suit of armor to defend her from the dragon that wanted to devour her.

This special feeling lasted several weeks but began to fade when she gave me a B+ on some homework I felt deserved an A.

My second encounter with puppy love came in the fourth grade. Out of the blue, my heart pointed to a black-haired young lady and said, “She is the most beautiful girl in the world.” Her hair suddenly took on a radiance that set my heart racing. My eyes wanted to follow her every move, which was a problem as her desk was behind mine. I ran through a large portfolio of excuses to look rearward, including such jewels as “a crick in my neck,” “The sun’s shining in my eyes,” and telling the teacher “Your voice seemed to come from back there.”

Miss Baker, having witnessed numerous cases of puppy love, wasn’t fooled for a minute. As my alibis dwindled in quality she made her move by announcing, “Class, I’m sure you have noticed we need to reconfigure Harry’s seating arrangement. One, we turn Harry’s desk around and I teach Harry’s back; or two, I move my desk to the back of the room and teach the backs of the entire class except for Harry.”

The class pet offered the adopted solution: “Miss Baker, why not move Harry two seats back in another row?”

That’s what the teacher did, and all went well for a number of weeks. But the fourth grade was a hotbed of passing notes written on full sheets of notebook paper. The paper was folded lengthwise four times and then into a “love knot” two inches square. To the raven-haired object of my heart’s desire, I simply wrote “I love you,” folded it into a perfect love knot and sent it on its way. My heart waited. An answer finally arrived and spoke in terms as simple as mine: “Are you crazy?”

My first reaction was she answered, so she loved me. But the three words in her message kept getting in the way. When the real meaning finally got through, I wanted revenge. When we got our class pictures, I cut her face out with my pocketknife. My sister told Mom we had class pictures, and Mom insisted on seeing mine. I finally handed the photograph of my class to her. She sat in silence for a

long time and then asked why I cut that girl's face out. I said, "I didn't—it came that way." Mom handed the picture back and never said a word.

I was in the sixth grade when puppy love caught me again. This little farm girl sat across from me. After several months I suddenly noticed her flawless complexion. I saw that her lips seemed to glisten, her nose went perky, her hair shined, her teeth sparkled, and her feed-sack dress turned to velvet. She bloomed!

I wrote, "I think I love you," folded it in a perfect love knot and sent it on its way. Her note arrived; I opened it and read, "Do you want a kiss?"

Was she talking candy or lips? I didn't have the slightest idea. Driven to answer, even though I had a severe case of brain block, I sent a note back: "No." She read it and stuck her tongue out at me.

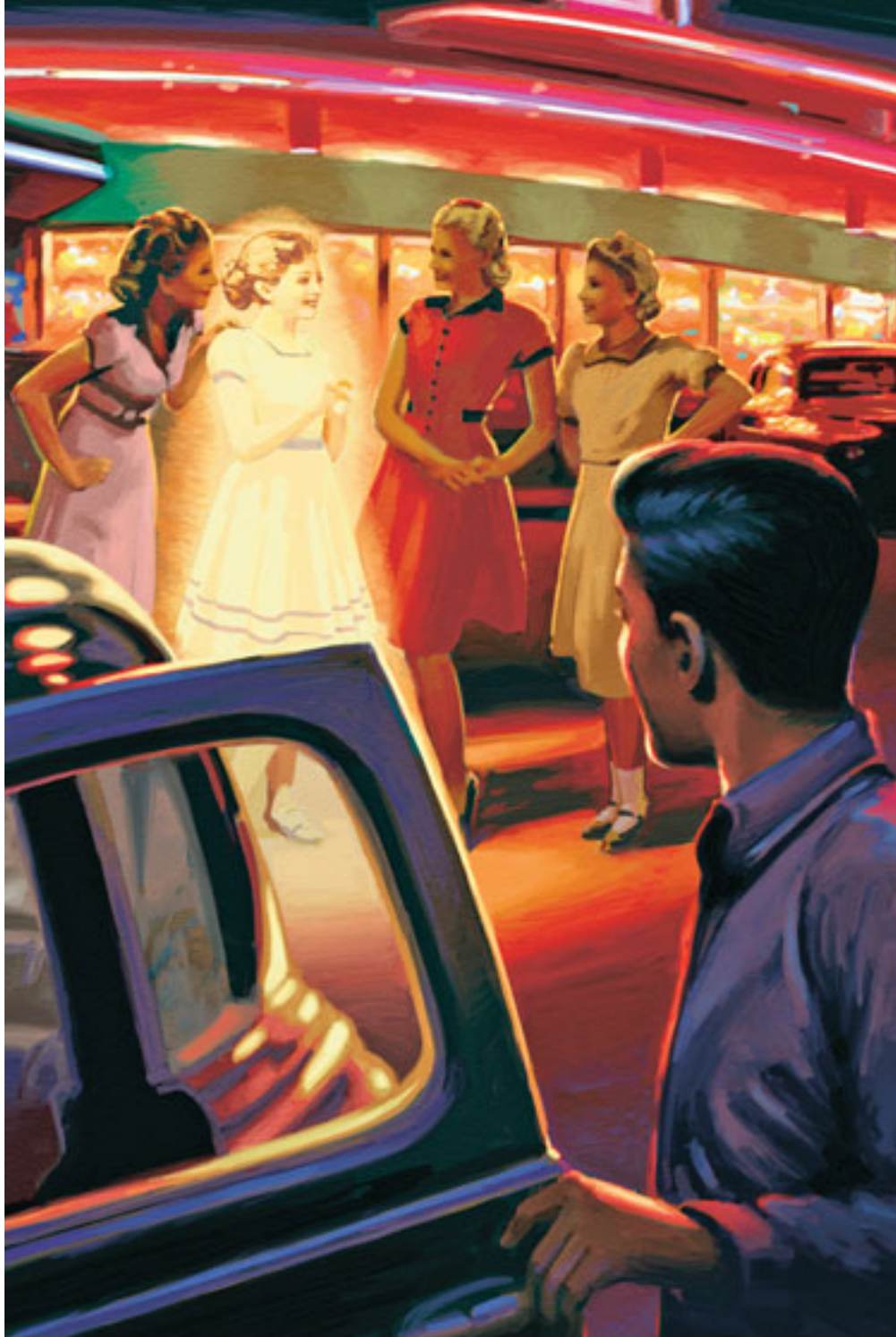
Then came the seventh grade. We had assembly every Friday morning. That provided a weekly opportunity to check out the girls, and it wasn't long before my eyes settled on a specific "sugar and spice, and everything nice." My heart and mind unanimously agreed, and I had another case of puppy love. Alas, she was a junior and far out of reach. She never knew.

As a high school sophomore I had matured—at least I thought so. I no longer wrote notes or cut faces out of class pictures. I had picked up the more sophisticated strategy of winking. But I had developed another maneuver that I felt obtained positive results 95 percent of the time. I would wink to get their attention and then go, "aha ... aha ... aha ... aha ... aha ... aha" and nod my head "yes" as I panted like a dog. I was having a cup of coffee with Dad one afternoon when a pretty girl walked in. I gave her a wink, followed by the "aha ... aha ... aha ..." routine. Dad gave me a long, strange look. Coffee was a nickel a cup. He placed a dime on the counter and walked out without a word. When he saw Mom he said, "Maizie, that boy is either crazy or epileptic." Dad didn't speak to me for weeks.

But the girl invited me to her table. It was 1946, and my family had just purchased a new fluid-drive Dodge car. So I asked her for a date—my first. She said "Yes"—her first. But her family moved away, and neither of us worked very hard to keep the relationship alive. It faded away.

That was the way it went with puppy love—it faded away. But one night at age 19, I was hanging out with the young crowd, and without giving it much thought, asked this perky little girl if I could drive her home.

Forty-eight years—including 46 years of marriage—and four children later, I lost her to cancer. That time it wasn't puppy love.



Harry Noble is a frequent contributor to Texas Co-op Power.

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This story breaks my heart every time. Allegedly, just two years after the discovery of tanzanite in 1967, a Maasai tribesman knocked on the door of a gem cutter's office in Nairobi. The Maasai had brought along an enormous chunk of tanzanite and he was looking to sell. His asking price? Fifty dollars. But the gem cutter was suspicious and assumed that a stone so large could only be glass. The cutter told the tribesman, no thanks, and sent him on his way. Huge mistake. It turns out that the gem was genuine and would have easily dwarfed the world's largest cut tanzanite at the time. Based on common pricing, that "chunk" could have been worth close to \$3,000,000!

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The Eloquent Barbara Jordan

BY KAYE NORTHCOTT

Congresswoman Barbara Jordan racked up a bunch of firsts: First African-American to serve in the Texas Senate since Reconstruction following the Civil War. First African-American woman from the South to serve in Congress. First woman and first African-American to give the keynote speech at a Democratic National Convention. First African-American woman interred in the Texas State Cemetery.

But in her autobiography, *Barbara Jordan: A Self-Portrait*, co-written with novelist Shelby Hearon (Doubleday, 1979), Jordan made it clear that firsts were not her goal. Excellence was.

Many of her values were passed down from her maternal grandfather, John Ed Patten, a rag and junk merchant who collected people's discards all over Houston's Fifth Ward. The young Jordan would ride along with her grandfather in a wagon pulled by two mules. He would read to her and had her commit this thought to memory, although she never knew its origin: "Just remember the world is not a playground, but a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday but an education. One eternal lesson for us all: to teach us how better we should love."

Grandpa Patten urged her to be independent and to set her sights high. In the Texas Senate, she voted with the liberals but got invaluable mentoring from Sen. Dorsey Hardeman, the leader of the conservative wing.

Support from President Johnson, who in 1967 invited the Texas senator to the White House to help evaluate his proposed Fair Housing legislation, paved Jordan's way to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1972. Jordan built bridges regardless of political affiliation.

She began her college education at Texas Southern University and ultimately obtained a law degree at Boston University.

Attending an Eastern college challenged her intellectual merit because her Texas education fell short when compared to most of her classmates'. As she stated in her autobiography, "... It occurred to me if I was going to succeed at this strange new adventure, I would have to read longer and more thoroughly than my colleagues at law school had to read."

But she had the intellectual prowess and commitment to apply herself. And she developed a virtually impregnable dignity that defied trivialization or typecasting. The nation hadn't really heard of her until July 25, 1974, two years after she came to Congress.

Each member of the House Judiciary Committee was televised live as he or she made a case for or against President Nixon's impeachment during the Watergate hearings. Jordan's

Congresswoman Barbara Jordan delivers her opening remarks on July 25, 1974, during the House Judiciary Committee's hearings on the issue of the impeachment of President Nixon.



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remarks cast such a clear light on the constitutional issues at play that some TV commentators said she towered above the rest. Her eloquence was unsurpassed as was her majestic presence.

As soon as she uttered a word, viewers knew they were in for something special. First was her flawless elocution. Second was her gravity: " 'We the people'—it is a very eloquent beginning. But when the Constitution of the United States was completed on the 17th of September in 1787, I was not included in that 'We the people.' I felt for many years that somehow George Washington and Alexander Hamilton just left me out by mistake. But through the process of amendment, interpretation, and court decision, I have finally been included ..."

Jordan continued: "... My faith in the Constitution is whole. It is complete. It is total. I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution." When Jordan walked out of the hearing room that day, she had entered the national consciousness.

Nixon resigned before a full congressional vote was taken.

A few years later, Presidents Carter and Clinton discussed cabinet positions with Jordan. She later said she would have liked to have been attorney general, but she was battling multiple sclerosis, a disease she would keep private until she was forced to use a wheelchair.

In 1979, she moved back to Texas to teach at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas and inspire a new generation to service. Gov. Ann Richards appointed Jordan to be her "ethics czar," giving hellfire and brimstone warnings to her appointees about abuse of public office. And so Jordan played out her remaining years in Texas in the role of elder stateswoman. She died at the age of 59 on January 17, 1996.

Kaye Northcott is the retired editor of Texas Co-op Power. As a reporter, she covered Jordan's years in the Texas Senate and U.S. Congress.

Love from the Kitchen

BY KEVIN HARGIS The way to a person's heart is through the stomach.

That old saying is, like many old sayings, based on a truth: Food is a primal need, and nothing's more attractive than a person who fills a primal need.

So, lovelorn ladies and laddies, both young and old, I would advise you to learn to cook. You don't need to have a repertoire as extensive as Julia Child's. You can even limit it to one dish—but learn that one dish well. That way, if you ever get a chance to entertain that someone special, you can use your ace recipe to dazzle with culinary brilliance.

My go-to dish as a budding romantic chef was lasagna. My recipe evolved over the years until I got the balance of spicy sausage, creamy filling and cheese just right.

But lasagna hasn't been part of the regular meal rotation for me and my wife, Lisa, for a long while. For one, lasagna, like many foods that taste wonderful, is not conducive to low-calorie eating. As I've gotten older (and hopefully wiser), I have avoided eating things packed with quite so much fat, sodium and carbohydrates.

And over the years, Lisa has developed an intolerance for dairy products: Cheese, milk and ice cream all are great treats but leave her feeling terrible later. She still misses being able to have some of her favorite luscious desserts.

One of those is key lime pie, with its rich combination of sweetened condensed milk and tart lime. I knew she missed it, so through some kitchen experimenta-

tion, I developed a recipe that duplicates the rich dairy texture and flavor with a nondairy substitute.

To my valentine Lisa: This recipe is for you, with love.

LISA'S KEY LIME PIE

- 3 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup cornstarch
- Pinch salt
- 1 can (14 ounces) cream of coconut, well shaken
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup key lime juice
- 1 tablespoon grated lime zest
- 1 prepared graham cracker crust or 9-inch pie shell
- Meringue

In small bowl, beat yolks and set aside. Combine sugar, cornstarch and salt in heavy saucepan. Add cream of coconut gradually, constantly stirring with whisk to avoid lumps. Bring to boil, stirring constantly, and cook about 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat. Temper yolks with about 1/2 cup of hot mixture, adding it to yolks and quickly combining (this prevents yolks from scrambling). Add yolk mixture back to cream of coconut mixture, add butter and lime juice and combine well. Return pan to heat and boil for about 2 minutes longer. Remove from heat and stir in zest. Pour into pie shell. Make meringue (recipe follows) and put on top of hot filling, spreading to edges. Bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes, until meringue is browned. Allow to cool completely before serving.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 371 calories, 4.3 g protein, 20.2 g fat, 43.3 g carbohydrates, 0.6 g dietary fiber, 216 mg sodium, 29.1 g sugars, 77 mg cholesterol

MERINGUE

- 3 egg whites
- Pinch salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/4 cup superfine sugar

Combine whites, salt and tartar in bowl of electric mixer and beat on medium-high speed until mixture becomes foamy. Add sugar in a slow stream and beat until mixture becomes stiff and glossy (take care not to overbeat).



Key Lime Pie

© STOCK FOOD



PAM KINKEMA, *United Cooperative Services*

Prize-winning recipe: **Creamy Scallop Crepes**

Romance and food just seem to go together. Creamy comfort and sweet nothings for breakfast, dinner and dessert were the order of the day for many of the recipes sent in for this month's Romantic Recipes contest. One of the creamiest and most comforting is a seafood dish that's surprisingly easy to put together—once you've honed the art of making crepes.

CREAMY SCALLOP CREPES

- 2 egg whites
- 1 egg
- 1½ cups milk
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 pound bay scallops
- ½ cup white wine
- ⅛ teaspoon white pepper
- 1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms
- 4 green onions, sliced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ⅔ cup evaporated milk
- ¾ cup shredded Swiss cheese

Beat egg whites, egg and milk in small bowl. In separate bowl, combine 1 cup flour and salt, then add to milk mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour.

Coat 8-inch nonstick skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium-low heat. Stir crepe batter and pour 2 tablespoons (⅓ cup) into center of skillet. Lift and tilt pan to coat bottom evenly. Cook until top appears dry; turn and cook 15 to 20 seconds longer. Remove to wire rack. Repeat with remaining batter, coating skillet with cooking spray as needed. When crepes are cool, stack them with layer of wax paper in between. Makes about 20 crepes.

In large skillet, bring scallops, wine and pepper to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 3 to 4 minutes or until scallops are firm and opaque. Drain, reserving cooking liquid; set liquid and scallops aside. In same skillet, sauté mushrooms and onions in butter until almost tender. Sprinkle with ¼ cup flour and stir until blended. Gradually stir in evaporated milk and reserved cooking liquid. Bring to boil, stirring constantly, and cook 2 minutes or until thick. Remove from heat. Stir in cheese and cooked scallops.

Spread ⅓ cup filling down center of each crepe; roll up and place in 13x9x2-

inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. When ready to serve, cover and bake at 350 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes or until heated through.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 2 crepes with filling. Per serving: 280 calories, 20 g protein, 9 g fat, 24.9 g carbohydrates, 2.1 g dietary fiber, 561 mg sodium, 4.1 g sugars, 69 mg cholesterol

CHOCOLATE ÉCLAIR RING

- 3 eggs, room temperature
- ½ cup plus 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup flour
- 1 box (3 ounces) instant vanilla or French vanilla pudding mix
- 1 cup cold milk
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1 square unsweetened chocolate
- 1½ cups powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Set eggs out; they must be at room temperature. Bring ½ cup butter and 1 cup water to boil. Remove from heat. Add flour all at once and beat with a wooden spoon. Add eggs, one at a time, and beat well after each egg. Dough should be stiff and sticky.

Pour batter onto a greased round pan. Using rubber spatula, form ring with 5-inch diameter center and with edges uniform in width and thickness by pulling dough from center toward sides. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes. Turn oven off and leave in closed oven at least 45 minutes, longer if possible. Opening oven door before time is up will cause dough to collapse.

Once pastry is cooled, combine pudding mix and milk. Mix with wire whisk. In separate bowl, whip cream until somewhat stiff and fold into pudding mixture. Carefully cut ring in half horizontally and fill bottom with filling. (Note: If dough breaks, fill in with custard and cover break with frosting.) Replace top.

To make frosting, microwave chocolate and 3 tablespoons butter in 15-second intervals until melted. Add powdered sugar and corn syrup and 2 to 3 teaspoons water, if needed, to bring to spreading consistency. Mix well. Add vanilla. Either drizzle over éclair or, using a pastry decorator, frost top of éclair.

Servings: 12. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 332 calories, 4.1 g protein, 19.7 g fat, 33.2 g carbohydrates, 0.7 g dietary fiber, 156 mg sodium, 22.2 g sugars, 109 mg cholesterol

MARGARET BONSAnte

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\$100 RECIPE CONTEST

June's recipe contest topic is **Ice Cream**. We're seeking recipes for cool, comforting concoctions that become so popular in the summer heat. Share your favorites, from sherbets to sorbets to good, old homemade vanilla. The deadline is February 10.

Submit recipes online at www.TexasCoopPower.com under the Contests tab. Or mail them to Home Cooking, 1122 Colorado, 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You may also e-mail them to recipes@TexasCoopPower.com or fax them to (512) 763-3408. Please include your name, address and phone number, as well as the name of your electric co-op. Also, let us know where you found the recipe or whether it's one you developed yourself. The top winner will receive \$100, a copy of 60 Years of Home Cooking and a Texas-shaped trivet. Runners-up will also receive a prize.

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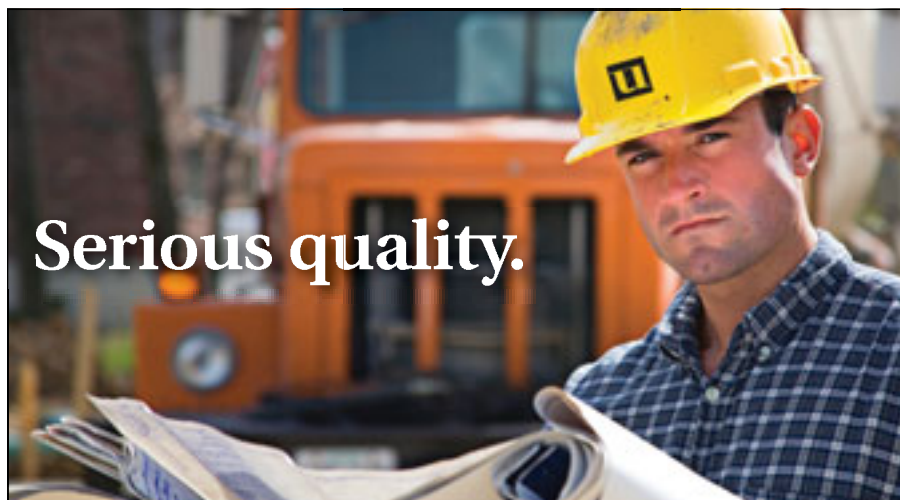


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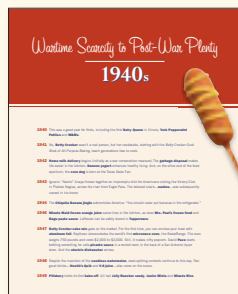
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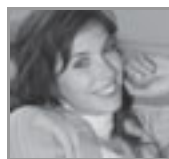
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Crows feet, Frown Lines and Wrinkles - Does Any Cream Work?



Dear
Dorris:

DEAR DORRIS: I am a young 65 years old, and have recently entered retirement. However, I haven't been able to relax

and enjoy, because I'm so upset about these wrinkles and lines I have developed around my eyes and mouth. I tried 6 different creams that Celebrities endorsed, and NONE of them worked. I am desperate here, to rid myself of these wrinkles, but I'm afraid to keep spending money on creams that don't work.

Is there any product out there that really and truly reduces the wrinkles and lines of the face, even the deep, entrenched ones?

Feeling Shriveled, Austin, TX

DEAR SHRIVELED: As a faithful reader of my column, you probably know that I was a long time sufferer of wrinkles and frown lines too. You'll be glad to know that I **DID** find a product line that gets rid of wrinkles and lines, and was especially helpful on those deep wrinkles that seem like they're never going away.

The Dermagist Original Wrinkle Smoothing Cream® is a rich, luxurious cream that is scientifically infused with the peptide, Matrixyl. In case you haven't heard of Matrixyl, it actually stimulates the DNA of the skin to produce new healthy skin cells and encourages your skin to produce Collagen. While there are several creams on the market that contain collagen, Matrixyl gets your skin to produce your **OWN** Collagen, which is much more effective. As if the Matrixyl wasn't enough, **The Dermagist Original Wrinkle Smoothing Cream®** has other proprietary ingredients that dramatically smooth and soften the skin, while lifting and plumping loose and saggy areas.

Affordable and incredibly effective, dermatologists are referring a lot of business to this company. I highly recommend that you try it for the wrinkles that your skin has. The Dermajuv products are **available online at www.Dermagist.com** or you can order or learn more by **calling toll-free, 888-771-5355**. Oh, I almost forgot... I was given a promo code when I placed my order that gave me 10% off. The code was "TXW1". It's worth a try to see if it still works.



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HEROES

What makes a hero? While the answers may differ, ultimately it comes down to this: A hero is an everyday person who makes the world a better place. He or she may be a police officer, a firefighter, a doctor, a soldier, a teacher or a person passing by on the street. This February, we salute those who have made a difference.

—ASHLEY CLARY

Please visit www.TexasCoopPower.com for more photos.

◀ J-A-C Electric Cooperative member **Henry Birdwell Jr.** serves on the Bryson Volunteer Fire Department. After training one day, son Dalton decided to put on his gear and head back to the station, too. “He wants to be a fireman when he grows up, just like his daddy,” says mom and wife, **Sheila**.



◀ These healthcare providers from Doctors Hospital at Renaissance in Edinburg traveled to Haiti after a massive earthquake devastated the country in January 2010. “We did not consider ourselves heroes, but we were seen as such by our patients,” said Magic Valley Electric Cooperative member and healthcare provider **Sandra Acevedo**, who sent in the photo.

◀ Specialist **Kenneth Kuydendall**, cousin to Pedernales Electric Cooperative members **Becki** and **Dee Didriksen**, poses on his third tour of military duty atop one of Saddam Hussein’s old palaces in Ramadi, Iraq. “We are extremely proud of Kenneth’s courage and dedication, along with all his ‘brothers in arms’ for doing their part to serve and protect,” the Didriksens say.



▲ **Orvil Richard “Rick” Williams** receives a Purple Heart in spring 1970 after sustaining multiple wounds in Vietnam from hand grenade shrapnel shortly before his 19th birthday. Rick and his wife, the **Rev. Cathey Williams**, are members of Fannin County Electric Cooperative.

Upcoming in Focus on Texas

ISSUE	SUBJECT	DEADLINE
Apr	Catch of the Day	Feb 10
May	Unlikely Duos	Mar 10
Jun	Murals	Apr 10
Jul	Those Were the Days	May 10
Aug	Milestones	Jun 10
Sep	State Parks	Jul 10

CATCH OF THE DAY is the topic for our APRIL 2011 issue. Send your photo—along with your name, address, daytime phone, co-op affiliation and a brief description—to **Catch of the Day, Focus on Texas**, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701, before **FEBRUARY 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. If you use a digital camera, submit your highest resolution images on our website at www.TexasCoopPower.com. 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.



▲ Home at last: After missing in action in South Vietnam since April 5, 1968, the remains of U.S. Marine Corps 2nd Lt. Donald John Matocha finally came home to his family and friends in Smithville. This stirring shot was sent by **Sarah Beal**, a member of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative.

AROUND TEXAS AROUND TEXAS

This is just a sampling of the events and festivals around and about Texas. For the complete listing, please visit www.TexasCoopPower.com

PICK OF THE MONTH

FEBRUARY 11 ATHENS

Trinity Valley Community
College Rodeo, (903) 670-3324



BULL RIDING: 2011 © TYLER OLSON, IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM. TRACTOR: 2011 © MARGO HARRISON, IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM. DOLL: 2011 © OLGA SCHLEICHER, IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM.

FEBRUARY

04 GLEN ROSE [4-5]
Antique Tractor Pulls & Show, (817) 559-1174

05 STONEWALL
Old Time German
Smokehouse Secrets,
(830) 644-2252

VICTORIA
Family Outdoor Expo,
(361) 572-9604, www.familyoutdoorexpo.org

11 KERRVILLE [11-13]
Winter Acoustic Jam
Camp, (830) 459-2120,
www.hcamp.org

CLUTE [11-20]
The Rainmaker—A Center
Stages Play, (979) 265-
7661, www.bcfas.org

12 NEW BRAUNFELS
19th Annual Hill Country
Doll Show & Sale,
(830) 708-8054,
www.dollr.com



4 GLEN ROSE
Antique Tractor
Pulls & Show

12 COLUMBUS
"The Mystery of Irma Vep,"
(979) 732-5135,
www.columbustexas.org

15 MERCEDES [15-20]
Rio Grande Valley Music
Festival, (956) 373-0130,
www.rgvvmf.com

17 BULVERDE [17-19, 24-27]
Marrying Terry,
(830) 438-2339,
www.stagebulverde.org

19 DRIPPING SPRINGS
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Val Verde County Arena

March 10-12 - Victoria, TX
Victoria Community Center

April 7-9 – Canutillo, TX
Rio Grande Valley Ranch Arena

June 2-5 – Burleson, TX
All Star Equestrian Arena
"A Mustang Affair"

June 10-11 - Hutchinson, KS
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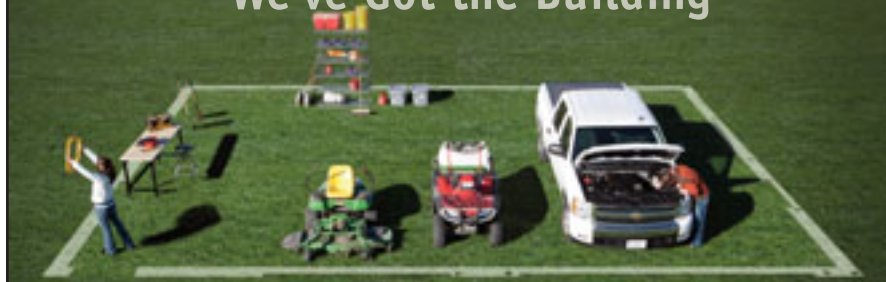
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MARCH

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The best gifts often come in small packages. The small Hill Country town of Stonewall, about 14 miles east of Fredericksburg and a little more than an hour's drive west from Austin, is such a package.

Perched near the Pedernales River, Stonewall is best known for its peaches, the **LYNDON B. JOHNSON STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE** that sits just east of town off U.S. Highway 290, and the adjacent LBJ Ranch. The state park, named for our nation's 36th president, rests on the south side of the Pedernales and serves as a gateway to the LBJ Ranch on the river's north side. Touring the working ranch, where the Hereford cattle so loved by Johnson still graze, is a simple matter of obtaining a free driving tour permit at the state park visitor center.

But guests who don't wander across the river to the ranch will find plenty to see and do in the state park: gorgeous fields of wildflowers in the spring, bison and longhorns, and a variety of amenities available for public use, including picnic areas, nature trails, a tennis court, a baseball diamond and a seasonal Olympic-sized swimming pool. You can even cast a line for free in the Pedernales—in Texas, no license is required to fish in state parks.

Don't bypass the visitor center where you can watch the film "LBJ: The Hill Country" and view memorabilia and interactive displays about Johnson's life.

Elsewhere in the state park, the past comes alive at the **SAUER-BECKMANN LIVING HISTORY FARM**, which portrays farm life during the 1900s. Seasonal activities add even more to the park. In the spring, there's kite day, an Easter celebration at the farm and guided nature walks. In the summer, you can join in on the annual fishing day, the **GERMAN HERITAGE DAY** celebration and **LBJ'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION** on August 27. During the fall, the focus is on planting wildflower seeds at the **ANNUAL PARK SEED STOMP**, decorating holiday cookies and participating in

EASY PICKINGS

From LBJ's legacy to juicy peaches, Stonewall is ripe with possibilities.

BY JAN ADAMSON



German holiday traditions. The year ends with the **ANNUAL LBJ TREE LIGHTING** just in time for Christmas.

The ranch, meanwhile, which falls under the umbrella of the **LYNDON B. JOHNSON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK** that's headquartered in nearby Johnson City, gives visitors great insight into the lives of one of Texas' most famous families. View the exterior of the **JUNCTION SCHOOL** where a young LBJ learned to read. Check out the reconstructed birthplace of the former president and explore the exhibits in the hangar visitor station where the Johnsons entertained guests with movies. Visitors also may take guided tours through the **TEXAS WHITE HOUSE**, a home away from Washington, D.C., for the Johnsons, who retreated there before, during and after LBJ's presidency.

Before you leave, pay your respects at the **JOHNSON FAMILY CEMETERY**, where LBJ and his beloved wife, Lady Bird, are buried.

Back in town, more historical roots

run deep at the **STONEWALL HERITAGE CENTER**, which is housed inside the **LINDIG HOMESTEAD**. The log dogtrot house, built in 1873, was moved into town more than a decade ago and rebuilt with its original logs and rocks. Admission is free and by appointment only.

And don't forget about the peaches:

Orchards dot the area, and in season, you don't have to look hard to find a good produce stand that offers mouth-watering samples. For the peachiest time of all, mark your calendar for June 16-18 when the **PEACH JAMBOREE AND RODEO** celebrates its 50th anniversary.

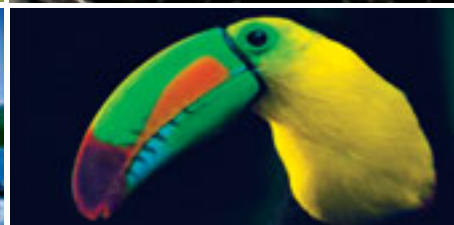
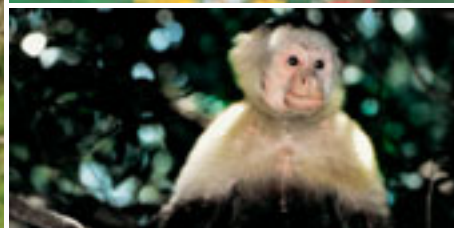
Stonewall also is at the heart of the Texas wine road—a stretch of U.S. Highway 290 that links Johnson City, Stonewall and Fredericksburg and features about 10 wineries. For a sampling, try **BECKER VINEYARDS**, just west of Stonewall, which is packed with wall-to-wall charm. Styled after a 19th-century German stone barn, there are two tasting rooms, and an original 1880s log cabin adjacent to the winery offers bed-and-breakfast accommodations.

Grab some lunch at the **STONEWALL ONE STOP**, a convenience store with a diner in the back. Or peruse **WEINHEIMER & SON**, a general merchandise store that can sell you some groceries, a shirt and a little hardware, too.

After all that activity, I want a place to relax and enjoy the setting sun, and **ROSE HILL MANOR**, which sits atop a hill overlooking the Pedernales River Valley, fills that bill and more. Designed in the style of an old Southern plantation, Rose Hill satisfies the senses in all ways, offering gourmet breakfasts to overnight guests and dinner five nights a week to guests and the general public. "We want our guests rested and well fed," says assistant innkeeper Diane Smith. "We shoot for perfection."

Stonewall Chamber of Commerce, (830) 644-2735, www.stonewalltexas.com

Jan Adamson is a freelance writer based in Grand Saline.



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