

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

OH, LITTLE TOWN OF NAZARETH

Village's exhaustive devotion to Nativity pageant means that Christmas comes but once every two years



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COVER PHOTO *April Schmucker* By Neal Hinkle

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Small World

Thanks for the September article "Who Knew?" I have always heard that Davy Crockett's wife was buried in Acton. It is of significance to my family as my paternal family name is Acton, and my maternal great-grandmother, Mary Leatia Crockett Humphreys, was a great-niece of Davy Crockett. This site joined my two family lineages long before my parents married. Small world.

BEVERLY ACTON BARKER | BLUEBONNET EC

Harvey Girls Connection

Like many Texans, I, too, had a close relative who was a Harvey Girl ["Dining with the Harvey Girls," September]. My Dad passed away last year at 101 in Oakwood. His mother, Lucy Williams Blasingame, was a Harvey Girl. Her job was to launder all those beautiful white linens and keep the cloth tablecloths and cloth napkins bright white. She did it by hand, all day, and was so happy to have a job.

Grandma Lucy met Arthur, a cowboy who was a drover for the last of the trail rides in West Texas. He saw her, held her hand and promised to return to marry her after the cattle were delivered in Kansas. He did, and there began another story for another time.

I'm 69 years young and so appreciative of Martha Deeringer for writing such a beautiful story that all ages can enjoy. Texas Co-op Power consistently hits that happy medium between nostalgia and useful information for today's readers.

LINDA RUTHERFORD | HOUSTON COUNTY EC

Heart of the Matter

The Texas Almanac may want to check its facts about where the

Hamilton County to the Rescue

On a recent Sunday night, I made a trip to my ranch in Hamilton from Waco, where I live, to pick up a trailer I needed for the next day. When I arrived, I found my house had no electricity. I called Hamilton County Electric Co-op and spoke with dispatcher Tracy Cox. While I was explaining my situation, I was stung in the face by two red wasps. I told Tracy what happened and that I was highly allergic. She expedited the call, telling the technician about the wasps.

I was shocked when the technician, Shea Wilson, arrived in just a few minutes. He was concerned about me instead of getting to the task he came to do. He was very kind and even offered to drive me back to Waco.

While I looked bad (face very swollen) I thought I'd be fine driving myself. He got the electricity back on, and we went our separate ways.

The next day Shea called to check on me. He told me he had gone back out to my ranch and found the red wasp nests and got rid of them. He definitely went above and beyond his call of duty.

I tip my hat to the great people at Hamilton. I am proud to be a part of it and hope that someday I can repay Shea and Tracy for their kindness and concern.

GUS KRUEGER | HAMILTON COUNTY EC



Shea Wilson, Gus Krueger and Tracy Cox

JOSE YAU

heart of Texas is ["Where is the heart of Texas," August]. On U.S. 84, 10 miles east of Goldthwaite, is a little place called Center City. At Center City there was an oak tree with a plaque placed by the State of Texas that said that oak tree had been calculated to be the exact center of Texas [based on an early 1870s survey, according to The Handbook of Texas Online]. Hence the name Center City.

CURTIS HORTON | UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Glory Days in San Saba

Oh, how I enjoyed October's Hit The Road, "San Saba." I grew up in San Saba until 1945, when my father took a job in Fort Worth. Too bad we never moved back.

My days in San Saba were the happiest days of my entire life. My father climbed many a pecan tree while we were there. There wasn't such a thing as a tree shaker back then. He had to climb the tree and knock the pecans off with a cane pole. I was a junior in high school in San Saba when I had to leave.

RAY PIERCE | FANNIN COUNTY EC



KEVIN WANDIVER

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Lady Bird's 100th Birthday

Lady Bird Johnson, first lady to President Lyndon Johnson and fervent environmentalist, would have turned 100 on December 22.

Claudia Alta Taylor was born in the East Texas town of Karnack, which is served by Panola-Harrison Electric Cooperative. When she was a toddler, she was described by a nursemaid as “purty as a lady bird,” and that became her lifelong nickname.

She graduated from The University of Texas with history and journalism degrees. In 1934, after a whirlwind courtship, she married Lyndon Johnson, and by 1937 she was the wife of a U.S. congressman who played a vital role in the rural electrification of Texas.

As first lady, Lady Bird was instrumental in the creation of the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. Her love of wildflowers led her to create the National Wildflower Research Center in 1982 near Austin that today is named in her honor.

She died in Austin on July 11, 2007, and was buried beside her husband at the LBJ Ranch in Stonewall. The LBJ Presidential Library in Austin will celebrate Lady Bird's 100th birthday with the opening of new exhibits that come after a major interior redesign.



Mark Your Calendar with an X

Who among us hasn't slipped on a pair of damp, ugly rental shoes with ratty laces and then tried to coax a heavy, chipped ball with ill-fitting holes down a greased lane? Bowling is something most of us have done—some more proudly than others.

In any case, you might be interested to know that December 29 will mark the 150th anniversary of when the first wooden bowling ball was made. The details are sketchy, but it was in 1862 that bowling left the stone ages. That's right: Before that, the balls were roundish stones. In 1905, the first rubber bowling ball was produced.

Arlington is home to the International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame, and Houston is home to the state's oldest bowling center (higher-ups in the bowling community don't want us to call them alleys anymore), AMF Diamond Lanes, which opened in 1911.



WHO KNEW

Texas leads the nation in the production of cattle, cotton, hay, sheep and wool, and goats and mohair, according to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

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HAPPENINGS



Kinderfest in Fredericksburg

While doing your Christmas shopping in tourist-friendly Fredericksburg, you also can entertain your little ones. Continuing a long-standing German tradition, St. Nicholas will be stopping at the Pioneer Museum 2-3 p.m. on December 8 to fill the stockings of good boys and girls. Kinderfest, which has been going on for more than 40 years, invites children to hang their Christmas stockings over a large hearth in anticipation of St. Nick and then enjoy singing, storytelling, decorating felt Christmas trees and a visit from the jolly man himself. At the end of the festivities, the children can see the surprises that St. Nick put in their stockings. Kinderfest is free to all local and visiting children 10 and younger accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com

FOR INFO, (830) 997-2835, PIONEERMUSEUM.NET/KINDERFEST.PHP

ON THIS DATE

Know Your Currency Events

Bet you 100 Confederate dollars that you don't know who Lucy Holcombe Pickens was.

Well, she was a Texan—lived in Marshall—and went on to become quite the flirt throughout the South. But 150 years ago—on December 2, 1862—the Confederate government issued \$100 notes bearing her portrait.

She was born in Tennessee in 1832, had some schooling in Pennsylvania and then lived with her family in Marshall between 1848 and 1850. In 1858 she married Francis Wilkinson Pickens, twice a widower, 27 years her senior and also the U.S. ambassador to Russia. In St. Petersburg, Czar Alexander II and Czarina Maria found her to be quite charming, and they showered the couple with gifts.

The Pickens left Russia, and Francis became governor of South Carolina on the eve of the Civil War. Lucy died in 1899, leaving a legacy as the “Queen of the Confederacy” and the only woman to appear on Confederate currency.



144,000,000

acres in Texas are rural lands, including privately owned forests. That's 86 percent of the state's total land area.

OH, LITTLE TOWN OF

Nazareth

COMMUNITY'S EXHAUSTIVE DEVOTION TO NATIVITY PAGEANT MEANS THAT CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE EVERY TWO YEARS

BY JIM STEIERT • PHOTOS BY NEAL HINKLE



The basement of Nazareth's Holy Family Church buzzed. Cast and crew of the community's cherished Christmas Pageant bustled in 30-minute-to-showtime preparation. Villagers from ages infant to 80 had roles in this December 23, 2011, performance, closing the 18th season of a holiday heirloom.

No reason to be nervous, but I was, strolling among performers, camera ready, having already done my publicist job. Lurking behind the scenes fit better than a pew upstairs.

Eyeing a shepherd on a step, I photographed him—texting—thumbing technology I hoped he'd silence lest it chirp while tending flocks by night.

Young angels clad in snowy white perched 'round a table, glittered faces sparkling. Tinsel wings flexing, they fixed rapt attention on Nicole Schulte. The co-director was altering a scene. Tall, trim, intense, Nicole paced, humming, seeking a cue for angelic arrival.

Close by, Harvey Milton, robed as Zacharia, fretted. Once he fell to his creaky knees in fear of Angel Gabriel, he might not be able to get up.

"Spray your knees with WD-40," I advised.

"Nah. I already told Angel Gabriel he may have to work a miracle," mustachioed Harvey countered.

Joe Hochstein, towering, luminous Angel Gabriel, had his own issues. Head costumer Cince Hoelting Schulte noticed a wing askew, nabbed him by the arm, hauled him next to a staircase and—with safety pins clamped in her lips, eyes squinted—mumbled, "Be still, be still." Cince, on tiptoe atop the third step, fixed Joe's flight gear.

Wise men Matt Olvera, Derrick Schacher and Mark Kleman mashed crowns atop their heads, fiddled with sashes and floor-length robes, practiced majestic bearing.

In a corner, farm boys and bankers shucked boots and jeans for the bare-limbed look of short pants, gold lamé cloth armor, imitation leather skirting, sandals. Norman Gerber, Troy Ramaekers, Marcus Brockman and Curtis Durbin wrapped lengths of leather-looking cloth around their calves—legionnaire leggings. Mercifully, long scarlet capes would block backside drafts.

Surrogate soldiers gamely slumped into school desks and endured daubing with makeup and lipstick.

Baby Cash Hochstein, infant Jesus this year, was passed among an adoring entourage. If they kept him awake just a little longer, he might lie quietly in his mother Meredith's arms, gazed upon by his dad, Mickey, during Nativity scenes.

After a pre-performance group prayer, I sprinted around the building and slinked through the main church doors into the dark sanctuary. A restless crowd waited. I took a right turn and headed up stairs to the softly lit choir loft for more pictures.

Friends from growing-up days—Darlene Birkenfeld Schulte, her brothers Bob and Alan, Glenn Ramaekers, Kathy Acker Birkenfeld—on the choir riser flashed smiles. Bean counter Henry Ramaekers and farming brothers Rex and Brian Ramaekers waved from behind narration microphones. Farm neighbor Jim Hoelting and Nazareth Mayor Ralph Brockman hunkered beside slide projector spotlights. Mary Lynn Wilhelm Olvera, playing behind a screen, still never having seen an official performance in all her years of playing, fingered the first organ chords. Warmth welled with the singing: "Welcome, wel-

come, child of Bethlehem, welcome newly born king."

This Christmas story, told through a village's commitment, unity and pride, was almost lost.

Nazareth's first Christmas Pageant in 1972 culminated a dream of the late Father Stanley Crocchiola, former pastor of Holy Family Church. Artist, author, pageant adviser, cast and crew encourager during the early years, Father Stanley was delighted that Nazareth, named for Jesus Christ's childhood hometown, shared a Christmas pageant with the Panhandle. He worked with the late Donna Benke Birkenfeld, gifted homegrown writer and musician, who originated and directed the first pageants, writing the script, selecting and arranging music, composing the haunting "Soldier Search" and "Magnificat" music.

BELOW: A shepherd, played by B.J. Klein, is joined by angels Alicia Straley, left, and Amy Schilderink standing behind him and a prayerful Tobie Peterson kneeling alongside him onstage at Holy Family Church in Nazareth. **OPPOSITE:** Sharing a quiet moment before their scene, Mickey Hochstein, playing Joseph, cradles son Cash. Couples with a new baby traditionally have filled the role of the Holy Family in the Nazareth Christmas Pageant.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Stage crew members, from left, Norman Gerber, Danny Schilling, Edwin Huseman and Levi Cline unload platforms used to assemble a stage in front of the altar for the 2011 pageant at Holy Family Church. From left, Julius Birkenfeld, Nazareth Mayor Ralph Brockman and Deaf Smith Electric Cooperative Director Jim Hoelting work the stage lights—actually slide projectors rigged with home-engineered washer slides—in the choir loft. Angela Fulkerson adds flute accompaniment to the organ music. A scroll charting the wise men’s route and an elaborate gift for a newborn king are among the props—all home-crafted—used to tell the Christmas story. Men of the parish used carpentry and metalwork skills to design a raised stage platform that can be assembled and disassembled. From left, Harold Venhaus, Gerber, Clyde Schulte, Huseman, Cline and Schilling work on the stage.

Noreen Kleman Carson, sister of current-day director Nicole Schulte, later directed the fifth through eighth pageants and wrote the music “Chosen by God.”

Father Stanley’s art students painted stage backdrops—brushstroke Bethlehem. Timeless stitchers Rosemary Wilhelm, Lucille Drerup, Ann Heck, Ann Schulte—all passed on now—as well as Judy Lange and Norita Hoelting made costumes. Crowns for wise men were crafted from plastic bleach jugs, their robes from priest vestments and communion rail cloth. Fire helmets became soldier headgear. Garbage can lids were shields; canning jars and funnels formed lanterns.

Many generations of parish families became choir and musicians, set and lighting crew, carpenters, welders, electricians, actors, and narrators depicting Christ’s life from the Annunciation in the Galilean village of Nazareth, through his birth in Bethlehem, and the Holy Family’s flight to Egypt and return to Nazareth. Fourteen scenes, 14 songs, faithfully rendered.

Staged annually from 1972 to 1982, and intermittently from 1984 to 1994—the pageant’s initial run was 16 years. The effort was exhausting, even for this close-knit congregation. A year off turned into two, five, a decade, 15 years.

Word of revival came at a German festival in July 2009. I was leaving Nazareth’s Community Hall when Lisa Lacy Schulte, who grew up just down the road from our family farm between Hart and Nazareth, motioned me over.

“Did you know we’re talking about bringing back the Christmas Pageant? We’ll meet about it next week and decide,” she said excitedly.

Lisa and Nicole Kleman Schulte had talked at a family reunion about resuming it.

“Watching as a child left memories of the sweetness of the story, songs that fit scenes perfectly, sense of tradition. I wanted to see the pageant revived so my children and other children could know the true story of Christmas,” Nicole explained.

“A generation of our youngsters had never experienced the Christmas Pageant. Realizing that was all it took to get rolling,” Lisa said.

Parish priest Father Ken Keller urged his flock to take up the project only if they were committed.

“So many people called, took over a committee, jumped in with both feet. They wanted their kids and grandkids to see and one day remember the pageant,” Lisa recalled.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Alicia Straley gets makeup to give her an angelic look. The heart and soul of Nazareth's Christmas Pageant is its rich music—14 numbers in all, performed in the subdued lighting of the loft by a hometown choir that for the 2011 performance included, from left, Mary Ruth Verkamp, Darlene Schulte, Karleen Hoelting, Beverly Schulte and Sandra Carpenter. Meredith Hochstein, portraying Mary, gazes at son Cash as the newborn king. Women and children who will flee soldiers of King Herod in an intensely dramatic scene—from left, Vanessa Welps and son Oren, Tausha Schacher, Selena Brockman and son Ethan, and Dianne Heitschmidt—share a relaxing moment with Kyla Acker, one of the acolytes who will open the program with a processional. Mary Lynn Wilhelm Olvera has played the organ music accompanying scenes from behind a light screen for many years—without having seen an actual performance.

Weterans of pageants past and eager new volunteers pitched in. Jim Hoelting, a director at Deaf Smith Electric Cooperative, has worked in every pageant. Though willing to shinny up streetlight poles as in days past to disconnect lights that might ruin the pageant's indoor aura, this time he borrowed a bucket truck. Jim and fellow technical crew veteran Ralph Brockman found the original slides—made of duct tape, aluminum foil and washers—that made carousel projectors into affordable spotlights. "Big washer hole, large beam; small washer hole, small beam, way simpler and less costly than high-dollar lights," Jim told me during a rehearsal.

"This is a fantastic homespun show that everybody missed, a hometown production worth doing. People have to want to do it," Jim mused.

Norita Hoelting, enduring pageant seamstress, stitched new costumes and repaired and altered old ones. Ilona Schilderink upgraded angel wings with new tulle over wire frames and added garland etching.

The first performance night in 15 years was December 20, 2009, at 7:30. I arrived at 6 to an already half-full sanctuary. By 7, a relay was passing folding chairs for overflow seating.

Alan Birkenfeld leaned close as we hauled chairs, smirking. "You think we had too much publicity?"

A sanctuary that seats just over 700 was cram-jammed—with people from Amarillo, Tulia, Dimmitt, Hart, Hereford, Friona, Plainview, Olton, even Lubbock. The dear old pageant shone anew.

In a follow-up meeting, volunteers agreed to alternate years of staging the pageant. The next performance is in 2013, tentatively scheduled for December 22 and 23.

Memories of pageants past flowed with the music during the final 2011 performance. As the choir voiced "Cherry Tree Carol" in the last scene before the closing acolyte processional, the church was dark. "On a bright Christmas morning," they sang. Decorated trees and the crèche beside the stage instantaneously twinkled to life. Silent night ... love's pure light.

From the choir loft, the manger and its renewed story of hope are not so far away.

Jim Steiert is a Hereford writer.

The German and Irish Catholic community of Nazareth's history as a rural colony in Texas dates to 1902. Nazareth, 76 miles southwest of Amarillo, and Holy Family Church are served by Deaf Smith Electric Cooperative.

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

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Artistic License

The imaginations in Houston's art car community showcase endless ways to kitsch a ride



The Art Car Museum in Houston, which has the bodacious nickname Garage Mahal, is a showroom unlike any other. 'Iron Maiden,' left, is the creation of Ken Browning, Museum Director Noah Edmundson and the BFH Skate crew. 'Earth, Wind, Fire (and Water)' won first place in the 2012 Orange Show's Houston Art Car Parade. Rebecca Bass and her students at Jefferson Davis High School fine-tuned what used to be a 1996 Saturn station wagon. The art car exhibition changes quarterly.

"CARMADILLO," "BAD TASTE BBQ" AND THE "Mad Cad" may not excel at fuel efficiency.

"But they bring more smiles per mile," says Noah Edmundson, director of Houston's Art Car Museum—aka the Garage Mahal.

I get an inkling this is no ordinary shrine when I park my Camry next to "Spoonazoid," a reptilian vehicular creature with hydraulic arms and jaws covered by scales crafted from about 6,000 stainless steel spoons—among dozens of outlandish inventions by Mark "Scrap-daddy" Bradford, guru of Houston car artists.

There's no mistaking you're at the

right place, thanks to Californian David Best's oversized scrap metal and chrome exterior, with fenders, bumpers, grilles, taillights and other car parts providing a garage-like motif.

Inside, up to eight elaborately designed vehicles—built from VW bugs, Caddies, unicycles, golf carts, trucks and whatever else captures the imagination—are displayed along with paintings, sculptures and other artwork.

Exhibitions change quarterly, and part of the fun is that you never know what you'll encounter at the no-fee museum. Car artists represented can range from Bradford, Best and Californian

Larry Fuente, all acclaimed nationally, to students participating in college or high school projects. Some creations make social, political or religious statements; others represent pure whimsy. "I just like to do goofy things to cars," Edmundson concedes.

Displays during my first stop included "Cigs Kill," a Nash Statesman body covered with tobacco leaves attached to a 1978 Lincoln chassis; a Craftsman riding lawnmower remade into a popcorn cart by 11-year-old Houstonian Harry "Bruiser" Goldberg; and Edmundson's miniature pedal car labeled the "Dragster" and driven by a skeleton.

On another foray, the prized attraction was “Earth, Wind, Fire (and Water),” created by Rebecca Bass and her students at Houston’s Jefferson Davis High School, who renovated a 1996 Saturn station wagon using mixed media, jewelry, spray foam, mirror pieces and wood. The car, which has its own computer system, includes a working waterfall that flows into a pond at the rear, a fog machine rising from the roof, a fire-breathing phoenix, moving arms and other robotic features plus Earth, Wind and Fire re-creations with their instruments. It’s little wonder this beauty—the 27th art car made by Bass, many with her students’ help—was among the biggest winners at the city’s prestigious Art Car Parade last spring.

Plenty of gems survive: Ever seen a 1972 Honda motorcycle frame supporting a giant red stiletto heel? A 1999 Toyota pickup rebuilt as a cockroach? A 7-foot-tall plastic foam rabbit—complete with fur and sharp teeth—appropriately atop a 1981 Volkswagen Rabbit and holding a basket filled with Easter eggs? They’ve all taken their turn in the spotlight here. Videos in one gallery showcase their brilliance.

While art cars are the signature attraction, the bulk of most exhibitions at the Art Car Museum involves more traditional art and photographs. Edmundson suggests the combination is understandable: “We’re trying to take art cars to the fine art level,” he says, then laughs. “And I suppose

ornamentation.

“When people saw what Larry did with that car,” Edmundson says, “we thought, ‘The sky’s the limit.’”

The “Mad Cad,” since shown at museums nationwide, is largely credited for the debut four years later of an Art Car Parade with 11 vehicles and 2,000 onlookers. The event, conducted by the city’s Orange Show Center for Visionary Art, now attracts 300,000 spectators and entries from 23 states, Canada and Mexico. Scheduled for May 11 next year, it has spawned similar endeavors worldwide: “A lady from England came here, went back and started a parade in London,” Edmundson says. “I attended one in France.”

The museum expands on the theme—



FROM LEFT: Jim Hatchett is curator at the museum, where the creative grillwork greets visitors even before they enter. Mark Bradford saddles up ‘Azaba’ at his workshop a half-mile from the museum. Bradford, better known as Scrapdaddy, has built cars 23 years straight for the Art Car Parade, including fire-breathing ‘Mr. Green,’ which won the grand prize this spring.

On my second visit, “Spoonazoid” had disappeared—but only temporarily, according to museum curator Jim Hatchett. “It’s in our warehouse, but ‘Spoonazoid’ will be back,” Hatchett says.

Some cars are part of the museum’s permanent collection and are rotated as space allows; others are donated, including parade-winners. “Most people are happy to show their work,” Hatchett says. “If nothing else, it keeps them from paying a few months’ storage on them.”

Otherwise, Edmundson jokes, “Some cars go to the scrapyards once the parade is over—if they can make it that far. Or people use them as a personal vehicle.”

we’re taking fine art to the art car level.”

Inspiration for the museum, which opened in 1998, came from longtime arts community leaders James and Ann Harithas. James previously was director of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, director at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and currently directs Houston’s Station Museum of Contemporary Art. Ann, a prolific artist, curated a show (“Collision”) at Houston’s Lawndale Art Center that introduced Fuente’s “Mad Cad”—a one-of-a-kind masterpiece with stylized flamingos, bowling trophies, dolls, beads, teddy bears, mannequins and countless other

with Fuente returning to present cars that include “Rex the Rabbit,” whose construction is a highlight of videos.

While the Harithases remain museum benefactors, chances are you’ll encounter one or more of four staff members during your visit—Edmundson, Hatchett, assistant director Mary Forbes or assistant curator Alicia Duplan. All are artists and have built art cars; they’ve worked together for three or more years; and part of the fun is asking them about their favorite cars and personalities.

Though car artistry isn’t new, its popularity escalated in the 1980s thanks to “a bunch of poor art students bar-hopping

and decorating our cars,” Edmundson says. No doubt that’s a shred of truth, but this is a serious pursuit for many professionals—including some who couldn’t find other venues.

“They put their art on cars, and it became a rolling gallery,” Hatchett says.

As Edmundson says, “There are no rules. All you need is a car and an idea. One person did the Virgin of Guadalupe out of license plates. A ‘Go Van Gogh’ car was decorated with Van Gogh paintings. One man from Arizona covered his car with dolls, each decorated differently. It was a wild, wild car. But when he drove it to Houston for the parade, I think he had to sell some dolls to pay for gas.”

Edmundson, a multiple parade win-

Museum and parade officials frequently collaborate on projects that include the museum showcasing parade winners. “There are art car events in about 15 or so cities, but none comes close [to Houston] in the number of parade entries or art cars driven every day,” says Barbara Hinton, longtime Orange Show board member.

Hinton cites several factors, including the city’s status as an arts center and academic support from high schools and the University of Houston’s art programs. Also, she says, “The parade reaches across all demographic sectors—age, ethnicity, income, education, political persuasion.”

Some cars make one-time appearances, but other favorites join the parade

zoid” after the 2001 terrorist attacks temporarily prompted a change to plastic. As legend holds, the airline was only hours away from melting down the silverware.

Like most Bradford creations, the design and logistics are remarkable. For “Spoonazoid,” the top opens, Bradford climbs in, then leans back and the lid opens just enough that he can see and steer with controls in each hand. The arms move, jaws open and the beast growls as it proceeds.

Bradford uses recycled materials to make all his drivable hydraulic creatures, including “Carmadillo,” a 50-foot litho-plate aluminum armadillo built over a truck and van with a mouth that opens and a moving head; and “La Ranza,” “an abstract monster,” according to Brad-



FROM LEFT: Close-ups of the cars reveal the painstaking effort that goes into converting sedans into still lifes. ‘Faith’ was created by David Best using lots of skulls and action figures. Mark Bradford used about 6,000 stainless steel spoons discarded by American Airlines as the scales for ‘Spoonazoid.’ ‘MiShell’ by the artist who goes by the single name Kathamann is awash in seashells. Alex Harrah covered a Nash Statesman body with tobacco leaves and a haunting hood ornament for what he calls ‘Cigs Kill.’

ner, and fellow Houstonian Paul Kittle-son were inspired to create “Bad Taste BBQ” in 1996, Edmundson says, “because there was never anything to eat during the parade. So we found this Volkswagen, where the engine is in the back and the trunk in front, and we converted the front of the car into a barbecue pit. We smoked turkey, chicken and goat along the way, and after the parade we’d eat everything we smoked.”

Duplan’s first car, “Cleanliness is Next to Godliness,” used detergent boxes to make religious crosses in 1993. A self-described environmental artist, Duplan says, “I went to laundromats all over town and raided their trash cans. I only got kicked out of a couple.”

Duplan’s favorites by other artists include a vehicle designed to represent the Exxon Valdez tanker from which “oil” spilled onto streets during the parade. “Just when you thought that was the end of it, from around the corner came men in black suits carrying briefcases, handing out fake \$50 bills and shouting, ‘You didn’t see this,’” Duplan says.

year after year: Spectators eagerly anticipate tweaks to the “Sashimi Tabernacle Choir”—aka the Fish Volvo—with more than 250 computer-controlled singing lobster, trout, catfish, sharks and other species.

Mark Bradford has built new cars for 23 consecutive parades, and his most recent creation, “Mr. Green,” won the Mayor’s Trophy (and \$2,000) grand prize. It’s a 12-foot walking machine constructed of 99 percent recycled materials and pulling what appears to be an ox cart driven by Bradford.

Inquire at the museum for directions to Bradford’s outdoor workshop a half-mile away. If he’s home, Scrapdaddy is happy to show off his newest endeavors and previous parade entries.

For Bradford and his peers, ingenuity and enterprise are critical with even the classiest creations. Car artists scrounge junkyards, flea markets, pawnshops and dollar stores for materials. “I work with whatever I can get,” says Bradford, who coaxed American Airlines into forking over 6,000 silver utensils for “Spoon-

ford, with eight legs and 10-inch teeth. “La Ranza” drew enough attention that Bradford shipped it in a container to Germany, where it appeared in a parade he attended in 2009. Other accomplishments include what Bradford bills as the world’s longest bicycle (95 feet).

An accomplished sculptor, welder and television personality (“Junkyard Wars,” “Scrapyard Scavengers”), Bradford says, “I’ve spent thousands of hours on some cars, and I think of myself as the father of my creatures. That’s where the name Scrapdaddy comes from.”

Bradford dreams of establishing an “art-car zoo” for his work: “I’ve done performances with my cars, like a circus thing,” he says. “I hope they can inspire people for years to come.”

Harry Shattuck is a retired travel editor for the Houston Chronicle; he lives in Houston.

For videos of past Art Car Parades, go to YouTube and type Houston Art Car Parade.

On TexasCoopPower.com

More info on Houston’s art car scene and more great photos are available online.



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A D V E R T I S E M E N T

Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.



Dear Darryl

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option.

I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly – Houston, TX

DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY: As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unclog the drain field as well. **SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs** deliver your system the fast active bacteria and enzymes needed to liquefy solid waste and free the clogs causing your back-up.

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SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "DARTX3", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.

Be Ready for Santa

Enjoy a safe holiday season with your family

The most wonderful time of the year can also be the most stressful—particularly when it comes to keeping your kids safe through parties, presents, travel and meals.

Follow these tips from Texas Electric Cooperatives and Electrical Safety Foundation International to protect your little ones this holiday season.

Electronic gifts

About 70 percent of child-related electrical accidents occur at home when adult supervision is present, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. So make sure those new toys don't pose a danger.

- ▶ Electric-powered toys and other devices can be extremely hazardous if used improperly or without proper supervision.

that are battery-operated.

- ▶ Make sure all electrical toys bear a fire safety label from an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

- ▶ Inspect all electrical toys periodically. Repair, replace or discard deteriorating toys.

- ▶ Ban play with electrical toys near water, and make sure children understand that water and electricity don't mix.

- ▶ All electrical toys should be put away in a dry storage area out of the reach of younger children immediately after use.

Decorating safely

Christmas, Christmas Eve and New Year's Day lead the year for candle fires, according to ESFI. Mind your festive decorations for safety hazards:

- ▶ Keep candles, matches and lighters out of reach, and never leave children unsupervised when candles are lit.

- ▶ Instead of traditional candles, try using battery-operated candles.

- ▶ Cover any unused outlets on extension cords with plastic caps or electrical tape to prevent children from coming into contact with a live circuit.

- ▶ Place electrical cords out of the reach of small children.

- ▶ Read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels for any decoration, such as electronic trains or animatronic dolls, that will be used around young children.

- ▶ Never allow children to play with lights, electrical decorations or cords.

Cooking

In 2009, ranges and ovens were involved in an estimated 17,300 burn injuries seen in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. Of these, 36 percent of the victims were younger than 5 years old. Keep little kitchen helpers in check:

- ▶ Never leave the kitchen when something's cooking—a fire or accident can happen in an instant.

- ▶ Keep children at least 3 feet away from all cooking appliances.

- ▶ Never hold a child while cooking or when removing hot food from the microwave, oven or stove.

- ▶ Turn pot handles inward, away from reaching hands.

- ▶ Use the back burners on the cooktop whenever possible.

- ▶ Hot tap water scalds can be prevented by lowering the setting on water heater thermostats to 120 degrees or below and by installing anti-scald devices in water faucets.

- ▶ Once your holiday meal is ready, check that the stove and oven are turned off and that other kitchen appliances are unplugged and out of reach.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International



If you have youngsters around during the holidays, be sure to invest a few dollars in outlet covers to keep curious fingers out of trouble.

- ▶ An adult should supervise the use of any electrical product. Consider both the maturity of the child and the nature of the toy when deciding how much supervision is required.

- ▶ Do not buy an electrical toy, or any toy, for a child too young to use it safely. Always check the age recommendation on the package, and remember that this is a minimum age recommendation. You should still take into account the child's capabilities.

- ▶ Never give any child younger than 10 years old a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, choose toys

Deck the Halls with Cost-Saving, Energy-Efficient Lighting

BY ANGELA PEREZ

When one goes out, they all go out, right?

Wrong, if you use light-emitting diodes to do your holiday decorating. These hardy, energy-saving lights are guaranteed to give you one less thing to worry about so you can better focus on the joys of the season. Why are LED holiday lights better than traditional bulbs?

▶ LEDs are now on par with traditional bulbs. Gone are the days when LED holiday lights were known for a harsh white light or stark colors that created a less-than-magical atmosphere. These days, LEDs come in warm, inviting colors in a variety of light beam patterns and dimming options, giving you lots of creative ways to decorate.

▶ LEDs last longer than traditional lights. In fact, they have an operational life span of about 20,000 hours, enough to last for many holiday seasons. Also, the lights don't have glass or filaments, which makes them durable and resistant to breaking. And because LED bulbs are so strong, one individual outage generally doesn't darken the whole strand. For those enthusiastic decorators who like to blanket their entire house and yard in holiday lights, LEDs could save hours of painstaking work each year by eliminating the need to replace individual bulbs.

▶ LEDs use less energy, which means less strain on your first winter electric bill. Running LEDs on one 6-foot Christmas tree for 12 hours a day for 40 days can save 90 percent or more energy when compared to traditional incandescent lights.

▶ Because they use less energy, LEDs make it safer to connect multiple strands end-to-end without overloading the wall socket. Also, they're cool to the touch, reducing the risk of fire.

Look for brands and manufacturers of Energy Star-qualified LED decorative light strings at energystar.gov.

Holiday LEDs boast numerous benefits over traditional incandescent bulbs, including a variety of vibrant colors and big savings on electric bills.



Don't untangle—recycle. Trade in your old, tangled, incandescent light strings for new, energy-efficient LED strands.

A New Life for

Old Lights

If you're replacing those old energy-sapping Christmas tree lights with efficient, cool-to-the-touch LED strands this year, don't throw the old ones in the trash. Recycle them.

Big-box stores, city governments, Christmas specialty stores and others are collecting incandescent holiday lights and recycling the glass, plastic and copper wire. Some stores will trade your old strands for discounts on new, LED holiday lights, which can last for many Christmases and lower your holiday-season electric bill. Others donate the money from selling the recycled parts to charities.

Most of these places accept used and even broken lights.

LED decorations cost a bit more than traditional incandescent bulbs, but they save you money in the long run because they use less energy. You'll find LEDs rated both for indoor and outdoor use. Because they don't get hot, they pose less of a fire hazard than your old tree lights.

You can buy LED holiday lights at many of the same stores that sell incandescent lights.

The Beauty That She Envisions



It's easy to get wrapped up in what quilter Diane Rose has been able to accomplish, considering she is blind

BY SOLL SUSSMAN

AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT TO BE TRUE OF ANY gifted artist, when Diane Rose starts working on a quilt, she has a vision of how the fabric and spools of thread that lie before her will transform into scenery or a pattern or an endless array of soaring hot air balloons. That's how artists bring their works to life. With a vision born of her mind, her spirit and her hands, Rose creates beauty.

When she finally holds up a quilt, you, too, can see that vision.

When she finally holds up a quilt, Diane Rose sees nothing.

She hasn't seen a thing in nearly 30 years after her failing eyes finally went dark from glaucoma. Since then, she has crafted more than 800 quilts, and she knows what each one looks like.

"When you have dreams, dreams come from the heart, from the soul, from what God gives you," she says, lapsing into the cadence of a preacher. And, in fact, in addition to quilting for a living, Rose works as an evangelist and motivational speaker. "I'm very blessed to be as independent as I am. Yes, I'm bold. Yes, I'm beautiful. I tell it how it is."

Amen, sister.

Rose, in her early 50s, lives in Bellmead, just outside Waco. She used to tell it how it is in Tennessee, not as an evangelist but as part of the country music scene in—no offense, Austin—Music City. "I would call different radio stations around the country, and I would tell them what was going on in Nashville," she says. When fans came to town, they would contact her to be a tour guide.

Framed photos of Rose with Vince Gill, Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, Minnie Pearl, Ricky Skaggs and dozens more stars line the walls of her comfortable mobile home.

Rose was born with limited vision that allowed her to perceive light and color. She attended public school, where she learned Braille and how to print using the standard English alphabet. "I didn't let the blindness run me; I ran the blindness," she says.

She lost her vision totally in 1984. "The cornea popped," she says. "Medically, there was nothing that could be done."

The move to Texas came in 1994, when Rose was looking for a new way to earn a living, though she continued reporting to radio stations by phone. By 1998, she was quite frustrated and seeking an answer about what to do next. In asking for spiritual guidance, she said, the fingertips on her raised hands became hot. "In my heart, in my soul and my spirit, I heard, 'Your talent is in your hands,'" she says. The next day, a friend asked her if she would like to learn how to quilt.

Now, nearly 15 years later, she is surrounded by her quilts and quilting materials. She eagerly shows off her skills. Stitching by hand, she works on an appliqué for a green patterned quilt with a rustic design featuring a cheerful blue mailbox. This one is for a customer in Branson, Missouri. When hand stitching, she works within a plastic frame, a quilter's version of an embroidery ring, and delicately feels where the stitches go. They turn out even and without loops. "I

see nothing with my physical eyes, but I see a lot with God's eyes," she explains.

Rose works largely by hand because the majority of her quilts are appliqués. Appliqués are cut from her own cardboard designs used as templates or with the help of an artisan's craft cutting machine. On pieces like pinwheels, where fabric is sewn together in a pattern, she adeptly uses her sewing machine. She is on her third sewing machine and hopes one day to be able to afford one that talks.

One quilt was based on a dream, she recalled, of a lake with a fisherman and a snow-capped mountain. "I like to do scenery because I have a vivid imagination. I read a lot [using audio books], and I like to see the vision that I see in my mind put into a hard copy as in a quilt," she says.

Three volunteers help Rose with parts of the process. "I do have a girl who cuts for me; Emily is awesome. I have another girl who takes the pictures and helps me label the quilts. Each quilt is numbered and comes with a certificate of authenticity. And Margaret helps me with that. My friend Jennifer helps me with transportation and sometimes matching threads," Rose explains.

She uses her memories of color in designing a quilt, and the colors are often vivid—bright pink, turquoise, deep green, red. "I used to see a little bit, so I do visualize as you would with color and images," she says. "One thing I can say that God gave me is determination and gusto and lots of energy. I have a bad habit of wearing people out."

Most of the fabric is donated, including old ties, jeans or swatches. She posts updates on her website for specific colors of fabric needed, and she always welcomes black and white cotton thread. She markets and sells her wares online, including on Facebook. Among her other promotional efforts are public appearances before quilting groups, business leadership seminars and churches. "I've never been afraid of a crowd," she says.

Always ready for an opportunity, she brings with her coffee mugs bearing her photograph, a DVD of a Las Vegas speaking engagement or smaller pieces of her handiwork like potholders or quilted baby books that can be sold for less than a full-fledged quilt, which can run from several hundred dollars up to \$1,000.

Her dreams now include a husband—"a man who can stand beside me, believe in



me"—and a house. "I need a big sewing room, where I can have a cutting table, a sewing machine, and a rack that I can pull out of the wall where I can hang the quilts—like a showroom. And I would very much like someday to have a museum and gift shop where people can see what I've done with my life."

That's her future, as she would have it. She can see it perfectly, just as she can her quilts.

Soll Sussman is an Austin writer.

Diane Rose is a member of Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative. To see more of her quilts, visit theamazingquilter.com.

TALENT IN YOUR HANDS Diane Rose has been blissfully swaddled in a world of quilting since receiving spiritual guidance 15 years ago. She has churned out more than 800 quilts at her home in Bellmead, relying on fast and fearless work at the sewing machine and her memory of the vivid colors she knew before she lost her sight.

My Haircut from Capt. Hamer's Barber

I asked for the lowdown
from the barber of
Bonnie and Clyde's killer,
and I wasn't shortchanged

BY MIKE COX

THE HOT FOAM ON THE BACK OF MY NECK felt great, but when the old man picked up that glistening straightedge, my eyes locked on his brown-splotched hand—checking for even the slightest tremor. I could always change my mind.

When I first started going to Austin's Sportsman's Barber Shop back in the 1980s, the senior barber was Sidney C. Frost. In deference to his age, everyone called him Mr. Frost. Born in 1909 and semiretired, he had been taking a little off the top and sides since 1927.

Mr. Frost had started out downtown in the Littlefield Building at Sixth Street and Congress Avenue, back when the Capital City was still small enough for that location to be convenient for the entire community. In the 1960s, he followed his customers to the suburbs, and about the time he reached traditional retirement age, he sold out to a younger barber named Jim Field. Field started Sportsman's, filling its walls with mounted game heads and trophy fish.

Tall and thin, Mr. Frost knew his trade well. But as surely as hair grows, it also thins and turns gray, and he had trimmed his workload to part time, coming in only when he wanted to.

Back in the day, Mr. Frost had been the barber for the legendary Capt. Frank Hamer, the storied Texas Ranger who, in 1934, had tracked down and killed the outlaw couple Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow. Knowing I had written some books on the history of the Rangers, Field said I ought to talk to Mr. Frost if I ever found him in the shop.

As it happened, the next time I showed

up needing a haircut, Field had a customer, with another one waiting. However, Mr. Frost was sitting in his chair reading the newspaper. Could he work me in, I asked, being polite. I told him I was headed out of town and definitely needed a haircut before I hit the road. He looked up from his newspaper long enough to assess the length of my salt-and-pepper locks and said sure, slowly getting up.

Necessity aside, I liked the idea of being able to tell my grandkids that I'd gotten a haircut from the same man who used to cut the hair of the Ranger who relentlessly pursued—and finally killed—two of Texas' most violent criminals.

"How you want it?" Mr. Frost asked. "Above the collar?"

Just a regular haircut, I said, and, sure, nothing over the collar.

Settled into the chair, I planned a slow buildup to the one story I wanted most to start, which was, "So, tell me about Captain Hamer ..." That in mind, I started by asking Mr. Frost how long he'd been cutting hair. Soon I had him reminiscing about the good old days, snipping away as he recalled his younger years.

He said that early in his career under the revolving red, blue and white pole, most men got their hair cut weekly. That was a good thing, because even in the wildly inflationary days before the stock market crash in 1929, Mr. Frost earned only 40 cents a haircut. "After the market crashed," he recalled, clip-clip-clip, "we had to lower the price to 35 cents."

A lot of men also depended on Mr. Frost for their daily shave. One well-

groomed customer came in twice a day, first thing in the morning and then again in the afternoon to get his five o'clock shadow taken care of. His hand still steady after more than six decades as a barber, Mr. Frost remembered the past in short snips as he continued with my haircut, other customers listening in.

Finally, I took aim at Hamer—at least in the interrogatory sense. Mr. Frost said he didn't remember much of what they had talked about back in the late '20s and early '30s, when Hamer had his headquarters in Austin—probably just typical barber-customer banter. But one thing did stand out in his memory.

"The captain never got a shave and a haircut at the same time," he said. "Guess he didn't have that much time, or that much money."

A shave cost a quarter before the crash, so the whole shebang would have set the 6-foot-plus lawman back all of 65 cents. State employees have never been overpaid, so Hamer might have opted for an economy of scale when it came to his tonsorial needs.

And then Mr. Frost recalled another of the late captain's eccentricities.

"When he did get a shave, he never let me completely cover his face with a hot towel," my barber revealed. "He said too many people wanted to kill him for him to let his guard down."

Given that Mr. Frost likely would have been standing close enough to catch a stray round or two if any shots had been fired at the captain as he sat in the barber chair, he didn't mind Hamer's cautious approach.

By the time I warmed Mr. Frost's chair, barbers no longer did much shaving of faces. But when he asked if I'd like the back of my neck shaved, I said yes. If the ever-vigilant Hamer trusted Mr. Frost to be steady with a razor, so did I. Well, sort of.

"Just don't cover my face," I laughed, sneaking one last look at his hand. Was that a slight shake?

Nick free, when I stood up after Mr. Frost removed the cover he'd draped over my lap, I looked in the mirror. Perhaps overly preoccupied with talking about the old days, Frank Hamer's barber had removed almost all my hair! Mr. Frost's "regular" was the shortest haircut I'd ever had this side of a burr.

Maybe the longtime barber's ample scissor work explained why most photographs of Hamer show him wearing a Stetson and a frown.

Mike Cox, frequent contributor



Capt. Frank Hamer

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Washington crossing the Delaware.
Eisenhower launching D-Day.
Kennedy rescuing the crew of
PT 109. These men made history.

This set made history

To celebrate the bicentennial of America, the U.S. Mint struck this special three-piece proof set honoring these three American presidents—and our 200th birthday. To capture the bicentennial spirit, the coins in the set are dual-dated 1776–1976.

This set was so popular over 4 million were sold.

Unlike the regular circulating coins of the day, these coins are struck in 40% precious silver.

It's the first commemorative U.S. Mint Proof Set ever. It's also the first proof set to feature all dual-dated coins. And finally, it's the first U.S. Proof Set to include a Silver Dollar.

Americans love proof coins from the U.S. Mint. Each coin is struck twice from specially prepared dies and has deeply-mirrored surfaces and superb frosty images.

And you know you've got a *real piece of American history* when you hold this set—the red white and blue holder is spectacular!

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This first-ever Bicentennial Silver Proof Set sold out at the mint three decades ago. When you consider how much prices have risen since then, you might expect to pay \$100 or more to buy this set today.

But for this special offer, we are releasing our entire stock of Bicentennial Silver Proof Sets for only \$49 each. Or better yet, buy five and pay only \$39 each!

Order now risk free

We expect our small quantity of Bicentennial Silver Proof Sets to disappear quickly at this special price. We urge you to call now to get yours. You must be satisfied with your set or return it within 30 days of receipt for a prompt refund (less s&h).

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16" Skid-Steer	Universal		380 lb.	\$1,595

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Item 97115 shown

ITEM 97115/67440/69455



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12 PIECE CUSHION GRIP SCREWDRIVER SET
PITTSBURGH

Item 68868 shown

LOT NO. 68868/69421

SAVE 58%

\$4.99 REG. PRICE \$11.99



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8 FT. 4" x 11 FT. 6" FARM QUALITY TARP

Item 2707 shown

LOT NO. 2707/60457/69197

SAVE 50%

\$5.99 REG. PRICE \$11.99



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18 VOLT CORDLESS 3/8" DRILL/DRIVER WITH KEYLESS CHUCK
drillmaster

Includes one 18V NiCd battery and charger.

Item 68239 shown

LOT NO. 68239/69651

SAVE 46%

\$15.99 REG. PRICE \$29.99



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80 PIECE ROTARY TOOL KIT

Item 68986 shown

LOT NO. 68986/97626/69451

SAVE 72%

\$6.99 REG. PRICE \$24.99



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3 GALLON, 100 PSI OILLESS PANCAKE AIR COMPRESSOR

Item 95275 shown

LOT NO. 95275/69486/60637

SAVE 50%

\$39.99 REG. PRICE \$79.99



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1000 LB. CAPACITY SWING-BACK TRAILER JACK

Item 41005 shown

LOT NO. 41005/69780

SAVE 42%

\$19.99 REG. PRICE \$34.99



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21 PIECE HIGH VISIBILITY 3/8" DRIVE SAE/METRIC SOCKET SET
PITTSBURGH

Item 69900 shown

LOT NO. 69900

SAVE 28%

\$17.99 REG. PRICE \$24.99



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3/8" x 14 FT. GRADE 43 TRUCKER'S CHAIN

Not for overhead lifting.

Item 97711 shown

LOT NO. 97711

SAVE 51%

\$16.99 REG. PRICE \$34.99



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SUPER-WIDE TRI-FOLD LOADING RAMP

Item 90018 shown

LOT NO. 90018/69595/60334

SAVE \$65

\$79.99 REG. PRICE \$144.99

1500 LBS. CAPACITY



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500 LB. CAPACITY STEEL CARGO CARRIER

Item 66983 shown

LOT NO. 66983/69623

SAVE \$50

\$49.99 REG. PRICE \$99.99



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ADJUSTABLE SHADE AUTO-DARKENING WELDING HELMET

Item 46092 shown

LOT NO. 46092

SAVE 47%

\$36.99 REG. PRICE \$69.99



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2000 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH REMOTE CONTROL AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

Item 68146 shown

LOT NO. 68146

SAVE \$50

\$49.99 REG. PRICE \$99.99



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60" WORKBENCH WITH FOUR DRAWERS

Item 93454 shown

LOT NO. 93454/69054

SAVE \$90

\$139.99 REG. PRICE \$229.99



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3 TON HEAVY DUTY STEEL FLOOR JACK

Item 68048 shown

LOT NO. 68048/69227

SAVE \$70

\$69.99 REG. PRICE \$139.99

WEIGHS 74 LBS.



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SUPER COUPON!

10/2/55 AMP, 6/12 VOLT BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER

SAVE 53%



LOT NO. 66783/60581/60653

Item 66783 shown

\$2799 REG. PRICE \$59.99

HARBOR FREIGHT TOOLS - LIMIT 4

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SUPER COUPON!

27 LED PORTABLE WORKLIGHT/FLASHLIGHT

Garden

LOT NO. 67227/69567/60566

Requires three AAA batteries (included).

SAVE 58%



Item 67227 shown

\$249 REG. PRICE \$5.99

HARBOR FREIGHT TOOLS - LIMIT 9

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SUPER COUPON!

12 VOLT MAGNETIC TOWING LIGHT KIT

HaulMaster

LOT NO. 96933/67455/69626/69925

SAVE 66%



Item 96933 shown

\$999 REG. PRICE \$29.99

HARBOR FREIGHT TOOLS - LIMIT 6

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SUPER COUPON!

9 PIECE FULLY POLISHED COMBINATION WRENCH SETS

PITTSBURGH

Item 42304 shown

SAE LOT NO. 42304/69043

METRIC LOT NO. 42305/69044

SAVE 53% **YOUR CHOICE!**

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SUPER COUPON!

1500 WATT DUAL TEMPERATURE HEAT GUN (572°/1112°)

drillmaster

LOT NO. 96289

SAVE 60%



\$799 REG. PRICE \$19.99

HARBOR FREIGHT TOOLS - LIMIT 7

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SUPER COUPON!

MULTI-USE TRANSFER PUMP

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

LOT NO. 66418

SAVE 69%



\$399 REG. PRICE \$12.99

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SUPER COUPON!

300 LB. CAPACITY LOW-PROFILE CREEPER

Item 2745 shown

40" x 19"

SAVE 55%



\$1799 REG. PRICE \$39.99

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SUPER COUPON!

1500 WATT CONTINUOUS/3000 WATT PEAK POWER INVERTER

LOT NO. 93280

SAVE \$40



\$11999 REG. PRICE \$159.99

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SUPER COUPON!

4" x 36" BELT/6" DISC SANDER

CENTRAL MACHINERY

LOT NO. 97181/93981

SAVE \$45



Item 97181 shown

\$5499 REG. PRICE \$99.99

HARBOR FREIGHT TOOLS - LIMIT 3

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SUPER COUPON!

3200 RATED WATTS/4000 MAX. WATTS PORTABLE GENERATORS (212 CC)

PREDATOR GENERATORS

70 dB Noise Level

Item 68528 shown

SAVE \$160

LOT NO. 68528/67560/69676/69729

LOT NO. 68527/69675/69728, CALIFORNIA ONLY

\$28999 REG. PRICE \$449.99

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SUPER COUPON!

12" SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAW WITH LASER GUIDE

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

Item 98194 shown

SAVE \$80

LOT NO. 98194/69684

Laser guide requires two AAA batteries (included).

\$11999 REG. PRICE \$199.99

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SUPER COUPON!

6.5 HP OHV HORIZONTAL SHAFT GAS ENGINES (212 CC)

PREDATOR ENGINES

LOT NO. 68120/60363/69730

LOT NO. 68121/69727, CALIFORNIA ONLY

Item 68120 shown

SAVE \$80

\$9999 REG. PRICE \$179.99

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SUPER COUPON!

580 LB. CAPACITY FOUR DRAWER TOOL CART

US GENERAL

LOT NO. 95659

SAVE \$130



\$9999 REG. PRICE \$229.99

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SUPER COUPON!

1.5 CUBIC FT. ELECTRONIC DIGITAL SAFE

BUNKER HILL SAFES

LOT NO. 91006

SAVE \$65



Electronic keypad uses four C batteries (included).

\$8499 REG. PRICE \$149.99

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SUPER COUPON!

45 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT

THUNDERBOLT solar

LOT NO. 68751/90599

SAVE \$90



Item 68751 shown

\$13999 REG. PRICE \$229.99

HARBOR FREIGHT TOOLS - LIMIT 4

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From Chicken Farmer to Snake Charmer

The class of 1972 sat outside listening to Janis Joplin plead for a Mercedes-Benz. A growl interrupted, turning heads toward the road. An orange 1968 Shelby Mustang paced like a caged tiger. The omnipresent sheriff restrained its owner to a submissive 35 mph, but he couldn't quell the sensation that this tiger would break loose. The driver sped away, the engine's roar diminished behind the school bell, but the spell remained unbroken. Teens drifted inside, praying—not for a Mercedes but for a Shelby.

BY K.A. YOUNG

WHAT TEEN WOULDN'T LIKE A MACHINE boasting muscle and a name like King of the Road? After 50 years, Shelby cars—Mustangs and Cobras—still drive youths into the workforce to buy them. Young and old pay a premium for the privilege of owning Carroll Shelby's earliest transformations.

Shelby, the mastermind behind the high-performance Shelby Cobras and Mustangs, put an American Ford V-8 engine into a lightweight British AC Cars chassis in 1962 in Southern California, hatching the first Cobra and changing the automotive industry forever. He transformed Ford's Mustang into a racehorse, bringing power to the people.

But his road to the top had switchbacks.

Shelby was born January 11, 1923, in Leesburg to a rural mail carrier and his wife. After graduating from Woodrow Wilson High in Dallas, he sped skyward as a World War II flight instructor and test pilot near San Antonio. Back on the ground, he started a dump truck business, tried roughnecking and then decided to raise chickens. He started racing cars in 1952, and in 1953, he literally left the chicken farm wearing striped bib overalls to race at Eagle Mountain near Fort Worth. The overalls captured a lot of publicity—as did his racing—so he decided to make them his signature racing attire.

Sports Illustrated named Shelby its Driver of the Year in 1956 and again in 1957, and in 1958, he teamed with Ray Salvadori to win the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans. He won three U.S. sports car racing championships.

Shelby also was in a race against time.

It was determined when he was 7 that he had a serious congenital heart defect.

He drove in a 200-mile race in 1960 with nitroglycerin pills underneath his tongue to stave off a heart attack. He finished third and after the race said, "If I hadn't slowed down each time I popped one of those pills, I might have won."

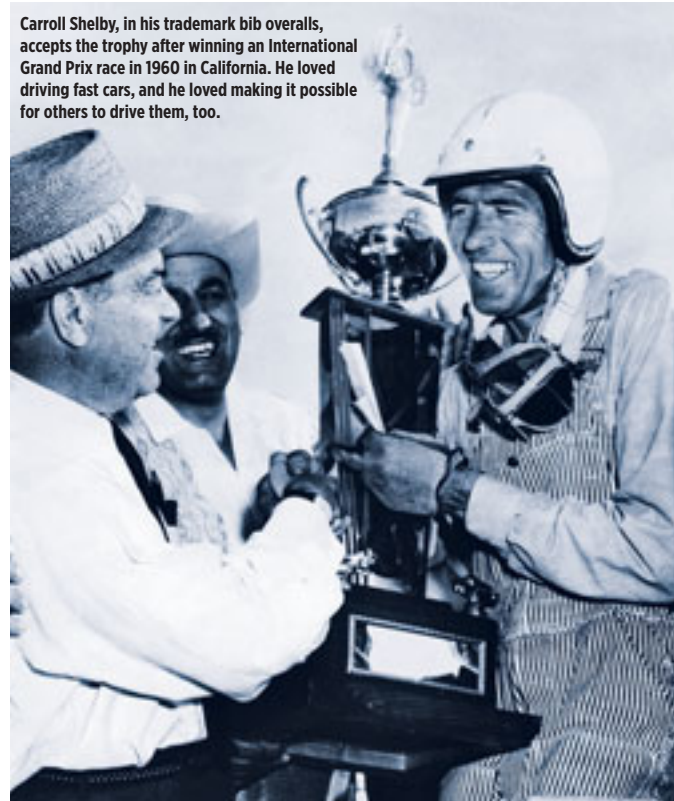
That same year, told he had less than five years to live, Shelby quit driving and turned to designing cars—for five decades. Shelby also owned a ranch near Terlingua and helped launch its famous world chili cook-off in 1968. That led to the creation of "Carroll Shelby Chili" mix. And in 1975, he helped start the Chili's restaurant chain.

His hottest hand, though, was definitely in the automotive and racing industry. He helped Ford Chairman Lee A. Iacocca develop Mustang racecars—the GT350, the GT40, the GT500 and the GT500KR. KR stood for "king of the road." His Ford GT40 won the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1966 and 1967.

When Iacocca took over Chrysler, he enlisted Shelby's help again, and they came up with a high-performance Dodge Charger and the Dodge Viper.

In 1990, while working on the Viper, Shelby's health required him to undergo a heart transplant. A year later, he established what is now the Carroll Shelby Foundation. Initially founded to defray expenses for children's transplants, it also assists children with other serious illnesses and partners with Northeast Texas Community College to prepare

Carroll Shelby, in his trademark bib overalls, accepts the trophy after winning an International Grand Prix race in 1960 in California. He loved driving fast cars, and he loved making it possible for others to drive them, too.



students for automotive careers.

In 1996, he received a kidney from his son Michael, becoming one of the oldest survivors of two transplants.

In May, shortly before the debut of his latest powerhouse, the 2013 Shelby GT500, Shelby died at Baylor Hospital in Dallas. He was 89.

His Los Angeles Times obituary succinctly described his life in the fast lane: "He raced cars. He had a heart transplant from a Las Vegas gambler in 1990 and a kidney transplant from a son in 1996. He was married seven times."

And—oh, Lord—the squealing tires and throaty rumble of his fast cars continue to turn heads on highways and street corners everywhere.

K.A. Young, a member of Wood County Electric Cooperative, lives in Quitman.



2012 Holiday Recipe Contest SPONSORED BY THE TEXAS PECAN BOARD

After weeks of baking and frying, testing and tasting and several rounds of voting, the results are in for Texas Co-op Power's 2012 Holiday Recipe Contest, sponsored by the Texas Pecan Board.

Pedernales Electric Cooperative member Rita Lutz's beautiful, rich Texas Pecan Butterscotch Cake rose above the rest of the 500-plus recipes we received to claim the grand prize of \$2,000. Lutz, a retired buyer/manager for J.C. Penney and a grandmother of eight, lives in Horseshoe Bay, about 50 miles west of Austin, with her husband, Donald.

Rita enjoys baking and tried several versions of the cake before hitting on this one, which was given a thumbs-up by a grandson. "My husband can tell you; he gets tired of trying them," she said with a laugh. "I made it a couple of times for him and one for my grandson Robert. He says it's his favorite cake."

KEVIN HARGIS



Texas Pecan Butterscotch Cake

\$2,000 GRAND PRIZEWINNER
RITA LUTZ, PEDERNALES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Texas Pecan Butterscotch Cake

- 1 cup softened unsalted butter, divided, plus more for preparing pans
- 2 cups coarsely chopped Texas pecans, divided
- 1 cup coconut flakes
- ½ cup coconut oil
- 2 cups packed light brown sugar
- 5 large eggs, separated
- ½ cup buttermilk
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 teaspoons butterscotch schnapps (substitute caramel extract or vanilla extract, optional), divided

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups butterscotch chips
- 1 tablespoon light corn syrup
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 8 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

- > Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly butter three 8-inch round, 2-inch high metal cake pans. Line bottoms of pans with parchment paper rounds. Butter paper and lightly flour rims.
- > Pour pecans onto a cookie sheet and toast 5 to 8 minutes. Set aside and allow to cool.
- > Meanwhile, put coconut flakes on a cookie sheet and toast for 5 to 8 minutes until lightly browned, stirring once halfway through. Set aside and allow to cool.
- > In a 5- to 6-quart mixing bowl, combine ½ cup (1 stick) butter and coconut oil and beat with an electric mixer until light and creamy, about 2 minutes. Add brown sugar and beat on medium speed about 5 minutes.
- > Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- > In a separate small bowl, combine buttermilk, ricotta, vanilla and 1 teaspoon schnapps or extract substitute. Set aside.
- > In another bowl, combine flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Add to the creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk mixture, beating well after each addition.
- > Stir in 1 cup of the pecans and the coconut until just combined.
- > In a separate large mixing bowl, whip the 5 egg whites on high speed until stiff peaks form (about 2 minutes). Do not overbeat. Fold into pecan batter.
- > Divide batter equally among the prepared cake pans. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- > Set pans on a wire rack to cool about 10 minutes. Run a butter knife along edge of pans to loosen and turn cakes out onto rack. Carefully peel off the paper liners and

leave cake rounds on racks to cool completely.

- > When cooled, wrap each layer in plastic wrap and place in the freezer for 30 minutes. This makes it easier to put the first layer of frosting on the cake.
- > As cakes are cooling, make the frosting. First, bring the whipping cream to a simmer over medium heat in a 1-quart saucepan. Remove from heat, add butterscotch chips and whisk until smooth. Stir in corn syrup and remaining 1 teaspoon schnapps or extract substitute. Set aside to cool.
- > In a 5- to 6-quart mixing bowl, beat remaining 1/2 cup butter and cream cheese with an electric mixer on medium speed until creamy, about 3 minutes. Turn mixer to low and gradually add powdered sugar and salt, alternating with cooled butterscotch mixture. Beat until smooth.
- > Place one cake layer, flat side up, on a serving plate. Cover the top evenly with frosting. Sprinkle top with 1/4 cup pecans. Top with second cake layer. Cover the top with an equal layer of frosting, topping with another 1/4 cup of pecans.
- > Set third cake layer atop the other two and spread a thin crumb coat of frosting over sides and top of cake.
- > Put cake in refrigerator, uncovered, for about 30 minutes to allow the icing to set. Cover the remainder of the frosting and allow to sit at room temperature.
- > When cake is chilled, finish frosting the top and sides of the cake. Use any leftover frosting to decorate the cake. Sprinkle remaining pecans over the top.

Servings: 24. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 605 calories, 5.2 g protein, 28.7 g fat, 80.3 g carbohydrates, 1.5 g dietary fiber, 339 mg sodium, 69.1 g sugars, 79 mg cholesterol



Texas Pecan
Maple Crusted
Cheddar
Cutlets with
Gala Relish

\$1,000 SAVORY WINNER

JUDY SCRUGGS, FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Judy Scruggs and her husband, Joe, live “out in the woods” near Cumby with an extensive menagerie, including a donkey, a pony, a couple of dogs and “more cats than you can count,”

she said. Judy, who said she spends a couple of hours a day in the kitchen, came up with her winning recipe using ingredients she always has on hand.

Texas Pecan Maple Crusted Cheddar Cutlets with Gala Relish

- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon creamy horseradish
- 2 medium Gala apples, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1/4 of a jicama, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch cubes (about 1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh chives
- 1 block (8 ounces) extra-sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 small egg
- 1/3 cup maple syrup
- 1/4 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Pinch salt
- 1 cup finely chopped Texas pecans

- > Combine sugar, mustard, mayonnaise, lemon juice and horseradish in a medium bowl. Add apples and jicama and toss to coat. Sprinkle with chives and set aside.
- > Slice cheese into 4 equal pieces, each measuring 5 1/2 inches by 2 1/2 inches by 1/4 inch. Beat egg in a medium bowl and add maple syrup. Beat briefly to combine. Set aside.
- > Combine flour, pepper and salt in small bowl. Transfer flour mixture to a plate. Set aside.
- > Place chopped pecans on another plate and set aside.
- > Dredge cheese cutlets in the flour mixture and shake excess back into the bowl. Dip floured cutlets into egg mixture, allowing excess to drip back into the bowl. Set dredged and dipped cheese on top of chopped pecans on the plate to coat one side. Flip to coat second side. Use your fingers to press pecans onto the edges of each cutlet, coating them entirely.
- > Preheat a heavy 12-inch nonstick frying pan over medium-low heat. Use a spatula to gently set cutlets into the heated pan.
- > Cook cheese for 1 to 1 1/2 minutes or until pecans become fragrant. Carefully flip and cook on the second side for another 1 to 1 1/2 minutes. Remove to serving plates.
- > Top each cutlet with 3 to 4 tablespoons of apple mixture and serve warm.

Servings: 4. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 658 calories, 19.3 g protein, 43.8 g fat, 47.3 g carbohydrates, 4.8 g dietary fiber, 559 mg sodium, 29.3 g sugars, 99 mg cholesterol

\$500 SAVORY RUNNER-UP

PEGGY DICKERSON, FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Peggy Dickerson, a 28-year resident of Rockwall, said her recipe was inspired by a dish she and her husband, Gary, enjoyed at a New England bed and breakfast. “I love the art and science of cooking,” she said.



Surprise Pecan
Brie Quesadillas

Surprise Pecan Brie Quesadillas

- 3 slices bacon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, divided
- 1 cup Texas pecans, chopped medium fine
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon prepared yellow mustard
- 2 crisp pears
- 1 round (8 ounces) Brie
- 6 flour tortillas (fajita size)

- Fry bacon slices until crisp. Break into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces and set aside.
- Melt 4 tablespoons of butter in a sauté pan. Add pecans, brown sugar, Worcestershire and mustard and stir well. Cook 3 to 4 minutes, stirring well to mix. Remove from heat and set aside.
- Core pears and slice into 24 $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch rounds. Melt 2 tablespoons of butter in the pan. Add pear slices and cook for 1 minute per side. Remove from pan and set aside.
- Place 4 slices of Brie, 4 pear slices, 4 to 5 bacon pieces and about 2 tablespoons of pecan mixture on half of each tortilla.
- Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a small (9- to 10-inch) skillet. Add one quesadilla to pan and sauté for 1 minute. Fold empty half of the tortilla over the Brie mixture and continue to sauté until lightly browned and slightly crisp on both sides. Repeat process with remaining quesadillas, keeping each quesadilla warm until ready to serve.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 1 quesadilla. Per serving: 699 calories, 15.4 g protein, 48.7 g fat, 47.4 g carbohydrates, 5.6 g dietary fiber, 646 mg sodium, 18.3 g sugars, 103 mg cholesterol

\$1,000 SWEET WINNER

JUDI BALDWIN, MID-SOUTH SYNERGY

Her winning recipe is based on a French dessert, said creator

Judi Baldwin, who is originally from England and lives in Huntsville with her husband, Christopher. The cupcake versions of Omelette à la Norvégienne (known as Baked Alaska) were perfectly sized for her and Christopher to enjoy.



Caramel Pecan
Surprises

Caramel Pecan Surprises

- $8\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 10 ounces (a scant $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups) plus 1 tablespoon sugar, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Texas pecan halves
- 4 ounces (about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup) self-rising flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) very finely chopped Texas pecans
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee granules
- 1 tablespoon brewed coffee
- 2 large eggs
- 4 egg whites
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- Caramel sundae syrup
- 1 pint butter pecan ice cream

- Melt $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons butter in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon sugar and the pecan halves. Cook and stir for about 5 minutes, or until sugar loses its grainy appearance. Pour pecan mixture onto a piece of foil and allow it to cool for at least 15 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease and flour a six-partition jumbo muffin pan.
- Mix 4 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) sugar, flour, baking powder and the finely chopped pecans in a medium bowl.
- Add coffee granules to brewed coffee, then add it to flour mixture along with eggs and remaining butter. Blend until creamy and smooth. Add 1 teaspoon cold water and stir to combine.
- Divide mixture among the six muffin cups and bake for

25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of a cupcake comes out clean. Allow cakes to cool in pan for 1 to 2 minutes, then turn out onto a cooling rack to cool completely.

- When cakes are cool, cut a conical section from the center of each cake, about 1/2 inch from the edge, taking care not to cut through the bottoms of the cake.
- When ready to serve, preheat oven to 400 degrees and make the meringue. Whisk egg whites until stiff peaks form. While continuing to beat, add 6 ounces sugar, cornstarch and cream of tartar gradually.
- Return cakes to the cleaned muffin pan and pack hollowed centers of each cake with ice cream. (Return remaining ice cream to freezer.)
- Working quickly, spread or pipe meringue atop each cake, making sure to completely cover ice cream and cake.
- Place in oven for about 4 to 5 minutes, until meringue begins to color.
- Remove cakes from the pan to individual serving plates. Drizzle each with caramel syrup and divide caramelized pecans equally over each. Serve immediately.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 1 cake. Per serving: 821 calories, 9.8 g protein, 49.3 g fat, 82.7 g carbohydrates, 2.4 g dietary fiber, 443 mg sodium, 57.6 g sugars, 178 mg cholesterol

\$500 SWEET RUNNER-UP

SUNNY KOVACHEVICH, GRAYSON-COLLIN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Sunny Kovachevich of Anna says she grew up in the kitchen, as her father was the head chef at a restaurant in Ohio. Her kitchen experience paid off with the cookie recipe she formulated to re-create a crispy cinnamon roll her husband, Ray, enjoyed from a bakery on a trip to California.

Pecan Cinnamon Crispy Cookie

- 1½ cups Texas pecans, toasting optional
- 1/3 cup sugar, plus some for rolling
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon, plus some for rolling
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Flour for rolling
- 2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg, well beaten

- If desired, toast pecans in heavy pan on stove or in 350-degree oven for about 5 minutes. Allow to cool completely.
- Place pecans, sugars, cinnamon and salt in food processor and process until very finely ground. Set aside.
- Flour a sheet of parchment paper and unroll puff pastry sheets side by side onto paper. Press dough together at the seam. Roll it out into a 20-by-10-inch rectangle with a rolling pin.
- Slide dough and paper onto a baking sheet, cover loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm, about 45 minutes.



Pecan Cinnamon Crispy Cookies

- Remove from refrigerator and brush dough's surface lightly with the beaten egg. Sprinkle evenly with the pecan mixture, pressing it into the dough. Starting with the 10-inch side, roll up as tightly as possible. Brush flour from pastry as you roll.
- Discard remaining flour on parchment paper. Wrap dough roll tightly in the parchment and freeze for about 20 minutes.
- Remove from freezer and immediately cut crosswise into 1-inch rounds.
- Sprinkle a work surface with sugar and cinnamon. Coat both sides of each dough slice with the sugar mixture and press to flatten slightly.
- Roll each cookie into a 6- or 7-inch round. Sprinkle with additional sugar and cinnamon as needed to keep cookies from sticking. Place cookies on parchment-lined baking sheets and refrigerate again until firm, about 20 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bake cookies until golden brown, about 14 to 18 minutes. Watch carefully for last 5 minutes of baking. Allow to cool on baking sheets.

Servings: 10. Serving size: 1 cookie. Per serving: 219 calories, 2.8 g protein, 15.1 g fat, 19 g carbohydrates, 2 g dietary fiber, 148 mg sodium, 12.7 g sugars, 18 mg cholesterol

\$100 Recipe Contest

April's recipe contest topic is **Beyond Tuna Salad**. By using different breads, spreads and fillings, you can make an infinite variety of sandwiches. What are some of your fanciest formulas for the meal you eat with your hands? The best recipe could win you \$100. The deadline is December 10.

There are three ways to enter: **ONLINE** at TexasCoopPower.com (under the Submit and Share tab); **MAIL** to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; **FAX** to (512) 763-3408. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op.



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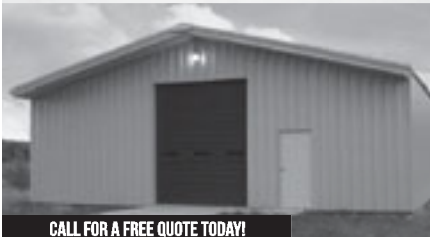
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Lee Kobs, San Bernard EC, took this photo of the moon and Venus when it was a little foggy, which created spectacular rings around the heavenly bodies. ▶

David Lund, Bryan Texas Utilities member, used a slow shutter speed to create this shot, which he calls “A Northgate Night.” It’s an Aggie thing. ▼



Some cacti bloom only at night. This one lives in the backyard of **Paul Garcia**, Medina EC. ▲

Doug Green, Pedernales EC, left his shutter open for 30 minutes to create this image. “Notice the North Star in the center of the rotation,” he says. ▼

Upcoming Contests

February Issue: Silhouettes *Deadline: December 10*

March: Broken **April: Reflections**

Send your photo for the February contest—along with your name, address, daytime phone, co-op affiliation and a brief description—to Silhouettes, Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701, before **December 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 using a digital camera, submit your **highest-resolution images** at TexasCoopPower.com/contests. We regret that Texas Co-op Power cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.



Night Photography If people gazed up at the stars each night, I bet they would live life differently. There is something so ethereal and majestic about a beautiful night sky and a world bathed in moonlight. It can tug at the very strings of one’s soul. For those of you who only come out at night, thank you.

ASHLEY CLARY-CARPENTER

On TexasCoopPower.com

More Night Photography

◀ Once in a blue moon, you get a photo like this. Pedernales EC’s **Faith Rasche-Neely** took it near San Marcos on September 1—actually the day after a blue moon—still rare. One definition of blue moon is the second full moon in a calendar month, which happened August 31. The other full moon was August 1. The next blue moon will be July 31, 2015.

Pick of the Month

Living Christmas Drive-Thru Presentation

Bulverde [8]
(830) 980-2813, redroofchurch.org

'Tis the season. In Bulverde, drive through 12 scenes of what Christmas is all about, including a live Nativity scene, music and animals. Admission is free.



LIVING NATIVITY: ANNEKAS | BIGSTOCK.COM. OWL: ERIC ISSELEE | BIGSTOCK.COM.

December

07

Kilgore [7-8] Kilgore Snow Hill Festival, (903) 984-5022, kilgorechamber.com

Salado [7-8] A Christmas Carol, (254) 947-9205, tablerock.org

Liberty [7-9] Christmas Under the Stars, (936) 336-7252, christmasunderthestars.com

San Angelo [7-9] Christmas at Old Fort Concho, (325) 481-2646, fortconcho.com

Burnet [7-9, 14-16] Main Street Bethlehem, (512) 756-6033

08

Athens Bird and Nature Walk, (903) 670-2266, athenstx.org/things-to-do/bird-and-nature-walk-december-2012

Coleman Heritage Hall-iday at Heritage Hall Gallery, (325) 624-5544

Columbus Breakfast with Santa, (979) 732-8385, columbus-texas.org

Port Lavaca Christmas on Main Street, (361) 552-2959, portlavacatx.org

08

San Saba Christmas on the Square & Lighted Christmas Parade, (325) 372-5141, sansabachamber.com

Vernon Christmas on the Western Trail & Lighted Christmas Parade, (940) 553-3766



**December 8
Athens Bird and Nature Walk**


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and festivals around Texas. For a complete listing, please visit TexasCoopPower.com/events.



December 14
Luling Cocoa & Carols

08

Ingleside [8-9] Renaissance Faire,
1-888-899-2906, inglesidetxchamber.org

09

Seguin Mid-Texas Symphony: "Sleigh Bells Ring," (830) 372-8089, mtsymphony.org

13

Levelland FaLaLa Fun for the Girls Night Out, (806) 894-9079, levelland.com

14

Bowie Silver Strings Country Ball Room Christmas Ball, (940) 872-3228

Luling Cocoa & Carols, (512) 738-0228, lulingmainstreet.com

January

January 1

Bandera Cowgirl Roundup & Show-Deo



01

Bandera Cowgirl Roundup & Show-Deo, (830) 796-4413



January 4
Fredericksburg First Friday Art Walk

04

Fredericksburg First Friday Art Walk, (830) 997-6523, artwalkfbg.com

Submit Your Event!

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your event for February by December 10, and it just might be featured in this calendar!

CHRISTMAS COCOA: DMITRY LOBANOV | BIGSTOCK.COM. COWGIRL: RON HILTON | BIGSTOCK.COM. PAINT TUBES: MADLEN | BIGSTOCK.COM.

WALK IN SWAGGER OUT



The women who shaped Texas have worn every kind of shoe – and boot. When you learn what they accomplished, you'll have something new to brag about – and – you might just hear a jingle on your shoe.

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**BULLOCK
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Once again strong of wing and keen of instinct, rehabilitated birds of prey start their second chance in the wild with Highland Lakes cruise

BY MARK WANGRIN

RUMORS OF A MUCH-NEEDED THUNDER-storm beckon on the horizon on an otherwise sunny Sunday afternoon in July as a 70-foot, double-decked excursion vessel slows to a stop 100 yards off the craggy, exposed coastline of Lake Buchanan.

On the **Texas Eagle II's** foredeck, the talons of a nervous six-month-old great horned owl are digging into the leather welding glove worn by a probably equally nervous 12-year-old boy. The boy's name is Will Sinsabaugh. The owl, propitiously, has no name.

"If we give them a name," says Kelly Rayner, facilities and educational director with Last Chance Forever, a nonprofit that specializes at rescuing birds of prey, "that means we've had them too long."

Last Chance Forever, founded in 1978 in San Antonio, rehabilitates birds abandoned, injured, lost, ill or otherwise threatened. They're treated, nursed to health, and retaught to fly and hunt live prey. Life at Last Chance Forever for the 150 to 300 falcons, hawks, eagles, owls, vultures and other species rehabbed each year isn't bad—the birds have modest flying room and a steady diet of beef heart and homegrown rodents—but nothing beats catching a draft and soaring unconstrained over Central Texas and eating on your own schedule.

When the birds have regained their strength and instincts—they must make three live kills on their own—they are set free. About a half-dozen or so times a year, from spring through fall, the release is held on a **Freedom Flight Cruise**, a two-hour excursion put on by **Vanishing Texas River Cruises** during which two or three birds are released with ticket-buying passenger participation. On this trip, featuring the release of two juvenile great horned owls and an adult red-shouldered hawk, passengers also visited Garrett Island, identified birds and learned about their habits.

The boat is piloted by Shawn Devaney, 53. Born in southern Louisiana and raised on Lake LBJ, Devaney took to the



WILD DAY: An exhilarating moment as Will Sinsabaugh, with the helping hand of Last Chance Forever's Kelly Rayner, guides an owl to freedom.

water when still in his teens. He's been with Vanishing Texas River Cruises since its beginning in 1982 and has owned the business since 1999.

Devaney is backed by a crew made of mostly retirees. Guide Tim Mohan, for example, has made a life's work with second acts. Retired in 2004 from a 27-year career as a juvenile probation officer, Mohan mans the boat's microphone, mixing information about the predilections of the various bird species with play-by-play of the release of an owl.

In between he calls out sightings, sounding like a spotter for an anti-aircraft battery. "Osprey at 1 o'clock. 500 feet. Great blue heron at 11 o'clock, low near the water."

Five minutes into the cruise, Will wins a drawing among the 25 or so passengers to

release the owl. Blond and tanned, Will dons the heavy gloves and holds the owl as the spectators count down from three. Then he lifts his arms, opens his hands, and the owl, unsure of strength and not yet aware there are no constraints, pauses for a moment before soaring off toward the shore and over the horizon.

Later, Will's face glows as he recalls the moment, and the feeling it gave him. "When I let it go, I knew the bird was better, and I felt free," he says, pausing to reflect on what he's just said.

"I'll bet the bird did, too."

Mark Wangrin is an Austin writer.

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