

# TEXAS CO-OP POWER



## ROOTING AROUND

What you might miss on game day if you focus only on football



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**COVER PHOTO** *Texas Tech cheerleader Allison Rodarte, a freshman from El Paso, fires up the Red Raider faithful.* *By Neal Hinkle*

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## San Juan Hill

While much is attempted to be made of the Rough Riders, the recruitment of those folks in a San Antonio bar, etc., the fact is that the San Juan Hill fight was immaterial and irrelevant ["Roosevelt's Rough Riders," July 2013].

San Juan Hill was a fight in which fewer than a thousand Spaniards held off over 3,000 Americans for the better part of a day. This fact is never mentioned in Martha Deeringer's article.

We need to jettison the jingoism about this conflict. A balanced approach is always more correct and instructive.

ARTHUR SEIDERER | CHEROKEE COUNTY EC

## Sheldon Reservoir Memories

I remember one of my best friends, Mike Gucker, and me riding our bicycles from where we lived in Galena Park North Shore out to what we then called Sheldon Reservoir to go fishing. We spent many wonderful hours fishing from the bank, piers and wading the shallows for bass and bluegill and the occasional catfish or bowfin. The reservoir also had a healthy population of gators, which, thankfully, we never encountered. This was in the late 1960s.

Thank you for the story ["Hit the Road: Houston," July 2013] that brought back great memories of some of the most fun times fishing I can remember.

DAVID DORRIS | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

## Glamorizing War

I was appalled to see the June 2013 cover and the article ["Engaged in History"] it portrays, celebrating the revolting and largely inexplicable (to one like me, who has gone to war) practice of re-enacting the

## Beloved Labs

**I have just finished reading Camille Wheeler's article ["The Lab Who Ate the House," July 2013]. In fact, I've read it twice. It really got to me because I, too, have owned Labs—one black, one yellow and a half-Lab, also yellow. Even though he was a half-breed, Luke had all the wonderful characteristics of a full-blood without being nuts. My other Labs, Dinah and Tess, were typical in their behavior until maturity took over and they settled down and became sensible housedogs. Oh, how hard to give them up when it was time.**

**I'm 84 years old now and could not handle a Lab puppy, so there will be no more.**

ELANORE BOONE | RUSK COUNTY EC



most deadly, violent and, by many modern estimates, unnecessary war in the history of the United States.

Neither Mark Wangrin nor the editors of Texas Co-op Power can be held to account for the adolescent behavior of those morbid wannabe re-enactors, but they are accountable for glamorizing their offensive games.

DAVE COLLINS | PEDERNALES EC

A good issue, as always, and the bees story ["The Real Crop Dusters," June 2013] was the best. But I nearly spit out my coffee when I saw you had put a Yankee on the cover.

DON HOUSER | COMANCHE EC

## Sheriff with an Ax

I am disappointed that "The First Madam Sheriffs" [June 2013] by E.R. Bills failed to mention the first (and only) female sheriff in Montgomery County—Fannie Pearl Surratt, who was sworn into office on August 1, 1949, after her husband,

Sheriff Hershel Surratt, died in office. She served out the term and earned a reputation for destroying gambling machines with her ax.

LARRY L. FOERSTER

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
CONROE

## Don't Trash East Texas

I found myself taking umbrage with Scott Powrie's letter "This is Messed Up" [June 2013] and his statement that "those living in the country are OK with lining their roads through the East Texas trees with garbage."

Excuse me, but we are not OK with that situation or thoughtless people who throw trash, paper products from fast-food restaurants, feed sacks, drink cans and whatever in the back of their pickups and don't give a thought to what they do when the wind starts whipping them around.

We don't like it, but until people stop being careless, we will continue to have this problem. I'm sure that much of what Mr. Powrie and

his brother pick up is donated to his roadside in the same way. So when he finds a solution to his problem, let us in East Texas know.

ALICE WEST | DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

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*Please include your town and electric co-op. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.*



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## Wonder No More

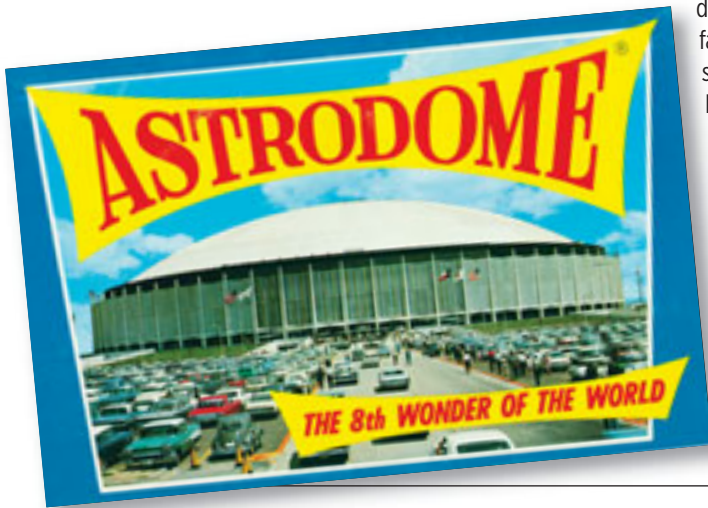
Could the eighth wonder of the world be stepping up to the plate again?

The now-abandoned Houston Astrodome made the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places, but plans for a remodel might save the once-beloved building.

A pillar of innovation and a nod to Space City, the Astrodome, built for about \$40 million, was the world's first domed, air-conditioned sports stadium when it opened in 1965 as home of the Houston Astros. The dome spared fans from the ravages of Houston's heat and humidity, and rainouts were impossible—except for one day in 1976 when torrential rains left streets around the Dome so flooded a game was called off.

The Houston Oilers also used the Astrodome but left for Tennessee after the 1996 season, and the Astros moved to a new stadium in 2000. The Astrodome has sat unused and empty since 2009.

In June, the Harris County Sports and Convention Corp., the group in charge of the grounds, rejected 19 proposals for the building's future, ranging from turning it into an indoor amusement park to stripping it down and building a park on the ground level. Instead, the group submitted a \$194 million plan to convert it into a convention and exhibition space, and the Harris County Commissioners Court is reviewing the proposal.



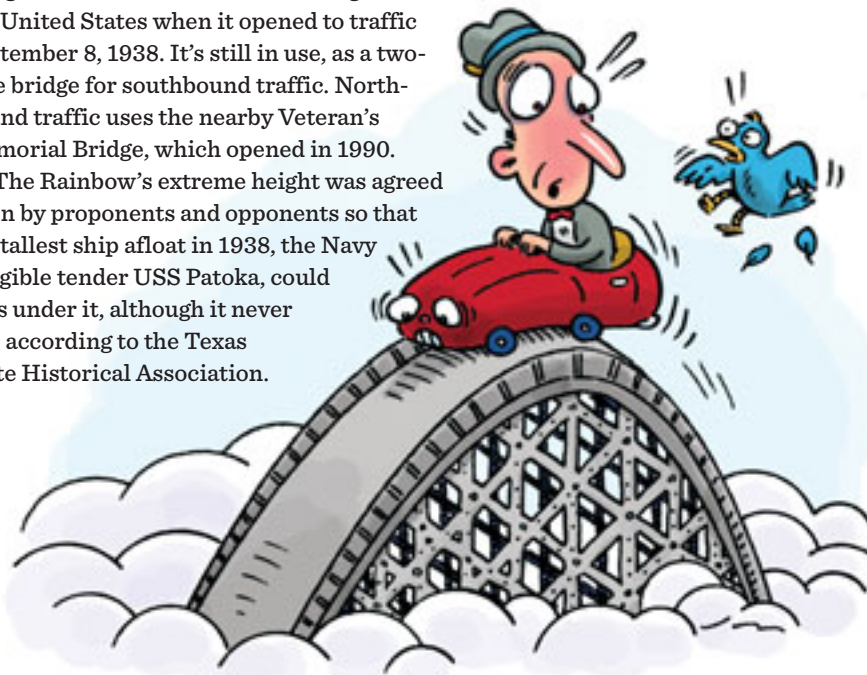
### ALMANAC

## Somewhere over the Neches

Seventy-five years ago this month, the bridge over the Neches River that later was named the Rainbow Bridge was dedicated, connecting Port Arthur to Orange County.

The cantilevered bridge has a clearance of 176 feet, making it the tallest highway bridge in the South and one of the highest in the United States when it opened to traffic September 8, 1938. It's still in use, as a two-lane bridge for southbound traffic. Northbound traffic uses the nearby Veteran's Memorial Bridge, which opened in 1990.

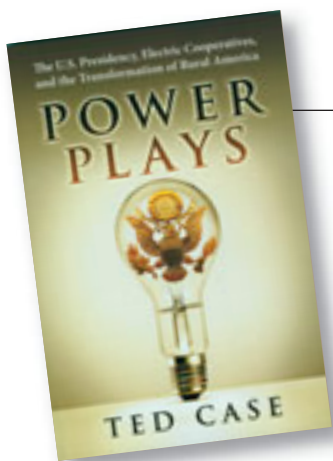
The Rainbow's extreme height was agreed upon by proponents and opponents so that the tallest ship afloat in 1938, the Navy dirigible tender USS Patoka, could pass under it, although it never did, according to the Texas State Historical Association.



### WHO KNEW?

## Quite a Career

Eighty-one players in Major League Baseball history own perfect career batting averages. But 80 of them went either 1-for-1 or 2-for-2. Only John Paciorek of the Houston Colt .45s went 3-for-3. During the last game of the season, September 29, 1963, Paciorek, an 18-year-old outfielder and a phenom in the Houston farm system, made his only big-league appearance. Back injuries kept him from ever playing again. (Thanks to Andrea Papcun of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative for reminding us of Paciorek's accomplishment after reading about Colt .45s pitcher Don Nottebart's no-hitter in our May issue.)



## ENERGY NEWS

### 'Power Plays' Puts Co-op History in New Light

Author Ted Case explores the connection between electric cooperatives and U.S. presidents in his recently published book, "Power Plays: The U.S. Presidency, Electric Cooperatives and the Transformation of Rural America."

"Power Plays" tells the story of rural electrification through episodes of co-ops' 75-year history that "vividly demonstrate that electric co-ops occupy a place in history far beyond stringing wire down a lonely country road," writes Case, who is also the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association executive director.

To obtain this perspective on history, Case researched oral histories, presidential memos and documents and interviewed co-op leaders—including Texas Electric Cooperatives President and CEO Mike Williams. "It is helpful to know where you've been and how you got here," Williams says.

The author reveals the relationships between co-ops and U.S. presidents from Franklin D. Roosevelt to George W. Bush. The book also examines co-op history in the light of historic events, such as the Vietnam War, Cuban missile crisis and Watergate scandal.

"Ultimately," Case writes, "this book is more a story of politics than it is of the power lines."

"Power Plays" (Ted Case, 2013) is for sale at [tedcaseauthor.com](http://tedcaseauthor.com).

# 102,500

*Our cover story on a day in the life of a college football stadium brings to mind the news earlier this year that Texas A&M University announced it will expand Kyle Field's seating capacity from 82,589 to 102,500 starting at the end of this season. The expansion would make Kyle Field the third-largest college football stadium in the country, behind only those at Michigan and Penn State. (Darrell K. Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium at The University of Texas ranks sixth at 100,119.)*

## HAPPENINGS

### Kick Up Your Heels

Dust off your boots and head to Gatesville, the Spur Capital of Texas, for Spurfest on September 21. This one-day event downtown is packed with activities from sunup till the cows come home. Gatesville is served by Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association.

Get your blood flowing in the morning with the 5K Zombie Run (or a non-zombie family run). Dress to impress! Best-dressed runners and zombies are recognized, and the zombie claiming the most "lives" is rewarded. (Think flag football: Lives are actually flags grabbed by zombies from runners' belts.)

Spurfest also features kickball and disc golf tournaments. (Preregistration by September 2 is required for all, so giddyup.)

Afterward, check out historic exhibits from the Coryell Museum, grab some food and do a little shopping. The Spurfest Stage cranks up at 3 p.m., and you can dance the afternoon away until country performer Ryan Beaver closes the festival at 11 p.m.

INFO: (254) 865-2617, [spurfest.com](http://spurfest.com)



Find more happenings all across the state at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)

# MORE THAN A GAME

*A day at the stadium is a colorful, emotional ritual*

Texas Tech vs. UT. This is *the* game. The biggie. Marked on Panhandle calendars for months. When the national powerhouse Longhorns traipse into Lubbock, as they did last November 3, typically mild-mannered folks in the Panhandle rouse to a fury.

The passions and strategies on game day cannot be contained by the impeccable turf at Jones AT&T Stadium, and they certainly didn't wait for the 2:30 p.m. kickoff. A record crowd of 60,879 turned the grounds at Fourth Street and University Avenue into a community larger than about 1,700 towns in the state.

Here's a glimpse into that community—a day in the life of a college football stadium.

That was my mission: Go to the big game, camera in hand, and photograph everything but the action on the field. Show what makes the place buzz with emotion. Equipped with only a press pass and my trusty Hasselblad, I showed up in Lubbock at 10 a.m., and I wasn't alone. The fans in the stands and an ABC/ESPN2 television audience saw Texas defeat the Red Raiders 31-22 after not trailing all game. Here's what I saw.



**1** Texas Tech safety Shawn Corker makes his way from the team bus to the locker room through a fan phalanx during Raider Walk a few hours before kickoff.





1



2



3



4



5

**2** Game day is the day to show off all things Tech. Cruising the streets on campus and around the stadium in custom wheels is one way to flaunt the red, black and white. **3** Tailgaters are everywhere, covering most parking lots and open grassy areas around the 90-year-old campus. Just try escaping the essence of burgers and barbecue sizzling on grills. **4** Omar Hernandez prefers to keep his tailgating consumables mobile. He's often seen pregame ziping around on his motorized electric cooler, kind of a bartender on the go. **5** Deep inside the stadium, Tech students Allencia Wooldridge and Brea Lewis staff one of many souvenir stands selling just about any item you can think of embellished with a double-T.



**1** Gabriel Hemmer and Dylan Nault make sure that everybody entering the stadium through the doors of a souvenir store has a ticket to the game. They also make no bones about their allegiance, flashing inverted 'Hook 'em' signs—more defiant than the ubiquitous 'Guns Up' hand gestures endemic in Raiderland. **2** Raider Red—or rather, the student who plays the mascot—puts on his game face long before the players do. The man behind the hirsute mask is public relations major Zach Bohls, a senior this year. **3** Many of the Tech students who occupy coveted front-row seats camp outside Jones Stadium for days before the game so they can be among the first fans let into the stadium. **4** A sea of red towers over the Longhorns on the visitors' sideline. **5** The Goin' Band from Raiderland breathlessly engages the crowd with its repertoire of catchy riffs.



**6** Christopher Wong keels over when hope yields to frustration toward the end of the game. **7** When trash talk in the stands is but an echo, Amanda Campbell, along with her classmates in the Master of Athletic Training program, swoop in to cart off the rubbish left behind. Their custodial work is part of a fundraising effort.

# RIGHT at HOME

*Native plants have advantages over imports that are good for the pocketbook and the environment*



**GOING NATIVE** *This Austin yard features a multitude of plants native to Texas, including: 1. Texas redbud, 2. possumhaw, 3. Lindheimer’s muhly, 4. Texas sotol, 5. lantana, 6. purple coneflower, 7. mealy blue sage, 8. Gregg salvia, 9. Barbados cherry, 10. cedar elm, 11. American beautyberry, 12. butterfly weed, 13. Gregg’s mistflower, 14. Texas purple sage and 15. pink skullcap.*

**E**ven on a morning thick with clouds, white-flecked Texas bluebonnets pop from a mix of buffalo and other native grasses at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in South Austin. Andrea DeLong-Amaya, director of horticulture for the Wildflower Center, points to sample gardens filled with the dark pink winecup and frosted purple Gregg dalea. She hands me a sprig of white leaf mountain mint, a plant that’s fragrant, peppery and, best of all, a native of the region.

With drought gripping much of the state over the past several years, adding native plants to the garden makes sense for both environmental and economic reasons. Not only do these native, drought-tolerant plants consume less water, but they also use less fertilizer and offer greater disease resistance than nonnative versions. Native plants also can better withstand brief peri-

odic blasts of cold, the frequent hallmarks of a Texas winter.

In addition, many native plant varieties provide habitat and food sources for regional birds, butterflies and other wildlife. Punctuating this fact, bees dive in and out of flowers in the many garden plots DeLong-Amaya and I explore. Pam Middleton, state coordinator of the Native Plant Society of Texas, based in Fredericksburg, emphasizes the biodiversity that native plant species provide—for instance, monarch butterflies and the native varieties of milkweed they consume.

Besides the practical advantages and biodiversity, native plants also keep Texas looking like Texas rather than someplace else. “Planting natives promotes a regional identity,” DeLong-Amaya says, “and they help keep it distinctive by avoiding homogenization.”

Sally and Andy Wasowski, husband-and-wife authors of

“Native Texas Gardens,” propose, “Rather than limiting your possibilities, native plants present you with greater flexibility and more options. And more options means getting away from that numbing sameness of traditionally landscaped neighborhoods.”

Native plants offer a distinct identity across diverse terrain statewide, from the arid climate of the western regions to the humidity of the coastline. This diversity in climate and topography leads to a rich variety of native plant options for gardeners to explore.

DeLong-Amaya and I admire stands of Indian blanket, also known as firewheel, wavering in showy circles of red and yellow, their edges ridged. This vibrant, heat-tolerant plant grows throughout the state and the Southwest. DeLong-Amaya describes other well-known native plants spanning regional borders, including the Texas bluebonnet, a treasure that thrives in soils statewide and doesn’t grow outside of Texas.

Turk’s cap, another popular and hardy native, grows in a variety of soil conditions and prefers some shade, its miniature red blossoms a distinctive surprise in shadowy alcoves. Spiderwort, which grows in shade or sun, provides a strong accompaniment to Turk’s cap. The soft purple-blue of mealy blue sage, meanwhile, looks good in the garden surrounded by butterflies or as a cut flower in a vase.

While some gardeners include nonnative plants in their yards and gardens, invasive plants—those brought to the region intentionally or by accident—adapt too well and increase in their new location without assistance or abatement. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service describes invasive plants as a species that causes some sort of harm or cost to the ecology, economy and human health.

Invasive plants deplete space for natives, leading to homogenization and loss of habitat. In addition, thirsty invasive plant varieties consume extra water, an added concern in a dry climate and particularly during times of drought. When measuring overall habitat loss, invasive species are second only to habitat destruction in terms of ecological impact, DeLong-Amaya says. In addition, invasive species pose an economic cost to crops, forests and fisheries in the United States estimated at \$137 billion annually, according to the U.S. Department of Agri-

culture. Invasive species also significantly threaten almost half of the federally endangered native species.

Not all nonnatives are considered to be invasive. Certain garden plants, such as the blue plumbago, have adjusted to the heat of the region without having the long-term impacts of more invasive plants. Many gardeners compromise in their plant selections, growing a mix of native and nonnative drought-tolerant plants. For gardeners who wish to increase their ratio of native plant varieties, solid alternatives are often available. The native Mexican plumbago, for instance, offers white blooms and a heat tolerance similar to the blue plumbago. A few other native plant options for common nonnative plant varieties are listed below. Most of these plants grow statewide.

Many nurseries and plant centers carry native varieties. If native plants aren’t available, DeLong-Amaya recommends that gardeners request them from their nurseries. As part of the Native Plant Society’s Natives Instead of Common Exotics (or NICE) program, the organization’s 34 individual chapters statewide work with nurseries to feature native plants and try to generate publicity about them.

Ordering native plants by seed is an option, while another is obtaining seeds and cuttings from gardener friends who have established plants. In addition, native plant societies occasionally offer plant sales and swaps, and organize salvage field trips, a great way to save native plants from a landscape or site slated for development.

DeLong-Amaya and I tour a series of sample gardens at the Wildflower Center. Although some gardeners favor an unstructured landscape for their native plants, DeLong-Amaya tells me native varieties are also well suited to formal gardens. “A stylized approach with native plants works just as well as the wild, natural look preferred by some gardeners,” she adds, showing me a carefully trimmed plot consisting of native plants, trees and the Wildflower Center’s own drought-tolerant blend of native grasses consisting of buffalo, blue grama and curly mesquite varieties.

Gardeners can blend formal and informal plant elements in a single garden. In addition to the look and feel of the garden,

<b>NONNATIVE</b>	<b>NATIVE ALTERNATIVES</b>		
<b>Blue plumbago</b> (flowering bush) Native of South Africa	<b>Mexican plumbago</b> or doctorbush ( <i>Plumbago scandens</i> ) <b>1</b>		
<b>Nandina</b> (flowering shrub) China and Japan	<b>Cherry sage, autumn sage</b> ( <i>Salvia greggii</i> ) <b>2</b> <b>Barbados cherry</b> ( <i>Malpighia glabra</i> ) <b>3</b>		
<b>Boxwood</b> (rounded shrub) Europe	<b>Dwarf yaupon</b> ( <i>Ilex vomitoria</i> ) <b>4</b>		
<b>Honeysuckle</b> (flowering vine) China	<b>Carolina jessamine</b> ( <i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i> ) <b>5</b> <b>Coral honeysuckle</b> ( <i>Lonicera sempervirens</i> ) <b>6</b>		
<b>Ligustrum</b> (flowering tree) China, Japan, Lord Howe Island, Europe, North Africa	<b>Texas mountain laurel</b> ( <i>Sophora secundiflora</i> ) <b>7</b>		
<b>Pampas grass</b> (accent grass) South America	<b>Lindheimer’s muhly</b> ( <i>Muhlenbergia lindheimeri</i> ) <b>8</b>		

the maintenance time the gardener devotes helps dictate the characteristics and personality of the native garden plot.

Walking away from the native gardens and surrounding grounds of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center isn't easy, but the many plant options stay with me on my stroll through the last of the sample gardens varying in style from formal to free-form. Visitors stoop over Texas bluebonnets and winecups or look up to admire an arbor covered in lush grapevines, just a few of the many native plant options.

## Native Plants Across Texas

This chart provides a sampler of Texas native plant varieties by region. For additional native plants within these six regions of the state and across the United States, visit the Lady Bird Wildflower Center's Native Plants Database at [wildflower.org/plants](http://wildflower.org/plants).

### WEST TEXAS

The red rolling plains of the region mark it as the southern end of the Great Plains in the U.S. Photos shown in order of list



- Blackfoot daisy (*Melampodium leucanthum*)
- Buffalograss (*Bouteloua dactyloides*)
- Texas redbud (*Cercis canadensis* var. *texensis*)
- Wild blue flax (*Linum lewisii*)
- Winecup (*Callirhoe involucrata*)

### TEXAS HIGH PLAINS

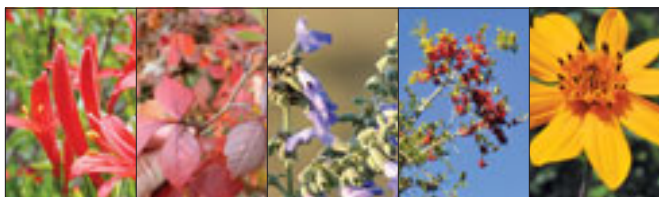
This flat plateau, also marking the southern tip of the Great Plains, consists of clays and sands over caliche.



- Agarita (*Mahonia trifoliolata*)
- Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- Evening rain lily (*Cooperia drummondii*)
- Indian blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*)
- Prairie zinnia (*Zinnia grandiflora*)

### NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS

The dark soil of the Blackland Prairie combines grasslands and woodlands.



- Flame acanthus (*Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii*)
- Fragrant sumac (*Rhus aromatica*)

- Pitcher sage (*Salvia azurea*)
- Yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*)
- Zexmenia (*Wedelia texana*)

### CENTRAL TEXAS

This is where the Hill Country, consisting of caliche, limestone and clay, meets the Blackland Prairie.



- Coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)
- Hill Country rain lily (*Cooperia pedunculata*)
- Mealy blue sage (*Salvia farinacea*)
- Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Texas lantana (*Lantana urticoides*)

### EAST TEXAS

Soils range from sandy to clay in this mix of pine and post oak woods.



- Bushy bluestem (*Andropogon glomeratus*)
- Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Halberdleaf rosemallow (*Hibiscus laevis*)
- Northern catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)
- Red maple (*Acer rubrum*)

### SOUTH TEXAS

This region of coastal prairies and plains includes a combination of clays, caliche and sands.



- American basket-flower (*Centaurea americana*)
- Lemon beebalm (*Monarda citriodora*)
- Prairie verbena (*Glandularia bipinnatifida* var. *bipinnatifida*)
- Purple prickly pear (*Opuntia macrocentra* var. *macrocentra*)
- Texas yellowstar (*Lindheimeria texana*)

Gail Folkins is an Austin writer.

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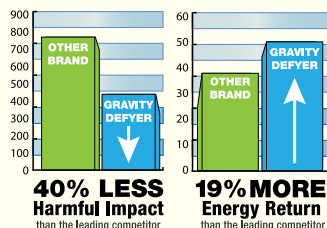
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# Landscape for Looks and Efficiency

**DEAR JIM:** We are landscaping our new house. We like a wooded yard for shade and to enhance the energy efficiency of our home. Where should we plant trees, and which are best? What materials are good alternatives to grass for ground cover?  
 —Mark G.

**DEAR MARK:** Wise landscaping can do more than just create an attractive yard. It can also lower your utility bills, summer and winter, and improve your family's comfort year-round. Trees,

your house or to provide moisture for evaporative cooling of the air near your home.

In an average temperate climate, a typical efficient tree landscaping plan has deciduous trees that lose their leaves in the fall to the south, southeast and southwest. The leaves block the sun during summer, but during winter, the sun shines through to heat your home.

Plant dense evergreens along the north, northeast and northwest sides, which block cold winter winds. With shorter days and

the sun lower in the sky in winter, not much solar heat comes from these directions.

In hot, humid climates, shading during summer is most important. Taller trees should be planted closer to your home to block the sun, which is higher in the sky.

For ground cover, there are alternatives to grass, such as ground cover plants and gravel. Both have their advantages and disadvantages for landscaping a house. Low-growing ground cover near your house can help to keep it cool during summer. The leaves block the sun's heat from absorbing into the ground, and they give off moisture for natural cooling. Ground cover has a lesser effect on efficiency during winter.

The cooling effect from ground cover is most effective in drier climates because there is more evaporation. In hot, humid climates,



Low-water-use ground cover plants and boulders are shaded by trees during the summer and help warm the home during winter.

being a key component of any residential landscaping design, can have the greatest effect on your utility bills.

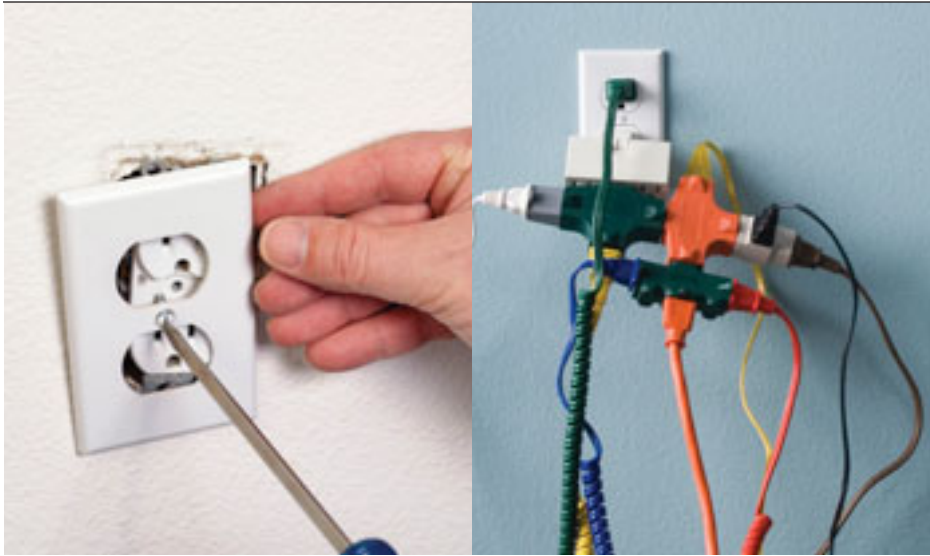
For one, the evaporation of moisture from leaves actually cools the air around your home, akin to how perspiration cools your skin. And by taking advantage of passive solar heating during winter, with the proper placement and selection of trees, you can use less electricity to heat your home.

The primary goal of efficient landscaping with trees is to shade your home during summer yet allow the sun to pass through during winter. Additional goals are, depending on your climate, to allow cool evening breezes to flow around

your house or to provide moisture for evaporative cooling of the air near your home. In an average temperate climate, a typical efficient tree landscaping plan has deciduous trees that lose their leaves in the fall to the south, southeast and southwest. The leaves block the sun during summer, but during winter, the sun shines through to heat your home.

Plant dense evergreens along the north, northeast and northwest sides, which block cold winter winds. With shorter days and the sun lower in the sky in winter, not much solar heat comes from these directions. In hot, humid climates, shading during summer is most important. Taller trees should be planted closer to your home to block the sun, which is higher in the sky. For ground cover, there are alternatives to grass, such as ground cover plants and gravel. Both have their advantages and disadvantages for landscaping a house. Low-growing ground cover near your house can help to keep it cool during summer. The leaves block the sun's heat from absorbing into the ground, and they give off moisture for natural cooling. Ground cover has a lesser effect on efficiency during winter. The cooling effect from ground cover is most effective in drier climates because there is more evaporation. In hot, humid climates, the additional moisture from plants near the house will further increase the relative humidity level. This is more of a problem if you rely on natural ventilation than when using air conditioning with the windows closed.

Landscaping with gravel eliminates the need to water grass, but it can increase the air temperature around your house, particularly in the evening. The thermal mass of the gravel stores the afternoon sun's heat, which helps in the winter. If you use gravel, make sure it's shaded by deciduous trees during the summer.



**LEFT: Every outlet should have a properly fitted and securely mounted switchplate. RIGHT: An overload waiting to happen. Use power strips or have additional outlets installed.**

# Pay Attention to Cords, Plugs and Outlets

**Misuse of and malfunctioning electrical outlets and cords cause nearly 50,000 house fires every year, the National Fire Protection Association reports.**

Keep your family safe by paying attention to how household members treat cords, plugs, appliances and outlets.

Some tips:

- ▶ If you notice an appliance cord is damaged, frayed, split or coming loose from its plug, don't use the appliance. Have the cord replaced or buy a new appliance.
- ▶ Don't leave an extension cord plugged in for more than a few days. It's not designed for permanent use. Move your lamps, electronics and appliances closer to wall outlets so you don't need extension cords. If you don't have enough outlets, hire an electrician to add more.
- ▶ When you use an extension cord, keep it in plain sight. Do not hide it under a carpet where it can get trampled on all day. If the cord overheats, it can catch the rug on fire.
- ▶ Child-proof all receptacles so children won't stick their fingers into outlets.
- ▶ Don't plug more than one high-wattage appliance or electronic device into a single receptacle, even if using a multiplug power strip. The power strip doesn't add capacity to your electrical circuit. It just makes it easier to overload it, which can cause a fire.
- ▶ Avoid outlets and switches that heat up when used. Call an electrician to identify and solve the problem.
- ▶ If you trip a circuit every time you turn on your hair dryer or if your lights flicker or dim, that's a problem. Call an electrician.
- ▶ Find out which kind of lightbulb is safe for each table lamp in your house. You'll find information about maximum wattages if you look at the lamp socket.
- ▶ Install ground-fault circuit interrupters anywhere water can affect a circuit: the kitchen, all bathrooms, the laundry room, the basement and on outdoor electrical circuits.
- ▶ Equip your home with arc-fault circuit interrupters, which can prevent a fire.

## Is Your Old Refrigerator an Energy Hog?

**Does this sound familiar? You bought a new Energy Star-qualified refrigerator and moved your old fridge to the garage or basement to keep a few drinks cold. Here's a tip that can help you save energy and money.**

Old refrigerators, especially those more than 17 years old, tend to use a lot of energy. A refrigerator bought before 1993 uses more than twice as much energy as a new Energy Star refrigerator. So you're spending a lot of money to keep that refrigerator running. What's more, refrigerant deteriorates and seals start to leak over time, causing a decline in the performance of an older refrigerator.

If you have moved your old refrigerator to an uninsulated location, such as a garage, it will use even more energy during hot weather. A fridge in a 90-degree environment, for example, uses nearly 50 percent more energy than one in a 70-degree environment. And if the temperature falls below about 40 degrees in the winter, the refrigerator's thermostat may not run its cooling and defrost cycles for the needed amount of time.

So just by pulling the plug on that old fridge, you can lower your electric bill.

For other tips on how to save energy and money, visit [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) and find out how the little changes can add up.



**That old fridge may be retro and cool, but it's likely not energy-efficient.**

TOP, LEFT: ISTOCKPHOTO. TOP, RIGHT, THINKSTOCK. ISTOCKPHOTO

# Terminal Disconnection

Hung up on airport's cellphone cacophony, one weary traveler finds reconnection the old-fashioned way

BY CAMILLE WHEELER

FOUR HOURS BEFORE MY SCHEDULED flight home from San Diego International Airport, I'm lonely, hungry and mentally exhausted from listening to people's cellphone conversations. Poor planning led to this long wait on a March morning dragging into afternoon, and right now, Austin seems a million miles away.

I feel disconnected as I listen to people yammer on and on in cryptic cellphone sound bites. It's maddening listening to partial conversations. I can't concentrate on reading my book, and napping is out of the question. My head's about to explode from sensory overload.

Looking around the crowded terminal at phones stuck to people's ears like plastic appendages, I'm not so sure that we resemble an evolving species. Our so-called smartphones aren't making us look very intelligent as we text with thumbs, like cave people learning the first strokes of communication.

But watching other people text is just that: I can look away, unaffected. I'm not involved against my will. End of story. Cellphone conversations, meanwhile, are a story with no end. I miss the intimacy of pay phones. People spoke quietly, keeping the conversation appropriately private. Now, at rude, megaphone-loud levels, we hear the minutiae of each others' lives.

Yet I'm confused as to why that bothers me so much. As a longtime urbanite, I'm acclimated to ambient noise: barking dogs, sirens, traffic. So why can't I handle all this yakking? As it turns out, there's a

logical explanation. A research report published in the October 2010 issue of the journal *Psychological Science* makes the case that overhearing "halfalogues"—one half, or one side, of a cellphone conversation—annoys and distracts us.

The report details experiments in which participants performed simple computer-screen tasks after listening to recordings of a cellphone conversation. Hearing dialogue or monologue speeches, the latter of which recapped the entire conversation, did not hurt task performance. But hearing halfalogues significantly decreased performance.

The reason, submit the report's authors, is that the less predictable speech of halfalogues creates confusion and inattentiveness.

No wonder I'm so hung up on escaping cellphone conversations. In San Diego, an hour before my flight, I land a seat in a mostly deserted section next to my gate. I stretch and survey my surroundings. Wait. What was that? I whip my head back around, doing a double take at a husband, wife and teenage daughter sitting with two strange, exotic-looking animals.

In the woman's lap sits a small, fuzzy-headed creature with long, jackrabbit-sized ears. Is it a farm animal? Maybe a goat? My mind struggles to process the visual. The other, larger animal looks like a dog. But he's unlike any dog I've ever seen, with gray, hairless skin, upright ears and the regal stance of a king.

Intrigued, I approach the family: What on earth are these animals? The answer, for both: *Xoloitzcuintli*, an

ancient Aztec dog breed I've never heard of and sure can't pronounce (it's show-low-eats-queen-tlee).

With permission, I pet the larger dog, 2-year-old Miguel, whom the family has just purchased from a breeder in Tijuana, Mexico. Miguel's skin feels like soft, rubbery leather, and his dark eyes bore into me, as if he's plumbing mysteries I don't know exist. I reach out my hand to the shy Hermanita, a 4-month-old puppy who's hairless save for the scruffy patch on her head.

I walk away, but then glance back. A crowd has gathered around Miguel and the teenage girl. There's both a tenderness and an otherworldliness to this muscled dog standing as still as a stone sculpture while a baby girl pats his head.

Suddenly, I'm fully engaged. I grab my reporter's pad. A Southwest Airlines pilot, the same co-pilot who will help fly me home, asks to see the breed's spelling on my yellow legal paper. People pull out cellphones, not to make calls, but to take pictures of Miguel. I officially meet the

teenage girl, Kayla Wise, and her parents, United Cooperative Services members Paul and Amy Wise, who raise show dogs on a ranch near the North-Central Texas town of Hico.

This is Miguel's first flight, and his pink harness bearing white lettering—ESA, for emotional support animal—partially tells his story: He'll be trained for the show ring, but today, he's serving as an ESA for Amy, who experiences anxiety when flying. Baby Hermanita, who's making her second flight with Amy, is also filling a support role: The 3,500-year-old Xolo breed, known as the first dog of the Americas, is legendary for its uncanny ability to comfort and pick up on emotion and energy.

At long last, we board our plane bound for Texas. The Wise family claims the front left row. Miguel, the older dog, sits in front of teenager Kayla, who's five days from her 16th birthday. Hermanita sits in Amy's lap, in the middle. Husband Paul takes the aisle seat, fielding questions about the dogs.

I settle in 14 rows back, in front of the baby girl who petted Miguel. Finally comes the message I've waited all day to hear: "Please turn off all electronic devices." Face-to-face conversation bubbles around me. I turn around and meet the baby, 1-year-old Maya, and her parents. Maya flirts with everyone who walks down the aisle. At 30,000 feet, a woman headed to the restroom stops to play peekaboo with the precious baby girl.

Up front, Amy relaxes by rubbing lotion into Hermanita's skin. Miguel, who instinctively placed his head in Amy's lap during takeoff, sits in silent protection of his new family as two flight attendants admire the dogs.

After we land in Austin, the co-pilot steps out of the cockpit to chat more with the Wise family. I'm home, but the Wises have one more stop, in Dallas. I say goodbye, clearing the way for new passengers on this connecting flight. I turn my cellphone on, feeling energized, alive and ready to communicate.

*Camille Wheeler is an Austin writer.*



EDD PATTON

# Nourishment for Body and Soul



Comfort Café in Smithville relies on good food and good hearts to help sustain rehabilitation center

BY CAROLYN BANKS

WHEN TERI COSTLOW AND ROSIE LOPEZ packed up Costlow's Suzuki SUV in December 2005 to leave Long Island, New York, for Smithville, the information that they had was scant. Costlow's mom had an online acquaintance who lived in Smithville and liked it.

And if the view ahead was iffy, so was the one in the rearview mirror. The vehicle was so full that they couldn't see out of it. The women knew they had to pare down drastically, each finally agreeing to bring one bag of clothes and one bag of electronics.

Lopez, 48, brought a computer. The device that Costlow, 50, couldn't part with was her KitchenAid mixer.

But the biggest possession the two brought with them was their vision—a vision of a restaurant that would nurture in a number of ways—not all of them with food. The restaurant of their dreams would give men and women recovering from addiction a chance to learn job skills such as food preparation, waiting tables and, for those who were really talented, cooking.

Lopez, 48, and Costlow, 50, seem to have a do-good gene. They met at a 12-step meeting back East—Lopez with a background of someone in need of rehab and Costlow with counseling credentials. Both wanted to provide a guilt-free zone that offered troubled people comfort.

The restaurant would be part of an overall rehabilitation program, one that didn't treat people with addiction as though they ought to be punished. "We would be creating a village where we

would be saying, 'Come heal with us,' " Lopez says. They call this village Serenity Star, an entity with the motto "Turning Scars into Stars."

Its present incarnation is a strip of four single-story buildings right across from Smithville's Chamber of Commerce and the James H. Long Railroad Park and Museum.

The beating heart of the village is Comfort Café, an extraordinary eatery. At the end of the meal, diners get a donation envelope instead of a check. Proceeds from the restaurant fund the rest of Serenity Star's offerings: yoga classes, 12-step programs, peer counseling, and wellness and meditation workshops.

"We've had people come in and have a burger," Lopez says, "and leave a hundred-dollar bill." And if they're stiffed? "Well, that person has to go home knowing what they did. Maybe they'll think about it and come back and make restitution."

A sign outside says, "Pay What You Can." The Comfort Café offers free meals in exchange for an hour of labor. There's plenty to do. There are tables to bus, a small herb garden to tend and the enclosed dog-friendly patio to sweep.

Menus change quarterly; summer, fall and winter offerings include a wild berry salad, shepherd's pie and chili with cornbread waffles. Eggs Benedict and eggs Florentine and an omelet with artichoke hearts tucked inside are on the menu year-round, as are burgers and pizza. One of Lopez's favorite menus, made for special occasions—when a musical group has come to entertain, say—is grilled salmon





Rosie Lopez, left, makes sure all is well during a recent lunch hour at Comfort Café, which has a strong customer base among locals in Smithville and is starting to attract diners driving along the Houston-Austin corridor. Employee Kristen Rollins, right, helps prepare food in front of one of the dry-erase boards conveying words of inspiration.



with peach-mango salsa and jasmine rice pilaf.

The eggs used at Comfort Café are local. The veggies often come from Johnson's Backyard Garden, an organic farm in Austin. Costlow and Lopez are always looking for more nearby places to provide top ingredients.

And the recipes? They don't come from a cookbook, Lopez says. "They come from the heart." The secret ingredient, she insists, is love. "We put love into everything we serve," she says.

It's easy to see why diners would be hooked. Comfort Café has a strong base of local fans, but more and more it attracts people who regularly drive the Austin-Houston corridor and make a point of stopping along the way. The restaurant, at 111 NW First St., is just off State Highway 71.

Costlow and Lopez lucked into the

location. They had Serenity Star and its outreach programs in one of the buildings on First Street, and they were supporting the operation with weekly garage sales. It was 2010, and they were just hanging out when, as Lopez explains, "The phone rang and a friend of ours in the building next door, Eulene Carter, said she had had enough of the restaurant business and she wanted out." Carter ran the Patio Café and was so fed up, Lopez recalls, that she even left biscuits in the oven. "We went right over, and she leased it to us and even cut us a break on the rent the first month," Lopez says.

So there it was, Comfort Café—ready to go with tables and chairs, dishes and cutlery, and commercial kitchen appliances, too.

When Carter decided to sell the property two years later, Costlow and Lopez

had dibs. An anonymous patron stepped up and bought it for the women, with a favorable repayment schedule. That was in 2012. It's no wonder that a wall inside Comfort Café proclaims, "Where Miracles Happen."

Carolyn Banks is a freelance writer living in Bastrop.

More info: [serenitystar.org](http://serenitystar.org), (512) 321-8336

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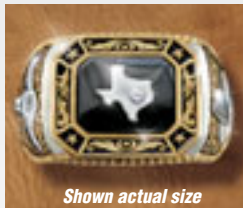
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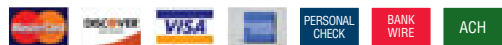
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# The First State Fair

For a while, Henry Lawrence Kinney owned some of the prettiest and most pristine land in Texas, but he didn't know what to do with it. He wanted to sell it, but the people coming to the pretty but isolated port city of Corpus Christi in the mid-1800s weren't stopping and they weren't buying any of the surrounding land. They were headed for the gold fields of California.

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

THE VAST PRAIRIE OF THE BEST GRASS anybody had ever seen—land that would become the foundation of the King Ranch—interested them not at all. Kinney's solution was to stage a state fair, the first in Texas, featuring all manner of bread and circuses as a way to bring tens of thousands of people (and potential land buyers) to the area. They would come for the fair, buy some land and stay—or not, just as long as they bought some land.

That first fair featured a couple of true visionaries, but it can be debated as to whether Kinney was one of them. He comes across as more of a schemer than a visionary. He called himself Colonel, citing service in the Seminole War in Florida, though no evidence of that has ever been found. He and partner William A. Audrey founded what would become Corpus Christi in 1839 when they established a trading post in what is now the city's downtown.

In addition to advertising in newspapers, Kinney sent out some 20,000 handbills all over the world announcing that a state fair would begin on May 1, 1852, in Corpus Christi. He estimated an attendance of 20,000 to 30,000 people and advertised far and wide that the “largest stock of improved cattle, horses, etc.” would be available at an agreeable price, according to a story on the fair by Hortense Warner Ward in the October 1953 *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*.

Kinney planned as if he believed it. The little community on the bay was suddenly a spectacle of construction. A racetrack was laid out. Bullfights, cockfights, fireworks, a circus and performances by a traveling the-

ater troupe were planned and subsequently staged. And there would be prizes: coffee urns, punch bowls, sugar baskets, pitchers, goblets, tumblers and cups and more.

As great as Kinney made it sound, only about a tenth of the people he anticipated actually showed up. Getting to Corpus Christi over land, or even by boat, was no easy task in the 1850s. The pleasant little city on the bay was just too isolated.

Judged from a financial viewpoint, the fair was a colossal failure. The *Texas Republican* opined that “the fair did not meet public expectation” and that “the award of premiums was not received with entire satisfaction.” The paper also declared the bullfights to be “humbug.”

But the fair was not a total bust. Gail Borden, later to become rich and famous as the inventor of condensed milk, was there and won a prize for one of his early and lesser-known inventions, the meat biscuit. A correspondent for the *New Orleans Delta* described “elegantly dressed American and Mexican ladies, flirting their fans with the same coquetry that they would at an opera” mixing and mingling with frontiersmen, Comanches, Apaches and Mexican vaqueros.

Rather than rescue Kinney from debt, the fair plunged him deeper into a finan-



cial spiral of lawsuits and repossessions. He later tried to establish a colony in Nicaragua with about the same success he had with the state fair. He moved to Mexico during the U.S. Civil War and died there during a gunfight between two rival factions.

Some fair attendees, such as Borden, fared much better. A prosperous and adventurous steamboat captain named Richard King was in Corpus Christi with his good friend H.K. “Legs” Lewis, who was in charge of the prizes to be awarded at the fair. On their way there, King and Lewis chose a pretty little spot on Santa Gertrudis Creek as the site of a future cattle operation. That was the beginning of the King Ranch.

As a scheme to make money, the first state fair of Texas was a disaster. As a vision, Kinney had the right idea but at the wrong time and in the wrong place.

There wouldn't be another state fair in Texas for 34 years.

Clay Coppedge is a frequent contributor.



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# Let's See What's in the Fridge

This month's featured recipe is an excellent way to turn leftover cooked rice into a terrific side or a meal unto itself. This recipe takes less than 30 minutes to make, and shrimp, pork and vegetables can be added as desired.

We used Jasmine, an American-grown jasmine rice made by RiceSelect, which is based in Houston. RiceSelect is part of the Texas Department of Agriculture's Go Texan program, so featuring one of the company's recipes was a no-brainer.

SANDRA FORSTON

## Fried Rice

- 2 eggs
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons peanut oil, divided
- 3 green onions, sliced
- 1 cup shrimp or cubed chicken or pork
- 1 cup snow peas, cut diagonally
- ½ cup roasted cashews, pecans or peanuts
- 3 cups jasmine rice, cooked and cooled
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce

- > Beat eggs with salt. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a large skillet or wok. Add onions and egg mixture. Stir-fry until set. Remove from pan.
- > Heat a second tablespoon of oil. Add shrimp, chicken or pork; stir-fry 5 to 10 minutes or until cooked through. Add snow peas and nuts; stir-fry an additional 2 minutes, then remove from pan and set aside.
- > Add the final tablespoon of oil and heat. Add rice, stir-

ring to heat. Stir in soy sauce, meat mixture and cooked egg. Combine all ingredients and stir gently to heat through.

Servings: 4 Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 443 calories, 19.2 g protein, 20 g fat, 43.6 g carbohydrates, 2.2 g dietary fiber, 999 mg sodium, 2.6 g sugars, 173 mg cholesterol



**Cook's Tip:** *Cooking a roast or ham—and rice—over the weekend can make your workweek easier. With such hearty staples on hand, you can make easy-to-prepare, delicious meals for your family any night of the week.*

### Tips for Quick Meal Preparation

1. Wash and prepare vegetables in advance. They will keep up to a week in the refrigerator and make an easy addition to any meal.
2. Planning your meals for days or a whole week takes the stress out of starting from scratch each night.
3. Freezing meals is a big bonus. When making a complicated recipe like lasagna, make two and freeze one for a meal later in the month.
4. When a recipe calls for chopping a portion of a vegetable, chop the whole thing and save the rest for future use.



Fried Rice

OLINKA GOMEZ | MAGIC VALLEY EC

*Creating a completely new meal out of leftovers can be challenging, but the winner of our No Leftovers Left Behind contest came up with a quick and simple recipe for nachos using leftover taco meat.*



## From Tacos to Yummy Nachos

- 1 package (12 ounces) chorizo
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ onion finely chopped
- Dash cumin, optional
- 1 pound leftover cooked ground beef seasoned for tacos
- 1 bag (14 ounces) nacho-flavored corn chips
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup shredded Colby cheese
- Sour cream for serving, optional
- Picante sauce for serving, optional

- Preheat a medium saucepan. Add chorizo and 1 tablespoon of water and cook as you would ground beef. Once it has released its oils, drain excess grease from pan and turn the heat to low.
- Add the garlic, onion and cumin, if using. Stir well and add seasoned beef. Set aside.
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange tortilla chips in a pan, spreading them evenly, and top with the chorizo mixture. Top with shredded cheeses and place in the oven for 5 to 7 minutes or until cheese begins to melt. Be careful not to leave it in too long.
- Remove pan from oven, allow to cool slightly and serve. Top with sour cream and picante sauce, if desired.

Servings: 6. Serving size: ½ of dish. Per serving: 891 calories, 48.4 g protein, 54.7 g fat, 38.0 g carbohydrates, 2.8 g dietary fiber, 1,357 mg sodium, 2.8 g sugars, 146 mg cholesterol

## \$100 Recipe Contest

January's recipe contest topic is **Mushrooms**, which can be added to a variety of dishes—soup or burgers, for example. Send us your favorite recipes. The deadline is September 10.

There are three ways to enter: **ONLINE** at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](http://TexasCoopPower.com/contests); **MAIL** to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; **FAX** to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.

## Mexican Hash

- 4 cups cooked roast beef
- Vegetable oil to sauté
- 1 onion, chopped
- ½ green bell pepper, chopped

- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 jalapeño pepper (or more to your taste), chopped
- 1 baked potato, cubed
- 1 can tomatoes with green chilies
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste

- Cut roast into small pieces.
- Put about two tablespoons of oil (or more if needed) in large frying pan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Sauté onion, bell pepper, garlic and jalapeño and then add potato and roast beef.
- Add tomatoes with green chilies, cumin and oregano and season with salt and pepper. Simmer until the flavors have melded together, 20 to 25 minutes.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 359 calories, 40.2 g protein, 14.7 g fat, 10.4 g carbohydrates, 1.1 g dietary fiber, 272 mg sodium, 1.6 g sugars, 104 mg cholesterol

JUDY PIZZITOLA | PEDERNALES EC

## Chicken Corn Chowder

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 seeded jalapeño, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cups chopped leftover chicken
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 1 pint heavy cream
- 1 can (15 ounces) whole kernel corn
- 1 can (14 ounces) creamed corn
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
- Creole seasoning, to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste

- Sauté garlic, onion and jalapeño in oil until tender. Stir in chicken and sauté for one minute.
- Add stock, cream, both cans of corn, beans and seasonings. Simmer 30 to 45 minutes until it has reached the desired thickness.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 2 cups. Per serving: 623 calories, 25.5 g protein, 39.5 g fat, 40.7 g carbohydrates, 4.5 g dietary fiber, 504 mg sodium, 7.6 g sugars, 150 mg cholesterol

PAM JOHNSON | NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

## Corned Beef Hash

- 2 cups cooked corned beef, finely chopped
- 2 cups cooked potatoes, grated (skins and all)
- 3 or 4 strips bacon
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- Salt or garlic salt
- Pepper

- Combine meat and potatoes.
- Fry bacon until crisp. Remove bacon from pan.

- Add finely chopped onion (use one tablespoon of onion for each cup of meat/potatoes mixture). Sauté until clear.
- Combine meat and potatoes in hot drippings in pan. Crumble bacon and add the meat mixture.
- Stir thoroughly while heating.
- Add salt or garlic salt and pepper to taste.

Servings: 4. Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 301 calories, 18.2 g protein, 15.2 g fat, 16.5 g carbohydrates, 1.5 g dietary fiber, 1,054 mg sodium, 0.9 g sugars, 84 mg cholesterol

TEDDY RUSH | SAN BERNARD EC

## V.L.'s Bread Pudding

- 3 to 4 homemade biscuits
- 2 cups whole milk
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (½ stick) butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Nutmeg to taste
- Whipping cream, optional

- Crumble biscuits into a 1- to 1½-quart casserole dish, set aside. Heat milk, sugar and butter until warmed (do not boil).
- In a separate bowl, beat eggs until lemon colored, about

2 minutes. Slowly add milk mixture, a quarter cup at a time, to eggs. Add vanilla. Pour over crumbled biscuits in casserole dish and sprinkle top with nutmeg.

- Bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees or until mixture wobbles when shaken.
- Serve with whipping cream if desired.

Servings: 8. Serving size: ½ cup. Per serving: 349 calories, 7.9 g protein, 14.7 g fat, 44.4 g carbohydrates, 0.8 g dietary fiber, 346 mg sodium, 23 g sugars, 87 mg cholesterol

VERNA L. MINICK | WOOD COUNTY EC

## 5-Minute Potato Salad with Pimento Cheese

- 4 cups cold mashed potatoes
- 1 cup pimento cheese spread
- 1 cup mayonnaise-type salad dressing
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- ¼ cup sweet pickle relish
- Salt and pepper to taste

- Combine all ingredients and serve.

Servings: 4. Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 606 calories, 14.9 g protein, 32.3 g fat, 62.8 g carbohydrates, 3.6 g dietary fiber, 2,040 mg sodium, 16.3 g sugars, 52 mg cholesterol

JOY PRUNER | HEART OF TEXAS EC

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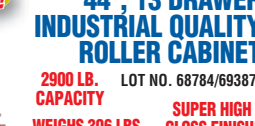


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**On TexasCoopPower.com**

We pose this question: Can you sit still long enough to look at more portraits? We have them online.

◀ **Deanie Smith**, Pedernales EC, sent in this portrait of her mother, **Ruby Honeycutt**, sporting a bob complete with a spit curl and finger waves—a fashionable 1920s hairstyle.



▲ Taken at the Greek Festival in Corpus Christi, this portrait features **Vasula Hartofalix**, who is more interested in the tassel on her cap than the festivities around her. Thanks **Linda Tipton**, Nueces EC, for sending it in.



▲ **Dana Miller**, Rusk County EC, snapped this photo of her grandparents **Maud** and **Monnie Ross** with their Boston terrier in 1980 when she was taking a college photography course.



▲ **Dorrett Townsend**, Central Texas EC, caught his neighbor **L.B. Haines** in his 'office' one morning as he headed out to haul cattle to auction. 'L.B. is proof that the cowboy mystique is still alive and well in our part of the Hill Country,' Townsend wrote.

**Upcoming Contests**

**November Issue: Courage**

*Deadline: September 10*

**December: Homemade**

**January: Looking Up**

All entries must include your name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo. Photos must be taken in Texas. **ONLINE:** Submit highest-resolution digital images at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](http://TexasCoopPower.com/contests). **MAIL:** Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We do not accept entries via email. We regret that Texas Co-op Power cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.

**Caitlin Jones** patiently awaits her turn during rehearsals for a dance recital. Mom **Emily Jones**, Pedernales EC, took this picture outside the Scottish Rite Theater in Austin. ▶



**Pick of the Month**

**15th Annual Denton Blues Fest**

**Denton** [September 21-22]  
(940) 382-9100, dentonbluesfestival.org

*The Denton Black Chamber of Commerce hosts a free festival with music, food and children's performances.*



**September**

**07**

**Palestine** Classic Movie in the Park, "Desperate Hours," (903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

**Terrell** A Walking Horse Ranch Barn Open House, (214) 799-3337

**08**

**Luling** [8-17] Reflections of Texas Art Show, (830) 875-1922

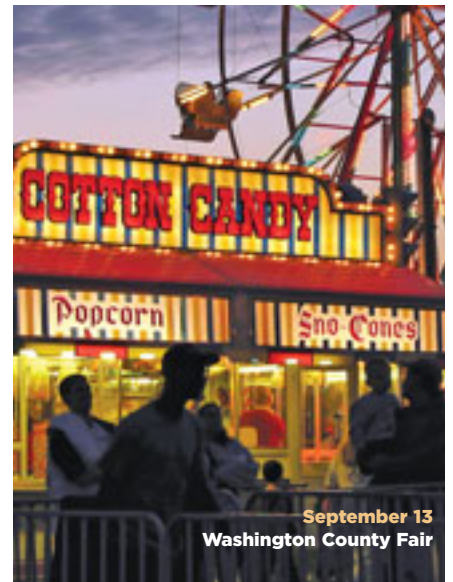
**10**

**Yoakum** Jim Witte Memorial Country Music USA Show, (361) 293-2309

**13**

**Caldwell** [13-14] Quilt Guild, (979) 535-8269

**Brenham** [13-21] Washington County Fair, (979) 836-4112, washingtoncofair.com



September 13  
Washington County Fair

**14**

**Morgan Mill** Arts & Crafts Fair, (254) 968-4983

**Idalou** [14-15] Apple Butter Festival, (806) 781-1753

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and festivals around Texas. For a complete listing, please visit [TexasCoopPower.com/events](http://TexasCoopPower.com/events).

19

**Fairview** Brighten the Night, (469) 233-0668, [carsonscrusadersfoundation.org](http://carsonscrusadersfoundation.org)

20

**Bartlett** [20-21] Old Town Festival, (254) 527-0196, [bartletttxas.net](http://bartletttxas.net)

**Sulphur Springs** [20-21] Lone Star Heritage Quilt Show, (903) 885-7899, [sulphurspringstxquilts.com](http://sulphurspringstxquilts.com)

21

**Collinsville** Pioneer Day, (903) 429-6308

**Roxton** Roxton Saturday Night, (903) 346-2939

22

**Victoria** Heritage Day Celebration 2013, (361) 575-3623, [felcvictoria.org](http://felcvictoria.org)

27

**McKinney** [27-28] Oktoberfest 2013, (972) 547-2660, [downtownmckinney.com](http://downtownmckinney.com)

27

**Abilene** [27-29] Big Country Balloon Fest, (325) 795-0995, [bigcountryballoonfest.com](http://bigcountryballoonfest.com)

28

**Port Aransas** Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup, (361) 749-5919, [portaransas.org](http://portaransas.org)

**Cleburne** LHVFD Country Fair & Fundraiser, (817) 239-3046

**Clarendon** Col. Goodnight Chuckwagon Cook-Off, (806) 874-3581, [saintsroost.org](http://saintsroost.org)

**Comanche** [28-29] Comanche County Pow-Wow, (325) 356-3233, [comanchechamber.org](http://comanchechamber.org)



## October

01

**Kenney** [1-5] Hodges Farm Antique Show, (979) 865-9077, [hodgesfarmtexas.com](http://hodgesfarmtexas.com)

04

**Fredericksburg** [4-6] Oktoberfest, (830) 997-4810, [oktoberfestinfbg.com](http://oktoberfestinfbg.com)



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Oct. 26

### Food & Wine Fest

Celebrate Texas Wine & Food downtown Fredericksburg! Three Special Events plus our great FEST- Guest Chefs at Cooking School, 29 Wineries, 40 Specialty Booths, Lively Music... [FbgFoodandWineFest.com](http://FbgFoodandWineFest.com)

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The senses can be in for a wild treat as you make the rounds through the farms, gardens, eateries and other attractions in this historic area between Houston and Austin

BY EILEEN MATTEI

IF YOU THOUGHT THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER were just something to be endured, take a trek to Washington County, where the weather is just right for nurturing glorious fields of fragrant lavender. Follow your nose to **CHAPPELL HILL LAVENDER FARM**, where 3,000 lavender bushes thrive in the September sun, their perfume wafting down the farm's gentle slopes.

On weekends August to October, farm owner Debbie McDowell allows visitors to wander the fields and harvest their own purple Provence lavender. Borrow scissors and a basket from the shop and go snip an armful of the tall spikes (each plant has 100-400 stalks) for a nominal fee. "Strip the bottom leaves off the stem, put the stems in a bundle and hang it upside down in a cool dark place for two weeks," McDowell advises. "The fragrance lasts so

long because the essential oil is in the bud."

For a lifelike lesson in history, go to the **BARRINGTON LIVING HISTORY FARM** at the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site. The farm represents the homestead of Anson Jones, the last president of the Republic of Texas. Visitors get to participate in period-specific tasks to learn what life was like in the mid-1800s.

Get an early start and experience picking cotton just as the early settlers did, dragging your burlap sack and stuffing it with white bolls bursting in the tall-cotton fields. "Everyone likes to pick cotton, except those people who used to have to do it," said Park Ranger Pam Scaggs.

Make time to watch the sturdy Piney-woods oxen pull a plow and respond to simple commands: A flick to the front of their legs makes them back up.

Kids who normally shy away from history get caught up by the old ways evident in the kitchen outbuilding. A shoofly (a cloth fan hung from the ceiling) keeps pests from settling on the fresh-baked cornbread, made with corn grown and ground at the farm. Youngsters can help pick okra, late-season squash or even pears.

Next, swing past the **ANTIQUÉ ROSE EMPORIUM** in Brenham. Roam its seven acres of display gardens, featuring not only "rustled" old-fashioned peach, pink and yellow roses, but also perennials, drought-tolerant native plants and butterfly gardens.

A muffuletta sandwich followed by a generous slice of homemade Dutch apple pie at **MUST BE HEAVEN** restaurant in Brenham helps you re-energize. Nearby, **TOUBIN PARK** celebrates historic underground cisterns. In the 1870s, Brenham was thought to be the first Texas city to build public cisterns, a response to fighting too many fires with too little water.

Down the road at **ROUND TOP FESTIVAL INSTITUTE**, the intricate woodwork of the acoustically perfect performance hall is balanced by the riot of color and scents of acres of themed herb gardens. Festival Hill's pharmacy garden has long, raised beds devoted to medicinal plants grouped by geographical region—New Zealand, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, the Americas. Touch the leaves of ginseng, patchouli, turmeric and curry plants for a spice market experience.

Stroll down shaded paths to the herbal tea garden, the fiber-and-dye garden and the lakeside garden. Helpful identifier tags let you match rare and unusual scents to the plants, which include varieties of lavender, salvia and basil. The sunny Cloister Garden recalls a ruined stone church with rosemary trailing over the walls.

Reward yourself with dinner at **ROYERS ROUND TOP CAFÉ**. The grilled rack of lamb served with a mashed potato casserole along with junk berry pie is one more Washington County feast for the eyes, nose and mouth.

Eileen Mattei is a frequent contributor.



**A YOUNG SHAVER** Barrington Living History Farm at the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site offers hands-on opportunities to experience rural chores as they were performed a century ago. This young boy tries his hand at shaving—planing—a piece of wood.



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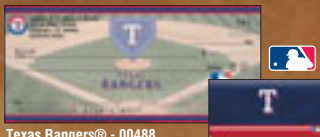
The Nightmare Before Christmas - 00531  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00531 ♦

Monsters, Inc. - 00618  
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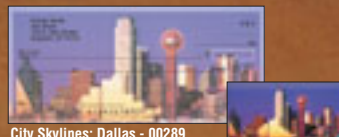
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City Skylines: Dallas - 00289  
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Cowboy Boots - 00434  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00434 ♡



Moments of Majesty - 00001  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00001 ♡



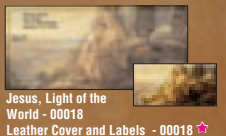
Cowboy Round Up - 00380  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00380 ♡



Cowboy Kids - 00527  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00527 ♡



John Wayne:  
An American Legend - 00204  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00204 ♡



Jesus, Light of the World - 00018  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00018 ♡



Thomas Kinkade's Faith for All Seasons w/verse "Believe all things are possible with God" - 00105  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00105 ♡



Winter Calm - 00017  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00017 ♡



Thomas Kinkade's Country Escapes - 00162  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00162 ♡

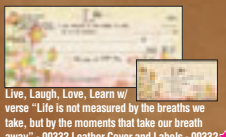


Unbridled Joy - 00166  
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Faithful Friends - Boston Terrier w/verse "You look at me with eyes of love" - 00365 One image.  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00365 ♡

German Shepherd - 00014  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00014 ♡



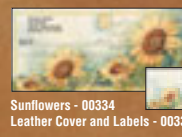
Live, Laugh, Love, Learn w/verse "Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away" - 00332  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00332 ♡



Words of Faith w/verse "With God all things are possible." - 00551  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00551 ♡



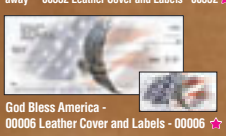
Challis & Ross Awesome Owls - 00337  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00337 ♡



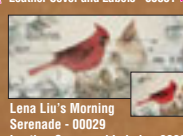
Sunflowers - 00334  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00334 ♡



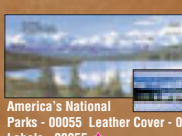
Farmall - 00328  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00328 ♦



God Bless America - 00006  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00006 ♡



Lena Liu's Morning Serenade - 00029  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00029 ♡

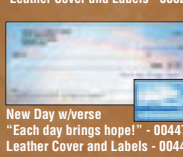


America's National Parks - 00055  
Leather Cover - 00151  
Labels - 00055 ♡

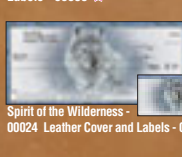
Rescued is My Breed of Choice - 00379  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00379 ♡  
*A portion of the proceeds will be donated to a national no-kill animal shelter.*



Angel Kisses - 00019  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00019 ♡

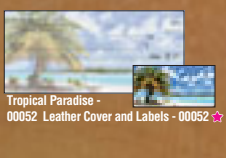


New Day w/verse "Each day brings hope!" - 00447  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00447 ♡



Spirit of the Wilderness - 00024  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00024 ♡

Footprints in the Sand - 00008  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00008 ♡



Tropical Paradise - 00052  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00052 ♡



Chance Encounters - 00350  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00350 ♡



On the Wings of Hope - 00384  
One image.  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00384 ♡  
*A portion of the proceeds will be donated to fight breast cancer.*

Butterfly Bliss - 00445  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00445 ♡



Lightning Strikes - 00178  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00178 ▲

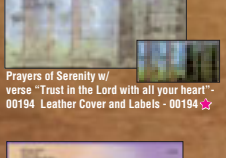


Grandkids Rule! w/verse "I'd rather be with my grandkids." - 00437  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00437 ♡



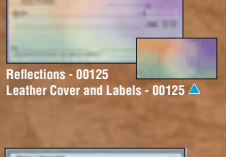
Prayers of Serenity w/verse "Trust in the Lord with all your heart" - 00194  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00194 ♡

Lena Liu's Floral Borders - 00088 w/optional verse "Lord bless and keep you." - 00117  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00088 ♡



Reflections - 00125  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00125 ▲

Shining Stars - 00201  
Leather Cover and Labels - 00201 ▲



Blue Safety - 00027  
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Leather Cover and Labels - 00027 ▲

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