

# TEXAS CO-OP POWER

## HOUSTON, TAKE A BOW

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## Comfort Café

Discovered Comfort Café ["Nourishment for Body and Soul," September 2013] in Smithville. Have had family in Smithville for over 40 years but never heard about the café.

The hamburger with sticky potatoes is out of this world. Can't wait to go back to try other items. "The Drunk Monkey" sounded so good but will try it next.

Four of us ate there and were amazed that only donations accepted for food!

The service is sweet and wonderful. Thanks for sharing.

JOHNNIE JOHNSON | AUSTIN

## Washington County

As a former resident of Washington County and a Bluebonnet Electric Co-op member, I would like to comment on Eileen Mattei's article [Hit the Road "Washington County," September 2013]. Festival Hill and Royer's Café are both in Fayette County and not Washington County. (They are "down the road" but some folks get rather touchy about their locations.) Also, Antique Rose Emporium is in Independence, which is a rural community near Brenham.

Keep up the good work with the publication. I read it cover to cover.

JIM LATHER | HILCO EC

## Delicious Reading

Your articles are informative, historical, clever (and delicious) as well as safety-minded. We have passed them on to others.

MR. AND MRS. KENNETH J. BURAS SR.  
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

## Madam Sheriffs

In reference to your article in June 2013 ["The First Madam Sheriffs"],

## Native Plants

I'm a Comal master gardener and have been in charge of the past two training classes for new master gardeners. I loved the article ["Right at Home," September 2013] by Gail Folkins on native plants in the landscape.

This is the most concise and well-targeted article I've ever seen on using native plants in the landscape. Any homeowner in the Hill Country would do well to study this article and integrate some of the plants into their home landscape.

It also presented the case for natives in a balanced way; not all nonnatives are problematic, such as crape myrtle, thryallis and trailing lantana. And some invasives would be hard to live without, such as Bermuda grass. But the article hits the bull's-eye on the benefits of utilizing natives.



LEE FRANZEL | PEDERNALES EC

my mother, Ruby Covey, was appointed sheriff of Borden County in April 1937 to finish the term of her deceased husband.

DORIS SELMAN | GRANBURY

## Game Day

After reviewing your article, I noticed that there were no Longhorn fans at the Texas Tech game last year. However, I did notice a lot of Tech fans in your photographs giving the international hand signal for "loser."

Hook 'em Horns.

MARSHALL CAPPS  
SOUTHWEST RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



I would like to personally thank you for the coverage ["More than a

Game," September 2013] that you recently gave Texas Tech. What a nice surprise when I received my magazine and saw my alma mater on the cover along with the pictures and article. Living in South Texas, I am used to The University of Texas or Texas A&M getting the recognition for everything. I speak for my entire family who are Texas Tech alumni: Thank you.

LEA SURLS | MEDINA EC

## Living History

I enjoyed your June 2013 article ["Engaged in History"] on Civil War re-enactors. It was timely and relevant as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the war on our native soil that included more than 3 million Americans and cost the lives of an estimated 750,000 citizens, exceeding the total of Americans lost in all other wars our country has fought added together.

As we remember this time in our history, re-enactors provide living history of those mostly young Americans who had lives that were

only beginning, cut short so others could live free. I for one appreciate the re-enactors who teach us that freedom is not free today and was not free 150 years ago.

PAT NOWOTNY | HEART OF TEXAS EC

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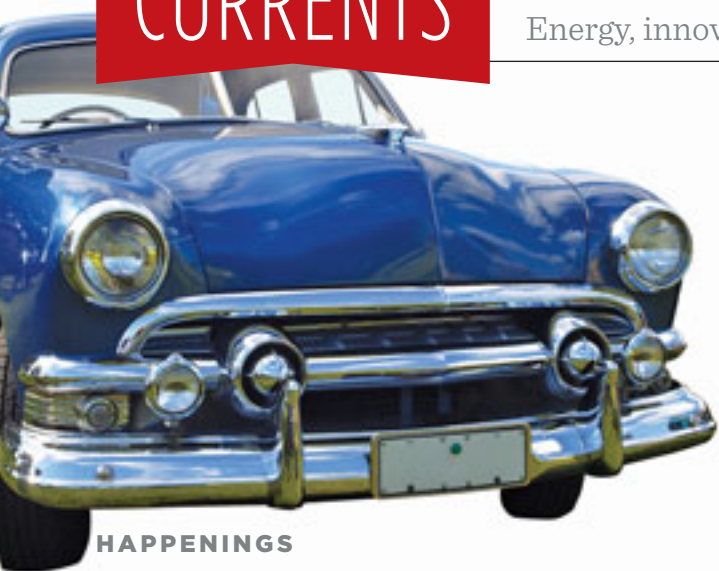
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## HAPPENINGS

## Step Back in Time

Blast into the past November 9 at the Edgewood Heritage Festival. Take in rural East Texas life in 1900 amid the 20 authentically restored and furnished structures at the Heritage Park Museum of East Texas. The free event features a pinto bean cook-off, dog show and parade, and classic car and tractor show. Look out for the tomahawk throwers, buy some beautiful plants and take the kids to visit Santa.

INFO: (903) 896-4448, [edgewoodheritagefestival.com](http://edgewoodheritagefestival.com)

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

## Less Mess in Texas

Texas is not as messy as it used to be, apparently.

The state's roadsides are less cluttered than they were in 2009, reported the Texas Department of Transportation. [See "Don't Mess With My Bit of Texas," March 2013.] The agency, which measures trash accumulation every four years with the Texas Litter Survey, said visible litter is down 34 percent, a result it credits to the Don't Mess with Texas campaign.

These encouraging results come despite an additional 1.1 million drivers on the state's roadways in the past four years.

Workers helping with the litter survey examined about 4.8 million square feet of roadside (equivalent to a 1-foot-wide line long enough to connect Brownsville and Amarillo).

They found that tire and rubber debris was the most common type of trash, followed by food and beverage containers.

Cigarette butts, considered "micro litter" by TxDOT, were the most common type of all litter, the survey found, with a projected 500 million to be found on Texas roads by the end of 2013.



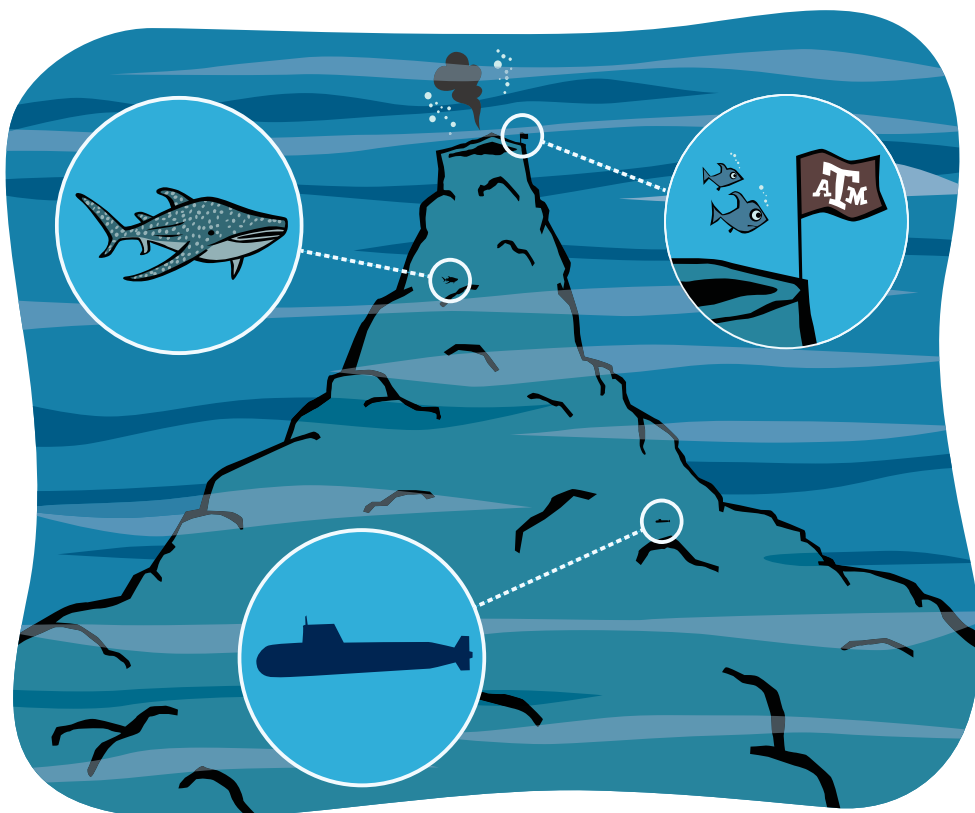
## The Aggies' Magma Carta

How about a hearty *Whoop!* for the world's largest volcano, which is doing Texas A&M University proud about 4 miles below the surface of the Pacific Ocean.

The volcano, named Tamu Massif, has a footprint about the size of New Mexico and sits some 1,000 miles east of Japan. What, you may ask, does a volcano under the Pacific Ocean have to do with Texas A&M? Geophysicist William Sager led a team of scientists that announced the volcano's discovery in September, and though he's a professor at the University of Houston, Sager spent 29 years at A&M. Part of the volcano's name is in honor of A&M—TAMU is an abbreviation for the university. Massif is the French word for "massive" and a scientific term for a large mountain mass, says Sager.

The volcano is completely submerged, and Sager doesn't think its peak ever rose above sea level over its 145-million-year existence.

Mauna Loa in Hawaii had been the largest known volcano on Earth.



CAR: MARGOJI | BIGSTOCK.COM; DON'T MESS AND TAMU MASSIF: EDD PATTON



## WHO KNEW?

### Of Course It Was Oil

After the Port of Houston opened as a deep-water port in 1914 (See “Houston’s Sea Change,” Page 8), the first foreign vessel to arrive was an oil tanker from Mexico.



Oil tanker, 1915



## He Had Connections

On Page 29, “The Legend of the Yellow Rose” introduces you to a fellow, William Bollaert, who seems to have played a key role in substantiating some parts of the legend of the woman considered to be the Yellow Rose of Texas. Bollaert heard details about Emily West from none other than Sam Houston.

Interestingly, Bollaert, an English scientist, is also connected to research that led to important discoveries about electricity, according to findings in 1996 by James Lutzweiler, who was researching the veracity of the Yellow Rose story.

In 1842, Bollaert was checking out land in Texas for a speculator friend in Britain when he bumped into Houston.

Before that, though, Bollaert worked as an assistant chemist to Michael Faraday, whose discoveries in electromagnetic induction made possible the development of the electric motor.

And there’s more—Bollaert reportedly saved Faraday’s eyesight after a lab accident nearly blinded him, allowing Faraday to continue his research for another 44 years.

## ON THIS DATE

### Commemorating JFK’s Assassination

Dallas city planners have been preparing for the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy for more than a year. The shooting, on **November 22, 1963**, jolted the country and stained the consciousness of Dallas, and organizers of ceremonies planned for later this month are determined to reverently mark the milestone.

“We are planning a simple, serious, understated, respectful public memorial to commemorate President Kennedy’s life,” Mayor Mike Rawlings said in The Dallas Morning News.

Plans call for the ceremony to begin at 11:45 a.m. on November 22 with church bells tolling throughout the city, followed by a moment of silence. A ceremonial flyover and prayers from religious leaders are included in the program.

Kennedy’s “death forever changed our city, as well as the world,” Rawlings said. “We want to mark this tragic day by remembering a great president with the sense of dignity and history he deserves.”

Attendance at the event will be limited to about 5,000, and ticketholders will be vetted by Dallas police.





BY MARK WANGRIN • PHOTOS BY ROBERT SEALE

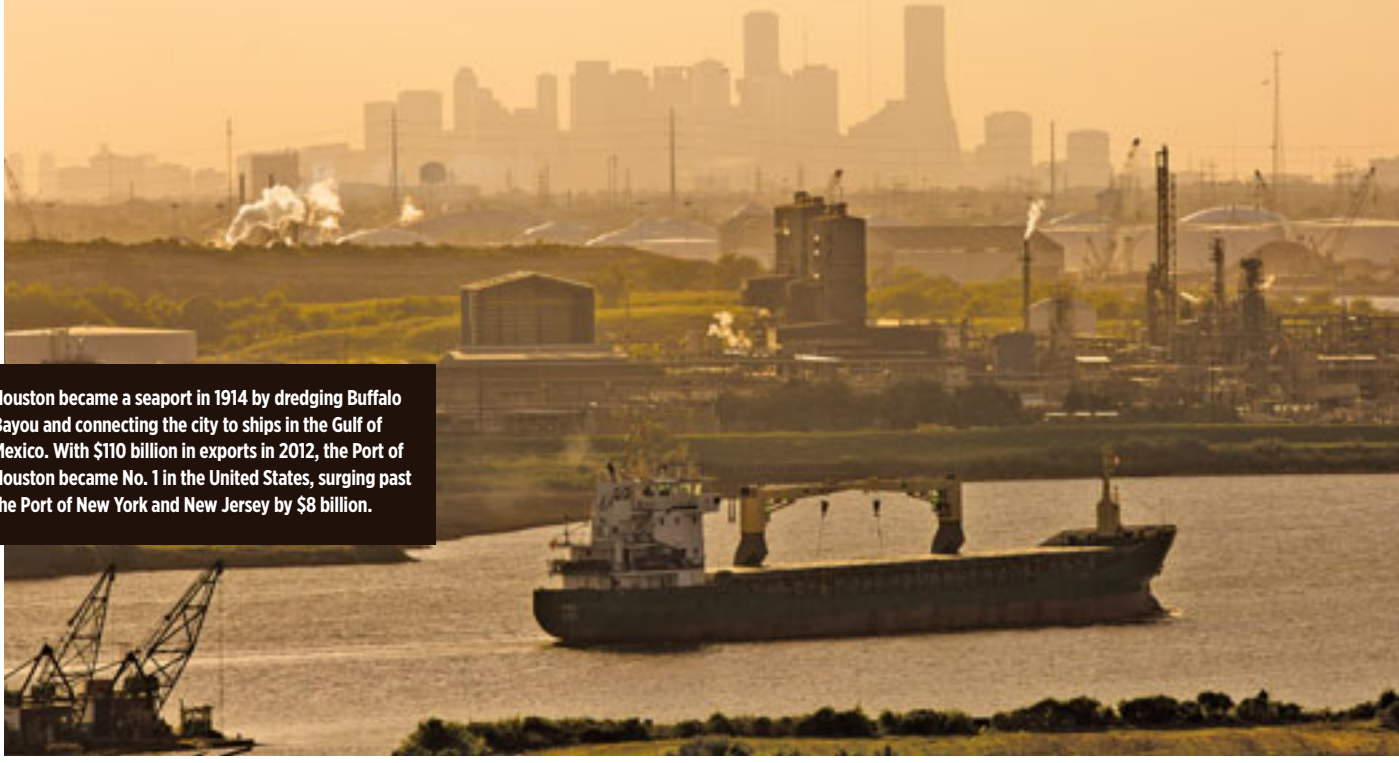
# HOUSTON'S SEA CHANGE

How  
an inland stop dug  
deep a century ago  
transformed Buffalo Bayou  
into the Port of Houston, the  
nation's busiest seaport  
and an anchor of the  
Texas economy

The nearly 100-year-old  
Port of Houston is a complex  
system of terminals and docks  
through which more than 200  
million tons of cargo are  
transported annually.







Houston became a seaport in 1914 by dredging Buffalo Bayou and connecting the city to ships in the Gulf of Mexico. With \$110 billion in exports in 2012, the Port of Houston became No. 1 in the United States, surging past the Port of New York and New Jersey by \$8 billion.

#### THIS IS THE STORY OF THE LITTLE STREAM THAT COULD.

Close your eyes and imagine a quiet place 200 years ago on the banks of an idyllic waterway in the southeast part of what would become the state of Texas. There's a stream flowing quietly, with the occasional protruding tree trunk beneath overhanging cypress branches, its water so clear the buffalo fish are visible from its banks. It's nothing to behold in terms of grandeur, just about 60 yards wide and 15 feet deep, but there's an inexplicable sense of untapped potential.

Next put your nose and ears to work. There's a whiff of magnolia cut with the faint scent of a dying sea breeze. There's the hoarse honking of herons and the barely audible sound of Karankawa braves paddling past in a dugout canoe.

This is Buffalo Bayou. Or was. Open your eyes and take a look now. Snaking its way toward the Gulf of Mexico is a 52-mile-long channel, its waters roiled with the prop wash of 100,000-ton oil tankers and its banks crowded with cranes, wharves and warehouses as far as you can see. The 130-decibel air horn of a freighter bullies the air, punctuating the sounds of whirlwind commerce. The magnolia smell has given way to an industrial potpourri of diesel fumes and other petroleum production vapors and, yes, an even fainter whiff of a sea breeze.

What used to be a simple stream is now, two centuries later, part of an enormous complex of waterways and infrastructure known as the Port of Houston, which helps drive the Texas economy. As the busiest seagoing export port in the United States, it generates more than 1 million jobs and pumps more than \$178.5 billion into the statewide market, including \$4.5 billion in state and local taxes, according to a 2012 study by John C. Martin, a maritime transportation economist. Next November will mark 100 years since the deepwater Port of Houston opened for business.

Not bad for a little stream.

"It is a fascinating story," says author Mark Lardas, who wrote about the port and the movers and shakers behind its development in "The Port of Houston" (Arcadia Publishing), due out this month. "In many ways, the Port of Houston is a metaphor for the

story of Texas in that they put it together with hard work, risk-taking and a little bit of Texas brag."

What they created was a magnet for international business that put Houston on the map. It easily could have been Harrisburg, a few miles downstream, or Galveston, where the bayou eventually empties into the Gulf of Mexico through the state's only true deepwater harbor, if not for vision, salesmanship, innovation, serendipity and more than a little politics and pluck.

John Kirby Allen and Augustus Chapman Allen, land speculators and brothers from New York who sought to establish a city named after the great hero of the Texas Revolution in the late 1830s, had the salesmanship. They also had the vision. The Allens saw plenty of opportunity, not in the plush, verdant banks of Buffalo Bayou, but in the potential for money, easy and quick. "They weren't thinking this was one day going to be the fourth-largest city in the United States," Lardas says. "They just thought, 'Oh, gee whiz, this is a good spot to build a city, sell some land, and get out of here.'"

It didn't hurt that the Allens also were adept at that time-honored tradition of backroom dealmaking, donating land and construction in Houston to build the new republic's capitol. They also helped build the image of Houston as the state's potential dominant port by dubiously claiming that the head of the waterway that leads to Galveston Bay was near Houston, not Harrisburg.

**Top trading partners in 2012** based on combined imports and exports, by tonnage: Brazil, China, India, Russia and Germany

But when the railroads came in the 1850s, and getting cargo to and from Galveston became easier, the potential for Houston to become a seagoing city was at a precipice. "Houston really had a problem," quips Lardas, who worked as a NASA contractor at the Johnson Space Center for 25 years. "Unless they could turn it into a deepwater port."

One of the local newspapers, the Weekly Telegraph, fore-



The American container ship Yorktown Express, **TOP**, dwarfs the trees on the bank and its lone sailor in the bow as it navigates downstream in the Houston Ship Channel near Morgan's Point. The Port of Houston's \$15 billion petrochemical complex is the largest in the U.S., which attracts a steady stream of ships like the GasChem Baltic, **ABOVE**, a liquefied petroleum gas tanker that sails under the Liberian flag. The cargo ship Maersk Illinois, **OPPOSITE**, is tied down at the Southside Turning Basin, one of dozens of wharves along the 25 miles of waterway managed by the Port of Houston.

warned in 1867, "Houston, with the ship channel, is the favorite commercial point in Texas; without it she is a small commercial town gradually growing up by her railroads and manufactories, but destined never, in our lifetime, to grow very much beyond what it is now."

So deepwater it was. And when the cities of Galveston and New Orleans rubbed Charles Morgan, the top shipper in the Gulf of Mexico, the wrong way with their methods and taxes, he snatched up companies and land, and in the 1870s dug a private canal to give Houston the upper hand. In 1900, a powerful hurricane devastated Galveston, and 12 years later, work began to dredge a deep channel from Houston to the Gulf. Game over.

"Houston and Galveston were kind of like brothers who quarrel with each other, depend on each other, but really don't get along," Lardas says.

Technology tells the story of how Houston dominated the Galveston port, and ultimately the nation's ports. When the railroads came in and a deepwater port was needed, Houston already had the dredging capabilities. When the triple-expansion steam engine, which allowed ships to recycle steam for power two more times, came into use in the 1890s, going the additional 50 miles from Galveston to Houston became more efficient.

Would anyone believe in 1836 that Houston would be the largest seaport in the United States? Lardas asks. "I don't think so, but the reason it is is technology," he says. "It seems every time there's a technological revolution, it seems to end up helping Houston."

**Top commodities** in 2012 based on combined imports and exports, by tonnage: plastic, petroleum and petroleum products, organic chemicals, iron/steel products and miscellaneous chemical products

Now the recent development of profitable methods to squeeze oil and gas out of oil shale, such as hydraulic fracturing—fracking—is allowing Houston to again experience an oil and gas boom.

"Last year, we had a record year in steel piping," says Bill Hensel, director of corporate communications with the Port of Houston Authority. "This year there's a big gain in oil exports. That's all because of fracking."

Economic factors also made a huge difference through the years, Lardas says. When the Great Depression hit and unemployment soared, many people made ends meet by buying cheap trucks and using them to carry cargo to ports. Houston was closer to the supply than Galveston, and fewer miles to drive meant more profit. When containers cut the cost of shipping in the 1950s and '60s by 97 percent, Lardas says, union longshoremen in other ports nationwide refused to unload them because they required less labor. Houston's port wasn't fully unionized. Houston won again, and it hasn't let up much since.

Bill Diehl, retired Coast Guard officer and former captain of the Port of Houston, is now director of the Greater Houston Port Bureau. "People never think of Texas as a maritime state," Diehl says. "Our ports are our on-ramp to the global economies. Big companies across the country are looking to expand to other countries. We're well positioned for that, and if you don't sell to the whole world, someone else will."

The port bureau acts as a clearinghouse for ship movements and port promotion. "We're the 411 for the port," Diehl says. It's





important to stress the economic impact of the Port of Houston because ports are often overlooked when state politicians are doling out funding, he adds.

With \$110 billion in exports in 2012, the Port of Houston became No. 1 in the United States, surging past the 2011 leader, the Port of New York and New Jersey, by \$8 billion. The 5.6 percent rate of growth also topped all domestic ports, according to data from the U.S. Department of Commerce released in July.

The Port of Houston is preparing for more growth. Expansion of the Panama Canal, which cut through the 48-mile-wide Isthmus of Panama in 1914 to allow ships to bypass the treacherous and lengthy trip around the tip of South America, began in 2010 and is expected to be finished next year. The \$5.25 billion project will widen and deepen the channels and replace existing locks with larger ones to allow bigger ships to make the crossing.

Meanwhile, Houston again must resort to technology to catch up. Rather than wade through government bureaucracy that might delay the project a decade or more, Diehl says, the port is using money from its own version of a rainy day fund to pay for the dredging of offshoots of the lower ship channel to accommodate the bigger ships, which draft at least 45 feet, 5 feet more than the current depth.

Houston has an inherent advantage over ports where the dredging depth is limited, Lardas says. “The only thing at the bottom is mud,” he says. “Bedrock is at least 300 feet down. The problem is, once again, technology. You roll the dice one more time, and so far it’s been a winner every time.”

Companies interested in keeping the Port of Houston vibrant aren’t shying away from investing in the future, according to a port bureau survey that drew responses from 39 percent of those firms. The study reveals known investment of \$28.8 billion in improvements between 2010 and 2015. Martin Associates, which conducted the Port of Houston economic impact report, estimates the investment will lead to 111,700 direct construction jobs, 154,100 induced and indirect jobs, and \$800 million in tax revenue from 2012-15.

“The best thing about the Panama Canal expansion is that it’s not going out of business,” says Diehl. “The ships are getting bigger. If you’re not able to handle bigger ships, you go out of business.”

Diehl expects the state’s oil shale plays to allow Houston to again get ahead of the curve. Oil companies along the ship channel have been refitting to handle the expected flood of natural gas exports.

And if some future technology creates a way to ship goods

cheaper? It would be time to adapt once again—employ the vision, technology, verve and innovation that got the Port of Houston where it is today, on the verge of its 100th birthday.

It’s an unlikely story, how a small inland stream near a town named after the first president of the Republic of Texas, neither of which were given much of a chance for success in their infancies, not only survived, but prospered and ultimately dominated. It’s the story of Texas, a microcosm of how the state overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles to get where it is today, and it all began with a stream and a dream.

*Mark Wangrin is an Austin writer.*

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# Hunters' Bounty

**Donations of deer meat to Hunters for the Hungry mean food on the table for neighbors in need**



**W**HEN I WAS A KID, MY MOTHER mostly refused to throw some bread on a hunk of venison and toss it into a cast-iron skillet to fry. She was no vegetarian, of course. There aren't many vegetarians traipsing around out there when there are hungry mouths to feed and only a vague idea where the next meal is coming from.

Ducks, fish, quail, squirrels, even squirrel brains, were fair game at our house. But deer, for some reason, she just wouldn't do, even though we totaled eight people squeezed into a tiny, one-bathroom house living on a preacher's salary when that salary was barely triple digits in a month.

We got by, as most rural families did after World War II, with chickens, butter, fat hogs, canned pickles and vegetables that church members dropped off in lieu of actual cash and some we grew ourselves.

I still remember my dad putting on all his warm clothes on icy winter mornings

to slog across the highway to our neighbor's pasture where he'd stashed a Jersey cow that pumped out the gallon or so of fresh milk four kids needed every day.

It was a grand example of the circle of life. We lived on the land, and the land—and our neighbors—took care of us. But times and circumstances changed, as they always do, and more people moved to cities, fewer turned to the land for their sustenance and a largely rural lifestyle shifted to something my grandparents wouldn't even recognize if they were still alive today.

But people still need people. Neighbors still help out neighbors, even as that word has taken on a more global meaning. And one group of "neighbors" are deer hunters, whose passions connect them closely to the land and whose benevolence through a movement called Hunters for the Hungry provides venison to people who need it.

The program, which operates in most states, was started by folks who saw a need and created a cooperative effort that has donated millions of pounds of fresh, ground venison to families who need protein. Hunters who participate work with local processors, which grind and package the meat for a small fee paid by hunters. The meat is then provided to local food banks and other nonprofit partners, which distribute it to families and to kitchens serving meals to those in need.

Tanya Greenough, food services program manager for Caritas of Austin, knows how much donated venison means to people needing help. "The donated meat is very popular with our community kitchen and food pantry clients," she says. "We have a lot of clients who requested the venison. Meat is expensive, so donations from Hunters for the Hungry help lower our costs. It's also a lean and healthy option, which is





**Texas has more than 3.5 million deer, the largest population in the U.S., and about 600,000 deer hunters. During the 2012-13 hunting season, Hunters for the Hungry delivered nearly 133,000 pounds of venison to food pantries and kitchens in the state.**

what we strive to provide.”

Anitra Hendricks, program coordinator with the Austin-based Texas Association of Community Action Agencies, agrees. “Red meat is a treat for them,” she says.

During the 2012-13 hunting season, 103 processors involved with Hunters for the Hungry in Texas delivered nearly 133,000 pounds of venison to pantries and kitchens. Statewide donations to the program peaked at 192,000 pounds in 2008-09, Hendricks says. The 2013-14 white-tailed deer general season runs November 2 until sometime in January. The close of the season varies by region.

Texas has more than 3.5 million deer and 600,000 deer hunters. Individual hunters are allowed up to five deer on their licenses each year, with some exceptions. An expanding deer population creates habitat problems for some ranches, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department allows more extensive hunting in

those cases. Because of overpopulation in some urban areas, a number of subdivisions, especially in Central Texas, can receive special permits that allow hunting in an effort to reduce the number of deer-caused automobile accidents and deer eating homeowners’ landscaping.

“We look at this as a win-win situation,” says Hendricks. “Hunters have to have a place to take their deer, especially [with liberal harvest rules], and that’s the whole point, to take advantage of an existing resource that’s already out there.”

One issue that’s plagued Hunters for the Hungry from the beginning is the \$30 to \$40 charged by processors. Many large ranches gladly pay the fees to reduce deer populations on their properties, where hundreds of deer are harvested per year. Some municipalities have done the same when urban deer numbers need to be controlled.

Lee Pipkin, director of food resources

for the Texas Food Bank Network, says that around San Angelo where he’s based, local providers saw funding for processing slip even as landowners experienced significant cash crop losses because of deer. “As a large relief organization, we’re striving to get that protein to as many people as possible,” Pipkin says.

The answer was to underwrite the costs of processing as much as possible. His group worked with landowners and hunters, wrote grants seeking funding and even requested money from local organizations such as Rotary Clubs.

One client of the Caritas of Austin food pantry knows just how important the Hunters for the Hungry program is after coming to the agency for help. (The client requested to remain anonymous.)

“I was able to come to the Caritas food pantry to get two weeks’ worth of venison at a time,” the client says. “It’s a good help when someone needs it. They help add to





**FROM TOP:** Licensed hunters are allowed up to five deer each season, although the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department issues additional permits to relieve overpopulation in some areas. Deer season begins November 2. Tanya Greenough of Caritas of Austin says the agency appreciates donated meat. ‘We have a lot of clients who requested the venison,’ she says. ‘It’s also a lean and healthy option, which is what we strive to provide.’

what I already have, and they are so nice.”

Texas Food Bank Network CEO Celia Cole says that the Caritas Community Kitchen in Austin provides free lunches to 350 or more people every day in the downtown area. Its pantry provides take-home groceries to clients in crisis and donates groceries for more than 43,000 meals each year. Donated venison plays a large role in both of those operations. Hunters for the Hungry figures one protein serving for each quarter-pound of ground venison, which means the 133,000 pounds produced 532,000 meals last year.

There’s little argument about the effectiveness of the program or its value to families and individuals in need. The real issues today are in gathering as much venison as possible and distributing it efficiently and quickly to the people who can use it. That’s where the Texas Food Bank Network comes in.

“This is a great opportunity to supplement the food we’re able to get because it’s such a healthy source of protein and they desperately need it,” Cole says.

The network is working on a program to double the amount of meat it provides by expanding its sources of venison. “We need to make sure landowners and processors know about the program. Food

banks have trucks they can use if they have a steady source of protein,” Cole says.

The Texas Food Bank Network is collaborating with processors who ship to local charities and is expanding the list of participating processors to make getting venison to the charities as simple as possible.

“Convenience is the key. Hunters for the Hungry should be the first thing you think of,” Cole says.

**Mike Leggett** is the outdoors writer at the *Austin American-Statesman*. This will be his 55th season deer hunting, and he has been donating venison to charitable organizations for more than 20 years.

### How Hunters Can Help

Along with Hunters for the Hungry, there are other programs in Texas that provide venison to those in need:

- **Hunters for the Hungry:** (325) 617-2228, [taca.org/hunters-for-the-hungry](http://taca.org/hunters-for-the-hungry), [lpipkin@tfbn.org](mailto:lpipkin@tfbn.org)
- **Texas Food Bank Network:** (817) 531-3663, [tfbn.org](http://tfbn.org)
- **Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry:** [fhfh.org](http://fhfh.org)
- **Hunters’ Harvest:** [huntershavest.org](http://huntershavest.org)

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# HOLIDAY

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# Be Careful with Holiday Flames

Colorful lights, burning candles, flickering flames in the fireplace, extra cooking and careless company all add up to a heightened risk of house fires during the winter holidays.

Prevent fires by buying safety-rated and certified electrical devices, keeping children away from flames and stoves, and inspecting every cord and decoration before rigging it up for the season.

Never leave a flame unattended, even for a little while. Extinguish candles, bank fires and turn off heaters and ranges if you are going to be away from them.

More accidental house fires occur in November and December than at other times of the year. Be prepared in case it happens at your home. A few tips:

- Equip your kitchen with fire extinguishers that will put out small, contained fires before they spread.

- Practice a fire drill with your family so that everyone knows the best way to calmly evacuate your house in case of a fire.

- Photograph or film every angle of every room in your house. During a fire, the contents of your home can burn beyond

**Candles that utilize LED technology are flameless and much safer than their fiery counterparts. A variety of styles, colors and sizes are available, and their long battery life makes them an affordable and beautiful option.**

recognition. Often the only way for you to remember everything you had—and to prove it to your insurance company—is to have an inventory of it. A visual inventory is better than a written inventory without pictures. Store this visual record in a safe place, such as a fireproof safe, with a relative or in a safety-deposit box.

- Double-check with your insurance carrier that you have adequate insurance both to restore the structure (exterior plus interior walls, windows, floors, roof and other built-in pieces of your home) and interior contents (furniture, appliances, clothing, jewelry, for instance). You might be surprised to learn you don't have enough coverage.

Careful use of electricity and containment of flames will help prevent catastrophe from happening. Inventories and insurance will prevent the devastation from compounding into a financial nightmare if something does go wrong.



Writing the date you change the filter on the filter can help you keep up with this important energy-efficiency task.

## Filters Need Changing in Cool Weather, Too

**You dutifully changed your air conditioning system's filter every month or two over the summer—right? And now that the weather is cooling off, you might think that job is finished until next summer.**

It's not.

Your central heating system also relies on a filter to catch dust, dirt, pet hair and other airborne particles that can clog the system, slow it down and even make it blow that stuff back into your indoor air.

A clogged filter restricts airflow, and that can force the system's blower to work harder. This can shorten the life of the equipment, causing it to overheat, break down or unnecessarily increase your heating bill.

It's important to change the filter frequently during the seasons when you use your system either for heating or cooling. Most HVAC manufacturers recommend monthly changes.

Especially if you have pets, if you live in a dusty climate, or if someone in your home smokes or suffers from allergies, regular filter changes are critical to keeping your heating and cooling system in good shape.

A tip: Replace the filter on the same day that you pay your bills every month.





# Efficient Holiday Cooking

*Control energy costs while preparing celebratory meals*

**The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that cooking alone accounts for 4 percent of total home energy use, and this figure doesn't include the energy costs associated with refrigeration, water heating and dishwashing.**

As holiday parties and meals gear up, keep these tips in mind to control energy costs:

## Smart Oven Use

- ▶ Before the baking begins, clean the inside of your range, wiping accumulated grease and grime out of the oven and making sure the window is clean and clear so you can see what's cooking.
- ▶ Don't open the oven door to check on the progress of cooking food. Every time the door is opened, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, forcing it to use more energy to return to the proper cooking temperature. Use the oven light and the window to look at the dishes.
- ▶ For recipes that need to bake longer than an hour, preheating isn't necessary.
- ▶ If you use a ceramic or glass dish for baking, you can typically set your oven for 25 degrees less than the recipe directs. Because ceramic and glass hold heat better than metal pans, your dish will cook just as well at a lower temperature.

## Stovetop Sense

- ▶ For your stovetop to function effectively, it's important that the metal reflectors under your electric stove burners stay dirt- and grime-free.
- ▶ Electric stovetops transmit heat to pans only by direct contact with burners. The less contact your pan has with the burner, the more energy the stovetop has to expend to heat the pan.
- ▶ If your pans have warped over time and don't sit flat on the burner, it may be time for a flat-bottomed update. To keep pans from warping, don't clean them while they are still hot. The temperature difference between the pan and wash water can deform the metal.



**A clean oven is the first step to preparing an energy-efficient holiday dinner.**

## Think Small Appliances

- ▶ A slow cooker, microwave, toaster oven or warming plate can do the same job of cooking some dishes with less electricity. For example, the average toaster oven can use about half the energy of the average electric stove over the same cooking time.

Information to help you estimate how much energy your own appliances use is available on [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov).

*Source: U.S. Department of Energy*



**An electric blanket can keep you cozy, but you should never sleep on top of one or let the kids jump up and down on it.**

## Make the Change of Season Safely

**As the leaves change to their beautiful autumn hues and the weather gets colder, keep in mind the following electrical safety tips for the change of season:**

- ▶ Check to see if electric blankets are in good repair and certified by an independent testing lab such as Underwriters Laboratories.

- ▶ Do not tuck your electric blanket under the mattress and don't put anything on top of the blanket. Do not allow pets to sleep on electric blankets.

- ▶ Check cold-weather tools, such as leaf blowers, to ensure that power cords are in good repair. Extension cords used with those tools need to be approved for outdoor use.

- ▶ Before you tackle fall tree trimming, be sure to look up and know exactly where overhead power lines are located so you can avoid them.

- ▶ If you have a fireplace, have the chimney cleaned before the start of the fire season.

*Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International*

# Freddy Fender: A Man For All Seasons



The child who went state to state as a migrant worker plucked musical acclaim by moving among various genres

BY E.R. BILLS

IF YOU WERE LISTENING TO YOUR CAR stereo in Texas in the mid-to late 1970s, you could hardly drive 30 miles in any direction without hearing Freddy Fender. If you stopped at a café or bar with a jukebox on any stretch of road in any corner of the state, an hour could barely pass without Fender earning it a quarter.

His rendition of “Before the Next Teardrop Falls” hit No. 1 on Billboard’s “The Hot 100” on May 31, 1975. His “Wasted Days and Wasted Nights” later that year was a bit of eight-track tape gold that helped carry AM radio during its last stretch of musical relevance. His clear, emotive tenor was unmistakable, and his Chicano Afro and mustache were instantly iconic.

Fender was born Baldemar Huerta in the El Jardin barrio of San Benito in the Rio Grande Valley on June 4, 1937. His father died of tuberculosis when he was 7, and he and his mother became migrant workers.

At an age when most kids were navigating grade school, Huerta was harvesting beets in Michigan, picking cucumbers in Ohio, baling hay in Indiana and picking cotton in Arkansas. Besides the hard work, what he remembered most about the period was the soulful music of African-American field workers. He was given a busted guitar when he was 10 and practiced tirelessly, so much that he soon made his first public appearance, singing “Paloma Querida” on KGBT-AM in Harlingen, a city near San Benito. His mother, recognizing Huerta’s passion,

bought him a new guitar. Huerta mastered it quickly and began entering and winning talent shows in the Valley.

In 1953, Huerta began a three-year stint with the Marines. When he returned to Texas, he married and threw himself into his music, playing beer joints and honky-tonks throughout the Valley. He auditioned for Falcon Records in McAllen in 1956 and was offered a contract. His first session produced “No Seas Cruel,” a Spanish version of the Elvis Presley hit “Don’t Be Cruel.” The B-side was a Huerta original called “Ay Amor.” Falcon marketed Huerta as El Bebop Kid, and “No Seas Cruel” became a hit in Mexico and South America.

He “was the first one to cross the bilingual line,” says Joe King Carrasco, the current “king” of Tex-Mex rock ‘n’ roll who looked up to Fender while growing up in Dumas. “He’s what Texas music is all about.”

In 1959, Huerta signed with Imperial Records. He had failed to reach a broader audience in the United States, so he changed his name to Freddy Fender, taken from the brand of his favorite guitar. Soon after, he was separated from his wife for a time, and one evening at the Starlight Lounge in Harlingen, he immortalized his feelings in a song called “Wasted Days and Wasted Nights.” It became a regional hit in 1960, and Fender began touring.

Shortly into the tour, Fender’s career was curtailed by his arrest for possession of marijuana in Louisiana. He and a bandmate were each sentenced to five





**Freddy Fender, left, played a small-town sheriff in the 1988 film ‘The Milagro Beanfield War,’ starring Sonia Braga and Rubén Blades. Fender, a San Benito native, first rose to prominence in the 1970s with hit singles ‘Before the Next Teardrop Falls’ and ‘Wasted Days and Wasted Nights.’ By 2001 he’d collected three Grammy awards, including best Latin pop for his last studio album, ‘La Musica de Baldemar Huerta.’**

years in prison. In 1963, Louisiana Gov. Jimmie Davis, a successful blues, country and gospel recording artist in his own right—famous for composing “You Are My Sunshine”—paroled Fender. Any steam Fender’s career had picked up in 1960 was shot, but he joined the New Orleans music scene. Over the next few years, he worked with future legends such as Art and Aaron Neville.

Fender returned to the Rio Grande Valley in 1969. He continued to perform, but he also took a job as a mechanic and began studying sociology at Del Mar College. Five years later, Fender attempted to cut a rhythm and blues album at Crazy Cajun Studios in Houston. His producer, Huey Meaux, suggested he give a country ballad called “Before the Next Teardrop Falls” a try. Fender wasn’t interested, but Meaux insisted. Fender acquiesced and gave the song one obligatory run-through, changing some of the English lyrics to Spanish.

Meaux released Fender’s take on “Before the Next Teardrop Falls” in Janu-

ary 1975. Within months, it was a smash hit. Meaux decided to strike again while Fender’s career was hot. They re-recorded “Wasted Days and Wasted Nights” and it, too, blazed up the charts, reaching No. 1 on the country charts and No. 8 on the pop charts. Fender was an international recording sensation overnight, and by the end of 1975 his bilingual country ballads won him Country Music Association nominations for single of the year, album of the year and male vocalist of the year. “Before the Next Teardrop Falls” won single of the year.

Fender had several other hits before the ’70s ended. In the late ’80s and early ’90s, he played in the Texas Tornados, a supergroup that included Flaco Jimenez, Augie Meyers and Doug Sahm. They won a 1990 Grammy for best Mexican-American performance. He won a 1998 Grammy in the same category as a member of another supergroup, Los Super Seven. And he won the 2001 best Latin pop Grammy for his last studio album, “La Musica de Baldemar Huerta.” In

between, he found time to act in “The Milagro Beanfield War,” perform for three presidents and receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Fender’s health began to decline rapidly. He received a kidney transplant in 2002 and a liver transplant in 2004 but then was diagnosed with lung cancer. Fender died in Corpus Christi on October 14, 2006, and was buried in San Benito.

In a career spanning six decades, Fender introduced Latin America to rock ‘n’ roll, rock ‘n’ roll to Chicano, and country to conjunto. He might have sprung from a San Benito barrio, but his timeless ballads were gentle salve for aching hearts from the high-rises in Houston to the flatlands of West Texas, cowboy or vaquero, rocker or Tejano.

“His music came from his roots and he expanded from there,” Carrasco says. “He was the real deal. He had a great voice, he was great on the guitar, he could do Tex-Mex, rock, blues—he could do it all.”

*E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo.*

# When the Preacher Came To Visit

Family spared nothing when special guests blessed an otherwise bleak existence

BY BETTY CALCOTE

“CHARLES, GET A CHICKEN FROM THE henhouse. Company’s coming!”

Mother would have the neck wrung and the chicken still flapping on the ground when the preacher’s car pulled up to our four-room, unpainted, tin-roof farmhouse. From our view atop a rocky hill in Coleman County (we belonged to Coleman County Electric Cooperative), it was easy to see the puff of dust miles away that alerted us to the preacher’s arrival. Our family of five might not have had meat all week, but company would be served the best we had. When the preacher and his family alighted from the car, Mother would say, “We’re having chicken for dinner. Will you join us?”

West Texas in the late 1940s and ’50s was regaining strength after the Great Depression, but our small tenant farming community was an exception. We still lived as we did in the Depression; the ravages of those times reflected in my parents’ gaunt, sad faces and lean bodies. Only our country church and taking our turn housing the preacher brightened our existence.

We were one of the 15 families who rotated the duty of providing the preacher and his family with weekend accommodations. He and his wife and daughter would arrive from Abilene on Saturday afternoon. We would sit down to large platters of fried chicken, fresh garden vegetables and homemade rolls followed by Mother’s special cinnamon rolls or sometimes angel food cake.

We tried to offer our best for the visit. Preparations always began the Monday

before. We worked hard to make things look as clean and fresh as they could, but it was not easy. I had to give up my bed in the living room and instead sleep on a pallet in my parents’ bedroom. There was not a blade of green surrounding our house. The only flowers would be blue-bonnets in the spring on the nearby hill-sides. Our vista was miles and miles of rock and poor sandy soil. My brother and I would sweep the dirt around the house. The outhouse was about 40 yards away, and I designed a path with pebbles as my contribution for the preacher’s visit.

Windows were always open, making it difficult to keep the dust out. Mother had us dip the broom in kerosene before sweeping the gritty linoleum. If the preacher visited in the summer, there would first be wall repairs. After a West Texas winter, wind would blow through holes in the walls. Our remedy would be to flatten cardboard boxes and then nail them to the walls. Then we covered the repairs with heavy, flowery wallpaper applied using flour paste.

All our water was precious as we had to haul it on a flatbed trailer from a nearby tank. We all bathed in the same water in a No. 3 washtub with the water heated on the kerosene stove. That being the case, the preacher and his family would not bathe while they were with us. We could provide only a bowl of hot water in the mornings so the preacher could shave. The bowl was placed on my parents’ dresser because it held our only mirror. The dresser had been decorated with crocheted doilies Mother and I had



starched in sugar water the week before and then molded around mixing bowls to form pretty shapes that sat upright.

The preacher's wife had her own ritual. Before bedtime, she would whip four egg whites and apply them to her face. She was the product of Southern aristocracy and probably did not realize how precious those four eggs were to us. Of course, we were anxious to serve. She was one of the first women who demonstrated feminine primping rituals for this teenage admirer.

Sunday morning would mean another big feed for Mother to prepare, followed by the big Sunday lunch and afternoon supper. No matter how much food there was to prepare, we would arrive on time for services, where Daddy led the singing. Upon our return home, we served a noon meal, which usually consisted of a large roast from the calf Daddy had killed in the spring and vegetables that had been

slowly cooking in the oven during our two-hour church service.

Everyone napped after the abundant meal. Afterward, Mother would serve leftover roast sandwiches on homemade light bread. Then we rode back to church on the 4 miles of dirt roads to attend the evening service. When we got back home, sometimes Daddy, who taught himself the guitar and violin, would play music for us—that is, if it wasn't too hot on the front porch.

In addition to preparing the weekend meals, we would pack boxes of extra food for the preacher to take home for the week. Daddy always killed two hogs in December in addition to the calf in the spring. Whatever we had available in meat and in vegetables from the garden we shared and sent home with the preacher and his family, even Mother's delicious pies. Money was scarce at our house, and this was part of our church offering.

I will always remember the preacher visits as special and endearing. That same Church of Christ preacher and his wife later helped me get into college and helped me find a job. Several years later, he married my husband and me in the University Baptist Church in Abilene, enabling us to have music and a piano, which were not allowed in our country church. The preacher's visits provided me a window to the future as well as a break in our Depression-era existence.

We did not have much growing up, but we had heart. We also had structure, and we had responsibility modeled for us daily. I learned the opportunity and value that an education could provide. And I learned that although our resources were slim, a love for family, church and community would give me the foundation I needed for life.

**Betty Calcote**, a retired teacher, lives in Georgetown.



DAVID BOWMAN

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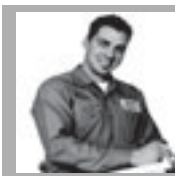
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## A D V E R T I S E M E N T

# 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 – Fort Worth, 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.

This fast-acting bacteria multiplies within minutes of application and is specifically designed to withstand many of today's anti-bacterial cleaners, soaps and detergents. It comes in dissolvable plastic packs, that you just flush down your toilets. It's so cool. Plus, they actually Guarantee that it restores ANY system, no matter how bad the problem is.

**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](http://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 **"DARTX7"**, 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.



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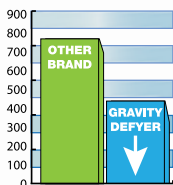
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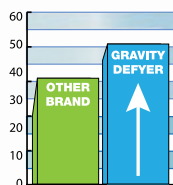
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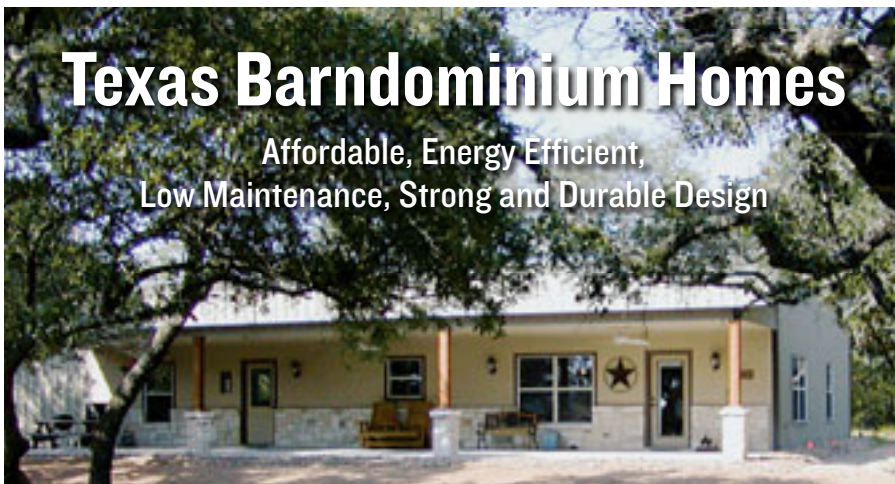
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# The Legend of the Yellow Rose

Does the Yellow Rose, immortalized in the namesake song, refer to a particular woman? Did she influence the Battle of San Jacinto?

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

THE STORY OF A WOMAN DUBIOUSLY BUT PERSISTENTLY referred to as the Yellow Rose of Texas, Emily West, is one of those legends that a lot of popular historians have decided is too good to verify. Her tale, or rather one story that grew up around her, is a combination of lore and song sprinkled with a few facts. Where fact and legend intersect, or whether they do at all, has long been a matter of debate.

Emily West is sometimes identified as Emily Morgan. The confusion stems from Emily possibly taking the name of her contract employer, the land speculator James Morgan. He brought Emily, a free black woman, from New York to New Washington near Morgan's Point. She arrived in Texas in 1835, a bad time for anybody unwilling to tangle in the Texas Revolution.

In April 1836, Emily and others were seized at New Washington by Mexican soldiers looking for Republic of Texas President David Burnet, who had fled. Morgan was away, commanding Fort Travis in Galveston. Mexican Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna rested at New Washington while his soldiers looted warehouses. Three days later, with Emily and other captives in tow, he led his troops in search of Sam Houston's ragtag army.

The two armies met on the San Jacinto battlefield on April 21, 1836, when the Texians caught the Mexican army by surprise. The reason, as the story goes, is because Santa Anna's attention was diverted by Emily, who was "closeted" in Santa Anna's tent. The meeting is often referred to as a "dalliance," though other descriptions have been less abstract.

Whether there was actually a meeting of Emily and the Mexican general—ah, there's the problem.

The story made its way to a traveling Englishman named William Bollaert in 1842, who noted it in his journal. The original record in Bollaert's own handwriting is archived in the Newberry Library in Chicago. The entry reads as follows:

*The Battle of San Jacinto was probably lost to the Mexicans, owing to the influence of a Mulatta girl (Emily) belonging to Col. Morgan who was closeted in the tent with g'l [i.e., General] Santana, at the time the cry was made, 'The Enemy! They come! They come!' and detained Santana so long, that order could not be restored readily again.*

But it wasn't until 1956 that Bollaert's journal, in edited form, was published. From there the story took on a life of its own, appearing in popular histories that served as the source for more popular histories. Before long, Emily was being identified as the subject of the song, "The Yellow Rose of Texas." There's no evidence that this is the case, but the notion persists.

In 1997, researcher James Lutzweiler presented a paper to



the Texas Historical Association suggesting that Sam Houston himself was the source of the original Bollaert story. Bollaert had actually cut a letter from some other document and pasted it into the narrative. Lutzweiler also found a page saying Emily's story was "a copy of an unpublished letter written by G'l [General] Houston to a friend after this extraordinary battle."

Alas, that does not solve the mystery. We don't know to whom the letter was written, when Houston wrote it, or where Bollaert got it. Honestly, we don't even know if the story is true.

We do know that the Battle of San Jacinto was barbaric to the extreme, and if Emily was there it must have been a gruesome sight. Judge Isaac Moreland noted in a letter that he had met Emily in April 1836. Emily told Moreland she had lost the documentation of her "free" status on the San Jacinto battleground and wanted to go back to New York. Some historians think she did.

Emily might have tried to forget what she experienced at the Battle of San Jacinto, but legend and song have gone out of the way to remember her as the Yellow Rose of Texas.

Clay Coppedge is a frequent contributor.



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# Great Tex-Mex: Family Secrets

Do you have a favorite Tex-Mex restaurant, one that you take your family to on Friday nights? Or, is there a place you always take out-of-town guests? For my husband and me, that place is Matt's El Rancho in Austin. From drinks to enchiladas to perfectly prepared shrimp to the Early Texas Pecan Pralines, we have never been disappointed in more than 20 years of dining at Matt's.

Matt Martinez Sr. opened the well-known Austin restaurant in 1952, but his establishment wasn't the family's first. His father, Delfino, opened a restaurant in 1925 in Austin. Five generations of Martinezes have been involved in the business, including Matt Martinez Jr., who opened Matt's Rancho Martinez in Dallas in 1985.

Even if you can't visit a Martinez restaurant, you can still enjoy their Tex-Mex dishes by preparing recipes from the cookbook "Mex Tex: Traditional Tex-Mex Taste" by Matt Martinez Jr. (Bright Sky Press, 2006). **SANDRA FORSTON**



## Gorditas ("Little Fat Ones")

- 1 cup masa harina (dry masa)
- ½ cup mashed potatoes
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Vegetable oil for frying

- > In a bowl, mix masa, mashed potatoes and baking powder thoroughly with a pastry knife or wooden mixing spoon. Add about ¾ cup of cold water, 1 tablespoon at a time, mixing after each addition until dough is no longer crumbly. When you can squeeze the dough in your hand and the dough keeps its shape, you've added enough water. Don't add too much water.
- > Divide dough and roll into 12 walnut-sized balls. Place on a plate or cookie sheet lined with waxed paper. Cover with another sheet of waxed paper to keep dough from drying out. Let them rest at least 10 minutes (or longer if you have time).

- > Heat half an inch of oil in a skillet over medium heat. While oil is heating, flatten dough balls by hand. Work them with your fingertips to form 2-inch-wide circles.
- > When oil is heated to just shy of smoking—about 325 degrees—drop dough circles into the oil. Depending on the size of your skillet, add two to three at a time. Cook for about a minute on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Serve immediately with your choice of filling.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 2 unfilled gorditas. Per serving: 325 calories, 2.1 g protein, 26.7 g fat, 17.8 g carbohydrates, 1.5 g dietary fiber, 134 mg sodium, 0.6 g sugars



**Cook's Tip:** Fill with crumbled fresh goat cheese, beans, guacamole and your favorite hot sauce, if desired. Shredded roast beef, pork roast or chicken work well, too.

## Early Texas Pecan Pralines

- 2 cups sugar
- ¾ cup milk
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla
- 1½ cups pecan halves or pieces

- > Mix sugar, milk and baking soda in a large saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly and scraping the bottom of the pan to prevent scorching.
- > After 12 to 15 minutes, the mixture will start to thicken. Using a candy thermometer, bring to soft-ball stage (235 to 240 degrees). Or, if you don't have a thermometer, drop a small amount of milk syrup into cold water. If it forms a ball in the water, the syrup has cooked sufficiently.
- > Once syrup is ready, remove from heat and add butter and vanilla; mix until creamy. Then stir in pecans so they are thoroughly coated.
- > Quickly drop mixture by heaping tablespoonsful onto a buttered baking sheet or a piece of waxed paper. Let cool until solid.

# Recipes

- When cool, place candies in a covered container. They will keep two to three days at room temperature.

Servings: 24. Serving size: 1 praline. Per serving: 118 calories, 0.8 g protein, 4.9 g fat, 18 g carbohydrates, 0.6 g dietary fiber, 29 mg sodium, 17.4 g sugars, 2 mg cholesterol

## Little Matt's Shrimp Cocktail

- 3 pounds cooked small shrimp, shelled and deveined

### Cocktail sauce

- 1 bottle (14 ounces) ketchup
- 1 can (11½ ounces) V8 juice
- Juice of 2 lemons
- ½ cup lemon-lime soda
- ½ cup diced fresh tomato
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- ¼ cup chopped jalapeños
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ cup thinly sliced celery, divided

### Garnish

- 2 avocados, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 bunch cilantro, finely chopped
- 2 lemons, cut into wedges

- Chill the shrimp until ready to serve. Combine all of the sauce ingredients except for ¼ cup of celery; mix well. Cover with a lid or plastic wrap and refrigerate.
- To serve, divide the remaining celery among eight tall glasses (parfait glasses work well). Fill each glass evenly with shrimp.
- Stir cocktail sauce well and divide equally over the shrimp. Place avocado slices on top and garnish with cilantro.
- Serve with lemon wedges and crispy crackers on the side.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 1 glass. Per serving: 252 calories, 25.4 g protein, 5.4 g fat, 23.5 g carbohydrates, 3.4 g dietary fiber, 2,203 mg sodium, 15.5 g sugars, 214 mg cholesterol



CHUCK BURGESS | HEART OF TEXAS EC

**Great Tex-Mex Contest Winner:** *Tex-Mex dishes are close to the heart and the taste buds of most Texans. It's not easy creating a delicious Tex-Mex dish that will satisfy the cravings of those who truly appreciate the state's namesake culinary love, but Chuck Burgess did just that to win our November recipe contest with a cheesy, spicy dish featuring shrimp and crab.*



## Shrimpaladas

- ¾ pound cooked medium-to-large shrimp
- ¾ cup diced red onion
- ¾ cup diced sundried tomatoes
- 1½ cups shredded pepper jack cheese
- ½ cup salsa
- 2 teaspoons oil
- 1 can (6 ounces) white crab, drained
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 2 teaspoons instant chicken bullion
- 4 ounces cream cheese, diced and softened
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 12 6-inch flour tortillas
- ½ cup diced green onion

- Move oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly oil a 13-by-9-inch casserole dish and set aside.
- Put shrimp, red onion, tomatoes, cheese, salsa and oil in a medium bowl and toss until well mixed. Set aside.
- Put crab, flour, bullion, cream cheese, coriander, salt, pepper and 3 cups of water in a medium saucepan and whisk while heating until blended and thickened. Allow to simmer another 1 to 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside.
- Cover tortillas with a dampened paper towel and microwave for 30 to 45 seconds to soften.
- Add ½ cup of crab mixture to shrimp mixture and stir to blend. Spread about ⅓ cup of crab-shrimp mixture in the center of a tortilla. Roll tortilla and place in casserole. Repeat process until all tortillas are filled. Stir any leftover crab-shrimp mixture into crab mixture and spread evenly over rolled tortillas.
- Place casserole in middle rack of oven. Cook for 20 minutes or until sauce is bubbly and the tops are lightly browned. Toss green onions on top and serve.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 2 shrimpaladas. Per serving: 573 calories, 32.1 g protein, 26.3 g fat, 47.1 g carbohydrates, 3.9 g dietary fiber, 1,285 mg sodium, 6.1 g sugars, 151 mg cholesterol



## Chicken Burritos

- 2½ cups chopped cooked chicken
- ⅔ cup salsa
- ⅓ cup chopped green onion
- ¾ to 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon oregano leaves
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 8 8-inch flour tortillas
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese
- Queso, guacamole and/or pico de gallo, optional, for serving

- Preheat oven to 475 degrees.
- Mix together chicken, salsa, onion, cumin, oregano and salt.
- Brush one side of a tortilla with melted butter. Spread about ⅔ cup of chicken mixture down the unbuttered side of the tortilla and top with 2 tablespoons of cheese. Fold two sides over the filling and fold ends down. Place seam-side down in a 13-by-9-inch baking dish.
- Repeat with remaining tortillas.
- Bake for 13 minutes or until crisp and golden brown.
- Top with queso, guacamole and/or pico de gallo, if desired.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 1 burrito, without toppings. Per serving: 339 calories, 20.4 g protein, 15.7 g fat, 25.5 g carbohydrates, 1.9 g dietary fiber, 635 mg sodium, 1.1 g sugars, 66 mg cholesterol

GEORGANN HUNT | PEDERNALES EC



**Cook's Tip:** I boil my chicken in water that has been seasoned with cumin, salt, pepper, garlic and onion. But you can use a roasted chicken from the grocery store deli.

### Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Tell us your favorite Tex-Mex recipe ingredients or let us know about a great local restaurant by visiting the TCP Kitchen page on our website and entering your comments at the end of the story. You can also visit us on Facebook.

### \$100 Recipe Contest

March's recipe contest topic is **Say Cheese**. Whether used as an accompaniment, a topping or as the main feature of a meal, ooey, gooey cheese draws a crowd. Does everything go better with cheese? Send us your recipes. The deadline is November 10.



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## Courage

What is courage? That word often might make us think about members of the military, especially in November when we celebrate Veterans Day. We also might think of first responders and the courage they demonstrate. But the photos you sent us depicted other examples of courage, including the courage to be goofy.

ASHLEY CLARY-CARPENTER

### Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Don't be afraid to check out more photos of courage on our website.



▲ 'Gunter Fire and Rescue was practicing fire extinguisher training. I had taken several pictures [and] while going through the pictures later, I saw this one, which turned out to be one of my favorites,' writes **Jonathan Logan**, Grayson-Collin EC. 'The firefighter is unknown, which I enjoy because it represents every one of the firefighters there that night.'



▲ **Heather Mullet**, CoServ Electric, came across this piece of paper deteriorating in the soil in her backyard. She had just moved to Little Elm and knew no one, and her future was uncertain. 'Someone was trying to tell me something and that everything was going to be OK,' she writes.



◀ Being silly takes courage, says **Cristal Torres**, Magic Valley EC, of her mother **Maria E. Chávez**. 'She doesn't care to be silly in the presence of her loved ones, and that is what I love about her. She takes the risks of having an amazing memory for life,' Cristal writes of this photo of Maria and a family friend.



Wise EC's **Annette Stephens** says grandson **Stuart Loran** began climbing a tree by a creek bed and became scared, but Oscar encouraged him to go on. ▼



## Upcoming Contests

**January Issue: Looking Up** Deadline: November 10

**February: Looking Down** **March: Stairways**

All entries must include name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo. **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.

## Pick of the Month

### Wild West Days

**Winnsboro** [November 15-17]

(903) 342-1300, thelegendsofcrossroads.com

*Winnsboro is keeping the Old West alive. Enjoy historical re-enactments, food and music and compete to be the best-dressed cowgirl or cowboy on the range.*



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## November

### 01

**Gainesville** [1-2] Arts & Crafts Sell-A-Rama, (940) 665-4472

### 04

**Walburg** Wurstbraten, (512) 863-3065, zionwalburg.org

### 06

**Harlingen** [6-10] Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, (209) 227-4823, rgvbf.org

### 07

**Plano** [7-10] 'Neath the Wreath Holiday Gift Market, (972) 769-0557, neaththewreath.org

### 08

**Stephenville** Veterans Ball, (817) 907-9038

**Bastrop** [8-9] Veterans Day Car Show, (512) 303-0558, bastropdba.org/vets

**Wimberley** [8-9] Civic Club Home Tour, (512) 847-1673, visitwimberley.org/civicclub



**November 6-10**  
**Harlingen**  
**Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival**

### 08

**Fredericksburg** [8-10] Die Künstler Fine Art Show & Sale, (830) 456-0196, diekunstler.com

### 09

**Buda** Dream of Hopes Ranch Fall Festival, (512) 791-0160, dreamofhopesranch.org

**The Colony** American Heroes: A Salute to Veterans Festival & Fireworks, (972) 625-1106, saluteamericanheroes.com

**Smithville** Airing of the Quilts and Tour of Homes, (512) 237-2323

**Waco** Tellabration 2013!, (254) 717-1763

**Woodville** Big Thicket Ren Faire, (409) 200-0331, bigthicketrenfaire.org

**Glen Rose** [9-15] Oakdale Park Woodcarving Rally, (254) 897-3081, glenrosetexas.net



## GAS UP AND GO!

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

16

**Andice** Christmas in the Country,  
(254) 368-7046

**Mason Wood & Wire** Bluegrass Band,  
(325) 347-6781, [theodeontheater.com](http://theodeontheater.com)

**Tenaha** Festival Along the Tracks,  
(936) 248-3841

**Trinity** Marina Village Resort Classic Car  
Show, (936) 355-4024

22

**Brenham** Victorian Christmas Tea & Flower  
Show, (979) 836-0564

**Milam** [22-23] Settlers Day, (409) 625-4876,  
[milamsettlersday.org](http://milamsettlersday.org)

**Kerrville** [22-24] Sleigh Bell Boutique,  
(830) 285-8664, [sleighbellboutique.com](http://sleighbellboutique.com)

23

**Hempstead** [23-24] Civil War Weekend,  
(979) 826-3126, [liendoplantation.com](http://liendoplantation.com)

23

**Nacogdoches** [23-12/14] Nine Flags Festi-  
val, 1-888-653-3788, [nineflagsfestival.com](http://nineflagsfestival.com)

27

**Luling** [27-1/1/2014] Lighted Yule Trail,  
(830) 875-3214, ext. 3

30

**Anderson** Twilight Firelight, (936) 873-2633

## December

03

**Abilene** City Sidewalks, (325) 676-2556,  
[abilenevisitors.com/calendar](http://abilenevisitors.com/calendar)

03

**Conroe** Christmas Tree Lighting,  
(936) 522-3500, [playinconroe.com](http://playinconroe.com)



**November 9-15**  
Glen Rose  
Oakdale Park  
Woodcarving Rally

**December 4**

**Kyle**  
Santa's Arrival  
and Tree Lighting  
Ceremony

04

**Kyle** Santa's Arrival and Tree Lighting  
Ceremony, (512) 268-4220, [kylechamber.org](http://kylechamber.org)

05

**La Grange** Schmeckenfest—Wassail Tasting  
Festival, (979) 968-3017

### Submit Your Event!

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your event for January 2014 by November 10, and it just might be featured in this calendar!

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Like a mirage, the camels disappeared long ago, yet an oasis thrives in the heart of the Hill Country

BY BOB McCULLOUGH

CARAVANS OF DRIVERS, BIKERS, CYCLISTS and hikers daily trek through Camp Verde, midway between Bandera and Kerrville at the junction of State Highway 173 and Ranch Road 480. Those who pause at the Camp Verde General Store & Post Office treat themselves to an oasis-like experience—relaxation, good food and trade in the form of a gift shop filled with art, candles, jewelry, candy, lotions, kitchen gadgets, dishes, casual footwear, souvenirs and made-in-Texas jams, jellies and salsas, to name a few.

Its roots go back to 1857 when the Williams Community Store was established to supplement the needs of soldiers assigned to Camp Verde, where the Army began testing camels from the Middle East as pack animals for lugging supplies to other forts on the Western frontier. A state historical marker on a pastoral lane about a mile west of the store marks the site where the camels outperformed horses and mules, but the Civil War and lack of funds ultimately doomed the experiment in 1869.

“The soldiers weren’t allowed to drink at the fort, so it’s believed that the com-

munity store might have been a Wild West saloon,” wrote Joseph Luther, author of “Camp Verde: Texas Frontier Defense” (The History Press, 2012), in his book about Camp Verde and Bandera Pass. The pass, 3 miles south of Camp Verde, has served for centuries as a natural gateway through the rugged hills for Native Americans, explorers, soldiers, Texas Rangers, settlers and, in more recent times, those eager to visit the picturesque limestone store and post office on the north bank of Verde Creek.

Today the Camp Verde store with its rustic décor attracts not only growing numbers of visitors but also locals who live on nearby ranches and drop by to pick up mail from the post office that opened in 1887. This is particularly true around lunchtime, when a restaurant built in 2012 that connects to the store turns out tasty plate lunches, salads and house-specialty sandwiches such as the Ooh La La, with roast beef, Swiss cheese and grilled onions. Guests have the option of eating in the airy dining room or on tree-shaded patios. They can complete their meal with frozen yogurt,

gelato or sorbet and a choice of crunchy and sweet toppings.

Each December, camels play key supporting roles with sheep, shepherds and wise men in Nativity scenes telling the Christmas story, but the image of a camel gets top billing on innumerable Camp Verde shopping bags that leave the store filled with holiday gifts. Shoppers particularly enjoy generous discounts when the store sets aside a Saturday—December 14 this year—for a daylong open house.

Santa Claus patiently listens to wishes from kids of all ages, a band serenades on the patio and several thousand guests come and go during the day to take advantage of bargains. During their stay, they can sample complimentary food items such as snacks, sweets, soft drinks and wine.

Yes, the camels have gone away, but statues and images of the sturdy beasts permeate the store inside and out. They’re reminders of a unique slice of Texas history and the reason for a Hill Country oasis.

Bob McCullough is a writer in the Hill Country.

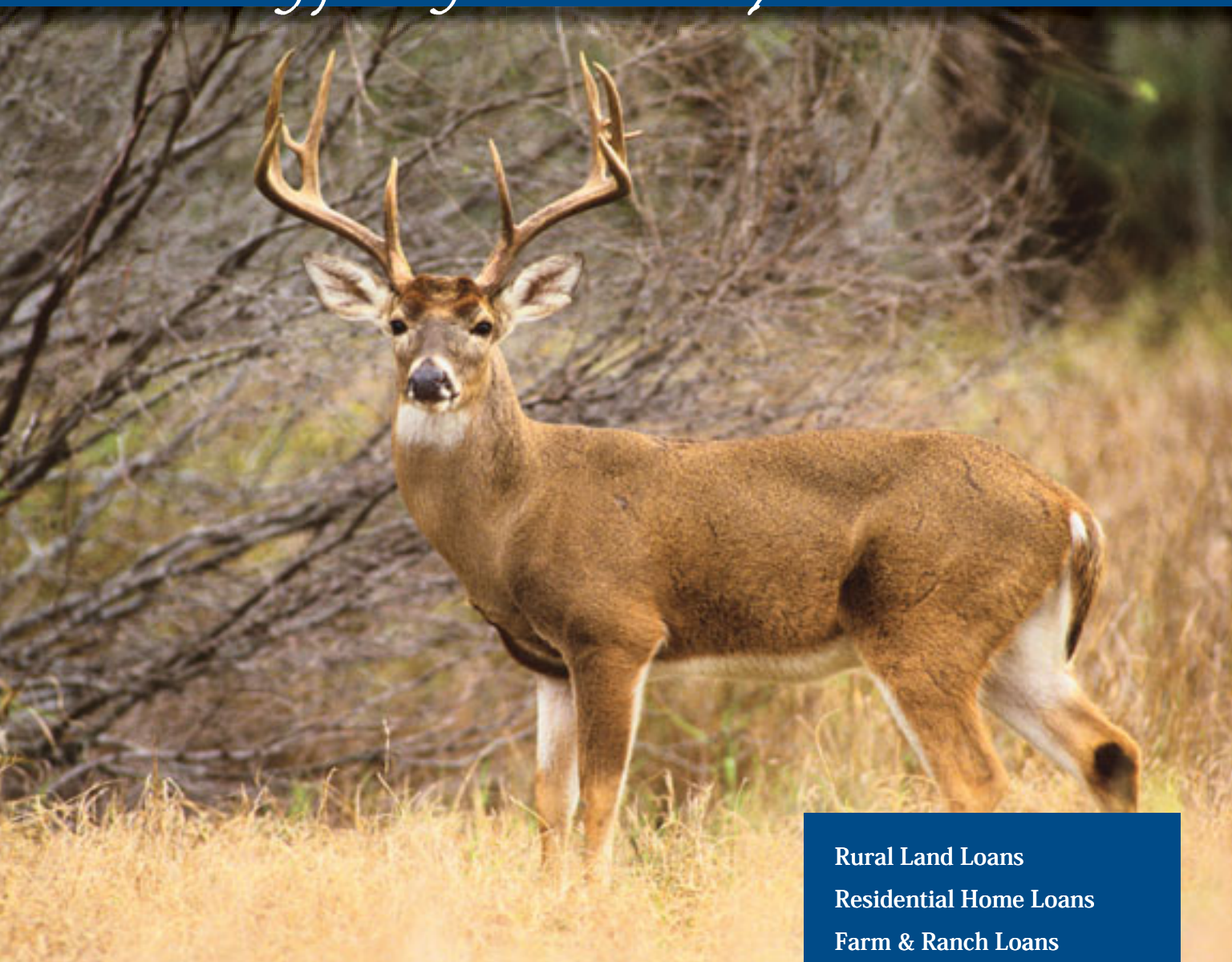


**STOCKING UP:** The Camp Verde General Store & Post Office caters to passers-by and residents by offering dining and shopping options, with special attention given to holiday gift giving. A century and a half ago, the store helped meet the needs of soldiers involved in nearby Army experiments using camels as pack animals.





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