

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

TASTY TIDINGS

Pecan-studded shrimp
floating on sea of greens
gets grand prize



\$5,000 HOLIDAY RECIPE CONTEST
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Best Main Dish, Side Dish,
Appetizer and Dessert
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Texas USA

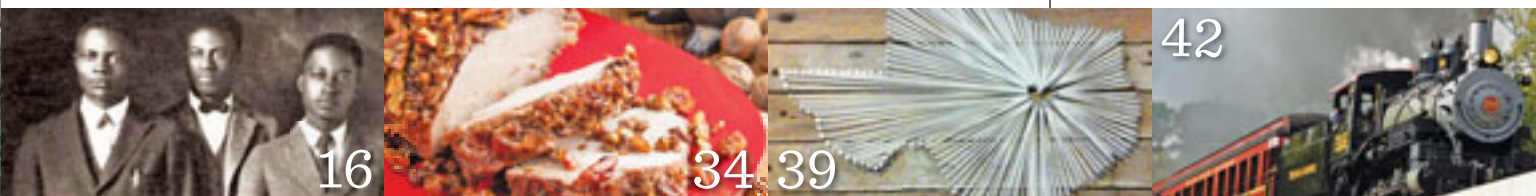
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By Suzanne Haberman



COVER PHOTO *Peggy Dickerson's fabulous shrimp dish is the grand prizewinner in the 2013 Holiday Recipe Contest.* *By Rick Patrick*

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Web Extras

Just finished reading the October issue and want to tell you how much I enjoy each issue.

The "Rust in Peace" article [October 2013] is super. I followed up on the "additional info" leads at the end of each article. Wow! The slideshows are great additional information.

Needless to say, I have registered for the E-Newsletter and am eagerly waiting for the next issue. The articles are also good leads for new places to visit.

DAVID THEIS | PEDERNALES EC



Hero from Central Texas EC

On September 23, my husband and I were en route to Seminole Canyon State Park when we had a blowout on a tire on our travel trailer. We were stranded between Llano and Mason, a short way from Art.

My husband is 78 and I am 77, and there was no way either of us could change a tire. An employee of Central Texas Electric Co-op stopped to help us. Bo Brown removed some damaged metal from the underside of the trailer and made note of the size tire needed.

Ghost Towns

Thank you for Suzanne Haberman's story "Old Haunts" [October 2013]. Best writing I have ever enjoyed in your publication. And I have appreciated your (feels like) free magazine very much for well over a decade.

Also delighted y'all featured the Madisonville 'shroom festival. Hope it inspires new foragers to go to the [Big] Thicket for so much more than fungi.

TINA STRONG | PEDERNALES EC



He went into Mason and sent a man to our rescue. An employee of Dipstick's Tire & Lube brought a new tire and repaired the situation for us.

We are most thankful to Bo Brown for his help. [Randall "Bo" Brown, a first-class lineman, has been with CTEC for 28 years.]

BILLIE AND CHARLES FUCHS | BARTLETT EC

Internet Access

I agree with the reader's comment about the lack of reliable, affordable Internet access to rural citizens ["Empowering Members," October 2013 Letters].

At least here in Comanche County, we're still in the stone ages. The only Internet access available in rural areas is either with the phone company, which requires a landline and all the assorted monthly charges associated with it, or the very unreliable satellite access.

BARBARA MILLER | VIA FACEBOOK

Fracking Facts

You had an item that said George Mitchell "developed hydraulic fracturing" ["'Father of Fracking' Changed World's Energy Balance," October 2013]. This is incorrect.

The Stanolind Oil and Gas Corp. (now BP) held the patent on fracking in the early 1950s. Mitchell used

fracking a lot, but is not the father of the process.

JIM WAGGONER | TRINITY VALLEY EC

Travis' Ring

Rebecca Cummings ["William Travis' Ring," October 2013] is my relative. I am very curious how Martha Deeringer learned of the information for her article.

The article mentioned a brooch that Travis gave to her. I hadn't heard that before. I have been searching and searching for a photo of Rebecca.

I enjoyed your article, and it is exactly the story that I also know, which was told to me by my father, Kenneth Cummings.

LYDIA CUMINGS | COLLEGE STATION

Editor's note: We spelled Rebecca Cummings' name with two m's, as is found in numerous historical documents. Lydia Cumings explains the way she spells her name: "The spelling of Cumings is correct with one m. In the book 'William Barret Travis: His Sword and His Pen' written by Martha Anne Turner, on Page 141 is a picture of a document that Rebecca signed using just the one m in Cumings. We think that the spelling has just become confused over the years."

Mineral Wells Memories

I was raised in Mineral Wells [Hit the Road, October 2013]. My dad was stationed at Camp Walters. My honey and I went to grade school and high school there. We married and had two sons there. We moved to East Texas in 1954.

That cold crystal water was so good when we walked home from school and we would stop and get a glass of it.

It's good to go back.

MARGARET KING | WOOD COUNTY EC

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HAPPENINGS

A Night in Bethlehem

Every year for more than a decade, the First Baptist Church of Livingston has transformed Pedigo Park into a re-creation of the village of Bethlehem, including the Nativity scene. The event, A Night in Bethlehem, is scheduled for December 7-9 this year.

The church's congregation, many of whom are members of Sam Houston EC, works more than 1,500 hours to complete the transformation, which includes two large pavilions and one tent with shops, animals, live music and more than 100 actors in period costume. The FBC's Worship Choir, which comprises 100 singers and entertains several hours each day, began preparations in August.

More than 3,500 visitors are expected this year.

INFO: (936) 327-4417, fbclivingston.org

Waxahachie Washout

When two scientists won the Nobel Prize in physics on October 8 for research conducted in Switzerland that proved the existence of a subatomic particle believed to give mass to all other matter, the newsroom at the Waxahachie Daily Light was nailing down coverage of the police chief's contract and an upcoming ghost walk downtown.

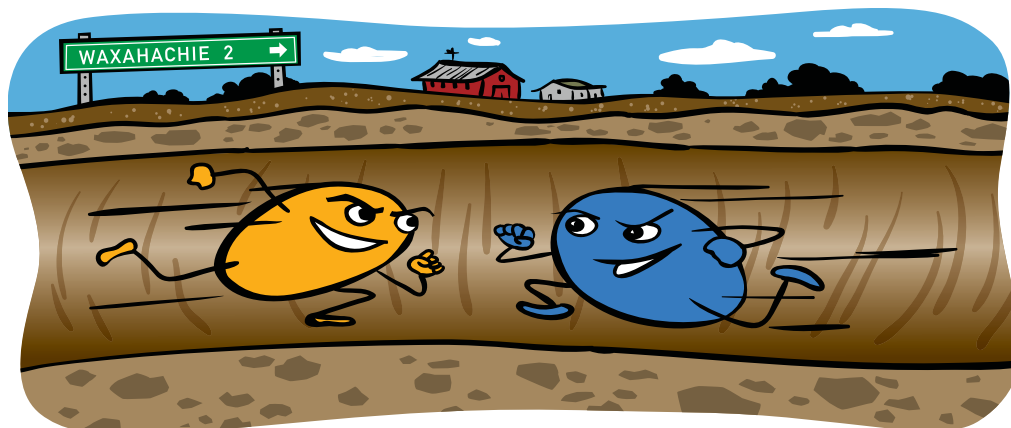
The real ghost walk occurred 20 years earlier when Congress yanked funding to finish constructing the Superconducting Super Collider, a 54-mile circular laboratory being built under Waxahachie. The SSC would have given researchers the ability to smash subatomic particles into each other at nearly the speed of light as they searched for the existence of the Higgs boson, also called the "God particle."

Construction on the SSC began in 1991, and 15 miles of tunnel were dug. But in 1993, after \$2 billion had been spent on the Waxahachie project, Congress canceled it. That opened the door for the discovery, described by The Wall Street Journal as "one of the seminal moments of modern science," to be made at Switzerland's massive particle accelerator, known as CERN, in 2012.

That also left one scientist lamenting what might have been in Texas.

"We would have all this settled long ago if Congress had not foolishly canceled a great scientific project that was going to be built here in Texas," University of Texas theoretical physicist Steven Weinberg told KUT News in July 2012.

Today, the SSC site is home to the chemical manufacturing company Magnablend.



A Really Old Testament

Hey, Texas, your incunabulum (in-kyə-'na-byə-ləm) is showing.

Actually, it's been on display for more than 35 years and has been around for centuries.

Incunabula (from the Latin word for bands holding the baby in a cradle) are books printed during the earliest period of printing, before 1501. Texas has a copy of one of the world's most famous incunabulum—the Gutenberg Bible—printed about 1455 in Germany by Johann Gutenberg. The University of Texas shows the incunabulum at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin. The display has been in place since the university purchased the Bible in 1978.

Read more about the Gutenberg Bible—including the history of the printing press and UT's acquisition and handling of the book—in this month's Observations.



WHO KNEW?

The Recipes Don't Lie

Lutefisk is a traditional holiday fish dish eaten by people of Nordic backgrounds (see “How We Make Our Spirits Bright,” Page 8). The recipe calls for dried codfish, reconstituted using lye, commonly known as a caustic chemical used to make soaps and drain cleaners.

The toxic nature of lye led the state of Wisconsin, which has a large Scandinavian population, to pass a workplace safety law that exempts lutefisk from being classified as a toxic substance, according to smithsonianmag.com.

But lye is used in preparing foods other than lutefisk. A bath in water and lye right before baking is what gives pretzels “their terrific color, texture and flavor,” the Los Angeles Times reported. And lye, the Times continued, is used in making hominy, the curing of olives and the canning of mandarin oranges.

CO-OP PEOPLE

Take a Book, Leave a Book

A Little Free Library is an outdoor cabinet that houses books to take or leave—for free. They have been sprouting up in neighborhoods across the planet. And now you can find one in Frisco.

The Ladybug Little Free Library in the Panther Creek neighborhood is part of a grassroots literacy movement started three years ago in Wisconsin. Now there are about 6,000 such libraries in 36 countries.

CoServ Electric members Marie and Gregory Buggs thought it was a perfect idea for their neighborhood. “We were looking for a community project to work on with our granddaughter,” Marie said.

Gregory built the cabinet, and granddaughter Alexandria Gann, 10, whose nickname is Ladybug, helped pick out its decorations.

“It gets the kids involved. They don’t have to worry about keeping a book so long as they leave one to share,” Marie said.

LEARN MORE about Little Free Libraries at littlefreelibrary.org.



Gregory Buggs and granddaughter Alexandria Gann



Palestine is 4,018 miles from the North Pole. Our Hit the Road this month, “Steam Train” on Page 42, describes the popular Polar Express Train Ride conducted in November and December. That jaunt starts from the depot in Palestine and goes about 16 miles round-trip. It’s a re-creation of the fantastic train journey children make to the North Pole on Christmas Eve in the Chris Van Allsburg book “The Polar Express” (Houghton Mifflin, 1985) and the 2004 film featuring the voice of Tom Hanks.

BY CAMILLE WHEELER

*Around the state, Texans
cling to various traditions,
sacred and secular,
to celebrate the holidays*

How We Make Our Spirits Bright



Cowboy Santa John Compere of Baird and 4-year-old Lilah Love Davis of Hawley are dressed up and ready for the 79th annual Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball at Pioneer Hall in Anson. There is no shortage of ways to celebrate the holidays in Texas, no matter your faith or cultural background.

N

EAR THE TIP-TOP OF TEXAS, WHERE SWIRLING SNOW-storms conjure up visions of the North Pole, Santa rides shotgun in a pickup pulling a flatbed trailer.

Each December, a few days before Christmas, Texline Mayor Jim Smith dons a red Santa Claus suit complete with East German guard boots ordered from an army surplus store and a leather belt sporting a saddle-cinch buckle.

As Santa for Texline's Angel Tree program, Smith delivers presents to children in need in this small town served by Rita Blanca Electric Cooperative. His wig and fake beard cover much of his face, making it hard for him to see, so Smith enlists a driver for a magical night's work on the Texas-New Mexico border 7 miles from Oklahoma. At home after home, Smith grabs wrapped presents off the trailer, knocks on front doors and greets wide-eyed youngsters with a booming "*Merry Christmas!*"

From his red Santa hat down to the faux white fur lining his boot tops, Smith looks like the real thing. And with the suit's belly pad bulking up his 6-foot-2-inch, 245-pound frame, "I'm plenty fat," Smith says.

One year, a boy wasn't home when Smith came calling. Later that night, after his Santa rounds were completed, Smith and his wife, Pamela, saw the boy at a restaurant. When Pamela told the lad that Santa had dropped his gifts off at their house for safe-keeping, he incredulously sputtered that he had just seen Santa at school the day before. Why hadn't Santa handed over the goods then?

Texline's youngsters see Smith year-round, but most of them never seem to recognize him as Santa. Wonderful, says the 66-year-old Smith: "I want 'em to believe."

And from the Panhandle to the South Texas border, we do. Granted, as Texans representing many different cultures, we might not all believe the same thing. But during this special time of year when myriad faiths, ethnicities and community events share space on jam-packed calendars, we can honor the heritages from whence we came: African. Asian. Czech. Danish. German. Irish. Lebanese. Mexican. Norwegian. Polish. Spanish. Wendish.

During this Christmas season, which much of the state celebrates, we can embrace diversity. Those of Judaic faith, for example, ask us to understand that Hanukkah, an eight-day holiday that ends December 5 this year, is not the Jewish Christmas. The holiday begins on the 25th day of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar, which can fall at any time from late November through late December. Hanukkah, which means "dedication" in Hebrew, commemorates the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem in 165 BC after it was defiled. The rededication required that the menorah, or candelabra, be lit. There was only enough oil to burn for one day, but miraculously, the oil lasted eight days. As part of traditional Hanukkah celebrations, Jewish families light candles in a menorah: One of eight candles is lit each night with a ninth candle called a *shamash*, or helper.

And the members of the African-American community staging big events in Dallas and Houston invite fellow Texans to experience a nonreligious, cultural holiday called Kwanzaa. Its name is derived from the phrase *matunda ya kwanza*, which means "first fruits" in Swahili, the most widely spoken African



TOP: The Jewish holiday of Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights, features the lighting of candles on a menorah, one each night for the eight-day celebration. A ninth candle is called a *shamash* or helper. **BOTTOM:** Many African-American Texans celebrate Kwanzaa, the nonreligious holiday celebrating family and community. Events often feature African dance, music and richly colored traditional clothing.

language. Kwanzaa, which represents all of Africa as a Pan-African holiday, celebrates family and community. Kwanzaa's seven principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith sound a lot like those by which electric cooperatives abide.

Even if we're too old to believe in Santa, we can celebrate his giving spirit. Sure, it gets a little weird when inflatable elves and reindeer share front yards with Nativity scenes. But before we charge anyone with sacrilege, consider that the modern-day Santa's roots date back to St. Nicholas, a fourth-century bishop in a region that's now part of Turkey who dedicated his life to serving God, protecting children and helping the sick and poor.

As bighearted Texans, we can follow suit. We can give of our time, our money and our love. And as adventurous Texans, we could sample something new this Christmas and holiday season, such as a Spanish-origin folk drama. Or we could be really daring and try a Norwegian delicacy called lutefisk: lye-soaked codfish.

Shepherds of History

IN MISSIONS, CHURCHES, NEIGHBORHOODS AND BACKYARDS across Texas, Mexican-Americans re-enact two Christmas folk plays that Spanish missionaries brought to the New World: Las Posadas, a processional drama that re-enacts Mary and Joseph's search for a *posada*, or inn, on the eve of Jesus' birth; and Los Pastores, an elaborate Nativity drama performed in Spanish starring the *pastores*, or shepherds, alongside masked and costumed angels and devils.

There's no more appropriate setting than San Antonio, which arose from the establishment of Spanish missions almost 300 years ago, to watch both annual performances. La Gran Posada, considered Texas' oldest version of this drama, winds its way through downtown San Antonio to historic San Fernando Cathedral. Participants and tourists who join the procession follow costumed actors to the church, where festivities include a mariachi band and choir performance. San Fernando Cathedral first staged the play in 1731, when the church was founded.

About 5 miles south, Los Pastores performances are held yearly at Mission San José at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Performed outdoors by members of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Los Pastores is more than a play: It's a ministry of telling the story of Christ's birth via a rich, ancient tradition, says 42-year-old Deborah Covarrubia-Barcenez, a cast member since the age of 6. She portrays Tebano, a lead shepherd role she inherited from her grandfather, who now plays the hermit.

Stuffed to the Gills

EVERY OCTOBER, CRANFILLS GAP NATIVE RUTH TAYLOR orders 75 to 100 pounds of codfish from Olsen Fish Company of Minneapolis. The dried fish, which doesn't require ice for travel—but does carry a distinct odor—arrives around Halloween in cardboard boxes at the Cranfills Gap school. "The UPS man is always glad to get that off the truck," Taylor says.

From that point on, it's all hands on deck in preparation for the Cranfills Gap Lutefisk Dinner, a December fundraiser for the school district and a feast that celebrates the Norwegian heritage of this Central Texas town northwest of Waco served by United Cooperative Services.

The codfish arrives almost as hard as a rock—like jerky, Taylor says—and in long fish sticks, which the high school agriculture teacher cuts into 3-inch pieces with an electric band saw. After ag students pull the skin off with pliers, the fish goes into a 30-gallon water trough for three weeks of soaking and rinsing in cold-water mixtures of lye, lime and then a long bath of cold, fresh water under the twice-daily supervision of a fish master. The final step of boiling the fish in salted water completes its transformation to opaque lutefisk: codfish (*fisk*) preserved in lye (*lut*).

Overcooked lutefisk turns gelatinous, says the 55-year-old Taylor, who helps organize the annual event. But just like the lutefisk she grew up eating in her grandparents' kitchens, the firm and flaky lutefisk produced by Cranfills Gap's experienced cooks is quite good, Taylor says. What does it taste like? She thinks for a few seconds, then laughs: "It tastes like lutefisk."



Hispanic folk dramas take center stage during the Christmas season throughout the missions and churches of San Antonio. **ABOVE:** Celebrating the birth of Christ, Las Posadas re-enacts the journey of Mary and Joseph in search for a *posada*, or inn, on Christmas Eve. **RIGHT:** The event features elaborately costumed actors dressed as the story's main characters, including the wise men searching for baby Jesus.

Beyond the taste, Taylor says, what really matters is the tradition of eating a fish so rich in history. Pre-Christmas lutefisk dinners trace their roots to the centuries-old Norwegian practice of fasting during the Advent season, a time of preparation for celebrating the birth of Christ. During the Catholic Middle Ages, from roughly 1000 through the early 1500s, codfish was dried outdoors on wooden racks, then soaked in lye, rinsed in fresh water, and boiled and served with butter as part of a fasting ritual.

In modern times, lutefisk pairs nicely with the rest of the Cranfills Gap dinner's menu: boiled potatoes, white sauce and melted butter, turkey and cornbread dressing, green beans, homemade bread, cranberry sauce and homemade pies.

The dinner, which can feed 800 people, is a community affair. In roles that Taylor once filled, elementary-school students wearing traditional costumes perform Norwegian dances for people waiting to be seated in the high school gym. Older students serve the meal and handle a host of other details, from filling breadbaskets to directing parking-lot traffic.

He Knows If You've Been Bad or Good ...

DECADES AGO, TEXAS CHILDREN RAISED IN CZECH HOMES didn't look to the night sky for Santa's sleigh. They knew that St. Nicholas was coming to the front door with the devil in tow.

Jerry Janecka, an 81-year-old docent at the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio, recalls his earliest memory of St. Nicholas visiting his family's Central Texas farm in Dubina, the first Czech settlement in Texas.

On December 5, the eve of St. Nicholas Day, the door swung open and there stood three figures: St. Nicholas, the devil and an angel leading the devil by his rattling chains. St. Nicholas, speaking in Czech, asked Janecka, who was 5 or 6, and two younger brothers if they'd been good that year. Don't lie, St. Nicholas



Cranfills Gap Middle School students raise money for their school each year by selling tickets and serving a traditional Norwegian Christmas meal featuring lutefisk, or codfish. Students, from left, Kameron Wiese, Ty Green, Nicolas Moreno and Ricardo Brionez pull the skin off dried codfish that then must undergo three weeks of preparation before being cooked for the annual Cranfills Gap Lutefisk Dinner.

warned: The devil's right here. He bravely responded in Czech, the only language he knew: *Ano*. Yes. They'd been well-behaved.

"I've never forgot it," says Janecka, who later learned that an uncle and two neighbors played the imposing trio. "It scared the living daylights out of us."

But Christmas, resplendent in its simplicities, was a joyful time for the family. Apples, popcorn and lit candles decorated a cedar tree cut and hauled home on Christmas Eve. The family fasted before Christmas Eve midnight Mass and then came home to desserts—kolache, molasses cookies, poppy-seed strudel—and presents. Christmas Day brought a feast of sausage,



A popular Christmas song talks about Santa coming to town, checking his list for naughty and nice children. Many Czech families recall the traditional story of St. Nicholas visiting children while accompanied by the devil. In the story, the devil is dragged in chains by an angel as St. Nicholas asks children if they have been good. Not wanting to be handed over to the guy with horns, the answer was usually *ano*, or 'yes' in Czech.

duck or goose, and gravy and potatoes at Grandpa's house, who gave each of the grandkids a silver dollar.

Dancin' in Anson

INSIDE ANSON'S PIONEER HALL, THE RULES ARE CLEAR: No drinking. No smoking. And no hats worn while dancing.

Yes, dancing, that controversial, boot-scootin' activity that from 1933 to 1987 was illegal by ordinance in Anson, near Abilene. The historic Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball—first held in 1885 and resurrected in 1934—became an annual event while other dances were banned. Today, all public dances in Anson, the ball at Pioneer Hall included, require a \$25 dance permit.

True to pioneer traditions, the Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball keeps pertinent rules in play: Men must check their hats at the door, and women must wear a dress (organizers keep extra skirts in the back room). "If you break those rules," says Suanne Holtman, secretary and treasurer of the Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball Association, "it becomes just another dance."

That's hard to imagine. This storied ball attracts out-of-state and international visitors and one very special guest: a Western Santa who slips in the front door on the final of three nights before the little ones fall asleep. Wearing a cowboy hat (he's exempt from the rule), a red coat, Wranglers, chaps and spurs, and toting saddlebags filled with candy, Santa enters ringing bells and shouting out a hearty West Texas "Ho, ho, ho!"

It's the Christmas and holiday season in Texas: a time to exchange, and appreciate, the cultural gifts that represent our diverse paths. It's a time for faith, family, community, time-honored traditions, new experiences—lutefisk, anyone?—and, above all, love.

Camille Wheeler is an Austin writer.

Web Extras on TexasCoopPower.com

- **Read more:** *Years ago, children raised in German- and Polish-heritage homes knew the Christmas Eve rules: No one touched gifts under the tree until the bell was rung and the parlor door was opened.*
- **Read about Marshall's gift to the world.** *Almost 30 years after a winter of economic darkness, this East Texas festival continues to light the way.*
- **Take in the tastes of the season** with a recipe for Pimentos-N-Cheese shared by the Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball and one for Molasses Cookies handed down through generations in a Polish family.



Worth Seeing and Doing

A sampling of the religious, cultural and community-based offerings around Texas this holiday season:

November 27–December 31, Wonderland of Lights Festival—Granddaddy of Texas' Christmas lighting festivals, Marshall. visitmarshalltexas.org

November 29–January 1, Texas Hill Country Regional Christmas Lighting Trail—Bandera, Blanco, Boerne, Burnet, Dripping Springs, Fredericksburg, Johnson City, Kerrville, Marble Falls and Wimberley create a luminous trail. tex-fest.com

December 4–22, Ford Holiday River Boat Caroling—Choral and folk groups, bell choirs and Latino ensembles ring and sing on boats along the San Antonio River Walk. visitsanantonio.com

December 6–7, Native Arts and Crafts Fair—Handmade items from members of the Alabama-Coushatta and other Native American tribes, Livingston. alabama-coushatta.com

December 6–8, Christmas at Old Fort Concho—Shopping, living history, children's workshops and much more on historic fort grounds, San Angelo. fortconcho.com/christmas.htm

December 6–8, 13–15, 20–22, Fiesta de las Luminarias—Centuries-old tradition lines San Antonio River Walk with thousands of luminarias to symbolically light the way for the holy family. visitsanantonio.com

December 7, Cranfills Gap Lutefisk Dinner—All the Norwegian lutefisk you can eat. Seating times at 4 p.m., 4:45 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. (254) 597-2406 or (254) 597-2505

December 7–8, Dickens on the Strand—Victorian Christmas festival celebrates 40th anniversary, Galveston. galvestonhistory.org

December 14–15, KwanzaaFest—Celebrate African-American heritage of family, community and culture, Fair Park, Dallas. johnwileyprice.com/kwanzaa-main.html

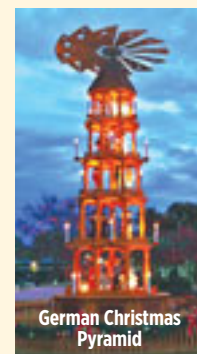
December 15, La Gran Posada—Re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's search for lodging on the eve of Jesus' birth. Evening procession through downtown San Antonio, ending at San Fernando Cathedral. sfccathedral.org, visitsanantonio.com

December 19–21, The Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball—For the 79th consecutive year, they're dancin' in Anson. ansoncowboyschristmasball.com

December 21, 7 p.m., Los Pastores—Folk play depicts the shepherds' journey to worship the Christ child and the obstacles the devil puts before them. Mission San José, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. nps.gov/saan/index.htm

December 26–January 1, Celebrate Kwanzaa—Various venues, Houston. shape.org/kwanzaa.asp

German Christmas Pyramid—Carousel-like wooden structure handcrafted in Germany will remain illuminated through the first week of January in Fredericksburg's Marktplatz. visitfredericksburgtx.com



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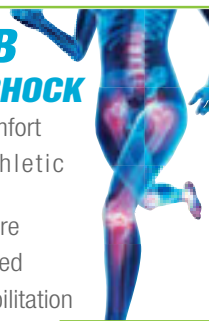
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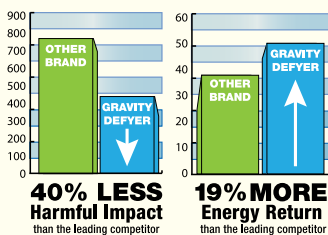
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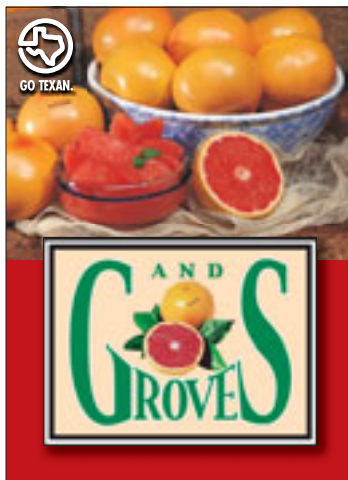
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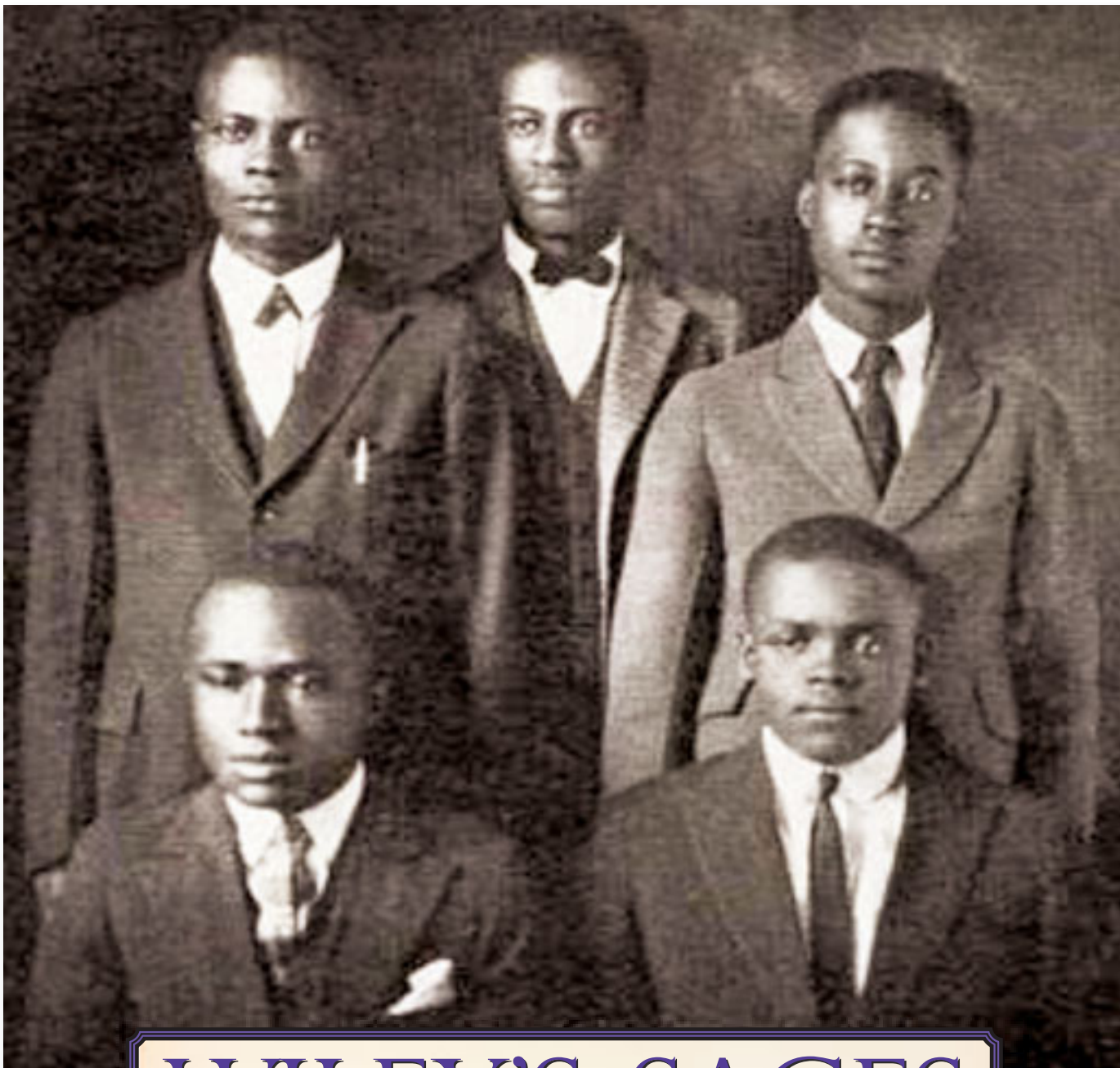
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WILEY'S SAGES

Debate team from historically black college challenged segregated America

BY E.R. BILLS

IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY, color barriers in America were repeatedly broken by black athletes. Jesse Owens was the star of the 1936 Olympics in front of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Berlin. The Brown Bomber, Joe Louis, reigned as the world heavyweight boxing champion from 1937 to 1949 and was a

national hero after defeating German fighter Max Schmeling in 1938. And Jackie Robinson sent shockwaves through baseball in 1947 when he broke into the major leagues.

Even before African-American athletes became household names by eclipsing racial milestones in sports, a group of

students from Wiley College in Marshall were making similar, if not just as dramatic, inroads—not in sports, but in the arena of collegiate debate.

"It's amazing their story is so little-known," says Lloyd Thompson, professor of social sciences and history at Wiley. "They were phenomenal."

PHOTOS COURTESY WILEY COLLEGE

In the fall of 1923, Melvin Beaunorus Tolson took a teaching job at Wiley, a small, all-black college where he wore many hats. Besides teaching English, he wrote poetry, founded and directed a local theater troupe and coached football. Then, on October 28, 1924, he founded the Forensic Society of Wiley College.

Wiley's Forensic Society became Tolson's passion, and he taught aspirers to the debate squad that points of view contained no intrinsic truth. Wiley debaters were not simply taught to defend their own individual, heartfelt opinions or beliefs—anyone could do that. Wiley debaters were pushed outside their personal and philosophical comfort zones and forced to win arguments from both sides, lofty or low, seemingly correct or incorrect. They analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of pro and con stances on an issue and then explored ways to bolster, mitigate or refute the premises and conclusions of each side.

Tuesday and Thursday nights at the Tolson house—where members of the debate team gathered to sharpen their cognitive wares—were not for the faint of wit. The Tolson living room became a philosophical shark tank where opinions were solicited, offered, interjected, dissected, rejected, resurrected, conflated, berated, restated and occasionally perfected. Tolson worked to refine his debater's elocution and delivery. No superfluous gesture, distracting tic, stalling pause or monosyllabic “uhhh” or “well” was safe. Tolson pounced on them like a hawk, cutting them from each team member's oratory.

Surprisingly, some of the debate topics of the day easily could be substituted for the pressing issues of today. During the 1934-35 debate season, forensic contests were based on four questions: 1) Should the international shipment of arms and munitions be restricted? 2) Should the incomes of presidents of corporations be limited? 3) Should health care be available to all at public expense? 4) Does social planning fall under the purview of the federal government?

Tolson required every Wiley Forensic Society member to read hundreds of books, journal essays and magazine articles on history, government, economics, literature and sociology. With their growing awareness and polished dialectic skills, Tolson's polemicists staked out intercollegiate debate as their baseball

diamond, cinder track or boxing ring and began pummeling their opponents.

In more than 100 debates from 1930 to 1940, they lost one competition. After they dominated all the historically black colleges, including Bishop, Fisk, Howard, Morehouse, Tuskegee, Virginia Union, Knoxville and Wilberforce, they scheduled debates with white colleges.

The national forensic organization that governed collegiate debate competition in America was called Pi Kappa Delta, and it restricted participation in events to white students. Tolson formed Alpha Phi Omega to serve historically black colleges, and Wiley scheduled contests with white colleges as unofficial, no-decision affairs.

In early 1930, the Wiley forensic team matched intellects with law students from the University of Michigan, becoming one of the first teams from a black college to debate a white college team in America. The event was held at the African-American-owned Seventh Street Theater in Chicago because most white-owned venues prohibited racially mixed audiences. In March 1930, Wiley became the first black college to debate a white university in the South, contesting Oklahoma City University at Avery Chapel in Oklahoma City.

The interracial debates were controversial, but Tolson considered them

more unifying than divisive. “When the finest intellects of black youth and white youth meet,” Tolson later wrote, “the thinking person gets the thrill of seeing beyond the racial phenomena the identity of worthy qualities.”

Most of the Wiley Forensic Society's exploits failed to make local or state newspapers because Wiley was an all-black institution. But with coverage or not, under Tolson's guidance the Wiley Forensic Society became a polemics powerhouse, with each successive debate squad as formidable as the preceding, dominating teams from institutions three, four and five times their enrollment. They did this while traversing the Jim Crow South on shoestring budgets and circumnavigating “whites only” accommodations and restaurants. By the mid-1930s, Wiley was being called the “Harvard West of the Mississippi,” and it was then that the Great Debaters made their mark.

During the 1934-35 debate season, Wiley steamrolled their usual opponents and then set out on what Tolson called the Interracial Goodwill Tour to debate a number of colleges on their way to California to challenge the reigning Pi Kappa Delta national champion, the University of Southern California.

In the early spring of 1935, they were well-received in Fort Worth when Texas



OPPOSITE: The debate teams at Wiley College honed their skills under the relentless tutelage of English and speech instructor Melvin Beaunorus Tolson, middle. The 1935 team became known as the Great Debaters after becoming one of the first teams from a traditionally black college to challenge and defeat debate teams from white colleges, including the national champion, the University of Southern California. **ABOVE:** The 2013 team became the first from a historically black college to officially claim a national forensics championship.

Christian University made history by becoming the first white college in the South to invite a black college team onto its campus for a debate. Wiley debaters Hobart Jarrett and Cleveland Gay handily defeated the recently formed Forensic Frogs and, afterward, the crowd rushed the stage to shake their hands and congratulate them. Tolson later remarked that TCU “had a splendid team, and we were never received more agreeably anywhere.”

On March 22, 1935, Jarrett and Gay defeated Willis Jacobs and John Kennedy from the University of New Mexico at Texas’ El Paso Negro High School. Next, the Wiley College debaters faced a team from San Francisco State Teachers College before heading to Los Angeles to face USC.

USC put the Wiley team up in dorm rooms, and Tolson subsequently confined them there. USC’s speech department was larger than Wiley College’s entire campus, and Tolson reportedly didn’t want his team intimidated.

On April 2, 1935, Wiley debaters Jarrett and Henry Heights locked minds with the Southern Cal debaters in front of a crowd of 2,200 at Bovard Hall. Based

on interviews and reports of the event, Jarrett and Heights impressed everyone with their erudition and wit and vanquished the nation’s pre-eminent white collegiate debate team.

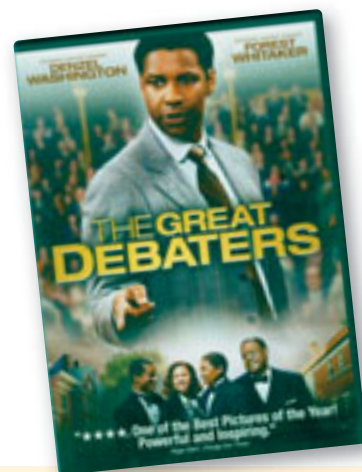
As the contest was a no-decision affair, Wiley College was never proclaimed national champion by Pi Kappa Delta, but they did earn the title of “The Great Debaters,” and their ascent to the apex of collegiate intellectualism was no less amazing or inspiring than the accomplishments of the era’s great black athletes.

“Given the temper of the times in which they lived,” Thompson says, “their success is hardly believable. To hail from a tiny black college in East Texas and reach the pinnacle of intercollegiate debate—it was just an incredible achievement.”

In 2007, “The Great Debaters”—a movie directed by and starring Denzel Washington and produced by Oprah Winfrey—hit theaters and introduced the story of the legendary Wiley forensics program to the American public. Washington subsequently donated \$1 million to Wiley College to re-establish its forensics program, and today it’s back to its winning ways.

In the 2013 debate season, the team made history again when it became the first historically black college to officially earn a national forensics championship. Wiley claimed an individual national title at the National Christian College Forensics Association Tournament held in Siloam Springs, Arkansas, this past March.

E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo.



Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Watch the trailer for “The Great Debaters,” the 2007 film starring Denzel Washington.

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If traveling is part of your holiday plans, taking some simple steps at home before you head out can help cut energy costs and increase safety.

Prepare Your Home for a Holiday Trip

So you're not going to be home for the holidays? Make sure that high winter electricity bills take a hike, too. Here are some recommendations to save energy and keep your home safe if you go away for more than a few days:

HEATING/COOLING: Set your thermostat to 50 degrees. Your home may be chilly when you return, but not cold enough to freeze pipes or damage plants. As a precaution, turn off water at the meter and drip your faucets in case of a cold snap. NEVER leave portable heaters plugged in.

WATER HEATING: There's no need to heat water if no one is home. Turn off your water heater at the breaker, or set it on the lowest temperature setting possible.

WASHER AND DRYER: Unplug these when you leave. They have been known to short out and cause fires when, because of a storm or accident, they become surrounded by water. Also, disconnect the hoses leading to the automatic washer to avoid freezing.

OTHER APPLIANCES/ELECTRONICS: Unplug them all! Many still draw power while plugged in, even if turned off. Besides, an appliance that's left connected can be a fire hazard.

REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER: Set to the warmest possible temperature without spoiling food items, and make sure both are fully packed with space between items. This will help the cold air circulate easily, and fridges and freezers won't have to work as hard.

Besides making your home safer from electrical dangers and helping keep your electric bill smaller, make sure your

belongings are safe, too. Here are some steps to help you avoid putting out the welcome mat for would-be burglars:

DON'T ANNOUNCE YOUR TRAVEL PLANS ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

There's no need to let all of the Internet know that you are three states away and your home is deserted. Instead, share your vacation details and photos when you return home.

SKIP LEAVING (PREDICTABLE) TIMERS ON FOR APPLIANCES.

Setting a timer for your lights and sprinklers is a great idea—just make sure that it's not obvious. If the lights go on at 6:30 a.m. and off at 10 p.m., like clockwork, and sprinklers turn on and off even if it's raining, anyone closely watching your home will know you're gone. Instead, try using several timers with multiple time zones, which can create the effect that someone is moving through the house.

CLOSE BLINDS AND CURTAINS. Don't let burglars do a little window shopping with your belongings. If they see something they like, they might come back while you're away.

DON'T PREMATURELY PUT OUT TRASH. This is especially true if your recycling includes boxes for all those new gadgets you got for Christmas. Instead, ask a friend or trusted neighbor to put out your bins on trash day, and if that's not possible, just skip the trash pickup altogether.

DON'T LEAVE A NOTE. Putting a hold on your mail and newspaper deliveries is a good idea, but leaving a note for a delivery person that you're gone is the same as leaving a note for anyone at your door. Instead, let a trusted neighbor know when you are expecting packages and have them pick them up for you.

Bundle Up Your Home with Insulation

One of simplest ways to reduce your home's heating costs—and improve comfort—involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides resistance to heat flow. The more heat-flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls and floors—wherever there is a temperature difference.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. The longer your heater has to run to maintain a comfortable temperature, the higher your electric bill will be. Proper insulation, though, decreases heat flow.

Heat-flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of multilayered installation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

Insulation effectiveness also depends on how and where it's installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it's important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.



Here are some tips on insulating your home from the U.S. Department of Energy:

- ▶ Consider factors such as your climate, home design and budget when selecting insulation for your home.
- ▶ Use higher R-value insulation, such as spray foam, on exterior walls and in cathedral ceilings to get more insulation with less thickness.
- ▶ Install attic air barriers such as wind baffles along the entire attic eave to help ensure proper airflow from the soffit to the attic. Ventilation helps with moisture control and reducing summer cooling bills, but don't ventilate your attic if you have insulation on the underside of the roof. Ask a qualified contractor for recommendations.
- ▶ Be careful how close you place insulation next to a recessed light fixture—unless it is insulation contact- (IC-) rated—to avoid a fire hazard.
- ▶ Follow the manufacturer's installation instructions and wear the proper protective gear when installing insulation.



Install carbon monoxide detectors away from fans and other air sources to prevent a misleadingly low CO reading.

Carbon Monoxide Dangers

When it's cold outside, keeping your home closed up is the natural thing to do. That can make wintertime a prime time for carbon monoxide danger.

If you have a fireplace, wood stove, attached garage, gas appliances or an electrical generator, you should have a carbon monoxide detector.

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that is emitted through combustion, especially if an indoor appliance is not vented properly or is poorly maintained. It inhibits oxygen intake in the bloodstream and can cause injury or even death in high concentrations.

At low exposure, CO can cause fatigue in healthy people or chest pain in those with heart conditions, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. At higher concentrations, it can cause impaired vision, headaches, confusion and nausea. It may also cause flu-like symptoms that fade when a person is no longer exposed to CO.

To reduce dangers from CO, make sure fireplaces and gas appliances are in good repair, never idle a vehicle in an attached garage and always operate generators outside in a well-ventilated place away from the home's windows and doors.

A carbon monoxide detector can alert you and your family when concentrations of the gas become too high. But, like smoke detectors, if it has weak batteries—or worse, no batteries—it won't do you much good.

Mansion Returned to 'Original Vision'



Nearly destroyed by arsonist,
state's most historic home
restored with authentic and
modern details

BY JEFF JOINER

THE STately home sits in a small, green oasis in the heart of urban Austin. Graced by six 29-foot Ionic columns across a two-story portico, the Texas Governor's Mansion gleams a brilliant white a few years after an arsonist nearly destroyed the state's most historic home.

From its completion in 1856, the Governor's Mansion has endured the comings and goings of 40 governors. Numerous changes and renovations were made to the Greek Revival structure over its 157-year history, most ordered by governors trying to make the mansion more comfortable to live in.

The more the structure was transformed over time, the less it resembled the classic antebellum mansion designed and built by Abner Cook to serve as a "suitable residence" for the state's chief executive. It took a tragic fire to return it to its former glory.

"One thing that history tells us is that every governor changed the mansion in some way to make it their own," says Dealy Herndon, the State Preservation Board project manager who came out of retirement to oversee the home's restoration after the still-unsolved 2008 arson. "Imagine moving into a three bedroom, 19th-century mansion with eight children and there are no closets to hang clothes in. That's what Sam Houston found."

New governors often found the mansion needing serious repair, says State Preservation Board Architect Kevin Koch. Often updates were done on shoe-string budgets with little regard to historic preservation.

"Holes were punched in walls to run wiring and install plugins for lights, as an example," Koch says. "Over time, architectural details were hidden or structural changes made to introduce modern conveniences like air conditioning and plumbing."

In 2007, a major renovation that was to include the installation of the structure's first fire-suppression system was begun. That work was never completed. In June 2008, someone threw a Molotov cocktail onto the front porch, igniting a fire. Photos of the aftermath show the mansion still standing, but charred columns barely hold up the blackened second-floor balcony. Fire and water damage collapsed the roof and destroyed the second floor with most of the debris falling into the home's central hallway.

Because of the renovation, Gov. Rick Perry and his family already had been living elsewhere in Austin, and the home's historic furnishings and art were in storage. Despite that silver lining, some believed the mansion was beyond saving, Herndon says.

"There was not a single inch of that building that wasn't affected," she says, recalling the six weeks she spent devising a plan for restoring the structure.

Herndon, who knew the mansion intimately and who had worked on historic restoration projects for 30 years, said she immediately understood the challenges the state faced. How do you rebuild a treasured historic landmark but make it state-of-the-art, accessible to the public and comfortable for a modern family to live in?

Herndon's plan involved preserving the historic integrity of the mansion, including recovering original architectural details lost to time and the fire, while introducing contemporary technology where appropriate and required.

The home, including public areas and private quarters, was for the first time made compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Kitchens were modernized and living quarters upstairs expanded with office space added for the governor. Until the restoration, there was no place for a governor to work in the private quarters.

Some of the most dramatic changes have been made in how the mansion is heated and cooled. Designed as a 19th-century home that relied on large floor-to-ceiling windows for light that were opened for summer cooling, the mansion was modernized in the restoration with a ground-source heat pump system that made it energy efficient while preserving required historic details such as the original single-pane windows.

Koch says the mansion, even with added living space, is 50 percent more energy efficient with electric bills consistently 30 percent less than before the fire.

"We've been able to show that you can integrate new technology with old construction techniques to maintain sustainability and energy efficiency in a 150-year-old building," Koch says.

He is submitting an application for LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, certification for the restoration. LEED certification rates building projects for using environmentally sustainable design and construction methods. Koch says earning LEED certification would demonstrate the value of saving historic landmarks while working in a sustainable way.

The project required a \$21.5 million appropriation from the Legislature and an additional \$3.5 million in private donations.

In July 2012, four years after the fire, the restoration was completed, and the Perrys moved back into the mansion. This spring the mansion, on the corner of 11th and Lavaca streets, was reopened for public tours.

Herndon, who was also project manager for a 1983 renovation of the Capitol, says the mansion project was the most challenging she's undertaken. She says she wishes she could talk to Abner Cook about what he thinks of his most famous



architectural work.

"This is the closest the mansion has come to look like his original vision for more than 150 years," says Herndon who retired again this summer. "It's so beautifully simple in its design. It's so pure now."

Jeff Joiner is Texas Co-op Power editor.

Information about mansion tours is available by contacting the Friends of the Governor's Mansion at (512) 305-8524 or by visiting txfgm.org.

STATELY AGAIN: The Governor's Mansion in Austin, completed in 1856, now stands in dignity after a four-year restoration project that cost \$25 million and included a 1,700-square-foot addition to the back of the house for more upstairs living space, an elevator, a larger kitchen and increased security. Security became a central issue after an arsonist nearly destroyed the building in June 2008. 'There was not a single inch of that building that wasn't affected,' says Dealy Herndon, the State Preservation Board project manager who oversaw restoration.

Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Follow a digital timeline of mansion history including the governors who called it home.

Turning a Page in the Book of Books

University of Texas' centuries-old Gutenberg Bible showcases pivotal chapter for mankind's faith and knowledge

BY SUZANNE HABERMAN

OLIVIA PRIMANIS LIFTS THE OPEN GUTENBERG Bible from its cradle with her bare hands. The senior book conservator at the Harry Ransom Center removes the more than 550-year-old text from the display case at the University of Texas at Austin and closes the polished calfskin binding, handling the rare book with as much ease as an everyday Merriam-Webster dictionary.

"It doesn't help if you get nervous," Primanis says, explaining her respect for historic manuscripts. "So many of the things we have here have been touched by the creator ... and so we've always realized the importance of the artifact."

In late summer, she and a team are updating the Bible exhibit in the humanities and research library and museum by changing the displayed page of the university's copy of this epic tome. Produced in about 1455, the Gutenberg Bible was the first surviving book printed on a printing press with moveable type.

Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press and process in Germany, and the first book he printed commercially was the Bible. The approximately 180 books printed in his print shop are now called Gutenberg Bibles.

The printing press revolutionized the reproduction of the printed word. Books that once had to be hand copied could now be produced with speed and accuracy through a mechanical process. The subsequent availability of printed texts, starting with the Gutenberg Bible, put knowledge at mankind's fingertips.

"And ownership of and access to

printed texts of all sorts has been incomparably the most significant factor in human intellectual progress over the past five centuries," writes Martin Davies, a curator of the British Library, in "The Gutenberg Bible" (British Library Board, 1996).

Only about 48 Gutenberg Bibles survive today. The book Primanis holds in her arms during the Ransom Center's quarterly page-turning is one of only five complete Gutenberg Bibles in the United States.

The Gutenberg Bible is also "the central text of the religion of the West, the book of books, the source of faith and its palpable expression," writes Davies. "In its earliest printing it is also, in the opinion of many critics, one of the most beautiful books ever produced."

That beauty is subtly on display at the Ransom Center. Two volumes make up the complete text of UT's copy, with each book measuring about 16 inches tall, 11 1/2 inches wide and 4 inches thick, and weighing more than 14 pounds. Most days, they rest—one open, one closed—in a secure and climate-controlled case in the lobby where the "display is all about control of light," explains Ken Grant, exhibition conservator and head of exhibition services.

Even under subdued lanterns, the polished calfskin cover of the closed book gleams, and the open book reveals two of the complete work's more than 1,277 printed pages of still-supple paper, handmade with organic fibers in northern Italy by craftsmen who "knew intuitively what made a good piece of paper," Grant says,

rubbing his thumb and fingers together. “They knew how to make things last.”

Each leaf of the hardy paper stock had to withstand about four passes through Gutenberg’s invention. The mechanism, perhaps modeled after a winepress, imprinted rows of rich black Gothic letters that spell out the Vulgate, or St. Jerome Latin translation of the Bible, common in Gutenberg’s time.

Hundreds of characters—cast in metal in reverse so they could be aligned backward in a frame, dabbed with ink and then pressed on paper—appear woven into two columns of 40, 41 or 42 lines in the Texas copy. The old-fashioned lettering and lack of most punctuation makes the text nearly unreadable to a modern observer even if one did know archaic Latin. Yet the text was by medieval standards “very neat and legible ... not at all difficult to follow ... without glasses,” according to a letter written in 1455.

Hand-drawn embellishments grace the lettering. They include “illuminations” painted in gold leaf and bold, old-world colors on select initial letters; rubrication, or red detailing at the beginning of sentences; and liturgical directions and corrections in the margins.

Handwriting studies hint at the two volumes’ ownership over the past five centuries, wrote Eric Marshall White of Southern Methodist University’s Brid-

well Library in a description and analysis of UT’s Gutenberg Bible. Four scribes wrote in the texts, but only one person, in about 1600, wrote in both, meaning the two volumes are not an original pair.

Clues from the bindings suggest the Texas texts might have served German Jesuits and remote Carthusian monks, White reports, but little is known of this copy’s early history. In the early 1800s, the copy moved to the first-recorded individual owners, traveling from a European book collector to a prince, two earls, a library and, finally, to the private collection of the Pforzheimer family in New York City in the 1920s.

The University of Texas purchased the Gutenberg Bible from the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation for \$2.4 million in 1978. For more than 35 years, the incunabulum—a book printed before 1501—has been on nearly constant display at the Ransom Center.

Primanis has been involved with turning the page for the Gutenberg Bible display for 23 of those years. Before UT’s fall 2013 semester, she places Volume II that had been open to Lamentations on a utility cart near the display with an ease that comes from experience. She takes Volume I from the display case and rests it on its spine beside the second.

She turns to Ryan Hildebrand, book cataloging department head and curator

of the Pforzheimer collection at UT, for confirmation of the page number he says he chose based on personal interest and physical features of the book. “And it’s 121?” Primanis asks.

“One twenty-eight,” Hildebrand instructs, bending to see the penciled-in page numbers, added to the upper corners as a modern study aid, as Primanis thumbs through the book. They’re looking for the end of Ruth and the beginning of I Samuel, where in this copy the number of lines per column changes from 42 to 40 as Gutenberg adjusted the printing process to conserve paper.

Finding Page 128, Primanis supports the open book on her forearms and places it on the display next to Volume II, which she had closed and replaced earlier. She plies to get eye level with the book and slides two supports below the pages to prevent drooping. Then she, Grant and Hildebrand step back in admiration of the artifact that she—and the creator—has touched.

Suzanne Haberman is a staff writer.

Web Extras on TexasCoopPower.com

- Check out *the Bible by the numbers*.
- Learn about the mark of a papermaker.
- Turn the pages of a UT digital Bible.



Harry Ransom Center employees Olivia Primanis and Ken Grant put the finishing touches on the Gutenberg Bible exhibit after changing the displayed page. Hand-drawn embellishments, inset, adorn the first-surviving book printed using movable type.



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Turkey Neck, Dallas County

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Jane Long's Christmas

The woman who is called the 'Mother of Texas' faced unthinkable challenges, including a brutal winter, nearly alone on Bolivar Point.

BY MARTHA DEERING

CHRISTMAS OF 1821 TESTED THE METTLE OF TEXAS PIONEER JANE Wilkinson Long. Jane's husband, James Long, bade her to wait at a small stone fort on Bolivar Point at the entrance to Galveston Bay while he and 52 soldiers set out to help free Texas from Spanish rule. Winter was coming; the nearest neighbors were a hostile Karankawa tribe living across the bay; and Jane was expecting a baby.

Long, the fort's commanding general, promised to return in three weeks. He left Jane, their 6-year-old daughter, Ann, and Kian, a 12-year-old servant girl, in the care of some 50 soldiers on October 19, 1821. Three weeks came and went; supplies began to run low; and winter arrived with a vengeance. A few at a time, the remaining soldiers abandoned the fort.

To their credit, the soldiers pointed out the perils. Jane, 23, was unmoved, and the last soldiers reluctantly left her behind with a few surplus rifles, some ammunition, an old cannon, a few fishhooks, a single fishing line and a dog. Jane provided for her family by fishing and shooting birds.

Born in Maryland in 1798, Jane Wilkinson lost her father before her first birthday and her mother in 1812. Gen. James Wilkinson, the controversial veteran of the American Revolution, was a distant relative, and he adopted Jane. On his plantation in Mississippi, she grew into a remarkable beauty, independent and adventurous.

When she met James Long, a handsome surgeon who fought in the Battle of New Orleans, Jane abandoned her studies and married him. Long practiced medicine, bought and operated a plantation where daughter Ann was born, and then went into the mercantile business. Yet when he was offered the rank of general to head an expedition to Texas, he donned a uniform again.

Jane followed her husband to Bolivar Point after the birth of her second child, Rebecca, traveling by boat and later by mule. She stayed for a month with her sister in Louisiana, and the baby died there of unknown causes. Heartbroken, she joined Long at the battered stone fort, where they lived without furniture or amenities for nearly a year until duty called him away.

Winter blew in on bitter winds after Long's departure, and Galveston Bay froze over. Jane moved her family into a makeshift tent inside the walls, but snow collapsed the tent's roof and dusted the beds with white.

On December 21, 1821, as young Kian lay delirious with fever, Jane delivered her own baby, a third girl she named Mary James. The next day, she went out to collect fish, frozen in the ice, for Christmas dinner. The day after Christmas, seven men



from Monterrey brought a message from Long. His letter explained that he was imprisoned in Mexico City but was well.

Across the bay from Bolivar Point, fires gleamed at night on Galveston Island, where the Karankawa had set up camp since the departure of the pirate Jean Lafitte. One morning, Kian ventured outside the fort and began to scream. Approaching the mainland were canoes loaded with painted warriors. With adrenaline-fueled strength, Jane and Kian turned the aged cannon toward the flotilla. Then she and Kian applied tinder to the cannon and fired. She missed the boats, but the tremendous boom had the desired effect. The Karankawa paddled away.

In March 1822, Jane finally agreed to leave Bolivar Point and accepted passage to San Jacinto with James Smith. She would not receive the letter telling of her husband's death until July, although he had been shot months earlier in Mexico City. His death was an accident, the Mexican government claimed.

In time, Jane opened a boarding house in Brazoria, and legend says she turned down marriage proposals from Sam Houston, Ben Milam and Mirabeau B. Lamar.

Jane is often called the "Mother of Texas" because it was thought that her third daughter was the first Anglo-American child born in Texas. Although researchers have since found earlier births, most feel she earned the title during the lonely vigil of Christmas 1821.

Martha Deeringer is a frequent contributor who lives in McGregor.



2013 Holiday Recipe Contest

SPONSORED BY THE TEXAS PECAN BOARD

We Texans love our pecans, especially when they're native. Again this year, the Texas Pecan Board sponsored the annual Texas Co-op Power Holiday Recipe Contest, and the 2013 grand prizewinner has done our state's favorite nut proud. Peggy Dickerson, a member of Farmers Electric Cooperative from Rockwall, created a delicious recipe featuring Texas pecans, shrimp and a tangy Thai dipping sauce.

Dickerson says she was encouraged by her grandmother to cook and began experimenting in the kitchen as an 8-year-old.

"I like to create new dishes, and I'm really interested in how food looks on the plate," she says, adding that her husband, Gary, teases her about the effort she puts into the presentation of meals. Her eye for delicious taste and presentation earned her the 2013 Holiday Recipe Contest \$3,000 grand prize.



\$3,000 GRAND PRIZEWINNER

PEGGY DICKERSON, FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Pecan-Studded Crowns of Shrimp atop Royal Spring Greens

- 1 pound large shrimp
- 1 3/4 cups Texas pecans, divided
- 3/4 cup cornflakes

- 3/4 cup Panko breadcrumbs
- 4 teaspoons plus 1 cup sugar, divided
- 4 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon crushed dried red pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoons medium-grind sea salt, divided
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup whipping cream

- Dash red pepper sauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- Oil for frying
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons Thai sweet red chili sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon grated onion
- Pinch ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon dark brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 cups fresh spring mixed greens
- 6 dates, pitted and sliced
- 6 ounces goat cheese, crumbled
- 1 beet, roasted and cut into half-inch cubes (optional)
- 1 pear, peeled and thinly sliced

Shrimp

- > Peel and devein shrimp, leaving the tails attached. Finely chop $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pecans. Crush cornflakes to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces. Mix pecans and cornflakes together in a medium bowl with breadcrumbs, 4 teaspoons sugar, sesame seeds, red and black peppers and 1 teaspoon sea salt.
- > In a separate bowl, whisk together the egg, cream and pepper sauce. Place flour in a separate bowl.
- > Holding a shrimp by the tail, dip in flour, covering all but the tail. Next, dip in egg mixture. Finally, dredge in pecan mixture, patting gently to cover the shrimp well. Set aside and repeat process until all shrimp are breaded.
- > Heat 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches of frying oil to 350 degrees in a Dutch oven or electric skillet. Watching carefully, fry shrimp for 3 minutes or until golden brown. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain well on a rack or paper towels. Set aside.

Sauce

- > In a small bowl, whisk together honey, Thai chili sauce, vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil, onion, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt, pinch of ground pepper and 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Set aside.

Glazed Pecans

- > Boil 1 cup water, remaining 1 cup sugar and cayenne pepper 5 to 7 minutes or until just slightly thickened. Stir in remaining 1 cup pecans and boil for another 5 minutes. While pecan mixture is boiling, mix brown sugar and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt. Drain pecans and place on waxed paper. While still warm, sprinkle pecans with the brown sugar mixture and toss. Cool completely.

Assembly

- > Gently toss greens with approximately half of the sauce, dates, goat cheese and beet cubes, if desired. Pile the greens mixture in the center of a plate.
- > On the greens, arrange 3 pear slices in the shape of a pyramid. Sprinkle with desired amount of glazed pecans.

Carefully place 3 pecan-studded shrimp atop the pears and greens to form a “crown.”

- > Garnish with additional pecans and serve extra sauce on the side for dipping shrimp. Store any remaining candied pecans in an airtight container.

Servings: 6. Serving size: $\frac{1}{6}$ of dish. Per serving: 668 calories, 24.2 g protein, 25.2 g fat, 86.1 g carbohydrates, 5.8 g dietary fiber, 1,664 mg sodium, 54.8 g sugars, 145 mg cholesterol

\$500 RUNNER-UP—BEST APPETIZER

DEBRA GIFFORD, PEDERNALES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Gifford says her daughter inspired her pecan crab dip recipe. “My daughter loves crab, and I thought I would try a recipe with crab and pecans. She loved it. She had friends over, and they demolished it.”



Hot Pecan Crab Dip

Hot Pecan Crab Dip

- 8 ounces crab, fully cooked and flaked
- 6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

Recipes

- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cheddar, shredded
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mozzarella, shredded
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise
- 6 to 8 jalapeños, chopped and deseeded
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup green onion, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon crushed garlic or $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped Texas pecans
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crackers
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup melted butter

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine crab, bacon, cream cheese, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Parmesan, cheddar, mozzarella, mayonnaise, jalapeños, onion and garlic in a bowl then transfer to a 9-by-9-inch baking dish.
- In a separate bowl, combine pecans, remaining Parmesan, crackers and butter.
- Sprinkle pecan mixture over top of crab mixture and bake until bubbly, about 20 to 30 minutes.

Servings: 24. Serving size: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. Per serving: 205 calories, 6.5 g protein, 17 g fat, 3.6 g carbohydrates, 0.4 g dietary fiber, 248 mg sodium, 0.9 g sugars, 48 mg cholesterol

\$500 RUNNER-UP—BEST MAIN DISH

KATHRYN WARD, MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

This recipe could have been a failure, Ward says: “This is one of my first ‘kitchen sink’ meals where I just take a little bit of a lot of things I have in my kitchen and create a masterpiece or a disaster. This happens to be one of my masterpieces.”

Honey Dijon Pecan-Crusted Pork Loin

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Dijon mustard
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry white wine
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 cups crushed Texas pecans
- 6 to 8 pounds pork loin

- Mix garlic, mustard, honey and wine with a wire whisk until well combined. Lightly salt and pepper the pork loin. Roll the pork loin in the mustard mixture then roll in pecans until coated well, pressing pecans firmly into the meat.
- Place loin in a shallow 10-by-8-inch glass baking dish, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 1 hour (or overnight).
- Bake at 375 degrees for 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours or until internal temperature reaches 170 degrees. Let rest 15 minutes before slicing.

Servings: 24 (with 8-pound loin). Serving size: About $\frac{1}{4}$ pound. Per serving: 405 calories, 28.2 g protein, 27.7 g fat, 6 g carbohydrates, 2 g dietary fiber, 154 mg sodium, 3.7 g sugars, 83 mg cholesterol

\$500 RUNNER-UP—BEST SIDE DISH

KATHERINE GOODNIGHT-CLICK, FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The East Tawakoni resident says she fondly remembers a squash recipe her grandmother often made. “I wanted to try making a similar squash dish, but I wanted to add my own twist by trying it with pecans.”

Squash Bake

- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups cooked, mashed butternut or acorn squash
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter, softened and divided
- 2 beaten eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup chopped Texas pecans
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup flour

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix squash, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, eggs, milk and spices and spread into a casserole dish. Mix remaining butter, brown sugar, pecans and flour together and sprinkle over squash mixture.
- Bake 40 minutes or until lightly browned and hot.

Servings: 6. Serving size: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. Per serving: 471 calories, 6 g protein, 31.3 g fat, 41.7 g carbohydrates, 4.7 g dietary fiber, 44 mg sodium, 25.3 g sugars, 111 mg cholesterol



Honey Dijon Pecan-Crusted Pork Loin



Squash Bake

\$500 RUNNER-UP—BEST DESSERT

COURTNEY BAUERLEIN, GUADALUPE VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Bauerlein's family comes from Texas pecan country. "My dad is from Seguin, and they love pecans over there, so I grew up eating pecans. I really like sweet and salty flavors, so I added bacon to this recipe to add that saltiness I like."

Bacon Pecan Pie Bars

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 ½ cups powdered sugar
- 1 cup softened butter, divided
- 3 ½ cups chopped Texas pecans, divided, or 1 ½ cups chopped pecans and 2 cups pecan halves
- 1 ¼ cups light corn syrup
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- ½ cup cooked bacon, chopped

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Whisk together flour and powdered sugar. Cut in ¾ cup butter and mix until it forms a dough. Mix in 1 ½ cups chopped pecans. Press the dough into a greased 13-by-9-inch baking dish and bake for 20 minutes.
- After crust is done and removed from oven, raise oven temperature to 350 degrees.
- Meanwhile, in a saucepan, combine corn syrup, brown

Bacon Pecan Pie Bars



sugar and remaining ¼ cup butter. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture comes to a boil. Remove mixture from heat and allow it to cool for a few minutes.

- Using an electric mixer, beat the eggs. Gradually add the syrup mixture. Stir in vanilla and salt. Fold in the remaining pecans and bacon.
- Pour filling over the crust and bake for 30 minutes or until the center is set. Let the bars cool for at least an hour before cutting.

Servings: 20. Serving size: 1 bar. Per serving: 429 calories, 5.2 g protein, 25.2 g fat, 46 g carbohydrates, 2 g dietary fiber, 225 mg sodium, 26 g sugars, 71 mg cholesterol

Web Extras at TexasCoopPower.com

Watch a video of the winning recipe being prepared and photographed for the cover.

\$100 Recipe Contest

April's recipe contest topic is **Strawberries**. Whether it's a wonderful family take on shortcake, a tangy strawberry sherbet or a delicious and healthy drink, strawberries are a great way to usher in spring. The deadline is December 10.

There are three ways to enter: **ONLINE** at 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.

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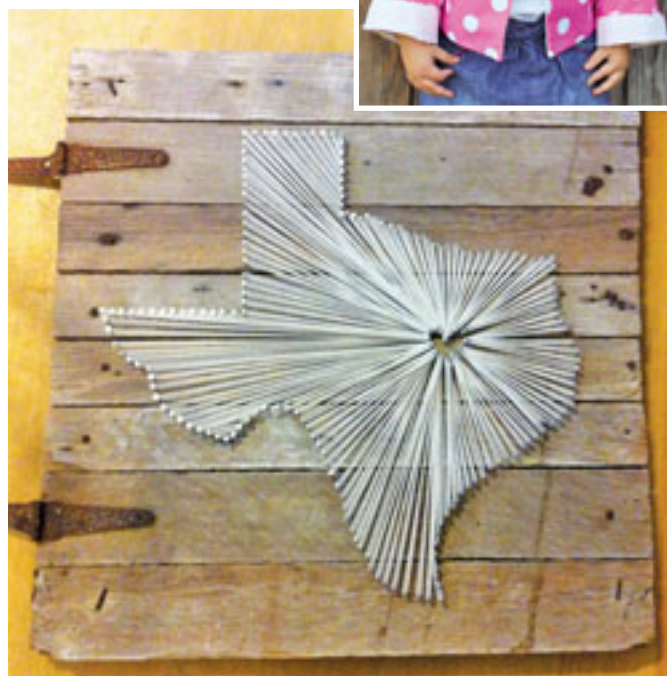
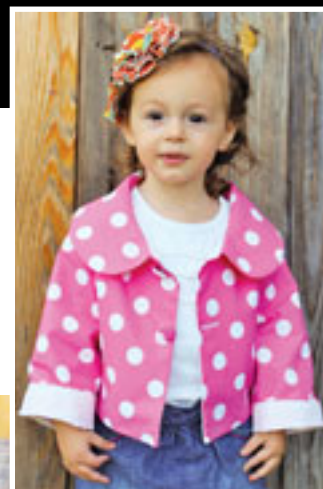
◀ **Jennifer Connor**, Pedernales EC, wanted to make daughter **Maya** something special for her first day of kindergarten, so she fashioned this backpack out of fabric Maya picked. Connor says Maya, shown here with little sister **Maizy** leading the way, couldn't be happier with her one-of-a-kind bag.

Paul Garcia, a Medina EC member who has participated in Alamo battle re-enactments, honored ancestors who fought for Texas independence by carving his 1836 replica flintlock musket with their names. ▶



◀ Mmm, tasty! Or should we say prickly? This prickly pear syrup was made by **Pamela Trede**, Pedernales EC.

Pretty in pink: Fannin County EC's **Ksenia Hudgins'** girl **Mila** shows off her mommy-made jacket. ▶



The West fertilizer plant explosion hit close to home for HILCO EC's **Donna Pustejovsky**, whose family lost a home and farm. Daughter **Kaylee** created this piece with West as the heart of Texas using a small door from a barn on that farm. ▶

Upcoming Contests

February Issue: Looking Down Deadline: December 10

March: Stairways **April: Slow Shutter**

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. **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

Cocoa Sip-N-Stroll

Seguin [December 6-7]
(830) 401-0810, visitseguin.com

Participating downtown stores sell special mugs for sampling homemade cocoa. The evening event also features Christmas music, horse-drawn carriage rides and ornament-making stations. Oh, and a very special guest will be in attendance.



COCOA: YASTREMSKA | BIGSTOCK.COM. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: ERIC1513 | BIGSTOCK.COM

December

05

Jacksonville Christmas Parade,
(903) 586-2217

Nacogdoches A Down Home Christmas Cooking Show, 1-888-653-3788,
nineflagsfestival.com

Abilene [5-27] Christmas Lane, (325) 795-3547, abilenevolunteerservicescouncil.org

06

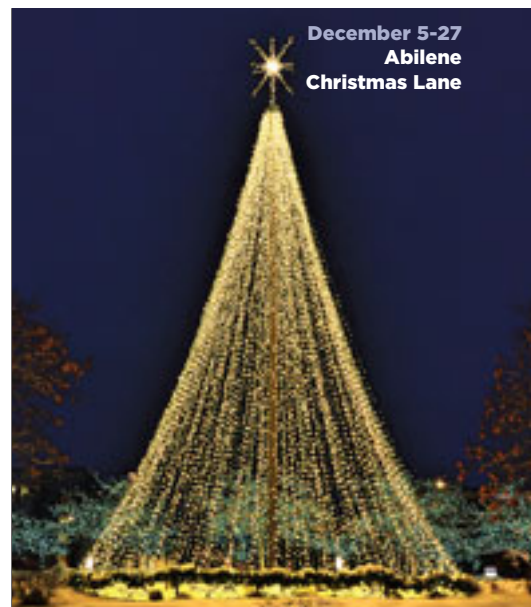
Lockhart [6-7] Dickens Christmas,
(512) 398-3223, lockhartchamber.com

Newton [6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 23-24] Festival of Lights, (409) 489-3066

Denton Reindeer Romp, (940) 349-7275,
dentonparks.com

Gonzales [6-7] Santa's Market Winterfest,
(830) 672-2815, cityofgonzales.org

Palestine [6-8] Frost Fest: A Vintage Holiday in the Piney Woods, (903) 729-6066,
palestinefrostfest.com



07

Buna Christmas in Buna, (409) 994-5586

Cranfills Gap Lutefisk Dinner,
(254) 597-2505, cranfillsgapisd.net

GAS UP AND GO!

Browse hundreds of events from around the state at
TexasCoopPower.com/events

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT IS HERE

DEC 5 - 6:30PM
LIGHTED CHRISTMAS PARADE

DEC 6 - 6:30-8:30PM
COCOA SIP 'N STROLL

Buy an artsy mug and taste homemade cocoa at the shops on the square. Horse & buggy rides, Santa, Christmas music and more!

DEC 7 - ALL DAY
Santa, SNOW, Christmas music, family fun.

DEC 7 - 1-5PM
HOLIDAY TOUR OF HOMES
See historic homes decorated for Christmas.

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

07

Fredericksburg Pearl Harbor Observance, (830) 997-8600, pacificwarmuseum.org

Henrietta Clay County Christmas, (940) 538-5261, hccchamber.org

Port Aransas Carolers Afloat & Boat Lighting Parade, (361) 749-5919, portaransas.org

Port O'Connor Lighted Boat Parade, (361) 983-2898, portoconnorchamber.org

Rosenberg Christmas in Rosenberg, (832) 595-3525, ci.rosenberg.tx.us

Sherman St. Mary's Run Run Rudolph 5K, (903) 436-5502, stmarys-sch.org

13

Lubbock [13-14] Candlelight at the Ranch, (806) 742-0498, nrhc.ttu.edu

Comanche [13-15] Cora's Christmas on the Square, (325) 356-3233, comanchechamber.org

Liberty [13-15] Christmas Under The Stars, (936) 336-7252

Tomball [13-15] German Christmas Market, (281) 379-6844, tomballgermanfest.org

14

Bulverde Living Christmas Drive-Thru Presentation, (830) 980-2813, redroofchurch.org

Sattler Christmas Parade, (830) 964-2461, clnoonlions.com

Snyder Big Country Christmas Ball, (325) 660-8338, westtexasrehab.org

Round Top The Nutcracker, (979) 249-3129, festivalhill.org

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

Ingleside [14-15] Renaissance Faire, (361) 776-2906, inglesidetxchamber.org

Stonewall Boxing Day, (830) 644-2681, ext. 302, beckervineyards.com

December 13-15
Tomball German Christmas Market



31

Luckenbach New Year's Eve, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

January

01

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

04

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

Submit Your Event!

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

CAKE POPS: RUTH BLACK | BIGSTOCK.COM. PARTY BLOWERS: JMBATT | BIGSTOCK.COM

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Texas State Railroad revisits the early days of rail travel and is about to chug into its most popular season—when the Polar Express ventures to the ‘North Pole’

BY KEVIN HARGIS



ALL ABOARD: Engine No. 316, built in 1901 and weighing 79 tons, churns over a bridge as it leads passengers down the historic rail line between Palestine and Rusk.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, THERE WERE no commercial airlines and the automobile was in its infancy. The state of the art in long-distance travel was the steam-powered locomotive. The iron horses no longer roam freely across the country, but in a few select places, they still ply their trade.

One of those is in East Texas' Piney Woods. For 37 years, visitors have gotten a taste of taking the train at the turn of the 20th century with a jaunt on the Texas State Railroad.

I arrived at the railroad's depot outside Palestine one August morning. There, five train cars waited on the tracks for the 50-mile round trip to Rusk, the home of Cherokee County Electric Cooperative Association, and back.

Historical exhibits at the depot held my interest until Engine No. 316, bell clanging, emerged from the nearby storage and maintenance facility in a cloud of smoke and steam, chuffing and puffing into position before the cars. With practiced precision, the day's engineer, railroad General Manager Earl Knoob,

backed the 79-ton locomotive built in 1901 smoothly into place.

Then, the nostalgic call went out: "All aboard!" I settled into my seat in the Lone Star Class car, which features table service and air conditioning, and soon we were underway.

Picking up speed, cars gently swaying, the train moved into the mixed forest of pine and oak. The scenery glided by, peppered with sights such as a beaver-created lake; the Jarvis Wye, a locomotive turnaround; and a trestle crossing 35 feet above the Neches River.

In the hamlet of Maydelle, which houses the railroad's track maintenance operations, an 1890s-era turntable still rotates locomotives during special events.

Not much farther, the train pulled into the station at Rusk for a 1½-hour layover, allowing passengers to eat lunch—the railroad offers catered salads and sandwiches—and explore the depot and surrounding campground.

Then, it was "all aboard" again for the return trip to Palestine, which I took in the open-air car at the back of the train,

where I could hear the chugging of the engine and feel the warm wind carrying the blended scents of pine, creosote and engine smoke.

The full-length East Texas Steam Train Excursion takes about 4½ hours, including the layover, and departs every weekend through early November. Special trips include dinner train rides, one catering to photographers, and, in October, the Pumpkin Patch Express, which makes a stop for seasonal fun near Maydelle. But the most popular time to travel the line is now, in December, on the Polar Express Train Ride.

Running through December 29 this year, the Polar Express attracted more than 43,000 of the railroad's 56,000-plus passengers in 2012, said Janet Gregg, marketing and communications manager for the Texas State Railroad.

During the trip, which covers the 8 miles or so between Palestine and the "North Pole" set up at the Jarvis Wye, families listen to a recording of actor Liam Neeson reading the book about a child's steam train journey to meet Santa Claus. Many passengers wear pajamas, just like the children do in the story, Gregg said, and cookies and cocoa are served.

The narration is timed so that it ends just before the train, decked out in holiday finery, emerges from the dark woods at a lighted village where Santa and his elves board, Gregg said. Then, on the trip back to Palestine, the elves and crew lead passengers in singing Christmas carols.

At a top speed of about 20 mph, the train might not fit the modern definition of efficiency. But for the passengers who travel on it, it's a trip in time.

Kevin Hargis is a staff copy editor.

For tickets and other information, visit the railroad's website, texasstaterr.com, or call 1-877-726-7245.

Web Extras at TexasCoopPower.com

Hear the sounds of Engine No. 316 and read a history of the rail line.



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