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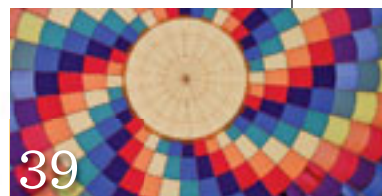
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COVER PHOTO Ryan Halko is surrounded by kolache at the Village Bakery in West. By Rick Patrick

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Homecoming

Suzanne Haberman's article "Old Haunts" [October 2013] made me go back to my youth in the East Texas town of Talco. Though small, Talco was a thriving oil-field town with a beautiful school building in the shape of a T. Now the school lies abandoned. It should be listed as a historic site.

MIKE HAYNES | JUDSONIA, ARKANSAS



Changes in Farming

I was born in Floyd County in 1934, and was raised and lived on a farm there until 1966, when I pulled my family up and moved to Hurst.

A few days before I received my October 2013 Texas Co-op Power, my son and I were checking out the farming operations southwest of Floydada, my old stomping grounds. I told my son that I wondered how the farmers made their rows in a circle so the sprinkler systems could water the cotton without messing up the rows when in operation. The article on the Smith family operation ["Where Cotton Doesn't Shrink"] explained that in detail, and now I know. My, how farming has changed through the years.

We received our first electricity in 1950 when I was 16, and the provider was the Rural Electrifica-

Chicken on Sunday

What a wonderful story by Betty Calcote ["When the Preacher Came to Visit," November 2013]. I remember shooting yard chickens with a .22 (flopping and all) and Sunday dinners on a farm/ranch in Mathis.

Fried chicken in the big city (Corpus Christi) was at a friend's house every Sunday, and I always hoped I'd get an invitation after church.

PHIL ALBIN | ROCKPORT



tion Association, and you can bet that was the best thing we had ever witnessed.

ROY TEAGUE | UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Mayoral Correction

I enjoyed the article "Freddy Fender: A Man for All Seasons" [November 2013]. "The Milagro Beanfield War" is one of my favorite movies. However, Freddy's role in the movie was as the mayor of Milagro—not the sheriff, as stated in the caption.

SHARON JOHNSON | HEREFORD



Game Day Excitement

Editor's note: Because of the fervor over college football in Texas, we knew the September 2013 feature "More Than a Game" would excite

readers. So did a barbed letter we received in response ["Game Day," November 2013]. Many readers took exception to comments published in our Letters section. Here's a sampling of responses:

As a Texas Tech alum ... I am all too familiar with tacky comments about my school. Most of these comments are not intended to be hurtful, but sometimes they cross the line. All the more reason to be disappointed by the publication of such disparaging comments from one of your readers.

SAM WHITEHEAD | PEDERNALES EC

As a proud Texas Tech alumnus, the last thing I want to read ... is the slanted viewpoint of an overzealous Longhorn supporter. You owe all Texas Tech alumni a formal apology.

WILLIAM BULHAM | COSERV ELECTRIC

We are entitled to our opinions, especially when it involves a sports rivalry, but publishing such comments is unacceptable in a magazine designed to reach a broad base.

SCOTT CROWE | PEDERNALES EC

It was disappointing to see that little rant printed in Texas Co-op Power.

SCOTT HUTCHENS | DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

The reaction ... is not unexpected ... but it is unexpected to be published in Texas Co-op Power, which should appeal to all Texans.

LELAND TURNER | PEDERNALES EC

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CO-OPS IN THE COMMUNITY

Sowing Seeds of Awareness

Several Texas electric cooperatives joined a 1,000-mile tractor ride last fall to fight rural hunger. They raised about \$105,000 for food pantries in Central Texas, where nearly 70 percent of public school students qualified for free and reduced lunches in 2012, according to federal data.

Electric cooperative employees from Comanche, Lyntegar, South Plains and United Cooperative Services participated in Tractor Drive 2013: Driving Hunger Out of Rural Texas. They joined lead organizer AgTexas Farm Credit Services, a regional lending cooperative, and local chapters of the National FFA Organization.

"It's been a lot of work, and it's been a lot of fun and very rewarding," said Shirley Dukes, communications and public information specialist at Comanche EC, which hosted three cookouts in late October.

Although the purpose of Tractor Drive 2013 was to raise awareness of local hunger, the co-ops' fundraisers also drummed up support for 32 Central Texas FFA chapters.

Czech Passions Are Mutual in West

The folks in West, 15 minutes north of Waco, might argue that the "Kolach trail," featured on Page 8, begins and ends there. For one thing, the Village Bakery claims to be the first all-Czech bakery in Texas. For another, the town of just 2,800 people boasts three bakeries serving kolache, the fruit-filled pastries with Czech origins that lure travelers to exit Interstate 35.

West's Czech roots run deep—75 percent of residents claim Czech heritage. And when the fertilizer plant in West exploded April 17, killing 15 people, Petr Gandalovič, the Czech Republic ambassador to the United States, visited two days later to offer condolences and lend support, saying the explosion was the top news story in his home country that day. Within a week, that country's government approved 4 million Czech crowns (about \$200,000) to help rebuild a community center.



Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com

HAPPENINGS

Real Find for Artifact Hunters

The Fredericksburg Indian Artifact Show on January 25 at Pioneer Hall in Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park features 65 tables of Native American artifacts and collectibles for sale, including arrowheads, beads and pottery. Winston H. Ellison and N. Dwain Rogers will have their limited-edition book, "The Finest Artifacts of Prehistoric Texas" (Hynek Printing, 2013) available for sale.

The event runs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with \$6 admission for ages 15 and older. Cases are also available for sale to keep purchased artifacts safe. Buzzie's BBQ will offer breakfast and lunch, and door prizes will be awarded throughout the day.

INFO: (830) 626-5561, hillcountryindianartifacts.com

CO-OP PEOPLE

Mid-South Helps Electrify Haiti

Three Mid-South Synergy linemen volunteered with NRECA International Foundation last summer to help electrify two villages in northern Haiti. The work harkens back to the roots of the electric cooperative program, which began in the 1930s to extend electricity to rural Americans.

Larry Finley, Clayten Owens and Bo Williams spent about three weeks in the villages of Caracol and Jacquezy. They helped implement a rural electrification plan by building infrastructure, distributing supplies and sharing tips of the trade with locals.

“It reminded me of the stories I have been told about rural America when our local cooperatives were organized,” says Kerry Kelton, general manager of the co-op based in Navasota. “The lives of our current members and the economic health of our service territory is thriving because people banded together to bring electricity to our rural area.”

This was the linemen’s first trip with NRECA International Foundation, a charitable organization and affiliate of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, which partners with U.S. co-ops to provide electricity to poor rural communities in developing nations.

Mid-South Synergy’s crew of Bo Williams, left in hard hat, Clayten Owens, next to him, and Larry Finley, in bandana, pose with a Haitian line crew and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s Leo Hernandez, in plaid shirt.



WHO KNEW?

Don't Fence Me In

Strange laws are still on the books in Texas. Carrying wire cutters in your pocket is illegal in Austin, according to a law remnant of Wild West days when renegade cowboys snipped barbed-wire fences that didn't belong to them. (See “Barbed Wire, Barbaric Backlash,” Page 14.) This law is featured on websites that highlight dated laws around the country, including dumblaws.com.

Other strange laws and ordinances in Texas:

- It is illegal to shoot a bison from the second story of a hotel.
- In Galveston no person shall throw trash from an airplane.
- It is illegal for children to have unusual haircuts in Mesquite.
- Obnoxious odors may not be emitted while in an elevator in Port Arthur.

2,000,000

Cooperative businesses provide more than 2 million jobs in the U.S. and create more than \$75 billion in annual wages, according to the National Cooperative Bank. The largest co-op sector is agriculture, which accounts for \$139 billion in revenue. Energy and communications co-ops rank third.

BY JEFF SIEGEL

At every Czech bakery along the way, esteemed pastry leads to conversations filled with heritage and pride—and apricot and cream cheese

Eating only one takes some willpower, but if you do, you've eaten a *kolach*. That is the proper singular noun. *Kolache* is the plural word, though most people call them kolaches.



The Kolach Trail

THE BILLBOARD RISES ABOVE STATE Highway 71 outside of Ellinger, reminding drivers they can stop at Weikel's Bakery, some 10 minutes farther west in La Grange, to buy kolache. The billboard is little different from thousands of others advertising roadside stops in Texas, save for one thing. The Weikel's billboard almost towers over Hruska's Store & Bakery on Highway 71. Hruska's sells kolache, too, that are equally as famous as Weikel's.

Think barbecue is taken seriously in Texas? Wait until you hear about kolache.

"Kolache is a symbol," says Denise Mazel, a Czech native and chef who owns the Little Gretel restaurant in Boerne. "Kolache is a small pastry, but to every Czech, it represents family. So everyone is going to say their kolache is the best and their recipe is the best."

Kolache, plural for the Czech word kolach, are one part sweet roll and one part tradition, and have been a Central Texas staple since Czech-speaking immigrants brought them with them in the 19th century. They might not be as famous statewide as barbecue or chili, but partisans are just as loyal, just as opinion-

ated and just as ferocious in their sympathies. Want to start an argument in Hallettsville, home to the annual Kolache Fest each fall? Say something nice about kolache from West or Ellinger or La Grange or Wharton.

Call it a kolache state of mind.

"You can travel across the United States, and at every exit you'll see McDonald's and Jack in the Box and Taco Bell," says Imran Meer, who owns the Kolache Depot in Ennis, about 40 minutes south of Dallas. "Even in Ennis, a small town, we have five Subways. But you don't find kolache on every corner.

That's what makes it unique, and that it's unique is why it's still popular, even after all these years."

A Long Tradition

Anyone who has driven Interstate 35 more than once knows about West, 15 minutes north of Waco and home to three kolache bakeries—impressive for a town of just 2,800 people. But kolache are about more than geography; there are kolache bakeries as far east as Corpus Christi and as far west as Lubbock, and even in the four big cities—anywhere, apparently, where someone has a recipe, often handed down from the old country, and the wherewithal to use it. Still, if there is a focal point for Texas kolache, based on the concentration of bakeries and Czech communities, it's probably the area between Austin and Houston that includes Hallettsville, Ellinger, La Grange and Wharton. Yet residents around Caldwell, near College Station and home to a kolach festival of its own, almost certainly will take issue with that in the finest kolache tradition.

"We eat a lot of kolache here," says Sharee Rainosek of the Hallettsville Chamber of Commerce, who oversees the 19-year-old kolach festival and the chamber's kolache sales (about 500 dozen a year), kolache queen pageant, kolache-eating contest and, for the last two years, the baking of a 6-foot-long kolach. "This is an area with a long history of Czech and German immigrants, and that means we have a long history of kolache."

The pastry can trace its Texas roots to Czechs who settled in Central Texas before and after the Civil War. By the beginning of the 20th century, there were 250 Czech communities in the state, according to the "Texas Almanac." Traditionally, kolache were made at home, with bakery-made pastries unheard of (still true in the Czech Republic). They were made with a sweet yeast dough, hollowed in the center, filled with fruit and eaten as an afternoon snack. Fillings were simple—apricots, poppy seeds, prunes and cherries, all available locally in Eastern Europe. Kolache were similar to other Eastern European pastries such as the Polish *piernik* and a Ukrainian sweet where filling was placed inside rolled dough.

A century later, much has changed, except for the basic recipe. Finding



Twin sisters Jude' Routh, left, and Jody Powers are especially proud of the kolache they serve at Zamykal Gourmet Kolaches in Calvert. Routh holds up a peach kolach, a variety named grand champion at Westfest in 2010.

homemade kolache is becoming more and more difficult, says Rainosek, thanks to the usual 21st century reasons—more women in the workplace, an emphasis on convenience foods and generations further removed from the idea that kolache should be homemade.

Fillings have become almost exotic—pecan pie and chocolate coconut cream among the 30 varieties at Zamykal Gourmet Kolaches in Calvert, for example. The modern bakery, whether the traditional Village Bakery in West, with its lace decor and its claim to be the oldest Czech bakery in the state, or the truck stop-like Hruska's and Weikel's, is now where most people, Czech heritage or not, get their kolache.

Always Evolving

This is part of what Jamie Allnutt, the marketing manager at the Village Bakery, calls the kolach's resurgence in popularity. It's not so much that the pastry ever went out of favor; rather, she says, "people are going back to their roots, and

they want to experience other people's ethnic roots. It makes them happy when they do that, and they can do that with kolache."

She divides the postmodern kolache world into three parts:

- **Gourmet**, where bakeries focus on nontraditional fillings and attempt to update the pastry for the 21st century. Kolache, in fact, have been embraced by the artisan food movement, and trendy takes on kolache are popular in Austin and Houston.

- **Bigger is better**, where bakeries focus on size.

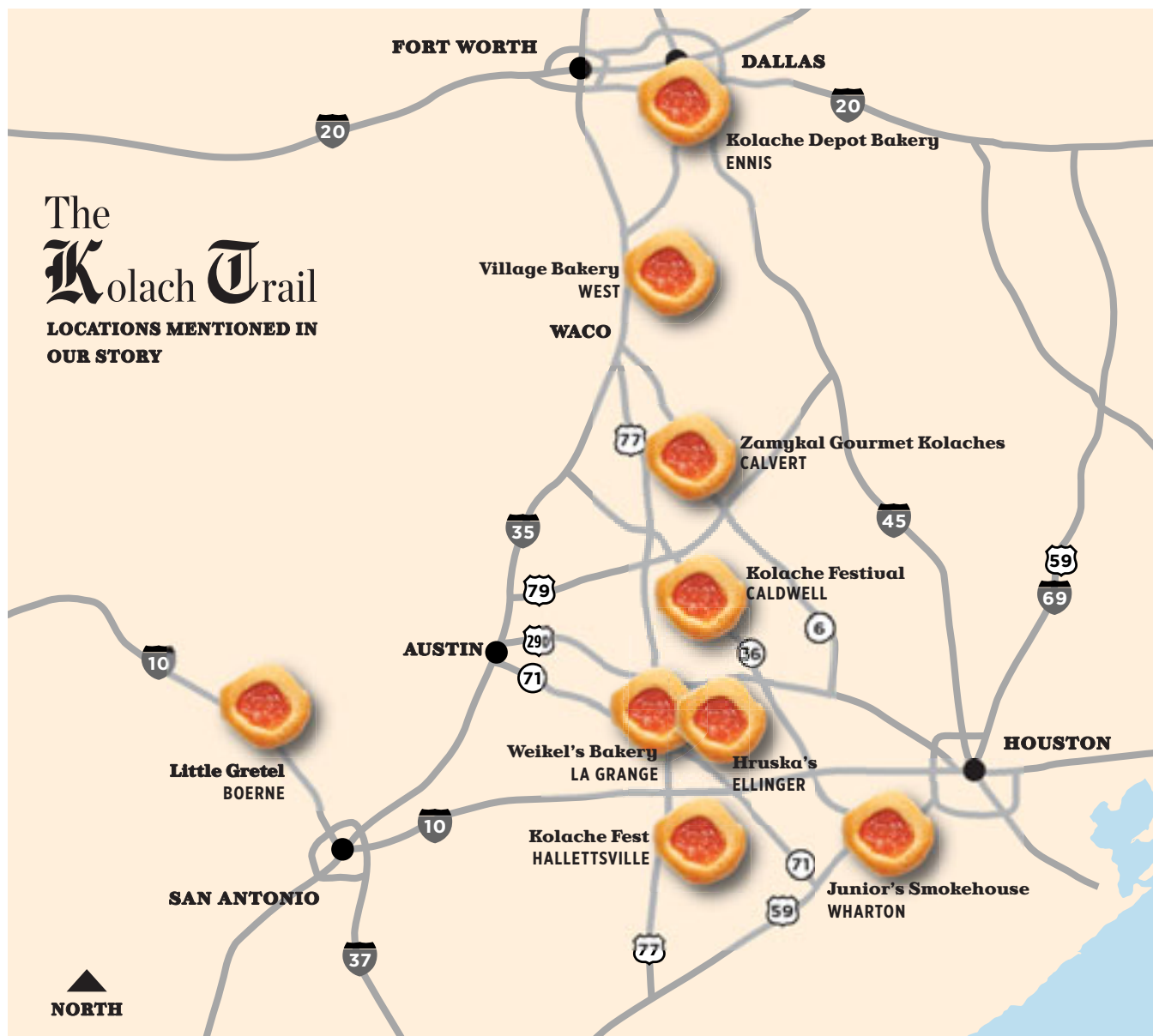
- **Tried and true**, where bakers make traditional kolache as they were made in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Which brings up the question that everyone has an answer for, and which is different for everyone who has an answer: What are the best kolache?

The question can't be answered because, as Jude' Routh, who owns Zamykal with twin sister Jody Powers, notes, "The thing about kolach recipes is

The Kolach Trail

LOCATIONS MENTIONED IN OUR STORY



that every family recipe is different, like every family has a different recipe for meatloaf.”

Each region—no, each bakery—has its partisans, and none of the others measure up, in the same way that two people will argue about whether mesquite and direct heat barbecue is better than pecan and indirect heat barbecue as long as either can take a breath. One bakery’s dough is too soft or too yeasty while another’s fillings are too sweet or too fruity. Or it may come down to the kolach not being round enough, because shape matters. Besides, is that

The Halko family from Georgetown—mom Celeste, dad David and sons Christopher, left, and Ryan—eyeball their options at Village Bakery in West. Ruby Kotch is ready to serve their selections.

other recipe really that authentic? And none of this takes into account the sausage-filled kolach, which isn't really a kolach at all and often brings on another round of argument (see sidebar below).

And don't even bring up kolache sold at chain doughnut shops.

The irony is that many of the kolache in Texas have one important thing in common—most of the recipes are authentic, handed down from generation to generation. Routh talks about the family recipe that took three years to perfect. Teresa Jones, who owns Hruska's, talks about her bakery's passion for what she calls its original style of kolache. Kalan Besetsny, whose family owns five Besetsny's Kountry Bakeries in Central Texas, credits his grandmother's recipe for the business' success. James Dornak, who bakes kolache at Junior's Smokehouse in Wharton, uses a recipe from his family, Czech on both sides.

The other irony? Many bakeries, even those that offer exotic fillings, report that their best-selling kolache are the most traditional—apricot, poppy seed and cream cheese.

Regardless of style or niche, everyone sells lots and lots of kolache. Some sell so many that, in the finest competitive tradition, they don't want to talk about how many. Zamykal, though, which is located in a town with one stoplight on the way to towns not much bigger, will sell as many as 300 a day. At its Hallettsville location, Besetsny's will sell some 8,000 a week, and Junior's Smokehouse sells a couple thousand each week.

This, ultimately, is why kolache have



Mike Sulak, left, and Bill Klaus chat with Mimi Montgomery Irwin, owner of the Village Bakery, which claims to be the oldest Czech bakery in Texas. Her parents, Wendel and Georgia Montgomery, opened the business in West in 1952.

endured and evolved over the past 160 years.

"It's about our German and Czech heritage," says Besetsny. "It's still out there, and here in the country; it's still in the blood. People remember their grandmother making kolache, and they want to relive that. They want to remember what that was like."

Which is a fine thing for any pastry to

be able to do—even if no one agrees what it's supposed to taste like.

Jeff Siegel is a Dallas writer.

Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Watch the sisters at Zamykal serve their kolache with a smile—and sometimes with a song. Check out their ditties online.

A Kolach By Any Other Name

Arguments flare over what is and isn't a kolach

Starting an argument among Texas kolach aficionados is easy, but what really gets people worked up is when someone calls the sausage-filled pastry sold in Czech bakeries a kolach.

It isn't a kolach and never has been. The classic Czech recipe is for a pastry with a fruit-filled center, and no one in Prague would recognize the so-called sausage kolach from a milkshake. It's a Texas invention called a *klobasnek*—plural *klobasniky*—which is Czech for little sausages. The Village Bakery in West takes credit for it, but others would no doubt disagree.

But that's only the beginning of the contro-

versy. How you fill klobasniky is another story. Is it OK to use a hotdog-style sausage, or should it be smoked sausage? Or even ground sausage? Is it OK to add cheese? If so, what kind of cheese? Talking about this with James Dornak, who bakes kolache at Junior's Smokehouse in Wharton, seemed to make his head hurt.

Regardless, klobasnek is an amazingly popular product, no matter how it's made. Besetsny's Kountry Bakery sells 5,000 a week, sausage, cheese and all, at its Hallettsville location.

Jeff Siegel



We'll end our feature the way we started, with a little lesson. Kolache are traditionally baked with fillings such as fruit, poppy seed or cream cheese. When bakers put meat or sausage in the dough, they have made a *klobasnek*—plural *klobasniky*.

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Barbed Wire, Barbaric Backlash

Fences that stretched across vast frontier pushed tempers past peaceable boundaries during the fence-cutters war



Cattle search for grass along a barbed-wire fence in the midst of a winter storm. Cattle were vulnerable to powerful, fast-moving winter storms known as blue northerners in the barren Texas Panhandle. In 1882, ranchers built a drift fence across the width of the Panhandle that in the winter of 1885-86 killed thousands of cattle trapped behind it during a devastating blue norther.



W

hen barbed wire was introduced in 1875, Texans were unimpressed. The contrivance had originated in the north, and many folks considered it a gimmick of carpetbaggers.

Barbed wire was eventually used in isolated applications, and it quickly proved durable and cost-effective. Traditional fencing materials such as timber and stone were hard to come by in many parts of the state, and barbed wire was practical. This made it an irrepressible prospect.

In no time, larger ranches purchased barbed wire by the trainload and subjugated horizon-to-horizon stretches of the Texas frontier with little regard for convenience, public access or the property of others. Barbed wire installers fenced in property that didn't belong to them, restricting access to community water sources, obstructing cattle drives, blocking common thoroughfares and impeding postal routes. Concerned parties contacted their state legislators, but

at first complaints were ignored or received unsatisfying answers.

By the late 1870s, disgruntled Texans were taking matters into their own hands. They began carrying fence-cutting pliers and simply snipping stretches of barbed wire that were in their way. As their numbers grew, fence cutters organized clandestine groups with official and unofficial names, such as the owls and the javelinas, and began cutting miles of fencing at night. If fence lines reappeared, the fencecutters nipped them again.

With no small amount of public support, the fence-cutting crusade evolved into what became known as the fence-cutters war. In many cases, fence-cutting activities were well-organized, including the use of disguises and armed lookouts to protect participants.

In 1883, the imbroglio reached a boiling point when Texas suffered through a horrendous drought. Cattle died in droves on the dwindling open ranges. The lack of access to fenced-off range was cat-

astrophic for landless stockmen. Even some closed-range ranch advocates grazed their cattle on common ranges until the grass was gone and then moved stock into their enclosed pastures. This exacerbated the situation, increasing fence cutting, pasture-burning and sizable herd liberations, if not outright theft.

Closed-range ranchers began hiring security personnel to patrol their fencing. One large ranch in DeWitt County persuaded some Texas Rangers to trade in their tin stars for fence security work, and confrontations along the barbed-wire boundaries increased, resulting in several casualties.

By late 1883, newspapers reported that losses from destroyed fencing had reached \$20 million, and tax valuations in general had declined by approximately \$30 million. These staggering numbers began to shift Texans' worldview. In the beginning, the widespread fence-cutting movement was viewed as reasonable civil disobedience. Yet, like many protest efforts that

During the height of the 1880s fence-cutters war, ranchers used barbed-wire fences to carve rangeland into smaller, permanent ranches to stop cattle from moving freely across open lands. At first little regard was given to property access or even public roads as fences crisscrossed the state.



were committed to addressing inequities, fence-cutting activities devolved into petty or pointless swipes that approached vandalism, anarchy or counter-opportunism instead of redress.

With public opinion starting to favor permanent ranches, Texas politicians got involved. On October 15, 1883, Gov. John Ireland scheduled a special session of the Texas Legislature on January 8, 1884, “to consider and find remedy for wanton destruction of fences”

After weeks of heated debate, the special session adjourned with new laws on the books. Fencing the land of another became a misdemeanor with a fine not to exceed \$200, and the culprits were granted six months to remove the illegal fence. If the fence ran across public roads, fencers were required to install a gate every 3 miles and ensure that gates were kept in working order.

Injuring a fence or leaving a fence gate open—causing “any hogs, cattle, mules, horses or other stock to go within the inclosed lands” and graze without the consent of the owner—led to a fine of \$10 to \$100 and imprisonment for up to one year, according to the Texas Penal Code. Willfully cutting a fence was a felony and led to imprisonment of one to five years. Pasture burning, also deemed a felony, resulted in two- to five-year imprisonment.

Enforcement of the laws reduced

fence-cutting offenses, but they didn’t end altogether. Contrarian sentiment was slow to fade.

In the summer of 1888, fence cutting became a regular occurrence in Navarro County, and the Texas Rangers dispatched Sgt. Ira Aten and lawman James King to address it. Aten and King posed as farmhands and became familiar with the local fence cutters. Rather than arrest them, the duo attempted to exact their own justice on the cutters. As Aten later noted in his 1945 book “Memoirs,” he planted along fences dynamite charges rigged to explode when the wire was cut.

When Aten’s superiors got wind of his plan, he was ordered to stand down and return to Austin. Instead, he detonated the makeshift bombs in place. Rumors of remaining fence-line explosives were enough to eliminate fence cutting in the area.

Barbed wire protected pastures and reduced rustling, but it also restricted the long-held practice of free grazing and, essentially, ended large cattle drives. Then, easy access to railroad cattle cars made long-range drives and their cowboys obsolete. Within a decade, the days of the traditional cowboy in Texas were done. Frontier purists were forced to head south to Mexico or west for refuge in the remaining expanses of open American range.

Cowboys were not the only victims.

Their bovine charges also suffered, especially in what came to be known as the Big Die-Up.

During the 1880s, the Texas Panhandle and the South Plains of West Texas got a little too crowded with ranches and livestock. Because the region was vulnerable to powerful blue northers—frigid storm systems that dropped temperatures rapidly, brought hard freezes and created blizzards—cattle there liked to drift far south to take cover in draws, canyons and river valleys. Every time a norther blew through, the cattle dispersed, and the ranchers had a hard time regrouping their herds.

In 1882, with barbed wire all the rage, the Panhandle Stock Association resolved to build a “drift” fence to keep northern livestock from wandering down to the southern ranges. Within a few years, the fence stretched the entire width of the Panhandle, from New Mexico to Oklahoma.

In 1885, extreme cold sent thousands of head south, and they became trapped at this fence. The cattle converged at the barrier in increasing numbers. Those not trampled, frozen or starved to death fell easy prey to wolves and coyotes. The first thaw of January 1886 revealed a barbed-wire deathtrap. Thousands of cattle lay dead along the fence line, and several big-ranch herds were almost destroyed.

Legendary Seven K Ranch foreman Frank Biggers was so incensed by the unnecessary losses that he demanded the Seven K Ranch owners allow him to cut the Panhandle fence, but they refused. Biggers immediately quit and wired his resignation from the location of his new employer, the Box T Ranch.

The 1886-87 winter brought more northers, and cattle once again perished by the thousands. One ranch hand reportedly skinned 250 carcasses a mile for approximately 35 miles along one stretch of drift fence, according to the Texas State Historical Association, and several Panhandle ranches almost went under. Within a generation or two, Panhandle cattle developed more sedentary habits and settled into a driftless existence.

The fence cutters won a few battles but lost the war. Their enemy turned out to be progress rather than carpetbaggers or big ranches.

E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo. His book ‘Texas Obscurities: Stories of the Peculiar, Exceptional and Nefarious’ (History Press, 2013) is available at retail stores and online.

How a Chicago Doctor Shook Up the Hearing Aid Industry with his Newest Invention

New nearly invisible digital hearing aid breaks price barrier in affordability

Reported by J. Page

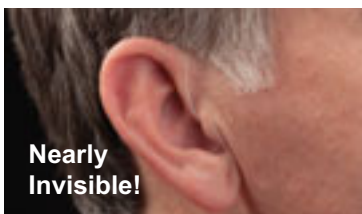
Chicago: Board-certified physician Dr. S. Cherukuri has done it once again with his newest invention of a medical grade **ALL DIGITAL** affordable hearing aid.

This new digital hearing aid is packed with all the features of \$3,000 competitors at a mere fraction of the cost. **Now, most people with hearing loss are able to enjoy crystal clear, natural sound—in a crowd, on the phone, in the wind—without suffering through “whistling” and annoying background noise.**

New Digital Hearing Aid Outperforms Expensive Competitors

This sleek, lightweight, fully programmed hearing aid is the outgrowth of the digital revolution that is changing our world. While demand for “all things digital” caused most prices to plunge (consider DVD players and computers, which originally sold for thousands of dollars and today can be purchased for less than \$100), yet the cost of a digital medical hearing aid remained out of reach.

Dr. Cherukuri knew that many of his patients would benefit but couldn't afford the expense of these new digital hearing aids. Generally they are *not* covered by Medicare and most private health insurance.



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- ✓ Telecoil setting for use with compatible phones, and looped environments like churches
- ✓ 3 programs and volume dial to accommodate most common types of hearing loss even in challenging listening environments

The doctor evaluated all the high priced digital hearing aids on the market, broke them down to their base components, and then created his own affordable version—called the MDHearingAid® AIR for its virtually invisible, lightweight appearance.

Affordable Digital Technology

Using advanced digital technology, the MDHearingAid® AIR automatically adjusts to your listening environment—prioritizing speech and de-emphasizing background noise. Experience all of the sounds you've been missing at a price you can afford. **This doctor designed and approved hearing aid comes with a full year's supply of long-life batteries. It delivers crisp, clear sound all day long and the soft flexible ear buds are so comfortable you won't realize you're wearing them.**

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Of course, hearing is believing and we invite you to try it for yourself with our RISK-FREE 45-day home trial. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within that time period for a full refund of your purchase price.

Can a hearing aid delay or prevent dementia?

A study by Johns Hopkins and National Institute on Aging researchers suggests older individuals with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing. They suggest that an intervention—such as a hearing aid—could delay or prevent dementia by improving hearing!

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JOHN DEERE

Rare African Emerald Find Shocks Colombian Cartel

U.S. jeweler seizes more than 10,000 carats and makes history by releasing the One-Carat Pride of Zambia Emerald Ring for UNDER \$100!

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA - A recent find of high quality emeralds in this African republic has thrown the luxury gem world into tumult. For hundreds of years, Colombians have controlled the high-end emerald market and sent prices soaring to over \$15,000 per carat for top graded stones. But the history-making discovery of Zambian emeralds has revealed a green gemstone with mesmerizing clarity that simply changes everything.

This important find led Stauer, a major gem dealer and importer, to bid on over 10,000 carats. Stauer designed a classic 1-ctw ring for people who love the gem but don't love outrageously priced luxury. Because of their timely buy, Stauer is releasing this exclusive, natural emerald ring—aka *"The Pride of Zambia"*—to the public for under \$100!

Discover a Different Kind of Emerald

"For the price, these natural gemstones were the most magnificent emeralds that I've seen in 30 years," said Michael Bisceglia at Stauer. "The value of Colombian stones can't compare."

Industry experts back him up. Lab tests prove that Zambian emeralds are less porous and brittle than their Colombian brothers. And gem cutters have found Zambians so brilliant that they lend themselves more to high-luster cuts than traditional emerald designs.

Unfortunately, the window on this exciting emerald opportunity is closing fast. Not long after Stauer acquired their cache, a recent auction saw Zambian emerald prices hit a new record high. The time to act on this great gem value is now, before it's too late. Please call our U.S.-based client service team at 1-888-277-8375 or visit us online at www.stauer.com.

Emerald Is THE Gem of 2014

The rise of emeralds is more than just a passing trend. An article in the *Financial Times of London* from June of this year pointed to the reason. In "Emeralds: Shades of Green Start to Outshine Diamonds," the newspaper reported that emerald demand is soaring worldwide even as diamond demand softens. Rarity is key as fine emeralds are much rarer than diamonds.

"With wealthy Russian and Chinese demand for emeralds way up, we expect prices to continue to rise quickly," Bisceglia said. "That's why we're so happy to have found these beautiful stones at this price."

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Spruce up Your Fireplace

If you've used your fireplace much this winter, or if it has several winters of use, it might benefit from a facelift.

Here are some ideas for making your fireplace a glowing centerpiece of your house.

REPLACE YOUR MANTEL. You can order pre-cut mantels in any price range and in materials ranging from hardwood to marble to plaster. This is a weekend job for a handy do-it-yourselfer.

CLEAN YOUR FIREPLACE AND CHIMNEY. Wait at least a day after your last fire and shovel out the ash and unburned pieces of wood. Then sweep the interior of the fire box out. Make sure you use a metal bucket for gathering ashes in case an ember is still live.

Or, hire a chimney sweep and save yourself the trouble. Even if you're not burning wood in your old fireplace anymore, give it a good cleaning.

CLEAN THE BRICK OR STONE THAT SURROUNDS YOUR FIREPLACE. If the brick is sealed, most of the soot should scrub off with detergent and a cloth. Tougher stains might require a mixture of ammonia and water with a stiff-bristle brush. Test a small area first to make sure the brush doesn't damage the brick's surface and the solution doesn't discolor it. If your brick is unsealed or old, don't scrub it; instead, just sweep it.

REPLACE YOUR WOOD-BURNING FIREPLACE WITH AN ELECTRIC MODEL. You might feel some heat if you sit close to your wood-burning fireplace, but it's not producing enough heat to help your furnace keep the house warm. In fact, it's sucking your home's heated air right up the chimney. Consider converting that energy-inefficient fireplace to an electric version. If you haven't seen one in awhile, you'll be amazed by how realistic its "flames" look, thanks to technological advancements.



Instead of cranking up the thermostat, slip on a sweater to keep warm.

What Not To Do When It's Cold Outside

Follow these tips to stay safe and save energy during winter.

1. DON'T OVERSTUFF YOUR REFRIGERATOR. Stacking holiday leftovers on top of each other and squeezing extra containers of food onto every refrigerator shelf will prevent the air from circulating. That forces the appliance's compressor to work harder and use more electricity.

2. DON'T CRANK THE THERMOSTAT WAY UP to heat a cold house in a hurry. Turning the heat up to 90 degrees won't warm a 60-degree house any quicker than turning it up to 72 degrees.

3. DON'T RUN BATHROOM AND KITCHEN EXHAUST FANS any longer than you have to. Flip them on to clear smoke while cooking and steam while showering.

4. DON'T USE A BARBECUE GRILL OR A PROPANE PATIO HEATER INDOORS, even if your central heating system is on the fritz. This is a fire hazard and can expose you to carbon monoxide poisoning.

5. DON'T TURN OFF YOUR CEILING FANS. Ceiling fans can save energy during winter. The trick: Set the spin direction to push air up. In this mode, the blades slant downward. Heat rises, so in the winter, the blades should move warm air toward the ceiling and walls and down into the room.



Keep your home and family safe by properly maintaining your fireplace.

Solid Lighting Solutions

LEDs meet (and exceed) 2014 lighting efficiency standards

BY MEGAN MCKOY-NOE AND BRIAN SLOBODA

A new year calls for updated lightbulb efficiency guidelines. No need to use bulbs with a twist; light-emitting diodes can help you switch on savings.

Congress called for improved energy-efficiency standards for traditional incandescent bulbs under the federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. By 2014, lightbulbs using from 40 to 100 watts must consume at least 28 percent less energy than classic bulbs. The change will save Americans an estimated \$6 billion to \$10 billion in lighting costs annually.

When the next wave of standards kicks in this month, traditional 40- and 60-watt incandescents will no longer be available. In their place, some consumers are filling the gap with a solid solution: LEDs.

'Solid' Lighting

Incandescent bulbs create light using a thin wire, called a filament, inside a glass bulb—a delicate connection that can easily be broken. In contrast, LEDs are at the forefront of solid-state lighting—small, packed electronic chip devices. Two conductive materials are placed together on a diode. Electricity passes through the diode, releasing energy in the form of light.

LEDs were invented in 1960 at General Electric and originally were a red color. They were used in remote controls, exit signs, digital watches, alarm clocks and car signal lights. After the invention of blue-colored LEDs in the 1990s, the devices quickly gained momentum for large-scale lighting.

LEDs Offer Several Benefits

- ▶ They could last longer, perhaps for decades.
- ▶ The energy to use them could be substantially less than that of compact fluorescent lamps or other fluorescents.
- ▶ With no mercury content, LEDs are less hazardous than fluorescents.
- ▶ The products are rugged and more resistant to breakage.
- ▶ LEDs perform well in cold climates, especially outside.
- ▶ They can be dimmed and produce a more pleasing light.

However, some consumers avoid LEDs because the price tag exceeds normal lightbulb costs. The true value lies in the lifetime of the bulb. It takes about 50 traditional incandescent bulbs, or eight to 10 compact fluorescents to last as long as one LED lamp.

Sources: *The Association of Electrical Equipment and Medical Imaging Manufacturers, U.S. Department of Energy, Cooperative Research Network*



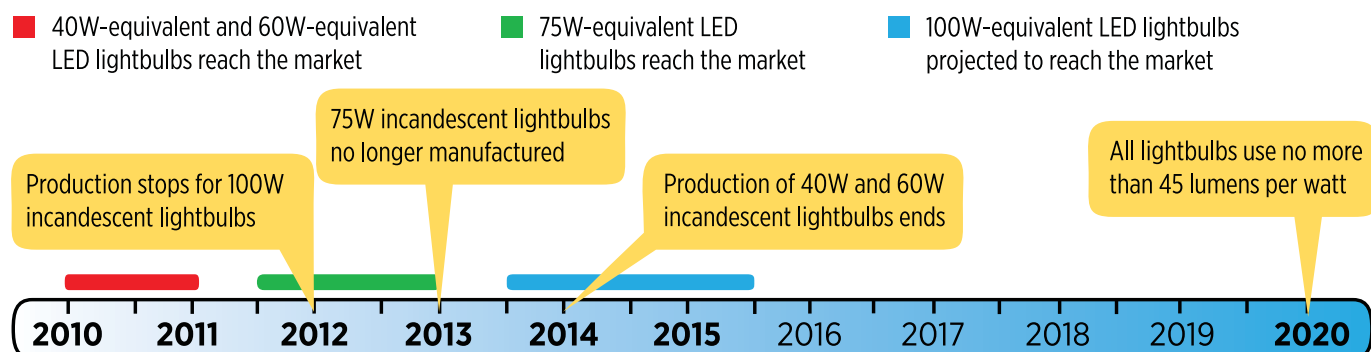
Shedding Light on LEDs

Curious to know if LEDs are right for you? Learn how to read LED labels at lightingfacts.com/content/consumers.

Homeowners can visit energysavers.gov/lighting to compare LEDs to new energy-efficient incandescent bulbs and CFLs.

LEDs: A DECADE OF CHANGE

By 2014, lightbulbs using between 40 watts and 100 watts must consume at least 28 percent less energy than traditional incandescents, saving Americans an estimated \$6 billion to \$10 billion in lighting costs annually. The federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 also mandated that lightbulbs become 70 percent more efficient by 2020. Light-emitting diodes, LEDs, are quickly evolving to meet this challenge. Learn more at energysavers.gov/lighting.



BULB: ANDREY KHRITIN | THINKSTOCK; CHART: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY LIGHTING FACTS PRODUCT SNAPSHOT: LED REPLACEMENT LAMPS 2011

He Was a Mover and a Shaker



R.G. LeTourneau left his legacy in giant earthmoving equipment and at namesake university in Longview

BY K.A. YOUNG

WHEN IT CAME TO MOVING HEAVEN AND earth, R.G. LeTourneau paved the way.

First his earthly accomplishments: LeTourneau was a prolific inventor. Among his 299 patents is one in 1953 for a “bulldozing machine,” an early version of the modern bulldozer. Other patents included a portable crane, powered rollers used to tamp down pavement, bridge spans, mobile platforms for offshore oil drilling and the electric-powered wheel. He was responsible for making 70 percent of the earthmoving equipment used by the Allies in World War II to build runways, roadways and shelters. His inventions, still at work today, started a revolution that turns the wheels of our modern world.

When it came to spiritual matters, LeTourneau was on equally solid ground. In 1946, he and his wife, Evelyn, founded LeTourneau University in Longview to perpetuate his spiritual legacy. And they donated 90 percent of their fortune to Christian ministries.

“He had a can-do spirit,” says Dale Lunsford, president of LeTourneau University.

In the early 1900s, mules or tractors pushing scraper blades were man’s only options when he needed to move dirt, unless he used a shovel. LeTourneau mobilized scraper blades, inventing the bulldozer. He was the first to use rubber tires on behemoth machines, powering wheels individually with electric motors. Today’s heavy equipment couldn’t shove and haul so much, so far, so fast without his inventions. He even devised some-

thing called the Tournalayer, which produced prefabricated concrete bungalows “like a chicken lays an egg,” leaving a legacy of modest homes of enviable economy studied by architectural students today.

But his road to success was uphill, riddled with potholes of poverty and debt. It took him 30 years to discover his destiny, spending the rest of his life blazing trails to pursue it.

Born in 1888 in Vermont, young Bob (later known as R.G.) earned a reputation as a ne’er-do-well. At 12, he built his first invention: a heifer-pulled snowplow. It might have worked, but the heifer wouldn’t cooperate. At 17, he quit high school and, moving to Minnesota, Oregon and then California, began his on-the-job education in manual trades, learning to work faster, not harder, eagerly completing one job to begin the next. In California, LeTourneau was introduced to welding, and he pioneered the practice of never using a bolt where a weld would do. Then, on his first earthmoving job, he realized: “I wanted to move dirt. Lots of dirt.”

LeTourneau, who started his own land-clearing business in Stockton, California, after World War I, noticed weaknesses in existing machinery and remedied them himself. When he got more earthmoving contracts than he could handle, he built machines that did more work. Then his Carryall scraper—a motor-operated badger on wheels doing the work of 1,000 men and mules—pushed him into big-league manufacturing.

LeTourneau constantly came up with



Although today's earthmoving machines no longer carry his name, visionary R.G. LeTourneau's inventions changed the landscape of the heavy construction world.

ways to move more dirt in less time for less money, inventing machines that defied the common sense of his day. In the early 1930s, he gave up the earthmoving business and dedicated himself full time to manufacturing heavy equipment.

Existing tractors limited his Carryall scraper. In 1937, while recovering from a car accident, he spent six months in a full-body cast and designed a stretcher to wheel himself through his factory. That's when he got the idea for the Tournapull to pull his scraper. With two rubber tires and a two-way, 90-degree swing, it looked as useless as a sulky without a horse—until hitched to the Carryall. “Called crazy again,” he said, “I knew I was on the right track.” Sure enough, after World War II, other manufacturers raced to catch up with him when they realized the improvement the machine brought to earthmoving.

In 1946, he settled in Longview. There he converted an abandoned Army hospital into a technical institute, now LeTourneau University, where students could earn a living while learning in a Christian environment. From age 30, he had dedicated himself as “God’s businessman.”

Success brought him opportunities to share his faith, flying around the world in a converted A-26 glass-nosed bomber, saying, “I am just a mechanic whom the Lord has blessed.” At age 65, LeTourneau sold his line of earthmoving equipment and three of five factories, agreeing to a five-year exile from the industry. His Christian compassion motivated him to continue inventing machines to help those living in underdeveloped but resource-rich nations improve their quality of life.

When he was 70, LeTourneau invented a digger that scoops 150 tons of dirt in two minutes (one gulp each of two 75-ton pay-

load buckets), and a train that hauls 150 tons (the weight of a blue whale) over all terrains. Whenever his wife asked him if he was going back to work after supper, he’d say, “No, just going back to play with my big toys for a while.”

In 1969, LeTourneau died after a stroke. He was 80. The steel domes beneath which he erected his giant machines remain a Longview landmark. His earthmoving innovations continue to change the landscape.

“I like to think his greatest legacy, however, is LeTourneau University and the unique education our students experience,” says Lunsford, the university’s president. “It’s a hands-on, world-as-your-classroom curriculum that emphasizes professional excellence and Christian character.”

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

Those Who Can, Teach

Schooled by an age-old hierarchy—students rule—beleaguered substitute and tutor leaves it to professionals

BY CAMILLE WHEELER

I AM THE DAUGHTER OF A RETIRED HIGH school English and journalism teacher. But that does not make me a teacher.

During the 2013 spring semester, I worked as a tutor and substitute teacher for the Austin Independent School District. I entered both part-time jobs with lofty expectations: that as the child of a teacher, who taught me in high school, I would excel in the classroom, planting seeds of encouragement that would someday bloom into productive and creative adult lives.

Instead, the tables turned on me. Schooled under a classification system I once helped enforce as a brash teenager, I was reminded: Students, as the higher order, rule. Substitutes, as the lower order, are bait—fresh meat for the piranhas.

To be fair, there were many bright moments, especially as a tutor for an education initiative called AVID: Advancement Via Individual Determination. The higher education-readiness program places academically average students in advanced classes. That group includes minority and low-income students, some of whom will become the first in their families to attend college.

In Texas, the elective AVID model is used at 144 of 1,028 public school districts. Austin makes it available for high school and middle school students, and I tutored freshmen on two campuses.

I wasn't a total failure. AVID classrooms, which feature the security of working with a teacher as opposed to flying solo as a sub, work best with math-proficient tutors. I'm as lopsided as they

come. I was the kid asking, "When am I ever going to need algebra in real life?" And in geometry, I agreed with a classmate's logic. Wanting to take shortcuts, he'd stare at a problem written on the chalkboard and challenge our frazzled teacher: "You can see it's congruent."

But, thanks to my mother, I can hold my own in English. Those skills came in handy last school year as I helped AVID freshmen write practice college scholarship-application essays. At first, they grumbled: "I have to write a whole page?" But as they put pencil to paper, the stories flowed. Some students came from broken homes. Some wrote about financial stress and parents who were working long hours to make ends meet. Some wrote about loneliness and bullying.

Some cried at the profoundness of their own journeys. Some could've written a book.

And, just as I once treated substitute teachers, some students wrote me off. I was the middle-aged woman who, *like, duh*, didn't know anything. I was old, as one freshman girl helpfully told me one day after I'd prattled on and on about the joys of using that ancient thing called a dictionary. I argued with students who complained: "When will I ever need algebra?" As a sub, to be heard above the din, I committed the cardinal sin: yelling, which only heightens the circus atmosphere.

I refereed conflict. One morning on the playground, a herd of fifth-graders and I tried to pry the T-ball bat away from a boy crying foul play. She, he charged, pointing at a classmate, had cut line.

Actually, I offered, she didn't. It's her turn to bat. "NOOOOO!!!" he screamed, tears streaming down his face. "IT'S MY TURN!!" He spun in a circle with the bat, wildly swinging at and missing the ball resting safely on the tee, as we all jumped out of harm's way.

I know all about playground scuffles. I went to school with tough country kids at Southland, near Lubbock, where my teachers included my mother, Laura Jo Wheeler, and my Aunt Peggy Wheeler, my inspiring and innovative second-grade teacher and senior sponsor. Out of awkwardness, I never addressed them by title in the classroom. I'd just raise my hand and wait to be noticed.

Throughout the grades, as a teacher's smart-aleck kid, I managed to get noticed plenty. By the ninth grade, I knew everything, so I thought. Who needed algebra? I'd fold my arms and sit, sullen, above it all. My class—all 14 of us—proudly wore its rowdy label. Some of us had been together since the first grade. Now we were too cool for school.

Until we entered my mother's classroom. We'd come roaring down the hallway—and encounter my mother standing outside her open door, waiting for us, her index finger pointing to the trash can where I was to toss the wad of bubblegum hidden on the roof of my mouth.

And I can still see The Stare: my mother's stern, withering look that could wilt the will of the biggest, roughest boy. But my mother was fair in the classroom. She didn't yell. She was always prepared, with lesson plans written on the chalkboard. A consummate grammarian, she drilled us, over and over, on the parts of a sentence. She played Shakespeare records for us, bringing the words to life through vocal dramatizations.

Students respected her. They listened. They learned.

Last spring, I met someone similar: Idell Jacinto, the AVID teacher at Travis High School in south-central Austin. On Tuesdays, I tutored in Jacinto's classroom of freshmen. She never yelled. She never lost control. She met with students one-on-one. And she accepted nothing less than their best efforts.

One day, Jacinto stood in front of the students, hands on her hips and flames in her eyes. A nervous hush fell over the room. Some students had been slacking. And they knew it. Pacing back and forth, with the intensity of a fire-and-brimstone

preacher, Jacinto laid it on the line. She might as well bring some mattresses from home so the students could start sleeping under the nearby Interstate 35 bridge. That's where you're headed, she said, if you don't get your priorities straight. No one laughed. They knew she was right. Without a high school diploma and a quality education, their lives would be difficult.

Jacinto is now in her 30th year of

teaching. Yes, she could retire. But too many kids need that extra nudge to recognize their potential. She's always available to listen, to push, to counsel. She gives students multiple-choice options—about school, about life—and thrills at watching them learn to make the best decisions.

She can't walk away now. "It's hard to pull back," Jacinto says, "when you see yourself making a difference."

Camille Wheeler is an Austin writer.



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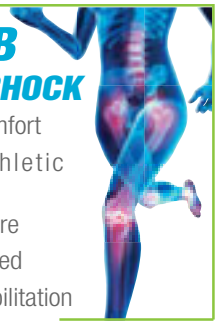
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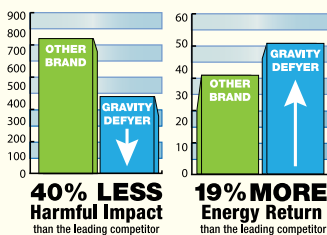
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A D V E R T I S E M E N T

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 – Arlington, TX

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

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SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at **www.septicleanse.com** or you can order or learn more by calling **toll free at 1-888-899-8345**. If you use the promo code **"DARTX8"**, 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.

Towering Texans' Circus Tour

Shields brothers under the big top as the Texas Giants

P.T. Barnum puts

BY MARTHA DEERING

IN FRONTIER TEXAS, WHERE HIGH-HEELED BOOTS AND 10-GALLON hats gave even normal-sized hombres a vertical advantage, the Shields brothers rose above the rest like skyscrapers in downtown Dallas. Their heads reached so high that in 1879 they attracted the attention of one of P.T. Barnum's talent scouts. Four of the brothers, not so enamored with scratching out a living on their father's hardscrabble farm in northeastern Texas, were easily persuaded to join the circus and travel the country as entertainers—billed as the Texas Giants.

There were actually nine brothers, sons of John and Penelope Shields of Alabama, who settled on a farm near White Rock in 1868. The couple lost one son, James, in the Civil War and another, Starling, before the move to Texas. The boys' father was between 6 feet 6 inches and 7 feet tall, their mother of average height.

There must have been a good milk cow in the barn, though, because the youngsters continued to grow.

And grow.

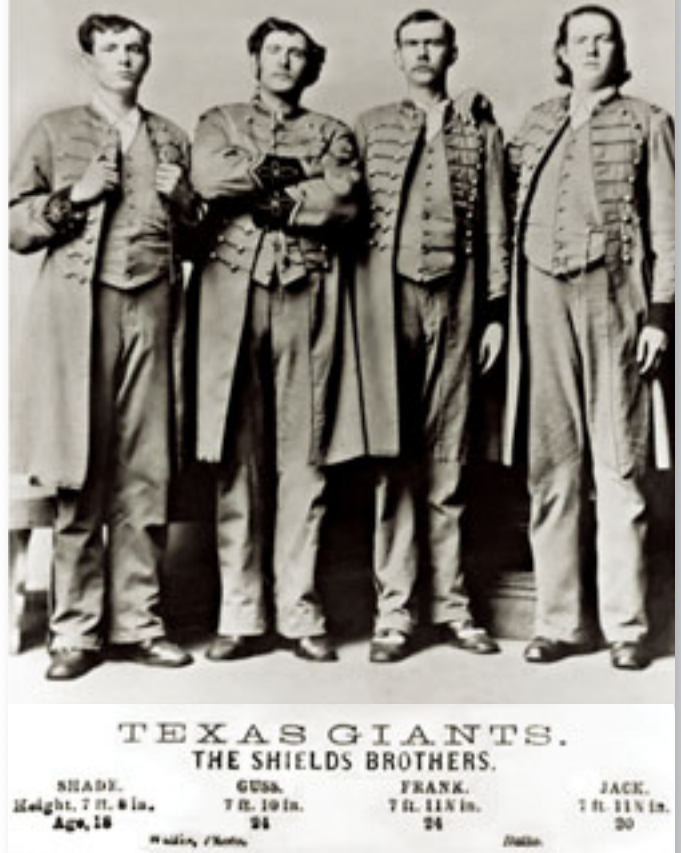
By 1879, Jack, Frank, Guss and Shadrack (Shade) Shields had sprouted into full-grown giants. Many accounts say each was well over 7 feet tall, though some sources claim none of them reached that height. Barnum, infamous for supposedly stating, "There's a sucker born every minute," listed the Texas Giants as: Shade, 7-8; Guss, 7-10; and Frank and Jack at 7-11 ¾ inches. An average-sized man could walk beneath their outstretched arms with his hat on.

By the time Barnum discovered the Shields family, the three oldest boys were settled on farms and had no interest in the roaming life offered by the Greatest Show on Earth. But the four youngest, eager to wring excitement from lives of toil, rushed to the depot in Kingston and boarded the train for New York City. Frank, 26, and Guss, 28, were married, but times were hard and the lure of a \$100 weekly salary was too good to pass up. The giants supplemented their incomes by selling photos of themselves, called cabinet cards, for 10 cents apiece.

The Shields brothers, who traveled by train throughout the United States and Canada, appeared with Barnum for 10-day periods in large cities like Chicago and at many one-day stops in between. They also toured Great Britain. "We have a nice large room with carpets on the floor," Guss wrote to an uncle from a luxury hotel, "... and we have an easy time, no responsibility nor no work."

Their job was simply to be on display. They appeared in specially made military uniforms crowned by tall hats, and rumors circulated that Barnum outfitted them with elevator shoes. The four were on exhibit from noon to 5:30 p.m., took an hour off for

The Shields brothers, known as the Texas Giants, wore military uniforms specially made for their large frames when appearing with P.T. Barnum's circus.



dinner in the circus concession, and returned until 11 p.m.

On Christmas Day, 1890, Shade Shields married a giantess, 7-foot-tall, red-haired Annie O'Brien. The couple toured together as "the tallest married couple on Earth." They had one son, who was of average height.

Guss, Jack and Frank quit the circus in 1883 when a smallpox epidemic broke out in the Barnum camp, said Annie Shields, Jack's daughter-in-law, in a 1969 interview for the Denison Herald newspaper. Guss and Frank lost wives to the disease. Jack ran a grocery store in Kingston after his circus career and later joined his younger brother in operating a saloon. Shade moved to Hornersville, Missouri, where he was elected mayor and then justice of the peace. His closest friend was 3-foot-tall William "Major" Ray, another circus veteran who settled in Hornersville.

Circuses brought much-needed entertainment in the 19th century. While many sideshow performers were billed as freaks of nature, the Texas Giants simply sprang from a family of exceptionally large people. Most of their numerous offspring were of average size, although Frank's grandson, Marcus Ross Freiburger, was 6-10 and won a gold medal with the U.S. basketball team in the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki, Finland.

Martha Deeringer is a frequent contributor.

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Healthy Mushrooms Mean Growing Demand

Since being founded in 1988 near Gonzales, Kitchen Pride Farms has ridden a growing public awareness of nutrition research identifying the health benefits of eating mushrooms. People are also learning how good fresh mushrooms taste, says Kitchen Pride founder Darrell McLain.

“With all the talk about nutritional benefits, people have realized that mushrooms are not only healthy, but they add so much to recipes,” McLain says. “They just make things taste better.”

Fresh mushrooms are fat-free, low-calorie and a good source of B vitamins and selenium, essential for the production of antioxidants. With increased demand for this healthy food source, Kitchen Pride, served by Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative, has gone through four major production expansions. Today, it grows more than 225,000 pounds of mushrooms a week that are shipped to major grocery store chains across Texas and sold in numerous farmers markets. Because they are grown in climate-controlled rooms, the farm delivers fresh mushrooms year-round.

McLain says increased demand promises to continue: “Consumers are trying new things like substituting mushrooms for meat or trying mushrooms in different things like breakfast tacos. Growing awareness means we need to grow more to keep up.”

Visit kitchenpride.com to learn how mushrooms are grown. The site also lists farmers markets where you can buy Kitchen Pride mushrooms and provides recipes, including the one below for a healthy dish with salmon and mushrooms.

JEFF JOINER

Mushroom, Edamame and Salmon Penne

Some Mushrooms Grown at Kitchen Pride Farms

- 4 cups uncooked penne pasta
- 2 ½ tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 pound mushrooms, sliced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 16 ounces frozen shelled edamame (soybeans)
- 4 sundried tomatoes
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup white wine or water
- 1 ¼ cups vegetable broth
- 1 pound skinless salmon, cut into 6 strips

- Cook pasta according to package directions.
- Heat 1 ½ tablespoons olive oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add a single layer of mushrooms and onion and cook, without stirring, for about 5 minutes or until mushrooms become red-brown on one side. Flip mixture and cook about 5 minutes more, until other side is the same color.
- Add edamame and stir. Add tomatoes and sprinkle with flour and salt; stir for 3 to 4 minutes to slightly cook the flour. Pour in wine or water and broth and stir to integrate flour into the liquid. Cook until sauce thickens, about 5 to 10 minutes.
- In a separate skillet, sear salmon in remaining olive oil about 3 minutes on each side.
- Add cooked pasta to mushroom mixture and gently stir to combine. Heat until thoroughly warm and top with salmon strips to serve.

Servings: 6. Serving size: ⅓ of dish plus 1 salmon strip. Per serving: 610 calories, 31.4 g protein, 15 g fat, 72.6 g carbohydrates, 12.6 g dietary fiber, 571 mg sodium, 5.6 g sugars, 41 mg cholesterol



SANDRA JENNINGS | GUADALUPE VALLEY AND NUJES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Add Umami with Mushrooms Contest Winner

The mild flavor of bite-sized button mushrooms makes them perfect for marinating. In Sandra Jennings' prizewinning recipe, fresh herbs and green onion give the savory fungi a flavorful punch, while red bell peppers add a sweet crunch.



Cindy's Marinated Mushrooms

- 1 pound button mushrooms
- 2 large red bell peppers
- 1 bunch green onions
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley
- 1 large clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ⅓ cup soy sauce
- ⅓ cup red wine vinegar

- Chop mushrooms, bell peppers and green onions (including tops) into 1-inch pieces. Place in large bowl with a top that seals. Add basil, parsley, garlic and pepper and mix well.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together olive oil, soy sauce and vinegar. Pour over mushroom mixture. Seal bowl. Turn over several times to coat vegetables.
- Refrigerate at least 2 hours turning once or twice.

Servings: 8. Serving size: about ¾ cup. Per serving: 99 calories, 2.9 g protein, 6.7 g fat, 7.5 g carbohydrates, 1.9 g dietary fiber, 608 mg sodium, 3.3 g sugars

Portobello Pizzas Margherita

- 8 large portobello mushrooms, stems removed
- 1 clove garlic, mashed
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 8 slices mozzarella cheese, each approximately ¼ inch thick
- 1 large tomato, peeled and diced



- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ⅓ cup coarsely chopped fresh basil

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly coat surface of baking sheet with cooking spray. Arrange mushrooms, gill side up, on baking sheet.
- Sauté garlic in olive oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat 3 minutes, or until garlic is golden brown. Remove garlic and discard. Brush mushrooms with olive oil.
- Bake 5 minutes or until mushrooms are lightly browned and slightly crisped on top.
- Place a slice of cheese on top of each mushroom. Divide diced tomatoes among mushrooms, mounding on top of cheese. Sprinkle tomatoes with salt and basil. Return to oven 3 minutes more, or until cheese is melted and bubbling.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 1 pizza. Per serving: 253 calories, 16.8 g protein, 16 g fat, 6.5 g carbohydrates, 1.4 g dietary fiber, 669 mg sodium, 3.1 g sugars, 30 mg cholesterol

BETSY KUEBLER | FARMERS EC

Mushroom Lasagna

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 pound mushrooms, sliced thin
- Juice of half a small lemon, optional
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2¼ cups milk
- 8 ounces lasagna noodles
- 1 pound ricotta cheese
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

- Melt butter in a large saucepan. Add mushrooms and lemon juice and sauté until softened.
- Dissolve cornstarch in a small amount of water. With a wire whisk, blend cornstarch and salt into mushroom mixture.
- Remove from heat and gradually stir in milk. Return to heat and cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Set aside.
- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Cook noodles according to package instructions.
- In an 11-by-7-inch baking dish, spread a layer of sauce, top with a layer of noodles, then a layer of ricotta, mozzarella and Parmesan, repeating layers until all ingredients are used, topping with remaining mushroom sauce.
- Bake for 45 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to stand about 15 minutes before serving.

Servings: 6. Serving size: ⅓ of dish. Per serving: 480 calories, 22.3 g protein, 23.7 g fat, 42.4 g carbohydrates, 5 g dietary fiber, 684 mg sodium, 6.5 g sugars, 80 mg cholesterol

GARY FEARS | MAGIC VALLEY EC



Cook's Tip: The mushroom sauce can be made ahead and refrigerated until ready for use.

Stuffed Portobellos

- 6 medium to large portobello mushrooms
- 1 pound Italian sausage, mild or spicy
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 cup chopped okra
- ½ cup chopped zucchini
- 4 medium cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup Panko breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup shredded fresh Parmesan
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon oregano
- ¼ teaspoon thyme

- Using a spoon, scrape the gills from the mushroom caps but leave the stems intact.
- Remove sausage from casing and crumble into a frying

pan. Over medium heat, cook sausage and onions until halfway done. Add the okra and zucchini and cook until they begin to soften.

- When sausage is fully cooked, add minced garlic and cook for 1 minute.
- Remove from heat and mix in breadcrumbs, Parmesan and spices.
- Fill mushrooms with sausage mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 1 mushroom. Per serving: 351 calories, 16.2 g protein, 24.2 g fat, 14.5 g carbohydrates, 2.6 g dietary fiber, 886 mg sodium, 4 g sugars, 61 mg cholesterol

JENNIFER MAJESKI | BLUEBONNET EC

\$100 Recipe Contest

May's recipe contest topic is **Peanuts**. The versatile peanut can be used in so many ways, the possibilities are endless. Do you have a recipe that features the legumes, which are a major crop in Texas? The deadline is January 10.



SPONSORED BY THE TEXAS PEANUT PRODUCERS BOARD.

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.

Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Find more than 500 recipes that have appeared in Texas Co-op Power, including others containing mushrooms, on our website.

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-Jon

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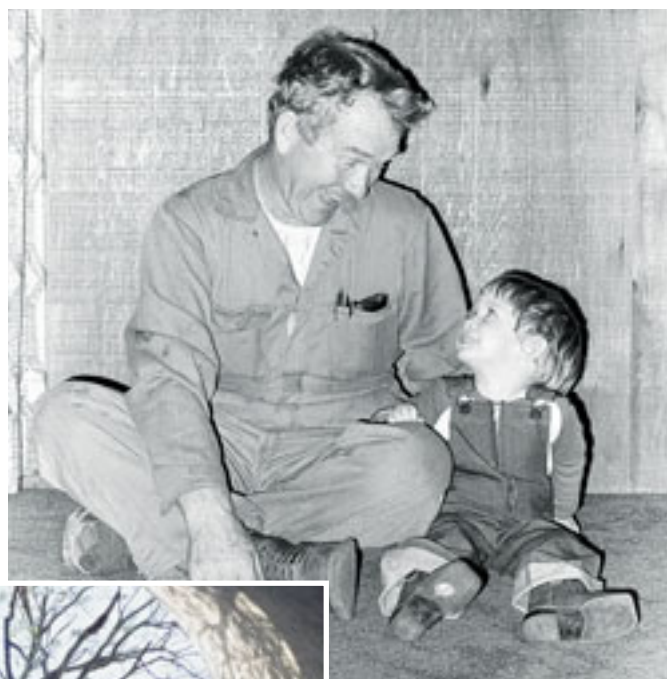
Things are definitely looking up, as you've shown with all of the photos you sent in—upward of 200. We knew you would rise to the occasion.

ASHLEY CLARY-CARPENTER

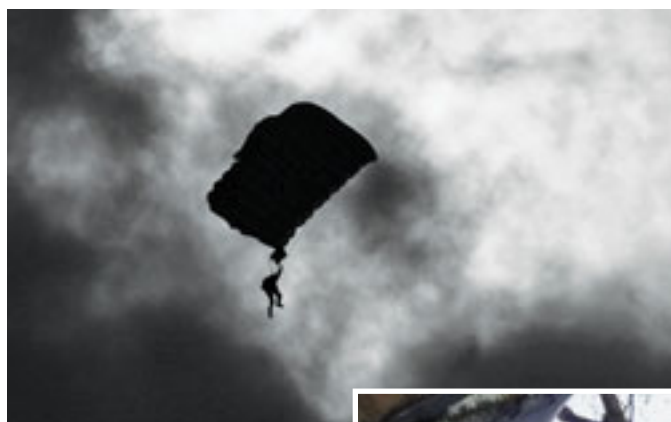
Web Extras on TexasCoopPower.com

We received 200 photos and are showing you only five? What's up with that? No worries. We uploaded a bunch more to our website.

Taken in about 1980, young **Patrick Fortune** looks up at his grandpa **Dub** with love and adoration. Today, Patrick belongs to Panola-Harrison EC, as does his father, **Paul**, who sent in the photo. Dub was also a member from 1945 until his death in 2012. ▼



▲ **Jonathan Berrier**, 3-year-old son of **Shannan**, Grayson-Collin EC, reaches up to grasp a sunflower.



▲ Skydivers wow the crowd at the Randolph Air Force Base air show in Universal City. Thanks to **Paul Garcia**, Medina EC, for sharing.

Upcoming Contests

March Issue: Stairways

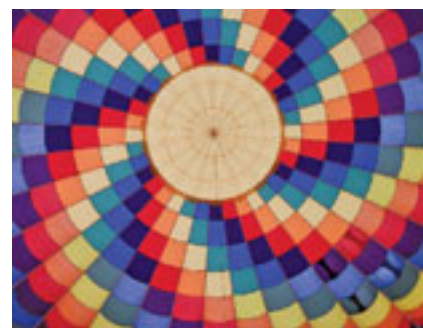
Deadline: January 10

April: Slow Shutter

May: Inspirational

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.



▲ **Tammy Jaresh**, Grayson-Collin EC, takes a look up into the hot air balloon carrying her through the sky.

◀ Cooke County EC's **Rene Schmitz** shares the unusual perspective of looking up through a grain silo.

Pick of the Month

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January



January 18
Round Top
RT Family Library's
10th Annual Chili
Cook-Off

11

Athens Bird and Nature Walk,
(903) 676-2277, athenstx.org

Johnson City, Hye, Stonewall,
Fredericksburg Port 'n Pairings,
(830) 868-2321, wineroad290.com

16

Austin [16-18, 24] Travis County Youth
Show, (512) 278-8498,
traviscountyyouthshow.org

18

Brenham Uptown Swirl, 1-888-273-6426,
downtownbrenham.com

Round Top RT Family Library's 10th Annual
Chili Cook-Off, (979) 249-2700,
ilovetoread.org

Victoria Victoria Symphony Presents
Wynonna, (361) 576-4500,
victoriasymphony.com



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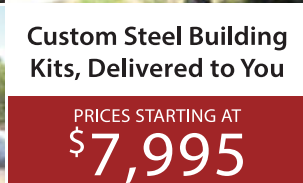
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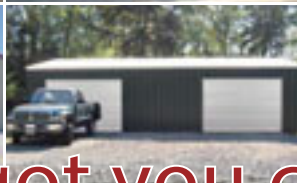
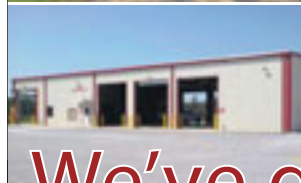
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January 24
Tyler
Kiwanis Antiques & Vintage
Collectible
Show and Sale

19

Austin 2014 3M Half Marathon,
(512) 984-7223, 3mhalfmarathon.com

24

Red Rock [24-25] Old School House
Sanctioned Chili & Barbecue Cook-Off,
(512) 284-4097

24

Tyler [24-25] Kiwanis Antiques & Vintage
Collectible Show and Sale, (903) 530-1771,
tylerkiwanis.org

Johnson City [24-26] Blanco County
Youth Council Stock Show, (830) 868-7167,
johnsoncity-texas.com

25

Rockport [25-26] Piecemakers by the Bay
Quilt Show, (361) 727-0437,
piecemakersbythebay.org

29

Fredericksburg [29-31] Texas Aquaculture
Association Conference and Trade Show,
(281) 639-8271, texasaquaculture.org

February

01

Boerne Hill Country Family History Seminar,
(830) 331-8730, rootsweb.ancestry.com

Lockhart Wild (And Not-So-Wild) Game
Dinner, (512) 764-2585

08

Clifton Hearts and BARKs Gala,
(254) 675-7712

February 8
Clifton Hearts
and BARKs Gala



Submit Your Event!

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Witness to naval history and World War II's most memorable moments is docked at La Porte and open to the public

BY JEFF JOINER

A YOUNGSTER SITS AT THE CONTROLS OF an anti-aircraft gun on the deck of a warship spinning the still-functioning elevation control, raising and lowering the gun barrel as his father points out how sailors aimed the weapon. Craig Russell, a U.S. Army artilleryman stationed at Fort Polk in Louisiana, explains the finer details of gunnery techniques, but 6-year-old Damon is having too much fun to listen.

The Russells are touring the Battleship Texas, commissioned as the USS Texas in 1914 and today a floating museum in La Porte. The Battleship Texas BB-35 State Historic Site is home to the world's last dreadnought battleship and the last surviving U.S. warship to serve in both world wars. Developed before World War I, dreadnoughts were the world's most powerful weapons at a time when international clout was demonstrated on the high seas.

"The Battleship Texas is an amazing historical artifact," says Ship Manager Andy Smith of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "It represents the first 50

years of modern naval technology, from the first battleship to launch an airplane in 1919 to the first to use radar in 1939."

The Texas sits docked in a sea of petrochemical complexes along the Houston Ship Channel adjacent to the San Jacinto Battle State Historic Site. The ship is a hub of activity as visitors scramble through hatchways and down stairs to visit crew quarters below deck, where as many as 1,400 sailors lived. On the bow, visitors climb into the massive No. 1 turret to see where sailors loaded 14-inch shells into twin guns. People scurry high above the deck on the conning tower, taking in spectacular views of the Texas and shipping traffic on the channel.

The Texas is best known for its service in World War II when it fought in both the European and Pacific theaters of the war. The battleship bombarded the enemy during amphibious landings including D-Day in 1944 and assaults on the Pacific islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa in 1945.

"The Texas witnessed some of the most iconic images of World War II,"

Smith says. "You can stand where crewmembers watched from the bridge as the flag was raised on Mount Suribachi" during the battle for Iwo Jima.

After World War II, aging battleships were offered to their namesake states, but only Texas accepted the offer, Smith says. Decommissioned, the Texas was officially transferred to the state in 1948.

In 2009, the Legislature approved funding to build a permanent dry berth for the ship at its present location. Those plans were put on hold in 2012 when the battleship experienced severe flooding from leaks. Structural repairs are now being made to the ship, Smith says, which remains open to the public.

Visitors can daily take self-guided tours or join occasional tours of areas not open to the general public. Guided "hardhat" tours offer a look at areas such as the ammo-handling room, boiler room, main radio room and the pilothouse. The Battleship Texas Foundation also offers overnight stays on board for groups. Participants sleep in bunk beds, just as the crew did.

"One of the coolest things about the Texas is getting a sense of the conditions the crew lived and worked under," Smith says. "You can walk the deck and imagine what it was like to be here in the middle of North Atlantic storms or in the heat of the South Pacific."

Jeff Joiner is Texas Co-op Power editor.

Visit the Battleship Texas

The Texas is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Visit tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/battleship-texas. Learn more about the ship's history and efforts to repair and preserve it at the Battleship Texas Foundation website, battleship-texas.org.

Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

- Take a video tour of the Battleship Texas.
- Read about the March Battleship Texas Centennial Celebration.



A BIG GUN: For 6-year-old Damon Russell, visiting the Battleship Texas in La Porte is a larger-than-life adventure that includes trying out the controls of an anti-aircraft gun. The historic warship is open daily for self-guided tours.

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