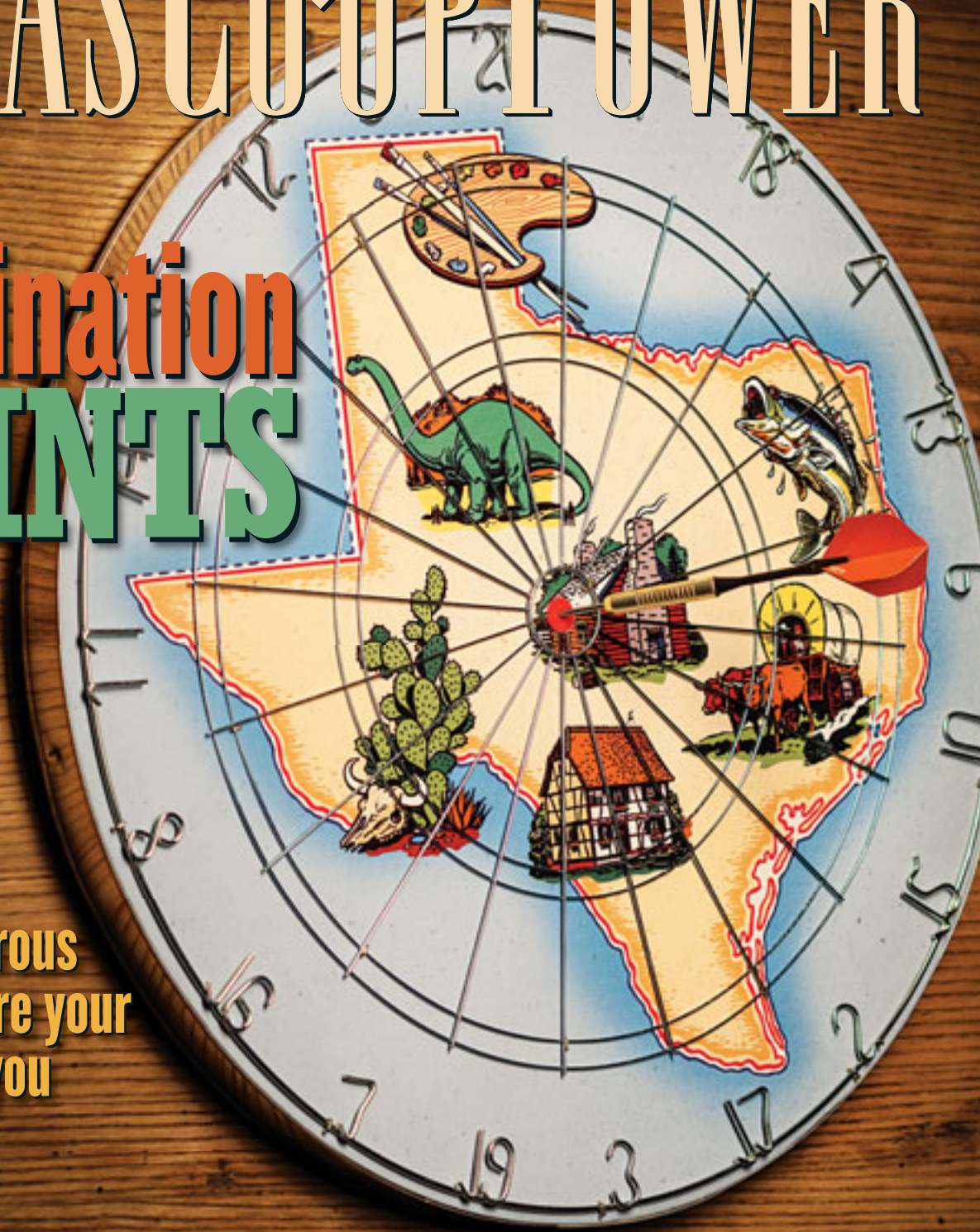


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REFRESHING DIP: A swimmer glides through the cold waters that flow from Caroline Spring on Independence Creek Preserve in West Texas.

FEATURE

Darting Around Texas Throw a dart at a map of Texas, we decided, go wherever it lands, and let the adventures begin. The point is: There are delightful destinations all around us

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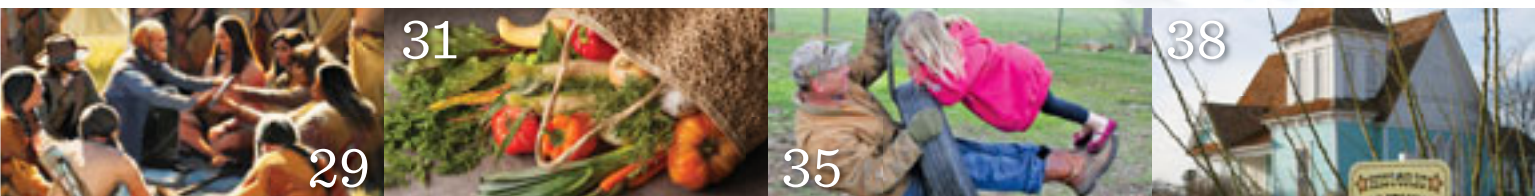
TexasCoopPower.com

Texas USA

King of Thrones
By Wes Ferguson

Observations

We Live in a Different World
By Lewis Young



COVER PHOTO We turned Texas into a dartboard showing the seven bull's-eyes pinpointed by our tosses. Map: John Kachik. Photo: Rick Patrick

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2014 TEXAS SILVER ROUND



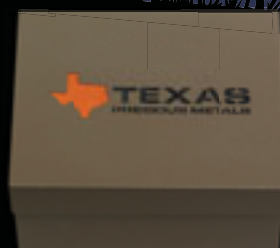
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The Big Pig Problem

Mike Leggett reports on an issue close to home for me ["Here a Pig, There a Pig," April 2014]. Our family ranch in the Hill Country is rife with feral hogs. Using the old-fashioned "rifle" technique, we have kept the population down, but they continue to proliferate.

The notion came to me that baiting feed with birth control might slow the fertility of the sows. Of course, we would not want the white tail deer, red foxes and other small mammals to get to the bait. Has there been any method of controlling the feral hogs with this concept in mind?

ANNE KOBDISH | AUSTIN
PEDERNALES EC

I have a big problem with hogs, too. I have had a circular trap about 40 feet around for the last five years, with a corn feeder in the center of the pen, which has a spring-loaded gate 4 feet wide and a trip wire near the dispensed corn. I caught three pigs the entire year last year and none so far this year.

I suggest that pressure be put on Texas Parks and Wildlife to get a sodium nitrite project completed. Someone needs to find a company to pelletize the sodium nitrite so we

Readers Know Vino

The article "We Know Vino" [April 2014] was good, but Laura Jenkins left out the names and work of two pioneers in our wine industry—George Ray McEachern of College Station and Jim Kamas of Fredericksburg. Both men were there at the start and continue to work with growers across the state.

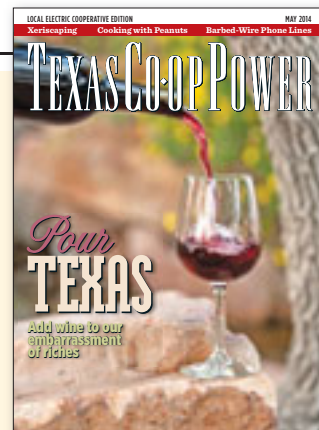
AL B. WAGNER | COLLEGE STATION | BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

I was a little disappointed in "We Know Vino." She didn't mention the oldest winery in Texas. The Val Verde Winery in Del Rio has been in continuous family operation since 1883. It was established by Frank Qualia upon his arrival in Del Rio.

DANIEL DECKER | MOUNTAIN HOME | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

"We Know Vino" told about many wineries in our great state of Texas. Most of the wineries mentioned were in the Hill Country. I wondered whether Laura Jenkins was aware of the Haak Winery in Santa Fe, Texas. Many people thought grapes could not be grown in that Galveston County climate, but the owner, Raymond Haak, has been very successful.

JOHNNIE HAAK | GEORGETOWN | PEDERNALES EC



can start using it to poison pigs. It is used in Australia with great results.

ED J. WAGNER | HALLETTSVILLE
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

Add to the list of damages caused by wild pigs the destruction of nests of ground-nesting birds such as quail and turkey.

For several years, my goat kid crop sustained overnight losses of newborns until, with a bit of luck and a .22-250 rifle, I managed to shoot the pig of 300-plus pounds that had done thousands of dollars in damages. It only takes one.

DAVE HARRIS | FREDERICKSBURG
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

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Letters may be edited for clarity and length.



@TexasCoopPower



Artwork Slipping Away

Thanks for Eileen Mattei's colorful and historic piece on the Rio Grande Valley's citrus crate artwork ["The Crop Collection," April 2014]. Who knew? Like record album covers, this artwork has slipped away, almost completely unnoticed.

MIKE DAILEY | HARLINGEN | NUECES EC

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Civil Rights Take Center Stage

President Barack Obama and three former presidents headlined a host of speakers from the worlds of entertainment, sports, the media and, of course, civil rights who convened for the Civil Rights Summit in April at the LBJ Presidential Library on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. The event was held in commemoration of the Civil Rights Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964. Obama honored LBJ and the civil rights movement of the 1960s in his keynote address, saying, "We've got a debt to pay." Former presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush also spoke at the summit.

Todd S. Purdum noted in a story on Politico.com that LBJ's last public appearance, in December 1972, was on the same stage where the summit was held and marked the opening of some of his White House files on civil rights. Purdum wrote:

"Whites stand on history's mountain, and blacks stand in history's hollow," Johnson said then. The challenge, he concluded, was to "get down to the business of trying to stand black and white on level ground."

See "We Live in a Different World," this month's Observations, in which Lewis Young, a director at Wood County Electric Cooperative, recounts how the Civil Rights Act changed his life in East Texas.



From left: Presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama and George W. Bush

Texas accounted for the most wind-generated electricity in the country in 2013, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Texas generated nearly 36 million megawatt-hours. No other state came close: Iowa was second, with more than 15 million MWh. To put that in perspective, the wind-generated electricity produced in Texas last year could power about 2.5 million homes in the state for a year.

36,000,000

HAPPENINGS

Dueling Polkas

How does the polka equivalent of "Dueling Banjos" grab you? As firmly as your dance partner grabs you, no doubt.

The Czech Heritage Society of South Texas holds its second annual South Texas Summer PolkaFest on July 26, featuring a "battle dance" at the Moravian Hall in Corpus Christi. The Leo Majek Orchestra of Corpus Christi and the Red Ravens of El Campo will alternate playing onstage, trying to outdo each other as guests polka and waltz to their hearts' content. The bands will play together for the final hour.

PolkaFest includes a raffle and plenty of traditional Czech food and drinks, including, of course, kolache.

INFO: Doors open at 11 a.m., \$7 admission, (361) 215-9163, chssouthtexas.org

Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com



ENERGY NEWS

Volts That Float

If a startup called Altaeros Energies gets off the ground, it will do so by producing electricity way, way off the ground.

The company, founded in 2010 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is preparing to launch a floating wind turbine over Alaska called a BAT, or buoyant airborne turbine, according to The New York Times. The BAT is a helium-filled doughnut surrounding a rotor. It would float in strong winds 1,000 feet up and, using one of the cables tethering it to the ground, feed enough electricity to power more than a dozen homes.

Ben Glass, CEO of Altaeros, had planned a career in rocket science and interned at SpaceX, the private company that has a rocket and equipment test facility outside McGregor.

"I realized that to be a rocket scientist you kind of had to be a billionaire and have a rocket company or you were just going to be designing some little widget part of the rocket," Glass told The New York Times.



BAP: ALTAEROS ENERGIES; NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS: NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS



ON THIS DATE

Lookout Below

Fifty years ago, Natural Bridge Caverns opened to the public, giving visitors access to the largest known cavern system in Texas.

In 1960, four students from St. Mary's University in nearby San Antonio obtained permission from the landowners to explore the area under a 60-foot limestone bridge. They eventually discovered and crawled their way through 2 miles of underground passages.

The owners of the property developed the site into a tourist attraction and opened for business on July 3, 1964, allowing visitors to go 180 feet underground and see ancient formations, including stalagmites, stalactites, flowstones, chandeliers and soda straws.

WHO KNEW?

Texas became the 28th U.S. state on December 29, 1845. The 28th star was officially added to the American flag on July 4, 1846. The 28-star flag existed for just one year because on July 4, 1847, the 29th star was added to represent the newly admitted state of Iowa.



Darting Around TEXAS

With open minds and unpracticed aim, we scattered about the state, our destinations determined by the toss of a dart

Because we travel around the state a fair bit, and our readers often regale us with the charms of their far-flung communities, we know of the boundless possibilities Texas offers. We talk about how you can go almost anywhere and discover adventures if you pack your curiosity. Heck, throw a dart at a map of Texas, someone said, go wherever it lands, and I bet you'll have fun.

So that's what we did. Seven of us on the Texas Co-op Power staff tossed darts at a road map. Second tries were granted after a couple stuck in Oklahoma or the Gulf of Mexico. Ultimately, here's where we and our darts landed: Brown, Burleson, Hemphill, Henderson, Medina, Scurry and Terrell counties.

We wanted to avoid the well-worn weekend trips and be surprised at what Texas has to offer, and our darts helped us do just that. Did you know you could go scuba diving in the West Texas desert? Did you know a Panhandle town has an old church that became a doctor's home and is now an impressive art museum? Neither did we.

And that was the whole point.



TOM WIDLOWSKI

Terrell County

*Refreshing the soul at
Independence Creek Preserve*

BY SUZANNE HABERMAN

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD LINDY WRINKLE BOUNDS up the mesa, leading the way to a limestone cave overlooking Independence Creek Preserve in West Texas. Despite a pinkish bow holding back flaxen hair, dry wind blows wisps into her crystalline blue eyes as she bounds among prickly pear, catclaw acacia and ocotillo. Her mom, Lisa Wrinkle, Lower Pecos Program Coordinator for The Nature Conservancy of Texas, follows close behind, consenting to let Lindy introduce “the birdman.”

Near the top, eroded sedimentary rock forms a cave that provided shelter to indigenous peoples as long as 7,000 years ago. Lindy bops over boulders and finds the cave art, a weathered black image about 4 inches tall depicting a beaked profile on wide, winged shoulders. The young guide defers to her mom to describe the cave’s other features but observes with contagious curiosity the counting cuts, dulling grooves and a carved crosshatch pattern that perhaps indicated to early dwellers the presence of water in the desert.

In the valley below, Caroline Springs bursts with 3,000 to 5,000 gallons of water per minute before flowing into Independence Creek, a tributary and the largest freshwater contributor of the Pecos River in Texas. The water here is so pure that Lisa’s 9-year-old son, Logan, shows off by drinking directly from the spring.

Independence Creek Preserve, owned by The Nature Conservancy since 2000, covers about 20,000 acres in Terrell County roughly 120 miles south of Odessa. Lisa and the four other professionals who live on the preserve are restoring the former ranchland to a more natural state. Their efforts include watershed management to revitalize the wetlands and brush management to re-establish grasslands on mesa tops. The initiative aims to protect the land from being divided and foster habitat for the plants and animals of the Chihuahuan Desert, Edwards Plateau and Tamaulipan Thornscrub ecological regions that meet here.

Half the territory is opened to the public several times a year. My husband and I spend about 24 hours on the preserve, where we, inspired by Lindy, explore heights and depths with wonderment.



At dusk, we pitch our tent at a remote campsite away from the spring and other visitors. As the sun sets between mesas, the day’s last rays illuminate a cave near the top of a nearby mountain. We resolve to hike there come morning.

Navigating the steep and rocky terrain, full of every kind of pokey plant in three ecological regions, doesn’t come as easily to us as it does to Lindy, but after an hour, we near the summit. Childlike excitement wells up in me as I scale the last limestone rock face and step into the mouth of the cave.

Inside, we marvel at tiny stalactites, fossils, scat, fresh bones and jigsaw-like placement of rocks in the shelter, measuring about 50 yards wide, 20 feet deep and 15 feet high. We stretch our eyes over the distance and revel in feeling small.

Down at the headwaters, fellow campers swim, kayak and fish in the two small spring-filled lakes. I don my swimsuit and ease in while shivering children encourage me to just jump. Then a scuba diver lends me his gear for a better look below. Tank attached, I dip into the 68-degree water and enter another world. Red and green water primrose grows in columns and curtains, forming underwater chambers that are home to largemouth bass, sequin-like shiners and plate-sized Rio Grande cichlid.

I emerge from the spring feeling reborn. As Lisa said the day before as we

looked out over the valley from the mesa, “It really refreshes the soul.”

GETTING TO THE POINT



To learn more, visit nature.org and search for Independence Creek Preserve.

2014 Open Events Schedule

August 29–31, 3 p.m. Friday–noon Sunday

September 20, 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

Registration required for camping

Limited admission

Scurry County

*Where Southern charm greets
visitors in West Texas*

BY GRACE ARSIAGA

A VISIT TO THE WEST TEXAS TOWN OF Snyder takes travelers to a time when good food and service and small-town friendliness are still the rule.

Dinner at The Butcher’s Block, known for steaks and seafood, is my introduction to fine dining in the comfortable atmosphere of a small-town restaurant. The menu showcases Southern favorites such as bone-in pork chops, fried catfish and chicken-fried steak, as well as lighter options such as blackened fish tacos and Texas redfish. My waitress suggests oysters on the half shell, but instead I order a juicy sirloin with salad, grilled asparagus



TRIANGLE SINCLAIR GAS STATION

and a baked potato. For a bit of country flair, drinks come in large mason jars.

I spend the night at the rustic Windmill Ranch Preserve, which includes a bed and breakfast run by Marianne Randals. The walls, floors and ceilings of the inn are all made of unfinished wood, and antique furniture and collectibles decorate each room. I stay in the Big House, with my own bathroom directly across the hall. Breakfast the next morning is served in the sunlit Pavilion, a spacious common room beside the Big House.

When shopping on Snyder's town square, consider stopping for lunch at the Big Apple Deli. Owner Bill Robertson based the deli on a place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he worked as a kid. The bricks at the bar came from Snyder's streets and wood on the east wall from an old church. The dining room is the original lobby of the old Manhattan Hotel, which thrived during the oil boom decades ago.

A must-see in Snyder is the Triangle Sinclair gas station, restored in a 1950s style and featuring the Sinclair brand's iconic green dinosaur out front. Built in 1935 and operated until the late 1960s by Ramon "Bushy" Hedges, the station fell into disrepair after Hedges had to sell it. In 2010, Snyder native Lynn Fuller bought the station. Fuller and his business partner, Franklin Bryant, refurbished the building. The station is not operational but frequently hosts class reunions, car clubs and tours. Inside, the office looks just as it must have 60 years ago.

Western Texas College in Snyder is home to the Scurry County Museum.

Items in the permanent gallery, donated by area families, tell the history of Scurry County. The museum's front lobby is dedicated to educational activities and is a popular field trip destination for area schools. Exhibits are changed regularly to encourage repeat visitors. Admission is free, and executive director Daniel Schlegel Jr. has boosted attendance from 600 visitors a year to 9,500 in his four years there. The museum is a great way to spend an afternoon learning about local history.

Big Country EC serves parts of Scurry County.

GETTING TO THE POINT



Plan a visit or learn more about Scurry County with the help of these resources:

- snyderchamber.org
- scurrycountymuseum.org

Hemphill County

A showcase for a Panhandle town's world-class art collection

BY JEFF JOINER

DRIVING ALONG SIXTH STREET IN CANADIAN, I can tell this Panhandle town is proud of its history and particular about its appearance. The hometown feeling is fostered by historic churches and stately 19th-century homes graced with manicured yards and huge shade trees. On the corner of South Sixth Street and East Nelson Avenue, my destination is an impressive structure that looks to be part church and part mansion, which is pretty close to being correct.

Once a Baptist church and later a family home, the grand edifice, now known as The Citadelle, is perhaps the best surprise a traveler to Canadian will discover.

The Citadelle is home to the extensive art collection of Malouf and Therese Abraham. No longer the family's dwelling, The Citadelle is now a public art museum that rivals in beauty and architecture the small art museums found in cities several times larger than Canadian, population 2,832.

The Abrahams bought the abandoned First Baptist Church building in 1977 for \$15,000 and began renovating and expanding it while preserving its original details, including stained-glass windows and ornate columns. The Abrahams not only renovated the 8,000-square-foot church but also began buying up surrounding property until they owned the entire block. In the place of the neighboring houses, the Abrahams transformed the grounds into elegant formal gardens.

Malouf Abraham Jr., the grandson of Lebanese immigrants to Canadian, was a doctor and enjoyed a practice specializing in allergies. Passionate art collectors, Malouf and Therese Abraham used their home

Pieces on display at the Citadelle: one sculpture in a pair called 'Universal Man and Woman' by Dean Howell and Norman Rockwell's 'First Day of School'



as a showplace for their renowned art collection, purchased over four decades of travel. The collection began in 1972 when Malouf Abraham wandered into a New York City gallery and walked out the owner of the Norman Rockwell painting, “First Day of School,” now a central piece in the Abraham Art Collection.

The Citadelle holds a variety of American and international works. The collection includes paintings, illustrations and sculptures representing many styles and periods. Going far beyond regional art, the Abrahams sought out the work of artists, including J.C. Leyendecker, Jessie Wilcox Smith, William Adolphe Bouguereau and Georgia O’Keeffe, who are represented in many of the nation’s most important museums.

“We have a substantial collection of internationally known artists,” says Wendie Cook, executive director of The Citadelle. “The pieces in the collection are very personal to the Abrahams. There’s no piece that doesn’t have some kind of emotional connection for them.”

In 2009, the Abrahams decided to preserve their collection and their mansion by creating The Citadelle Art Foundation and donating their art and home to the community. The mansion became the centerpiece of The Citadelle and houses a portion of the Abrahams’ permanent collection, along with their assortment of antique furnishings. A separate gallery built on the grounds features traveling exhibits and special events.

As I tour the gorgeous home and view priceless paintings hanging in every room, even the bathrooms, Cook tells me the Abrahams covered nearly every available square inch of wall space with art when they lived there.

The Citadelle has turned Canadian into an art destination for visitors from across the country and a valuable resource for locals, especially schools that take advantage of the foundation’s educational resources not available in any other small town in Texas.

Greenbelt and North Plains ECs serve parts of Hemphill County.

GETTING TO THE POINT

The Citadelle, 520 Nelson Ave. in Canadian, is open Thursday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors 65 and older, and free to those 18 and younger. For information, including a schedule of visiting exhibits, go to thecitadelle.org.



Brown County

A community's rich history is proudly on display

BY KEVIN HARGIS

BEFORE I FOLLOWED A DART DEEP INTO the heart of Texas, my knowledge of Brown County and its biggest town, Brownwood, was limited to two legends: Underwood’s Cafeteria and Gordon Wood.

But on my recent visit to the county on the northern edge of the Hill Country, I learned there is more to the place than the home of a decades-old dining institution and one of the country’s most successful high school football coaches.

In the early 1900s, Brownwood, near the geographic center of the state, enjoyed booms brought by oil and the establishment of nearby Camp Bowie, one of the largest World War II military training centers in Texas.

To explore the area’s rich history, I headed to North Broadway Street, where one part of the Brown County Museum of History resides in a former garage. A cornucopia of artifacts awaited: a pioneer’s log cabin and a one-room schoolhouse, both reassembled inside; olive-drab relics from Camp Bowie; and the Birdsong Circus, a miniature big top with a motorized display of hand-painted performers created by a Brownwood resident who was once a circus clown.

Across the street stands another museum building, the imposing former county jail, a castlelike sandstone and concrete structure that opened in 1903.

Cramped iron cells on the second floor offer a glimpse at life behind bars. Prisoners were housed just a few feet from the trapdoor that was part of the jail’s built-in gallows.

Downstairs, in what once was the sheriff’s living quarters, two rooms are devoted to the Firearms Museum of Texas’ collection of antique rifles, pistols and shotguns.

A few blocks away on Washington Street, the city’s days as a rail hub are recalled. The restored Brownwood Santa Fe Passenger Depot is connected to the Brownwood Harvey House, a former rail-side restaurant. The Harvey House, now headquarters of the Brownwood Area Chamber of Commerce, includes a tourist center and gift shop. Ask at the gift shop’s counter—or call (325) 646-9535—for access to the replica locker room of the Gordon Wood Hall of Champions upstairs. The hall pays tribute to the coach who led the Lions to seven state championships and who retired in 1985 after 46 years of coaching with a nation-leading 396 career victories.

A sleek 6-year-old glass-and-steel building across Washington Street from the depot houses the Martin & Frances Lehnis Railroad Museum, a collection of equipment gathered during Martin Lehnis’ almost 50-year railroad career. The collection includes model train layouts he built, including an outdoor train big enough to ride (rides are offered only on Saturdays). The museum, adjacent to the main line running through town, has a train-viewing platform and includes a display of a caboose and passenger car.

A piece of living history stands on Com-

merce Street, where the Underwood family has been feeding customers since 1951. Underwood's Cafeteria still offers stick-to-your-ribs fare such as smoked meats, fried chicken and chicken-fried steak, served cafeteria style with all-you-can-eat side dishes, rolls, cobbler and beverages.

Just 10 minutes outside of town, the Star of Texas Bed & Breakfast offers a quiet setting for rest and relaxation. My arrival there coincided with a wedding being officiated by owner Don Morelock. The B&B's rooms are in comfortably furnished individual cabins, but for the more adventurous, the Morelocks offer a stay in a teepee with an interior fire pit.

That evening, I headed back downtown for a memorable meal at The Turtle Restaurant, which touts a "slow food" approach and the use of local ingredients. I savored every morsel of a perfectly seared duck breast served on creamy polenta with a mushroom sauce. The rich chocolate mousse confection to follow was the icing on the cake of my visit.

Coleman County and Comanche ECs serve parts of Brown County.

GETTING TO THE POINT

Plan a visit or learn more about Brownwood with the help of these resources:

- brownwoodchamber.org
- browncountyhistory.org
- tfmt.org
- gordonwoodhallofchampions.org

Medina County

Steinbach House adds to Alsatian influence

BY ANDREW BOZE

THE IDEA OF SMALL-TOWN TEXAS BRINGS to mind tradition, ancestry and an everybody-knows-everybody sense of community. But in Castroville, the town's claim to fame might not initially strike visitors as being "from 'round these parts."

The Steinbach House opened as a tourism and cultural center in Castroville on April 8, 2002, but its adventures began overseas in the 17th century. The house was built between 1618 and 1648 in Wahlbach in the Alsace region of France, where it would remain for more than 300 years until plans were set in motion to bring the Alsatian structure to Texas.

The building was purchased by the Association Jardin des Racines, beginning a four-

year relocation and restoration project, aided by faculty and students of the Lycée Agricole from Rouffach in northeastern France. The house was disassembled and put on a course for Texas, arriving in Houston in January 1998. The parts were then transported to Castroville by truck to be reconstructed on a lot along Highway 90.

Castroville, in eastern Medina County, is known as "The Little Alsace of Texas" because of its origins. Early European settlers in the area were farmers from Alsace, who arrived after founder Henri Castro contracted to colonize the town in 1844.

Reconstruction of the two-and-a-half story, 1,232-square-foot house began in 1998, beginning with the framework. Brick and mortar were added in 1999 to enclose the fachwerk, a style of timber framing. That same year, the Association Jardin Des Racines ordered roofing tiles to be shipped stateside. In February 2000, roofing and landscaping was completed with the help of the Lycée Agricole and the president of the Association Jardin des Racines, André Hartmann. The house's exterior was plastered and painted soon after, and the interior was revived as a functional living space—complete with authentic furniture and items donated by residents of Alsace—in March 2002.

Sure, the Steinbach House might look a little misplaced to Texans who aren't familiar with Castroville's history. But just ask around town and you'll discover it's one more part of what makes our state unique. The house is open to the public for viewing throughout the week except



Tuesdays, when the house can be viewed by appointment.

Bandera, Karnes and Medina ECs serve parts of Medina County.

GETTING TO THE POINT

Plan a visit or learn more about Castroville at castrovilletx.gov.

Burleson County

Escape to the beauty of the Brazos Valley

BY ELIZABETH JOHN

IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT TEXAS, you know how much the locals value their pecans. What's not to love? If your fondness for pecans is as deep as mine, you must experience Royalty Pecan Farms in Caldwell in the heart of Burleson County, just west of College Station. With a population that barely exceeds 4,000, the town allows for a pleasant escape from the city's fast-paced hustle and bustle.

Royalty Pecan Farms, east of Caldwell off State Highway 21, offers a variety of events, including orchard tours, wine tastings and recipe contests. The orchard is a sight in itself. Hundreds of perfectly planted rows of pecan trees stand on 500 acres of emerald grass and beautiful landscape.

Upon arrival, you're invited to browse the farm's gift shop and do some sampling. I suggest you come hungry. The options seem never-ending, with selections such as pecan pumpkin butter, jams, granola and coffee. You can taste pecans with mouth-watering flavors such as Cajun Thyme, Harvest Spice, Dulce de Leche and my personal favorite, CocoaMocha.

As I wait for the pecan tour to begin, I sit on the back porch overlooking the orchard and soak in all of its beauty. I'm told that many weddings and receptions are held here (a fact I make a mental note of). It's a Saturday afternoon, and the weather seems as if it were pulled right off a postcard. There are no clouds to interrupt the deep blue skies, and a breeze complements the sun's rays. I close my eyes and listen to the rustling of leaves.

After a few relaxing minutes, it is time for the orchard tour, and the real entertainment begins. My fellow visitors and I load into a covered wagon, where we will spend the next 45 minutes roaming through the rows of trees. The tour begins with the guide explaining from his tractor

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seat through a loudspeaker that the farm, which started in the mid-1970s, thrives in the rich soil of the Brazos River bottom-land. The guide periodically stops the plodding, jostling wagon to point out new buds on trees and damage caused by wild pigs, which also love pecans.

Along the way, we seem to be informed of everything one can imagine knowing about pecans: how they are cultivated and harvested, and how they get from tree to table.

Whether you are just passing through

Burleson County or looking for a weekend getaway to enjoy the beautiful countryside, drive out to Royalty Pecan Farms for a truly yummy experience.

Bartlett and Bluebonnet ECs and Bryan Texas Utilities serve parts of Burleson County.

GETTING TO THE POINT

Plan a visit or learn more about Burleson County with the help of these resources:

- burlesoncountytx.com
- royaltypespecans.com



Henderson County

*Where tranquil landscapes
and big fish hook visitors*

BY TOM WIDLOWSKI

GENTLY ROLLING HILLS, DOTTED SPARSELY with tiny towns, hint at the timberland that takes over the terrain the farther east you head. To the north and west looms the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, barely an hour away, but the reach of the urban rat race has yet to settle here.

The tranquil scenery and open roads of Henderson County might compel you to continue an enjoyable drive, though the major arteries lead to Athens, where reasons to stop beckon.

In Athens, it's easy to feel like a big fish in a small pond. Windows along the self-guided tour at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center put visitors eye-to-eye with the many species of fish that inhabit the state's streams, lakes and ponds. Huge buffalo—the fish—and carp lumber near the bottom of a pond. Paddlefish and gar, sleek and long of snout, meander around a tank, oblivious that they are prehistoric remnants thriving in a 21st-century exhibit. Across the walkway, three alligators loll about in their own dwelling.

But bass are what get Texas anglers out of bed early in the morning, and the fisheries center is big bass central. Texas Parks and Wildlife's ShareLunker program headquarters here. The program encourages anglers who have caught largemouth bass 13 pounds or bigger to lend or donate them to the fishery for spawning. The more than 400 lunkers that have participated since the program began in 1986 have helped the parks department populate the state's reservoirs with big bass.

At the fishery's Lake Zebco, visitors can cast for catfish, sunfish and rainbow trout. Rods, reels and bait are provided at no charge. The pond is a favorite of school groups and novice anglers, and several of the loblolly pines along the banks are adorned with dozens of dangling red and yellow floats, the result of errant casting. "Yeah, they catch a lot of 'tree bass' out there," noted a staff member.

Across town, the East Texas Arboretum & Botanical Society features 100 acres of gardens connected by trails. On a serene, early spring day, horticulture's colors had yet to take center stage, but birds in the overhead branches certainly produced a determined clatter.

The Henderson County Veterans Memorial, dedicated on Veterans Day 2013, assumes a prominent position off the main trail in the northwest corner of the arboretum. The names of some 9,000 Henderson County military veterans, from the Civil War to the present, are engraved on granite panels.

Cedar Creek Reservoir in the northwest corner of Henderson County is one of the largest lakes in Texas, with more than 320 miles of shoreline. A dozen towns sit lakeside or close by, including Gun Barrel City, which features a wheelchair-accessible fishing pier built by the Cedar Creek Lake Parrot Head Club to honor members of the military. Passionate fans of singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett are called Parrot Heads, with hundreds of clubs in the U.S. (Remember his 1977 hit "Margaritaville"? It supposedly was inspired by a refreshing beverage Buffett enjoyed in Austin.)

Northeast of Athens, near Murchison, the Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch provides sanctuary for more than 1,000 animals rescued from near-death situations. The 1,300-acre ranch is not a zoo, but twice a year it opens its doors to the public, and visitors can see bison, antelopes, apes, camels and other animals. In all, 43 species call the ranch home. The next open house events are scheduled for October 11 and October 18.

For the more adventurous traveler, head east from Athens, the county seat, toward Lake Palestine to New York Zip Lines, where visitors can glide among the pines at up to 100 feet above the ground.

Even for the earthbound, zipping around Henderson County proves to be a breeze. That's part of the joy of visiting. But so is stopping and enjoying the attractions.

Trinity Valley EC serves parts of Henderson County.

GETTING TO THE POINT



Plan a visit or learn more about Henderson County with the help of these resources:

- athenstx.org
- tpwd.state.tx.us
- eastexasarboretum.org
- blackbeauty ranch.org
- gozip texas.com

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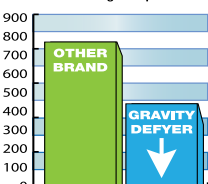
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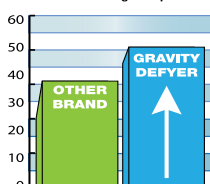
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Energy-Saving Tips for Summertime

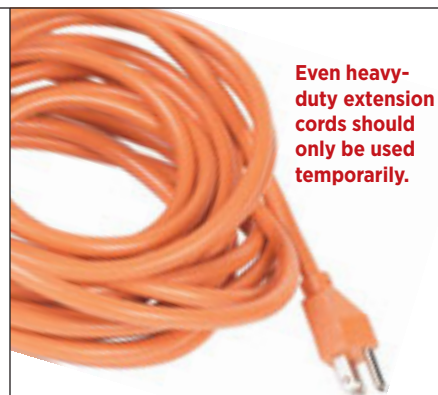
The average home requires hundreds of dollars a year to pay for energy costs. Smart habits can lower your energy bills and help save the environment.

- ▶ Turn up your thermostat. Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home and 85 degrees or off when you are away. Using ceiling or room fans allows you to set the thermostat higher because the air movement cools the room. Always take into account health considerations and be sure to drink plenty of fluids in warm weather.
- ▶ To help minimize peak loads for your electric cooperative, avoid running your appliances during peak hours, 4 to 6 p.m.
- ▶ Do your laundry efficiently by using the warm- or cold-water setting for washing your clothes. Always use cold water to rinse clothes.
- ▶ Line-dry clothes whenever you can. When you need to use the dryer, run full loads, use the moisture-sensing setting, and clean the lint trap after each use.
- ▶ Operate swimming pool filters and cleaning sweeps efficiently. Reduce the operating time of your pool filter and automatic cleaning sweep to four to five hours during off-peak time.



Using a microwave oven instead of the stove cuts cooking time and energy costs.

- ▶ Turn off appliances, lights and equipment when not in use.
- ▶ Unplug electronic devices and chargers when they aren't in use—most new electronics use electricity even when switched off. Turn computers and printers off at a power strip.
- ▶ Unplug and recycle any spare refrigerator in the garage if you don't really need it.
- ▶ Opt for a microwave. Nothing is more energy efficient for cooking than your microwave. It uses two-thirds less energy than your stove.
- ▶ Push a button to wash your dishes. It may come as a surprise to know that your dishwasher can use less water than washing dishes by hand. But remember to only wash full loads and then let dishes air-dry to save even more.
- ▶ Fill up the fridge. Having lots of food in your fridge keeps it from warming up too fast when the door is open, so your fridge doesn't have to work as hard to stay cool. The same is true for the freezer.



Even heavy-duty extension cords should only be used temporarily.

Preventing House Fires

Keep your home safe from fires all summer by taking a few easy steps to prevent them:

- ▶ Check your appliances for electrical cords that are loose or damaged. Sometimes you can have them repaired, but often the wear and tear that damages cords indicates it's time for new models.
- ▶ If you are hiding extension cords under carpets, remove them. Walking on cords can cause damage. Damaged cords can overheat and catch fire.
- ▶ Extension cords are not sturdy enough for year-round use. They're designed to temporarily add some reach to a regular-length cord for a few days or weeks, not for good. If you don't have enough easy-to-reach plugs, consider having an electrician install some more.
- ▶ Childproof your home's electrical receptacles with tamper-resistant plugs. Or replace your old outlets with new tamper-resistant models that prevent children from inserting objects into them.
- ▶ Don't overload your outlets. Just because a power strip has enough room for six to eight appliances doesn't mean the single outlet can handle the load.
- ▶ If an outlet or light switch feels warm when you touch it, or if turning on appliances and lights trips your circuits, call an electrician to resolve the problem.
- ▶ If your home is older, it might not have ground-fault circuit interrupters. Have them installed in bathrooms, the kitchen, laundry room, basement and outdoors—anywhere water might mix with electricity.



IMAGE SOURCE WHITE | THINKSTOCK

Keep Splash Zone Safe

The danger of electrocution is always present around a pool, hot tub, spa or other wet area. Don't take chances with electricity and water.

- Pool and spa owners should use extreme caution when using electrical appliances, equipment or tools in the vicinity of a swimming pool. Be careful not to allow extension poles used for rescue or maintenance to come in contact with electric power lines. Don't allow any electrical equipment in the vicinity of the pool.

- It is not safe to use a regular "landline" telephone or to place electrically powered appliances, such as radios, fans, light fixtures, CD players or televisions, where they may accidentally fall or be pulled into a pool or spa.

- Keep electrical devices away from the pool unless the equipment is approved for poolside use. Approved equipment will have a third-party certification sticker affixed to the outside of the device and will be double-insulated or designed with protective devices to prevent electrical shock.

- Don't reach for an appliance that has fallen into the water without first unplugging it from the power source. When you are wet, don't touch an appliance with one hand while touching something metal (such as a pool ladder or rail) with another hand. Dry off before touching any electrical equipment or appliances in the pool area.

- All electrical receptacles should be 10 feet or more from the pool and should be protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters, which will interrupt the flow of electricity if the cord is accidentally cut or frayed. Regular household uninsulated extension cords should not be used on a pool deck. It's best to use only battery-powered devices near a pool.

- Call a qualified and licensed electrician to perform electrical repairs on pool equipment. Don't attempt to make the repairs yourself, and don't allow an unqualified pool serviceman or a friend to do any electrical work.

Lighting Your Outdoor Space

Get more use out of your backyard deck or patio by lighting it up after dark. You'll find an array of low-voltage fixtures that are as eye-catching during the day as they are at night.

Installing low-voltage deck lights can be a do-it-yourself job. But if you want an elaborate spread, consider hiring a landscape lighting designer and an electrician to do the work.

Here are some tips for building your backyard paradise:

- The best time to incorporate lighting is while you're building a deck because you can hide wiring under the deck and inside railing posts.

- Deck lights create ambiance after dark, but they're also important for safety. Place lights along stairways and at steps between levels—even if it's just a single step—and around the perimeter of the deck, either recessed in the deck boards or on top of railing posts.

- Don't skimp on quality. If you're shelling out big bucks for a new deck, you'll be disappointed if the lights look cheap or don't last. Choose a model with at least a one-year warranty.



NEIL PODOLL | ISTOCK | THINKSTOCK

Outdoor lighting provides safety and allows for evening enjoyment of outdoor spaces.

- Low-voltage lights require a power source—usually a transformer that plugs into a 110-volt outlet protected by a ground-fault circuit interrupter. Hire an electrician to do the wiring.

- Traditional low-voltage lighting fixtures use incandescent lights. But they're also available with long-lasting light-emitting diodes or solar collection panels. LEDs require fewer bulb changes; solar lights require no wiring.

King of Thrones

94-year-old former plumber's
Toilet Seat Art Museum is
flush with creativity

BY WES FERGUSON

TOILET SEATS KEEP BARNEY SMITH AWAKE at night. His daughter thinks they keep him going.

Smith, 94, is San Antonio's king of thrones. The owner, curator and namesake of the Barney Smith Toilet Seat Art Museum has spent more than half a century building an empire in the garage behind his home. But as he gets older, he also has begun to contemplate the end of his reign.

So many toilet seats, so little time.

"I don't know when I'm going to stop. I've got so much more to do," Smith said one afternoon this spring. "Last night I was up till 3 o'clock in the morning, working on a toilet seat."

Like most days, Smith was expecting visitors, so he disappeared through a side door, then slowly pushed open the wide, swinging front garage doors, revealing a treasure that has drawn people from all 50 states and 74 countries.

The lids of toilet seats line the inside of the doors. More seats hang from the ceiling, and they cover nearly every square inch of wall space—more than 1,100 in all, each painted, engraved, etched or otherwise decorated in a different theme of Smith's creation.

Smith grinned. "Welcome to my toilet seat art museum," he said.

To the retired plumber, a toilet seat lid is a blank, and cheap, canvas. The creative possibilities dawned on Smith more than 50 years ago, following a successful hunting trip in the Hill Country.

"I needed a piece of wood to mount my deer horns on," Smith recalled. "I said, 'I'm

going to put my little horns on a toilet seat,' and that's how it got started."

Smith is a lifelong artist. He taught himself to paint while he was growing up in Eastland, between Abilene and Fort Worth, and as an adult he sold oil-on-canvas works at a "starving artists" market on the San Antonio River Walk. But mounting deer antlers to a toilet seat scratched a creative itch that more traditional media had not.

"I liked it so well, until I said, 'I'm going to put everything I have on a toilet seat,'" Smith said.

Before long, arrowheads, seashells, tobacco pipes, bear claws, turkey beards, plumbing supplies, old dental tools, casket handles and the silverware he recovered from his customers' kitchen sink traps, had all found their way onto seats. A more recent work displays the flusher that Saddam Hussein used when relieving himself in his Baghdad palace. Visitors can lift the lid of yet another seat and discover a practically buzzing hive of preserved hornets.

"One of them stung me on my head, and I said, 'I'm going to put you on my toilet seat,'" Smith recalled. "I stood there beating them as they came out of their hole in the ground."

Smith had been crafting toilet seat art for three decades when he opened his free museum to the public in 1992. As his fame grew, he began appearing on national talk shows, and each time he returned home, he decorated a toilet seat to commemorate the occasion. A seat for Barbara Walters hangs next to the one for Montel Williams.

While Smith uses toilet seats as a way to record his life events, interests and trav-



CAN-DO SPIRIT: Barney Smith, 94, continues adorning toilet seat lids. The collection in his San Antonio garage has more than 1,100, including one containing the push-button flusher, left, from a toilet in Saddam Hussein's palace in Baghdad.



els, the connections to his admirers and curiosity-seekers seem to matter just as much. On a slow afternoon, he might greet a trickle of guests; the next day could bring a bus loaded with tourists from Japan or South Dakota. All he asks is that visitors call ahead of time so he can open up.

"It started out as a hobby that makes him happy, and it's still a hobby to him," said Smith's daughter, Patricia Smith, noting how active and passionate her father has remained well into his 90s. "It's mostly thanks to the people who come. These are the people who have kept him alive."

Smith and his wife, Velma Louise, were married for 74 years. When she died in January, he decorated a toilet seat to honor the hospice provider who helped him care for her.

Smith said he has been giving some thought to his own mortality and is well aware of the events that followed the death of California artist John A. Kostopoulos, the "King of Toilet Seats," in 1996.

"When he died, they put a Dumpster in his yard and threw all his toilet seats in the city dump," Smith said, adding that almost all of Kostopoulos' 400 seats and lids were

lost. "After I'm gone, I don't have a say-so, but it would hurt to know they're going to be destroyed. I would hate to see that."

Smith's daughter has promised not to let a similar fate befall her father's work, although she is still puzzling over a solution that will preserve his oeuvre. A plan to transfer the collection to the corporate headquarters of the Bemis Manufacturing Company, a Wisconsin-based toilet seat manufacturer, did not pan out.

"We're trying to get some ideas, but I just don't know what I'll do with all of it when he's gone," Patricia said. "It's really going to be some kind of tribute when he passes."

Questions about the future of his collection weigh on him at times, but Smith is anything but morose. Museum tours and chats with visitors re-invigorate him every day, and toilet seat art still rouses his creative impulses. With so many ideas and projects in the pipeline, Smith said he's nowhere near ready to lower the lid on his life's work.

"I've got a lot of ideas," he said. "I've got to keep a-going."

Wes Ferguson is the author of *"Running the River: Secrets of the Sabine"* (Texas A&M University Press, April 2014).

If you go: Barney Smith's Toilet Seat Art Museum, 239 Abiso Ave., Alamo Heights, (210) 824-7791. Free admission; open by appointment. Smith accepts toilet seats from visitors.

Web Extras on TexasCoopPower.com
View a slideshow of more photos.

We Live in a Different World

50 years ago, the Civil Rights Act paved the way for blacks in America to dream of a better life

BY LEWIS YOUNG

AS TOLD TO ASSOCIATE EDITOR TOM WIDLOWSKI

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Lewis Young, 82, a Wood County Electric Cooperative director since 1981 and the board secretary/treasurer since 1998, shares his thoughts about what the Civil Rights Act meant to him. Young was born and raised in Van Zandt County and was a teacher in the Canton Independent School District for 36 years.

THE 1960S WERE TURBULENT YEARS FOR the United States, to be sure, and the civil rights movement turned countless participants into public figures—some tragic and some heroic.

However, most Americans, black and white, were merely bystanders to history. We were students, workers, parents—just regular, everyday people living regular, everyday lives in a country simmering with social change.

I was a teacher with a young family in Van Zandt County in Northeast Texas, where I grew up, when President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964. I was far removed from the front lines of the civil rights movement, and yet I knew precisely what the activists were fighting for and how adamant the opposition was in attempting to preserve the status quo.

As a teenager, I was rebuffed in my attempts to land a job. There weren't any jobs out there for black kids, and you just accepted it.

When I joined the Army in the mid-1950s, I experienced the sting of segregation while traveling with a busload of draftees, headed to Fort Bliss in El Paso.

As a black man, I stayed in a segregated hotel. We stopped to eat in Abilene. The white men ate in the dining room, with its fine white linens. I was sent to the kitchen, where I sat on a stool. We were all serving the same country, but I lived in a different world. That's the way it was.

Later, as I was trying to start my teaching career, my first interview was set up with the county superintendent. I went to the district office, and when I walked in and explained why I was there, I was not offered a seat to wait. Then the superintendent came to the door and told me he had never hired a black person. That was the end of that. It was very degrading.

Three years later, that same district tried to hire me three years in a row.

I was instrumental in helping a rural water system get started in this area. Many times, as I tried to enlist customers, white people turned me away. They refused to drink water from lines that would serve black people.

These were the times we lived in: Blacks had their place in society, and whites tended to make sure we didn't transgress the boundaries of our place.

That changed with the Civil Rights Act. This piece of legislation affirmed that I am as good as the next person—no better, but as good. It instilled in me a sense of pride.

When I was a child, I didn't think about what it meant to be black or about racial differences. It wasn't something my parents talked a lot about. They were concerned about education more than anything else. They were determined that their children would get an education. I'm



MAKING HISTORY: President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964, as Martin Luther King Jr. and other dignitaries look on. Inset: Wood County EC Director Lewis Young

one of seven children, and we all finished high school. That was a must.

Two of us became teachers. It seemed like most black people back then had two choices—preach or teach.

I worked in an integrated school system for 30 years. I didn't see any difference in any child. I didn't see color, even though I was the only black teacher. I can count on one hand the problems I had in the classroom. I had no sense that white students or their parents had a problem with me because of my race. I had one child tell me that I was the only person to make him feel like a person. That was after I let him help me pass out papers one day. He was white.

Today, when I meet former students, we talk about the times in my classroom and share funny and heartwarming stories—not about race, but about life and fond memories.

When I think of the Civil Rights Act, I think of LBJ, who also was so instrumental in bringing electricity to the countryside. Co-ops owe a debt of gratitude for the improvements he delivered to their members' lives.

I also think about Martin Luther King Jr. and the work he did to bring about social change. He was a great man. I believe he was touched by God for this moment in history. He was one of the great leaders of that era whose life was cut short. John F. Kennedy was another. We lived through a lot of tragedies, and I guess

We believe that all men are created equal. Yet many are denied equal treatment.

We believe that all men have certain unalienable rights. Yet many Americans do not enjoy those rights.

We believe that all men are entitled to the blessings of liberty. Yet millions are being deprived of those blessings—not because of their own failures, but because of the color of their skin ...

But it cannot continue. Our Constitution, the foundation of our Republic, forbids it. The principles of our freedom forbid it. Morality forbids it. And the law I will sign tonight forbids it.

President Lyndon B. Johnson
Excerpt from his speech before signing the Civil Rights Act, July 2, 1964

those tragedies were for the betterment of mankind. I used to tell my students that great leaders don't live long.

I also give Thurgood Marshall a lot of credit for the integration of this country. He fought his battles through the courts. Before President Johnson appointed him to the Supreme Court, Marshall won perhaps the most important legal case of the century in 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education*, ending the legal separation of black

and white children in public schools.

I remember seeing Marshall in Tyler in October 1956. He was there fighting efforts by the state's attorney general to shut down the NAACP and the Legal Defense Fund. Marshall had to stay in a private home because as a black man, he couldn't stay in a hotel room.

I see the effects of the Civil Rights Act in my own family. I taught for many years and worked hard to save money. I was able to put my children through college, and when they graduated, they had no debt from student loans. They entered adulthood in a world that had changed since I got out of college. They didn't have the limited choice of "teach or preach."

My son, Reggie, is a business development manager in crop protection for DuPont. My daughter, Djuana, is the executive director of admissions at the University of Houston.

The Civil Rights Act meant opportunities for me and my children and my children's children. It's part of LBJ's legacy. Even as the debate continues about whether the Civil Rights Act has brought about enough social change or has done it fast enough, I am confident it ensures that more Americans, through persistence and determination, will continue to achieve their dreams.

Lewis Young and Clotene, his wife of 56 years, live in the Prairie Creek community, where he grew up.



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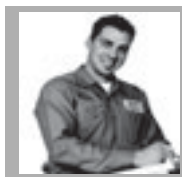
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Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

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 – Austin, 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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The Unbroken Peace Treaty

German immigrants around Fredericksburg negotiate lasting accord with Comanches in 1847

BY EILEEN MATTEI

IN FREDERICKSBURG IN 1847, A YOUNG German immigrant leader and a powerful Comanche chief signed a mutual defense pact believed to be the only unbroken peace treaty between American Indians and U.S. settlers.

The German immigrant society had purchased the 3.88 million-acre Fisher-Miller grant, which had to be surveyed by fall 1847 or it would be forfeited. What the immigrants did not know was that the Comanche, the most feared of tribes, claimed that area as their hunting grounds. Making peace with the Comanche became the responsibility of John O. Meusebach, the 33-year-old commissioner-general of the immigrant group.

In late January 1847, Meusebach rode north from Fredericksburg into the land grant with a small survey party. Meeting with Chief Ketemoczy of the Penetaka Comanche and other chiefs in an initial parley, Meusebach explained his friendly intentions, saying he represented towns that would welcome them. In return, he expected hospitality from his Comanche neighbors.

Ketemoczy dubbed the red-haired Meusebach “El Sol Colorado” (Red Sun) and promised to summon the chiefs of the western bands of Comanche to a peace council on the San Saba River at the next full moon.

Meusebach and his party explored parts of the grant and arrived on March 1 approximately 10 miles southwest of today’s city of San Saba to participate in the peace council. They were greeted by the scene of several hundred Comanche warriors standing behind the head chiefs: Buffalo Hump, Santa Anna and Old Owl. El Sol Colorado sat with them on buffalo robes, as the chiefs and he negotiated the terms of the treaty. On March 2, the talks concluded with a peace pipe and an agreement.

The treaty allowed the colonists to travel freely between the Llano and San Saba rivers. Likewise, the Comanche could



come into the settlers’ towns without fear. The Comanche promised to tell the colonists if hostile tribes were near the settlement, and the Germans vowed to assist the Comanches against their enemies. For allowing surveyors and colonists onto the land, the Comanches would receive \$3,000 in provisions and presents, according to Irene Marschall King, author of “John O. Meusebach: German Colonizer in Texas.”

On May 9, 1847, the treaty between the German Immigration Company and the Comanche nation was signed in Fredericksburg by six Comanche chiefs, Meusebach and seven others. After feasting and collecting their provisions and presents, the Comanche went home.

The treaty between the immigrants and the Comanche was unique: The government had no part in it. Despite a few infringements, the agreement held. The immigrants’ farms around Fredericksburg were safe from Comanche raids. The Comanche kept their hunting grounds, while tribes elsewhere were being forced onto reservations.

Meusebach went on to serve in the Texas Senate and marry a German countess. He died on his Loyal Valley farm north

of Fredericksburg in 1897.

But the story doesn’t end there.

Comanches were known for using smoke signals over long distances (a historical marker designates a signaling ground near San Saba). Legend says that during the March negotiations (which had taken place about 70 miles north of Fredericksburg), Comanche signal fires on the hills above Fredericksburg alarmed some children. Blending the Old World German tradition of Easter eve hill fires and Easter Rabbit tales, a Fredericksburg mother reportedly calmed her children by telling them that the signal fires were bunnies boiling Easter eggs.

But Easter in 1847 fell on April 4, not in early March. Over time, that merging of fact and legend was manifest in the Fredericksburg Easter Fires Pageant held for many years at the Gillespie County Fairgrounds the evening before Easter. The event, said Evelyn Weinheimer of the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg, celebrated a treaty unbroken and the peoples who agreed to live together peacefully.

Eileen Mattei, a member of Nueces EC and Magic Valley EC, lives in Harlingen.

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Start With Rosemary

Nothing tastes better than what you grow yourself, but not all of us have mastered the art of gardening. Thank goodness for farmers markets and CSAs, short for community-supported agriculture. CSA members pay a set fee and in return receive a regularly scheduled “share box” filled with vegetables and recipe cards.

America’s first CSAs started in the 1980s in New England. Today we have thousands. Like CSAs, the number of farmers markets in the U.S. has increased rapidly over the past 20 years. Selling products that might include fresh lavender or artisan cheese, these markets also serve as a springboard for small local food businesses.

This recipe was given to me by a friend, but over the years I’ve changed it around, using different vegetables depending on the season. The one ingredient I use every time is rosemary, which tastes wonderful with the roasted vegetables that enhance the soup’s natural sweetness.

ANNA GINSBERG, FOOD EDITOR

Bev’s Rosemary & Roasted Vegetable Soup

- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
- 1½ cup chopped carrots (½-inch pieces)
- 1 cup coarsely chopped onion
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 1 cup coarsely chopped red bell pepper
- ½ cup fresh corn
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 7 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth, plus more as needed
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt, optional or as needed
- 2 cups uncooked rotini pasta
- 2 cups fully cooked, cubed chicken breast

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- Toss the rosemary, carrots, onion, celery, bell pepper, corn, olive oil and black pepper together in a bowl. Spread on a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet and bake for about 40 minutes or until vegetables are lightly browned around the edges.
- Combine broth and garlic with 1 cup of water in a large pot. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Stir in vegetables and simmer for about 20 minutes.
- Add more broth as needed, plus salt to taste. Add the pasta and let soup simmer for 10 minutes or until pasta is tender. Add the chicken and heat through.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 1½ cups. Per serving: 452 calories, 24.6 g protein, 8 g fat, 72.8 g carbohydrates, 11.2 g dietary fiber, 818 mg sodium, 5 g sugars, 35 mg cholesterol

Finding Farmers Markets: Look under the **Locate GO TEXAN** menu at gotexan.org for a list of farmers markets in the state.



MITTIE DUNHAM | BIG COUNTRY EC

Farmers Market/What You Grow Contest

Winner: Our testers loved this flavorful zucchini bread. For best results, check the bread after 50 minutes of baking. The size of your loaf pan will affect overall baking time.



Zucchini Bread

- 3 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups grated fresh zucchini, unpeeled
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 3 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped nuts

- > Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- > Combine, eggs, sugar, zucchini, vanilla and oil. In a separate bowl, mix flour, salt, baking powder and cinnamon.
- > Stir flour mixture into zucchini mixture. Fold in nuts.
- > Divide batter equally between two greased loaf pans. Bake 50-60 minutes or until a tester inserted in center of loaf comes out clean.

Servings: 16. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 380 calories, 5.4 g protein, 19.8 g fat, 46.7 g carbohydrates, 2 g dietary fiber, 177 mg sodium, 25.9 g sugars, 34 mg cholesterol

\$5,000 Holiday Recipe Contest

December's issue will feature winners of the **Holiday Recipe Contest**, sponsored by the Texas Pecan Board. **Pecan Pie, Savory Dish and Sweet Dish:** Send us an ORIGINAL recipe in one of these categories, and your recipe could appear in Texas Co-op Power and win you a cash prize. The deadline is **August 10**. See complete rules at TexasCoopPower.com.

Regina's Gluten-Free Baked Eggplant Parmesan

REGINA MOSER | PEDERNALES EC

- Olive oil spray
- 1 large egg
- ¾ cup dry gluten-free breadcrumbs
- ¼ teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 4 small white eggplants
- Salt
- 2 cups tomato-garlic pasta sauce
- ½ cup shredded three-cheese Italian mix or mozzarella

- 2 slices of provolone, cut into strips
- ¾ cup finely grated fresh Parmesan

- > Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- > Spray baking sheet with olive oil and set aside. In a wide, shallow bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon water. In another bowl, combine breadcrumbs and seasonings.
- > Peel eggplants and slice into ½-inch strips lengthwise. Lightly salt eggplant slices and allow to sit for 10 minutes. Wipe slices dry with paper towel.
- > Dip eggplant slices in egg mixture, letting excess drip off, then dredge in breadcrumb mixture, coating well. Place on prepared baking sheets and top with olive oil spray. Bake until eggplant is soft and golden brown on top, 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from oven.
- > Spray bottom of an 8-by-8-inch baking pan with olive oil. Arrange half the eggplant in dish; lightly cover with sauce, then sprinkle with shredded cheese. Repeat with remaining eggplant and sauce, then top with provolone strips and sprinkle with Parmesan.
- > Bake until sauce is bubbling and cheese is melted and lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Servings: 4. Serving size: ¼ dish. Per serving: 482 calories, 23.6 g protein, 15.5 g fat, 66.8 g carbohydrates, 19.1 g dietary fiber, 1,011 mg sodium, 20.3 g sugars, 73 mg cholesterol



Cook's Tip: Baking the eggplant rather than frying it reduces the fat content in this gluten-free version of an Italian classic.

Fresh Pasta with Chard and Basil Pesto

TAMMY BROWNLOW | BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

- ⅓ cup almonds
- 1 cup Swiss chard
- 1 cup basil
- 3 large garlic cloves, peeled
- ½ cup grated Romano cheese
- 5 slices sun-dried tomatoes
- ⅛ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- Olive oil for drizzle
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Cooked pasta of your choice

- > Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Toast almonds until fragrant, about 5 minutes.
- > Snip stems off chard and basil.
- > Pulse toasted almonds in a food processor until chopped. Add chard, basil, garlic, cheese, sun-dried tomatoes and crushed red pepper. Pulse until fine.
- > With food processor running, pour in olive oil in a thin stream until mixture is a thick paste. Salt and pepper to taste.
- > Serve fresh over pasta or freeze in plastic bags.

Servings: 4. Serving size: ¼ cup. Per serving: 236 calories, 12.79 g protein, 26.28 g fat, 5.82 g carbohydrates, 2.28 g dietary fiber, 540 mg sodium, 1.43 g sugars, 29 mg cholesterol

Best Mustard Greens

PATTI SCHOEY | VICTORIA EC

- 2 bunches mustard greens
- 5-7 slices bacon
- 2 cups sauterne wine
- Tony Chacheres seasoning
- Tabasco sauce

- > Wash and dry greens.
- > Cook bacon and drain all but about ¼ cup bacon grease. Take out and crumble bacon.
- > Place greens in grease and cook down. Add bacon crumbles, wine, seasoning and Tabasco.
- > Simmer over medium heat 1 to 1½ hours.

Servings: 4. Serving size: ½ cup. Per serving: 336 calories, 10.31 g protein, 9.59 g fat, 18.55 g carbohydrates, 1.39 g dietary fiber, 572 mg sodium, 9.85 g sugars, 26 mg cholesterol

Yellow Velvet

DAWN HODGES | SAN BERNARD EC

- 4 ears sweet corn (about 3 cups kernels)
- 2 medium yellow squash
- 4 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup heavy cream



Yellow Velvet

Salt and pepper to taste

- > Scrape the kernels off corncoobs and slice squash. Sauté both in butter for about 5 minutes.
- > Add cream just to cover corn and squash, and sauté about 5 more minutes. Do not overcook. Corn should be crunchy and squash still in pieces.
- > Stir in salt and pepper.

Servings: 6. Serving size: ¾ cup. Per serving: 245 calories, 5 g protein, 16.5 g fat, 24.7 g carbohydrates, 3.9 g dietary fiber, 75 mg sodium, 5.2 g sugars, 47 mg cholesterol



Cook's Tip: Add some fresh chopped dill for variety.

Web Extra on TexasCoopPower.com

Check out hundreds more recipes in our archives.

10TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY RECIPE CONTEST



2011 Holiday Recipe Contest \$2,000 Grand Prizewinner Linda Morten shows off her Pecan-Cranberry Bread Pudding with Lemon Hard Sauce. Get the recipe at TexasCoopPower.com.

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Two \$500 Best Savory Dish Winners • Two \$500 Best Sweet Dish Winners

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Send us your best ORIGINAL Texas pecan recipes. (These are recipes you develop, not ones copied from a friend or found in a book or magazine.) Show us how you use Texas pecans to create a Savory Dish, a Sweet Dish or your Best Pecan Pie. All recipes must include pecans (Texas pecans are our favorite). Winners will be featured in our December 2014 issue. Enter by August 10, 2014, at TexasCoopPower.com.

Go to TexasCoopPower.com for details and official rules.

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Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com. Each entry MUST include your name, address and phone number, plus the name of your Texas electric cooperative, or it will be disqualified. Specify which category you are entering, Sweet, Savory or Pecan Pie, on each recipe. Send entries to: Texas Co-op Power/Holiday Recipe Contest, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You can fax recipes to (512) 763-3401. Up to three entries are allowed per co-op membership. Each should be submitted on a separate piece of paper if mailed or faxed. Mailed entries can all be in one envelope. No email entries will be accepted. For official rules, visit TexasCoopPower.com. **Entry deadline: August 10, 2014.**

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Additional Requirements: Hopper: Monthly fees: Hopper, \$12; Joey, \$7; Super Joey, \$10. With PrimeTime Anytime the AutoHop feature is available with playback the next day of select primetime shows on ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC. Both features are subject to availability. Requires Super Joey to record 8 shows at once. Recording hours vary; 2000 hours based on SD programming. Equipment comparison based on equipment available from major TV providers as of 6/13/14. Watching live and recorded TV anywhere requires an Internet-connected, Sling-enabled DVR and compatible mobile device. HD Free for 24 Months: Additional \$10/mo HD fee waived for first 24 months. Requires continuous enrollment in AutoPay with Paperless Billing. After 24 months, then-current everyday monthly price applies and is subject to change. Premium Channels: 3-month premium offer value is \$165; after 3 months, then-current everyday monthly prices apply and are subject to change. Blockbuster @Home requires Internet to stream content. HD-only channels not available with select packages. Installation/Equipment Requirements: Free Standard Professional Installation only. Leased equipment must be returned to DISH upon cancellation or unreturned equipment fees apply. Upfront and additional monthly fees may apply. Miscellaneous: Offers available for new and qualified former customers, and subject to terms of applicable Promotional and Residential Customer agreements. State reimbursement charges may apply. Additional restrictions and taxes may apply. Offers end 1/16/15.
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Friendship The body language of friendship is palpable in these moments, expressed in a smile, a lean, an attentive ear or shared mutual joy. Thanks, friends, for sharing.

Web Extras on TexasCoopPower.com

Continue this rapport on our website, won't you, by enjoying our friendly slideshow.

◀ Grandpa **John Hunnicutt** and granddaughter **Emily White** hang out in McNeil; submitted by **Rhonda Hunnicutt** of Bluebonnet EC.



▲ **Manny Michaud**, right, and his friend, **Tommy Mahoney**, share a laugh after a baseball game; submitted by **Debra Michaud** of CoServ Electric.

McKinsey Gunter loves her horse; submitted by **Jessica Gunter** of Cherokee County ECA. ▶



▲ Longtime friends **John Counts**, left, and **Virgil Greer** sit for a friendly chat in 1975; submitted by **John Fortune**, Counts' grandson, of Panola-Harrison EC.

Peggy Droemer of CoServ Electric submitted this creative photo taken by and featuring granddaughter **Riley Budd**, right, and her friend, **Caoimha Gordon**. ▼



Upcoming Contests

September Issue: Energy Deadline: July 10

October: Family **November: Trains, Planes & Automobiles**

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

Coryell Creek Critters 5th Annual BBQ Cook-Off

Gatesville [July 18-19]

(254) 865-7163, coryellcreekcritters.org

In addition to testing your culinary flair at the pit, a salsa contest and kids' pork chop cook-off and baking contest make this a weekend of eating. Other activities include dances, a 5K run, carnival and horseshoe tournament. Proceeds benefit the American Cancer Society.



July

11

Balcones Heights [11, 18, 25, 8/1]

Jazz Festival, (210) 732-0055,
sanantoniocentral.org

Kemp Annual Aley Picnic, (903) 498-6428

12

Levelland Early Settlers Day Festival,
(806) 894-3157, levellandtexas.org

Marble Falls Founders Day Celebration,
(830) 798-2157

Mt. Pleasant [12-13] **Quake on Town Lake Boat Races**, (903) 466-1349

Palestine [12, 19, 26] **Live Music Saturdays at Sweet Dreams Winery**, (903) 549-2027,
visitpalestine.com

18

Seguin [18-19] **Texas Lineman's Rodeo**,
(830) 420-3600, tlra.org



**July 11
Balcones
Heights
Jazz Festival**

19

Salado [19, 26, 8/2] **Salado Legends Dinner Theater**, (254) 947-9205, tablerock.org

25

Henderson **Jim Reeves Tribute Show**,
(281) 852-8308, johnrexreeves.com

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25

Mobeetie [25-28] Old Mobeetie Music Festival, (806) 845-2028, mobeetie.com

Fredericksburg [25-27] 37th Annual Hill Country Swap Meet, (830) 998-4058, fredericksburgcarclub.com

26

Bandera National Day of the American Cowboy, (830) 796-3864, banderacowboycapital.com



26

Athens Ready, Set, Glow Run!, (903) 677-2000, athenstx.org

Corpus Christi 2nd Annual South Texas Summer PolkaFest, (361) 215-9163, chssouthtexas.org

Hico National Day of the Cowboy, (254) 796-2523, billythekidmuseum.com

31

Wimberley [31-8/9] Shakespeare Under the Stars, (512) 847-6969, emilyann.org

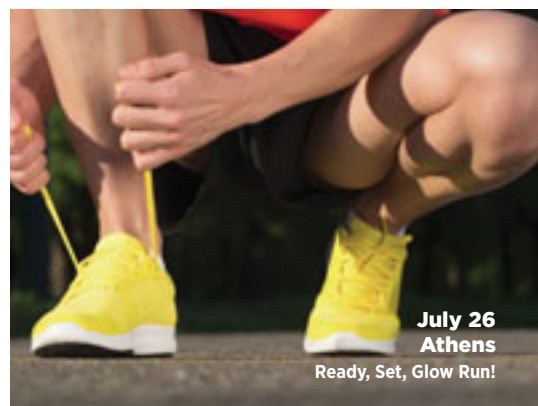
August

2

Brownwood Roy Orbison Tribute Dinner Show, (325) 660-8338, westtexasrehab.org

Eden Bruce Robison & Kelly Willis, (325) 869-2211, edentexas.com

Brenham [2-3, 9-10] Windy Winery Harvest Grape Stomp, (979) 836-3252, windywinery.com



3

New Ulm Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church Festival, (979) 732-7603

9

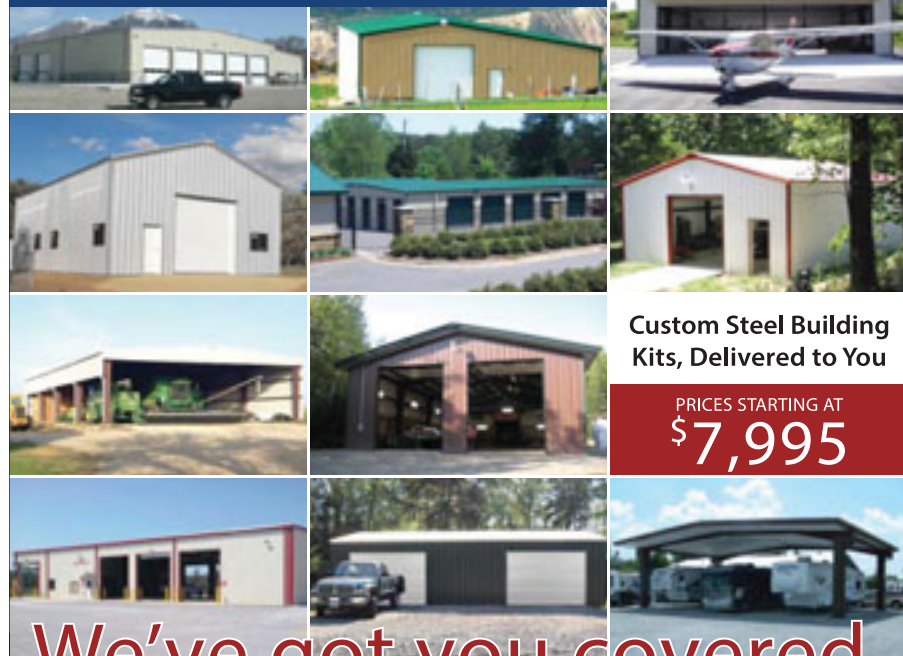
Lufkin Family Day & Smokey Bear Birthday Celebration, (936) 632-9535, treetexas.com

Submit Your Event!

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

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JULY 3
6PM - **FREEDOM FIESTA!**
STREET DANCE - DOWNTOWN

JULY 4
10AM - **BIGGEST PARADE!**
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Just south of Interstate 10 lie remnants of namesake
Army base and resting spot for frontier travelers

BY SUZANNE HABERMAN

LONG BEFORE DRIVERS SPED across West Texas going 80 mph on Interstate 10 with nary a glance at the Trans-Pecos topography, travelers could rest in Fort Stockton. Today, those who venture off the interstate can peer into the past by going on the self-guided **HISTORIC FORT STOCKTON DRIVING TOUR**.

At the **FORT STOCKTON VISITORS CENTER**, receptionist Laura Stoner provides a brochure highlighting points of interest that hark back to the frontier days. About 150 years ago, Fort Stockton lay at the crossroads of the Old San Antonio Road and Comanche War Trail on the Comanche Springs system. Early travelers and the U.S. military frequented sites that are now repurposed, preserved or abandoned, including the **OLDEST HOUSE**, which Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President Arna McCorkle encourages visiting at night to investigate rumors of haunting.

After a stroll at the visitors center, a converted Kansas City, Mexico and Orient Railway depot from 1911, the tour continues to the **FIRST NATIONAL BANK** building on business-lined Main Street. The police department now headquarters in the gray monolith, built in 1912, working under a pressed tin ceiling and among windows etched with Native American symbols.

Nearby, the **GRAY MULE SALOON**, a cowboy watering hole circa the 1890s, finds new life as a tasting room for Mesa Vineyards. The company produces wines such as Ste Genevieve at a facility about 30 miles east of Fort Stockton.

Across the street, the **ANNIE RIGGS MEMORIAL MUSEUM** tops a hill. Here, Annie Frazier Johnson Riggs hosted lodgers between 1904 and 1935 in her boarding house, a territorial adobe structure with Victorian-style trim built in 1899. A breeze sweeping across Big Chief Spring, now the seasonal **COMANCHE SPRINGS POOL AND PAVILION**,



The 1896 **ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH** is one of the oldest Protestant churches west of the Pecos River. The church still holds services.

might have drifted to the hotel's wide wraparound porches.

Today, the museum's 13 rooms and common areas showcase local and frontier memorabilia. Inside, museum employee Lorraine Roberts directs guests to the dining room to watch a video highlighting Fort Stockton's more nefarious tales.

In one story from 1894, an unknown shooter gunned down Pecos County Sheriff A.J. Royal in the **PECOS COUNTY COURTHOUSE**. Evidence of the bloodshed remains. "If you open up the drawer," Roberts says of Royal's desk at the museum entrance, "there are still stains in there."

Not all of Fort Stockton's history is dark. Two churches built before 1900 represent frontier faith. **ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH**, with earthy stucco and carved wooden doors, has been remodeled many times since it was built in 1874. **ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**, in light turquoise with a

white cross steeple and a bell that peals through the desert air, was constructed in Pecos in 1896 and moved to Fort Stockton in 1958.

Royal rests at the **HISTORIC FORT STOCKTON CEMETERY** alongside his 5-year-old son, Andrew Boy Royal. Established in 1875 and used until 1912, the small lot contains tombstones of many people not older than 40: beloved wife, precious daughter, infant son, husband dear and precious one, the markers read. Soldiers buried there were reinterred at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio in 1888.

Those soldiers served at **HISTORIC FORT STOCKTON**, where the U.S. Army served from 1858 to 1886, excluding a period during the Civil War. Fort tour guide Delia Ramirez explains that Fort Stockton once had more than 30 buildings on 960 acres. Today, only four original structures remain: the guardhouse and three officers' quarters. The barracks, rebuilt in the 1980s on salvaged

limestone foundations, now house historical displays.

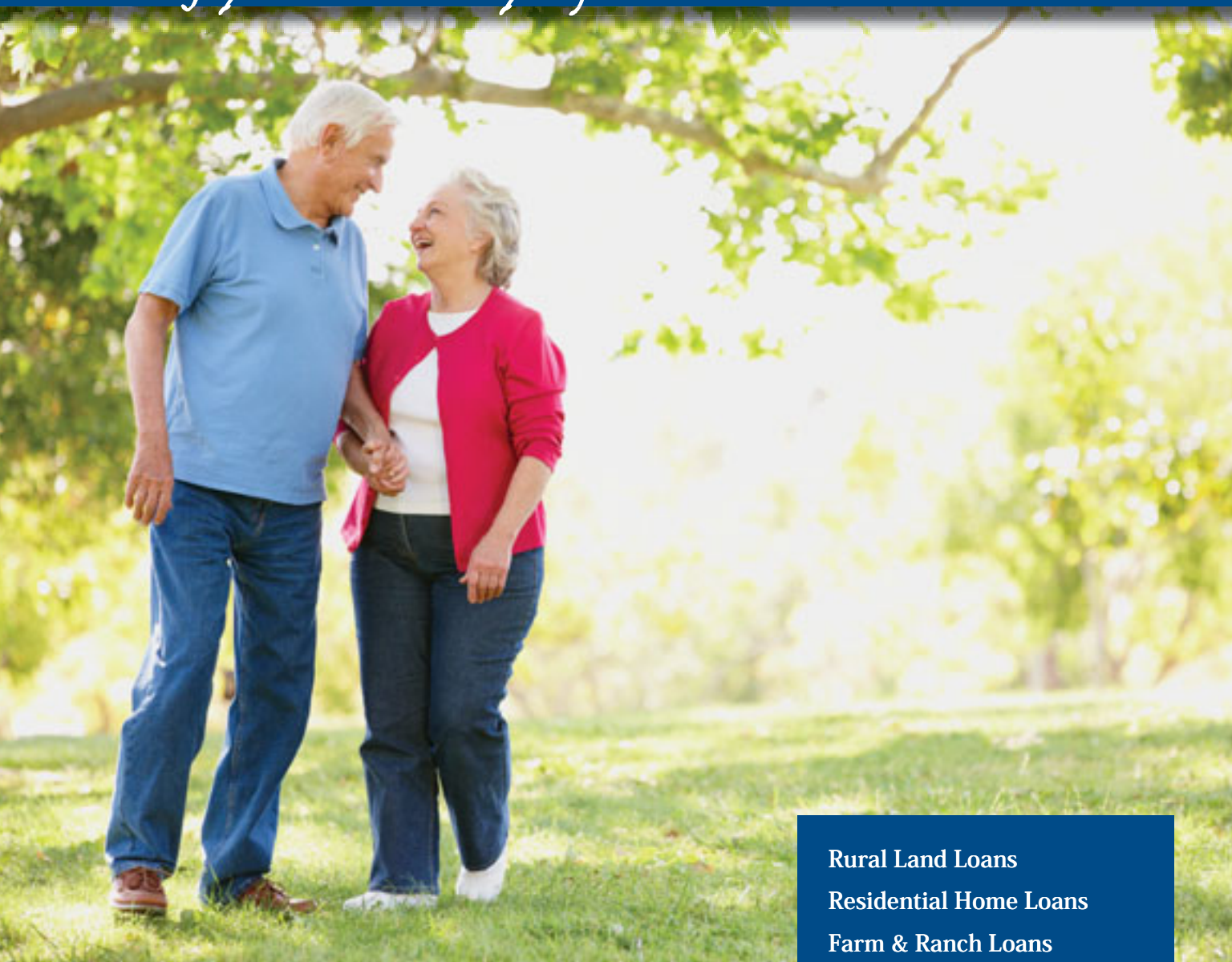
The fort's original buildings have fared better than the **OLDEST HOUSE**, built sometime between 1855 and 1860. The outcast of a modern residential neighborhood, the home once served as merchant quarters. Today, wind, water and likely vandals penetrate the chain-link fence, leaving adobe bricks to crumble in mounds below doorjamb without walls. Observing the relic at dusk, it's clear even the ghosts have moved on to find another resting place.

Suzanne Haberman, staff writer

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- Read Andrew Boy Royal's epitaph.
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