

LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EDITION

OCTOBER 2014

6 Books Reviewed

Who Wants Cake?

Alley Oop's Texas Roots

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

FAMOUS TREES

*Living Landmarks,
Witnesses to History*

[BEN MILAM CYPRESS]
SAN ANTONIO





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PRAIRIE SENTINEL: The Landmark Cottonwood near Canadian was a major milestone for settlers almost 140 years ago. Even as it weakens with age, it towers above neighboring trees and visitors such as writer Suzanne Halko.

FEATURES

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By Suzanne Halko

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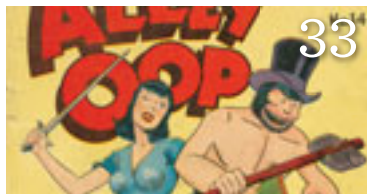
ONLINE TexasCoopPower.com

Texas USA
The Quarter Horse Lineage
By Martha Deeringer

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Around Texas *The Harvest Moon Regatta, October 9–12, is a sailboat race that begins at Galveston and finishes at Port Aransas, page 40.*



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TREE: JAMIE BAKER, TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT. BOAT: IMAGE COPYRIGHT FLORIN OPREA, USED UNDER LICENSE FROM SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

ON THE COVER *The Ben Milam Cypress overlooks the San Antonio River, as it has since before 1835. Photo by Stephanie Foresythe-Sword*

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Lightbulb Humor

I enjoyed your lightbulb jokes ["Speaking of Jokes," August 2014]. However, you missed the best of all:

How many Aggies does it take to change a lightbulb?

It takes five—one to hold the lightbulb, four to turn the ladder.

(By the way, our granddaughter attends Texas A&M University.)

DAVID PREUSS | ETOILE
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

Editor's note: Sorry, Aggies. We don't mean to pick on you. Lightbulb jokes target just about every group of people. What are some publishable lightbulb jokes that Aggies tell? Enlighten us on our Facebook page.

Fort Stockton Cemetery

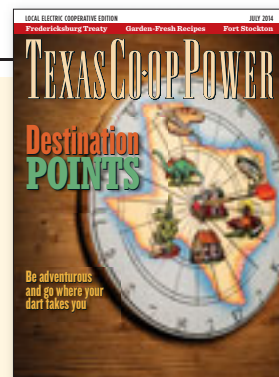
The Hit the Road story "Fort Stockton" [July 2014] said that the sol-

Origin of Alsace Slogan

Andrew Boze mentions in his article that Castroville in eastern Medina County is known as "The Little Alsace of Texas" ["Darting Around Texas," July 2014].

The purpose of this letter is to shed light on the origin of this slogan. In 1948, L.J. Haby, a friend of mine, was written up in the Castroville newspaper for coining the phrase, "Castroville, Little Alsace of Texas." He had entered a slogan contest and won first place out of 93 entrants. With his \$30 prize money, he bought a .22-caliber rifle.

WALTER MELLER | ABILENE



diers buried at the Historic Fort Stockton Cemetery had been reinterred at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in 1888. I believe that they are at the San Antonio National Cemetery.

San Antonio National Cemetery was established in 1867, with the

city of San Antonio deeding part of the city cemetery to the federal government. This small cemetery on the east side of San Antonio is very interesting.

DELLA SAVAGE | SAN ANTONIO
PROFESSIONAL TOUR GUIDE ASSOCIATION OF
SAN ANTONIO

signed by Clinton L. Smith. The book is in sad shape, but it is more than 80 years old.

HAROLD LIECK | DEL VALLE
BLUEBONNET EC

Editor's note: The reader is correct. The story misstated where soldiers from the Historic Fort Stockton Cemetery were reinterred in 1888.

Fredericksburg and Native Americans

Based on the book "The Boy Captives: Life Among the Indians," Clinton L. and Jefferson D. Smith were captured by the Comanche and Lipan warriors on March 3, 1869, about 25 miles from San Antonio. To elude pursuit by the family members, friends and the Texas Rangers, they headed into the cedar breaks and went westward toward the Fredericksburg area, crossing the Llano and later the San Saba river ["The Unbroken Peace Treaty," July 2014].

My grandfather purchased a copy of the paperback book [originally published in 1927], and it was

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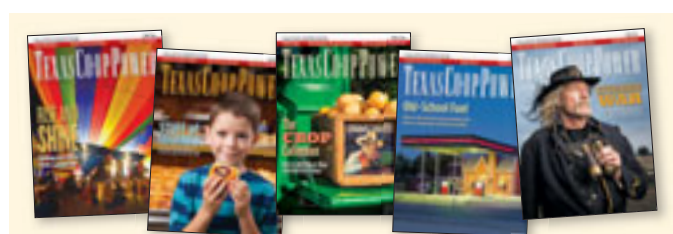
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Please include your town and electric co-op.
Letters may be edited for clarity and length.



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Educational Resource

After retiring from education—I was a high school English department chair—I wanted to say thank you for providing such a great magazine.

I've used my copy for years as an additional reading resource and cross-curricular activity. My students always enjoyed the two features Texas History and Hit the Road. I tried using the articles back in 2002 when looking for new resources, and my students really welcomed them. I continued using Texas Co-op Power as a resource until I retired.

TOM HILL | MIDLOTHIAN | HILCO EC

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CoServ Lineman Andrew Pierce rescues co-op member Tess Haranda's cat from a tree in Flower Mound.

CO-OPS IN THE COMMUNITY

Garland Gets Rescued

Garland the cat had been stuck in a tree for 48 hours when owner Tess Haranda called her electric cooperative for help.

The Flower Mound resident explained to a CoServ Electric customer service representative that her cat had dashed 30 feet up a tree during a storm and would not come down.

"In nearly 30 years with CoServ, I'd never heard of such a request," said Debby Ishee, a CoServ manager, who contacted dispatch to check crews' availability.

Linemen Chad Marshall and Andrew Pierce agreed to stop by Haranda's house on their way back from a service call. Once on the scene with a bucket truck, the men had Garland the cat on the ground within minutes.

"Thank you CoServ for saving my kitten today," Haranda wrote on Facebook. "I'm so happy!"

Watch a video of the rescue on our Facebook page or follow this link: bit.ly/1kN1glB.

WHO KNEW?

Grand Achievement

The University of Houston was the first football team in NCAA history to rack up more than 1,000 yards of offense when it clobbered Southern Methodist University 95-21 on October 21, 1989.

The UH Cougars had everything going for them: Coach Jack Pardee's explosive run-and-shoot offense and a quarterback, Andre Ware, who would go on to win the Heisman Trophy that season.

The SMU Mustangs had nothing going for them. They had been banned from playing football for the 1987 season because of egregious rules violations and chose not to field a team in 1988 because of severe limitations imposed on them by the NCAA. They were limited in how many scholarships they could offer, and most of their players were freshmen that day 25 years ago in the Astrodome.

Houston finished with 1,021 yards of offense. Ware completed 25 of 41 passes for 517 yards and six touchdowns. In an act of mercy, Pardee did not play Ware in the second half.

19,000,000

October is National Cooperative Month. Some 19 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms and other establishments benefit from electric cooperatives' service and community involvement, according to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Co-ops operate in 2,500 of America's 3,141 counties and in 241 of Texas' 254 counties.

HAPPENING

Rainwater Revival

Ask any Texan what they pray for, and they'll tell you, "Rain." That's why the folks at the Rainwater Revival want to educate the public on how to conserve and collect this precious resource October 25 in Dripping Springs.

"The Rainwater Revival was born in 2010. We saw an interest and a need," said Karen Ford, former Hays County Commissioner, founding board member of Hill Country Alliance and chair of the Rainwater Revival. "Growth to Hays County was putting pressure on the aquifer, so our citizen-driven group of water conservationists decided to start educating on rainwater harvesting."

On tap at the annual edu-fest are informative and entertaining presentations by rainwater professionals, conservation-related vendor booths and rainwater-catchment displays—as well as food booths, shopping and live music!

In addition, the Revival will feature a collection of 55-gallon rain barrels transformed into functional works of art, which will be auctioned off online prior to and at the event. The proceeds support Hill Country schools' rainwater catchment or conservation programs.

INFO: (512) 479-9426, rainwaterrevival.com



Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com



HERSCHEL WALKER

ON THIS DATE

Best Trade Ever?

It's been 25 years since the Dallas Cowboys made a trade that rocked the sports world, sending running back Herschel Walker to the Minnesota Vikings in exchange for essentially 13 players.

The October 12, 1989, deal allowed the Cowboys to draft running back Emmitt Smith and go on, with Coach Jimmy Johnson and other fruits of that trade, to win three Super Bowls in the 1990s. A promising Vikings team sputtered after the trade, and Walker was gone after two-and-a-half seasons.

In 2013, Sports Illustrated ranked the swap No. 1 in its list of the 15 worst trades in NFL history. ESPN.com ranked it No. 8 on its list of the most-lopsided trades in sports history.

Dallas sent Walker and four future draft picks to Minnesota and picked up five players and eight draft picks in return. In addition to Hall of Famer Smith, the Cowboys also ended up with star safety Darren Woodson, defensive tackle Russell Maryland, and cornerbacks Kevin Smith and Clayton Holmes.

Walker finished his career in Dallas in 1997 and in April, at the age of 52, said he believes he still could play in the NFL.

SAFETY NEWS

Smoke Alarms Save Lives

Fire Prevention week is October 5–11, and the theme for this year's safety campaign is "Smoke Alarms Save Lives: Test Yours Every Month."

The American Red Cross reports that 65 percent of house fire deaths occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. Working smoke alarms and a fire escape plan that has been practiced regularly can save lives in home fires.

The Red Cross recommends installing smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Test them every month and replace the batteries at least once a year.

Ionization smoke alarms are quicker to warn about flaming fires. Photoelectric alarms are quicker to warn about smoldering fires. It is best to use of both types of alarms in the home, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Some fire departments offer smoke alarms at reduced prices or even for free, and some will install battery-operated smoke alarms in your home at no cost, says the NFPA. Contact your local fire department's non-emergency phone number for more information.

Tall Tales

Get acquainted with some of the state's legendary trees with wondrous stories to tell **BY SUZANNE HALKO**

GRETCHEN RILEY REFERS TO TREES AS “WHO.”

Her subtle personification of living and dead woody perennials reveals how this Texas A&M Forest Service forester and partnership coordinator makes trees relevant to people.

“They have a story to tell, so they have a personality,” she says.

Riley is talking about Texas’ famous trees who were “witness to some of the exciting periods and events in Texas’ frontier history,” according to the first edition of “Famous Trees of Texas” (Texas A&M University Press, 1970). An upcoming edition of the book, due out in early 2015 to correspond with the TFS’ 100th anniversary, memorializes the tales of 100 historic trees.

“I like the famous trees a lot because I love the stories,” says Riley, a Bryan Texas Utilities member. “If trees could talk, this is the story they would tell.”

Across diverse ecological regions—including the piney woods of the east through the post oak savannah, prairies and mesquite regions to the mountain forests in the west—Texas sprouts more tree species than any other state, according to the TFS. Among Texas’ more than 300 native and naturalized tree species stand the ancient, the large and the famous. Riley’s agency educates Texans about forestry and keeps track of exceptional tree specimens.

The oldest trees, such as the 1,000-plus-year-old Goose Island Oak near Rockport, and the biggest, such as the state cham-

pion baldcypress near Leakey noted in the Big Tree Registry, earn their credentials based on numbers. Famous trees, however, claim distinction by serving as tangible historical markers.

“The trees are a great way to make it relevant to people today,” Riley says. “People of all ages can go to these places and touch these trees.”

Touching grand and old trees, which are symbols of strength and reminders of God’s creation, she says, is “a bit like sitting in Daddy’s lap.”

Guided by the first-edition book, I hit the road to meet four famous trees. I steered away from trees linked to well-known stories—such as how Stephen F. Austin signed the first boundary agreement with Native Americans under the Treaty Oak in Austin or how Gen. Sam Houston rallied his troops before the Battle of San Jacinto under the Runaway Scrape Oak near Gonzales—and instead visited a variety of species in disparate regions of the state.

Here are their historic stories and snapshots of their present.

LANDMARK COTTONWOOD

Canadian

Before permanent settlements came to the Panhandle in the 1870s, a tree on the prairies of the Southern Great Plains had to fight for survival. Sand bluestem, switchgrass and Indiangrass grew on the mostly stabilized dunes of the old prairie, thriving through fires that once flashed the region every seven to 12 years. The

blazes would destroy all the woody vegetation, but the grass would sprout again, providing nutritious sustenance to buffalo.

“Fire and grass go together like peas and carrots,” says Texas Parks and Wildlife Biologist Jamie Baker, who lives on the Gene Howe Wildlife Management Area near Canadian.

Mankind’s suppression of fires has allowed more trees to grow among the grass. The Canadian River valley now grows thick with western soapberry, black locust, black walnut and eastern cottonwood.

At Lake Marvin on the federal Black Kettle National Grasslands, Baker hikes near the Canadian River. He steps over the trail’s sun-bleached railroad ties into golden, hip-high grass and looks out over a small meadow rimmed in thicket.

“Transpose it in your mind across thousands and thousands of acres,” he says. “That’s the old prairie.”

On this landscape where historically the horizon rarely interrupted the sky, any large tree would have stood out. The Landmark Cottonwood, which grew in a low wet spot and had thick bark that insulated it from fire, marked a safe crossing on the Canadian River for military and stagecoach travelers heading north to Fort Supply in Oklahoma or south to Fort Elliott, the first permanent settlement established in 1875 in the Panhandle.

“It’s the right kind of tree in the right place at the right time,” Baker says, arriving at a viewing platform above muddy ground. “There’s no mistakin’ it.”

At about 90 feet tall with a trunk more than 6 feet in diameter, the long-living Landmark Cottonwood towers above its neighboring trees. Baker estimates a nearby 80- to 90-year-old elm comes closest in age to this cottonwood, which was mature enough for settlers to notice almost 140 years ago.

Today, the Landmark Cottonwood's fallen limbs—some as big as the trees around it—lie on the ground among shards of bark as big as hands. The tree's deciduous soft hardwood has weakened with age, and the elements have taken a toll.

"Evidently, to a large number of people it is a rather important tree, but we just cringe every time the wind blows," says Curtis Youngman, natural resource manager for the Black Kettle National Grasslands. "I think it's time to take some pictures of it and document it because I don't think it's going to be with us much longer."

BEN MILAM CYPRESS

San Antonio

On the winding San Antonio River Walk near the Commerce Street Bridge, a baldcypress rivals the height of a multistory Holiday Inn. The famous tree and hotel share a plot on the east side of the San Antonio River.

Here, honeymooners Anthony and Toni Whitlock from Waco stroll along the water and crane their necks to see the tree's ascending branches.

"These trees must have been here a really long time for them to be that big," Anthony says, snapping pictures of the deciduous conifer.

He's right. This towering baldcypress with a forked trunk has been around since before 1835. The Ben Milam Cypress measures about 90 feet tall and has a canopy spread of about 98 feet, says San Antonio City Arborist Mark C. Bird.

Before the Battle of the Alamo, soldier and colonist Benjamin Rush Milam joined the Texas army in the fight for independence from Mexico. In winter 1835, he and the Texans were about to retreat when a Mexican general surrendered, and Milam saw the opportunity to seize San Antonio.

"Who will go with old Ben Milam into San Antonio?" he asked, according to the "Handbook of Texas." Milam rallied 300 troops for the Siege of Bexar.

The victorious four-day fight paved the way for Texas' independence, but Milam didn't live to see the success of the siege. After the capture of two prominent houses



[**LANDMARK COTTONWOOD**
CANADIAN]



[**BEN MILAM CYPRESS**]
SAN ANTONIO



[**HUBBARD GINKGO**]
TYLER

along the east bank of the San Antonio River, a sharpshooter shot Milam from a perch in the same baldcypress tree that overlooks the Holiday Inn today.

Unlike the Whitlocks, most passersby barely glance at this famous tree. Except for a QR code mounted on a post standing in a pile of cinnamon-colored, feather-like leaves, no memorial marks the spot. Scanning the barcode-like icon on the post with a smartphone app directs the curious to a recording of former longtime TFS Director Bruce Miles telling the tale of the Ben Milam Cypress.

HUBBARD GINKGO

Tyler

In Tyler, City Hall's front desk employees don't know which tree on City Hall property is the historic Hubbard Ginkgo.

Gary Lynch in the Parks and Recreation Department, however, can distinguish the tree from among the pecans, oaks and magnolias because he and his wife sometimes share lunch outside in

the park-like surroundings.

Lynch describes the ginkgo biloba, a tree species with fan-shaped leaves that dates back to eighth-century China. He pulls up a street view in Google maps and points out the approximately 80-foot-tall living fossil—the only known member left in its genus—growing on the south side of Tyler City Hall just off the redbrick West Ferguson Street.

"It's especially glorious in fall," he says. "It turns a canary yellow."

In spring, the ginkgo's green leaves ascend almost as high as a nearby magnolia, and the trunk takes about 15 paces to walk around. A bronze plaque on scaly bark with deep fissures honors former Texas Gov. Richard B. Hubbard for the tree's presence in Texas, far from its Asian roots.

The Hubbard Ginkgo began its life in Texas as a sapling 125 years ago. Hubbard, whose second career was serving as a U.S. ambassador, brought two ginkgos back to Texas from Japan.

"Because an ambassador brought it

over, it shows that very early on ... immediately we are out and about. We get places," says the Forest Service's Riley. "You talk about being from Texas, and people know where you're talking about, even in other countries."

One ginkgo was planted at the Texas Governor's Mansion but did not survive. The other was planted on private property that the city of Tyler later acquired for its municipal building. There, the Hubbard Ginkgo has lived long because it has had the appropriate amount of care, says Riley.

"Surprisingly, the tree is doing really well," says Tyler City Arborist Luke Porter, who explains that the tree endured a lightning strike and repair in the 1960s plus a spring freeze earlier this year. "We just try to keep it alive and keep it healthy."

COLUMBUS COURT OAK

Columbus

The Columbus Court Oak is famous for something it probably didn't have anything to do with.



[COLUMBUS COURT OAK]
COLUMBUS

After the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas formed Colorado County and sent Robert McAlpin Williamson to hold the first court. Lore remembers that Williamson convened the first session in 1837 under a live oak tree near the present-day courthouse. A few years later under the same tree, the story goes, the circuit judge convicted a thief, who was whipped and branded on his right hand with the letter “T” for “thief.”

Based on this story, the State of Texas marked the site in 1936 with a historical marker that declares: “Beneath this tree the first Court of the Third Judicial District of The Republic of Texas was held.” A second marker added in 1969 identifies the tree as a Texas Historic Landmark.

Yet the earliest account of Williamson’s first court, published by the Colorado Citizen newspaper in 1889, says that the people met in a log house, likely a schoolhouse that survived the Revolution.

Even if the court session had been under a tree, exactly which one is disputed.

Some believe that Williamson actually conducted his court under another nearby oak.

“But the charm of the supposed outdoor setting took hold with the public,” wrote local historian Bill Stein in “Colorado County’s Courthouses” (Colorado County Historical Commission, 1991).

Residents revere the Columbus Court Oak for this story, even if it isn’t true. At festivals held each spring for many years, community members celebrated the story of Williamson’s first court with re-enactments under the Court Oak.

“We know that some of the stories aren’t true or have their facts wrong,” Riley says of the original famous trees book. “Perhaps that isn’t quite right, but there is a story in itself in that the community thinks it’s significant.”

Columbus residents also honor the Columbus Court Oak for its beauty, even though it has been dead for about 30 years.

“Of course it died, which was sad,” says Marian Schonenberg, a lifelong Columbus resident in her 50s and San Bernard Elec-

tric Cooperative member. “It was sort of the passing of a good friend. We consoled ourselves locally by planting the new tree.”

Schonenberg and fellow members of the Columbus Garden Club maintain a pocket garden at the base of the old and new trees, which occupy a median on Travis Street. Pink knockout roses, Shasta daisies and Confederate jasmine with white blooms that smell “like heaven” give the garden life, she says.

“It is very sculptural,” Schonenberg says of the wide trunk with smooth bark and three main twisted limbs, now trimmed and nestled in the shade of its replacement. “It is majestic, and you just have to stop for a moment to imagine how grand the tree was when it was alive.”

The Columbus Court Oak will be one of the 100 profiled in the 2015 edition of “Famous Trees of Texas.”

“We still feature the ones who have died,” Riley says. “Once you’re famous, you’re always famous.”

Suzanne Halko, staff writer

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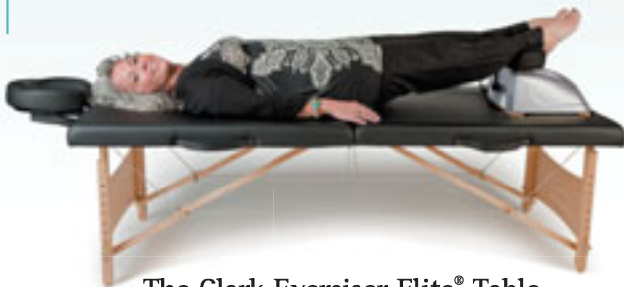
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TEXAS READS

Six Books We Think Readers Might Embrace

“A man shot at us our first day on the river. Of course he did.”

How can you not continue reading? Were this a novel, you’d want to know whether the narrator is able to scooch low enough to safely navigate out of shooting range.

But, no, this is journalist Wes Ferguson in October 2010, plugging along with a colleague on the meandering Sabine River in East Texas. He grew up just a couple of miles from the river but had mostly steered clear of it. Sometimes he would hear people say there was nothing in that old brown water but snakes and dead bodies. Is this what they meant?

Ferguson discovers, as do readers of his travelogue, “Running the River: Secrets of the Sabine,” that the Sabine River holds myriad mysteries, including armed loiterers and natural wonders. Most of the encounters on his journey are kinder than the one he describes in the first line of his introduction.

This book is one of six we introduce to readers by way of short profiles. October is a fine time to gather good reading for the shorter, cooler days to come. Fittingly, this month the Texas Capitol yields to literary zeal for the 2014 Texas Book Festival, October 25–26.

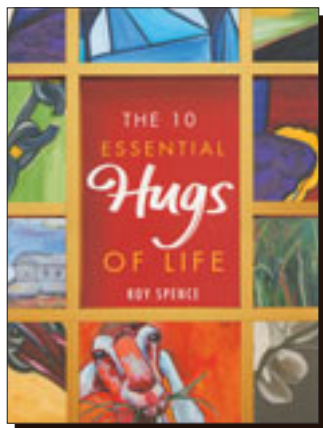
Tom Widlowski, *associate editor*

★ **Inspirational** ★

THE 10 ESSENTIAL HUGS OF LIFE

Roy Spence

If author Roy Spence had it to do over again, his new book “The 10 Essential Hugs of Life” would add a graphic element: a circle connecting those hugs.



Sitting in a conference room at GSD&M, the Austin-based advertising firm he co-founded in 1971 and now oversees as chairman, Spence traced an imaginary circle in the air, touching chapter titles with his index finger as he spoke them aloud. Hug Yourself First. Hug Your Faith. Hug Your Family. Hug Your Friends. Hug Your Flag. Hug Your Failures. Hug Your Fears. Hug Your Future. Hug Your Firsts. Hug Your Finals.

The circle represents the flywheel of life: Embrace the hugs’ principles, and the flywheel smoothly spins.

Violate the principles, and the flywheel starts to wobble.

Yet Spence’s book, his fourth, never wavers in delivering a

message of unconditional love: No one should go hugless. But while Spence is a big believer of the physical bear hug, he wrote “The 10 Essential Hugs of Life” (Greenleaf Book Group Press, 2013) as a metaphor for hugging—a model for uplifting oneself to elevate the lives of others.

The book honors Spence’s father, Roy Milam Spence, Sr. As a boy, Spence accompanied his father on trips back to Eagle Pass, the border town where his dad was raised, and across the Rio Grande to Piedras Negras, Mexico. There, “Big R,” as his dad was popularly known, would bend his 6-foot-5-inch frame to hug men, women and children. The introduction of his son, “Royito,” prompted more hugging.

As Spence writes, by the time he was old enough to walk, he was old enough to hug. And hug he did, practicing Big R’s mantra: Anyone worth meeting is worth hugging.

In 2009, a month after his father died at the age of 95, Spence was in Frankfurt, Germany, on business. Sleep eluded the jet-lagged Spence in his hotel room as he wrestled with grief: Both of his parents were now gone. But then, Spence writes, he felt a deep hug in his heart. His mom and dad were embracing him. The vision for this book came to him. No one had physically touched him, but he felt healed. Spence typed out the chapter titles. A book was born.

The crisp simplicity of Spence’s writing is easy to digest. But

hugging, he says, is about embracing the important things in life without running from them. And that's hard to do. Therein lies the heart of Spence's book.

Camille Wheeler is an Austin writer.

★ Middle-Grade Novel ★ REVENGE OF THE FLOWER GIRLS

Jennifer Ziegler

Eleven-year-old triplets Dawn, Darcy and Delany Brewster cringe when their beloved older sister, Lily, announces her decision to marry Burton, who has allergies, hates Presidential Trivia—their favorite game—and looks like an armadillo without a shell. Unlike Alex, Lily's former boyfriend, Burton practically lives in the library poring over his studies. Worst of all, he doesn't make Lily smile. And the wedding is only one month away.

The not-quite-identical triplets in "Revenge of the Flower Girls" (Scholastic Press, 2014) struggle to accept that their 22-year-old sister has grown up. They don't want to lose the Lily who read

every single Harry Potter book aloud to them, gets wavy lines on her forehead when she worries about things and always cries at the end of "Toy Story." Lily will be moving to Chicago as soon as Burton finishes a paper he is writing for his master's degree so that he can enroll in law school.

Lily asks the triplets to be flower girls at her wedding and scatter fake flower petals (because real flowers make Burton sneeze), but it's the sight of her wearing Burton's mother's old wedding dress and hand-me-down wedding ring shaped like a toilet seat

(actually a horseshoe) that convinces the troublesome trio that a bit of sisterly intervention is in order. In a lovingly diabolical scheme to bring Lily and Alex together again before it's too late, the triplets focus their combined creative genius on preventing Lily from marrying in haste and living unhappily ever after.

"It's a mystery, even to me, where my characters come from," says Austin novelist Jennifer Ziegler. "At times I'm aware that I'm borrowing elements from real people, but really, in Texas all you have to do is step outside and walk around, and you'll meet vibrant, colorful characters who should be in books."

Martha Deeringer, a member of Heart of Texas EC, lives near McGregor. Her first book, for young adults, was recently published by Fire and Ice Books. 'Emma and the Cutting Horse' is available on Amazon.

★ Outdoors ★ RUNNING THE RIVER: SECRETS OF THE SABINE

Wes Ferguson

Wes Ferguson grew up in Kilgore, outside Longview, and his parents loved to camp. So often the family would head to places such as Caddo Lake or Central Texas and the Guadalupe River.

His greatest adventure, though, occurred on a river he crossed more than a thousand times as a kid, and that led to his first

book, "Running the River: Secrets of the Sabine" (Texas A&M University Press, 2014).

Ferguson never held the Sabine River in high regard. It carves its way through Texas for about 550 miles, starting in Hunt County in Northeast Texas and ending up in the Gulf of Mexico. Ferguson knew it only as a murky river near home, with an overblown reputation for harboring mostly water moccasins and dead bodies—until he and photographer Jacob Croft Botter decided to run the river in a borrowed 16-foot motorboat.

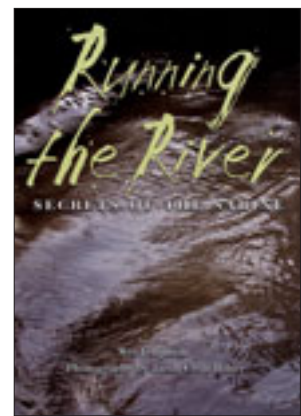
"It was absolutely more beautiful than we were expecting," says Ferguson, 34. "It was a real concern of ours that we would spend four days on the river, and we wouldn't see anything. We were really surprised to find so much life and activity."

He and Botter came to know several people—river rats, they call themselves—living almost exclusively in unquestionably rustic riverbank homesteads.

Besides bringing some of the grittiness out of the shadows, Ferguson explains the vital ecological role the Sabine plays. Its heavily forested river bottom serves as a filter for the river, which provides water for several towns.

"Rivers might not seem connected to our everyday lives, but they are in more ways than we realize," Ferguson says. "They're vitally important. I had no idea how central this river was to my quality of life."

T.W.



★ Children ★ MY PIECE OF THE SKY C.L. "Chuck" Heatherly

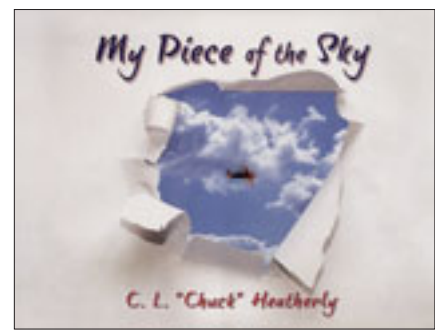
Look—up in the sky! It's a ... well, it's a spider. Right there on the wing.

This is one of the many wonders C.L. "Chuck" Heatherly describes from his decades of flying in his children's book, "My Piece of the Sky" (Light-house for Leaders, 2012). Heatherly, a retired teacher and principal who lives in Harlingen, joyfully and eagerly shares his experiences with a sense of imagination that soars across 42 pages of singsong prose.

This is a book that's meant to be read aloud, with a child on your lap, as all good kids' books are. So abandon your inhibitions and read this passage aloud:

*"Now I'd like to show you some things you might see
If you fly through the sky in my airplane with me.
Mountains and rainbows and spiders and gnats;
Good clouds and bad clouds and puppies and cats."*

He truly wants to share what has been his passion for as long as he can remember.



"I think I was born looking up," says Heatherly, 84, a member of Magic Valley Electric Cooperative. "I can't remember a time I didn't think about flying. I have always wanted to fly."

In 1980, he bought his first airplane, and he's been marveling ever since at how rainbows look like complete circles from thousands of feet up, though they're just as impossible to catch on high as they are on the ground, and how he sometimes sees mysterious lights when he flies after dark.

Finally, a few years ago, he decided to write a book so he could explain to children the adventures of flight. The book uses colorful, dreamlike images as the backdrop for his verse, and for that he adopts the same anapestic meter that makes Dr. Seuss books so fun to read.

T.W.

★ Novel ★

STEIN HOUSE

Myra Hargrave McIlvain

Author Myra Hargrave McIlvain of Austin calls herself a "teller of Texas tales." History, she says, is best remembered in colorful stories and not dry facts. For most of my life as a native Texan, I'd heard of Indianola, once a thriving seaport on the Gulf Coast until a hurricane barreled through in 1886 and decimated the city. In fact, I own a delicate cup and matching saucer—bequeathed to me years ago by my late grandfather Dudley R. Dobie—that survived the Indianola storm. But I'd

never bothered to learn more about the history behind my teacup. Boring, I had (foolishly) assumed.

Then I read McIlvain's "Stein House" (iUniverse, 2013), a historical novel set in Indianola that chronicles the lives of a fictional immigrant named Helga Heinrich and her four children. As the ship pulls away from the dock in Germany in 1853, her drunken husband leaps from the dock and drowns. Three months later, the family lands in Indianola, where Helga runs the Stein House, a

two-story boarding house that hosts a variety of characters.

The idea for "Stein House"—named the 2014 Best General Fiction Book by the Texas Association of Authors—sprang from an interview in 1974 with a 94-year-old woman who shared stories about her ancestors who settled around Indianola. "Her casual mention of a widow whose drunken husband drowned in a German river before setting sail for Texas captured me and stayed in my head," says McIlvain, who lectures on Texas history at the University of Texas at Austin and blogs weekly on the subject.

Now that I've read "Stein House," I believe I'll venture next into Brownson Malsch's detailed book, "Indianola: The Mother of Western Texas" (State House Press, 1977), from which McIlvain gleaned so much of her historical detail about Indianola. Oh, the exciting tales my teacup and saucer could tell!

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Blanco. She is the author of two books, including 'Texas Old-Time Restaurants and Cafes' (Taylor Trade Publications, 2000).

★ Cookbook ★

TEXAS ON THE TABLE

Terry Thompson-Anderson

Chicken fried steak, barbecue and pecan pie are certainly iconic to Texas, but given its diverse geography, climate and size, the state's culinary repertoire covers a far broader range. "Texas on the Table" (University of Texas Press, 2014) is a testament to that. In this new book, author Terry Thompson-Anderson shares 150 recipes that represent the flavors of Texas. Recipes are brought to life with photos by Sandy Wilson, as well as the profiles of chefs, vintners, farmers and ranchers whose products you might encounter at a local farmers market or on the menu of a fine restaurant.

Thompson-Anderson explores the history of Texas olive orchards, innovative fishing practices, artisanal dairies and Texas' role in the game industry, plus looks at the Texas wine industry and creative tactics vintners are using to produce award-winning wines. After learning more than I expected about our state's culinary landscape, it was time to test some recipes.

First was Herb-Baked Texas Goat Feta with Garlic, Olives and Almonds, which was tied to a story about CKC Farms dairy in Blanco. The result was culinary alchemy. The bold flavor of the melted goat cheese, complemented by herb-infused oil, almonds and Kalamata olives was perfect with a glass of Texas white wine.

My entrée, Maiya's Flat Steak, was a quick study in Roman cooking. A signature dish at Maiya's restaurant in Marfa, it's a rib-eye pounded flat and served over a bed of shredded radicchio, olive oil, lemon and Parmesan cheese. The salty, meaty juices and Parmesan tamed the bitterness of the radicchio in a flavor combination that reflected not only Chef Maiya Keck's Italian influence but also how the town of Marfa has embraced the eclectic.

The Chocolate Lava Cake with Texas Whiskey Sauce was our grand finale and a good choice for entertaining because the batter can be made ahead and poured into cups then baked fresh for dessert. This rendition was particularly good thanks to the whiskey sauce, which was both a conversation starter and perfect partner to the chocolate and whipped cream.

By the end of testing, I was making a list of friends who might like a copy for the holidays.

Food Editor Anna Ginsberg, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Austin. She is the author of 'The Daily Cookie' (Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2012).



Texas Book Festival

What: The event, which annually draws more than 250 nationally and critically recognized authors and more than 40,000 book lovers, is free and open to the public.

When: October 25–26. The Texas Teen Book Festival is October 18.

Where: State Capitol and surrounding grounds.

Info: (512) 477-4055, texasbookfestival.org/attend

HOLIDAY

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When To Turn Off Your Lights

With so many new lighting options these days, and more coming along all the time, the specifics can be confusing: Is it better to turn off these types of lights or leave them on? Do those lights get hot or not? Aren't these supposed to last longer? Here are a few facts to help tell the difference, and get the most out of each type of lightbulb.

The cost-effectiveness of when to turn off lights depends on the type of bulb and the cost of electricity. The type of lightbulb you use is important for several reasons. All lightbulbs have a nominal or rated operating life, which is affected by how many times they are turned on and off. In general, the more often they are switched on and off, the lower their operating life.

CFL lighting

Because they are already efficient, the cost-effectiveness of turning off compact fluorescents to conserve energy can be a bit complicated. A general rule of thumb for CFLs is this:

- ▶ If you will be out of a room for 15 minutes or less, leave it on.
- ▶ If you will be out of a room for more than 15 minutes, turn it off.

More than any other bulb, the operating life of CFLs is affected by the number of times they are switched on and off. You can extend the life of a CFL bulb by switching it on and off less frequently than if you simply use it less.

It is a popularly held belief that CFLs use a lot of energy to get started and that it is better not to turn them off for short periods. The amount of energy varies among manufacturers and models; however, Energy Star-rated bulbs are required to endure rapid cycling for five-minute intervals to ensure that they can hold up to frequent switching.

Yet the relatively higher “inrush” current required to turn a CFL on lasts for half a cycle, or 1/120th of a second. The amount of electricity consumed to supply the inrush current is equal to a few seconds or less of normal light operation. Turning off fluorescent lights for more than five seconds will save more energy than will be consumed by turning them back on

again. Therefore, the real issue is the value of the electricity saved by turning off the light relative to the cost of changing a lightbulb. This, in turn, determines the shortest cost-effective period for turning off a fluorescent light.

Incandescent lighting

Incandescent lights should be turned off whenever they are not needed because they are the least efficient type of lighting.

Ninety percent of the energy they use is given off as heat, and only about 10 percent results in light. Turning incandescent lights off will also keep a room cooler—an extra benefit in the summer.

Halogen lighting

While halogens are more efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs, they use the same technology and are far less efficient than compact fluorescent lamps and light-emitting diodes. Therefore, it is best to turn off these lights whenever they are not needed.

LED lighting

The operating life of an LED is unaffected by turning it on and off. Although lifetime is reduced for CFLs the more often they are

switched on and off, there is no negative effect on LED lifetime. This characteristic gives LEDs several distinct advantages when it comes to operation. For example, LEDs have an advantage when used in conjunction with occupancy sensors or daylight sensors that rely on typical on-off operation.

Also, in contrast to traditional technologies, LEDs turn on at full brightness almost instantly. LEDs are also largely unaffected by vibration because they do not have filaments or glass enclosures.

Lighting manufacturers should be able to supply information on the duty cycle of their products. In general, the more energy-efficient a lightbulb is, the longer you can leave it on before it is cost-effective to turn it off.

In addition to turning off your lights manually, you may want to consider using sensors, timers and other automatic lighting controls.



Increase lighting efficiency by regularly cleaning fixtures and bulbs.



Lighten the Laundry Load

Two practices can reduce the amount of energy used for washing clothes: using less water and using cooler water. Unless you're dealing with oily stains, the warm or cold water setting on your machine will generally do a good job of cleaning your clothes. In addition to saving wear and tear on your clothes, switching your temperature setting from hot to warm can cut a load's energy use in half.

Laundry tips

- ▶ Wash your clothes in cold water using cold-water detergents whenever possible.
- ▶ Wash and dry full loads. If you are washing a small load, use the appropriate water-level setting.
- ▶ Dry towels and heavier cottons in a separate load from lighter-weight clothes.
- ▶ Don't over-dry your clothes. If your machine has a moisture sensor, use it.
- ▶ Clean the lint screen in the dryer after every load to improve air circulation and prevent fire hazards.
- ▶ Periodically, use the long nozzle tip on your vacuum cleaner to remove the lint that collects beneath the screen in the lint screen slot of your clothes dryer.
- ▶ Use the cool-down cycle to allow clothes to finish drying with the heat remaining in the dryer.
- ▶ Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure that its vents, intakes and hoses are not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using rigid venting material—not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.
- ▶ Consider air-drying clothes on clotheslines or drying racks. Air-drying is recommended by clothing manufacturers for some fabrics.

Long-term savings tips

Look for the Energy Star and EnergyGuide labels on new appliances. Energy Star clothes washers clean clothes using 35 percent less water and 20 percent less energy than standard washers.

Energy Star does not label clothes dryers because most of them use similar amounts of energy.

When shopping for a new clothes dryer, look for one with a moisture sensor that automatically shuts off the machine when your clothes are dry. Not only will this save energy, but it also will save the wear and tear on your clothes caused by over-drying.

Celebrate the Cooperative Way

The utility that keeps your lights and appliances humming along every day is a cooperative business, not a corporation.

Cooperatives are owned by the consumers who use their services: you and your neighbors. In fact, your electric cooperative doesn't refer to you as a "customer." Instead, everyone who works there knows that you are a "member."

October is National Co-op Month, when members from more than 29,000 cooperatives nationwide—including more than 900 electric cooperatives—celebrate their heritage.

Take a few moments this month to learn a little more about the way your electric cooperative does business.

Here is the basic cooperative business philosophy: They are not-for-profit, democratically controlled and member-owned.

That means they don't sell stock to out-of-state shareholders or let outsiders decide what's best for their local consumer-members.

And it means that any member—including you—can run for election to the cooperative's board of directors, the governing body that hires the manager and sets policies for the utility.

If you don't want to be a board member, you still can vote for the candidates you would like to represent you.



Where Quarter Horses Get Their Mettle

Steel Dust and his lineage prove ideal for whole range of tasks

BY MARTHA DEERING

AMERICA WAS NOT ONLY A GREAT MELTING pot for people; horses brought to colonial shores swirled in the pot, too, developing into specialized strains that served many purposes. One of these, the quarter horse, carried the Texas cattle industry on its broad back from the Civil War into the modern age.

Although tiny ancestors of modern-day horses left fossilized remains in North America millions of years ago, that equine species had abandoned the continent for millennia before Cortez and Columbus brought mares and stallions back in the 15th century. These went forth and multiplied, from roughly 200 in the mid-17th century to 10,000 some 20 years later. And where horses dwell, horse racing cannot be far behind.

Racing took two forms in America. "Short racing" was the entertainment of common folks who used their horses for farming, riding and driving and didn't want to tire them out. The South's tide-water planters, envisioning themselves akin to British aristocracy, wanted the action to last longer and preferred the 3- or 4-mile races that required thoroughbreds. Sturdy quarter running horses finished their quarter-mile races and went back to the farms and ranches instead of returning to the stable as thoroughbreds did. When pioneers set off to settle the West and Southwest, these laborers were the horses that went with them.

Steel Dust, a bay colt with a short back and compact muscular body, arrived in the Republic of Texas as a yearling before the Mexican War and came to be described as

the fastest horse in Texas. In spite of poor eyesight, he won so many match races that soon no one would challenge him. His jockey rode bareback and smeared the stallion's back and withers with blackstrap molasses to help him stay on. Admirers agreed the stallion was faster than a rush telegram on a downhill wire.

In the new frontier settlements, quarter racing was often the chief form of amusement. A level strip of prairie was the only requirement. There were few rules, although disputes over the outcome might disintegrate into blows or possibly gunshots. Bettors who lacked hard cash put up ponies, saddles, wagonloads of grain, even articles of clothing. On these short tracks, Steel Dust and his sons and daughters wrote a new chapter in equine history.

Their sire's celebrated wins at the track made Steel Dust colts and fillies valuable property, and he was in great demand at stud, but in range country the youngsters were also highly valued as cow horses. The compact build and bulging muscles of "steeldusts," as they sometimes were called, made them instantly recognizable, and their powerful bursts of speed put cowboys within rope-range of a renegade cow quickly. Their agility and a hard-to-describe asset that cattlemen call "cow sense" made them ideal prospects for cutting, roping and ranch work. Outcrosses to the horses of Mexican vaqueros and to Indian ponies produced tough, uniform horses of medium size that could work on the range all day and take the children for a quiet ride after supper.

During the Civil War, the Confederate

cavalry rode off to battle aboard steeldust horses. No stud records have survived except by word of mouth. (Stud records from that day were incomplete at best, with such recorded statements as “Bred old Jenni to Shilow” making up many of the listings.) Steel Dust, who had been blind for years, reportedly died in 1864 at the age of 20, although conflicting stories make the truth hard to run down.

After the Civil War, steeldust horses gathered the hundreds of thousands of wild longhorns that roamed the Texas prairie and drove them up the Chisholm Trail to market, a job where being well-mounted was as important as being well-armed. The most talked-about horse in Texas in 1875 was the Denton mare, a horse of Steel Dust bloodlines that belonged to an orphaned youth from Denton County named Sam Bass. Bass acquired an interest in horse racing and rarely missed the match races at the Denton track on Sunday afternoons, and the amount of money that changed hands after these races was not lost on him.

Without the funds to finance a racehorse, he persuaded an associate to go in with him on the purchase of a speedy sorrel filly. While the mare blew by the competition on the track, Bass began getting into scrapes with other racehorse owners and barely kept ahead of disgruntled losers, one of whom claimed Bass had poisoned the drinking water of a rival horse. With the heat on, Bass sold the Denton mare in San Antonio and took up banditry.

Old Sorrel, another Steel Dust relative, populated the famous King Ranch with thousands of his colts, who proved to be unmatched cow horses. In Fort Worth, a group of interested horsemen met in 1940 and formed the American Quarter Horse Association. The AQHA's national registry recorded for the first time the bloodlines of the stallions and mares whose ancestors had become legends. Of course, no one is surprised to learn that the AQHA's first foundation sire, Wimpy, was a descendent of Steel Dust.

Martha Deeringer, a member of Heart of Texas EC, lives near McGregor.



Making the Case for Happy Endings

It seems that books with humor and upbeat characters are a rare treat these days

BY JUDDI MORRIS

I CRAVE FEEL-GOOD BOOKS, AND I'M A FOOL for a happy ending. A book crammed with front-to-back good humor, I cannot resist, and I try to write the same kind of books for middle-grade kids.

Reading or writing books about upbeat characters is my idea of a fine time. After all, we are what we read, and we are the educators of our own personalities.

I prefer not to spoil my own reading or writing time with miserable or depressing characters who seem to be saying, "Life sucks and then you die." And, from my point of view, feel-good books are getting harder and harder to find. I avoid books about addiction and suicide, and tell-alls about dysfunctional families, but those books sometimes seem to get more attention than more lighthearted books. Maybe literary critics and book reviewers believe that writers who create lighthearted books are having too much fun.

As a writer for middle-grade kids, I've watched unpleasant and depressing books muscle into and take over a hefty chunk of the market in the young reader's book world. And if one should feature a vampire or the son of a vampire, then the sky's the limit.

Some might say this is sour grapes on my part because I don't have the stomach to claw my way into—much less finish writing—anything dark or edgy even if I tried. But if I could, I'd find it way past dreary to spend my writing life with a bunch of depressing characters. Besides, I grew up thinking vampires were scary and about as sexy as Frankenstein or that guy who sneaked in during poor Janet

Leigh's shower in the film "Psycho."

That's OK—I don't have to read or write that way. But just when I'd accepted the reputation as the World's Greatest Book Wimp, I discovered Alexander McCall Smith and his books for adults and children, and I took heart.

McCall Smith, a man known to provide delightful company in person as well as in print, is admired by readers in every corner of the world. He tells interviewers that he, too, loves upbeat books with happy endings. He even says that he needs them. (Ah, don't we all?)

This internationally known writer also puts his considerable money where his mouth is and writes books that leave readers feeling that life is good; sometimes hard, but still good. His books, though benign, handle thorny or difficult issues in humane, civilized and even quirky and humorous ways.

So let's take heart, all of us readers who are fools for feel-good books. Comb our libraries and bookstores until we find them, and cling to the wisdom that says "there's life without vampires."

I cross my heart and promise any parent who feels uneasy about dark and edgy reading for their children to keep writing feel-good books for young readers. Today, when horror, fear, frenzy, discord and cynicism prowl our world, I pledge that I will lather my books with hope. I will not infect them with dark and edgy, and as for vampires, I'd be too scared to even try without a scarf around my neck and a really high collar for protection.

Critics might call these feel-good



books “escape reading,” but escape reading can be good. Kids need it and so do we adults. I believe feel-good books are good for our immune systems and that they nourish and promote good health. They’re as good for us as bear hugs and belly laughs.

Emily Dickinson said it best:

*“Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all.”*

Juddi Morris of Gainesville has written 11 children’s and young adult books.

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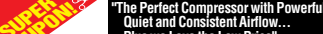
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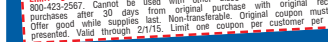
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Comics Caveman

From the bountiful oil fields around Iraan emerged Alley Oop, the legendary funny-pages fossil

BY E.R. BILLS

INSPIRATION IS STRANGE. SOMETIMES IT COMES IN A DREAM. Sometimes we stumble onto it matter-of-factly in our daily routines. And sometimes it hits us over the head like a club.

The club that struck V.T. Hamlin had a caveman named Alley Oop on the other end of it. Hamlin created the funny-pages fixture more than 80 years ago while working in the oil fields near the West Texas town of Iraan (pronounced Ira-Ann).

Born May 10, 1900, in Perry, Iowa, Hamlin had an early proclivity for drawing and was publishing cartoons in his hometown newspaper by his early teens. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, he lied about his age, enlisted and was shipped to France. He was hospitalized twice and passed the time by scribbling cartoons that drew the attention of his fellow infirmed. He even illustrated some of their letters home. Hamlin was discharged from the military in 1919 and returned to high school in Iowa.

In 1920, Hamlin enrolled at the University of Missouri, but after an art professor ridiculed his interest in cartooning, he left after one semester. Over the next two years, Hamlin dabbled at college, worked as a newspaper reporter and did a considerable bit of train-hopping though the Midwest and the Pacific Northwest. He then returned to Iowa and completed a correspondence course in newspaper art.

That helped land him a job in 1922 in the art department of *The Texas Grubstaker*, a Fort Worth oil publication. Later that year, he became the chief cartoonist and head of the Grubstaker's art department.

Hamlin joined the Fort Worth Star-Telegram the following year and created two short-lived comic strips, "The Hired Hand of WBAP," a radio promotion, and "Panther Kitten," a baseball cartoon devoted to coverage of the Fort Worth Panthers, the local Texas League squad.

Hamlin returned to Iowa in 1926 and married his high school sweetheart, Dorothy Stapleton. When he and Dorothy returned to Fort Worth, Hamlin began providing illustrations for *Texas Oil World* and traveled through West Texas surveying oil fields.

Hamlin worked as a photographer at the 1928 Democratic Convention in Houston and then returned to pencil and paper to record the rolling topography of the Yates Oil Field near Iraan. He was struck by the seemingly endless number of fossils in the area and began to contemplate the lives of the ancient creatures that must have roamed the region.

The 1925 silent screen adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Lost World" had been a box-office smash, and Edgar Rice Burroughs' wild and wildly popular, fictional Tarzan—often with a faithful chimpanzee named Cheetah at his side—was encountering dinosaurs and lost primitives in every new edition of the



TOP: V.T. Hamlin at his drawing table. **LEFT:** An Alley Oop comic book from 1948. **ABOVE:** The popular character made an appearance on a U.S. postage stamp in 1995.

ape-man's series. As Hamlin surveyed the landscape around Iraan, the hulking, loin-clothed caveman he first called Oop the Mighty materialized in his mind, accompanied by his own faithful sidekick, a dinosaur named Dinny.

After a couple of fits and starts, the comic strip "Alley Oop" (with Alley carrying a stone axe instead of a club) debuted in newspapers on December 5, 1932, and was syndicated in 1933. Hamlin's Texas caveman became a staple of the funny pages. At its peak circulation, the comic appeared in 800 newspapers, making Alley Oop a household name and presaging later Stone Age fare such as the comic strip "B.C." and "The Flintstones" TV show.

Though Hamlin retired from drawing and writing "Alley Oop" in 1972 and passed away June 14, 1993, the comic strip endures with new writers, still running in newspapers around the world. And the town of Iraan still recognizes Alley Oop as its patron primitive.

In 1965, Hamlin returned to Iraan when the town proclaimed May 8 Alley Oop Day and dedicated the Alley Oop Museum and Fantasy Land Park. A 20-foot tall bust of Alley and a 65-foot long, 80,000-pound statue of Dinny still adorn the park today, and old and new fans of the prehistoric pair still swing through Iraan to pay homage.

E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo.

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Blessed by Cake

Of all desserts, cakes might be the most sacred. Tied to tradition since ancient bakers shaped dough into rounds to symbolize suns and moons, cakes are still the centerpieces for holidays, weddings, birthdays and other occasions across the world. Be it a rich butter cake, cheesecake or fluffy angel food, cake brings people together and makes memories indelible by stamping the flavors and aromas of special moments into our minds. It's no surprise, then, that some families have "signature" cakes associated with events. In fact, this month's submissions included more notes than usual, with bakers citing the significance of their cakes to their family or the person known for making it.

My contribution is my family's favorite pumpkin cake. The recipe calls for a full tablespoon of baking powder, so I recommend using an aluminum-free type such as Rumford Double-Acting (which, in my opinion, leaves less of an aftertaste than other types). You can assemble the cake in layers, or bake it in a 13-by-9-inch pan so that it's easy to carry to a casual holiday get-together or teacher appreciation event. It's fairly simple to prepare and looks pretty when garnished with toasted pecans and caramel sauce.

ANNA GINSBERG, FOOD EDITOR

Spiced Pumpkin Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups canned pumpkin
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup pecans, toasted and chopped, divided

Frosting

- 16 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 2 cups powdered sugar, plus more as needed
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Ready-to-use caramel sundae sauce

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray two 9-inch round baking pans with flour-added baking spray.
- Stir the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg together in a bowl and set aside.
- In a large mixing bowl, beat the sugar, eggs, pumpkin, oil and vanilla just until mixed. Add the flour mixture to the pumpkin mixture and stir until blended. Stir in ½ cup of the chopped pecans, then divide cake batter evenly between the two pans.
- Bake cakes on the center rack for about 32-35 minutes or until a pick inserted in the center comes out with moist crumbs. Let cakes cool for about 10 minutes, then carefully turn out of the pans and let them cool completely on a wire rack.
- When cakes are completely cool, make the frosting. Beat



Spiced Pumpkin Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

the cream cheese and butter with an electric mixer until smooth and creamy. Gradually add the two cups of powdered sugar, beating until smooth, then beat in the vanilla extract. Taste test. If you prefer a sweeter frosting, add more sugar and continue beating.

➤ Frost and stack layers, then garnish with remaining pecans and caramel sauce before serving.

Servings: 12. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 742 calories, 8.76 g protein, 46.10 g fat, 68.97 g carbohydrates, 3.61 g dietary fiber, 418 mg sodium, 44.51 g sugars, 108 mg cholesterol

SUSAN LAVERY | FARMERS EC

Cakes Recipe Contest Winner: *Indulging in a slice of cake alongside family and friends is a tradition we love for marking almost any occasion—from quick and easy treats at simple get-togethers to lavish and complex creations at celebrations such as quinceañeras, weddings and anniversaries. Our readers sent us an inspiring array of cakes to enjoy together, including this month's top choice:*



Chocolate Kahlua Torte

- 1 cup whipping cream
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon instant coffee granules
- ¼ cup butter
- 3 tablespoons Kahlua coffee-flavored liqueur
- 1 box (15.5 ounces) Pillsbury Thick 'n Fudgy Chocolate Chunk Deluxe Brownie Mix
- 2 eggs, divided
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-inch diameter springform pan.
- Heat whipping cream in a saucepan over medium heat until very hot but not boiling. Stir in chocolate chips until melted and smooth. Set mixture aside to thicken.
- In a small saucepan, combine coffee granules, butter and Kahlua, and heat over medium heat until butter is melted, stirring occasionally.
- In a large bowl, combine coffee mixture, brownie mix and 1 of the eggs, mixing well. Spread batter in greased pan.
- Beat cream cheese in small bowl until light and fluffy. Add remaining egg and beat until smooth.
- Add ½ cup of the chocolate mixture to cream cheese mixture and blend well. Spread evenly over brownie mixture in pan.
- Bake 45–55 minutes until top springs back when touched. Cool 10 minutes. Remove sides of pan. Let cool for 1 hour or until cake reaches room temperature.
- Place cake on serving platter. Spread remaining chocolate mixture over top, letting mixture run down sides. (You may need to thin it with 1–2 more tablespoons cream.)
- Chill 1 hour before serving.

Servings: 10. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 561 calories, 6.63 g protein, 32.83 g fat, 60.6 g carbohydrates, 2.15 g dietary fiber, 234 mg sodium, 22.32 g sugars, 90 mg cholesterol



Cook's Tip: *Let the chocolate drip down the sides just enough to run over but not pool on the plate—makes it look irresistible.*

Butter Pecan Bundt Cake

CONNIE RENE WATSON | MAGIC VALLEY EC

"My mama has used this cake for all occasions—funerals, welcome to the neighborhoods and other get-togethers."

- 1 box butter pecan cake mix
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 carton coconut pecan frosting
- ¾ cup chopped Texas pecans
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened
- 8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
- 2¾ cups powdered sugar (up to 3¾ cups for sweeter frosting)
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spray a 12-cup Bundt pan with flour-added baking spray.
- Pour the cake mix into a large bowl. Do not follow the directions on box.
- Add the eggs, oil and 1 cup water to the cake mix and beat with an electric mixer until smooth.
- Add frosting to the batter and beat until evenly mixed. Stir in pecans.
- Pour batter into Bundt pan and bake for 1 hour. Let cool completely.
- To make the frosting, beat the butter and cream cheese together in a mixing bowl until smooth.
- Continue beating mixture, gradually adding about 2¾ cups of powdered sugar. Taste test to make sure frosting is sweet enough; for a sweeter frosting, add additional powdered sugar; then add vanilla and beat until smooth.
- Cover cake with frosting. Decorate with chopped nuts or top with pecan halves.

Servings: 12. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 770 calories, 6.80 g protein, 38.93 g fat, 89.75 g carbohydrates, 2.3 g dietary fiber, 445 mg sodium, 66.83 g sugars, 92 mg cholesterol

Mango Tres Leches Cake

DENISE IMHOFF | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar, divided
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 5 large eggs
- 12 ounces evaporated milk
- 14 ounces sweetened condensed milk
- 2½ cups plus ⅓ cup heavy cream, divided
- 3 whole, ripe mangoes
- Pinch of salt

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 13-by-9-inch pan.
- In a small bowl, mix the flour, baking powder and salt.

- In large bowl, using an electric mixer, cream the butter and 1 cup sugar until light and fluffy, about 3–5 minutes. Add vanilla and mix in.
- Crack eggs into large measuring cup or bowl.
- With mixer running on low, add flour mixture and eggs alternately to the creamed mixture until just combined. Scrape bowl and mix again for 30 seconds.
- Pour mixture into the greased pan and bake for 20–30 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, then invert onto a cooling rack if desired (or let the cake finish cooling in the pan).
- While cake is baking, whisk evaporated milk, condensed milk and 1/3 cup heavy cream together in a bowl. Set aside.
- Peel mangoes. Chop or slice one and set aside as garnish. Cut the other two off the pits and place the fruit in a blender with the remaining cup of sugar and pinch of salt. Puree until smooth.
- Transfer puree to saucepan over medium-high heat and reduce to a simmer. Stir and simmer about 5 minutes until thick. Place in refrigerator to cool.
- Poke the top of cooled cake with a fork thoroughly to help the milks soak in. Slowly pour half of milk mixture over the cake.
- Using a chilled mixing bowl and beaters, whip remaining 2 1/2 cups heavy cream until stiff peaks form. Gently fold in mango puree.
- Spread all of mango cream mixture on cake. Garnish with chopped or sliced mangoes and place in refrigerator for at least 3 hours to chill.

Servings: 12. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 582 calories, 9.5 g protein, 31.09 g fat, 64.17 g carbohydrates, 0.28 g dietary fiber, 307 mg sodium, 51.52 g sugars, 188 mg cholesterol



Cook's Tip: You can also substitute strawberries for the mangoes. Just make purée with about 1 1/2 quarts of strawberries. Also, the cake may be made as rounds and layered. If baking in layers, use round pans and adjust baking times as needed. You may use wooden dowels to help hold stacked layers together.

Key Lime Layer Cake

GLADYS BLEZINGER | SAN BERNARD EC

"I baked this cake for a church supper, and everybody liked it."

- 1 box (18.25 ounces) lemon cake mix
- 4 large eggs
- 1 1/3 cups vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 1 small package lime Jell-O
- Juice from two limes
- 6 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 container (12 ounces) Cool Whip
- 1 cup chopped Texas pecans

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour three

8- or 9-inch round cake pans.

- Mix cake mix, eggs, vegetable oil, orange juice and lime Jell-O in a large bowl and beat well with an electric mixer.
- Pour into pans and bake for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Remove layers from pans.
- Mix lime juice and powdered sugar. Spoon over cake layers while they are hot. Let cakes cool completely.
- To make the frosting, mix together cream cheese and sugars until smooth, then fold in Cool Whip.
- Spread over cake. Sprinkle pecans on top.

Servings: 12. Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 807 calories, 8.51 g protein, 51.6 g fat, 74.52 g carbohydrates, 2.24 g dietary fiber, 424 mg sodium, 61.12 g sugars, 83 mg cholesterol

\$100 Recipe Contest

March's recipe contest topic is **Your Secret Ingredient**. Every cook has an unexpected trick to make a dish unique. Share your "secret" with us! The deadline is **October 10**.



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

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ASHLEY CLARY-CARPENTER

Web Extras on TexasCoopPower.com

Clearly, love for family is something we all can relate to, as you'll see in our slideshow.

◀ "There's nothing more fun than a momma-daughter dance party," says **Tiffany Cassidy**, Farmers EC, cutting a rug with her girl, **Kayla Beth**.



◀ **Jodie Landers**, who operates his own fencing business, shows son Jeremy, 9, the ropes. **Jodie** and **Julie Landers** belong to Fannin County EC.

Guadalupe Valley EC's **Thomas** and **Alicia Orsak**'s grandkids, **Aiden** and **Avery Dowdle**, embrace after a short separation. ▶

Timothy Zamudio says he wants to be just like his 'GrandPa,' Nueces EC's **Carlos Trevizo**. ▼



This is how CoServ Electric's **Cari McCorkle**'s family cools its toes in Galveston. ▼



Upcoming Contests

December Issue: Bad Santa *Deadline: October 10*

January: Hats **February: Frozen**

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

Punkin Days

Floydada [October 11] (806) 983-3434, floydadachamber.com

Floydada, in cotton country, is also Pumpkin Capital USA, a distinction folks celebrate every October with food, music and games, including a pumpkin pie-eating contest. Preview your Halloween character at the costume contest.



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October

5

Crosby Sacred Heart Czech Fest, (281) 328-4871, sacredheartcrosby.org

9

Port Aransas [9-12] Harvest Moon Regatta, (361) 749-5919, portaransas.org

10

Conroe [10-12] Cajun Catfish Festival, (936) 539-6009, conroecajuncatfishfestival.com

Snyder [10-12] Benefit Trail Ride, (325) 207-2509

11

Burleson Founders Day Celebration, (817) 447-1575

Burton Oktoberfest Burton, (979) 289-0007, burtontexas.org

Cleburne Liberty Chapel VFD Country Fair, (817) 239-3046

**October 11
Huntsville**

Butterfly Festival
and Fall Plant Sale



Clifton Arts and Crafts Fair, (254) 597-2478, ringnesshouse.org

Electra Western Heritage Day, (940) 733-3620

Florence Friendship 5K Fun Run/Walk, (254) 793-2490, florencetex.com

Huntsville Butterfly Festival and Fall Plant Sale, (936) 435-2426

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McKinney National Fossil Day,
(972) 562-5566, heardmuseum.org

Rockdale La Escuelita Fall Cook-Off,
(512) 446-6833, laescuelita-in-rockdale.org

Shallowater Harvest Festival,
(806) 778-7888,
e-clubhouse.org/sites/shallowater

17

Mesquite [17-18] Treasures Barn Sale,
(972) 216-6468, historicmesquite.org

Mineola [17-18] Bigfoot Meets NatureFest,
(903) 569-6983, mineolanaturepreserve.com

18

Cottonwood Shores Cottonwood Rock Festival, (830) 220-9020,
cottonwoodrocks.com

Early Pioneer Days, (325) 649-9317,
earlypioneerdays.com

Lexington Chocolate Lovers Festival,
(979) 773-4337, lexingtontexas.com

Marietta Fall Festival, (903) 824-4272

Whitesboro Peanut Festival,
(903) 564-3331, whitesborotx.com

Edom [18-19] Festival of the Arts,
(903) 852-3897, edomfestivalofthearts.com

Levelland [18-19] Petticoats on the Prairie,
(806) 894-3157,
petticoatsontheprairie.blogspot.com

24

Raymondville [24-26] Wild in Willacy Nature Festival, (956) 689-1864,
wildinwillacy.com

25

Alto Fall Festival, (936) 858-1000

Hamilton Hamilton County Dove Festival,
(254) 386-3216, hamiltondovefest.com

Palestine Hot Pepper Festival,
(903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

30

Wylie Boo on Ballard, (972) 516-6016,
wylietexas.gov

31

Kingsville Zombie Walk, (361) 221-9480,
kingsvilletexas.com



October 25

Palestine

Hot Pepper Festival

November

1

Caldwell Pecan Harvest Festival at Royalty Pecan Farms, (979) 272-3904, royaltypescans.com

Sulphur Springs Heritage Square Car Show, (903) 885-1236

Submit Your Event!

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

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PECAN FEST HERITAGE DAYS

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October 25

Music, Food, Trade Booths, Pecan Goods,
Pecan Pie Contest, Pumpkin Patch,
HEB Texas Vanilla Seguin Pecan Ice Cream,
Hat Parade, World's Largest Pecan,
Hay Rides, Agricultural Exhibits & Demos,
Amazing Maze, Turkey & Dressing Lunch,
Sebastopol and Nutcracker Museum Tours,
Heritage Village Tours, Quilt and Pottery
Shows, Conjunto Festival, Free Shuttle

Historic Ghost Tours - Oct 24 & 25

Tour de Pecan Bike Ride - Oct 25

Riverside Cemetery Tours - Oct 26

Pecan Classic Golf Tournament - Oct 26

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Make your way from Sam Houston to Bugs Bunny, one historical marker at a time

BY CLAY COPPEDGE



HISTORY LESSON: The Otto Brinkmann House in Comfort features one of the more than 15,000 historical markers placed around the state by the Texas Historical Commission.

IF YOU'RE THE TYPE OF MOTORIST WHO doesn't mind stopping every few miles to read a brief tidbit of history by the side of the road, you can put together a pretty fair sketchbook of Texas' past just from the historical markers scattered all over the state.

For instance, you can follow Sam Houston from where he first splashed across the Red River into Texas to a number of places where he lived, fought, slept or speechified. Want to know where he went in the 1860s to bathe his lingering wounds from the Battle of San Jacinto? There's a marker for that, at Sour Lake in Hardin County.

With more than 15,000 markers in the state, all placed by the Texas Historical Commission, there is a lot of noted history that most people have never heard of. Most people don't live where the marker is located and wouldn't otherwise know that the community of Fairy in Hamilton County was named for Fairy Fort, "the petite daughter of pioneer settlers Battle

and Sallie Fort" or that a space alien (allegedly) crashed his, hers or its spacecraft near Aurora in 1897 and is (allegedly) buried in the Aurora Cemetery.

Some of the markers, like that one, have a Ripley's Believe It or Not quality, partly because research for the markers is a bottom-up process, meaning that it usually starts with a local historian or historical society. Oral history is usually identified as such. The marker in the Aurora Cemetery, for instance, doesn't say that a being from another planet is buried there—only that the story is told. Ditto the legend of the Marfa Lights in Presidio County.

The historical commission has a list of "Undertold Markers" that commemorates dozens of significant but otherwise forgotten events, sites or personages that don't always get their historical due. These could be called the "Who knew?" markers. The list includes a marker in Shelby County recognizing the Choctaw tribe for its over-

looked contributions to the state's history and one in Taylor for cartoonist Tex Avery, who created Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck and had a lot to do with Porky Pig, too.

The curious traveler of a certain age who stops at some of these markers might also experience a moment of "I thought everybody knew ..." because the marker might highlight an actual personal memory. We might not think of ourselves as part of the historical record, but we are.

Bob Brinkman, coordinator of the historical markers program for the commission, notes that the Cold War is turning 50, which makes some Texas sites prime prospects for markers. He says the Atlas ICBM Launch Facility in Taylor County, built in the heart of the Cold War in 1961, is the first 20th-century addition

to the commission's Texas Forts Trails.

"I think people are surprised when they find a marker commemorating something they actually witnessed or something that was part of their life, like the Texas International Pop Festival in Denton County," Brinkman says. "It took place in 1969, just a couple of weeks after Woodstock, but it's a powerful memory for a lot of people."

The most adventurous way to encounter some of this undiscovered or rediscovered history is to simply get in your car, start driving and stop when you come to a historical marker. A more systematic approach could include a visit to the THC website, thc.state.tx.us, where the markers can be searched by county or keyword.

There's also an app for that. Atomic Axis: The Texas Historical Landmark App for iOS devices is available for \$3.99 in the iTunes store.

Clay Coppedge, a member of Bartlett EC, lives near Walburg.



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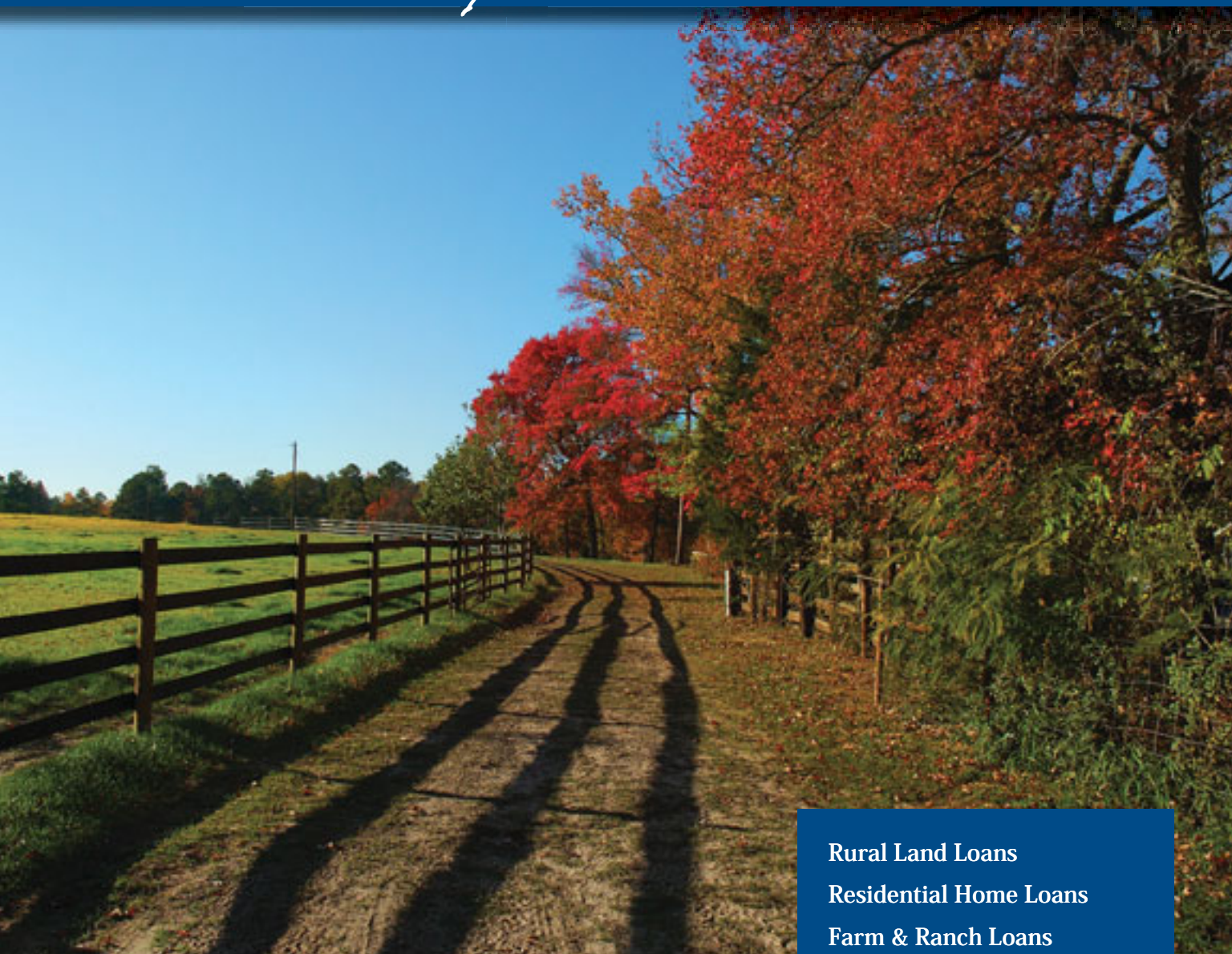
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