

LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EDITION

MARCH 2016

Border Radio

Pecos Wall of Water

Eggs: Plain and Fancy

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE

Washington-on-the-Brazos celebrates
birth of the Republic





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Texas Independence Day features Professor Farquar's medicine show.

FEATURES

8 Texas Independence Washington-on-the-Brazos: Birthplace of a nation celebrates anniversary

Story and photos by Julia Robinson

12 Border Radio Booming and bombastic, broadcasts from Mexican soil turned American culture on its ear

By Gene Fowler

FAVORITES

5 Letters

6 Currents

20 Local Co-op News

Get the latest information plus energy and safety tips from your cooperative.

33 Texas History

Pecos River Flood of 1954

By Lonn Taylor

35 Recipes

Eggs: Plain and Fancy

39 Focus on Texas

Photo Contest: Boats

40 Around Texas

List of Local Events

42 Hit the Road

Visit a Sky Island

By E. Dan Klepper

ONLINE

TexasCoopPower.com

Find these stories online if they don't appear in your edition of the magazine.

Texas USA

The First Flying Saucer

By E.R. Bills

Observations

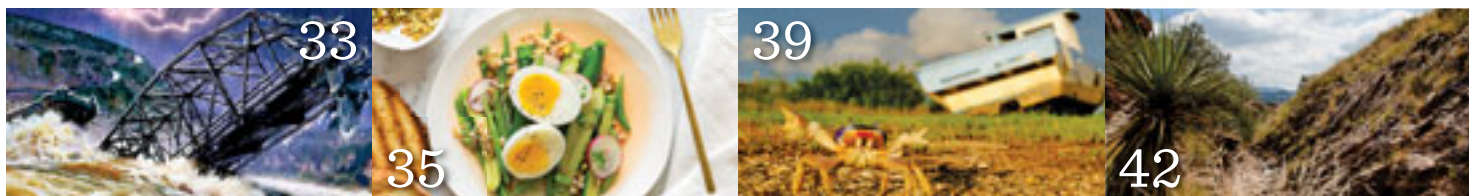
Resident Spirits

By Martha Deeringer

NEXT MONTH

Texas Hats & Hatmakers

Meet the craftsmen who help today's Texans carry on a storied tradition.



TEXAS INDEPENDENCE: JULIA ROBINSON. HAT: MICHAEL FLIPPO | DOLLAR PHOTO CLUB

ON THE COVER Jim Richardson, a living-history re-enactor, sits in a replica encampment at Washington-on-the-Brazos. Photo by Julia Robinson

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The image shows the front cover of a cookbook. The background is a high-quality photograph of a lattice pie, likely strawberry and raspberry, with a golden-brown crust. The title 'THE BEST OF' is in a small, white, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, 'TYPICALLY TEXAS' is written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters inside a dark blue banner. Underneath the banner, 'COOKBOOK' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, in a small, white, sans-serif font, it says 'FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF TEXAS CO-OP POWER'. The entire cover is set against a light beige, textured background.

This cookbook is filled with more than 700 recipes, including more than 300 dessert recipes.

To order by mail, send a check or money order payable to TEC for \$29.95 to Best of Typically Texas Cookbook, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701.

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Preserving Wildlife

How many of you anti-hunters have a hunting license, which helps preserve the wildlife [Letters, November 2015]? What have you birdwatchers and wildlife observers contributed to their management? **CARL BROCKMANN | SAN ANGELO CONCHO VALLEY EC**

I Like Ike

Just read *Another Texan in the White House?* [Currents, December 2015], which lists Texans who ran for president of the USA (that country that borders Texas on three sides). How could you omit the most illustrious such person, Dwight Eisenhower? **KONRAD EBISCH | BUDA PEDERNALES EC**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Eisenhower was born in Denison, but his family moved to Kansas shortly after his birth. He never ran for office in Texas and is more closely identified with his boyhood home of Abilene, Kansas, where he is buried and where you'll find his presidential library.*

The Wonderful Topperweins

At the Marine Science Library in Port Aransas, we held a staff art show, and one of our contributors brought in a bullet "drawing" [shown at right] by the Topperweins [*The Wonderful Topperweins*, December 2015]. **MARG LARSEN | PORT ARANSAS NUECES EC**

Through my father's close friendship with Ad Topperwein, the great shooter mentored [me] as a 10-year-old kid. The elderly trick-shot artist rarely talked to

Linemen Rock!

A shoutout to the linemen who worked tirelessly to restore our power after the recent tornadoes went through our neighborhood. When we first looked at



Clayton Thompson
of HILCO EC

the snapped poles and tangled wires, we thought it would take weeks to get things back to normal. However, the linemen from HILCO had our power back on in less than two days!

DIANE MORREN | WAXAHACHIE | HILCO EC

me about the usual disciplines of sight alignment, sight picture and trigger control, but he did stress concentration. He mostly led by example in his unassuming manner. I vividly recall Ad throwing electrical box knock-outs into the air in rapid succession and plugging every one with a .22 caliber Colt Woodsman pistol.

BILL MULDOON | KERRVILLE CENTRAL TEXAS EC



Culture in Texas

I read the January 2016 letters and the response about culture

in Texas by Lonn Taylor. We recently visited Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo, New York, and visited with the director of a restoration project there. She proudly told us about the project. In response, I started to tell her about our beautiful Round Top Festival Institute theater, only to get cut off by her saying, "I did not know they had culture in Texas." She has never visited Texas, but it illustrates Taylor's point.

HENDRIK BERGEN | ROUND TOP FAYETTE EC

Helping in Haiti

I was glad to see that electrical cooperative employees have gone to Haiti to help with the infrastructure [*The Power of Your Cooperative*, October 2015]. Since September 2013, I have been going to Haiti on a regular basis and am involved in teaching the residents to build earthquake- and hurricane-resistant homes.

HERB NORDMEYER | CASTROVILLE MEDINA EC

Springing Forward

My wife and I absolutely hate daylight saving time [*Daylight Saving Time Law Intercepted*, Currents, November 2015]. When the time is advanced one hour in the spring, it plays havoc with the human sleep cycle. I will contact Rep. Dan Flynn of Van and ask him to never give up his quest to eliminate daylight saving time. **GARY WILLIAMS | WAXAHACHIE HILCO EC**

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



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Only Tears of Joy in Weslaco



I SAY... IS THAT A BLOOMING ONION?



Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com

SHOPPERS EAGERLY AWAIT the arrival of Texas 1015 onions in produce sections every spring. Weslaco, where the 1015 was developed, celebrates the signature vegetable with Texas Onion Fest.

WHY 1015? The famous onion gets its name from the recommended planting date—October 15. Texas A&M University scientists in Weslaco introduced the Texas 1015 in the 1980s after decades of research. This allium is heralded for being supersweet and tearless.

AS A TRIBUTE, Lali Dena honors her grandfather Gregorio Vega, who worked at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in Weslaco for 33 years. “I remember he would take us to the festival so we could taste the onions he planted,” says Dena, an administrative assistant at Magic Valley Electric Cooperative, which sponsors the Onion Fest Car Show & Shine. “I’ve been a volunteer for the past eight years, and I’ll continue to be a volunteer in memory of my grandfather.”

IN 1997, the Legislature declared the sweet onion the state vegetable. A year later, Weslaco started Texas Onion Fest.

Did you know?

THE GREAT ONION RING
Because of a scandal in 1955, when two onion traders cornered the onion futures market on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Congress outlawed futures trading in onions forever. Onions are the only agricultural product for which futures trading is illegal.

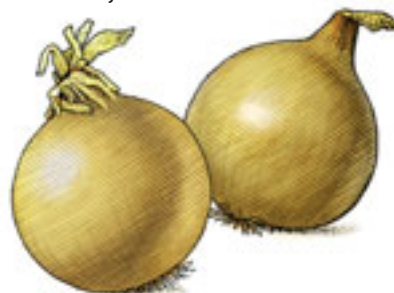
BY THE NUMBERS

\$100,000,000

Onions are Texas’ top vegetable crop, leading to sales upward of \$100 million per annum. The abundance of alliums and agriculture is celebrated on **National Ag Day, March 15**, but the onion has been a staple of diets spanning the ages, including in ancient Egypt.

NEXT MONTH If you can peel yourself away from other springtime activities, check out Texas Onion Fest on April 2.

INFO ▶ (956) 968-2102, weslaco.com



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Red Pens Pencils Rule

MARCH 4 IS NATIONAL GRAMMAR DAY, and the wordsmiths at *Texas Co-op Power* will beam proudly when they aren't wincing at these offenses:

Chris Burrows: What *affects* me most is the use of effect and affect. I want to *effect* change on that topic, because the *effect* of the confusion is bitter *affect*.

Suzanne Halko: The incorrect use of apostrophes in plurals such as dates (*1950's*) or names (*Halko's*). The Halkos are passionate about good grammar.

Charles Lohrmann: Your and you're. *Your* indicates possession. *You're* means you are. You're welcome.

Ellen Stader: Its and it's. *Its* is possessive. *It's* means it is. It seems like a small thing, but it's a big deal.

Tom Widlowski: That and which. Some sentences have phrases *that* are essential to their meaning. Some phrases, *which* are usually set off by commas, are not essential.

All these grammar rules get celebrated again March 8—National Proofreading Day.

Had enough with the grammar rules? The next day is for you—March 9, National Get Over It Day.



NURSERY RHYME
REVISITED

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Texas garden, beg your pardon
How does your raised bed grow?
It's 3-feet high, shaped like a pie
And, water-wise, fit for a show.



▲ CUTAWAY VIEW | OVERHEAD VIEW ▼



For four years, you've made **Keyhole Gardening** [February 2012] the No. 1 most-read story on TexasCoopPower.com. That must mean your keyhole gardens are in full production! Don't be contrary; show us what you've grown! Email editor@texas-ec.org or post on our Facebook page.

SPORTS SECTION

Houston or Bust!

MARCH MADNESS makes its way April 2–4 to Texas when Houston hosts college basketball's Final Four. Three notable events stand out from the Final Four's eight previous Texas visits:

2008: All four top seeds advanced to the Final Four in San Antonio, where Kansas won out over Memphis.

1986: "Never Nervous" Pervis Ellison led a young Louisville team to its second title of the decade in Dallas.

1971: John Wooden's UCLA team continued its storied run with a fifth straight title in Texas' first Final Four—in Houston.



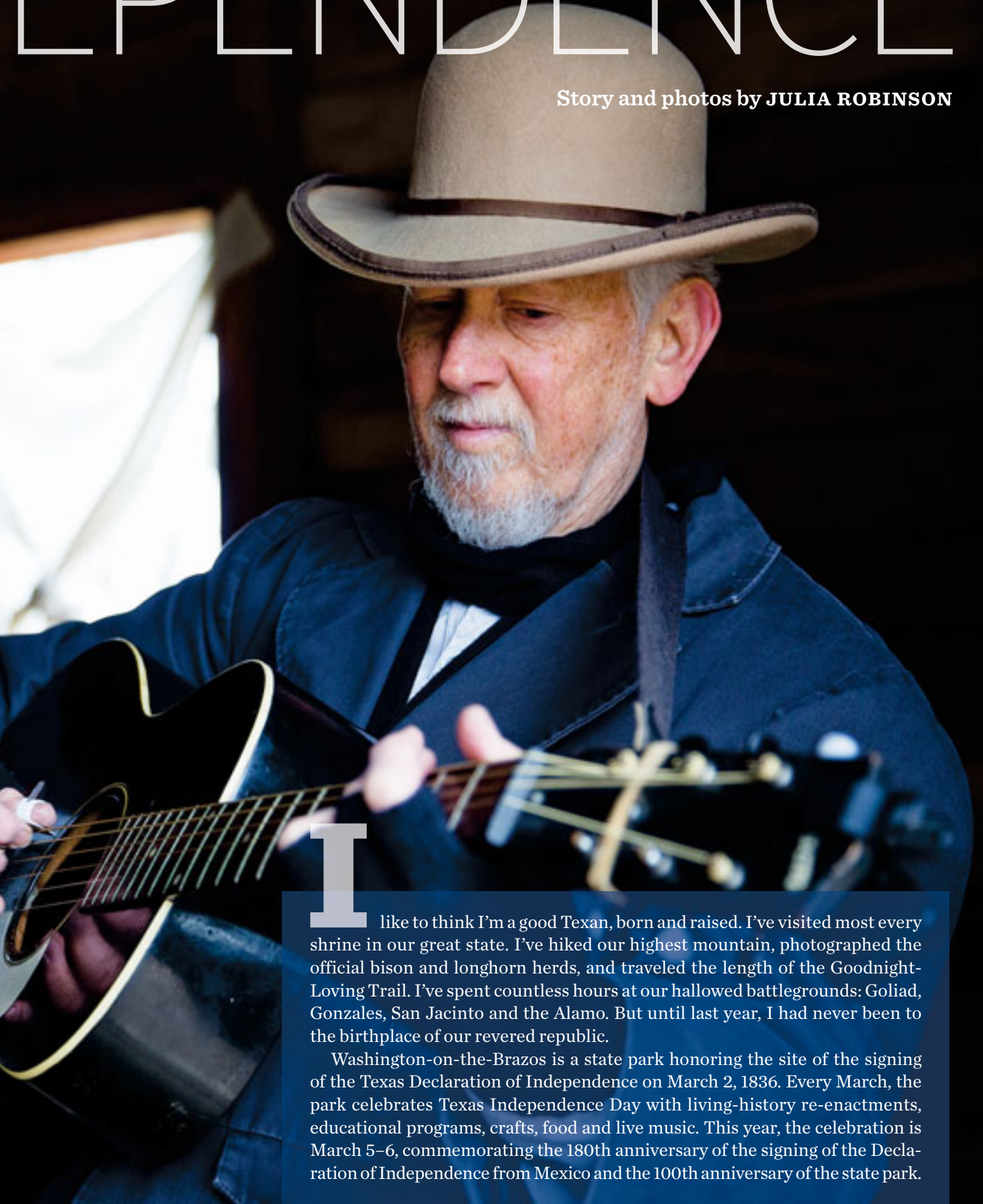
TEXAS IND



WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS: BIRTHPLACE OF A NATION

DEPENDENCE

Story and photos by JULIA ROBINSON



I like to think I'm a good Texan, born and raised. I've visited most every shrine in our great state. I've hiked our highest mountain, photographed the official bison and longhorn herds, and traveled the length of the Goodnight-Loving Trail. I've spent countless hours at our hallowed battlegrounds: Goliad, Gonzales, San Jacinto and the Alamo. But until last year, I had never been to the birthplace of our revered republic.

Washington-on-the-Brazos is a state park honoring the site of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. Every March, the park celebrates Texas Independence Day with living-history re-enactments, educational programs, crafts, food and live music. This year, the celebration is March 5-6, commemorating the 180th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence from Mexico and the 100th anniversary of the state park.



On a brisk but cloudy Texas Independence Day, I'm driving through the rolling prairies 20 miles northeast of Brenham. I turn onto a curving drive that delivers me to the birthplace of Texas: a 293-acre park on the original site of the town of Washington. I'm here to learn a few things that were left out of my seventh-grade text on Texas history.

Despite the gloomy weather, visitors have filled the parking lots then taken over the park paths and picnic tables. In the visitors center, families inspect a replica of the Texas Declaration of Independence along with some of the artifacts unearthed on the park's grounds. The name of the site, Washington-on-the-Brazos, distinguishes it not only from the nearby town of Washington but also from that *other* capital city, Washington on the Potomac.

"The events that happened here in Washington not only helped shape the Republic of Texas but also the young state of Texas," explains Adam Arnold, a park ranger and history interpreter.

Arnold, a seventh-generation Texan, was living in Oklahoma during the time most schoolchildren learn about the Texas revolutionary period. "I missed out on most of the school studies, so I had a lot of catching up to do when I got to the park. It's more than just the Alamo and San Jacinto. There are so many amazing stories about the people that were here."

Indeed, "amazing" is an apt description of those events and people who participated. In 1836, as Travis, Crockett and Bowie were spilling blood for the Texian cause at the Alamo in San Antonio, 170 miles to the northeast, another group was spilling ink to forge a new republic. The 59 signatories of the Texas Declaration of Independence gathered in this town along the banks of the

Brazos River near La Bahia highway, upstream from Houston. Their convention hammered out the language that defined the republic even as Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna hammered the walls of the Alamo.

They met in an unlikely Independence Hall. Today's replica of the building occupies the exact spot where those Texians signed their names to the declaration on March 2, 1836. Today, I walk a tree-lined path from the visitors center to Independence Hall so I can see our Philadelphia, in frontier Texas style.

Back then, the Washington townspeople offered the meeting space to the delegates free of charge in the hope of stimulating the local economy. The town had been officially founded the prior year, and the only place large enough to house the gathering was an unfinished building owned by a local gunsmith. It lacked windows, doors and part of its roof.

A cold front swept into the area and sent temperatures plum-

"I think it's important to visit these sites for a historical

meting to near freezing the week of the convention. Most delegates couldn't find lodging in the only inn, and food was running low by the end of the 17th day. That was when everyone evacuated ahead of the Mexican troops marching east, energized by their victory at the Alamo. Some delegates fled with settlers, staying ahead of the Mexican army that was known to take no prisoners. Their flight was dubbed the Runaway Scrape. Other delegates rallied to the fight, following newly minted Commander in Chief Sam Houston to the decisive Battle of San Jacinto.

To my surprise, more than half of the signatories were recent arrivals to Texas from the United States. They were illegal immigrants in violation of the immigration ban imposed by Mexico in April 1830. They hailed from 11 states and five foreign countries. Only two of the signatories were native Texans: José Antonio Balamero Navarro and José Francisco Ruiz.

The contemporary Independence Hall appears to be identical to the original, according to accounts from the 1830s. No drawings

From left, previous spread: replica of Independence Hall; Larry Wheat plays guitar during Texas Independence Day weekend. This page: Larry Heidbreder with his longhorns; interior of Independence Hall. Opposite page: a demonstration of rifles used during the Texas Revolution; Park Ranger Jon Failor in period clothing.



or plans for the building are known, but the structure sits on the same foundation stones left from the 1830s. Inside the shadowy room, simple desks and chairs are arranged for a meeting, and white curtains hang in windows that hold no glass. Independence Hall sat near a bustling ferry town of 100 people on the edge of the frontier, and looking through the simple wood frames, I wonder if the landscape now appears as undeveloped as it must have been then.

A 1912 fire burned the last of the original buildings, and the remains of the town have been lost under layers of soil. “The gopher holes are how we find lots of things,” says Barb King, park ranger at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site. “It would cost millions of dollars to dig, but kids and visitors find things the gophers have dug up.” These gifts from the gophers include pottery shards, fragments of porcelain, tools and the occasional dollar coin from 1837. “We always encourage visitors to not pick anything up but tell us when and where they see some-

ing against the safety line to get closer to the explosions of noise and gunpowder. Each *kaboom* generates cheers.

Living-history re-enactors have set up camp nearby. I find Jim Richardson, a recent convert to living history, cleaning his period rifle outside a tent. Richardson, from McKinney, has traced his family history back to the de Zavala Colony in 1835.

For Richardson, Washington-on-the-Brazos and other historic sites of the Texas Revolution provide an opportunity to connect emotionally to the people of that era. “What could those people have been thinking? What did it feel like to be so close to the most formidable army on Earth?”

Richardson also says he believes that understanding the more nuanced political history helps us preserve our democratic principles. “I think it’s important to visit these sites for a historical perspective. To preserve our freedom, it’s important to know what happened in history.”

perspective. To preserve our freedom, it’s important to know what happened in history.”

thing,” King says. Artifacts lose much of their context and potential for historical accuracy if they are moved from the site of their excavation. There’s hope for an archaeological field school to establish professional digs at the park, but until then, the historical treasures remain buried.

The park paths are laid out as the streets once were, and a glance at the historic city maps orients me to what once was. I stare into the overgrowth summoning ghosts of the revolution: here an inn, there a brickyard, then a stable.

The crowd today is a diverse group of families, foreigners, history re-enactors and locals. The celebration continues as the Sweet Song String Band’s guitar and fiddle players strike up a song and, in period costumes, lead the crowd to the monument erected by Brenham schoolchildren in 1899. Today’s schoolchildren lay a wreath in honor of the occasion.

Down the hill, a demonstration of cannons and guns draws onlookers every few hours. Visitors crowd the perimeter, strain-

I experience a mix of somber reflection and sheer enjoyment at the park this Independence Day. At the Star of the Republic Museum, Jack Edmondson is performing the life story of Sam Houston for a packed theater. He elicits laughter and applause in equal measure.

Washington thrived during a brief window as a pivotal ferry town along La Bahia highway. It was the Texas capital, briefly, in 1842, and the last president of Texas, Anson Jones, lived in nearby Barrington even as the people of Texas decided to let their nation become the 28th state of the United States in 1845.

With statehood, the story of Washington, Texas, faded. This tiny hamlet that birthed a nation returned to the land again.

Julia Robinson is an Austin photojournalist.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com View a slideshow online and see details about the Washington-on-the-Brazos 180th anniversary celebration of Texas Independence to be held March 5–6.

ON AIR





BORDER RADIO

**Booming and
bombastic,
broadcasts from
Mexican soil
turned American
culture on its ear**

BY GENE FOWLER

IN legends of the Old West, desperados rode hard for the Rio Grande and crossed the river into Mexico to hide from the law. In the 1930s, a different kind of outlaw broke for the Mexican border. These desperados were on the run from U.S. broadcasting regulations. Radio renegades built powerful transmitters on the river's southern banks. Blasting their signals northward, these "super-watt" American stations on Mexican soil beamed their colorful programming from coast to coast, border to border—and beyond.

For half a century, border radio stations had a tremendous impact on American culture, influencing political campaigns, religious broadcasts, musical tastes, health care and, particularly, advertising.

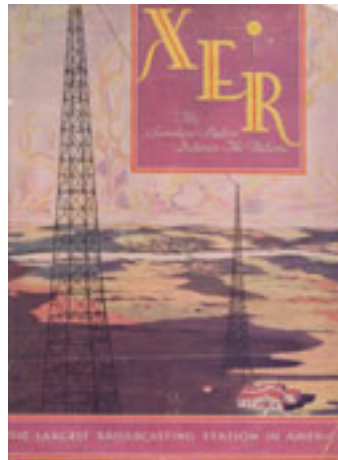
The father of border radio, Dr. John R. Brinkley became internationally famous in the 1920s for the goat gland transplant, a "pioneering" surgical procedure that could be described as an early agricultural version of Viagra. In 1930, after losing both his radio station license and his Kansas medical license, Brinkley ran for governor of the Sunflower State with the slogan, "Let's Pasture the Goats on the Statehouse Lawn."

Branded an outlaw for his financial misdeeds and his medical shenanigans, the doctor lit out for the broadcasting badlands along the Rio Grande, opening station XER, later called XERA, across the river from Del Rio in Villa Acuña in the fall of 1931.

Another Midwestern mogul, Norman Baker, followed in 1933 when authorities closed his Iowa station due to the promotion of his controversial cancer treatments. After building his own superstation, XENT, in Nuevo Laredo, Baker, who had no medical training, moved his clinic to the border. His advertising urged patients: "Phone 666 upon arrival in Laredo, Texas." Texas Gov. Miriam "Ma" Ferguson dispatched Texas Rangers to the border to arrest Baker on an Iowa charge of practicing medicine without a license, but the radio outlaw could not be lured across the Rio Grande.

Mexican authorities accommodated these high-powered media mavericks because the U.S. and Canada had divided up all the long-range radio wavelengths between themselves, allotting none to Mexico. Soon the stations dotted the borderlands, from Tampico to Tijuana. XEPN blasted from Piedras Negras, across from Eagle Pass. XELO started out in Piedras Negras, moved to Tijuana and finally settled in Juarez. XEG thundered northward from Monterrey. In Reynosa, across from Hidalgo and McAllen, Houston philanthropist Will Horwitz operated XED before he was sent to prison in 1932 for rebroadcasting the state of Tamaulipas lottery into the U.S.

With colossal wattage, border station signals played havoc with American stations. A listener in Philadelphia, for instance, might hear *Amos 'n' Andy* muscled aside by Brinkley's frank discussions of human sexuality. According to legend, Brinkley's station could be received on bedsprings and dental work. June Carter Cash, who performed as a child with the Carter Family on XERA, said the family's music could be heard on any barbed wire fence in Texas.



Clockwise from top: Cowboy Slim Rinehart at a Pecos radio station; an early 1930s illustration for XERA, founded by the grandfather of border radio, Dr. John R. Brinkley; Rose Dawn's magazine published in Del Rio

So-called hillbilly and cowboy music were the most popular sounds on the prewar border stations, but Americans also liked Mexican music from the border. “I enjoyed the cowboy songs,” one listener recalled, “but the real highlight of the program for me was Rosa Dominguez singing *Estrellita*. To this South Dakota farm boy, that sounded like the angels in heaven.”

Fortunetellers and psychics, banned on U.S. airwaves, also broke for the border. Rose Dawn, the “Star Girl” of XERA, journeyed deep into Mexico to gather arcane knowledge for the Mayan Order, the metaphysical radio and mail-order business she founded in Del Rio in 1936. Her monthly magazine, *Modern Astrology*, achieved national circulation.

In the 1930s, Dallas insurance magnate Carr Collins bought XED in Reynosa, which he renamed XEAW, to advertise his Crazy Crystals. Mixed with tap water, the reconstituted minerals from Mineral Wells in Texas made Crazy Water, the natural tonic from Mineral Wells, “for any condition caused or made worse by a sluggish system.” Collins’ partner in the station was Texas

Gov. W. Lee “Pappy” O’Daniel, a radio star from Fort Worth airwaves and Piedras Negras’ XEPN. When Texas stations insisted that the unpredictable governor provide copies of his radio speeches in advance, O’Daniel talked to Texans from his own station in Mexico, accompanied by music from his band, the Hillbilly Boys, and commercials for his Hillbilly Flour.

During World War II, future Country Music Hall of Fame member Hank Thompson, who grew up in Waco listening to Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family on border radio, tuned in the powerful stations on a submarine in the Pacific to introduce his fellow sailors to hillbilly music.

After the war, as hillbilly and cowboy music morphed into country and western, stations like XERF in Ciudad Acuña (Brinkley’s old XERA under new owners) continued popularizing the genre. Despite his stardom on the *Louisiana Hayride* and the *Grand Ole Opry*, 1950s hitmaker Webb Pierce declared in 1986, “If it hadn’t been for border radio, I don’t know if country music would have survived.”

Pierce’s music got a big boost from border disc jockeys such as Paul Kallinger, XERF’s “Good Neighbor Along the Way.” Although Kallinger would not let a young Elvis Presley on his all-country show when the lip-twitching King of Rock rolled through Del Rio, the hip-shakin’, wig-flippin’ sound would soon scorch the ether on the programs of wild border DJs including Howlin’ Rooster, Dr. Jazzmo and Wolfman Jack. Country rocker Joe Ely says that listening to the Wolfman’s show was like going to school when he was growing up in Lubbock, introducing him to blues artists John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters and Lightnin’ Hopkins. Ely’s longtime bassist, Jimmy Pettit, a Del Rio native, paid musical dues unique to the borderlands. “Howlin’ Rooster booked my first band to open for the bullfights in Acuña,” he recalls. “And it was broadcast live on XERF, all the way around the world!”

Pettit’s father, Hawley Pettit, was the “diamond man” on XERF, selling “genuine simulated diamonds.” As Kallinger explained, “You practically had to sell ice to Eskimos to keep your job on XERF!” The border stations pioneered a long-winded commercial format, selling everything, including weight-loss pills, weight-gain pills, fishing lures, laxatives, gravestones, burial insurance, plastic ponies, razor blades, baby chicks and the Lord’s Last Supper tablecloths in vinyl.

The radio preachers became a mainstay of the stations. Many were remarkable spoken-word performers, ranting so furiously that listeners truly believed they could raise the dead. Others were sincere in their radio ministries. As Dallas Turner put it, “Some of those preachers were sanctified, and some of them were crank-tified.”

Border radio stations were enormously profitable, and there were numerous shootouts—and some deaths in the 1960s—for their control. The XEPN transmitter building in Piedras Negras was blown to bits in 1938 by one of the two feuding owners.

The Mexican government finally pulled the plug in 1986, seizing the last border station, XERF. Former station owner and Del Rio attorney Arturo Gonzalez said then that the station had been nothing but a headache. Still, before his death in 2012 at the age of 104, Gonzalez wistfully pledged a couple times a year, “I’m gonna get the station back. I’m gonna boost up the power and play rock n’ roll.”

Gene Fowler is the author, with Bill Crawford, of *Border Radio: Quacks, Yodelers, Pitchmen, Psychics, and Other Amazing Broadcasters of the American Airwaves* [University of Texas Press, 2002].

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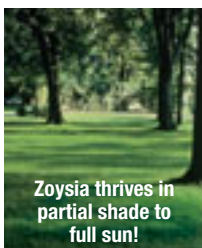
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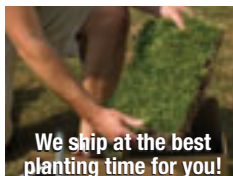
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Texans Set To Get Free Survival Food

Farmers vow to keep up with the demand to supply all Texans who call toll free and beat the deadline to claim up to four free 72-hour survival food kits.



Thousands have already claimed free Food4Patriots survival food kits. Giveaway ends 04/15/2016.

In a crisis, your number one need is food. But not just any food. What everyone needs is good-for-25-years survival food that you can rely on when the time comes that food is scarce.

Well right now – in what is truly an unprecedented move – 72-hour survival food kits from Food4Patriots are being given away to Texans as long as they call a special toll-free hotline and beat the program deadline.

“The world is rapidly changing,” explained Frank Bates, a spokesman for the company. “Every day Americans face very real threats. For sure, terrorism is a huge worry. But so are natural disasters like hurricanes, floods, tornados, and whatever else Mother Nature might have up her sleeve.”

believe each of us has a responsibility to ensure our loved ones will have the food they need to survive an emergency — without having to rely on handouts.”

Experts say that everyone should have at least a 72-hour supply of non-perishable food on hand at all times. Unfortunately, too many people make the mistake of choosing products that were never intended to be survival food. They end up with expensive stockpiles that are too big and too bulky to move, should an emergency force them to leave their homes.

Chances are, their foods were not packaged for a 25-year or more shelf life. Most are not.

And if they were unlucky enough to stock up on MREs, they’ll be depending on a product that can actually make you sick if you eat it for too long.

Food4Patriots survival foods are made of the finest ingredients, grown and packaged right here in the USA. They taste great. They provide the nutrition you need. And they were developed specifically for use in emergencies – although a lot of folks sometimes like them for a quick meal or snack.

Bates explained, “These are home-style meals that we package in airtight and resealable military-grade Mylar pouches that keep them fresh and delicious until they’re needed. Your family will enjoy meals much like they’re already eating every day.”

Every 72-hour kit that’s being given away contains four servings each of such familiar dishes as Liberty Bell Potato Cheddar Soup, Blue Ribbon Creamy Chicken Rice,

Travelers Stew, and the always loved Granny’s Homestyle Potato Soup.

The company’s usual price for the 72-hour kit is \$27.00 plus shipping. But Texans who act quickly can claim as many as four free kits and pay only a \$9.95 fee to help cover shipping and handling for each.

“We’re trying to ensure no members get left out, but they have to hurry because we have a limited supply of the 72-hour kits we can give away,” Bates warned. “Once word got out that we were actually giving away free survival food, our phones have been ringing off the hook. We even had to add extra agents to keep up with the incredible demand.”

There is still time to take advantage of this free food offer, but be aware the program will end no matter what promptly at midnight, April 15, 2016.



Military-grade Mylar pouches ensure these meals stay fresh for 25 years or more.

“It’s more important than ever to be prepared.”

“Hey, we’ve seen what happens when a crisis hits. Stores quickly shut down or looted by hungry mobs. People forced to dig through dumpsters to find anything edible. Thousands standing in line to get a meal from FEMA or some other relief agency.

“That’s not what I want for my family or anyone else’s. Honestly, I

HOW TO GET YOUR FREE 72-HOUR SURVIVAL FOOD KITS:

Food4Patriots is committed to giving up to four free 72-hour kits to every Texan who calls their toll-free hotline. Just give the agent the approval code shown below. Provide your delivery instructions and agree to pay the \$9.95 fee to help cover shipping and handling for each. That’s all there is to it.

Approval Code: 72FREE
Toll-Free Hotline: 1-800-958-1014
Offer Cut-Off Date: 04/15/2016

Please note: Food4Patriots says they will continue to give away these 72-hour kits for as long as their supplies last.

Due to media exposure, their phone lines may be busy. Just keep calling and you will get through.

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These vanished coins were not just any silver dollar—they were America's largest circulated coin, the beloved Morgan Silver Dollar. Each Morgan Dollar is struck from nearly an ounce of 90% fine silver and measures a massive 38.1mm in diameter. Morgan Silver Dollars were the engine of the American dream for decades. Created by famed American coin designer, George T. Morgan, they feature Lady Liberty's radiant profile and a majestic eagle, symbols of American strength and prosperity. Since their inception in 1878, they jingled in the pockets of famous and infamous Americans like John D. Rockefeller and Teddy Roosevelt, and desperados Jesse James and Al Capone. Today, Morgan Silver Dollars are the most collected coin in America.

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Just three years after the massive meltdown, the government gave the Morgan Silver Dollar a final chance to shine. In 1921, facing a serious shortage, the mint struck Morgan Silver Dollars for one more brief, historic year. Today, the last-ever 1921 Morgan Silver Dollar belongs in the hands of collectors, history buffs, or anyone who values the artistry and legacy of this American classic.



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— Dr. May, ENT Physician

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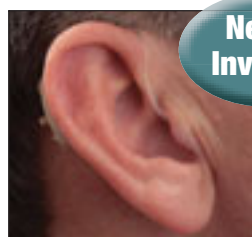
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Top 5 Energy Users in Your Home

A starting point for savings

ALTHOUGH MOST HOMEOWNERS would like to be more energy efficient and save money, the effort feels overwhelming because many people don't know where to start. How can the average family use less energy, lower their utility bill and still meet their daily energy needs? To get started, it is useful to identify the top energy users in your home.

The top five energy users in U.S. homes are, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration:

1. **Space cooling**—13 percent
2. **Lighting**—11 percent
3. **Space heating**—9 percent
4. **Water heating**—9 percent
5. **Refrigeration**—7 percent

Together, these five constitute almost half the American homeowner's energy bill every month. By adjusting household habits around each energy user, you can start conserving electricity and saving money.

Adjust the Temperature

Combined, home heating and cooling use the most energy and take the biggest bite out of your energy budget. You can achieve at least 10 percent savings by taking a few simple, low-cost steps.

- ▶ During cold weather, set your thermostat to 68 degrees.
- ▶ During warm weather, set it to 78 degrees.
- ▶ Clean the filters of your HVAC system to cut costs between 5 and 15 percent.
- ▶ Clean refrigerator and electric baseboard heater coils to maintain maximum efficiency.
- ▶ Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors to prevent indoor air from escaping to the outdoors.

No matter what the climate or time of year, proper use of a programmable thermostat can save you 10 percent on your monthly utility bill.

Shine the Light on Savings

Take a fresh look at the lighting in your home. If you still use incandescent lighting, your lightbulbs are operating at only 25 percent energy efficiency. Replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified light-emitting diodes can save you \$75 per year. Another easy way to save is to always turn lights off in rooms that are not being used.



Changing home energy use habits can help save money.

Water-Heating Efficiency

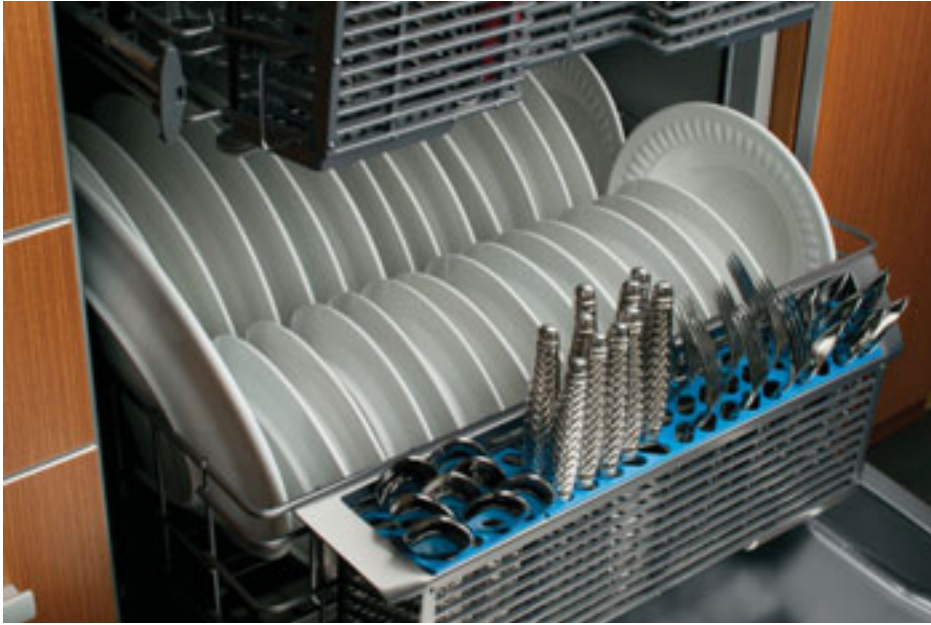
Just as it is energy-wise to insulate your roof, walls or floors, it also pays to wrap your water heater with an insulating blanket. Doing this is all the more critical if you have an older unit. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. For additional efficiency and savings, insulate exposed hot water lines and drain 1–2 gallons of water from the bottom of your tank annually to prevent sediment buildup.

Cold Cash Back in Your Wallet

If your refrigerator was purchased before 2001, chances are it uses 40 percent more energy than a new model. If you are considering an appliance update, a new Energy Star-certified refrigerator uses at least 15 percent less energy than noncertified models and 20 percent less energy than required by federal standards.

Regardless of the age of your fridge, there are additional steps you can take to save energy and money. For example, don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends temperatures of 35–38 degrees for the refrigeration compartments and zero degrees for freezers.

By understanding how your home uses energy, you can determine the best ways to modify energy use and keep more money in your wallet.



Today's efficient dishwashers save energy and money compared to washing dishes by hand.

Dishwashers Clean for Less

IT'S A QUESTION THAT HAS BEEN ASKED FOR YEARS: Which is “greener”—using a dishwasher or washing dishes by hand? Which method uses less energy and less water?

Now, it seems, we have a definitive answer: Updated regulation combined with solid design have made appliances significantly better over the years, to the point where there's no longer a question.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy notes: Studies are showing more and more that, when used to maximize energy-saving features, modern dishwashers can outperform all but the most frugal hand washers.

Since 2013, all dishwashers have been required to use fewer than 5 gallons of water during a full cycle. Energy Star-certified dishwashers perform even better, using 4.25 gallons maximum and fewer than 295 kilowatt-hours per year in average usage, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers 215 cycles per year.

People often prerinse dishes, which uses a lot of water on top of what the dishwasher uses, skewing the numbers in favor of the sink. However, you don't really have to do that anymore—dishwashers are good enough that you can just scrape off the food and let the machine do the rest. The machines even have soil detectors to ensure that they get it all.

There are other bells and whistles that make dishwashers even more efficient. They have preheaters that boost the water temperature to up to 140 degrees to sanitize them, which lets you turn down the temperature of your household water heater to 120 degrees. They also have timers that let you set the appliance to turn on at a later time when the power rates are lower, and they often have no-heat, air-dry cycles, although some users complain that this causes spotting.

In the end, there appears to be a consensus that dishwashers today do a better job using a lot less water and energy than a person doing dishes by hand. It's one labor-saving appliance that does a better job than you can.

Look Up Before You Plant

SPRING IS A GOOD TIME to plant shade trees, which eventually will grow up and out and cast some nice shade on your house, keeping it cooler during summer.

But beware of where you plant. Tree branches can conduct electricity, creating a possible shock hazard for utility workers who need to service overhead power lines that are too close to towering trees.

Do some homework about the trees you've chosen before you plant them. Know how tall and wide each tree will grow. That way, you can plant it in a spot where, when it's fully grown, it will still be at least 10 feet away from a utility pole and overhead wires.

Here are a few other smart springtime precautions:

- ▶ Don't climb a ladder that's within reach of a power line.
- ▶ Hire a professional to prune tree branches that are near overhead wires. That's not a job for a do-it-yourselfer.
- ▶ Call your electric cooperative and 811 before you dig a hole to plant a tree—to make sure you won't interfere with underground lines on your property. That one is not only a safe practice; it's also the law.

How tall will that new tree get? You should know before you plant to make sure it won't grow into power lines.



The First “Flying Saucer”

Description of Denison UFO in 1878 became archetype for alien space travel

BY E.R. BILLS

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN THE LATE 1970s, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* practically owned the big screen, and Hollywood followed up with a *Mork & Mindy* takeover of network TV. Folks were captivated by galaxies “far, far away,” and I was no different; but Texas seemed light-years away from everything that was going on in deep space.

I recently stumbled across something that dispelled this youthful misperception.

Mork, Han Solo, Chewbacca and the visitors portrayed in *Close Encounters* were all space travelers, and the modern archetype for alien space travelers is the “flying saucer.” As it turns out, the first recorded sighting of a flying saucer was not in Roswell, New Mexico, or Boulder, Colorado, or at the Devil’s Tower in Wyoming. One was spotted in Texas on January 22, 1878.

According to a January 25, 1878, front-page report in the *Denison Daily News*—which was attributed to the *Dallas Herald* and headlined *A Strange Phenomenon*—a farmer named John Martin was hunting “six miles north of this city” when he spotted something in the distance. Martin’s “attention was directed to a dark object high up in the southern sky,” the story said. The “shape and velocity with which the object seemed to approach riveted his attention, and he strained his eyes to discover its character.”

At first the object appeared to be the “size of an orange,” but it got bigger and brighter as it approached. Martin stared at it so long he was temporarily blinded, and by the time his vision was restored, the object was almost directly overhead.

By then it was “about the size of a large saucer” and was soaring across the sky at high altitude and with incredible speed. Martin said it resembled a balloon, and the *Herald* reporter noted that if it was not a balloon, “it deserved the attention of our scientists.”

The story appeared in *The Dallas Weekly Herald* on January 26 and the *Daily Oklahoman* soon after. There is no evidence that the incident ever actually received examination from local, state or national scientists at the time, but it did grab the attention of stargazers and researchers decades later. It was discussed in the influential book *The Flying Saucers Are Real* (Fawcett Publications, 1950) by Donald Keyhoe, revisited in *The Dallas Morning News* on August 6, 1965, and examined in *Close Encounters of the Lone Star Kind* in *Texas Monthly* in 1969.

Although mysterious objects in the sky have been recorded throughout human history, the sighting in Denison led to the first-ever mention of a flying saucer, and flying saucers have been a staple of UFO lore ever since.

Where Martin saw the saucer is not exactly clear. According to the 1880 U.S. census, there was a tenant farmer named John E. Martin living in Grayson County (where Denison is located), but there were five John Martins working as farmers in Collin County (just north of Dallas and Dallas County): three Johns (two of whom were listed in the 1870 census), one John P. and one John W. The 1880 census listed no John Martin in Dallas County.

Regardless of which John Martin saw



Although mysterious objects in the sky have been recorded throughout human history, the sighting in Denison led to the first-ever mention of a flying saucer, and flying saucers have been a staple of UFO lore ever since.

a flying saucer in North Texas in 1878, at least three local newspapers reported it—at a time when no one had even heard of a UFO, much less space aliens, “close encounters” or R2-D2. This sighting occurred before there was a genuine context or compelling rhetoric for such events. It also took place before the sightings themselves became cliché—lending credence to the original account and firmly cementing the notion of visitors from galaxies “far, far away” right here in our own backyard.

E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo.

Resident Spirits

Lady Bird Johnson's experience with haunted houses—first her childhood home, then the White House

BY MARTHA DEERING

IN AN IMPOSING, 17-ROOM ANTEBELLUM mansion just a mile outside of Karnack, in deep East Texas, Claudia Alta Taylor was born December 22, 1912, into wealth and privilege. Her nursemaid, enchanted by the 6 ½-pound, dark-haired baby, pronounced her “as purty as a lady bird,” introducing a nickname the tiny girl would bear for the rest of her life.

Thomas Jefferson Taylor, the baby's bombastic and domineering father and the wealthiest man in town, owned a 65,000-acre cotton plantation, two cotton gins, a fishing business and two country stores, on which he posted the optimistic sign, “T. J. Taylor—Dealer in Everything.”

Perhaps it's prophetic that Karnack (misspelled by a postmaster who intended to name it “Karnak” for the temples of Egypt) lies near the town of Uncertain and just 20 miles from Jefferson, which claims to be the most haunted town in Texas. Many believed Taylor's mansion sheltered a resident ghost.

Built in 1843 and known as the Brick House, the mansion was the scene of a tragedy in 1861. Owner Milt Andrew's beautiful 19-year-old daughter, Eunice, known as “Oonie,” sat alone in a rocking chair in her bedroom beside the fireplace during a violent thunderstorm. Lightning coursed down the chimney and struck her, consuming the girl and her chair in a fiery inferno. Rumors suggest that Oonie's ghost never left the house.

When Lady Bird was 5, the Brick House, which is still standing and used as a private residence, witnessed a second tragedy. Minnie Lee, Lady Bird's genteel

mother, fell down the spiral staircase and died from complications of a miscarriage caused by the fall.

Minnie's death came during her husband's busiest time of year, and Taylor, not to be distracted from his business, took the 5-year-old to the store with him and set up a bed for her on the second floor, where coffins were stored. When she inquired what those long boxes were, her father replied, “Dry goods, honey, just dry goods.”

Lady Bird's brothers, still away at school, were not told of their mother's death for almost a year.

With her two older brothers away at school, Lady Bird's childhood centered on her bedroom, with the view from its windows blocked by trees. The family's servants repeatedly warned her to stay away from Oonie's bedroom, just down the hall from her own, and the whistling of the wind around the floor-to-ceiling windows added to Lady Bird's fears. Although she says she never saw Oonie's ghost herself, in later years Lady Bird admitted that, “I felt quite sure that ghosts did exist, and I was scared.” In her 80s, she told biographer Jan Jarboe Russell, “I would not, even now, at this age, feel comfortable being alone in that house myself.”

In the fall of 1919, Lady Bird started school, and her mother's sister, Effie, came to Karnack to help her niece adjust. Effie believed that Minnie's ghost inhabited the Brick House and visited her at night with instructions on caring for Lady Bird, washing windows and tending to other derelict household chores.

To escape the atmosphere of the house



and its resident spirits, Lady Bird turned to nature. The pine forests and swamps reminded her of her mother, who had once strolled barefooted through the woods in a white dress with a bouquet of wildflowers in her hand.

Lady Bird also explored nearby Caddo Lake and its adjacent bayous, where “time seemed ringed around by silence and ancient cypress trees, rich in festoons of Spanish moss. Now and then an alligator would surface like a gnarled log. It was a place for dreams,” Lady Bird said in Russell’s book *Lady Bird: A Biography of Mrs. Johnson* (Scribner, 1999).

“Growing up alone, I took my delights in the gifts nature offered me daily,” Lady Bird

said. Her love of wildflowers and interest in the environment are part of her inheritance from her mother, along with a shyness that was occasionally mistaken for aloofness. After she graduated from the University of Texas with two degrees, Lady Bird’s marriage to Lyndon Johnson propelled her out of the Taylor ancestral home and on the road to the White House, another residence purported to house spirits of the departed.

Four former first ladies have claimed to sense the presence of Abraham Lincoln’s ghost during their stints in the White House. Grace Coolidge glimpsed him standing by the window in his former office. Eleanor Roosevelt felt Lincoln’s spirit enter the room late one night while

she worked alone in the Lincoln Bedroom. Jacqueline Kennedy sat quietly in the Lincoln Bedroom on occasion to draw solace from Lincoln’s spirit, and Lady Bird Johnson strongly sensed his presence in the hallway of the private quarters.

Staff members and dignitaries such as Winston Churchill and Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands also sighted the former president and other apparitions in the White House.

But if Lady Bird actually saw those spirits herself, she kept her own counsel—a trait she had probably developed many years earlier at her childhood home in Karnack.

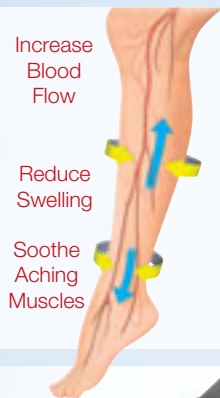
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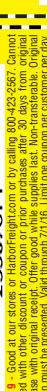
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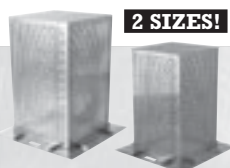
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Pecos River Flood of 1954

Heavy rain from Hurricane Alice sent wall of water that washed out highway bridge near Langtry

BY LONN TAYLOR

THE PECOS RIVER RISES IN THE MOUNTAINS of New Mexico, flows south across that state, then twists through the grease-wood country and canyons of West Texas, where it empties into the Rio Grande just east of Langtry. It is a treacherous river. Its sharply cut banks, shifting currents and tenacious quicksands led rancher Charles Goodnight to call it “the graveyard of the cowman’s hopes.”

The river is subject to flash floods, and over the weekend of June 26, 1954, when Hurricane Alice dumped 28 inches of rain into the Pecos drainage, a wall of water 90 feet high swept downriver and destroyed the bridge on U.S. 90 between Langtry and Del Rio. This was the most expensive bridge disaster in Texas history.

That bridge was a 500-foot steel truss double span, built in 1923 for \$175,000. The structure, 50 feet above the river’s surface, was the first highway bridge built over the Pecos, although the Santa Fe Railway had built a trestle bridge, then the highest in the United States, slightly upstream in 1892.

During the 1954 flood, the Pecos River crested at the highway bridge twice, first at 82 feet on June 27 at 7:30 a.m., when it took out both steel spans and washed away a car that was stalled on the bridge. Tragically, the driver had led his family to safety across the flooded bridge and had returned to try to start his vehicle when the bridge fell. His body was never recovered. The second crest of 96 feet came the next day at 1:30 a.m., when it washed out the center pier.

Texas Highway Department engineers A.J. Sharrod and J.A. Shelby drove out from Del Rio on the morning of June 29 to inspect the damage. They found extensive damage on U.S. 90, but when they reached the Pecos, they viewed complete destruction. Sharrod wrote, “The east abutment [for one of the 225-foot steel spans] had collapsed into the river about where it had



been erected. The eastern steel span, which was bent and badly twisted, was about 100 yards downstream in the middle of the river. The middle pier for the steel spans had collapsed and was underwater. The west steel span was lying in the edge of the water just off the west abutment.”

The railroad bridge withstood the flood, but some lower bridges to the west washed out, leaving the Santa Fe’s eastbound, 13-car Sunset Limited stranded in Langtry with 264 passengers. The passengers were rescued by helicopters sent from San Marcos, Corpus Christi and San Antonio to Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio. The choppers landed on the highway in Langtry and ferried the stranded travelers to an improvised landing point east of the river, from which buses took them to Laughlin. An eastbound Southern Pacific train, the Argonaut, halted in Sanderson and backed the 70 miles west to Alpine, where it was switched to the Santa Fe tracks and continued on to New Orleans via Fort Worth.

Langtry, a town of 100, saw its population quadruple over the weekend. In addition to the railroad passengers, 200

motorists were marooned there. People slept in cars, in the schoolhouse and on the train. Food from the train’s galley was supplemented by 1,000 pounds of Red Cross rations flown in by helicopter.

During the flood, Jack Skiles of Langtry was at his father’s ranch house just above Eagle Nest Canyon, about a mile outside of town. “It rained 30 inches on June 26 and 27, and on the morning of the 28th, my father and I rode horseback up to the highway, where my father had a store. The man who was leasing the store told us the Pecos River bridge was gone, and we didn’t believe him. But he was right. It was gone.”

The Texas Highway Department worked 24 hours a day for 57 days to build a temporary low-water bridge that was about 7 feet above the normal water level. The replacement bridge, which cost \$185,000, washed out about a year later, on July 19, 1955. Then the decision was made to construct the present bridge 273 feet above the river at a cost of \$1,168,500.

It is still there.

Lonnn Taylor, author and former Smithsonian historian, lives in Fort Davis.

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award fifteen \$1,500 scholarships to TREWA members or
their children. Membership dues are \$10 per year.

Eggs: Plain and Fancy

THIS MONTH, WE CELEBRATE THE humble egg. Readers share time-honored favorites, including a green chile casserole and a classic cheese soufflé. A flock of new cookbooks also showcase the egg's limitless possibilities. Take the following recipe from *The Perfect Egg* by Teri Lyn Fisher and Jenny Park. Here, chewy grains of farro, an ancient grain, are tossed with balsamic vinaigrette and a tumble of spring vegetables. (Feel free to substitute shaved carrots, sugar snap peas or even roasted mushrooms.) A final topping of soft-boiled eggs and aromatic garnishes transform a simple salad into a nourishing, satisfying meal.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

No Leafy Greens Salad

BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE DRESSING

- 2 tablespoons minced shallots
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ⅔ cup extra-virgin olive oil

SALAD

- 1 cup uncooked farro, rinsed and drained
- 4 cups chicken stock
- Salt
- 8 baby zucchini, sliced in half lengthwise
- 10 French green beans, sliced in half lengthwise
- 2 radishes, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 4 soft-boiled eggs, halved
- Microgreens, crushed pistachios and grated lemon zest, for garnish

1. **DRESSING:** Place all the vinaigrette ingredients except the olive oil into a small mixing bowl and whisk together.
2. Still whisking, pour in the oil in a slow and steady stream. Continue to whisk

Recipes

Eggs: Plain and Fancy



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

PATRICIA JAGER | PANOLA-HARRISON EC

From a comforting casserole to elegant preparations perfect for a special brunch or light dinner, these excellent egg recipes are sure to please at any time of day.

Green Chile Breakfast Casserole

"My mother-in-law gave me this recipe. I have made it many times for church brunches and out-of-town visitors, and everyone loves it. You can lighten it up with low-fat or fat-free cheese."

Butter, vegetable oil or nonstick cooking spray

- 10 large eggs
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pint small-curd cottage cheese
- 1 pound Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
- 7–8 ounces canned green chiles, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 13-by-9-inch baking pan.
2. Lightly beat eggs in a large mixing bowl. Add all remaining ingredients and mix well.
3. Pour the egg mixture into the prepared baking pan and bake 45–50 minutes or until lightly browned on top.
4. Allow the casserole to sit 10–15 minutes before serving. Serves 8–10.

COOK'S TIP For more heat, look for hot or fire-roasted green chiles, or add a few dashes of your favorite hot sauce.

until the mixture has emulsified. Taste, adjust the seasoning if needed, and set aside until ready to use.

3. SALAD: Pour the farro and stock into a medium pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer 30–40 minutes or until most of the liquid has been absorbed and the grains have softened and split. Drain any remaining liquid and allow the farro to cool, about 1 hour.

4. Fill a small pot with water and bring to a boil. Generously season with salt and drop in the zucchini and French green beans. Blanch 2–3 minutes and then transfer to an ice bath to ensure that the vegetables retain texture and color.

5. Once cooled, drain vegetables and place into a large mixing bowl with the cooked farro and sliced radishes. Drizzle half the vinaigrette over the mixture and toss together (you can reserve the remaining vinaigrette for another use).

6. Top the salad with egg halves, microgreens, crushed pistachios and grated lemon zest, and serve. Serves 4.

COOK'S TIP Farro can be found in most grocery stores, typically in the pasta section. To cool farro quickly, spread in a thin layer on a sheet pan and place in the refrigerator about 15 minutes. If you can't find microgreens, consider sprouts or chopped parsley.

The Perfect Egg by Teri Lyn Fisher and Jenny Park (Ten Speed Press, 2015), used with permission

Easy Cheese Soufflé

NANCY SULLIVAN | FAYETTE EC

"Contrary to general thought, this soufflé is easy to make, can be mixed in advance, and still rises nicely in the oven. My family loves it as a light weekday supper. I have also folded sautéed mushrooms or chopped blanched asparagus into the egg mixture before pouring into the dish, and both are delicious additions."

- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, plus more to butter the dish
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups cold whole milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 6 large eggs
- 2½ cups grated Gruyere cheese
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh chives

\$100 Recipe Contest

August's recipe contest is **Garlic: The Stinkin' Rose**. Send us your favorite recipes featuring garlic by the **March 10** deadline.

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.

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 6-cup gratin dish and set it aside.
2. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat, then whisk in the flour. Cook mixture about 10 seconds, whisking for smoothness.
3. Add the milk. Continue whisking until the mixture thickens and comes to a strong boil, about 2 minutes. (The white sauce should be thick and smooth.)
4. Remove pan from heat and stir in the salt and pepper. Allow the sauce to cool about 10 minutes.
5. Break the eggs into a bowl and beat well with a fork. Fold the eggs, cheese and chives into the cooled sauce, and mix well to combine.
6. Pour the mixture into the gratin dish and bake 30–40 minutes or until the soufflé is puffy and the top is nicely browned.

COOK'S TIP The raw egg mixture can be covered and refrigerated for up to a day before

baking. Once cooked, although the soufflé will stay inflated for quite a while, it's best served immediately.

Shirred Eggs

JAMIE PARCHMAN | MAGIC VALLEY EC

Shirred eggs are simply eggs that are baked in a flat-bottomed gratin dish or a ramekin traditionally called a "shirrer," typically with butter or cream. The addition of prosciutto (or your favorite ham) creates a heartier dish that can be served for brunch, lunch or dinner. "These eggs are super easy but look fancy," Parchman says. "Whenever I bring them out, my family is thrilled."

- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup ($\frac{1}{4}$ stick) butter, softened
- 6 slices prosciutto
- 12 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup heavy cream, or more to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper
- 4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped chives

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Butter the bottoms and sides of six 6-ounce ramekins.
2. Line the bottom and sides of each ramekin with a slice of prosciutto, slicing as needed to cover the surface of the dish.
3. Crack 2 eggs into a small bowl, leaving yolks unbroken, then carefully pour the eggs into one of the ramekins. Repeat with remaining eggs and ramekins.
4. Pour 2–3 tablespoons of cream onto each egg, then sprinkle with salt, pepper, Parmesan and chives.
5. Place the ramekins on a baking sheet and bake 10–12 minutes. (Yolks should still be runny. Bake an additional 2–3 minutes if solid yolks are desired.)
6. Remove from oven and serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com

Scrambling to find the perfect egg recipe? We have more online.

TEXAS COOP POWER

NEXT MONTH

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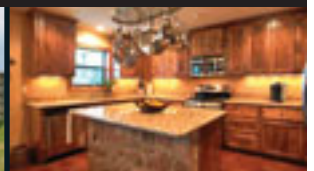
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Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

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.

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?



**Dear
Darryl**

Clogged and Smelly – San Antonio, TX

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

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SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "DARTX15", you can get 10% Off. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.

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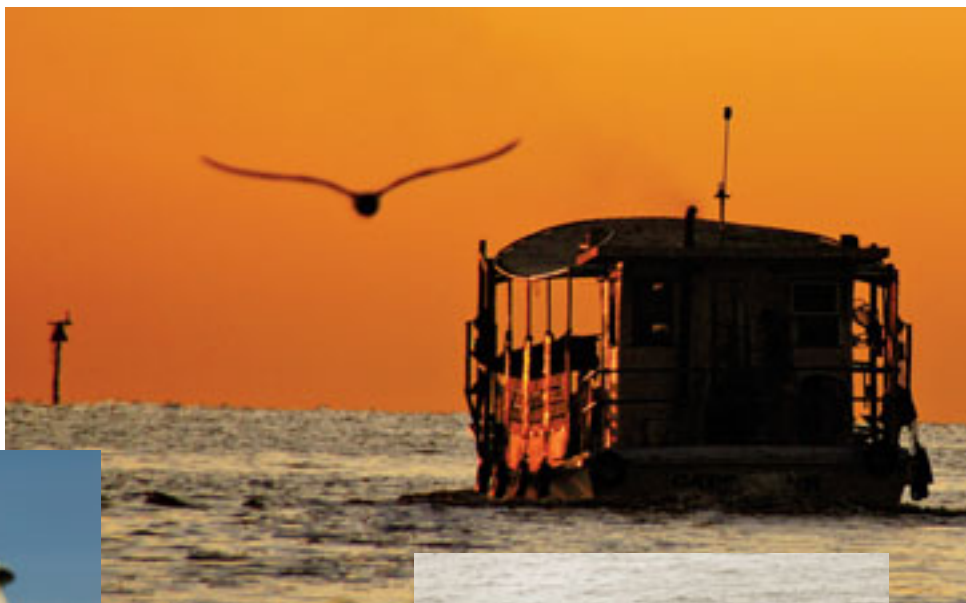
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▲ **RACHEL JOHNSON**, CoServ Electric: "Noah, my son, is testing the water with his paper boats."

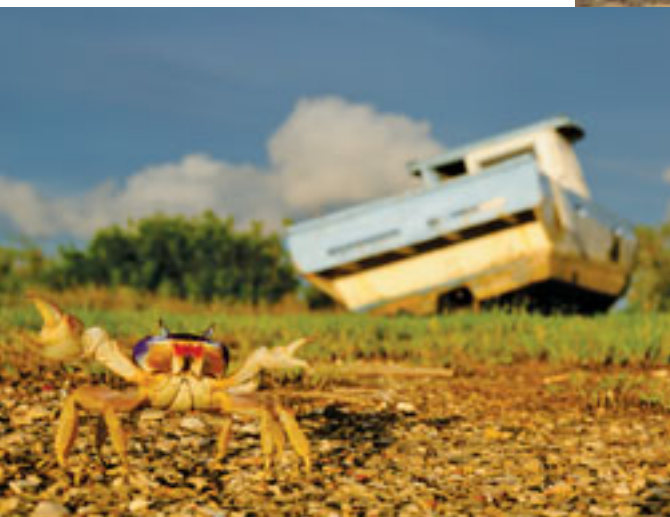
► **CHRIS WALTERS**, Houston County EC: An oyster boat makes a morning run.

▼ **MIKE ROACH**, Nueces EC: A crab seems to stand guard over a deserted boat in Corpus Christi.



► **PAM JOHNSON**, Nava-sota Valley EC: Johnson and best friend Barbra Turkal go retro on Lake Limestone.

▼ **ANITA EVANS**, Sam Houston EC: An elaborate duck blind on the move



UPCOMING CONTESTS

JULY	THE OLD WEST	DUE MARCH 10
AUGUST	RESTORED	DUE APRIL 10
SEPTEMBER	GONE FISHIN'	DUE MAY 10

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

Gillespie County Country Schools Open House

Fredericksburg [April 2]

(830) 997-5116, historicschools.org

The Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools, a nonprofit organization, oversees 12 country schools and preserves the history of structures that, in some cases, date to the 1800s. "We're working to keep those open and repaired," says the organization's Jeanette Beckmann, a member of Central Texas EC.

March

10

La Grange [10-13] Best Little Cowboy Gathering in Texas, (979) 702-0086, bestlittlecowboygathering.org

11

Houston [11-13] Azalea Trail, (713) 523-2483, riveroaksgardenclub.org

12

Alleyton Texas German Society Convention, (979) 732-3302, texasgermansociety.com

Bellville Classic Car Stampede, (979) 865-3187, austincountycruisers.com

Buna Redbud Festival, (409) 289-5832

Round Top James Dick in Concert, (979) 249-3129, festivalhill.org

San Benito Texas Independence Celebration, (956) 739-0401, happybirthdaytexas.com

Seguin ArtsFest, (830) 401-2475, visitseguin.com

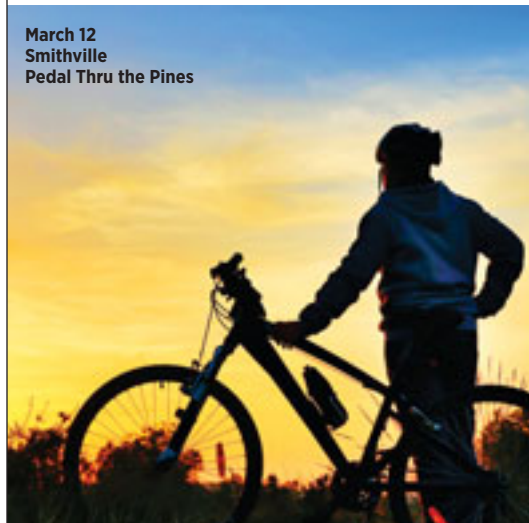
Smithville Pedal Thru the Pines, (512) 321-7760, pedalthrupines.org

Fort Worth [12-13] Funky Finds Spring Fling, (903) 665-7954, funkyfinds.com/spring

Huntsville [12-13] Rusty Chippy Show, (936) 295-4162, huntsvilleantiqueshow.com

San Antonio [12-13] 55th Annual Fiesta of Gems, (210) 860-2830, swgemandmineral.org

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Pedal Thru the Pines



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Boerne Boerne Concert Band: Spring Concert, (830) 249-8918, visitboerne.org

15

Fredericksburg [15-20] Hill Country Photo Roundup, (505) 577-0437, jdauidsonphotography.com/hcpr

16

Conroe [16-19] ModAero #NextGen Aviation Festival, 1-844-663-2376, modaero.net

18

Killeen [18-19] Shades of Texas Quilt Show, (254) 289-6382, cttquiltguild.org

19

Denison Easter Egg Roll, (903) 465-8908

Lakehills Lakehills United Methodist Church Fish Fry, (830) 751-2404, lakehillsumc.org

Port Arthur Taste of Gumbo & Trade Show, (409) 729-4040, facebook.com/portarthurrrotary

Rockdale [19-20] El Camino Real Trade Days, (512) 639-9004, elcaminorealtradedays.com



March 19
Denison
Easter Egg Roll

West [19-20] West, Central Texas Ceramic Expo & Handcrafted Items, (254) 716-5227, westceramicshow.com

29

Bellville [29-April 2] Hodges Farm Antique Show, (979) 877-5244, facebook.com/hodgesfarmcountryantiques

31

Athens Henderson County Texas Master Gardeners Spring Conference, (903) 675-6130, henderson-co-tx-mg.org

April

2

Lockhart Crawfish Boil or Shrimp Gumbo Lunch, (512) 638-5852

Luling Roughneck BBQ and Chili Cook-Off, (830) 875-3214, discoverluling.com

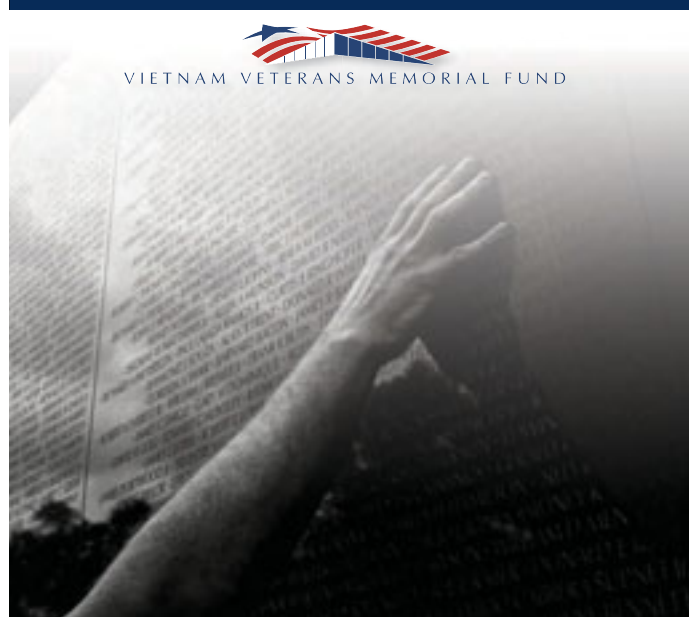
Schulenburg Sausagefest, (979) 743-4514, schulenburgsausagesfest.com

Stonewall LBJ 100 Bicycle Tour, (830) 868-7128, lbj100.bike

Submit Your Event!

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

THE WALL THAT HEALS



The City of Gonzales

The Wall That Heals exhibition features a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. It is approximately 250 feet in length, and like the original Memorial is erected in a chevron-shape. The exterior sides of the trailer that carries *The Wall That Heals* open to become a mobile Education Center. These exhibits tell the story of the Vietnam War, The Wall and the era surrounding the conflict, and are designed to put American experiences in Vietnam in a historical and cultural context.

Bringing The Wall home to communities throughout our country allows the souls enshrined on the Memorial to exist once more among family and friends in the peace and comfort of familiar surroundings. This exhibit is open for 24 hour visitation and is free of charge to the public.

March 23-26, 2016
1100 Block of Saint Lawrence
Gonzales, Texas

For more information call 888-672-1095

<http://www.vvmf.org/twth>

Visit a Sky Island

Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center and Botanical Gardens can captivate explorers

BY E. DAN KLEPPER

THE MODESTA CANYON TRAIL, A FAVORITE walkabout at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center and Botanical Gardens near Fort Davis, crosses a grassland swale where cloud shadows sometimes race red-tailed hawks, briefly shading a sea of sideoats grama and native plants that inhabit this Davis Mountains preserve.

The trail surprises, suddenly dropping into Modesta Canyon, where rock walls, layered like stacked pancakes, expose the geology of the region's volcanic past. Soon, treetops give way to their understory, where songbirds often rest in the branches. Before long, the soft splash of water reveals the true secret of the canyon. Modesta Spring, a shady grotto, offers respite to maidenhair ferns, warblers, finches, foxes, bobcats and the hiker seeking a cool, quiet place to rest.

Modesta offers one path into the heart of the nature center, which is the headquarters of the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute. The 507-acre preserve was established to promote education, appreciation and awareness of the Chihuahuan Desert, the largest desert in North America. The Davis Mountains, as well as much of the Big Bend region, comprise the upper reaches of the Chihuahuan, a biological environment that also encompasses a swath of northern Mexico. Much of the Davis Mountains region, considered a Chihuahuan "sky island," lies between 5,000 and 8,000 feet above sea level and embraces some of the most biologically diverse environments on the planet.

The nature center explains this diversity with interpretive exhibits; a botanical garden featuring more than 100 species of trees, shrubs and perennials; a geologic timeline with 4.5 billion years of rock samples; and almost 200 species of Chihuahuan Desert cacti and succulents in



A hike on the Modesta Canyon Trail can feature maidenhair ferns, warblers, finches, foxes and bobcats.

the greenhouse. A large-screen display at the visitors center can help guests identify birds they have seen. Also inside is an exhibit on the geology of the Davis Mountains, the key to understanding the modern diversity populating the surrounding slopes, peaks and plateaus.

For a visitor, however, often the most enlightening experience may come during a simple walk.

Hikers can then see the geology for themselves with a 1-mile loop hike to Clayton's Overlook. Here, a 360-degree view of the mountains complements a set of plaques with information that corresponds to the geology exhibit at the visitor center.

Then a self-guided, 1-mile stroll leads to the botanical garden, where more than 150 species of native Chihuahuan Desert plants are labeled and grouped to help provide a firsthand understanding of this biome's remarkable plant life.

Next is Cactus Hill, a quarter-mile loop around a rocky outcrop featuring a pollinator garden, water catchment area (perfect for spotting birds) and a scenic overlook. Hikers can continue along the bo-

tanical garden trail before taking a shady breather in the Memorial Grove, a mix of chinquapin oaks and wild roses, then investigate the cactus greenhouse.

Research is also an important part of the nature center's program.

"We actively encourage researchers to utilize our site," says Rick Herrman, the center's director, "and we find the research projects are perfectly complementary to the site as a serene and gorgeous public place for visitors energized by a connection with nature."

The admission fee provides visitors with a chance to explore the Davis Mountains environment and helps fund the center's efforts to bring the special characteristics of the Chihuahuan Desert to the forefront of environmental awareness and conservation. That's a noble outcome for a pleasant desert garden walk.

E. Dan Klepper is a photographer, author and artist who lives in Marathon.

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