

LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EDITION

MAY 2016

Vintage Baseball

“Crazy” Pirate Ben Dollivar

Greens and Grains

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

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Communities benefit
from sustainable farming





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Vintage baseball bats lean against equipment boxes at a game.

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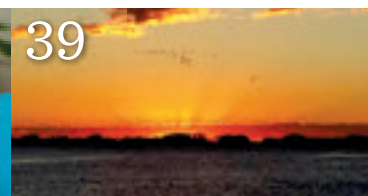
Surf Texas

By Kenny Braun

NEXT MONTH

Lofty Landmarks

Early Texas skyscrapers ascended where small-town hopes and dreams stirred.



BASEBALL: RUSSELL A. GRAVES

ON THE COVER Courtney Swearingen works at Cardo's Farm Project in downtown Denton. Photo by Dave Shafer

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The Keyhole's Bounty

I was fortunate to see landscape architect Deb Tolman, featured in *Keyhole Gardening* [February 2012], build one of the gardens. My son built one for my granddaughter in June 2014. His design uses the same principle with the compost basket—it just lacks the missing pie piece. The whole family has enjoyed the bounty produced in this small garden!

SHARON MURDOCH | TOW
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

My 4-year-old keyhole garden is my favorite garden. I grow broccoli, kale, onions, cilantro, parsley and dill. In the summer, it is an excellent tomato, pepper, onion and cilantro garden—my salsa garden!

I have not had to empty the middle (scrap veggie bin), into which we empty about 3 gallons of waste a week. In the summer, soldier larvae eat all the scrap veggies and turn them into compost quickly.

DONALD BORIACK | LEE COUNTY
BLUEBONNET EC

Chalk It Up to Good Grammar

Having learned grammar at a two-teacher country school, I went on to earn a master's degree in English because we learned through diagramming sentences on the blackboard [*Red Pencils Rule*, *Currents*, March 2016].

I know that we don't *try and* ... just as we don't *attempt and*. The two verbs are each followed by an infinitive, so we *try to*. Neither is anything *for free*. *Free* is an adjective, *for* is a preposition, and a preposition is followed by a noun. We have a *free order*, but we don't order it *for free*.

The Roots of a Trend

In regard to *How Does Your Garden Grow?* [*Currents*, March 2016], we set up our keyhole garden not long after reading the February 2012 article *Keyhole Gardening*.

We used an old water trough that had rusted out on the bottom. The keyhole is made from scraps of deck planking. We layered the cardboard, tree bark and compost as instructed.

We had never been able to raise good carrots in our garden, but in the keyhole we can. In the fall and winter, we also raise more spinach and lettuce than we can eat. So our friends and relatives benefit from the keyhole, too!

SHERMAN AND JOY SCHLICHTING | SEGUIN | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

Editor's note: See more readers' keyhole garden photos (and post your own) on TCP's Facebook and Pinterest pages.

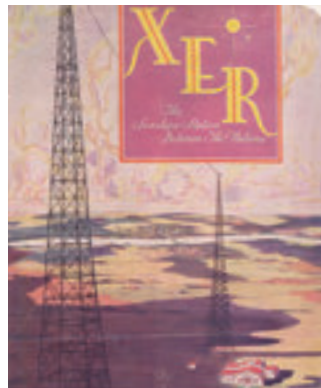


Nor do we ask the *reason why*. Reason means why, and we use *why* only to introduce a subordinate clause.

LORETTA BEDFORD | SAN AUGUSTINE
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

Daylight Saving Time

My wife and I absolutely love daylight saving time [*Springing Forward*, *Letters*, March 2016]. When the time is advanced one hour in the spring, it has no effect on our sleep cycles at all.



I will contact Rep. Dan Flynn of Van and ask him to please give up his quest to eliminate daylight saving time.

ROBERT WEBB | LUBBOCK
SOUTH PLAINS EC

Border Broadcasts

Border Radio [March 2016] sure rang a bell with me! I recall all those pitches—"Send your money to so-and-so, Clint, Texas." Sure brought back memories!

D.A. CROSSLEY JR. | ATHENS, GEORGIA

Not until I read *Border Radio* did I even wonder why we received XERF [from] Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, so strongly at our rural Childress County home during the 1950s. Most nights we heard J. Harold Smith preach at 8 o'clock. Listening to XERF is one of my fondest childhood memories.

LILA HOLMAN HOOBLER | CHILDRESS
SOUTH PLAINS EC

Clothesline Fashion

I love, love, LOVE Celina Easterling's photo of the gorgeous dresses hanging on the clothesline flanked by "the girls" [*Focus on Texas: Patterns*, January 2016].

LOTTIE HOLLAND | MURCHISON
TRINITY VALLEY EC

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Texas Co-op Power

TEXAS CO-OP POWER VOLUME 72, NUMBER 11 (USPS 540-560). Texas Co-op Power is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical Postage Paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. Texas Co-op Power's website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com. **SUBSCRIPTION PRICE** is \$4.08 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Texas Co-op Power (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of Texas Co-op Power showing old address and key numbers. **ADVERTISING:** Advertisers interested in buying display ad space in Texas Co-op Power and/or in our 30 sister publications in other states, contact Martin Bevins at (512) 486-6249. Advertisements in Texas Co-op Power are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication. Product satisfaction and delivery responsibility lie solely with the advertiser.

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HAPPENINGS

Pooches on Parade

DOGS AND THEIR MASTERS put their best paws forward when the Kennel Club of Greater Victoria hosts an **AKC ALL BREED DOG SHOW**.

SIT! Cindy Lane, chair of the 2016 show and a member of Victoria Electric Cooperative, says she expects more than 400 dogs representing more than 100 American Kennel Club-recognized breeds to compete.

STAY! The show is May 14–15 at the Victoria Community Center, and there are motor home hookups on site.

PLAY! In addition to the conformation dog show, the weekend features “Meet the Breed” and reproductive vet specialist presentations.

INFO ▶ (864) 316-6351, facebook.com/kennelclubvictoriatexasdogshow



Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com



SAFETY ALERT

BLAZING SPEED

Modern homes burn in a flash compared to older homes—up to eight times faster—making quick evacuation of a burning house even more critical.

Blame the Building Materials

Most homes today are built with lightweight, manufactured woods and then filled with goods, including furniture, often made of synthetic materials such as polyester and polyurethane, which cause homes to burn faster and hotter, according to research by Underwriters Laboratories. Firefighters say most homes built in at least the past 20 years contain lightweight building materials.

Here's the Proof UL set fires in identical rooms—one filled with modern furniture, the other with older, legacy furniture. After three minutes and 15 seconds, the modern room was fully ignited. The older room didn't become completely engulfed in flames until after almost 30 minutes.

HONORS

You're a Texan, Pilgrim

He hailed from Iowa, but late legendary film star John Wayne was made an honorary Texan in 2015 when state lawmakers declared May 26, “the Duke’s” birthday, **JOHN WAYNE DAY**.

Here are three more Texas tributes to the hero of westerns’ pistol-slinging legacy.

A 13-ton boulder carved to depict Wayne’s grinning likeness adorns the library at Lubbock Christian University in Lubbock.

The John Wayne Room at the Old Spanish Trail Restaurant in Bandera features a wall-to-wall homage to the *True Grit* star.

For four years running, the John Wayne Film Festival in Dallas has raised money for the John Wayne Cancer Foundation.



BY THE NUMBERS

Hey, Grads!

WORKERS who majored in petroleum engineering in college earn a median salary of \$136,000, making it the highest-paying major for U.S. students, according to a salaries list compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

IN FACT, engineers make up most of the top 10 spots. However, nursing majors enjoy the most satisfying careers, research company PayScale reports. But, of course, we'd like you to become lineworkers.



CO-OP PEOPLE

The Pineland Promise

PINELAND DAY revelers really put their money where their mouths are. One generous resident kept his promise to **2015 MISS PINELAND** Klarissa Matlock, who received a \$10,000 surprise with her crown.

Civic Pride Every other year since 1957, groups in Pineland nominate candidates and raise funds for months leading up to the first Saturday in October. The Pineland Day celebration serves as a combination homecoming, display of civic pride and festival of fundraising for community projects. The candidate, male or female, who represents the group that raises the largest amount each year is crowned Pineland royalty.

The Promise Keith Johnson, a Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative member, bought two \$100 raffle tickets, one from Matlock and one from another candidate, for the chance to win \$10,000 cash. He promised both girls that if he won the raffle, he would give the prize money to the one who sold him the winning ticket.

True to His Word Matlock's ticket was drawn, and Johnson, as promised, gave the money to her. "I have known Klarissa since she was a little girl," Johnson says. "I try to help people the best I can. I was certainly lucky that day and was happy to give back to Pineland and Klarissa's education."

Did you know?



PINELAND DAY began in 1957, lapsing only in 2005, when Hurricane Rita forced its cancellation. The event happens in odd-numbered years, alternating with Diboll Day, in even-numbered years in Diboll.

NATURE

A BETTER ROOSTING PLACE


After bald eagles began nesting on Rusk County Electric Cooperative utility poles near Martin Creek Lake in East Texas, the cooperative offered the raptors a safer refuge.

Linemen installed three "perch poles," or poles without wires, where eagles can roost without risk of electrocution or interfering with the electrical system. It didn't take long for the eagles to relocate to the poles the co-op provided.





A NEW CROP OF



A younger generation seeks alternatives to keep family businesses alive

While a sophomore at Texas State University in 2003, Ty Wolosin was treated for thyroid cancer. The weight he gained as a result inspired him to eat a healthier diet. “I started thinking about the source of my food and wondering if I really needed blueberries from Chile in November,” Wolosin says. He decided to try living off the land in Mills County, where his mother and stepfather, James and Janice Wilson, raised goats and cattle.

He took over the family business in 2008, turning the operation into a retail farm and, in 2009, moved to land in Comanche County. He sold vegetables and eggs at farmers markets in Dallas and Austin. Then severe drought forced the family to butcher about half of its goat herd. “We had to figure out what to do with all that meat, which spurred me to learn more about goat as a sustainable source of protein,” Wolosin says.

Windy Hill Farm now sells grass-fed goat meat directly to restaurants, along with eggs laid by chickens raised in pastures and a selection of vegetables fertilized with seaweed and manure.

Wolosin is part of a new breed of young farmers cropping up—pun intended—across Texas. “There has been an explosion in demand from consumers for real, truly local products from real, local farms,” says Evan Driscoll of the Texas Young Farmer Coalition, an organization that helps its members network, exchange ideas and become better at what they do. “That demand has made possible a new model of truly sustainable farming operations.”

In the Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative service area, where agriculture remains a major player, General Manager Rick Haile has noticed changes. “We have a couple of dairies that sell direct and are going back to the natural, organic approach,” he says. “That is a plus for people in the community. It keeps it in the community and helps some of the smaller family farms to survive.”

Ben and Alysha Godfrey have degrees from Texas A&M University, his in agricultural development and hers in scientific nutrition. They started Sand Creek Farm in Cameron because they wanted to raise their children in the country.

“It occurred to me that farmers were pushed too hard to try and make a profit,” Ben Godfrey says. “You have someone you know in almost every area of your life: your doctor, lawn man,

STORY BY MELISSA GASKILL
PHOTOS BY DAVE SHAFER

TEXAS FARMERS



'YOU HAVE SOMEONE YOU KNOW IN ALMOST EVERY AREA OF YOUR LIFE: YOUR DOCTOR, LAWN MAN, MECHANIC. YOU GO TO

mechanic. You go to your accountant twice a year. But you eat three times a day and have no idea where your food comes from. That notion struck us, and we started doing research and realized we had to change what we were doing."

The Godfreys, members of Heart of Texas EC, raise 100 percent grass-fed dairy and beef cows, pastured pork and chickens, and organic vegetables. Nothing is wasted, and everything is connected on the farm. Whey left over from making cheese is fed to the pigs, and the pigs and chickens consume unused milk, unsold vegetables and culls. Rotating the cows among grazing areas concentrates their manure and improves the soil for raising produce. Cover crops add nitrogen to the soil and provide food for the cows.

Most of the Godfreys' products are sold through an approach known as community-supported agriculture, or CSAs, in which individuals pay in advance for a share of whatever is produced. Members or shareholders typically receive a box or bag of produce and other items, usually weekly during the growing season.

Tremendous infrastructure exists for modern agriculture, Ben Godfrey says, but those who want to do something different often feel as if they are swimming upstream. Many of them deal with that challenge by banding together. In early 2015, he started Sustainable Farm Supply, a website offering supplies, such as horse-drawn equipment, for sustainable farms. Wolosin

partners with other farms to meet the demand for goat and lamb.

"Partnering and co-ops have been a utility of farming and ranching forever," Wolosin says. "Look at the cotton and grain industries; they knew it would be cheaper to own the mill together. That's kind of what we're doing with goats. A lot of farmers aren't interested in driving to Austin every week and talking to chefs like I do, so I've become a co-op distributor in a way."

Similarly, Austin-based Vital Farms collects, processes and distributes eggs from about 60 family farms. These farms follow strict standards for how often chickens are rotated on pastureland and the minimum amount of space—108 square feet per bird—needed for the land to recover between rotations. "We help give the farmers what they need to run a sustainable practice that does no harm to any party involved—land, chickens or farmer. In exchange, farmers get a better rate," says Vital Farms' Dan Brooks, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative. "Communities benefit because these are independent businesses. Retail customers benefit from a better selection, and the end consumer gets a more nutritious egg."

Eggs from grass-fed chickens, he says, are higher in vitamins and lower in saturated fats—not to mention tastier. "Some people think it isn't possible to produce food ethically and sustainably," he says. "But the price of a caged egg doesn't include the cost of polluting the land, the suffering of the animal or the indebtedness of the farmer."

That direct line between farmers and consumers is an impor-

Previous spread: The Godfreys, members of Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative, head out as a family to check on the dairy cows at Sand Creek Farm. Above spread, from left: Ty Wolosin of Windy Hill Farm partners with other farms to meet the demand for goat and lamb meat. Ben and Alysha Godfrey check on leafy greens in one of their aquaponic greenhouses. Courtney Swearingen works at Cardo's Farm Project in Denton.



YOUR ACCOUNTANT TWICE A YEAR. BUT YOU EAT THREE TIMES A DAY AND HAVE NO IDEA WHERE YOUR FOOD COMES FROM.

tant part of making the sustainable market work, Driscoll notes. Not only does direct selling yield the highest price per unit, it also builds a customer base through individual relationships. “Selling at farmers markets, starting CSAs and farm stands, and selling direct to restaurants are all great ways for a farm to get established, and for consumers to know where food is coming from and to get the best product for their money,” he says. “The food is way fresher than anything at a conventional store.”

Social media and cellphones make it easier for farmers to connect directly with their customers and also with each other, Driscoll says. That reduces the sense of isolation for those working in rural areas and fosters the exchange of information and ideas.

“We are seeing farmers connecting with and supporting each other in the local and small farming movement,” Driscoll says. “There is power in numbers. We saw that in the 1880s when agricultural cooperatives were a backbone of agriculture. People worked together and pooled supplies and inputs in order to survive.”

The new breed of farm also takes a different approach to labor. Godfrey invites interns in from other parts of the world—South Africa, Bolivia, Canada and Denmark so far—providing them with housing and teaching them to farm.

Wolosin has used World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, an online service matching volunteers and farmers. WWOOF workers developed all his garden beds and chicken coops.

Amanda Austin’s farm relies on interns from the University of North Texas and Texas Woman’s University and a host of volunteers. Austin worked on farms as a college student herself, and that experience led her to start Cardo’s Farm Project in Denton.

Today, the farm sells vegetables, flowers and eggs at farmers markets, through CSAs and wholesale to restaurants. Austin also runs an educational program, school field trips and summer camps.

“Education is the real reason I started the farm,” she says. “I introduce the concepts that farms feed us and provide hands-on experience connecting kids with animals and plants. It is intentional that we are downtown because I’m about accessibility and visibility. The idea is that people drive by who otherwise would never have known about the farm.”

New farmers face significant barriers, perhaps the most formidable in Texas being access to land. “Land prices have gone up, and Texas is losing arable land faster than any state in the country,” Driscoll says. “It’s very difficult for those who don’t already have land.”

Wolosin agrees. “To produce animals requires a decent amount of land, and growing vegetables requires a decent amount of water. You have to get creative about what you’re doing. One way is for older folks who are getting out of farming, but want to keep their land in production, to help the younger generation take over.”

Attracting young farmers to agriculture is vital, regardless of the type of agriculture they practice, says Comanche Electric Cooperative General Manager Alan Lesley. It is not for the weak-hearted, however. “These businesses are capital-intensive and susceptible to many volatile factors. Still, in the right area and with the right marketing, niche farmers can sometimes be very successful.”

Regular contributor **Melissa Gaskill** specializes in science, nature and travel.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com View a slideshow featuring a new breed of young farmers in Texas.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RUSSELL A. GRAVES

A GAME FROM THE PAST



VINTAGE BASEBALL DELIVERS A NEW VIEW OF AMERICA'S PASTIME

THE FIRST BALL hurled my way is a pitch I cannot hit, so I step back and adjust my baggy uniform, then dig my right foot in next to the round home plate. Intermittent showers have made parts of the field sloppy, so the diamond is slick, the ball wet and my teammates' uniforms spattered with red North Texas mud.

I glance back at the catcher. He nods and says, "Good striking, sir."

In all my years of playing baseball and softball, I've never heard that before. Then again, I've never played the sport like we're playing it today: The participants don't wear gloves or protective gear, and someone called a "talleykeeper" rings a bell with each run scored. This is baseball by 1860s rules, and it's definitely a whole other ballgame.



My first experience with vintage-rules baseball was courtesy of the late Wendel Dickason, the primary organizer of the Waxahachie Base Ball Club and a player in the Texas Vintage Base Ball League. The league's mission is to preserve the early form of baseball by encouraging local teams and providing a platform by which players can communicate and organize games.

Across Texas, you'll find teams that play vintage baseball throughout the year. Teams hail from Buffalo Gap, San Angelo, Carrollton, Farmers Branch and the Houston area. In the same



way that historical re-enactors portraying Civil War soldiers or pioneer farmers strive for authenticity, vintage baseball players conduct their games as if they were playing on a pastoral meadow in the mid-19th century. The teams include volunteers and historical enthusiasts who play simply for the love of the sport.

On a soggy Saturday morning, I arrive at Farmers Branch Historical Park to play with a group of local enthusiasts for a small audience. The Farmers Branch club is playing a team from Wichita, Kansas.

The uniforms consist of loose-fitting white shirts with baggy sleeves and simple V-neck collars in which dark scarves are tied in a bow. The loose cap features a scant leather bill. The pants are black knickers with string ties that cinch below the knee and above the calf. Our feet are covered in dark leggings. The only modern attire is a pair of cleats.

As we warm up for the game, I can tell the regulars are zealous.

"Vintage baseball allows me to continue to play the game with some wonderful people, as well as providing a living history of how the sport was once played," says Chris Shipman, an investment analyst who's been playing for four years. "It is so enjoyable to speak with the spectators about how the game was played and how it has evolved over the years and morphing into the game we watch today."

Once the game commences, each player takes on a 19th-century persona, complete with a nickname that usually complements his or her playing style.

You'll hear players called names like Aches and Pains, Spider, Shiny (to connote baldness) or Grasshopper. Danielle Brissette, the museum educator for Farmers Branch Historical Park,

also serves as the de facto manager of the local baseball club. She says that nicknames are part of the fun that endear spectators and players alike to the sport.

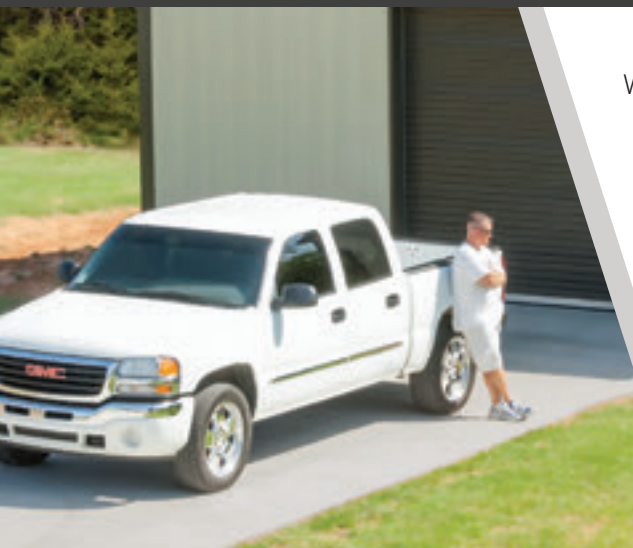
"If you don't come with a nickname, one will be assigned to you pretty quickly," she says. Brissette (or Breezy) says that of all the public activities the museum organizes, these baseball games are among her favorites. With other historical re-enactments such as battles, spectators know who the winner will be. With vintage baseball, the outcome isn't determined

From left, starting with main photo: Vintage baseball rewinds to the 1860s, when the game featured cloth bases, a ball with a cover of four leather pieces stitched together and classic caps. Scorekeeping was based on the honor system. Richard "2P" Tupy sets to field a grounder.

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***THIS IS BASEBALL
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AND IT'S DEFINITELY
A WHOLE OTHER
BALLGAME.***

v

until the very last out of each game.

"The game teaches about the past, but there is also a strong competitive element to it," she says. "When people come to watch, it's not like they're watching re-enactors doing things like baking bread, tending to a garden or other mundane chores. It's an active, spectator-friendly event. Historically, it's something people did together for fun and to build communities, and that makes it enjoyable for us to demonstrate."

That palpable connection to history brought John Henderson, a hospital CEO from Childress, onto the field for the first time. He's a lifelong student of baseball, and vintage games give him a chance to gain a deeper understanding of the sport and how it has influenced American culture.

"I've always had an interest in baseball," says Henderson, seated on the ground awaiting his turn at bat. "The way our national pastime actually led the country through conversations around collective bargaining and racial integration intrigues me."

Henderson, a member of South Plains Electric Cooperative, claims that baseball is one of those sports that inextricably links sons and daughters to parents and grandparents in a way that few sports do, and the chance to experience the game as it was played in its infancy was one he couldn't pass up. "The experience," he says, "is unforgettable."

Before he finishes his thought, Henderson gets up abruptly, as it is his turn to bat. "Striker to the line!" calls the umpire.

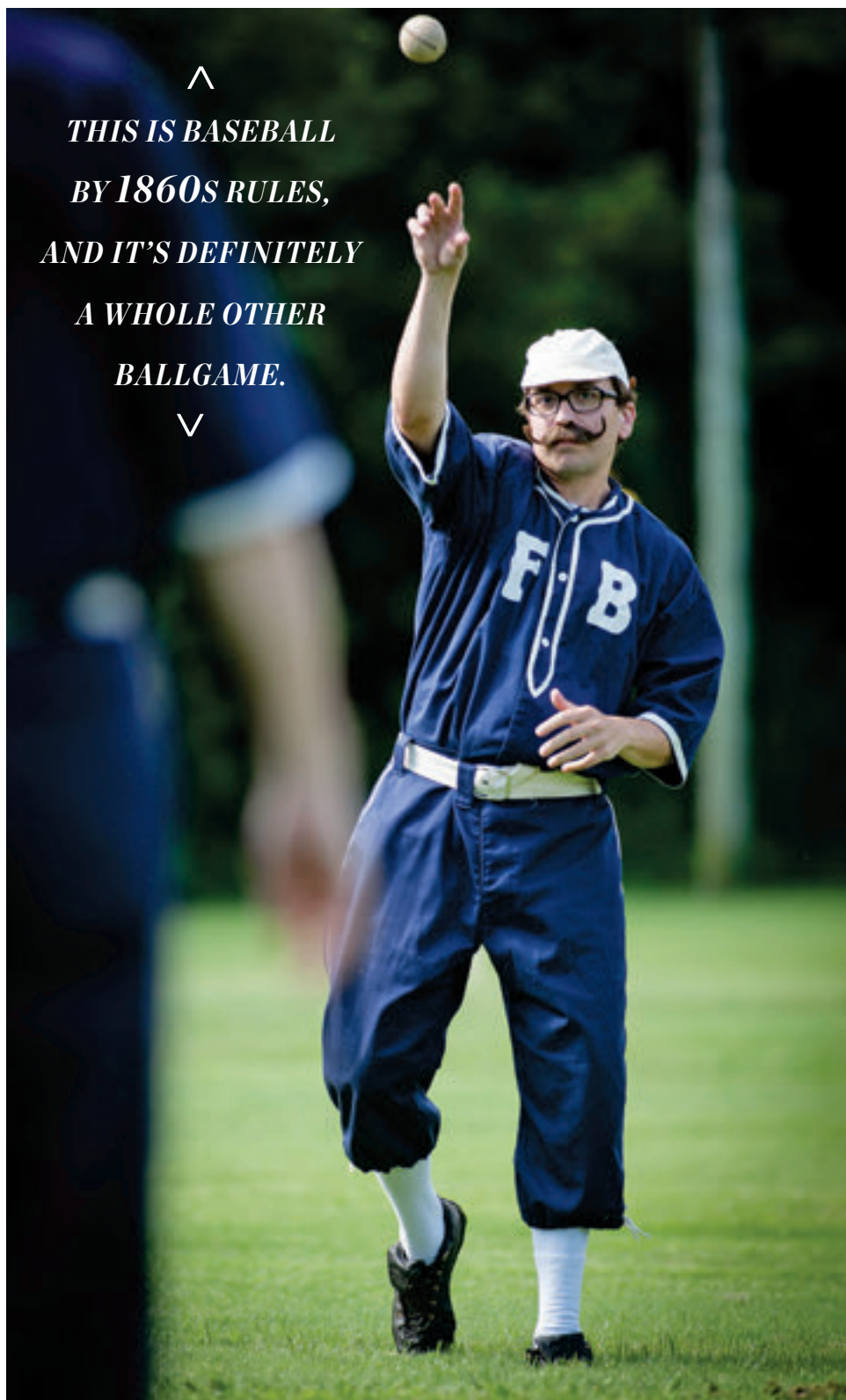
Stepping to the plate, Henderson is offered well wishes by the catcher, and the hurler lobs the ball toward him. He swings and hits a swift "bug bruiser" between first and second base. As he legs it out to first, the crowd and his teammates are pleased.

"Huzzah!" I hear a teammate cheer. While I don't have my vin-

tage baseball dictionary with me, I think that is a term of acclaim.

Writer and photographer Russell "Gravedigger" Graves is a member of South Plains EC.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com Learn more about how vintage baseball differs from the game played today, check out the lingo from the 1860s and view a slideshow online.



Pitcher Grant "Aches and Pains" Smith warms up before a game at Farmers Branch Historical Park.



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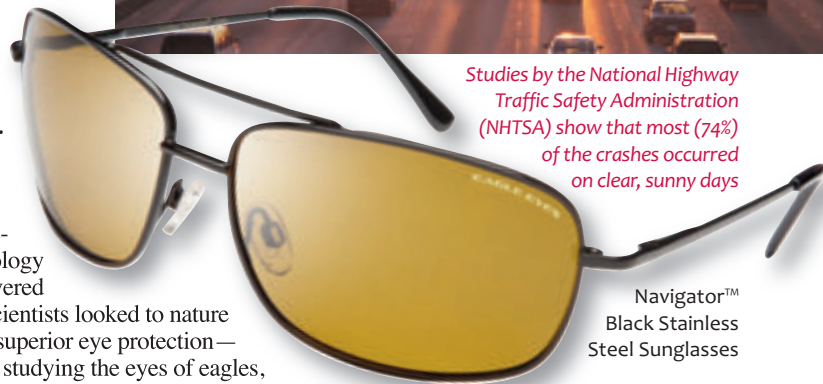
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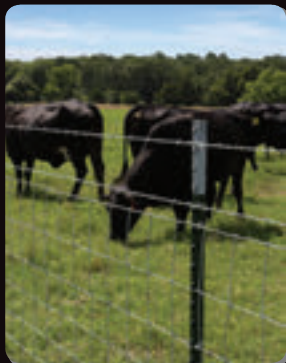


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Avoid Shams and Scams

Being cynical about that amazing offer can save you money



Beware of scammers claiming to represent your electric co-op.

WHEN IT COMES TO SAVING ENERGY, the slogan “caveat emptor” (buyer beware) is alive and well. We are all bombarded by claims that border on outright falsehoods from third parties claiming massive savings if you buy their products. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.

Here are some products and practices that should raise red flags for you:

“Black boxes” claim to clean up power, protect appliances and reduce energy use. Claims are that these improve power quality, smooth out power fluctuations and store energy so you can reduce your bills. They often require an electrician to install.

Save your money. The gains these devices represent are valid goals, but the technologies they employ are already in use by your electric cooperative—and they require utility-sized equipment to deliver them. Something that can fit in a shoebox is not going to provide any value, at least not in the areas promised. If you are concerned about protecting your sensitive appliances and electronics, talk to your co-op’s member services department about surge protection.

When you see an ad that reads, “The power companies don’t want you to know,” skip it. It’s not that we don’t want you to know; we just don’t want you to waste your time and money.

These are generally claims around building your own

renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store or a motor that produces limitless free electricity.

You can equate these offers with emails from foreign countries saying you can receive millions of dollars by simply surrendering all your banking information. At least in the case of the limitless motor, you get some cool plans and parts lists—just not the promised results.

There is a product that claims it will replace basement dehumidifiers and save tons of money. It basically is a fan system that vents all the basement air outside. If you have a basement (something of a rarity in much of Texas), this may seem like an attractive option.

The Cooperative Research Network (an arm of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) was asked a few years ago whether this product delivered on its savings claims.

Researchers said, “No.” The problem is that when all the basement air is blown outside, it is replaced with conditioned air from other parts of the house, forcing the home’s HVAC system to work harder and dramatically reducing the promised savings.

Yes, dehumidifiers can be expensive to run and are a nuisance when the water must be emptied. Here’s one solution: Set the basement dehumidifier to 60 percent and run a hose to the floor drain. This resolves the water-emptying hassle and reduces the power use while keeping the basement acceptably dry.

Finally, a different kind of warning: Scammers love to call or stop by, claiming they represent the local power company. Never give personal or financial information to anyone who claims to be an employee from your co-op without confirming their identity. Ask the caller for a callback number, then check with your co-op. Ask the door-to-door person for valid co-op ID credentials. If the person really is a co-op employee, they’ll be able to prove it.

Most of us want to save energy and keep our bills manageable. Technology can help do this, but caution is called for. Call your co-op before making any investments in technology that seem too good to be true. You’ll be glad you did.



Using a combination of fan and air conditioner during the summer months saves money on bills.

Make the Most of Ceiling Fans

By turning on the fan, you can turn up the savings

IF YOU ARE LIKE MOST AMERICANS, you have at least one ceiling fan in your home. Ceiling fans help our indoor environment feel more comfortable. They are a decorative addition to our homes and, if used properly, can help lower energy costs. Follow these tips to make the most of your ceiling fans.

Flip the switch. Most ceiling fans have a switch near the blades. In warm months, flip the switch so that the blades operate in a counterclockwise direction, effectively producing a “wind chill” effect. This pushes air down into the room, making it feel cooler than it actually is.

In winter, move the switch so that the fan blades rotate clockwise, creating a gentle updraft. This circulates warm air from the ceiling out toward the walls and down into occupied areas of the room. Regardless of the season, try operating the fan on its lowest setting.

Adjust your thermostat. In the summer, when using a fan in conjunction with an air conditioner—or instead of it—you can turn your thermostat up 3–5 degrees without any reduction in comfort. This saves money because a fan is less costly to run than an air conditioner. In the winter, lower your thermostat’s setting by the same amount. When it’s cold out, ceiling fans push the warm, conditioned air that has risen to the ceiling back down toward the living space, which means the furnace won’t need to turn on as frequently.

Choose the right size. Make sure your ceiling fan is the right size for the room. A fan that is 36–44 inches in diameter will cool rooms up to 225 square feet. A fan that is 52 inches or more should be used to cool a larger space.

Turn it off. When the room is unoccupied, turn the fan off. Fans are intended to cool people, not rooms.

Clean Up Your Cords

IF YOU PULLED YOUR DESK or TV cabinet out from the wall, you’d probably find a tangle of cords, cables and plugs.

That tangle isn’t good for your electronics.

Besides creating a tripping hazard, a mess of electrical cords could lead to a fire if they’re all plugged into the same overloaded power strip.

Here’s how to untangle—for safety’s sake:

Unplug everything—your computer, scanner, phone charger, TV, speakers and printer. In the process, you might find cords that are no longer attached to anything. Weed out those unneeded cords.

Remove all extension cords. They are not designed for permanent use.

Dust the remaining cords. Vacuum the floor and wipe down the wall around the outlet.

Never plug more than one power strip into a single outlet. Multiple strips can overload a circuit and tax your electrical supply. If you don’t have enough outlets, call a licensed electrician to add some.

Invest in inexpensive cable ties. Bunch the remaining cords together and wrap the tie around the bundle to keep them neatly together.

Drill a hole into the back of your computer table or TV cabinet that is big enough for all of the cords to pass through. That will keep them together and off the floor.

Use inexpensive cable ties to organize electric cords.



Building Blanco Back

Community rallied after the Blanco River violently breached its banks one year ago

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

THE EVERYDAY RHYTHM OF LIFE SWERVED then halted when historic floods slammed the Texas Hill Country in late May 2015. Along the Blanco and San Marcos rivers, catastrophic flooding killed 14 people and destroyed property in Blanco, San Marcos and Wimberley. Heavy rains also affected Bastrop, Caldwell, Travis and Williamson counties.

In Blanco, the rains started after midday on Saturday, May 23. It was Memorial Day weekend. Before dark, the Blanco River—by nature calm and slow-moving in its eastward course through town—raged high beyond its banks, surging into houses and demolishing nearly everything in its path.

By 9 p.m., the Red Cross opened an emergency shelter at the Gem of the Hills Community Center north of town. Volunteers provided cots and meals for residents evacuated from their homes and travelers unable to navigate flooded roads. The National Guard rescued stranded visitors from a riverside campground, and at Blanco State Park, Superintendent Ethan Belicek directed five dozen campers to higher ground and safety at his family's residence.

"Pray for Blanco," one resident posted on Facebook late that night.

The next morning, daylight revealed the flood's heartbreaking devastation: trees and other vegetation mowed over by the muddy Blanco River, which was still running high but no longer at flood stage. Washed-out windows on homes and buildings overlooking the river hinted at the terror of the night before. Days passed before reports confirmed damaged homes outside of town.

East of town, massive pieces of the concrete bridge on Ranch Road 165 lay in the river. Debris atop another river crossing in town blocked traffic. Miraculously, the city's major river bridge on U.S. 281/Main Street remained intact and never closed.

At City Hall, Mayor Bruce Peele (in office just shy of two weeks) met with staff. A block from downtown, first responders with their heavy equipment established headquarters at the Blanco Volunteer Fire Department. Down the street, volunteers at the Blanco Good Samaritan Center, a food pantry and nonprofit thrift store, gave out food and clothing to the first of many flood victims. Volunteers at Gem of the Hills organized shifts to cook and feed first responders and stranded survivors. Donations of clothing, bottled water, cleaning supplies and food poured into the city.

"After church that Sunday morning, my wife and I went home to start cleaning up our own property," says Blanco resident David Park, whose home was not damaged. "At that point, I didn't fully realize the gravity of what had happened."

Residents including Park paused their personal lives and banded together to operate the Blanco Flood Relief Center. Bolstered by city and county officials, a core of volunteer leaders, including military retirees, drew up an action plan. They identified tasks such as construction, data entry, coordination of volunteers and allocation of funds, and they appointed task directors.

"One of the first things we had to do was mud out homes," says Park, who agreed to serve as relief center director. "It was grim. The houses were health hazards."



Meanwhile, the Blanco County Disaster Relief Fund collected donations amounting to more than \$228,000. All told, the account funded projects on more than 150 properties. More than 500 local and regional volunteers restored nearly 60 homes, not to mention mending damaged fences and roads and removing debris. Church-affiliated groups from across the state (and as far away as Germany) sent workers.

Local cooperatives also contributed to Blanco's relief efforts. The floods affected every district in Pedernales Electric Cooperative's 8,100-square-mile territory, including some of the worst-damaged areas along the Blanco River. PEC crews and contractors worked around the clock to clear debris, replace downed utility poles and restore power. In one case, they attained a property owner's permission to clear and reinforce a road on his land so crews and residents could access an area cut off by flooding. By May 25, PEC had restored power to 508 members in Blanco;

remaining outages were restored by the early morning of May 28.

"Throughout the disaster and after, our employees reached out to support those affected," says Jeanette Horn, PEC's communications editor. "The bulldozers that PEC contracted were used to pull several vehicles from the mud, and employees handed out bottled water. As the cleanup began, staff volunteered to help and also took up collections of money, food and household items for flood victims."

Likewise, employees with GVTC Communications (formerly Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative) collected cleaning supplies for distribution to flood victims. Free of charge, the cooperative also provided the Blanco Flood Relief Center with two dedicated telephone lines, as well as a high-speed Internet connection.

By mid-September, volunteers had completed much of the rebuilding in Blanco, and most displaced residents were back in their homes. On October 9, the

Blanco Flood Relief Center officially closed and transferred relief support to the Blanco River Regional Recovery Team, a nonprofit organization established to meet the long-term recovery needs of flood victims in Blanco, Caldwell, Guadalupe and Hays counties.

Debie and Bill Knight, who live along the Blanco River in Blanco, worked with the relief center team to rebuild their destroyed home. "We are sleeping in our house tonight for the first time since the flood," Debie Knight posted on Facebook on September 12. "We are so blessed to live in this caring community."

Nearly one year later, the mayor is still amazed by how the Blanco community came together to rebuild. "If we hadn't had the outpouring of help, then we'd still be stuck in the mire," Peele says. "A disaster always seems to bring out the best in people."

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Blanco.

Surf Texas

Photographer gives this ocean-going sport a Texas twist

.....
EXCERPTED TEXT AND PHOTO BY KENNY BRAUN

I GREW UP IN HOUSTON, ABOUT FIFTY miles from the Gulf Coast. My earliest memories of the beach were of family outings and fishing trips to Rockport with my aunt and uncle. I've always loved being on the Texas coast. But when I discovered surfing, that love turned into an obsession.

No one would confuse the surf in Texas with some famous break on the Pacific Ocean, but that doesn't matter. Texas surfers are as maniacally devoted to the sport as surfers are all over the planet. My friends and I weren't proud; we would surf on anything rideable. We'd drive down to the beach with \$30 in our pockets and stay for a week, sleeping in tents and eating sandy sandwiches.

We started riding waves in the mid-seventies, which put us in the second generation of Texas surfers. The first generation consisted of the pioneers from the sixties who discovered surfing in California, wondered whether it could be done in Texas, and brought back boards to give it a try. Texas is not widely known for its great surf but, as that first generation discovered, if you know when to look, and if you look hard and patiently enough, it's there. There are, after all, over 600 miles of coastline, and the Gulf of Mexico reliably produces lots of wind and waves via low pressure systems, northers, storms, and hurricanes.

When I moved to Austin in the mid-eighties and no longer had close access to saltwater, my opportunities for surfing naturally diminished, but my obsession never quite disappeared. I started work on this book twelve years later, in part so that I could reconnect and try to under-



stand what it was about surfing and the Gulf Coast that had made such a deep and permanent impression upon me.

I think of myself less as a surf photographer than as a photographer who loves to surf. The essence of surfing, like most sports, is ultimately impossible to photograph or write about. Dreams and memories inform much of the work here. The photographs, I hope, chronicle both Texas's surfing past and its present. At the beach nothing ever changes and nothing is ever the same. The same is true of surfing. Board designs and fashions may change, but the urge to ride a wave, the search for that next perfect swell, is a timeless human preoccupation.

I think about time as I watch the waves growing into the same forms that were seen by our ancient ancestors. As I watch



Yes, in the Gulf of Mexico surfers ride the wakes of tankers. When the ocean itself won't supply a wave, you have to have the nerve and ingenuity to search out other things that will. That's the way it is in Texas, and that's what Kenny Braun has focused his camera upon with such quietly spectacular effect.

—STEPHEN HARRIGAN

my kids play in the surf, I remember seeing the Gulf for the first time. I remember countless hours spent with friends and family. Time spent at the beach is a return to the source—an intimate and immediate connection with the natural world. You're riding a wave and you look around at the fish and dolphins that are riding it, too—and somehow it just makes sense. Surfing has become commercialized, trivialized, and mythologized, but its primal appeal is pure. In these photographs, I hope I have managed to portray some of that enduring fascination, as well as the singular and sometimes unexpected beauty of the Texas coast.

Kenny Braun is an Austin photographer. Text and photo excerpted from *Surf Texas* (University of Texas Press, 2014).

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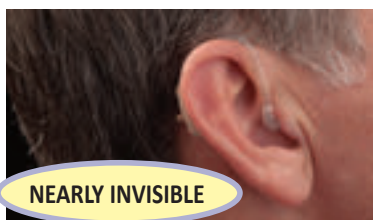
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Loose Saggy Neck Skin – Can Any Cream Cure Turkey Neck?

DEAR DORRIS: I'm a woman who is 64 years young who suffers from really loose skin under my chin and on my lower neck.



I hate the term, but my grandkids say I have “turkey neck” and frankly, I’ve had enough of it! I have tried some creams designed to help tighten and firm that loose, saggy skin, but they did not work. Is there any cream out there that Might help my loose neck skin?

Turkey Neck, Denton, TX

DEAR TURKEY-NECK: In fact, there is a very potent cream on the market that is designed to firm, tighten and invigorate skin cells on the neck area. It is called the **Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream**.

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These apple stem cells target your skin’s aging cells, and strive to bring back their youthful firmness, and elasticity. As an alternative to the scary surgeries or face lifts that many people resort to, this cream has the potential to deliver a big punch to the loose saggy skin of the neck. **The Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream is available online at Dermagist.com** or you can order or learn more by calling toll-free, **888-771-5355**. Oh, I almost forgot... I was given a promo code when I placed my order that gave me 10% off. The code was “TXN21”. It’s worth a try to see if it still works.

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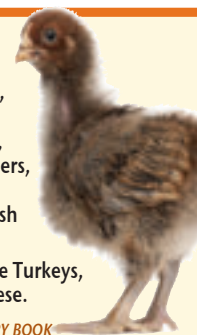
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Ben Dollivar and Lafitte's Gold

A crazy pirate legend with a nugget of truth

BY MARTHA DEERING

IN THE 1850S, “CRAZY” BEN DOLLIVAR staggered from one Galveston waterfront bar to the next, trailing grog fumes and fueling rumors that the old pirate had found one of former employer Jean Lafitte’s buried treasures, believed to dot the dunes around Galveston.

Although he hadn’t worked since he gave up the seafaring life 20 years before, Dollivar paid for copious amounts of ale with gold doubloons. He seemed unconcerned that each Spanish coin was worth 12 silver dollars, and it was an uncommon bartender who gave him correct change—and then only if others witnessed the transaction.

Dollivar rarely spoke of his years privateering (pirates preferred this term) with Lafitte. He had served as a soldier in the Battle of New Orleans with the Lafitte brothers, whose detailed knowledge of the labyrinthine waterways around New Orleans helped Gen. Andrew Jackson’s troops claim an overwhelming victory against the British during the War of 1812. Afterward, Dollivar sailed with Jim Campbell, Jean Lafitte’s favorite sea captain, and shared gunnery duties on a 6-pound brass cannon.

An orphan, Dollivar was born in Georgia in the 1780s and raised on a cotton plantation by an uncle who alternately flogged him and read the Bible aloud. As a teenager, he ran away to sea, eventually joining forces with Lafitte, who had taken up residence in Galveston in 1817.

Dollivar was a small, weather-beaten man whose skull had been dented by a stroke from a saber and whose mahogany face sported a 6-inch scar and a multitude of wrinkles. He muttered to himself and occasionally raved incoherently. The *New Orleans Delta* added more color to his description in July 1867: “His nose was sharp and crooked enough to have served for a boat hook in an emergency, and his mouth, cheeks and throat were covered



with a thick, dark beard. His little gray eyes twinkled in their sockets with a semi-piratical ferocity.”

During the coldest winter weather, Dollivar would put on a shirt, although he rarely wore one otherwise and was never seen wearing a coat. Galveston’s residents claimed he walked to town barefooted in all weather, and he held up his threadbare britches with a length of sail rope. He was known to swim in Galveston Bay during the bitterest of northers.

Historian W.T. Block Jr. writes that when questioned about his doubloons, Dollivar gave this answer: “Ah gits ’em from a big sea chest down in the Hotspur’s bilge.” The Hotspur, one of Lafitte’s schooners, had run aground and broken up on a Louisiana River in 1820. Many looked for Dollivar’s sea chest, but none found it.

Dollivar didn’t waste his treasure on amenities. He lived in a 10-by-10-foot shack on Galveston beach. Covered by an old sail, the hovel was open to the north and south, admitting the summer breeze and the winter wind. When Dollivar ran low on gold coins, he launched an old whaleboat into Galveston Bay and dis-

appeared for a few days.

A few of Dollivar’s cronies took care of him in his old age. Campbell had returned to the Galveston area and became a successful farmer. He sometimes treated Dollivar to a hot meal and took him home at night.

One day in July 1858, a graceful pearl-gray yacht sailed into Galveston Bay. It was piloted by a young man who claimed to be Lafitte’s nephew. The crew was searching for Dollivar. After a private discussion with Dollivar, Lafitte’s nephew rented a small sloop and sailed out of the harbor with Dollivar at the helm.

There are two versions of the end of Crazy Ben Dollivar. In one, his body was found at the mouth of Clear Creek a few days later with his throat slashed. In the other, he returned with the crew of the yacht and two rusty sea chests, then sailed away never to return.

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

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Greens and Grains

THIS FRAGRANT TANGLE OF NOODLES HAS become a weeknight staple at our house—partially because the recipe is so flexible. I like to use deep green lacinato kale because the long, slender leaves have a particularly sweet flavor, but you can use any variety available at the market. You also can use any variety of nut or pasta that you like, although the nutty flavor of whole-grain noodles pairs particularly well with the garlicky green pesto. Topped with a generous grating of Parmesan, the result is so rich and satisfying that there's really no need to tell anyone it's good for them; they'll just think it's delicious.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Whole-Wheat Pasta With Kale-Ricotta Pesto

- 1 bunch kale
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons walnuts, pecans or pine nuts, lightly toasted, divided use
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, plus more for serving
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for serving
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil
- 1 pound whole-wheat spaghetti (or any other noodle)

Freshly ground black pepper

1. Rinse kale and trim away any thick stems, and slice the leaves into 1- to 2-inch pieces. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, plunge the kale into boiling water; immediately drain and plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process and retain color. Drain kale in a colander then use your hands to squeeze out as much moisture as possible. Spread kale on a clean dish towel or paper towel to continue drying while you prepare the pesto.
2. Place $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nuts, garlic, salt and red pepper flakes in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until you have a coarse, pebbly mixture. Add the kale, ricotta and Parmesan, and process until combined. With machine running, drizzle in the olive oil through the feed tube until the mixture is smooth.
3. Cook the spaghetti according to package directions, until it's al dente. Just before draining, reserve 1 cup of the cooking water. Place

Recipes

Greens and Grains

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

GAIL PATTERSON | COOKE COUNTY EC

We should all be eating more leafy greens, such as kale, collards, spinach, Swiss chard, and mustard and turnip greens, as well as more varied grains, like quinoa, rice, oats and barley, according to countless health and wellness reports. Greens are nutrient-dense and rich in calcium and vitamins A and C, and grains provide fiber and plant-based protein. The following readers' recipes provide fresh inspiration to use both in new and delicious ways.

Red Chile Quinoa, Kale and Calabacita Enchiladas

This hearty and flavorful quinoa-kale mixture makes more than you'll need for enchiladas, but you'll appreciate the leftovers—for tacos, veggie lasagna, or as a vegan side dish or main course.

- 2 cups quinoa
- 5 cups vegetable stock, divided use
- 4–6 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 pounds diced calabacita squash or zucchini
- 3 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 pounds baby kale mix or stemmed regular kale
- Vegetable oil, as needed
- 16 corn tortillas
- 8 cups red chile enchilada sauce, divided use
- 1 pound shredded colby jack cheese, divided use

1. Rinse and cook the quinoa according to package directions, using 4 cups of

vegetable stock in place of the water, and set aside to cool slightly when done.

2. Heat 4 tablespoons olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring, until translucent, 7–10 minutes. Add the squash and garlic and continue cooking until the squash softens, about 10 minutes.

3. Add the remaining olive oil, if needed, and half the kale to the skillet and cook, stirring, until wilted. Add the remaining kale and continue to cook until wilted. Gently fold the cooked quinoa into the vegetable mixture. Add the reserved broth only if the mixture seems too dry. Set aside to cool.

4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

5. Heat a thin layer of vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the oil is hot, drag tortillas through the oil to soften them up, and stack on one end of a rimmed baking sheet.

6. Pour a puddle of enchilada sauce next to the tortillas. Dip both sides of a tortilla in sauce. Fill tortilla with about 1/4 cup kale-quinoa mixture and about a tablespoon of cheese. Roll tortilla into a snug cylinder.

7. Pour a thin layer of enchilada sauce into a 9-by-13-inch baking pan and swirl to evenly coat the bottom. Place enchilada seam-side-down in prepared pan and repeat with remaining tortillas.

8. Pour the remaining sauce over the prepared enchiladas and cover with the remaining cheese. Bake 30–45 minutes, until hot and bubbly. Makes 8–10 servings.

COOK'S TIP Calabacita is a Mexican squash typically sold alongside tomatillos and poblano peppers. Feel free to use zucchini or a mix of zucchini and yellow crookneck squash instead.

hot noodles and pesto in a large bowl and toss to combine. Add the pasta cooking water tablespoon by tablespoon as needed to loosen the mixture and evenly coat the noodles. Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

4. Serve immediately in large, shallow bowls, topped with a scattering of toasted nuts and plenty of grated Parmesan. Serves 4–6.

Quinoa, Kale and Blood Orange Salad With Citrus Dressing

ANITA PORTERFIELD | BANDERA EC

DRESSING

- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
 - 1/4 cup high-quality vinegar, such as Champagne or sherry vinegar
 - 2 tablespoons blood orange juice (or orange juice)
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

SALAD

- 1 cup red quinoa
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1/4 cup chopped onion
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 2 cups vegetable broth or water
 - 1 large bunch kale
 - 1 medium blood orange (or orange or tangerine)
 - 1/2 cup grated carrots
 - 1 tablespoon minced red onion
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds (pepitas)

1. **DRESSING:** Combine all ingredients in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake vigorously 30 seconds, until well combined. (Alternatively, whisk together the ingredients in a mixing bowl.) Set aside while you make the salad.

2. **SALAD:** Rinse the quinoa. Heat the olive oil in a 2-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the onions and salt, and sauté until the onions are wilted, about 4–5 minutes. Add the quinoa and stir.

3. Add the broth or water, bring the mixture to a boil, cover saucepan, reduce heat to a simmer and cook 20 minutes, or until quinoa is fluffy and tender and the liquid has been absorbed.

\$100 Recipe Contest

In **October**, *Texas Co-op Power* will showcase staff picks instead of a recipe contest. Watch for favorite dishes from our kitchens.



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November's recipe contest topic is **Make-Ahead Holiday Helpers**. What prepared dishes come to your rescue during the holiday crunch? The deadline is **June 10**.

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

4. While quinoa is cooking, trim any thick stems from the kale. Stack the leaves, roll them into a cylinder and thinly slice (a process known as “chiffonade”). Peel the orange, separate into segments and slice each segment in half.

5. Pour quinoa into a large salad bowl and add the kale and half of the dressing. Add the orange slices, carrots, red onion and remaining dressing to the bowl, and use a spatula to combine. Adjust seasonings as desired. Top with black pepper and pumpkin seeds. Serve immediately or refrigerate until well chilled. Serves 4–6.

COOK’S TIP When the quinoa is cooked, you can remove the pan from heat and allow it to rest, covered, an additional 5 minutes. You might not need to drain the grains after this step, but if necessary, transfer the quinoa to a colander to drain and rest 5 minutes.

Sesame Noodles With Broccoli

JUDY GUSTAFERRO | PEDERNALES EC

These spicy noodles are great for picnics,

potlucks or light spring suppers. Gustaferra recommends refrigerating them overnight and serving as a cold salad, but they can also be served warm, just after tossing, or at room temperature. Feel free to adjust the spice level by adding more or less chili oil as desired.

- 1 head broccoli
- ½ pound pasta, such as linguine or spaghetti
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- ¼ cup peanut butter, smooth or chunky
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon pure sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon chili oil
- ½ cup cashews or other nuts, chopped
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced
- Toasted sesame seeds, for garnish

1. Bring two large pots of salted water to a boil. Trim the florets and leaves from the broccoli and blanch them in one pot about 2 minutes until they’re bright green; drain and shock in ice water. Set

aside to continue draining.

2. Add pasta to the second boiling pot and cook according to package directions, until al dente. Drain and rinse briefly to remove starch.

3. Combine ginger, garlic, peanut butter, soy sauce, rice wine vinegar, sesame oil and chili oil in the bowl of a food processor and blend until smooth.

4. Combine broccoli, pasta and sauce in a large bowl and toss until the noodles are evenly coated.

5. Serve immediately or refrigerate overnight, if serving cold. Garnish with the chopped nuts, scallions and toasted sesame seeds just before serving. Makes about 4 servings.

COOK’S TIP Reserve ½ cup of pasta cooking water and add as needed to thin the sauce and evenly coat the noodles. Feel free to use low-sodium soy sauce, if desired.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com

Leaf through more Greens and Grains recipes from this month online.



\$3,000 GRAND PRIZEWINNER | 2015 HOLIDAY RECIPE CONTEST
Pecan Pie Cake with Cinnamon Whipped Cream Frosting
Jamie Parchman | Magic Valley EC
 Get the recipe at TexasCoopPower.com

12TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY RECIPE CONTEST

Send us your best original recipe!

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\$3,000 GRAND PRIZEWINNER

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

Show us how you add your personal touch to every part of a meal—from savory beginnings to sweet endings—for fun and festive holiday gatherings.

Send us your best ORIGINAL holiday recipes. (These are recipes you develop, not ones copied from a friend or found in a book or magazine.) Show us how you create a Savory Dish or a Sweet Dish that’s perfect for friends and family during the holiday season. Winners will be featured in our December 2016 issue. Enter by July 10 at TexasCoopPower.com.

Go to TexasCoopPower.com for details and official rules.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com. Each entry MUST include your name, address and phone number, plus the name of your Texas electric cooperative, or it will be disqualified. Specify which category you are entering, Sweet or Savory, on each recipe. Mail entries to: Texas Co-op Power/Holiday Recipe Contest, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You can also fax entries to (512) 763-3401. Up to three total entries are allowed per co-op membership. Each should be submitted on a separate piece of paper if mailed or faxed. Mailed entries all can be sent in one envelope. No email entries will be accepted. For official rules, visit TexasCoopPower.com. Entry deadline: July 10, 2016.



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55-59	\$14.20	\$11.95	\$23.00	\$19.25	\$45.00	\$37.50	\$111.00	\$92.25
60-64	\$17.20	\$13.30	\$28.00	\$21.50	\$55.00	\$42.00	\$136.00	\$103.50
65-69	\$20.50	\$16.00	\$33.50	\$26.00	\$66.00	\$51.00	\$163.50	\$126.00
70-74	\$27.40	\$21.40	\$45.00	\$35.00	\$89.00	\$69.00	\$221.00	\$171.00
75-79	\$37.00	\$30.10	\$61.00	\$49.50	\$121.00	\$98.00	\$301.00	\$243.50
80-85	\$50.50	\$42.55	\$83.50	\$70.25	\$166.00	\$139.50	\$413.50	\$347.25

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Home Sweet Home

"Country roads, take me home to the place I belong." — John Denver

HOME CAN BE A PLACE, a moment in time or even a loved one. It is where the heart is, where seldom is heard a discouraging word and where you hang your hat.

GRACE ARSIAGA

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com There's no place like TexasCoopPower.com for more Home Sweet Home pictures.



▲ **MICHAEL ALEXANDER**, Bryan Texas Utilities: An idle mailbox gets used for a special delivery.

▼ **CATHERINE BROCATO**, Pedernales EC: "We discovered this little friend in my son's sporting equipment. ... It was several months before my son could use his baseball gear again."



▲ **RICKY NIELL**, Trinity Valley EC: Daisy the Longhorn greets the sunrise on Niell's farm near Wills Point.

◀ **JAN TAYLOR**, Jackson EC: Getting to see a sunrise over Lake Texana is one reason Taylor and her husband treasure their rural home sweet home.



► **MICHAEL MITCHELL**, J-A-C EC: Prairie dogs gather at their home/hole at Lake Arrowhead State Park in Wichita Falls.



UPCOMING CONTESTS

SEPTEMBER	GONE FISHIN'	DUE MAY 10
OCTOBER	CREEPY CRAWLIES	DUE JUNE 10
NOVEMBER	FIESTA!	DUE JULY 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 Dancin' & BBQ'n on the Bricks

Kerens [May 20-21]

(903) 519-0690

When folks in Kerens tell you to hit the bricks, it's an invitation to dance the night away on the brick-lined main street. The event includes a barbecue cook-off. Kerens is the birthplace of Big Tex. He left his bootprints on South Colket Avenue.

May

7

Boerne VFD Annual Fish Fry and Auction, (830) 358-8828, visitboerne.org/calendar

Cibolo Bowling Club Annual Supper, (210) 658-2248, facebook.com/cibolobowlingclub

La Grange St. Mark's Foundation Sporting Clay Shoot, (979) 966-3485, smmctxfoundation.org

San Antonio Hannibal Pianta Art Walk II, (210) 325-3523, ava.org

Streetman Old-Fashioned Country Fair, (903) 389-7586, lakesideumcfamily.org

Fayetteville [7-8] ArtWalk, (979) 378-2113, artsforruraltexas.org

Sulphur Springs [7-8] The Bright Lights of Broadway, (903) 885-8300, netchoral.org

11

Mineral Wells [11-14] PRCA/WRPA Pro Rodeo, (940) 325-2557, visitmineralwells.org

13

Lewisville Keeping Tradition Alive Jam Session, (972) 219-3401, cityoflewisville.com

Edinburg [13-15] Fiesta de Mayo, (956) 383-6246, edinburgarts.com

14

Columbus Magnolia Festival, (979) 732-8385, columbus-texas.org



May 7
Cibolo
Bowling Club
Annual Supper

BBO: ALEXEY & SVETLANA NOVIKOV | DOLLAR PHOTO CLUB. BOWLING: LEV DOLGACHOV | DOLLAR PHOTO CLUB. TOMATOES: NAKORNCHAIYAJINA | DOLLAR PHOTO CLUB

29TH ANNUAL Folklife Festival MAY • 13 • 14 • 15

The Sam Houston Memorial Museum's 15 acre grounds become a bustling frontier settlement where the whole family can enjoy historical reenactments, listen to live music, shop for crafts and food, or simply stroll the same grounds where Sam and Margaret Houston lived and where their children played.

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Corsicana Airsho, (903) 257-8282,
coyotesquadron.org

Jacksonville Catfish Row, (903) 586-0141,
facebook.com/catfishrowjville

New Braunfels Herb Fiesta & Salsa Competition, (830) 629-2943,
newbraunfelsconservation.org

Rockdale UnCorked Wine Tasting,
(512) 446-2030, rockdalechamber.com

Wimberley Garden Club Garden Tour,
(305) 304-4686, wimberleygardenclub.org

15

Bleiberville VFD 16th Annual Fish Fry,
(979) 249-6382

Cedar Creek High Grove Cemetery Homecoming, (512) 924-9697

21

Bryan Downtown Bryan Sip & Shop,
(979) 822-4920, facebook.com/
downtownbryansipandshop

27

Bandera [27-29] PRCA Memorial Day Rodeo, (830) 522-0054, banderaprorodeo.org

Ellinger [27-29] Tomato Festival,
(979) 378-2311, ellingtexas.com

May 27-29
Ellinger
Tomato Festival



Fredericksburg [27-29] Crawfish Festival,
(830) 433-5225, fbgcrawfish.com

28

Bastrop World War II and Camp Swift Exhibit Opening, (512) 303-0057,
bastropcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Boerne Memorial Day Concert,
(830) 249-8918, visitboerne.org/calendar

Tyler Smith County Master Gardeners Garden Tour, (903) 590-2980,
txmg.org/smith/coming-events

June

3

Amarillo [3-4] Coors Cowboy Club Ranch Rodeo, (806) 376-7767, coorsranchrodeo.com

Graford [3-4] Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series, (940) 325-2557,
redbullcliffdiving.com/texas

Kerrville [3-4] Shakespeare in the Park,
(830) 896-9393, playhouse2000.com

Easton [3-5] Heritage Turnip Green Festival, (903) 643-7819

4

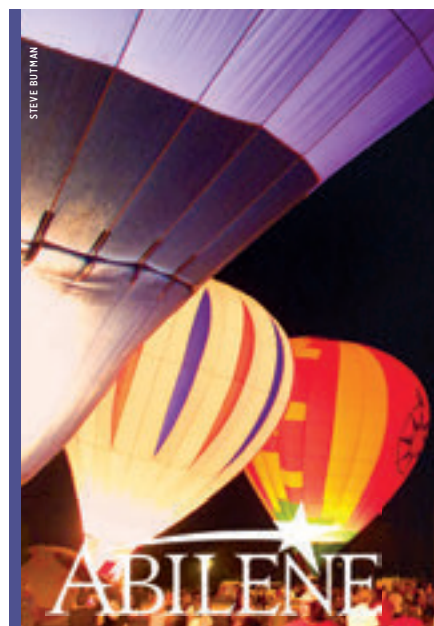
Cat Spring June Fest, (979) 865-1313,
catspringagsociety.org

Austin [4-5] Pond and Garden Tour,
(512) 629-7825, austinpondsociety.org

Port Arthur [4-5] Garden Festival,
(409) 985-7822, visitportarthurtx.com

Submit Your Event!

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



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Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail

Experience 19th-century Texas history in person and through a virtual tour

BY EILEEN MATTEI

THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY SAW MORE Civil War battles than any other area in Texas, says Chris Miller, a history professor at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. With most southern ports blockaded by the Union navy, the Mexican port of Bagdad on the Rio Grande played a vital role in supplying the Confederacy.

As an armchair tourist, you can travel the Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail via audio recordings, accessed using a phone, to visit the trail's 43 sites. In addition to images, narration and text, the RGV Civil War Trail website provides directions for visiting the sites in person.

"A virtual tour is a way you can quickly make a presence," says Russ Skowronek, an anthropology and history professor at the university. Because no funding existed to develop wayside signs and exhibits for this overlooked segment of history, Skowronek, Miller and the Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools joined forces with the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park and others to create the virtual Civil War Trail. It stitches together historical markers and sites that tourists can visit alphabetically or geographically.

The trail begins with the first battle of the 1846–48 Mexican-American War, commemorated by the Palo Alto Battlefield park northwest of Brownsville.

The Civil War Trail is paved with fascinating stops. The salt works at La Sal del Rey in Hidalgo County provided the salt that was essential to preserving meat for the troops. Homebound cotton wagons hauled the salt north with other military supplies. Union forces wrecked the rebel-held salt works in 1863 to hamper the South's efforts.

In Rio Grande City, the Mifflin Kenedy Warehouse still stands on Water Street, 150 years after it housed Confederate cot-



Replica cannons mark the Palo Alto Battlefield near Brownsville.

ton en route to Europe. The couple living at Jackson Ranch sheltered slaves escaping to Mexico. In Laredo, Confederate Col. Santos Benavides garrisoned his troops around St. Augustine Plaza and blocked streets with cotton bales to thwart Union soldiers. Confederate cavalry engaged the Union forces in a battle at Point Isabel in 1864 to gain control of the lighthouse.

East of Brownsville at Palmito Ranch, the final land battle of the Civil War occurred one month after Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered. Five hundred Union soldiers on their way to Brownsville confronted 300 Confederate soldiers. Following the confrontation, the Union forces retreated and sustained the last casualty of the war, an infantryman from Indiana.

With the Civil War Trail's paper map and directions taken from the website, I drive down Military Highway (now U.S. 281), which connected Fort Brown to Ringgold Barracks in Rio Grande City. I scan the map's QR code with my iPhone to access the Civil War Trail and select the recordings for sites scattered between sugar cane and cabbage fields. I read historical mark-

ers with only the wind for company.

While the virtual tour presents an interesting experience of many sites along the trail, several stops deserve a road trip: the sparkling white Sal del Rey, the lonesome prairie and interpretive displays at Palo Alto, and the exhibits at the Museums of Port Isabel and the Museum of South Texas History in Edinburg.

Skowronek says one benefit of a virtual tour is that more sites can be included easily. When I tell him that Union and Confederate armies had used the home of Brownsville Mayor Israel Bigelow as a hospital, he reminds me the trail is a community-generated project. "We welcome ideas from people that help us add stops on the trail."

Author Eileen Mattei uncovered the Israel Bigelow house information while researching her book *For the Good of My Patients: The History of Medicine in the Rio Grande Valley* (Topp Direct Marketing, 2012).



WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com

Take a virtual tour of the Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail or access the recorded audio at (956) 847-3002.

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