

LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EDITION

JULY 2016

Possum Kingdom

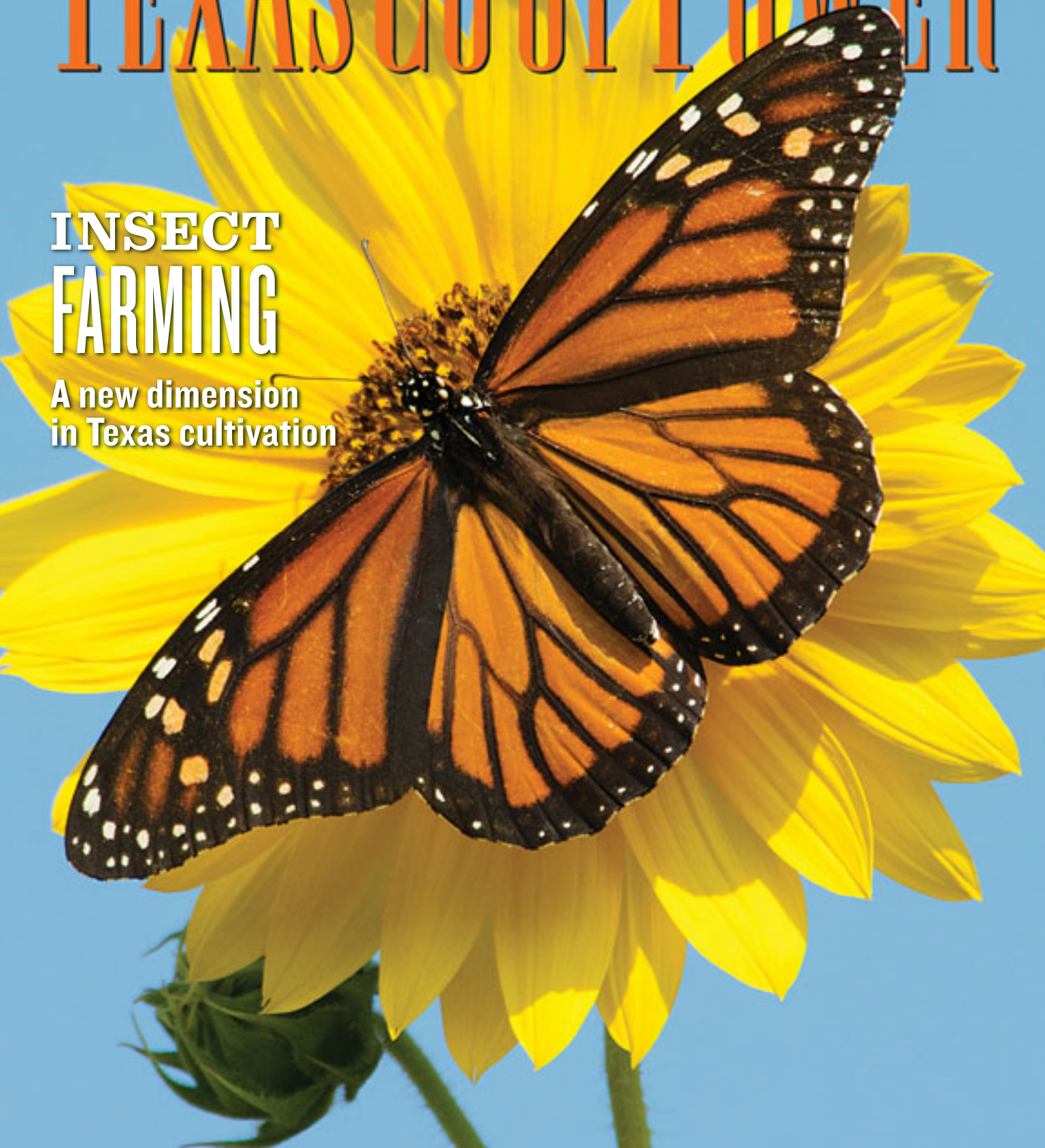
Primo Pasta

Port A's Farley Boat Works

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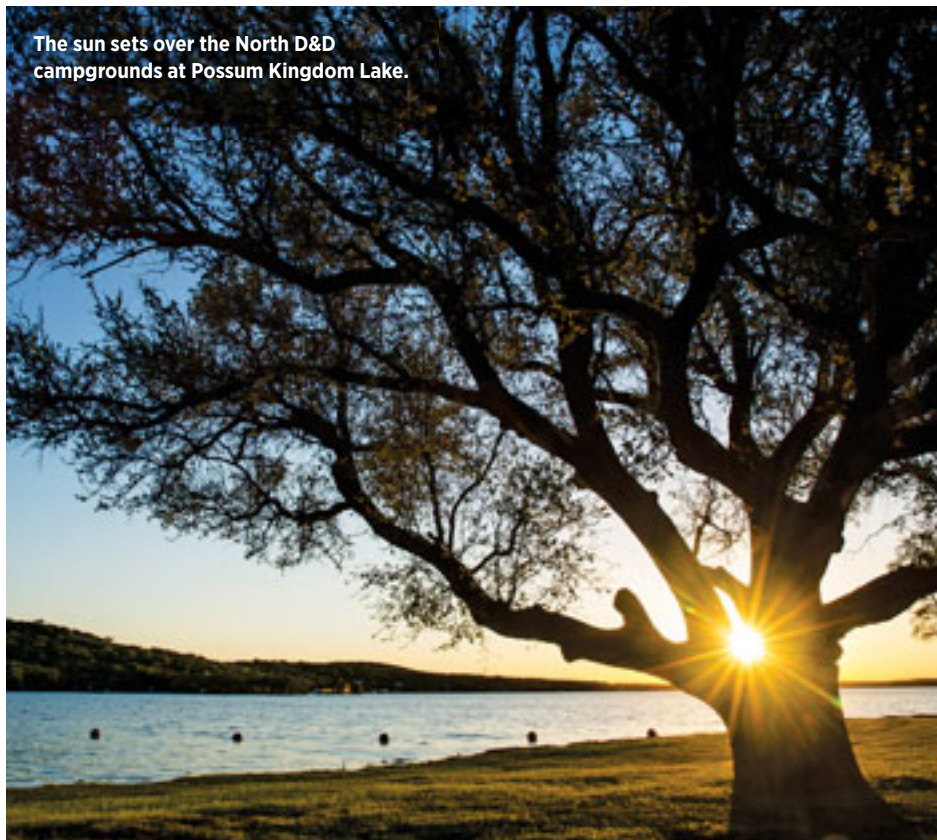
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The sun sets over the North D&D campgrounds at Possum Kingdom Lake.

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POSSUM KINGDOM: JULIA ROBINSON. SEAFOOD: JODY HORTON

ON THE COVER Insect farming can involve raising butterflies, such as this monarch feeding on a sunflower. Photo by Sari O'Neal | Shutterstock

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Cover Story

I kept waiting for your writer to mention a hat being worn by someone who wasn't a cow-puncher, Western star or fashionista [*Cowboy Hatters*, April 2016]. I submit that in Texas' fine heritage, it is much more likely that a hatmaker would have served or will serve a plowboy rather than a cowboy.

PAUL LAWRENCE | DAYTON
SAM HOUSTON EC

Something I'd like to know more about is how the style of hats and creases varies from one part of the state to another. Traveling across Texas, even a city boy like me can see the difference.

JEFF CARMACK | AUSTIN

Alvin's Deluge

I grew up in Alvin, and my parents were still living there when the flood struck [*Alvin's Deluge: It Reigns*, October 2015]. I was living in Conroe and talked with



them several times in those first hours. The next day I could not reach them by phone.

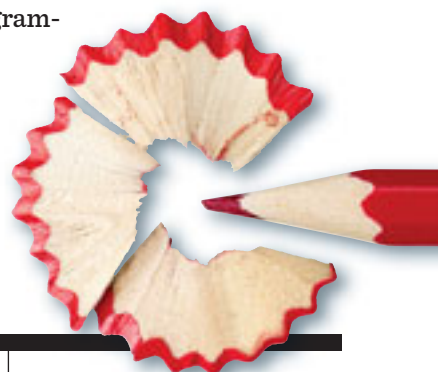
My son and I packed my Suburban with emergency supplies. About 3 miles from Alvin, we were stopped by high water, as

Grammatical Blueprints

I can echo the letter writer's assessment of her grammar background based on my education in the San Augustine Independent School District in the 1950s [*Chalk It Up to Good Grammar*, Letters, May 2016]. Mrs. Ann Kathryn Holbrook and our other English teachers taught diagramming. I still picture a sentence on a mental diagram.

We graduates had a sound basis for college English grammar. Thanks to our dedicated teachers who taught the fundamentals in all courses.

CYNTHIA C. WELCH | TYLER | HOUSTON COUNTY EC



were several other cars. In a few minutes, a large truck came along. The driver said he would "pull" us through the high water. There were six vehicles, and we were told to keep our motors running—we would not stop. The water was about 2½ feet deep, but the truck pushed a wall of water about 4 feet high.

Your story was a strong reminder of what can happen.

JOHN BURGE | CONROE
SAM HOUSTON EC

Editor's note: This letter tells a unique story, but readers should remember that water over the road is always dangerous and should be avoided. Better to heed the warning: "Turn around, don't drown."

A Matter of Time

Any of us can have selfish reasons for wanting daylight at a certain time of the day [*Daylight Saving Time*, Letters, May 2016]. We need to step away from our own wants and do what is best for Texans. Opting out of DST is

the only option that ends time changes and offers safety for school children.

MARTHA S. HABLUTZEL | INGLESIDE

By the time I get acclimated, it's time to change again. Farmers work sunup to sundown, so the only reason for the change is so people in California can play longer. Keep the same time, and the world will be better off.

WANDA G. ERICKSON | ANTON
LAMB COUNTY EC

Border Memories

I remember well listening late at night to the border radio station from Del Rio and the advertisements for baby chicks [*Border Radio*, March 2016]. Great country music was played every night.

LILA B. DAVIS | LAKE KIOWA
COOKE COUNTY EC

Wildlife Welfare

What do birdwatchers and wildlife observers do to contribute to animal welfare [*Preserving Wildlife*, Letters,

March 2016]? Many of us spend lots of money, time and effort building ponds and smaller watering spots. We maintain native vegetation; provide wild bird food, feeders and housing; and keep acreage wild for habitat.

The payoff? In 26 years, I've seen everything from bobcats to beavers, bald eagles and ivory bills.

SANDRA BONE | ALTO
CHEROKEE COUNTY EC

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Texas Co-op Power

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HAPPENINGS

McDADE Watermelon Festival & Car Show

McDADE HELD ITS FIRST watermelon festival in 1948 as part of a fundraising effort to help the Bastrop County community open a new school. Students were using makeshift facilities after the town's school burned down in 1940.

About 1,000 people attended that first celebration of what was then the area's principal cash crop. The money raised bought metal chairs for the new school.

The **McDADE WATERMELON FESTIVAL & CAR SHOW** has continued for 68 years, and recent beneficiaries of the proceeds have been a scholarship program and the McDade Food Pantry. The festival, July 9 this year, once again helps McDade Independent School District,

a member of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, meet a significant challenge. When school starts in the fall, McDade ISD expands to include ninth and 10th grades.

"It's a community-oriented festival," says Christine Walla, one of the organizers. "People pour out of the woodwork and really make it happen."

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Did you know?

THE FIRST COOK-BOOK published in the United States—in 1796—*American Cookery* by Amelia Simmons, contains a recipe for watermelon rind pickles.

Find more happenings all across the state at TexasCoopPower.com

MMM—TASTES LIKE PINE NUTS!



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

APHID REFLUX

Waiter, there's a fly in my soup!

That old gag just might lose its punch if entomophagists can persuade Americans to change their diets. Entomophagists participate in and encourage the consumption of insects. They eat bugs and think you should, too.

The U.S. might be missing out. Some 1,900 insect species are consumed by 2 billion or so people in more than 80 countries.

Honey, I Shrunk the Livestock on Page 12 profiles Texas entrepreneurs who raise butterflies for celebratory releases and crickets to use in cooking. Crickets are processed into flour used to make all sorts of conventional products and snacks with clever names like Crickers and Chirps. Crickets, say those who know, have a savory, nutty flavor.

Here are taste comparisons for other insects.

ANTS sweet, nutty

STINKBUGS apples

RED AGAVE ANTS spicy

TREE WORMS pork rinds

BEE EGGS peanuts or almonds

WASPS pine nuts

TERMITES nuts

SUN-DRIED EMPEROR MOTH CATERPILLARS tea

APHIDS slightly bitter to sweet, depending on their diet

HONORS

GREAT PLACE TO MAKE A LIVING

(BUT YOU KNEW THAT)



Texas is the best state for making a living, Moneyrates.com shows in its ranking of 10 best and worst states to make a living in 2015.

An average income of \$45,330, which is above the national average, lower-than-average cost of living and no income tax help account for Texas' ranking. The Lone Star State also had few workplace safety incidents and a low unemployment rate of 4.2 percent.

Hawaii ranked last with an inflated cost of living, driven mainly by higher-than-average housing expenses.



FLASHBACK

From Hill Valley to Humble

THE STAINLESS STEEL CAR that took Marty McFly back in time to 1955 in *Back to the Future* and forward to 2015 in *Back to the Future Part II* is about to transport its legions of fans to 1981, when it was first introduced.

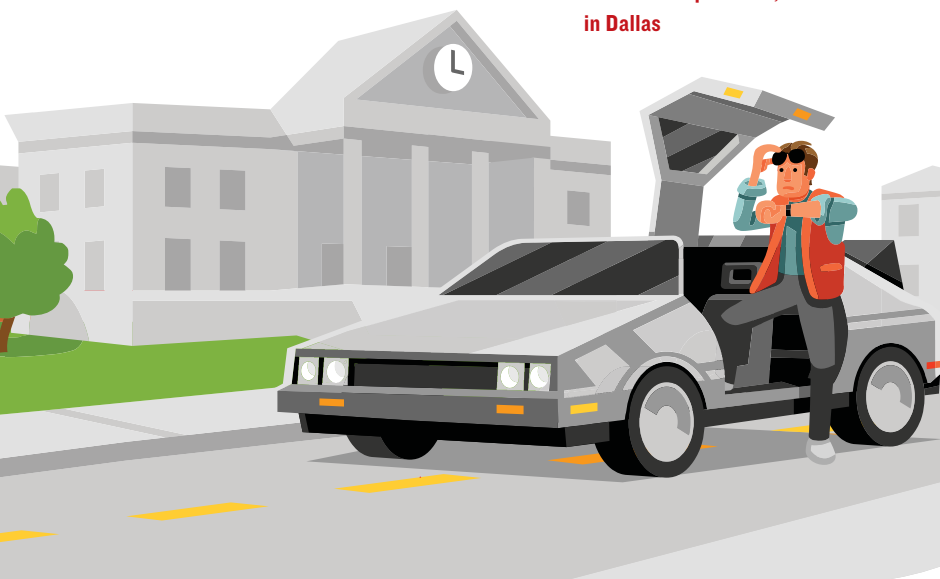
That's because "new" DeLoreans are about to become available for the first time in 35 years. Humble-based DeLorean Motor Company, which bought up all the parts from the original automaker, announced that it will begin assembling the iconic **DCM-12** starting next year.

The company expects to produce about 300 of the stout, gull-wing coupes, selling them for about \$100,000 each. They also get a handsome power boost, as the original cars' lackadaisical 130-horsepower engine gets replaced with one that produces more than 300 hp. That should make reaching 88 mph no problem.

OTHER TEXAS ODDITIES
Hall Cycle Manufacturing
Company Cyclecar, a 1914 car
made in Waco that could be
converted into a truck

Southern Aircraft Roadable,
a 1946 prototype "flying car,"
built in Garland

Vanguard Motors Vetta Ventura,
a mid-'60s sports car, made
in Dallas



CO-OPS IN THE COMMUNITY

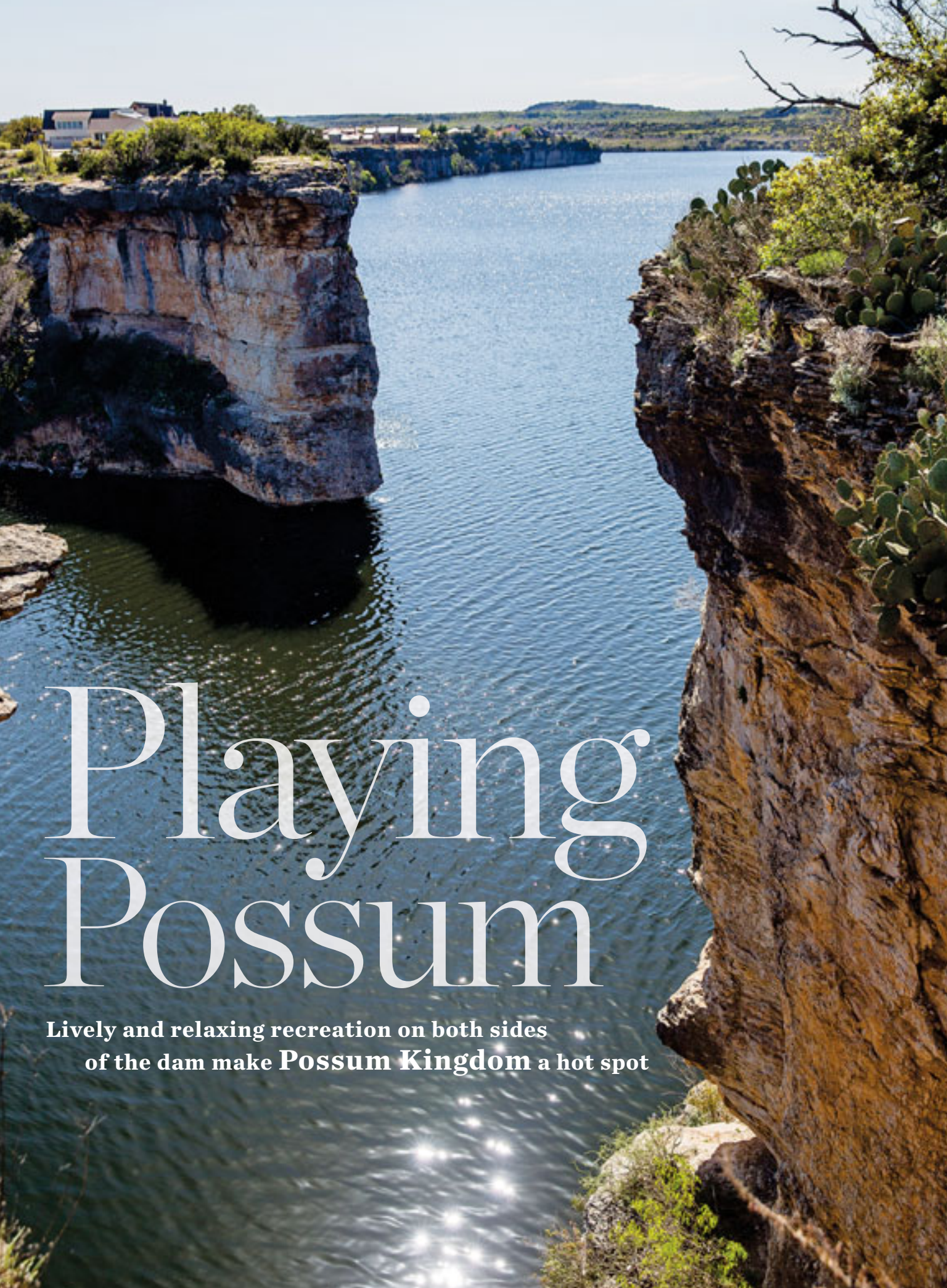
Rural Lender Celebrates a Century of Service

TWENTY YEARS before electric cooperatives began improving the quality of life in rural Texas by providing electricity, farmers and ranchers could bank on another type of co-op. Capital Farm Credit began providing agricultural loans after President Woodrow Wilson signed the Federal Farm Loan Act in 1916.

Capital, which receives electricity from Bryan Texas Utilities at its headquarters, offers financing to support borrowers of all sizes and celebrates its 100th anniversary in July. It is owned by its members, just like electric co-ops, and operates especially with them in mind in 192 Texas counties.

"Capital Farm Credit is committed to helping rural communities and agriculture thrive, in good times and bad," says Jeff Moder, Capital's director of marketing and communications.

Based on 2015 earnings, Capital returned \$56.7 million in cash to members through its patronage dividend program.



Playing Possum

Lively and relaxing recreation on both sides
of the dam make **Possum Kingdom** a hot spot

“Whazzup?”

Those were the first words that greeted me as I pulled up to Hide-Away Cabins & Inn at Possum Kingdom Lake, west of Fort Worth. The man wearing board shorts and flip-flops was loading a cooler into the back of his truck. I gave him a nod and headed to my room. I knew that Possum Kingdom attracted colorful characters and spring break parties, but I was there to find my own peace on the water and perhaps a semblance of the original Possum Kingdom.

The Morris Sheppard Dam began filling the area's stark and dramatic limestone canyons with water in 1941. The project was designed to alleviate flooding on the temperamental Brazos River and provide hydroelectricity for a growing state. Recreation was low on the list of benefits of Possum Kingdom when it was on the drawing board.

Those priorities changed in 2007 when hydroelectric generation stopped. “The infrastructure was aging, and we were going to have to do major upgrades,” explains Judy Pierce, public information officer for the Brazos River Authority, which manages the lake. Now the dam is more about flood control and the water supply it holds. Besides, the area's No. 1 economic engine is now recreation on the water.

“We call this the ‘Great Lake of Texas’,” says Gayla Chambers, executive director of the Possum Kingdom Chamber of Commerce. PK, as the locals call it, boasts close to 20,000 acres of water and more than 300 miles of shoreline. Even though PK isn't among the Texas top five for size, it's a much-loved waterway for the people of the Dallas-Fort Worth region and West Texas. The area around the lake touches Palo Pinto, Stephens and Young counties and is serviced by United Cooperative Services, and Comanche, Fort Belknap and Tri-County electric cooperatives.

“There are no hard numbers, but we estimate there are 1,500 full-time residents,” Chambers says. PK remains unincorporated, and residents are scattered along the long shoreline, so there is no exact population number. During the peak season, from May through September, Chambers estimates that as many as 3 million people visit the lake, staying in cabins, fishing camps, vacation homes and a few high-end resorts. “People come for a weekend and then end up buying a house,” she says.

As I considered my plans to learn more about the history of the Brazos River and the lake it created, I watched the afternoon sun set



Story and photos by **Julia Robinson**

over the water from the peninsula on the east side of the lake where FM 2951 juts west. The sky came alive with pinks, oranges and a deep purple before washing to black. In the parking lot near my weekend rental, trucks and lively voices came and went, but the 11 p.m. noise curfew held, and I set an early alarm.

I knew that in this area, 80 miles west of Fort Worth, the tributaries that the Spanish dubbed *Los Brazos de Dios*, “the arms of God,” flow southeast from the rolling plains through the Cross Timbers and combine to power the Brazos River toward the Gulf of Mexico. Salt deposits from the aptly named Salt Fork of the Brazos (where the saline content can be twice that of seawater) render the Brazos mostly unsuitable for human consumption. Despite that, the area has been continuously inhabited for millennia. Traces of one of North America's earliest human cultures, known as the Clovis people, have been found along a tributary of the Brazos in New Mexico.

Certainly, native people roamed the Brazos basin long before the Spanish and French arrived. When Anglo settlers began moving to the area in the 1800s, a new name arose from a fur trader whose best pelt suppliers he dubbed “the boys from Possum Kingdom.” The name stuck.

The morning broke cool and cloudy. I loaded the dog into the car, filled a canteen and drove a mile to the South D&D trailhead, one of many access points for a new 16-mile hike-and-bike trail, also managed by the Brazos River Authority. My goal: Johnson's Peak, a high point offering a 360-degree view.

The peak is named for J.A. Johnson, who moved to the area in the 1880s and, according to legend, hiked to the peak with a

Opposite: The 80-foot cliffs at Hell's Gate loom over Possum Kingdom Lake. Above: Signs guide visitors on a hike-and-bike trail.

Comanche leader who asked him to care for the land the way his people had. Years later, when Johnson sold the land to Eugene Constantin, he reportedly took Constantin to the same peak and delivered the same speech about stewardship.

“As the story goes” is a common phrase in Possum Kingdom. The area is rife with stories tied to geologic features and conflicts between Anglo settlers and local tribes.

I learned from David La Vere’s book *The Texas Indians* (Texas A&M University Press, 2004) that settlers first came to the area in the 1830s and lived in relative peace with remnants of the Delaware, Shawnee, Tonkawa, Wichita and Caddo tribes. Once frontier settlements were established, the agricultural tribes were pushed off their fields, and hunting tribes saw the decline of the buffalo. Comanche, Apache and Kiowa tribes began raiding. By 1859, a commission authorized by Texas Gov. Hardin Runnels recommended that all tribes be relocated to reservations in Oklahoma.

“This county [Palo Pinto] was one of the worst for Indian attacks,” explains Possum Kingdom historian Kevin VanDuser in his history of the area, *Possum Kingdom Journal*. VanDuser was an 11-year-old Tenderfoot Boy Scout when he first came to the area for summer camp. “I was a kid armed with a notebook and a Kodak camera, and history is what interested me.”

VanDuser visited Native American sites via canoe and listened to local ranchers and anyone else with a story to tell. He continues to stitch together bits and pieces of local lore today.

I read the plaques offering stories of settlers and natives, many written by VanDuser, a member of United Cooperative Services.

Today, the well-maintained hiking trail full of switchbacks is shaded by cedar and oak and punctuated by benches and scenic overlooks. Huge rocks line the path to the pinnacle, where the view opens up. I scan the route of the Brazos channel through the bends and turns of the lakefront, now peppered by vacation homes and docks.

Looking south, I can make out the iconic Hell’s Gate formation. The peninsula that stretches before me serves as a summer camp for the Boy Scouts and the YMCA, and the hike-and-bike trail shares land with the habitat of the endangered golden-cheeked warbler.

Looking north, I see the site of the submerged ghost town of Pickwick. First settled in the 1850s, the town grew slowly. After a disastrous cotton crop in 1915, the small population dwindled. The Brazos River Authority bought the remaining properties as part of the Morris Dam project, and lake water submerged the town in 1941. Building remnants, including chimneys, appear when the lake level drops.

I finish the 5-mile loop as I descend from the peak. I drain my water bottle and thankfully note the cooler temperature. As midday approaches, the buzz of boat traffic picks up on the water below.

“The only way to see the beauty of PK is from the water,” Chambers says, so I head to the lakefront, where WaterRush watercraft rentals owner Jesse Swanson says traffic on the water is a constant in summer months. “It used to be mostly speedboats, but we’re seeing more pontoons,” Swanson explains. Water skiing has waned as more wakeboards and tubers enjoy the long summer afternoons. Then there’s the newest in lakeside entertainment, the Jetovator, a kind of hydropowered pogo stick that can launch a person 25 feet into the air.

I pass on the water rocket and decide on a traditional kayak. I load the pup on board and paddle a few miles (20 minutes by Jet Ski or speedboat) to Hell’s Gate, the iconic limestone gateway for which PK is known. The cliffs are more than 80 feet tall at the waterline, with water depths greater than 16 feet, making for impressive photos and a perfect platform for professional cliff divers who flock here for a competition each summer.

Six miles around the bends of the lake, just below Morris Dam, a completely different experience awaits. It is the gem of the Brazos, as John Graves recorded in

Below: Canoeing on the Brazos River; opposite: the scenic overlook of Bone Bend on the trail to Johnson’s Peak.





*A short drive away,
near the point where
the Brazos River
flows out of
Morris Dam, I find
the Possum Kingdom
Stone Arch Bridge,
the longest masonry
arch bridge in
Texas, built by the
Works Projects
Administration
in 1942.*



his famous book, *Goodbye to a River* (Random House, 1960). In 1957, Graves and a 6-month-old dachshund piloted a canoe down the Brazos between the newly erected Morris Dam and Lake Whitney. Engineers had proposed as many as 13 dams for that stretch of the river, and Graves thought this was his last chance to experience the river of his youth. The winding narrative layers lyrical observations of the natural and spiritual journey with local history of settlers and natives. It's a journey of environmental conservation, history and personal reflection, perhaps best characterized as a Texas version of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. This stretch of the Brazos is now known as the John Graves Scenic Riverway and draws anglers and paddlers from all points of the compass.

A short drive away, near the point where the Brazos River flows out of Morris Dam, I find the Possum Kingdom Stone Arch Bridge, the longest masonry arch bridge in Texas, built by the Works Projects Administration in 1942.

On this lazy weekend afternoon, I find a half-dozen anglers and their families casting from the banks around the bridge. A few kayaks and canoes drift on the river and under one of the 18 arches of the bridge. The Brazos River Authority has created a hiking trail that winds along the river bluffs just beneath the dam, and from here, looking downstream, it is possible to imagine life on the Brazos before the lake.

The pup finds a deer path and bounds through the dry reeds for a cool dip in the river. She scares a few ducks into the air, and they flap, perturbed, downstream to land again on calm waters. From here the quiet is deafening. No buzz of speedboats or roar of floodgates, just the slow heartbeat of the Brazos. Am I now in the original Possum Kingdom?

Julia Robinson is an Austin photojournalist.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com See a slideshow and video of Possum Kingdom.

Honey, I Shrunk the Livestock



BY MELISSA GASKILL



INSECTS BRING A NEW DIMENSION TO TEXAS FARMING

On 24 acres north of Rockport, Tracy Villareal and Barbara Dorf recently started a farm. They ship their livestock all over the state and beyond—by mail.

Big Tree Butterflies raises monarch butterfly eggs and caterpillars for schools and educational programs and adult butterflies for exhibits and releases at memorials, weddings and other events.

Across the United States, you'll find about 100 butterfly farms, most of them small, one-person operations. Insect farmers also raise grasshoppers, mealworms and crickets for human consumption, and praying mantises and ladybugs to sell as natural pest control. People have kept bees for centuries, of course, but beekeepers operate less like farmers than landlords, providing hives and habitats in exchange for honey, pollination services or both from the bees.

Insect farming, harvesting the creatures themselves, is a relatively new practice in Texas and the United States, and it is not without some controversy. A key concern is that insects distributed commercially might spread parasites or diseases that could affect wild populations. Monarchs, for example, can carry a parasite with a tongue-twister name—*Ophryocystis elektroscirrha*, or OE.

"If you bring eggs in from the wild, raise a single generation and let them go, that is probably not a problem," says Lincoln P. Brower, research professor of biology at Sweet Briar College in Virginia. "But breeding several generations commercially, unless you are extremely careful, the incidence [of OE] builds up from one generation to the next." Partly because of that risk, Brower and several other scientists and conservationists recently released a statement recommending against large-scale captive rearing of monarchs for release into the wild.

Villareal points out that proper practices on butterfly farms reduce risk. "Our initial stock came from a renowned Florida

farm, and because we want to keep the gene pool healthy, we took some caterpillars off natural milkweed in the fall," he says. "We carefully screened those and released them into a contained area of milkweed. Now, everything is self-contained, so we don't collect any more in the wild."

In Maypearl, Nikki Camp raises monarchs, painted ladies and Gulf fritillaries at 13-0 Country Butterflies. Her small operation buys eggs from larger farms and checks all new stock for disease. Screening for OE is relatively easy but must be done constantly.

No law requires this testing, but Wayne Wehling of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service says he has been impressed with the growth in best management practices during the 16 years he's worked with butterfly farmers.

"It is amazing, the lengths people go to avoid disease issues," he says. "Obviously, if you have disease problems, you won't have a product to sell. The folks who do this in the mainstream do a very good job and know techniques for keeping their livestock clean and healthy. We only allow release of adult butterflies into the environment, and generally, if you have a butterfly capable of flying away, you have a healthy butterfly."

Most butterfly farmers really care about their stock, Villareal says. "As with any kind of animal husbandry, you have people who do it very well and have high standards—and those who don't."

Larry Gilbert, director of the University of Texas Brackenridge Field Laboratory in Austin, says he worries about butterfly releases interfering with scientific research.

"We study the genetics and biology of wild species and assume that what we sample in nature legitimately reflects interactions between that species and its environment," he explains. "If people bring butterflies in from wherever and let them go, [those butterflies] aren't local and scientists can't make assumptions about the wild population anymore."

Butterfly releases could also affect the ability of scientists to track migrations. "You don't know whether you caught a wild butterfly or one that was released," Brower says. "Anything that mucks up that research is too bad, because we need to understand the natural system."

The USDA limits releases to 250 specimens, but even limited releases could cause confusion, scientists say.

Timing also plays a role; releasing butterflies at the wrong time could mean none survive. Camp sells butterflies between late March and November—when temperatures in parts of Texas reach at least 60 degrees. She stops selling monarchs in early November, when they migrate.

"I interview potential clients to find out the purpose of a release, the atmosphere and the surroundings," she says. "You have to think through the whole picture, what is going to happen to the butterfly after a release."

Butterflies for viewing and crickets for eating are among the insects raised on some Texas farms.



Farm-raised monarchs are released to enhance ceremonies, above, and used for educational purposes.

vitamins B-12 and B-6, and minerals such as calcium, magnesium, iron and zinc. Plus, Jones says, “Cricket flour is delicious, with a savory, nutty flavor that lends [itself] well to baking.”

These little herds spend their lives in a climate-controlled warehouse, hatching from eggs in one bin, then moving into ever-larger bins as they grow, eating a custom blend of corn, soy and kelp. In five or six weeks, a cricket matures and lays its own eggs, Allen says. The operation then freezes the critters and sends them to a facility that produces the flour. Some restaurants serve the crickets whole.

“The idea of responsible, organic and local food outweighs the fact that it is weird for some people,” he says, “and others try it precisely because it is weird.”

The farm grows stock specifically for human food, and because crickets and humans are so genetically different, no diseases pass between the two. There is some anecdotal evidence of allergic reactions, says Allen, but it isn’t clear what actually caused those reactions. Aspire Food Group tests for pathogens and bacteria, and handles everything according to health codes and Food and Drug Administration regulations.

Properly regulated and operated, butterfly farms can contribute to knowledge about these species and what we all can do to help keep them healthy. Cricket farmers can produce healthy food using fewer resources.

“Insects have a very small carbon footprint,” Allen says. “People all over the world already eat them, and farming them is not really a complicated process.”

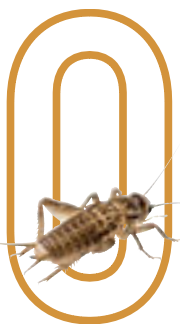
Sounds like tiny livestock could become a big thing.

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

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com Learn about saving the monarchs; read previous *Texas Co-op Power* stories about butterflies; and learn about the nutritional and environmental effects of cricket consumption.

Interstate transport of butterflies at any stage, to or from a farm, requires a permit from the USDA. The agency allows release of eight species in Texas: Gulf fritillary, eastern monarch, zebra longwing, giant swallowtail, eastern black swallowtail, red admiral, painted lady and American painted lady. Monarchs cannot be transported across the Continental Divide, as research has suggested a difference in disease susceptibility between western and eastern monarchs, Wehling explains.

Even those opposed to butterfly farming recognize an upside, though: education. “School kids raising monarchs, tagging and releasing them has a huge educational value,” Brower says. “It really engages them, and the value of that versus the potential damage has to be weighed carefully. The main thing is to be as careful as you can, know what you are doing and realize there can be problems if it’s not done right.”



Other insect farmers encounter other concerns. Robert Nathan Allen, who produces crickets for human consumption, deals less with controversy than with people’s reluctance to eat insects. He points out that about 2 billion people around the world eat insects, and humans have done so for centuries.

In 2012, Allen started Little Herds, a non-profit that encourages eating insects, and in 2014 helped Aspire Food Group found a cricket farm in Austin. It joins several dozen operations nationwide in a market where demand outpaces supply of cricket-based energy bars, pastries and chips. Fast Company says edible insects are a \$20 million industry in the U.S.

Most of Aspire’s crickets are processed into flour, and one of its customers, Crickers, uses it to make crackers. The Austin company’s founders, Leah Jones and Megan McDonald, point out that crickets provide protein, including all nine essential amino acids (amino acids are the building blocks of proteins), healthy omega-3 fats,

Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

CHICAGO: A local board-certified Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

"Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry" — Dr. Babu, Board-Certified ENT Physician

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease. **He could not understand why the cost of hearing aids was so high when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones, and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance plans do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which traditionally run between \$2,000-\$6,000 for a pair, many of the doctor's patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri's goal was to find a reasonable solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, similar to the **"one-size-fits-most" reading glasses** available at drug stores.

He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, almost all of these were found to amplify bass/low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and were not useful in amplifying the frequencies related to the human voice.

Inspiration from a Surprising Source

The doctor's inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a new cell phone he had just purchased. **"I felt that if someone could devise an**

- Designed by a Board-Certified Ear, Nose, & Throat (ENT) Doctor
- Doctor-Recommended, Audiologist-Tested
- ★★★★★ Top Rated Hearing Aid Online—Thousands of Satisfied Customers
- Batteries Included! Comes Ready To Use
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- Save Up To 90%
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affordable device like an iPhone® for about \$200 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at a similar price."

Affordable Hearing Aid with Superb Performance

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical-grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the **MDHearingAid PRO**, under \$200 each when buying a pair. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

Tested by Leading Doctors and Audiologists

The MDHearingAid PRO has been rigorously tested by leading ENT physicians and audiologists who have unanimously agreed that the **sound quality and output in many cases exceeds more expensive hearing aids.**

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RISK-FREE
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Doctors and patients agree:

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"LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE"**

*"I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years and these are the best behind-the-ear aids I have tried. **Their sound quality rivals that of my \$3,500 custom pair of Phonak® Xtra digital ITE.**"*

—Gerald L.

*"I have a \$2,000 ReSound® Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid PRO in the right ear. **I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids.**"*

—Dr. May, ENT Physician

*"They work so great, my mother says she hasn't heard this well in years, even with her \$2,000 digital! **It was so great to see the joy on her face. She is 90 years young again.**"*

—Al P.

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350 Carats of Can't-Miss

New!

The Blue Arrow necklace hits the target, giving you the casual and elegant turquoise look for just \$49

In frontier times, the Apache people of the Southwest were famed and feared for their incredible skill with a bow and arrow. An Apache's aim was always on point. This impressive accuracy was earned through dedicated practice, but the Apache also believe that wearing their iconic blue-green stones steadied the hand, granted a little extra luck and imbued the wearer with added confidence when pulling back the bow and releasing an arrow.



The Stauer Blue Arrow Necklace is equally on point and designed to deliver added confidence in any setting. This necklace offers an incredible 350 carats of that same turquoise look the Apache put their faith in.

The undeniable glamour of this statement necklace comes from its rugged natural beauty, making it equally ideal for a formal affair where you want to stand out or a laid back gathering where you want to unwind.

This much blue-green beauty can be prohibitively expensive, but the Stauer Blue Arrow Necklace, handcrafted from genuine howlite, gives you a striking legendary blue-green stone for **ONLY \$49**. We can thank Canadian gemologist Henry How for discovering howlite in 1868—this impressive stone delivers the same dramatic look of the popular desert gemstone without the dramatic price.

We're not promising that you'll suddenly start winning archery competitions, but don't be surprised if the relaxed luxury of 350 carats of the Blue Arrow Necklace imbues you with extra confidence.



"I would rate it a 5.
I like the length and
the colors are beautiful."

— Kay, Ardmore, OK

Only 4,999 available! These handcrafted beauties take months to create and they are flying off the shelves. Don't miss your 350 carats of can't miss. Call today!

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Lifesaving Lessons To Be Learned



To prevent injuries, check outlets around docks and pools to make sure they have GFCI protection, and check cords for exposed wires.

WHETHER IT'S SWIMMING, boating or fishing, summertime is water recreation time for millions. Your electric cooperative reminds everyone to avoid electrical hazards during water recreation.

Electricity is essential—it keeps us cool in the summer, lights our houses, keeps the refrigerator cold and runs the TV, stereo and computers. Electricity also can be dangerous. It doesn't take much electricity to hurt someone. The power that runs through most circuits is enough to kill an adult.

Ground-fault circuit interrupters are one form of protection from electrical hazards. GFCIs detect dangerous situa-

tions in which a shock might occur and cut off power immediately to prevent it. Anywhere electricity is used in close proximity to water, there is a shock hazard. You should have GFCI protection on underwater lighting circuits, lighting around pools, and on hot tubs and spas.

Heed these tips to stay safe in or around swimming pools:

Do not put any electrical appliances within 5 feet of a swimming pool. Use battery-operated, rather than electrical, appliances near swimming pools.

Any electrical outlets within 20 feet of a pool should be equipped with a GFCI. Pools and decks should be built at least 5 feet away from all underground electrical lines, and at least 25 feet away from overhead electrical lines.

Never swim during a thunderstorm.

If a swimmer is electrocuted or shocked, don't dive in yourself because you could be electrocuted, too. Turn off the power, and then use a fiberglass shepherd's hook to pull the victim out of the water. Call emergency services immediately.

When you leave the pool, don't change the radio station or touch any electrical appliances until you are dry. Never touch any electrical appliances when you are wet or standing in water.

If children wish to play with sprinklers or hoses, emphasize that they should be set up well away from any electrical outlets or appliances.

In most instances, if potential safety hazards are taken into consideration and handled proactively, accidents and deaths can be avoided.

Electricity is also dangerous around larger bodies of water.

If you plan to go boating or fishing this summer, be aware of your surroundings and potential electrical hazards.

Always check the location of nearby power lines before boating or fishing. Contact between your boat and a power line could be devastating. Maintain a distance of at least 10 feet between your boat and nearby power lines to be safe. Your boat's wiring should be in compliance with American Yacht Club Standards. If you are not qualified to work on your boat's electrical system, hire a professional.

If your boat does come into contact with a power line, never jump out of the boat into the water because the water could be energized. Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching anything metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line.

Be sure dockside outlets have GFCI protection, and check cords that are plugged into them to make sure there are no broken casings or exposed wires.

Check for the location of power lines before fishing. Make sure you are casting the line away from power lines to avoid contact.



Putting down the controllers and picking up the dice can help lower your energy bill.

Why Is My Electric Bill More Than My Neighbor's?

YOU HAVE A TV, VIDEO GAME SYSTEM, microwave oven, electric range and cooktop, refrigerator/freezer, heat pump and personal computer. So does your next-door neighbor. So why is your electric bill almost twice as high every month?

Consider this: How well are your walls insulated compared to your neighbor's? Do you take longer, hotter showers? Are you cooking gourmet meals and baking from scratch while your neighbor subsists on quick-heating TV dinners? Does the TV keep you company even when you're not watching it?

No two families live alike. So no two electric bills are the same. Comparing your monthly statement to anyone else's would be like comparing your weekly grocery tabs. Two families of four will never spend exactly the same amount on food because their tastes and habits are different.

Think about the conveniences you might be willing to pay for, even though your neighbor isn't. Are you more comfortable sleeping in an extra-cool house on hot summer nights? Maybe your neighbor's set-back thermostat ekes the temperature up a few degrees at bedtime.

Do members of your family entertain themselves in separate rooms after dinner—watching TV or playing video games—while the folks next door all gather in a family room to play a board game?

Another major factor in today's electric bills is vampire energy loss. Virtually anything that's plugged in is drawing some current—even when it's off. Experts estimate that standby energy drain accounts for 5–10 percent of an average home's annual power usage. A plasma TV, for instance, can use \$165 annually for electric power—when it's off.

Consider unplugging items when not in use or using a power strip to disconnect several items at once. There are also “smart” power strips available that automatically cut power to devices in standby mode.

The way to lower your electric costs is to use energy more efficiently before the bill comes.

Before You Go ...

YOU CAN'T WAIT for summer vacation. But is your house ready? Follow these suggestions before you hit the road for the long July Fourth weekend:

- ▶ **If you're not leaving any pets in the house, crank up your thermostat to about 85 degrees.** Don't worry about re-cooling your house when you get home; the energy you save while you're away will exceed the energy it takes to cool the place off when you get home. **A caution:** Don't turn the AC completely off. A home that gets too hot during the summer can invite mold and mildew.
- ▶ **Close all of the windows, for safety's sake.** Draw the curtains, shades and blinds. They will block sunlight and heat from getting into your rooms and making your empty house hotter.
- ▶ **Unplug the TV, computers, phone chargers and countertop appliances.** Even appliances that are turned off use energy if they're still plugged in.
- ▶ **Leave a few lights on for safety, but turn off the rest.** Check ceiling fans, alarm clocks, coffee makers and other auto-on devices to make sure they're out of commission while you're away from home.

Closing blinds will keep your home cooler and prevent prying eyes from peeking in.



With a Pit Bull on My Knee

A fiercely loyal pet can't overcome his base instincts

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

AN OLD FRIEND AND I WERE DISCUSSING Texas literature one day, and I submitted *Old Yeller* by Fred Gipson as one of my 10 favorite Texas novels. My pal said he'd never read the book and stayed away from the movie, as well.

His explanation: "I ain't going to read no book where no dog dies!"

If you haven't read Gipson's *Old Yeller*, or seen the film, sorry for the spoiler.

Old Yeller was the first Disney movie for kids without a happy ending—a daring move at the time. Besides, everybody's first dog dies. The details differ, but the basic story ends the same.

In my case, I have to explain that my first dog was a pit bull with a personality that helped give the breed a bad name. We named him Cisco in honor of my favorite television show of the day, *The Cisco Kid*. The Cisco Kid and his trusty sidekick, Pancho, rode the frontier fighting evil and injustice.

In my view, Cisco the dog did the same thing.

My dad picked Cisco out of a pound in Birmingham, Alabama, because the black ring around one eye reminded him of the dog on the RCA record label "listening to his master's voice." Dad didn't know Cisco was a pit bull until a vet broke the news to him a couple of weeks later.

Even then, 50 years ago, pit bulls suffered from a public relations problem, as the breed of choice for people who are entertained by betting on which of two dogs will rip the other to shreds. As a pre-schooler, all I knew about pit bulls was that if anybody messed with me, Cisco

would make them cry and run away.

By the time Dad realized that Cisco seemed aggressive occasionally, it was too late. Cisco and I bonded immediately. So I rode to Texas from Alabama in a beat-up 1949 Kaiser with a pit bull on my knee. Mom and Dad in the front seat. Me and Cisco in back, where I serenaded Cisco for miles with a Roy Rogers guitar and my rendition of Elvis Presley's *Hound Dog*.

The first time I did it, Cisco joined in with backup vocals—a mournful howl—just as I finished the line, "*You ain't never caught a rabbit, and you ain't no friend of mine!*"

Then he rolled over on his back and clawed the overhead upholstery until it dangled in jagged shreds.

A state trooper pulled the Kaiser over somewhere north of Lubbock because the beat-up old jalopy with out-of-state tags and its upholstery all ripped up came to what the trooper called "a rolling stop" instead of a complete one. When the trooper reached inside the car to hand the warning ticket to my dad, Cisco lunged at the patrolman's arm, missing the fleshy target by only a tooth's length.

The officer reeled backward and touched his holster for a moment. "That's a bad dog you have there, mister!"

"He's had a rough trip," Dad explained. "Besides, he's very protective of the boy."

Yes, Cisco was very protective of the boy—me—but he was the opposite of that with almost everyone else. Mom he tolerated because she managed the supper dish, but even Dad got no credit for rescuing Cisco from the pound. Friends of mine



were no friends of Cisco, either. Cisco didn't appreciate the recreational innocence of childhood activities like wrestling and tackle football, which looked to him like an assault on his kid. We had to chain him up when friends came over.

Bad deal. Broke my heart. Broke Cisco's spirit.

When Mom told me that she and Dad had decided Cisco had to go, I told them that was fine, but I didn't tell them I was going to run away with Cisco and live off the land—a boy and his dog, wild and free.

Old Yeller was a troublemaker, too, and the family was going to get rid of him until he saved one of the young'uns from a bear attack.

Cisco bought himself some time by grabbing me by the seat of my britches—

not to drag me around the yard for fun like he often did—but to keep me from running into the street to retrieve a ball a split second before a speeding Buick would have hit me. Mom witnessed the whole thing from the front porch.

"The dog stays," she told Dad. The matter was settled.

Old Yeller's fate was sealed when he fought off a rabid wolf and got the "slobbering fits"—hydrophobia or rabies—and later had to be put down after he growled and snarled at the same young'un he'd saved from a bear attack.

Cisco's fate was sealed when he overreacted one day after I tried to push his supper dish back from the edge of the porch. Cisco saw an arm going for his supper dish, and he bit it. Hard. All of a sudden

my arm had these little holes in it, and some of them were bleeding.

Cisco pulled back, whimpering. I think he knew that was the end of the line.

The truck that came to take Cisco away was, in my mind, bigger than any truck ever built—about the size of a B-12 bomber. My parents asked me to be brave and not to cry, but when that monstrous truck showed up and the animal control people wrestled Cisco into the back, and Cisco started whimpering, I broke down.

Just like people always do when they read *Old Yeller* or see the film.

And just for the record, Cisco would have run off that bear and whipped that wolf, too.

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

Savvy Settlers

Germans imported their furniture-making mastery to the Texas frontier

BY LONN TAYLOR

THE GERMAN IMMIGRANTS WHO COLONIZED the Hill Country of Texas in the late 1840s brought few pieces of furniture with them. There was little room for beds or wardrobes in the crowded ships that transported settlers across the Atlantic or in the wagons that carried them inland from the Gulf Coast ports to New Braunfels and Fredericksburg. When it was time to furnish their new houses, they turned to the cabinetmakers who had accompanied them from Germany, men who had learned their trade in Europe.

Between 1845 and 1875, these craftsmen produced an astonishing amount of furniture. Some of the finest examples of their work have been brought together at the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture in New Braunfels.

“The Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture is remarkable for the depth and breadth of its collection of furniture from New Braunfels and Comal County,” says author Kenneth Hafertape, a professor of museum studies at Baylor University. “The collection also benefits from being displayed in the Andreas and Caroline Breustedt house, which blends German and American features.”

In the mid-1800s, at least 50 German-born cabinetmakers worked in New Braunfels and Fredericksburg, towns where residents were almost exclusively German. They made furniture in the styles that were popular in Europe, including the Biedermeier style, with its smooth surfaces, graceful curves and inlaid decoration, but they also worked in the Renaissance Revival, Gothic Revival and

Elizabethan Revival styles. They used native walnut, cypress and pine, as well as imported mahogany and rosewood. At a time when Anglo-American cabinetmakers in the rest of Texas were setting up steam engines and turning their shops into small factories, the Hill Country Germans worked by hand on the human scale they had known in Germany.

The furniture makers usually worked in one room of their houses or in a nearby shed. They used hand tools brought from Germany, including the distinctive horned German smoothing plane, and worked alone or sometimes with an apprentice. They flourished until the mid-1870s, when the railroad made it possible to deliver inexpensive, factory-made furniture from the Midwest to even the most remote Hill Country farmer. The beautiful furniture they made continues to be much prized by today’s collectors.

The best known of the Hill Country cabinetmakers was Johann Michael Jahn, one of the original settlers of New Braunfels. Jahn was born in Pomerania in 1816, apprenticed in Prague, and worked in Switzerland before coming to Texas. His work was discovered by collectors in the 1940s and is well represented in the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture.

Another New Braunfels cabinetmaker whose work appears in the museum collection is Heinrich Scholl, who, with his brother, Adam, made window sashes and doors in addition to furniture. Heinrich Scholl specialized in inlaid tables, and the museum has recently acquired one from his great-great-great-granddaughter, who



The Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture features workmanship from the 1800s.

lives in California but wanted the table to come home to New Braunfels.

Friedrich Wilhelm Tietze is one of the lesser-known Texas-German cabinetmakers. Census records indicate that he came to New Braunfels in 1845 and worked there for at least 25 years. The museum owns a simple low-post pine bed from his shop, typical of the furniture that was made for the humbler Hill Country settlers. The pine probably came from the Bastrop pine forest, a source of wood for the cabinetmakers.

One of the most talented of the Hill Country cabinetmakers was Franz Stautzenberger, a bachelor who came to Texas with his brother's family and lived with them at Clear Spring, southeast of New Braunfels. In Germany, the Duke of Nassau employed Stautzenberger, but in Texas, he made furniture only for his family and friends.

The museum has a large and sophisticated walnut wardrobe made by Stautzenberger in 1860 for Nicholas Holz, a New Braunfels blacksmith. The wardrobe features a stylish pierced gallery mounted with acorn finials around the top, with a plaque in the center bearing the initials "NH" and the date 1860. The museum's collection also includes an elm and mesquite child's chair with an Egyptian Revival back, and an upholstered sofa made by Stautzenberger for Holz.

Bill and Nan Dillen, interior decorators who came to New Braunfels after World War II and pioneered the collecting of Texas furniture, acquired the Tietze bed and the Stautzenberger pieces. Their collection formed the core of the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture when it opened in 1984. Volunteers operated the museum until 2011, when Kathy Nichols came on board as its first professional

director. In addition to furniture, the museum features a reconstructed cabinetmaker's shop and hundreds of woodworking tools, and Nichols plans to expand the collections to include the work of other Hill Country cabinetmakers.

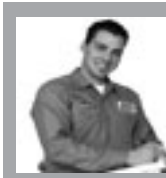
Bruce Shackelford, curator at the Witte Museum's South Texas Heritage Center and an *Antiques Roadshow* regular, says, "Texas has a rich furniture tradition that is often overlooked by both scholars and collectors. The Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture exhibits some of the best examples of Texas furniture and helps preserve what little is left from the past."

Lonn Taylor and David B. Warren wrote *Texas Furniture: The Cabinetmakers and Their Work*, two volumes (University of Texas Press, 2012).

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com Learn more about the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture.

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

DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.



Dear
Darryl

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option. I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly – Lubbock, 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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■ **A SNEAK PEAK INSIDE SILVER VAULT BRICKS:** Pictured left reveals for the very first time the valuable .999 pure fine silver bars inside each State Silver Vault Brick. Pictured right are the State Silver Vault Bricks containing the only U.S. State Silver Bars known to exist with the double forged state proclamation. TX, NM, OK, MI, AR and LA residents are authorized to get individual State Silver Bars at just \$57 state resident minimum set by the Lincoln Treasury. That's why everyone should be taking full Vault Bricks loaded with five State Silver Bars before they're all gone. And here's the best part. Every resident who gets at least two Vault Bricks is also getting free shipping and free handling. That's a real steal because all other state residents must pay over six hundred dollars for each State Vault Brick.

U.S. State Silver Bars go to residents in 6 states

U.S. residents who find their state listed below in bold get first dibs at just the \$57 minimum set for state residents while all non state residents must pay \$134, if any silver bars remain

NATIONWIDE – The phone lines are ringing off the hook.

That's because U.S. State Silver Bars sealed away in State Vault Bricks are being handed over to TX, NM, OK, MI, AR and LA residents at just the state minimum set by the Lincoln Treasury for the next 7 days.

This is not a misprint. For the next 7 days residents who find their state on the Distribution List above in bold are getting individual State Silver Bars at just the state minimum of \$57 set by the Lincoln Treasury. That's why everyone should be taking full Vault Bricks loaded with five U.S. State Silver Bars before they're all gone.

And here's the best part. Every TX, NM, OK, MI, AR and LA resident who gets at least two Vault Bricks is also getting free shipping and free handling. That's a real steal because all other state residents must pay over six hundred dollars for each State Vault Brick.

Just a few weeks ago, nobody knew that the only U.S. State Silver Bars locked away in the private vaults of the Lincoln Treasury would be allocated to the Federated Mint for a limited release to residents in 6 states. Every single one of the 50 U.S. State Silver Bars are date numbered in the order they ratified the Constitution and were admitted into the Union beginning in the late 1700s.

"As Executive Advisor to the Lincoln Treasury I get paid to deliver breaking news. So, for anyone who hasn't heard yet, highly collectable U.S. State Silver Bars are now being handed over at just the state minimum set by the Lincoln Treasury to residents in 6 states who beat the offer dead-

line, which is why I pushed for this announcement to be widely advertised," said Mary Ellen Withrow, the emeritus 40th Treasurer of the United States of America.

"These bars are solid .999 pure fine silver and will always be a valuable precious metal which is why everyone is snapping up as many as they can before they're all gone," Withrow said.

There's one thing Withrow wants to make very clear. State residents only have two days to call the Toll Free Order Hotlines to get the U.S. State Silver Bars.

"These valuable U.S. State Silver Bars are impossible to get at banks, credit unions or the U.S. Mint. In fact, they're only being handed over at state minimum set by the Lincoln Treasury to TX, NM, OK, MI, AR and LA residents who call the Toll Free Hotline before the deadline ends seven days from today's publication date," said Timothy J. Shissler, Executive Director of Vault Operations at the private Lincoln Treasury.

"We're bracing for all the calls and doing everything we can to make sure no one gets left out, but the U.S. State Silver Bars are only being handed over at just the state resident minimum set by the Lincoln Treasury for the next seven days or until they're all gone, whichever comes first. For now, residents can get the U.S. State Silver Bars at just the state minimum set by the Lincoln Treasury as long as they call before the order deadline ends," confirmed Shissler.

"With so many state residents trying to get these U.S. State Silver Bars, lines are busy so keep trying. All calls will be answered," Shissler said. ■



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ALL OTHER STATE RESIDENTS: MUST REMIT \$134 PER STATE SILVER BAR

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Borderlands Shrine

Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Brownsville stands as a spiritual and historic landmark

BY E.R. BILLS

FOR MORE THAN 150 YEARS, IMMACULATE Conception Cathedral has been the physical and spiritual home of the Roman Catholic Church in Brownsville.

The Gothic Revival-style structure on East Jefferson Street downtown, dedicated in 1859, still bears 250,000 of its original bricks, retains 29 original stained glass windows depicting dramatic scenes from the Bible and accommodates worshippers in the original wooden pews, which seat almost 400.

"It may not be one of the biggest cathedrals in Texas," says Tara Putegnat, a lifelong resident of Brownsville and director of the Brownsville Historical Association. "It's sort of modest in terms of size—but it's imposing in terms of history and significance." The cathedral, which has survived major hurricanes and the Civil War, was added to the National Register of Historic places in 1980.

"It's had a big influence on the city," Putegnat says. "It's right next to Market Square."

The cathedral's structure and all its adornments are striking. The chandeliers suspended from the vaulted nave ceilings came from France in 1865. Originally designed for candles only, the fixtures were retrofitted with light sockets when Brownsville received electrical service in the early 20th century. Only the crystal in them has been replaced since. A few changes have been made to the cathedral over the years: Depictions of the Stations of the Cross were mounted on the cathedral walls in 1907, and the pipe organ arrived in 1935.

In 1849, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate were the first religious order to arrive in the lower Rio Grande region after the establishment of the Diocese of Galveston. They established a parish and built a small frame chapel. In



1853, the Rev. Pierre Yves Keralum, a former carpenter and building tradesman, was transferred from the seminary in Galveston to Brownsville to assist the Rev. Jean Verdet in the construction of a larger church. The stone foundation of the structure was laid in 1854.

Later that year, Verdet undertook a voyage from Brownsville to New Orleans aboard the *Nautilus*, intent on securing further funding and purchasing timber for the construction effort. After a stop in Galveston, a violent gale capsized the *Nautilus* on its way to New Orleans, and Verdet perished.

Keralum was then entrusted with completing the church. He modified the plans for the building and saw the project through to completion. He supervised the baking of the bricks, designed the pulpit and altar, fashioned the pilasters, and chose the stone for the floor and the wood for the roof.

He was concerned about the weight-bearing capacity of the roof and got creative with lighter materials. He directed the installation of sky-blue canvas on the nave ceiling. This material imbued the ceiling with a dynamic, ethereal effect that

has been restored and maintains its original splendor.

Keralum also oversaw the construction of the priests' housing and the nuns' convent. The church's 83-foot bell tower was completed in 1863, and, over most of the next decade, Keralum assisted with other church projects, including the San Agustin Cathedral in Laredo. Then, on November 9, 1872, he began a missionary circuit to visit the surrounding villages and ranches and, like Verdet, disappeared. Cowhands discovered his remains a decade later.

In 1874, Immaculate Conception Church was established as a cathedral. In the decades that followed, the Immaculate Conception rectory would repeatedly serve as a haven for priests fleeing turmoil in Mexico.

Today, Immaculate Conception Cathedral is still the hub of the Catholic Church in Brownsville, which was established as a diocese in 1965. "You can visit for worship or otherwise, and it's walkable from anywhere downtown," Putegnat says.

E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo.

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See a slideshow of the cathedral.

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Primo Pasta

WHEN I ASK MY KIDS WHAT THEY WANT for dinner, I already know they'll answer, "Noodles!" Pasta is our happy place, and clearly we're not alone. Around the globe, from soba to spaghetti, home cooks know that noodles are the beginning of endless nourishing dinner possibilities. Best of all, many of the most appealing recipes can be made in minutes. For instance, at OHMS Cafe & Bar, an upscale bistro in historic downtown Amarillo, chef Mary Fuller's Linguine with Fresh Basil and Brie has been a staple since 1992. It's the perfect lazy-days-of-summer recipe that you can assemble in the time it takes for the water to come to a boil.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Linguine With Fresh Basil and Brie

OHMS Chef/Owner Mary Fuller encourages you to use this recipe as a guide and adjust ingredients to your personal preference.

Salt

Handful of fresh basil leaves

3 cloves garlic, chopped

1/3 cup olive oil

1 pound dry linguine

2 Roma tomatoes, diced into 1-inch pieces

4 ounces Brie cheese, sliced

3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Freshly ground pepper

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Meanwhile, combine the basil, garlic and olive oil in a food processor and pulse on the chop setting to combine. (The mixture doesn't need to be smooth.) Transfer mixture to a large mixing bowl.
3. When the water is boiling, add the linguine and cook according to package instructions until it's al dente.
4. Drain and immediately toss the hot noodles with the basil mixture, tomatoes, Brie, Parmesan, pepper and salt to taste, until cheese begins to melt.
5. Serve with an additional drizzle of olive oil, if desired. Serves 4-6.

RALPH DIVE

Recipes

Primo Pasta



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

ALI ALLIE | COSERV

With plenty of mushrooms, spinach and a creamy pesto made from cashews and sun-dried tomatoes, this satisfying one-skillet meal will please everyone in the family (even the carnivores).

Cheese Tortellini With Creamy Sun-Dried Tomato Sauce

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cups baby bella mushrooms, stemmed and sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups fresh baby spinach
- 12 ounces fresh cheese tortellini (uncooked)
- 2½ cups vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- ¾ cup Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto (recipe follows)
- 2 ounces cream cheese, cubed
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup julienned sun-dried tomatoes marinated in oil

1. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté 4–5 minutes. Add the garlic and spinach and cook, stirring, an additional 2–3 minutes.

2. Add the tortellini, vegetable broth and oregano. Stir to combine and bring the mixture to a simmer. Cover, reduce heat to low and cook 7–8 minutes.

3. Add the sun-dried tomato pesto,

cream cheese and Parmesan. Stir until the cream cheese melts into the dish. Continue to cook on low another 3–4 minutes.

4. Remove from heat and top with the sun-dried tomatoes. Serves 3–4.

Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto

- 3½ ounces sun-dried tomatoes marinated in oil, julienned
- ¼ cup roasted cashews
- 6 cloves garlic
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup water

1. Combine the sun-dried tomatoes, cashews and garlic in a food processor. Pulse the ingredients into a coarse purée.

2. Add the Parmesan, basil, black pepper and salt, and pulse to combine.

3. With the processor running, drizzle in the olive oil and water through the feed tube. Makes about 1 cup.

COOK'S TIP Feel free to substitute almonds or pine nuts for the cashews.

“Hombrecotti” (Mexican Manicotti)

CHUCK BURGESS | HEART OF TEXAS EC

Use your favorite green salsa to make a punchy cream sauce for this clever, south-of-the-border riff on manicotti.

- 8 ounces dry manicotti pasta shells
- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- ¼ cup Mexican-style seasoning blend
- 1 pound cottage cheese
- 1 can (4.5 ounces) diced green chiles, drained
- ½ cup diced sun-dried tomatoes in oil
- 1 cup shredded pepper jack cheese
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- 2 medium cloves garlic, diced
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1½ teaspoons dried oregano
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1½ cups half-and-half
- 1½ cups salsa verde

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook manicotti according to package directions for al dente, then drain and cool.

2. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease a 9-by-11-inch glass cooking dish. Heat grill to medium-high.

3. While the grill heats, combine the chicken and seasoning in a sealable bag and leave at room temperature for 5 minutes to let flavors permeate the chicken. Grill the chicken over direct heat until done, turning once, about 15–18 minutes total. Cover with foil and set aside.

4. In a medium bowl, combine the cottage cheese, chiles, sun-dried tomatoes and pepper jack cheese. Dice the grilled chicken and fold into the mixture.

5. Heat the butter and garlic in a skillet over medium heat until butter has melted, stirring frequently. Whisk the flour into the butter until smooth. Add the Parmesan, oregano, salt, pepper and half-and-half, and stir to blend. Stir in the salsa verde and remove mixture from heat.

6. Stuff each manicotti with equal amounts of chicken mixture and place them in baking dish (if any of the mixture is left, stir it into the sauce). Pour

\$5,000 Holiday Recipe Contest

December's issue will feature winners of the annual **Holiday Recipe Contest**. Share the dishes that make your holiday gatherings so special. Send us your best **ORIGINAL** recipes in the **Savory Dish** or **Sweet Dish** category, and your recipe could appear in *Texas Co-op Power* and win you a cash prize. The deadline is **July 10**. See complete rules at TexasCoopPower.com.

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.



sauce over the manicotti and place on middle rack in the oven. Bake 25–30 minutes, or until heated through and the sauce is bubbling. Serves 4–6.

COOK'S TIP For the best results, cook the manicotti just to al dente so each shell will hold its shape when baked. (Overcooked manicotti tends to fall apart.)

Italian Sausage and Pasta With Tomato Cream Sauce

JENNIFER RIECK | MEDINA EC

"This is our new favorite pasta dish! Everyone loves it. It's pretty quick and easy to make and really delicious."

- 8 ounces farfalle (bowtie pasta)
- 1 pound ground Italian sausage (if using sausage in casing, remove casing and crumble up)
- 1 can (14 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta per package directions for al dente, then drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, brown the sausage in a large skillet over medium-high heat until sausage is cooked through and crumbled. If you have an excessive amount of rendered fat in the skillet, drain it.
3. Add the tomatoes, oregano, garlic powder and salt to the sausage, and stir well to combine. Add the cream and bring the mixture to a slight boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer, uncovered, 8–10 minutes or until sauce is reduced and thickened.
4. Remove skillet from heat and stir in the cooked pasta and Parmesan. Serve with additional Parmesan cheese, if desired. Serves 3–4.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com

Create a show-stealing pasta pie with rigatoni.



TO RINSE OR NOT TO RINSE?

One of the great debates among pasta enthusiasts is whether to rinse cooked noodles after they've been drained in a colander. Cooked noodles have a starchy coating that adds flavor (particularly with whole-grain pasta) and creates a sticky surface that helps absorb the sauce. The only time you should rinse cooked noodles is when you're making pasta salad or stir-frying noodles (such as rice or soba noodles). That's because cold water stops the cooking process (so the pasta won't get mushy) and allows a looser texture so the pieces in the final dish will not clump together. —PD

DEADLINE: JULY 10

\$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!

\$5,000 IN PRIZES

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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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They Are Fantastic! "I just received my HCX hearing aids and they are fantastic. Advanced Affordable is far superior and far more affordable!"
- **Chuck D.**

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The Old West

TRACES OF THE OLD WEST linger in the rusted objects, faded photographs and eerie ghost towns left behind—and in a way of life that continues today.
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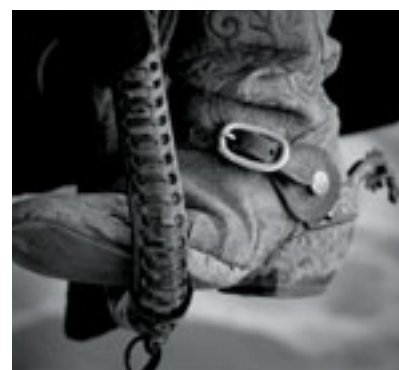
▲ **MARK HOLLY**, Bandera EC: Mounted shooting competition at a ranch near Bandera

► **VICKIE BUCKWALTER**, Grayson-Collin EC: Ghost town in Cody, Wyoming

▼ **ALICE LANGLEY**, Panola-Harrison EC: Langley's ancestors sat for this photo, including grandfather Albert C. Tiller, bottom left. His son and Langley's father, M.R. Tiller, was a Panola-Harrison EC director for 35 years. Her brother, Albert Tiller, is a director now.



▲ **JENNIFER RIECK**, Medina EC: "This is a picture of my husband, Billy, when he was a young boy. It's one of my favorite pictures of him!"



▲ **JENNIFER TUGGLE**, Cooke County EC: "Nothing like a good pair of boots when working a young horse."

UPCOMING CONTESTS

NOVEMBER FIESTA!	DUE JULY 10
DECEMBER NATIVE	DUE AUGUST 10
JANUARY CHURCHES	DUE SEPTEMBER 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 Fridafest

Edinburg [July 8-9]

(956) 383-6246, edinburgarts.com

Fridafest, celebrating the life and legacy of world-renowned Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, provides a showcase of art, music, dance and poetry inspired by her. The event also features a Kahlo look-alike contest and photographs from the artist's private collection.

July

8

Kemp Annual Aley Picnic, (903) 498-6482

Midland [8-9] Tall City Blues Fest, (432) 262-0034, tallcitybluesfest.com

Sweetwater [8-10] West Texas Rodeo Association Rodeo, (325) 235-3484, nolancc.com

Ingram [8-30] *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

9

Palacios Poker in Palacios and Seafood Dinner, (361) 972-2615, palacioschamber.com

13

Marfa [13-17] Film Festival, (432) 295-0291, marfafilmfestival.com

14

Fort Stockton [14-16] Water Carnival, (432) 336-2264, fortstockton.org

15

Slaton [15-16] Caprock Classic Car Club Show and Cruise, (806) 828-6238, slatonchamberofcommerce.org

Waco [15-16] Coryell Creek Critters Annual BBQ Cook-Off, (254) 865-7163, coryellcreekcritters.org

San Angelo [15-17] Wake the Desert Wakeboarding Competition, (325) 655-4136, visitsanangelo.org

16

Belton Discovery Day with Charley Chisholm, (254) 933-5243, bellcountymuseum.org

July 15
Slaton
Caprock Classic Car
Club Show and Cruise



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Farley Boat Works

A hands-on boat-building workshop brings (water)craft to life in Port Aransas

BY CHARLES LOHRMANN

EVEN IN PORT ARANSAS, WHERE BOATS often appear on dry land, the skeleton of a 19th-century schooner demands a closer look. My double take stopped my car outside Farley Boat Works, on Avenue C, just a few blocks from the ferry landing.

Judging by the beams and wooden framing, the boat looked like the younger sister of one of the pirate ships that once plied the waters of the nearby Gulf of Mexico.

"This is a replica of a truly Texas type of boat," explains Rick Pratt, a friendly fellow with a good-natured piratical bearing. With his weathered countenance and impish grin, Pratt clearly loves sharing his knowledge of watercraft and the craft of building them.

"This is a boat that no one has seen for decades," he says, "but it would have been common around Port Lavaca in the 1880s.

"This is the kind of boat that would have served as a freighter in those days, delivering the mail and navigating through the shallow passes where the water is no more than 3 feet deep."

But why here? And why now?

The answer to both questions is that Farley Boat Works is actually a living museum. Aspiring seafarers, families and groups come here to build their own boats. Anyone willing and able is encouraged to construct a boat. The 60-foot schooner taking shape in the back lot is one of the larger projects—but the craft can be as simple as a small skiff or as complicated as a wooden cabin cruiser similar to one the original Farley Boat Works built that transported President Franklin D. Roosevelt on his legendary tarpon fishing excursions in 1937.

Pratt introduces me to shop manager Frank Coletta, who takes up the story.

"We help people build all kinds of boats," Coletta says. "We provide the shop space as well as all the tools and guidance."

How long does this take?



Farley Boat Works is part of the Port Aransas Museum.

"We have a waiting list, but a typical skiff will take about two months," he says. "A family with five or six people can build the same boat in about two weeks." Could be a vacation project for an ambitious family.

The three of us walk over to a stack of wood shapes. Coletta points to the pile of plywood and lumber, and says, "We actually can build one of these kits in about three days."

The kit approach might be more appropriate for today's time-challenged boat builders who still want to invest their sweat equity in the experience of assembling a true heirloom.

"I got my start in a place like this on the West Coast," Coletta says. "It was during a plywood boat festival. But there wasn't one like it in Texas."

On that note, Pratt says that Farley Boat Works is a project of the Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association.

Now, why "Farley"?

"The Farleys started their boat works in 1915, back when Port Aransas was set up to become a port," he explains. "Then two major hurricanes hit in 1916 and 1919,

and the dream of a true port was dead."

So, he says, the Farleys decided that Port Aransas should become a sport-fishing destination. One angler requested that they add a cabin to make the standard skiff more comfortable on a hot day, and the resulting boat made the Farleys famous, Pratt says.

That was in the days when catching the fierce and feisty tarpon was the goal of many a sport angler visiting Port A. Then FDR made his much-discussed and well-documented visits.

Pratt guides me to one of the nearby storage units and unlocks the door so the sunlight can illuminate the battered frame of one of the original Farley boats, now awaiting full restoration.

Will this boat, the last of the classic boats from the original Farley Boat Works, ever go into the water? I ask. "I don't know," Pratt says, "I'd hate to be the guy that sank the last Farley boat."

Charles Lohrmann is the *Texas Co-op Power* editor.



WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com
Watch videos from Farley Boat Works.

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