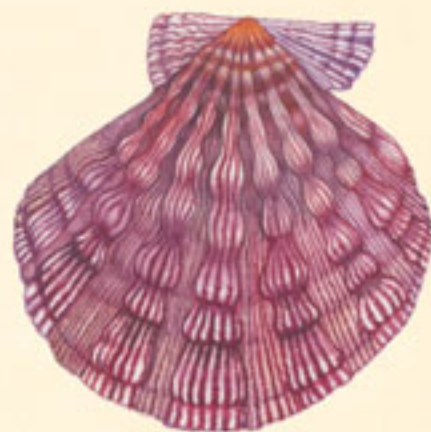


# TEXAS CO-OP POWER



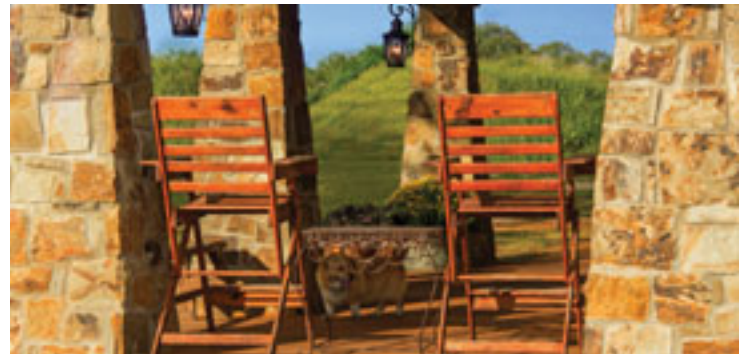
## SEASHELLS *of Texas*

Gulf treasure  
rewards coastal  
beachcombers





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Global currents produce the shells that wash up on South Padre Island.

## FEATURE

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### Treasure From the Gulf Seashells draw scientists and dreamers alike to hunt along the Texas coast

Story by Melissa Gaskill | Photos by Larry Ditto | Illustrations by Aletha St. Romain

Order an illustrated Texas Seashell poster online

## NEXT MONTH

**Out-of-the-Way Bookstores** Online shopping can't replace the pleasure of browsing in a store and discovering a new (or old) author.



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By E. Dan Klepper

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Excerpt by Carolyn Boyd

**ON THE COVER** Shells that once provided armor for sea life become works of art for beachcombers. Illustration by Aletha St. Romain

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## Historic Anniversary

I, too, lived through that storm. My family was living in Guymon, Oklahoma. I was only 13, and my mother was a schoolteacher. She will turn 100 on May 16.

ALVIN SHORES | NAVASOTA

MID-SOUTH SYNERGY

## I-35 Attractions

We really enjoyed *35 on 35* [March 2017]. While we were pleased that our wonderful Frank Buck Zoo made the list, we were disappointed the story did not include Texas' Medal of Honor Park in Gainesville. This beautiful park recognizes every Medal of Honor recipient in the history of our country.

FRANK MAHNICH | GAINESVILLE

COOKE COUNTY EC

**Editor's note:** *Valor Always Welcome* [March 2014] featured Gainesville's Medal of Honor Host City Program.



## Texas Holiday

I just finished reading the March issue. What a great disappointment! You didn't once mention Texas Independence Day, March 2.

H.L. FURR

UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

**Editor's note:** TCP honored Texas Independence Day with a post and links on Facebook (above). The March Pick of the Month in

## Blizzard Memories

I was born just days before the blizzard hit [*Blizzard of 1957*, March 2017]. My parents lived outside of Texhoma. I remember hearing stories about the snow and drifts being so deep that they couldn't leave the house for days.



Back then, they didn't have a phone in the house and couldn't call for help. A store owner in town knew my parents had a newborn. He became concerned about everyone's welfare. He packed up bags of food and milk, then he and another man walked to my parents' house and dug through the snow to deliver them.

KENNETH JOHNSON | PORTLAND | NUECES EC

Around Texas was the Texas Independence Celebration in San Benito. Also, *Stirring Delivery* [February 2017] follows the path of William Travis' Victory or Death letter.

## Eating Healthy

In response to the letter *Healthy Dialogue* [March 2017], I would like to point out that, except sugar, all the ingredients the reader listed are, indeed, healthy.

I was diagnosed as prediabetic with high cholesterol, high blood pressure and obesity. I have chosen to control these problems by eating a healthy diet of high fat, protein and very low carbohydrates. Carbohydrates (sugars) are the enemy we must do battle with.

ANDY CARR | LUBBOCK

SOUTH PLAINS EC

## Eating Cajun

The Cajun recipes are great [*Ragin' Cajun*, February 2017].

We tried and loved all four of them. Although I cook a lot, I had never tried Cajun cooking.

JANICE WYMAN | HALLETTSVILLE

GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

## Once a Texan ...

As a native Texan living elsewhere, your magazine is a wonderful link to my roots. The February issue was one of your best. As I read it from cover to cover on a dreary morning in Colorado, I felt like I was back home and realized that once a Texan, always a Texan—no matter where you reside.

CARYL HELMIN-SCHMID | IGNACIO, COLORADO

## Concern for Community

I am a family member of the old Coker Cemetery in Cooke County. We needed to have our 40-foot flagpole rope replaced and had no way to do it.

I contacted Cooke County EC to see if someone could help me. I was told to leave the rope

by the pole and somebody from the co-op would make it happen. I went out to do some cleaning last week, and sure enough, the new rope was up on the pole. I want to thank Cooke County EC for helping us honor the families of our cemetery.

RICHARD TEAR | CELINA

GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

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Texas Co-op Power

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## HAPPENINGS

# Cast of Volunteers

**MOST TEXAS FIRE DEPARTMENTS** are nonprofit entities that receive no taxpayer funding. That's why many hold regular fundraisers, such as the **BLEIBLERVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FISH FRY**, which includes a live auction.

The annual fish fry, **MAY 21** this year, collects money for equipment and operating expenses for the 35-member fire department in north Austin County, says Steve Doty, the VFD's president and a member of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative. In addition, Bleiblerville benefits from Texas A&M Forest Service funding for its participation in mutual aid services and has received grants from Bluebonnet and San Bernard ECs.

Three members of the Bleiblerville VFD are employees at San Bernard EC. John Spiess, the member services supervisor at the co-op, is a volunteer firefighter in Industry, and he says a dozen or more of his fellow employees serve as volunteer firefighters in the area.

Volunteers operate about 75 percent of Texas' fire departments.

**INFO ▶ (979) 249-6382**

Find more happenings all across the state at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)

## HISTORY LESSON

# BONDS OF MATRIMONY

**Fifty years ago**—for the first time in Texas—it became legal for married women to buy and sell their own real property and securities. Dallas attorney Louise B. Raggio helped draft the Texas Marital Property Act of 1967, which gave women the right to own property, secure bank loans and start businesses without their husbands' consent, according to the State Bar of Texas.

**Referring to a woman's** lack of rights under Texas law before 1967, Raggio once said, "It was idiots, convicts, minors and married women who didn't have property rights."



## WORTH REPEATING

*"Magic—that's just a label, you know. Completely meaningless. It wasn't so very long ago that people were saying that electricity was magic."*

— **ROBERT BLOCH**, 20th-century American fiction writer, best known as the author of *Psycho*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## There Once Was a Rhyme About Texas



**May 12 is National Limerick Day.**

Limericks are notoriously off-color, but an online search found this printable poem with a Texas tint:

*A gorgeous young lass from Decatur  
Longed for a career in theater.  
On stage she was bad  
So the audience got mad  
And hit her with a rotten tomat-er.*

From *Viagra, Prozac and Leeches* (iUniverse, 2006) by Don Ramon

### LIFESTYLE

## Pull Over, AUSTIN

**YOU'VE BEEN PASSED BY.** "AUSTIN" was expected to be the big prize when My Plates put 50 specialty Texas license plates up for auction in November 2016. But "12" sold for \$6,250. AUSTIN was second in the bidding at \$4,900.

**WHY 12?** Steve Farrar, president of My Plates, says 12 was the lowest number available, and it holds a special place in the hearts of Texas Aggies, who are proud of their 12th Man tradition in football.

**IT'S A RICH TRADITION.** The most expensive plate ever sold in Texas is "12THMAN"—for \$115,000 in 2013.

**WHO'S NO. 1?** My Plates says its first single-digit number plate will be auctioned this year. Check [myplates.com](http://myplates.com) for details.

### Did you know?



**VANITY PAYS.** My Plates sales have put more than \$47 million in the state general revenue fund since November 2009.

### CO-OP PEOPLE

## HE'S A SPECIMEN

**Bill Thompson** has discovered 46 species of extinct organisms since he began hunting for fossils in Central Texas in the 1970s, but the remains of a 110 million-year-old sea urchin he found in a quarry north of Canyon Lake have taken on a special meaning.

***Tetragamma donaldtrumpi***—named for President Donald Trump—is Thompson's way of honoring the commander in chief.

**"When you've got 46** to name, you have to come up with a lot," says Thompson, a member of Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative who also has named a fossil for one of his children and another for a friend.

### ALMANAC

## 90-Day Wonders

**When the U.S.** declared war on Germany and entered World War I in April 1917, an urgent need for officers for combat leadership arose.

**In May of that year,** the War Department opened 16 officer training camps around the country, including one at Camp Funston in Leon Springs near San Antonio. After three months of intense training, nearly 2,000 graduated from Camp Funston as officers.

**The trainees** at these camps became known as "90-day wonders." Camp Funston is now called Camp Stanley.







# Treasure *from the* Gulf

*Seashells draw scientists and dreamers alike to hunt along the Texas coast*

BY MELISSA GASKILL | PHOTOS BY LARRY DITTO | ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALETHA ST. ROMAIN

**I**magine a destination where treasure lies scattered in the open and available within easy reach—a different selection every day. Where you never know what you'll find, but you always know you will find something good. And everything you find, despite its inherent value, is free.

No need to imagine any longer. The destination exists: It is the Texas beach, and its treasures are seashells.

I spent my childhood beachcombing the broad hems of sand along the Texas Gulf Coast, and these unstructured outings produced pails

filled with unrecognizable shards as often as beautiful shells. In those presunscreen days, my newfound collection often cost me a painful sunburn. But the payoff for my time and discomfort came when I found whole sand dollars, complete lightning whelks and enough other seaside finds to consider the acquisition a bargain.

Besides, I always enjoyed a day on the beach.

Seashells are the exoskeletons, or outer protective coverings, of creatures in the taxonomic phylum Mollusca, commonly called mollusks or molluscs. These animals live inside a thick layer that secretes calcium carbonate to create their shells. Although not all mollusks create shells, and some nonmollusk organisms do





produce shell-like coverings, most seashells house a mollusk at some point.

Mollusks come in diverse shapes, but most share a common design: bilateral symmetry, or a left and right side that mirror each other, and a body that typically contains a head, a visceral mass and a large “foot” or muscle the animal uses to move around. Many of our most recognizable seashells—whelks, limpets, cowries and shark eyes—come from gastropods, the largest class in the Mollusca phylum.

On any given Texas beach, you will likely encounter about a dozen variations of shell shapes including turbinate (a sort of pointed swirl), conic (those shells you hold to your ear to hear the sea), ovate and cylindrical.



**The receding Gulf tide at South Padre Island speckles the beach with seashells.**

Another class of Mollusca is the bivalve. The classic bivalve shape—two identical halves hinged together—is the seashell shape many people imagine when the topic is mentioned. Bivalves include oysters, scallops and clams.

More than 100,000 and maybe as many as 200,000 molluscan species inhabit the world, with 2,455 or so found in the Gulf of Mexico and probably more than 1,000 within Texas, according to the *Encyclopedia of Texas Seashells* (Texas A&M University Press, 2010).

The book considers Texas land to stretch from the dry beach all the way out to the continental shelf and down the slope. With that definition

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

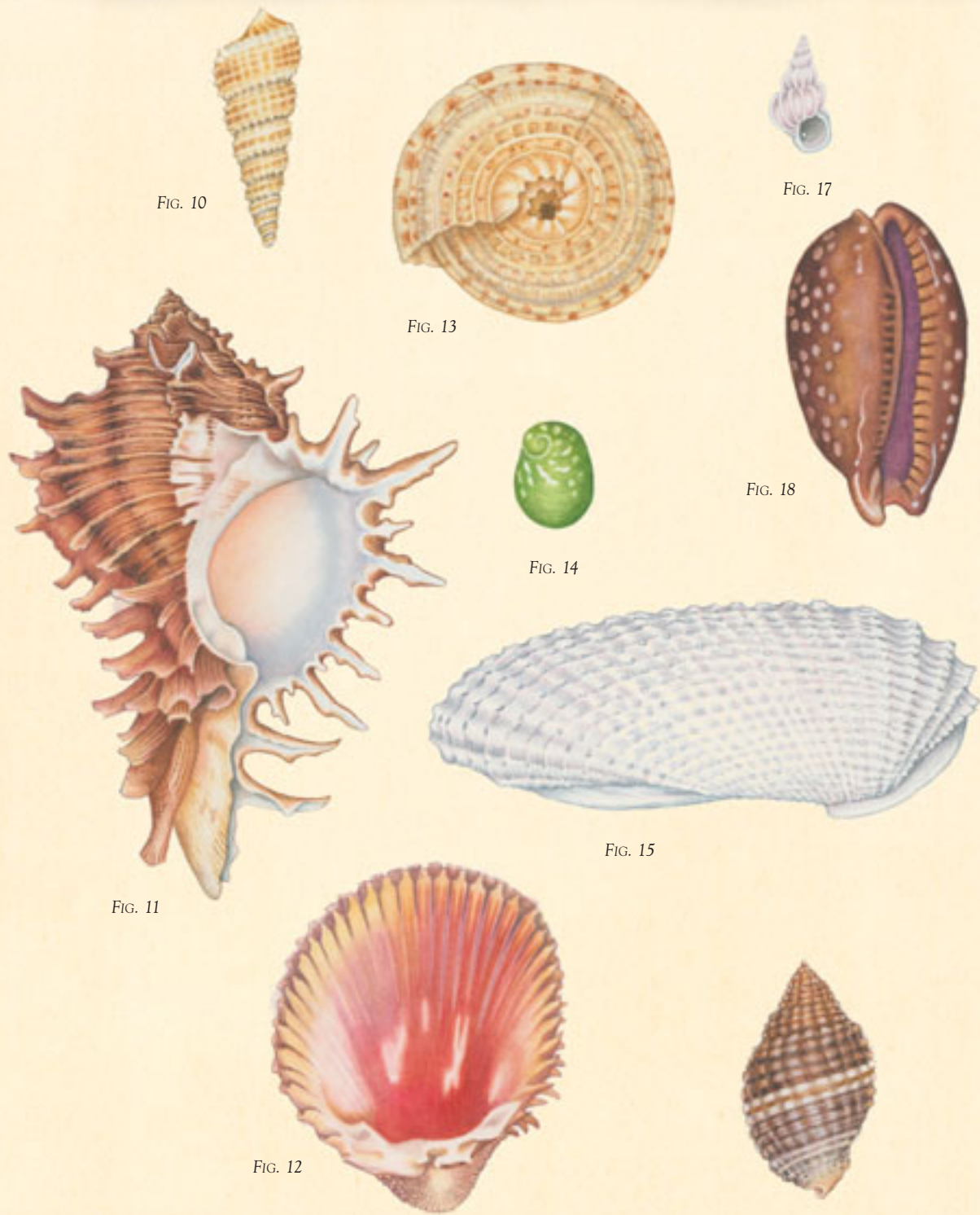




# SEASHELL

- FIG. 1: BANDED TULIP (*Fasciolaria lilium*) FIG. 2: BROWN-LINE NISO (*Niso aeglees*) FIG. 3: NORTHERN LION'S PAW (*Nodipecten fragosus*) FIG. 4: MANY-COLORED DWARF TELLIN (*Angulus versicolor*)  
 FIG. 5: RAM'S HORN SQUID (*Spirula spirula*) FIG. 6: JANTHINA (*Janthina janthina*)  
 FIG. 7: LIGHTNING WHELK, STATE SHELL OF TEXAS (*Busycon pulleyi*)  
 FIG. 8: FLAME AUGER (*Terebra taurina*) FIG. 9: WHITE BABY EAR (*Sinum perspectivum*)





# S o f T E X A S

- FIG. 10: MITCHELL'S WENTLETRAP (*Amaea mitchelli*) FIG. 11: GIANT EASTERN MUREX (*Hexaplex fulvescens*) FIG. 12: PRICKLY COCKLE (*Trachycardium isocardia*) FIG. 13: COMMON SUNDIAL (*Architectonica nobilis*)  
 FIG. 14: EMERALD NERITE (*Smaragdia viridis*) FIG. 15: ANGELWING (*Cyrtopleura costata*)  
 FIG. 16: COMMON NUTMEG (*Cancellaria reticulata*) FIG. 17: BLADED WENTLETRAP (*Epitonium albidum*)  
 FIG. 18: ATLANTIC DEER COWRIE (*Macrocypraea cervus*)

Altha St. Romain



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9 in mind, Texas includes deep-water species, as well as tropical species similar to those found at the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary 100 miles offshore, explains John W. “Wes” Tunnell Jr., endowed chair for biodiversity and conservation science at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies.

At least in theory, any of these shells could end up on a Texas beach, he adds.

“When an organism dies offshore, currents or, more commonly, storms, wash the shells onto the beach,” Tunnell says. That means that right after winter or tropical storms is the best time to find shells on the shore. Sometimes the animal dies on the beach, especially when a storm washes up one that doesn’t typically live there.

Empty shells can last for millennia, depending on their thickness. Tunnell says the prettiest shells typically found on the Texas coast include cowries, Mitchell’s wentletrap, lettered olives and cone shells. Another favorite is junonia, a spotted, spindle-shaped prize measuring 3 inches long or more.



Many bivalve shells look plain, but Tunnell points out that some have beautiful colors. Scallops range from bright yellow to red and orange. The small, thin shells of tellins range from bright pink to rose. While the animal is alive, these colors reflect the animal’s genetics and diet. Once a shell lies empty on the beach, sunlight and heat can fade or change its colors over time.

Lightning whelks, the Texas state shell, represent notable finds for beachcombers. These whelks grow as long as 16 inches, with colors ranging from off-white to tan or gray, with narrow, brown streaks of “lightning” from top to bottom. Inside lightning whelks, you’ll see a white surface with a counterclockwise spiral.

Live lightning whelks hang out on the bottom of shallow bays in sand or mud near shoalgrass or turtlegrass meadows. There they feast on oysters, clams and scallops. In March and April, beachcombers might find the empty egg capsules of this animal—pale, semitransparent strands of disk-like capsules up to 33 inches long, each containing as many as 200 eggs. Eggs hatch and grow inside the capsule, eventually emerging as miniature whelks, complete with shells.







**T**hroughout history, humans have used shells to make tools, arrowheads, beads, bracelets, boxes, rattles, drums and trumpets. Shells even served as currency. Native Americans in Texas ate lightning whelks and used their shells for ceremonial implements, tools, cups and bowls. Galveston Island State Park Ranger Lisa Reznicek reports that Native Americans on Galveston considered these unusual left-opening shells to hold magical powers.

Regardless of how you might use the shells, Texas law allows only hand collection of live lightning whelks and other saltwater mollusks and prevents overharvesting by imposing limits on the number of live creatures a collector can keep. If you decide to gather live whelks or other mollusks, you'll need to purchase a fishing license with a saltwater fishing stamp.

Everyone is free to collect empty shells on Texas beaches. Authorities suggest you take shells only as personal souvenirs, not for commercial purposes, and leave any shell with a living animal inside or connected to it on the beach. Remember that hermit crabs often make homes of unoccupied lightning whelks and other shells, so make sure any shell you pick up to take home is truly empty.

"The state of the art, so to speak, is not to collect live things, just the empty shells themselves," Tunnell says. "That is generally believed to be fine. You won't be hurting the environment."

Collecting your own shells is probably better for the sea crea-

tures than buying shells, he adds. Shells sold in shops generally originate in the Pacific or Indian oceans, where overcollection of

certain shells can damage the environment by endangering the population of sea creatures. "A market for certain rare shells can cause a problem if suppliers collect too many," Tunnell says. "In some places it is illegal, and in some places it *should be illegal.*"



Another disadvantage of buying shells is that information providing the shell's origin is sometimes inaccurate. Unscrupulous dealers paint or otherwise alter shells to enhance their appearance. When you order online, what you see will not always be what you get.

Those new to beachcombing can learn the ropes on scheduled beach walks held at Galveston Island State Park every Saturday from late March to late November. Knowledgeable guides explain what is commonly found on the beach and why. The park's nature center and office also offer shell identification charts and guidebooks.

Mustang Island State Park near Port Aransas offers regular beach walks—two-hour affairs that include hunting for shells, identifying birds and exploring around the jetties. Park interpreter Eric Ehrlich says low tide the week after an Arctic front makes for

**Opposite: Sunrise at South Padre; above: beachcombers at Mustang Island State Park**





the best beachcombing. Shells common on this beach include whelks, coquinas, cockles and shark eyes. Ehrlich's favorite shell is the more uncommon murex.

At Padre Island National Seashore, visitors may keep up to a 5-gallon bucket filled with found treasures such as unoccupied seashells for personal use. Commercial shell gathering is forbidden. "We're pretty serious about that," says ranger Patrick Gammon, who adds that currents from all over the world converge here, making for particularly rich treasure hunting.

Beachcombers are likely to find whelks, sundials, crab shells and sand dollars. The last technically aren't shells, but skeletons of an echinoderm, or sea urchin, that lives on the sea bottom. While alive, the urchins are covered with tiny hairs, but once the animal dies, the hairs fall off to reveal an attractive pattern. The seashore here also serves up a wealth of sea beans, which are seeds and not shells but are still considered worthy of collecting.

Rangers lead scheduled beach walks starting at Malaquite Visitor Center and give deck talks using a "touch table" that contains just about anything found on the beach. Gammon reports that shark eyes and giant purple acorn barnacles are common here. His favorite find is a calico crab shell. "They're beautiful but very fragile," he says.

Whatever beach you comb, take a close look at the wrack line, that line of debris on the beach after high tide. That's a good place to find one of Reznicek's favorite shells, the shark eye or moon snail. She loves to tell youngsters how the creature that creates this shell uses chemical secretions from its projecting tongue, called a radula, to drill a perfectly circular hole in another shell. It squirts an enzyme through the hole that enables it to slurp out the animal living inside.

If you find a shell with a perfectly circular hole in it, most likely a moon snail is to blame.

"Every day there is something new on the beach," Reznicek says. "It is so dynamic and changes so often—sometimes even in an hour. Collecting shells feels almost meditative."

A meditation replete with treasure.

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

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Find out more about Gulf Coast treasures and available guidebooks to identify them, and check out popular destinations to begin your beachcombing adventures.

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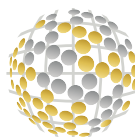
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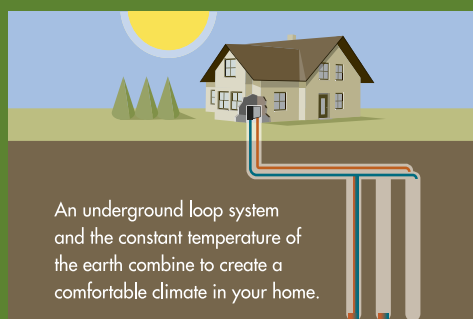


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# 10 Simple Spring Energy Savers

**FOLLOW THESE SPRINGTIME TIPS** to help save energy and lower your electric bill:

1. Call a qualified technician to service your central air-conditioning system. HVAC equipment needs servicing every year to head off major problems and keep the system running smoothly all summer.
2. As long as the spring weather is mild, open a window instead of turning on the air conditioner. Draw soft spring breezes into the home by turning on your ceiling fans.
3. Cook outside on the grill as soon as the weather permits it. When you don't turn on the cooktop or oven, you don't heat up your house.



**Open the windows for some cool air this spring and keep bills low.**

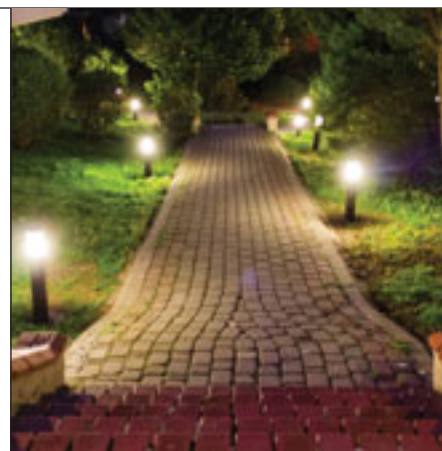
8. Likewise, caulk around windows and electrical outlets so cool air can't escape your house and hot air can't get in.
9. Keep your home's humidity levels low by running kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans—but only until the smoke or steam clears. Running them for too long will suck more than humidity and odors from your home. Those fans can send your comfortable, conditioned air out of the house.
10. Change your AC filter. A clogged filter forces your system to work harder and use more energy. It also can send the dust and allergens it collects right back into your indoor air.

4. Close the shades. It's tempting to leave them open on beautiful, sunny spring days. If it's hot outside, that heat can find its way into your house through the windows and tempt you to crank up the AC unnecessarily.

5. If it's sunny but not hot outdoors, throw those curtains open and let the natural daylight illuminate your home. Then, turn off any lights. You won't need them.

6. Don't have a programmable thermostat yet? It's time. Sometimes spring weather calls for heat, and sometimes you need the AC. A programmable thermostat will help you limit how much energy you use for either by automatically turning the temperature up or down as needed.

7. Seal the ducts in your central air-conditioning system. Leaky ducts can push your cooling costs up by as much as 30 percent.



## Follow the Path to Lighter Lighting

**LIGHTING ACCOUNTS FOR MORE** than 10 percent of a home's electric bill, but constant developments are making it easier and more economical to illuminate your home. Try any of these updated features to adjust the way you light up your life:

### Dimmers

- ▶ Adjust light levels to meet a range of preferences
  - ▶ Can extend lightbulb life
- LEDs and CFLs need to be labeled as compatible to work with dimmer features.

### Remote control or smart panels

- ▶ Offer convenient management from a phone or remote control
- ▶ Some models allow for remote management from anywhere, providing security and peace of mind.
- ▶ Some models save preference profiles that can be preset.

### Timers

- ▶ Provide added security while away from home
- ▶ Improve safety for entry after dark
- ▶ Countdown timers prevent leaving lights on accidentally.

### Motion sensors

- ▶ Allow for hands-free convenience
- ▶ Provide added security when installed outside

All switches and lighting equipment should bear the mark of a nationally recognized safety testing laboratory, and major upgrades should be handled by a qualified electrician.



# The Ins and Outs of Outlets

**OUTLETS—THE COMMON TERM** for electrical receptacles: You can't enter a modern building without seeing them, and they all seem pretty much the same, right? Wrong! As electrical construction practices have evolved over the years, electrical outlets have evolved along with them, building in greater safety features.

The old-school, two-pronged receptacle that you remember from your grandma's house was installed in residences before 1962 and is no longer recommended for any structure. Since 1971, the National Electrical Code has required at least the standard three-pronged, grounded receptacle, which reduces the risk of electrical shock and protects equipment from damage. From there, receptacle design has advanced to cover a range of safety needs.

**TRRs:** Tamper-resistant receptacles are recommended for homes with children or pets, as outlet covers have been proven not to provide adequate protection. In a TRR, a built-in shutter system prevents objects from being inserted, except when simultaneous, equal pressure to both slots is applied by a plug.

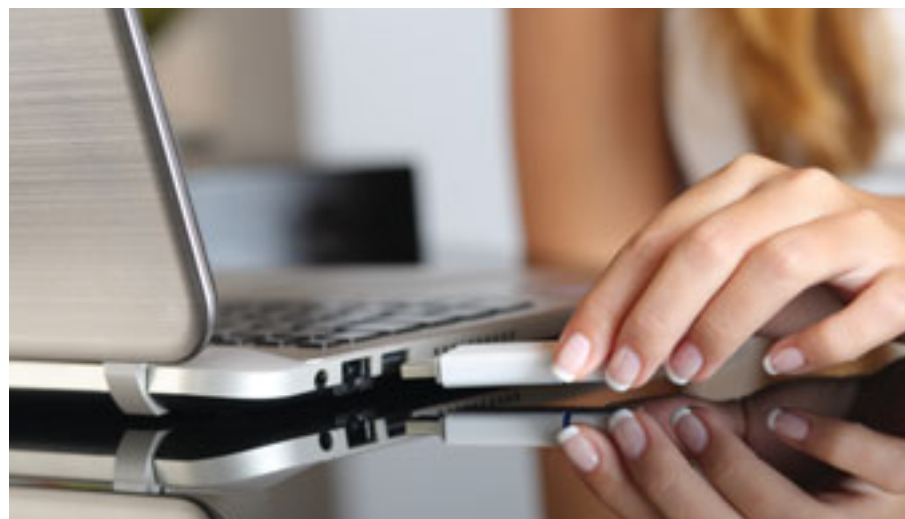
**AFCIs:** An arc-fault circuit interrupter reduces the risk of fire by interrupting power when an arc fault occurs anywhere in the circuit, including within the items plugged into it—even attached cords. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 50 percent of electrical fires occurring annually in the U.S. could be prevented by AFCIs.

**GFCIs:** Ground-fault circuit interrupters are recommended for installation in areas where water and electricity are in close proximity, such as bathrooms, garages, kitchens, laundry areas and any outdoor receptacles. A GFCI prevents shock by quickly shutting off power (in as little as  $\frac{1}{40}$  of a second) to a circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs from that returning, indicating current leakage, or a "ground fault."

**Surge suppressors:** A surge-suppression receptacle protects sensitive electronic equipment from transient power surges, as happens when large appliances such as air conditioners turn on and off. These often are installed to protect costly devices such as computers and TVs.

**USBs:** The newest kind of electric receptacle combines a computer USB port with a traditional outlet. The Electrical Safety Foundation International estimates that more than 10 billion electrical devices in use today are charged via USB cables.

**USB receptacles are commonly used to charge electrical devices.**



**After a flood, check your appliances and electrical system for damage.**

## Don't Use a Wet Appliance

**IF A SPRING STORM** floods your home, your washing machine and clothes dryer could wind up waterlogged—and that's not safe. Have a professional check for damage to your electrical system and appliances.

Before beginning to clean up a flooded house, **turn off the electricity and unplug all appliances.** Waterlogged appliances, especially those with motors close to the ground, could be damaged and should not be used until properly cleaned, dried and inspected.

**Open all appliances and wipe them clean.** Allow water to drain out and let them dry completely, which could take up to a week. Never plug a wet appliance back in before a service technician checks it for electrical damage.

Before restoring your electricity, **wipe clean all outlets that the water may have touched, and call a service technician to inspect the system.**

To prevent your home from flooding while you're away, **turn off the water before you leave.** Also, consider adding downspouts to your gutters to divert water so it won't pour onto the ground near the house.

# At One With Big Bend

Photographer James H. Evans captures people and places of his adopted home

BY E. DAN KLEPPER

THE BIG BEND REGION OF TEXAS FEATURES wildlife-filled desert, piñon-dotted mountains and panoramic grassland spreading across the western reaches of the state, from the Pecos River to El Paso. Although sparsely populated, it harbors an abundance of personality, provided as much by the locals as by the artists and adventurers drawn here by the landscape's inextricable allure. Photographer James H. Evans, whose work frequently occupies magazine pages as well as the walls of collectors and galleries across the state, moved here under such a spell.

"I made my first trip to the Big Bend in the late 1980s," Evans recalls. "I fell in love with the place. I camped in Big Bend National Park and met some locals around the area. They were smart, unpretentious and real. I guess you could say I fell in love with the people, too."

Although running his commercial photography studio in Austin provided its own rewards, Evans wanted more from his work and decided that the Big Bend could make that happen.

"I felt like if I moved to the Big Bend and dedicated my life to documenting the landscape and its people, then the work would hold up and have meaning," he says. "It was like the drag racers I used to photograph when I was just starting out. You had the weekend hotshot who would show up at the track then go back home to his real job. Then there was the guy that made a living at it. I wanted to be that guy."

Evans went back to Austin, closed his studio, moved to the Big Bend, and spent the next 25 years building his reputation.

"It happens that James Evans is one of the great artists of the Southwest and one of America's unique photographers, but his brilliance is unpolished, slightly off-balance," Robert Draper says in his foreword to Evans' *Big Bend Pictures* (University of Texas Press, 2003). "His admirers see this as evidence of Evans' authenticity. He and Big Bend are two of a kind."

Born in West Virginia, Evans spent his youth in New Jersey. His parents divorced when he was 7, and Evans stayed with his mother, who relocated him and his two brothers to Camden, across the Delaware River from Philadelphia.

"When I was young, I was a bit of a delinquent," he says. "But as I got older, I would bicycle to Philly across the Ben Franklin Bridge and go to museums and shows. I met famous photographers like Harry Callahan and George Tice just by hanging out at the galleries." At 25, Evans experienced one of the worst winters in U.S. history, battling frigid temperatures in a tiny Camden cottage. "I remember lying on the roof of my house that October of '79, watching flocks of geese making their way south. I figured if geese were smart enough to get out of here before the next







winter comes, then maybe I should, too.”

The next year, Evans moved as far south as he thought possible—the Texas Gulf Coast. “I still have a roll of film I shot that year that starts on the streets of Philly as my buddies celebrated the World Series win and ends with pictures of Galveston Beach.” He earned a living working in a Corpus Christi photo lab, picking up editorial assignments on the side.

Then a photographer friend hired him to help out on a shoot for American portrait photographer Annie Leibovitz. Leibovitz was in San Antonio photographing then-mayor Henry Cisneros. The experience transformed the way Evans understood photography. “It was a life-changer for me,” he says. “I was used to taking boring portraits and working in a lab. Watching Leibovitz, I realized how photography could be so much more than that. It could be art.”

A move to Austin and a two-year stint as a photographer’s assistant led Evans to open his studio and, ultimately, to the Big Bend.

Today, Evans and his wife, designer/architect Marci Roberts, operate an enterprise in Marathon, 50 miles north of Big Bend National Park. The collaboration includes Evans Gallery, where collectors find his limited-edition digital and silver prints, as well as his two books from UT Press, French Company Grocer (a food, wine and camping gear store), and a Big Bend-inspired product line called Desert Critter Wear. The line features images of desert wildlife including horned lizards, tarantulas, javelinas and rattle-snakes photographed by Evans on white backgrounds that are printed on pillowcases, camisoles, dinner napkins, pool dresses and T-shirts.

Despite the demands of running a busi-

**James H. Evans has been turning Big Bend’s landscape into art since 1988.**

ness, Evans hasn’t lost his enthusiasm for creative photography. “I live a good life,” he says, “and I’ve

worked hard to make it one.” His proudest achievement appears in the latest volume of the *All-American* photography book series by acclaimed photographer Bruce Weber. Volume 16, titled *Wild Blue Yonder* (teNeues, 2016), details Weber’s exploration of the state’s outliers and includes a photograph by Evans. The photographer’s nod to Evans serves as an honor and a testament to the talent of a Big Bend artist who has made the wild blue yonder his own.

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

**WEB EXTRAS at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)**

See a slideshow of Evans’ Big Bend images.

# White Shaman Mural

An enduring prehistoric landmark in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands

EXCERPT BY CAROLYN BOYD

WHITE SHAMAN SHELTER IS LOCATED AT the heart of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands. Due to a unique combination of ecological and geological factors, rockshelters here contain some of the best-preserved and longest records of Native American lifeways—from 11,000 years ago to European contact. As a result, the Lower Pecos Canyonlands is considered one of the most significant archaeological regions in the world. Although its boundaries are ill-defined, the visual and material culture characterizing the region and its prehistoric inhabitants extends approximately 70 miles north and 90 miles south of the United States–Mexico border, from near the hamlet of Sheffield, Texas, to the Arroyo de la Babia in Coahuila, Mexico. East and west the region stretches approximately 80 miles between the tiny communities of Carta Valley and Dryden, Texas. At the region's center, the Pecos River converges with the Rio Grande. White Shaman Shelter is located here in a small tributary canyon of the Pecos River.

The pictographs of White Shaman Shelter are classified as Pecos River style. This is the most complex and compositionally intricate of the regional rock art styles. An array of earth colors were used to create murals that are extraordinary in the level of skill required to produce them, as well as sheer size and complexity. Some of the panels are massive, measuring over 100 feet long and 30 feet high; others are small, tucked away in secluded alcoves high above the canyon floor.

More than 200 rockshelters north of the Rio Grande contain Pecos River style

imagery. South of the border, in Coahuila, Mexico, at least thirty-five Pecos River style sites have been identified. Solveig Turpin who recently published a book on Coahuila rock art, maintains that “there are surely scores more in the secluded canyons and caves in the sierras north of Arroyo de la Babia.”

Pictographic elements in Pecos River style murals on both sides of the border include anthropomorphs, zoomorphs, a wide range of geometric imagery, and enigmatic figures that are not identifiable as human or animal. Anthropomorphs are the most frequently depicted element. Although these figures share many characteristics—such as elongated, rectangular bodies with disproportionately short arms and legs—among them there is incredible diversity. They typically average in size between 3 and 7 feet; however, some are monumental, towering more than 20 feet high, while others are pocket-sized, standing only 3 inches tall.

These fascinating figures often are elaborately executed in red, yellow, black, and white, but at other times plainly painted in only one color. Not only is there variability in the form and color of these figures, but also in the accoutrements and paraphernalia associated with them. Headdresses of varying types, clusters of feathers at the waist, and wrist or elbow tassels often adorn these humanlike figures. Generally the artists portrayed anthropomorphs wielding paraphernalia such as atlatls and darts in their right hand. In the left hand they frequently hold staffs, feathered darts, and rabbit sticks. But sometimes none of these





items are present, or they are associated with the opposite hand.

Animals are also portrayed in the paintings and, as do anthropomorphs, exhibit significant diversity. Deer and felines are the most visually prominent. Deer are typically painted red, but also can be yellow, black, white, or a combination of colors. Some are portrayed with antlers, tails, hooves, and dew claws, but others with only antlers or hooves. Most of the time, but not always, they are impaled with a dart. Felines tend to be painted larger than life. A few are massive, measuring over 8 feet from the tip of the tail to the tip of the

nose. Although most frequently painted red, they are also portrayed in yellow, black, and white, or a combination thereof. Birds are small, easily overlooked, and often painted in more than one color. Some imagery resembles insects, such as caterpillars, dragonflies, and moths or butterflies. Sinuous, snakelike figures are also portrayed. Some appear to be spewing venom, and others are incredibly long, spanning up to 20 feet and bedecked with dots and horns.

For decades conventional wisdom held that these murals represented numerous painting episodes executed by different

artists over hundreds or even thousands of years. We now know that most are not a random collection of images painted over the course of time but, rather, compositionally intricate, highly patterned, and rule-governed visual texts. The Lower Pecos artists used pieces of ochre or charcoal to sketch out and organize the elements of their compositions. Vestiges of these preliminary sketches still can be seen today. At Cedar Springs, red paint was sprayed around a stencil to produce a finely executed negative image of a tall anthropomorph. And at numerous sites, long, crisp lines with slightly raised paint along the outer perimeter suggest the use of a straightedge. Production of these panels was no small undertaking. Significant time and effort went into planning the composition, obtaining resources to make paint, creating the artist's tools, and constructing scaffolds or ladders, not to mention the rituals that likely accompanied each step in the process. The rock art of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands was part of the living landscape that provided food, shelter, and a connection with the spirit world. The canvases provided by rockshelter walls, such as those at the White Shaman site, played a significant role in how these people depicted and recorded their knowledge, revealing a deep, complex cosmology that we are now beginning to understand.

Text excerpted from *The White Shaman Mural* (University of Texas Press, 2016).

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See more photos from *The White Shaman Mural*.



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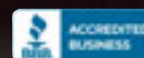
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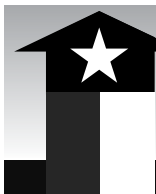


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one stop gardens

**SOLAR ROPE LIGHT**

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**SUPER COUPON**  
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**SAVE \$66**

Customer Rating  
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**SUPER COUPON**  
**\$19.99**

~~\$29.99~~ Compare \$57.55

**SAVE 65%**

Customer Rating  
★★★★★

**SUPER COUPON**  
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**SAVE 65%**

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# Battle Tested

Before Peggy Hull became a war correspondent, she fought with editors for the opportunity

BY EMILIE LE BEAU LUCCHESI

IN 1916, 25-YEAR-OLD REPORTER PEGGY Hull blew into El Paso to cover the U.S. military response to Pancho Villa's attacks for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. Eager to be taken seriously by her editors, Hull crafted her own uniform of khaki pants, knee-high boots and a brown hat, modeled after the Ohio National Guard soldiers whom she followed to Texas to cover the border conflict.

While embedded with the soldiers, Hull wrote compelling stories, and El Paso newsmen soon took notice. The *El Paso Herald* described how the young but seasoned reporter had fought a “real battle” with her editors at the *Plain Dealer*.

Hull pushed to work with the Ohio troops, but her editors refused to send a woman to the conflict. In response, she funded her own way to Texas in the first of several daring moves that propelled her to become first documented American female war correspondent.

Hull started in the news business in her home state of Kansas after an editor offered her a typesetting job—if she didn't mind ruining her nails. When a major fire broke out and there was no one else available to cover the story, Hull took the assignment and advanced to the rank of reporter.

Once a reporter, Hull moved from one newspaper to the next, giving her notice as soon as she hit the limits of what papers would allow from a female reporter. In almost 10 years, she jumped through six states, and when the *Plain Dealer* editor resisted her request to cover the hunt for Villa, Hull stayed in Texas.

“Won't come back; fire me if you like,” she wired to him. He immediately fired her.

Hull's reporting from the border was so powerful that within a few months, she was reporting for the *El Paso Morning Times*. The next spring, the United States entered World War I, and reporters lined up for



their foreign correspondent credentials.

Hull wanted her own press pass because she knew she wouldn't gain front-line access without it. The War Department denied her, but Hull's El Paso editors allowed her to push forward.

Without a press pass, traveling to France proved to be another challenge. Her male counterparts received visas to England and France, but Hull was denied and had to appear before a judge for approval.

Once in Europe, Hull reported from the sidelines, a hindrance she transformed into an advantage. She met a general who allowed her to interview soldiers at an artillery training camp. While the credentialed reporters waited to report on military action, Hull sewed buttons onto the shirts of soldiers waiting to fight. As she worked, they told her their life stories, which she reported to Texas readers.

Her editors in El Paso put her stories on the wire, and Hull's coverage went national. Several papers even claimed her as one of their own. The other correspondents in Europe quickly became jealous and demanded that the military ban her from interviewing soldiers.

This proved an insurmountable hur-

dle, but before Hull packed her bags to return to Texas, the *Morning Times* published an article in which she chided the newsmen who pushed her out. She let them know she wasn't defeated: “I learned to be a good loser long before I came to France,” she wrote.

Back in Texas, Hull resumed reporting El Paso news, but a year later, she set her sights on a new foreign conflict—the Russian Civil War. Hull was desperate to head to the Siberian city of Vladivostok. It didn't interest her El Paso editors, but Hull found another sponsor, the Newspaper Enterprise Association.

Hull found her way onto the War Department's list of approved reporters. In doing so, she became the first American female war correspondent.

During World War II, Hull was one of 127 women who received foreign correspondent credentials from the War Department. Some of the women headed to Europe and others set out for the South Pacific. Both groups traveled a path first paved by Peggy Hull.

Emilie Le Beau Lucchesi is the author of *Ugly Prey: An Innocent Woman and the Death Sentence that Scandalized Jazz Age Chicago*.

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popular *Hummingbirds of Texas* poster.

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From the publishers of **TexasCoopPower**



## Picnic Fare

PICNICS ENCOURAGE US TO SLOW down and savor. Given the choice between a fancy table and a simple meal on a blanket, I'll choose the outdoors every time. Consider pairing this month's winning recipe, Delicious Fried Chicken, with a nourishing grain salad like this one from chef Laurie Williamson, who co-owns Rancho Loma with husband Robert. At their boutique inn and restaurant near Coleman, the busy couple planted a vineyard and launched their own label, RLV Wine. If you visit the tasting room in downtown Coleman to sample their luscious varietals, ask which one pairs best with your picnic basket.

**PAULA DISBROWE**, FOOD EDITOR

### Farro Picnic Salad

Williamson loves to make this hearty salad year-round and varies ingredients accordingly. "Farro is super healthy, an excellent source of protein, fiber and iron," she says. "For even more protein, you can add rotisserie chicken." Feel free to add fresh green peas and arugula, or halved cherry tomatoes and basil.

- 1 cup farro
- 2 cups water, lightly salted
- $\frac{1}{8}$  cup olive oil
- Juice and finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- Salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 can (16 ounces) black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped parsley or mint
- Thinly sliced radishes, as desired

**1.** Combine the farro with water in a pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer up to 40 minutes, until grains are tender with a slightly chewy texture. Drain any excess water.

**2.** In a large mixing bowl, toss the warm farro with olive oil and lemon

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



**LAURIE & ROBERT  
WILLIAMSON**





# Recipes

## Picnic Fare

### THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

JOYCE ROEBUCK | CHEROKEE COUNTY EC

Roebuck whisks a secret ingredient, mayonnaise—Duke's from Greenville, South Carolina—into buttermilk and double-dips chicken in seasoned flour to create an exceptionally crispy, flavorful crust. Use thighs and drumsticks for finger-lickin' good picnic fare—and consider doubling the batch so you have leftovers.

### Delicious Fried Chicken

- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- 8 pieces skin-on, bone-in chicken

1. Whisk together the dry ingredients in a shallow dish and set aside. In another shallow dish, whisk together mayonnaise and buttermilk.

2. Heat an inch of oil in a heavy frying pan to about 350 degrees. Dredge chicken in the flour mixture, shake off excess, dip in the mayo mixture

and dredge a second time in the flour.

3. Carefully place the coated chicken in the hot oil. Fry in batches if necessary to avoid overcrowding the skillet. Cook the chicken, turning once, until each piece is golden-brown and cooked through, about 6–10 minutes on each side. Serves 6–8.

**COOK'S TIP** Use a meat thermometer to determine when the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees for dark meat, 160 degrees for white. If you don't have a thermometer, insert a knife to the bone; if the juices run clear, the meat is done.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

juice and zest, and then season with salt, pepper and red pepper flakes.

3. Add the feta, black-eyed peas, parsley or mint, and radishes, and toss to combine. This salad will keep refrigerated up to three days. Serves 4–6.

**COOK'S TIP** Farro is an ancient grain with a chewy texture and nutty flavor. Look for the “semi-pearled” variety; this means some of the bran has been removed, so it will cook more quickly. Grains such as farro, barley and quinoa become more flavorful and maintain their texture when prepared in advance.

### Picnic Grape Salad With Lemon Twist

JENNIFER SESSIONS | CHEROKEE COUNTY EC

This refreshing combination “is my go-to recipe for our family reunions and outdoor summer church gatherings,” Sessions says. “It is a hit each time.” She says the fresh lemon juice gives this sweet treat “a tiny twist of tang while helping preserve the freshness of the grapes.”

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons almond extract (or vanilla extract)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (or more to taste)
- 2 pounds green grapes, washed and dried
- 2 pounds red seedless grapes, washed and dried
- 3 tablespoons walnuts or pecans

1. Beat together the cream cheese, sour cream, sugars and almond (or vanilla) extract until blended.

2. Pour fresh lemon juice into the mixture. Add the grapes and nuts; toss to coat.

3. Transfer to a serving bowl, cover and refrigerate until serving time. Serves 6–8.

### Pepper-Cabbage Slaw

MICHELE WERTZ | BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

“This is a recipe handed down to me by my mother-in-law, who lived in Pennsylvania Dutch country of Pennsylvania,” Wertz says. “I’ve been

### \$100 Recipe Contest

October's recipe contest topic is **Sunday Cooking**. What do you make for a leisurely brunch or an after-church spread? Share your dishes with us. The deadline is **May 10**.

ENTER ONLINE at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](http://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.



taking it to picnics and cookouts for over 50 years, and it's always a favorite."

- 4 cups finely chopped cabbage
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 red pepper, cut into strips
- 1 teaspoon celery seed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar

1. Stir together vegetables and celery seed in a bowl.
2. Mix together salt, sugar and vinegar, then pour over vegetables and stir.
3. Refrigerate, covered, several hours or overnight. Serves 4–6.

## Savory Three-Bean Bake

ARLEEN ACTON | PEDERNALES EC

Bacon and a mix of beans give this sweet and smoky casserole depth of flavor and an appealing texture. This recipe can be prepared up to three days in advance and served warm or cold.

- 8 slices bacon
- 2 onions, sliced
- 1 can (16 ounces) baked beans, drained
- 1 can (16 ounces) butter beans, drained
- 1 can (8 ounces) lima beans, drained
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 cup chili sauce
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon mustard

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cook the bacon in a skillet until crisp, reserving 1 tablespoon of the drippings. Crumble bacon and set aside.
3. Add the onions to drippings and cook until tender and slightly browned.
4. Combine the remaining ingredients with onion and bacon and transfer to a baking dish.
5. Bake 20–30 minutes, until heated through. Serve warm or refrigerate until needed. This dish also can be served cold. Serves 6–8.

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Make room in your picnic basket for Fried Pies.



## Break Out Your Basket!

**NO BASKET, NO WORRIES.** A sturdy cardboard box, plastic bin, trolley with wheels or even a backpack makes transporting foods easier than an assortment of bags.

**CHILL.** Cold foods should be kept at 40 degrees or colder. Keep ice cubes in a Thermos so you can chill your drinks as you go.

**BE FIRM.** Enamel plates don't get soggy.

**CLEAN SWEEP.** Don't forget wet wipes and plastic bags to cart home dirty dishes, silverware and garbage. Remember to leave only your footprints! —PD



**2016 \$3,000 GRAND PRIZEWINNER**  
Stuffed Chicken With Mushroom Pan Jus  
Karen Bergman | Trinity Valley EC  
Get the recipe at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com).

## 13TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY RECIPE CONTEST

# \$5,000 IN PRIZES

**\$3,000 GRAND PRIZEWINNER**

Two \$500 Best Savory Dish Winners  
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**Send us your best original recipes!**

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—ones you've developed, not copied from a friend or found in a book or magazine. Winners will be featured in our December 2017 issue. Enter by July 10 at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com).

Go to [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com) for details and official rules.

## TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Enter online at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://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](http://TexasCoopPower.com). **Entry deadline: July 10, 2017.**

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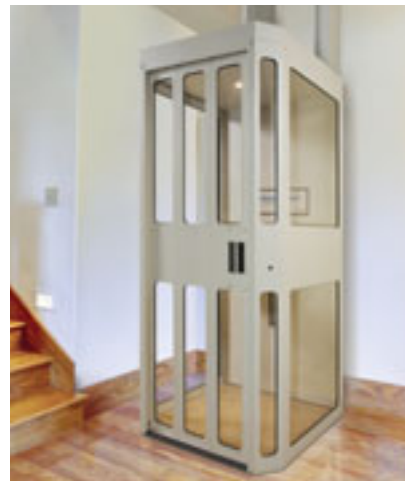
### **VERSATILE**

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### **CONVENIENT**

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*Can be placed virtually anywhere  
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82821



# Texas Rocks

EVER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE STUCK between a rock and a hard place? Then take a picture, as so many readers did for this month's contest. **GRACE ARSIAGA**

**WEB EXTRAS at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)** Much more natural beauty is just a stone's throw away.

◀ **CHARLES ASCHENBECK**, Jackson EC:  
The moon rises over Big Bend National Park.

▼ **CAROL HOLBERT**, Concho Valley EC: Stacked rocks among Texas bluebonnets near Mason



▲ **MARK AUSTIN**, San Bernard EC: "Marvana Austin having fun at Enchanted Rock"

◀ **BOBBY NORRIS**, Pedernales EC: Hamilton Pool Preserve is a beloved Central Texas swimming hole.



▲ **BILL GALLOWAY**, Pedernales EC: "Bald cypress roots and a carpet of fox-red needles create a fall abstract framing the inset limestone slab [at] McKinney Falls State Park."



## UPCOMING CONTESTS

SEPTEMBER AT THE RODEO	DUE MAY 10
OCTOBER COSTUME PARTY	DUE JUNE 10
NOVEMBER INTO THE WOODS	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](http://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

### M-o-o-ving Thru the Mud With Landon

**Gainesville June 3**

(940) 372-0343, [mudwithlandon.com](http://mudwithlandon.com)

Kids can get grimy while supporting a great cause, climbing, wallowing and running through a muddy obstacle course. Cooke County EC sponsors this annual fundraiser for families—including Landon Tipps'—affected by hypothalamic hamartomas.



MUD: INC | DREAMSTIME.COM, LILY: SF PHOTO | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM, HORSE: GORILLA IMAGES | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

## May

5

**Waxahachie** [5-14] Paint Historic Waxahachie, (469) 309-4040, [waxahachiecvb.com](http://waxahachiecvb.com)

7

**Bandera St. Stanislaus Catholic Church Festival**, (830) 460-4712, [ststanislausbandera.com](http://ststanislausbandera.com)

**Wylie Wylie 500 Pedal Car Race**, (972) 516-6016, [wylietexas.gov](http://wylietexas.gov)

10

**Jasper** [10-13] Lions Benefit Rodeo, (409) 384-2234, [jasperlionsrodeo.com](http://jasperlionsrodeo.com)

11

**Crockett** [11-13] Lions Club PRCA Rodeo, (936) 348-1431

12

**Huntsville** [12-14] General Sam Houston Folk Festival, (936) 294-1832, [gshff.com](http://gshff.com)

May 13  
Lake Jackson  
Brazosport Daylily Society  
Annual Flower Show  
& Plant Sale



13

**Alto** Primitive Tools: Friction Fire Starting, (936) 858-3218, [visitcaddomounds.com](http://visitcaddomounds.com)

**Bulverde** What Is Model Railroading? (830) 438-4864, [santrak.org](http://santrak.org)

**Coleman** Walk for a Cure, (325) 625-2163, [colemantexas.org](http://colemantexas.org)

**Fredericksburg** Historic Cherry Mountain School Open House, (830) 669-2855, [historicschools.org](http://historicschools.org)

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EVENT CALENDAR

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**Greenville** Audie Murphy Day,  
(903) 450-4502, amacmuseum.com

**Lake Jackson** Brazosport Daylily Society  
Annual Flower Show & Plant Sale,  
(979) 285-9664

**Royse City** Main Street Car Show,  
(972) 524-4846, roysecity.com

**Shiro** Shiro VFD BBQ Fundraiser,  
(832) 492-6625

**14**

**Marshall** Talent Show, (903) 935-4484,  
marshallartscouncil.org

**18**

**Luling** Field Day, (830) 875-2438,  
lulingfoundation.org

**Jacksonville** [18-20] Tops in Texas Rodeo,  
(903) 571-6249, topsintexasrodeo.com

**Wichita Falls** [18-20] Professional  
Wrestling Hall of Fame Induction,  
(940) 249-1193, pwhf.org

**19**

**Addison** [19-21] Taste Addison,  
1-800-233-4766, tasteaddisontexas.com

**Star** [19-21] Cowpokes for Kids Trail Ride,  
(325) 201-2870, cowpokesforkids.com

**20**

**Bryan** Sip & Shop, (979) 822-4920,  
downtownbryan.com

**Celina** Leighton's Ride, (972) 977-8156,  
leightongift.com

**Cottonwood Shores** Rumble at the River  
Car Show, (830) 693-5191, cwsvfd.org

**La Grange** *The Cowboy Ain't Dead Yet*,  
(979) 968-3017, visitlagrangetx.com

**Lufkin** Veteran Family Fun and Resource  
Day, (936) 674-7347, all13familylufkin.org



May 19  
Star  
Cowpokes for Kids  
Trail Ride

**Dripping Springs** [20-21] Redbud Artisan  
Market, (512) 858-7892

**26**

**Kerrville** [26-28] Texas Masters of  
Fine Art and Craft Invitational Exhibition,  
(214) 497-7179, texasmasters.com

**27**

**Ellinger** [27-28] Tomato Festival,  
(979) 378-2311, ellingtexas.com

**28**

**Breckenridge** Airshow, (254) 559-2301,  
breckenridgetexas.com

**June**

**1**

**Longview** [1-3] *Mockingbird*,  
(903) 236-7535, artsviewchildrenstheatre.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  
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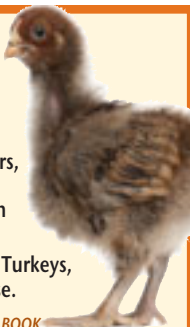
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# The Life of Bryan

Historic downtown contrasts nearby College Station

BY MARILYN JONES

CENTURY-OLD BUILDINGS SET AGAINST A backdrop of period-style streetscapes differentiates Bryan's historic district from neighboring College Station.

"I often describe downtown Bryan as the community's living room. It's a place where friends gather and visitors relax," said Sandy Farris, executive director of the Downtown Bryan Association.

The city of just under 80,000 developed as a center of commerce when the Houston & Central Texas Railroad reached the community in the 1860s. Texas A&M University opened in 1876 south of Bryan. The area around the train depot west of the campus was named College Station and became a city in its own right.

Arriving just past noon, I walked along South Main Street. There are no high-rise or modern buildings. Just past the renowned LaSalle Hotel, completed in 1928, I came to **Proudest Monkey**, a busy little restaurant featuring tacos and burgers. I went inside and sat at a high-top table. I ordered the Pulled Hammy Taco with pulled pork, cabbage slaw, grilled onions, cotija cheese and barbecue sauce. The friendly service and upbeat atmosphere made for a welcome bonus.

I continued along Main Street and found **Southern Grace**. Restored furnishings sparkled with pearl and rhinestone jewelry. Scarves and home accessories along with Texas A&M souvenirs filled every nook.

Farther along North Main Street, I entered **Bird's Nest Gifts & Antiques**. I marveled at clever displays of country-inspired accessories and decorative accents fashioned in a creative labyrinth.

I continued on, slowing to admire window displays. On West 26th Street, I stopped at **Brazos Glassworks**. As I looked at intricately made jewelry and decorative plaques, co-owner Debbie Jasek told me everything in the store is designed and



A shop along Main Street

made by artists in the United States and Canada. "We also make a lot of the items in the shop and offer art classes," she said.

My wandering continued to **Corner of Time Antiques & Collectible Mall** on North Bryan Avenue before I headed back to Main Street and stopped at the **Chocolate Gallery** with its baked goods and fine chocolate.

Just a minute's walk away, at **Catalena Hatters**, hundreds of cowboy hats lined one wall. I watched as Scott Catalena shaped and sized a cowboy hat. Using steam, he expertly refined the hat before embedding a crease down the center.

Even though I was enjoying my leisurely exploration, I also wanted to see the three museums beyond the historic downtown.

I first headed for **The Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley** to see what it offers little explorers. I found a variety of activities, including digging for dinosaur bones, shopping for groceries, exploring a spaceship and reporting for the fictional *Brazos News*.

Next I drove to **Brazos Valley African American Museum**, where I met curator Wayne Sadberry. "We have an oral history of Bryan and College Station residents," he said as he started an oral-history video. I listened as African-American men and women described their lives, church,

family and work in the mid-1900s.

The museum honors Texas politicians, authors and artists. It also fosters support for the community, said Velma Spivey, the director. The museum hosts community events and ongoing projects such as collecting school supplies for area children in need.

At the **Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History**, I found interpretations of prehistoric life in mineral samples, dinosaur bones and ice age fossils. Displays on cotton harvests, cattle drives and frontier weaponry represent more recent Republic of Texas and early Brazos County history.

The Discovery Room features living displays of the natural world, starting with an inside view of a beehive. Other displays present turtles, fish, tarantulas and scorpions for close-up (and safe) viewing.

I felt welcome in Bryan and enjoyed the laid-back, comfortable feeling of the city. I'm sure I'll be back to this "community's living room."

Marilyn Jones lives in Henderson and writes about travel.

**WEB EXTRAS at [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)**



See a video and more photos from downtown Bryan.



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