Master Naturalists

**Gulf Shrimp** 

320

JULY 2017 Bustling Childress

# stock SHOWS

Young Texans hope for big payoffs



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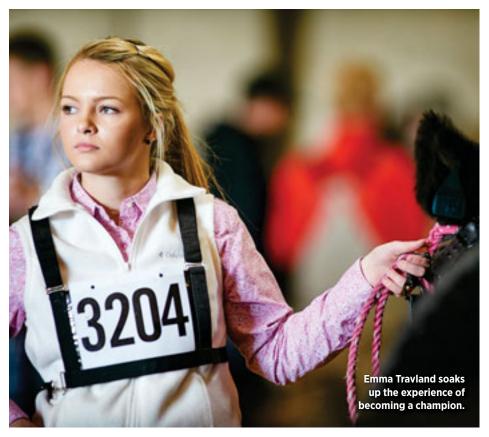
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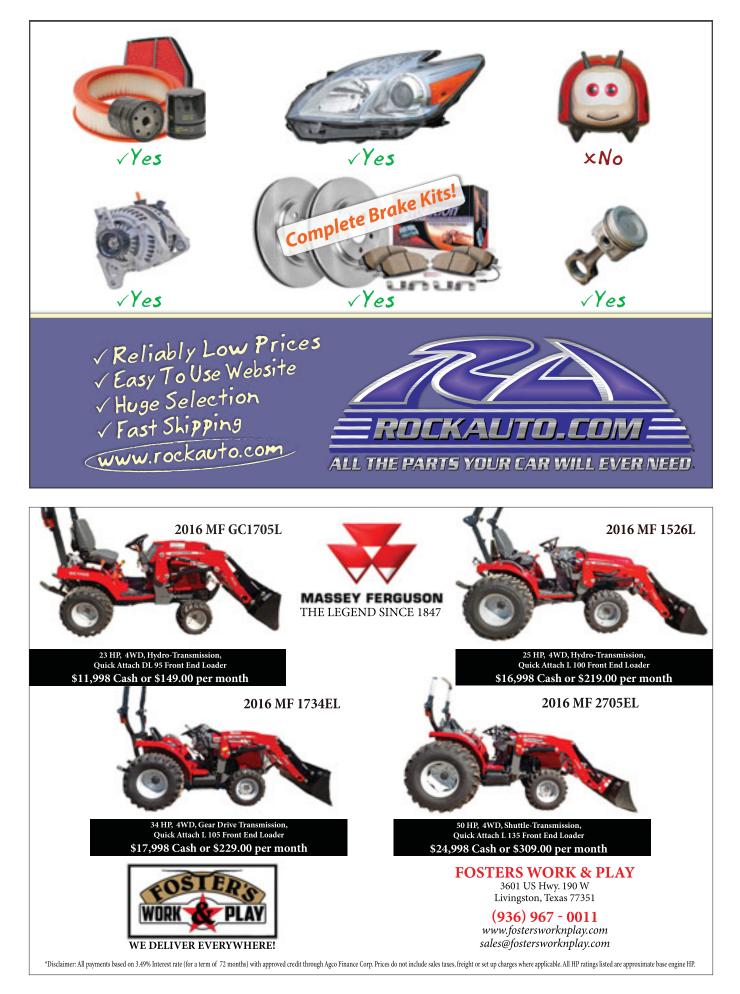
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STOCK SHOW: DAVE SHAFER. OWL: LARRY DI

ON THE COVER Emma Travland shows off Mopsy, her pride and joy, at the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo. Photo by Dave Shafer

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### LETTERS

#### Bandera Co-op Pioneer

My grandfather, Thomas P. Grant, volunteered to participate in the first officers training camp at Leon Springs from May 8 to August 15, 1917 [90-Day Wonders, May 2017]. He was commissioned as a lieutenant after completion of training. At the time, he was an ordained Presbyterian minister from Brady. He served as a chaplain in World War I and was wounded in combat.

He eventually settled in Tarpley and was instrumental in the founding of Bandera Electric Cooperative in 1938, serving as one of the first directors. TOM GRANT | JONESTOWN PEDERNALES EC

#### **Red-Letter Devotion**

I enjoyed reading about Nancy Johnson, who makes red hats for babies [*Open Hearts*, February 2017]. How do I reach her organization? I would love to contribute hats. HARLENE MERCY | FRISCO COSERV

Editor's note: To find out how to help the cause, visit heart.org, or contact Nancy Johnson at (325) 226-3659 or 19nanjo41@gmail.com.

### **Out of the Blue**

What a pleasant surprise to see a name familiar to my boyhood of the 1940s [*Aisles of Blue*, April 2017]. I lived near blueberry farmer Albert Moorhead. I remember great dinners at the homeplace and going home well-supplied with fresh pork and produce. BILL WRIGHT | EDGEWOOD TRINITY VALLEY EC

### **Heirloom Lightning Welk**

I loved your interesting article on seashells [*Treasure From the Gulf,* May 2017]. I have a collection of shells from many places. My aunt, a talented artist who had a

Order an illustrated Texas Seashells poster online.

a talented artist who had a studio on the Strand in Galveston, painted me a beautiful lightning whelk before her death. I love that she chose the state shell for me.

PAM FARMER | OLNEY | FORT BELKNAP EC

**True-Blue Servants** 

Just wanted to express our

appreciation for the linemen

who come out at all hours to

get our power back on [Much

Appreciated, April 2017]. When

it's too wet to get their trucks

way up a pole and spend hours

in, I've seen them spike their

in all weather working on the

problem. Could not ask for

WILLIAM HILL | FREESTONE COUNTY

**Haunting Memories** 

My wife and I visited New Lon-

don in February [The New Lon-

don School Explosion. January

2017]. The museum is outstand-

ing for a history buff. The whole

town gave me a haunted feel-

ing. It interested me that Adolf

Hitler sent a letter of condo-

lence to the town.

BILLY HANKS | DALE

BLUEBONNET EC

better service.

NAVARRO COUNTY EC

**Editor's note:** Our poster includes the lightning whelk, the state shell of Texas.



The best and truest rhyme about Texas may well be the one my dad used to recite [*There Once Was a Rhyme About Texas*, May 2017]:

н

The sun has riz, The sun has set, And we ain't left Texas yet. Takes me a hard 12-hour drive to reach Amarillo on our way to visit our grandkids in Colorado. JIM EVANS | PORT LAVACA VICTORIA EC

### **Old Magnolia**

We really enjoyed the article on Old Magnolia [*Trinity Thumbprint*, February 2017]. We have lived in the area for a while and discovered the defunct town on our own while exploring. **BREANNA AND KENNETH SMITH** HENDERSON COUNTY **TRINITY VALLEY EC** 

#### Words of Wisdom

My great-grandson, J.T., age 7, is very interested in learning from your safety- and weatherrelated tips. I feel he is acquiring valuable life lessons, and even I am still learning. JEAN SCHWECKE | CARMINE FAYETTE EC

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### CURRENTS

WEB EXTRAS Find more happenings online.

### Itchin' for Something Fun?

THE BUZZ IN CLUTE THIS MONTH CENTERS ON, of all things, the mosquito. While the rest of us curse, spray and flail at the annoying, biting insects, the Brazoria County town devotes three days—JULY 27-29 this year— to the GREAT TEXAS MOSQUITO FESTIVAL. The event even features mosquito-calling contests.

The organizers, called the Swat Team, promise a carnival, games, contests and food (for humans of all blood types). One of the main attractions is Willie-Man-Chew, the 26-foot-tall mosquito mascot.

#### TexasCoopPower.com

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT Relish the Idea

July is NATIONAL HOT DOG MONTH. On Independence Day, Americans will down 150 million hot dogs, enough to encircle Texas more than 4½ times.

### ENERGY INFO

### MORE THAN Goodenough

His 1980 discovery impacts our lives every day; now, University of Texas at Austin professor and solid-state physicist JOHN GOODENOUGH, who turns 95 this month, is on to an improvement in rechargeable battery technology that could revolutionize our electronics again.

A team of UT engineers led by Goodenough has developed a faster-charging, longer-lasting and safer, noncombustible battery that could someday make its way into our handheld devices, computers and cars.

The new cells use electrodes encapsulated in nanotubes that improve on the performance of lithium-ion batteries with solidstate lithium-sulfur. (Translation: They won't explode.)



### HISTORY LESSON

### Convenience Catches On

**FROM SNYDER TO PALACIOS, 7-ELEVENS** have dotted Texas' highway exits for 90 years. The pioneering convenience stores known best for their long hours and Slurpees got their start in the Lone Star State in 1927 when Southland Ice Company started offering milk, bread and eggs at its Dallas icehouse.

**FIRST ALL-NIGHTER:** One Saturday after a Longhorns home game in 1963, the year the football team earned its first national championship, an Austin location near campus stayed open past the traditional 11 p.m. closing time, keeping its doors open all night to satisfy raucous fans. The precedent spread.

**TOTE'M TAKES OFF:** The first-of-its kind stores were called Tote'm until 1946; now, there are more than 56,600 7-Elevens, originally named to reflect their 7 a.m.–11 p.m. business hours, in 18 countries.



HEAVEN: 7-Elevens offer FREE SLURPEES every July II (7/II).

### ALMANAC

### RODEO RAISES The Roof

#### It wasn't LUCILLE MULHALL's first

**rodeo,** but for her and the spectators at Cowtown Coliseum in Fort Worth 100 years ago, it was the first indoor rodeo anyone had ever seen.

#### The Oklahoma trick roper in 1917

organized what she called a "week of frontier sports" at the Fort Worth Stock Show. More than 50 cowpokes competed in roping, riding and bronc busting with legendary "Foghorn" Clancy on the call. Now, indoor rodeos are a staple of stock shows across the state.

#### Find out what stock shows are doing

for youths today by turning to *Raising the Stakes* on Page 8.



### WORTH REPEATING

"The genius of the American system is that through freedom we have created extraordinary results from plain old ordinary people."

- FORMER U.S. SEN. PHIL GRAMM OF TEXAS, who turns 75 on July 8

# **BABSING** Stock shows demand commitment for big payoff **THE STAKES**



t's 6:30 on this Hill Country autumn morning, and an orange glow lines the curve of a cool sky with purple clouds. Chickens peck the ground, a rooster crows and two old friends—Duke, a hound, and Abby, a calico cat—huddle together to ward off the chilly morning air. Fourteen-year-old Emma Travland has already been up for half an hour to herd two steers in from the pasture, then wash, dry, groom and feed them before loading them up for the Kerr County Fair Steer Show.

Emma is a freshman at Fredericksburg High School, and her family is a member of Central Texas Electric Cooperative. A 6 a.m. wake-up call is part of her routine because she has been showing livestock since she was 7. Her mother, Karen, showed steers growing up, and her aunt showed hogs, so showing livestock was integral to her family life. Even so, Emma concedes she did not enjoy showing animals the first couple of years. It was a lot of work, and she found it intimidating.

#### STORY BY BRENDA KISSKO | PHOTOS BY DAVE SHAFER

Her first steer was particularly difficult. It kicked and head-butted her with annoying regularity. As she walked it into the ring for her first county show, the 1,000-pound steer stepped on her foot, its pointed hoof digging into her boot. Emma's showmanship won the moment, and she kept her composure in front of the judge, holding her tears until she left the pen. That's when she embraced the challenge of training the animal and bonding with him so that they could work together to win. Despite their trying relationship, Emma recalls how hard it was to put him on the sale truck when it was time to let him go. She didn't realize she would miss that stubborn steer so much, and she felt the void as the trailer pulled away.

The next March, she chose a new steer, happily

taking on her next "project," as show animals are known, that would require years of tenacity, dedication and more tough lessons.

"If I didn't show, I would not be the same person I am today," Emma says. "Showing has taught me different values, like hard work and to always be honest," she adds. "It has taught me good morals. I have gotten a pretty good work ethic out of showing and have all A's in advanced courses. Showing has really helped me in school—a ton."

Emma wants to be a doctor. Possibly a surgeon. Through showing livestock, she is working toward her goal of earning scholarships

Emma Travland and Mopsy strut their stuff to a full house at the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo, where Mopsy claimed the title of reserve champion. and gaining the confidence, compassion and courage necessary to be a working professional.

She brushes Mopsy, her Angus, so named because of the unruly mop of hair he had as a calf, and

SOUTHASTEN DSITION & LIVESTOC FORT WITH, TELLS - 201 20

### WEB EXTRAS

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► Learn how to get involved in youth stock shows and see a slideshow of Emma's adventure.



then turns to Pepito, her young black-and-white exotic. He has been in only one show before today, and she hesitates to bring him. This is a smaller prospect show and a perfect opportunity to give her practice with her steers before the "majors."

The majors begin in January with the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo, then continue in San Angelo and San Antonio in February. Finally, shows in Austin and Houston in March set the stage for the State Fair of Texas and Waco's Heart O' Texas Fair & Rodeo in the fall. These are the shows where grand champions sell at auction for six figures, and scholarships can reach into the student will receive—everything above that goes toward scholarships and expenses. Many participating youths graduate with a good portion of their college bill paid through their hard work, endless early mornings and late nights with their animals, as well as the thousands of dollars required to buy and care for the animals.

Duery Menzies, a Central Texas EC member, is retired and lives just outside Fredericksburg. The livestock show world brought him the love of his life. He met his late wife, LaWanda, when they were both county extension agents. She showed hogs,

five figures. Throughout 2015, more than 57,000 total animals were validated for competition in Texas. Validation categories include market hogs (nearly half of the total), market lambs, market goats, market steers, heifers, wether dams, breeding sheep, wether doe and breeding goats.

Visitors don cowboy boots and 10-gallon hats to get a close look at the care and precision that goes into Lone Star livestock.

Spectators and buyers travel from across the globe to attend famed Texas stock shows and rodeos. Visitors don cowboy boots and 10-gallon hats to get a close look at the care and precision that goes into Lone Star livestock. These events are a true testament to the old saying, "Everything's bigger in Texas."

Texas stock show culture began in 1896, when the first livestock show was held on the banks of Marine Creek in North Fort Worth. It grew each year and, in 1907, charged its first admission:

### These events are a true testament to the old saying, "Everything's bigger in Texas."

25 cents. Now the show attracts more than 1 million visitors and exhibitors from more than 90 countries. Since 1980, the Fort Worth Stock Show Syndicate, a group of area business leaders, has awarded more than \$20 million in scholarships and sale money to youth participants. The Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo stands as the oldest continuously running show in the state.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is the largest in the world, drawing more than 2.4 million visitors in 2016 and contributing more than \$430 million to Texas youths since 1932. What started as a discussion between seven men brainstorming over lunch about how to promote and preserve the cattle industry along the Texas coast is now a show that sets world records at its auction. In 2016, five world records were set, including the grand champion junior market lamb going for \$261,000 and the grand champion junior market barrow, a hog, going for \$209,000. That same year, the grand champion junior market steer sold for \$375,000, but that price does not measure up to the world record

Clockwise from top: The competitors stir into action at 5 a.m., sometimes begrudgingly. Emma Travland and Mopsy await their turn for the grand march—after adjusting the show halter. Sundown means dinner for Mopsy. set in Houston in 2002, when the grand champion steer went for \$600,001.

The students who show animals earn money by winning premiums, through scholarships and at auction sales, though some shows set a cap on how much of the sale price a few steers and capons when she was growing up, and Menzies showed market lambs and breeding sheep. Menzies recalls sleeping in tents and bedrolls in the barn with the animals in his early years of showing. His mother was the first home demonstration agent in Menard County, and he served as Gillespie County's extension agent for more than 25 years. In the 1970s and '80s, he also judged livestock.

"As a judge, you can see self-confidence," Menzies says. "Winning takes someone who can read livestock. It takes diligence

and discipline. People need to learn hard work."

The numerous prospect shows throughout the state not only provide the opportunity to gain experience; they also make a big impact. In 2015, 47,452 youths participated in county shows across the state, and more than \$77 million was invested back into those participants through premiums and auction sales.

Billy Zanolini, assistant professor and extension specialist for youth livestock and agriculture at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, said he was surprised by the rising number of poultry and rabbits and attributed it to the fact that these projects take up less space and are less expensive. Smaller show animals create an opportunity for youths to get involved even without access to the land necessary for some of the larger animals.

Emma, Karen, Mopsy and Pepito arrive at the Kerr County Fair Steer Show, and immediately Emma goes to work preparing the animals' pen and grooming them. She's had some success in the past, having won reserve American breed champion at the State Fair of Texas in 2013 and grand champion steer at the Texas Junior State Angus Show in 2015, but she is nervous about these two today.

She first brings Mopsy into the ring for the junior showmanship competition. This is all about showing the animal—how she leads, how quickly she sets up, how well she answers questions about topics such as protein content in the feed, and if she makes eye contact. Emma wins third place. Then Mopsy wins reserve British breed champion. And Pepito? Pepito receives fourth place in the exotic middleweights, and the judge remarks that he sees a lot of potential in the way the young steer is filling out. Emma believes Pepito is right where he needs to be, on track to show in the majors.

**Brenda Kissko** finished her first novel, a coming-of-age story set in West Texas. Visit her online at brendakissko.com.

BY BARBRA A. RODRIGUEZ

## Home on the Range

Texas Master Naturalist volunteers help preserve natural heritage

or Janet Price, volunteering with the Mid-Coast Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program has included counting migrating buff-breasted sandpipers to determine whether they have enough coastal habitat; wading into a muddy shoreline on a hot summer day to plant erosioncontrolling grasses; and participating in daylong Christmas bird counts, when her team once identified 72 species. "It's a treat when you get to see something that you haven't seen before," says Price, a member of Jackson Electric Cooperative.

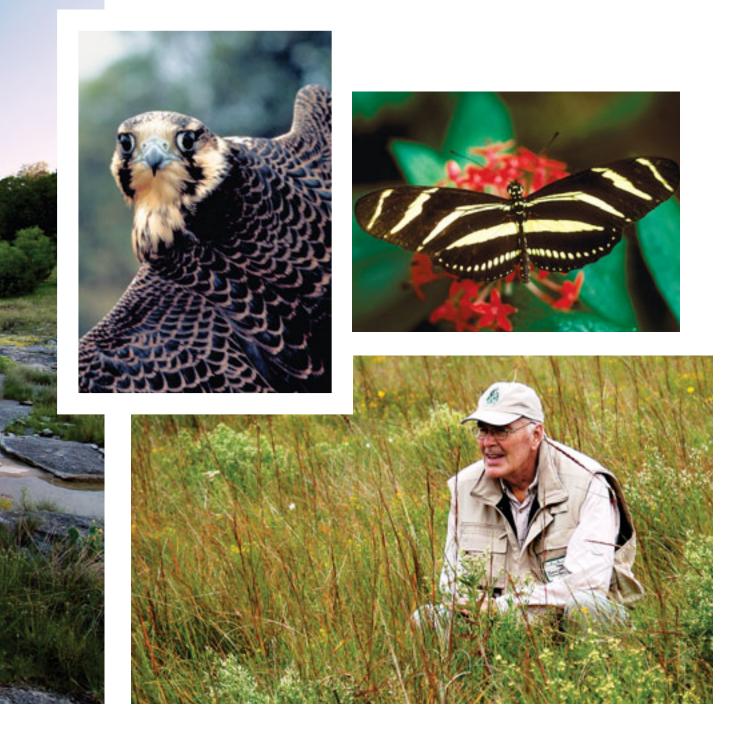
For other master naturalists, volunteering has revealed a new calling. That was true for Becky Etzler, who in 2012 trained with the Hill Country Chapter after moving to Harper with her husband. Expecting to restart a career managing a veterinary clinic, she

began helping the Texas Wildlife Association teach schoolchildren about groundwater issues and managing healthy landscapes.

Etzler began testing landscape tips while revitalizing her own 27 acres of savanna to create a better wildlife habitat. The former Floridian admits she became obsessed with identifying native wildlife and plants. As one of more than a dozen members of Central Texas Electric Cooperative who serve in the Hill Country Chapter, she now directs Kerrville's Riverside Nature Center.

"I was able to see a whole new world," she says of the master naturalist training. "It's such a life changer, opening your eyes to natural resources and to conserving them."

Etzler and others count themselves among more than 10,000 volunteers in 48 chapters of the Texas Master Naturalist program. The largest and oldest statewide program of its type, Texas Master



Naturalists began with a chapter in San Antonio in the 1990s. That first group was organized by a city naturalist working with a Texas Parks & Wildlife Department staffer who required help completing a range of projects. Member naturalists trained by TPWD and the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service are active from the Pineywoods to the Rio Grande Valley to the Panhandle. Their activities include counting wild parrot flocks, studying native plants and wildlife for conservation projects, conducting birding and stargazing tours, and building butterfly houses.

"They're making a difference for the future of natural resources by allowing our county governments and the whole gamut of agencies that touch Texas' landscapes to get so much more done with an ever-decreasing staff size," says Michelle Haggerty, Texas Master Naturalists' state coordinator. "We couldn't do our conservation Clockwise from opposite: A full moon hangs over a ranch outside Brady; peregrine falcon; zebra longwing; Dave Benoit surveys a native prairie. and natural resource work today without them."

All told, these citizen scientists annually educate close to 200,000 Texans, improve the health of approximately 2,000 acres of pub-

lic land and build dozens of miles of trails in natural areas. Even before doing all that work, certified master naturalists complete 40 hours of field and classroom training followed by 40 hours of required volunteer work. The volunteers assist local, state and national organizations, and the program has inspired similar naturalist endeavors in more than 20 states.

Master naturalists across Texas share their training in ways specific to the landscape, such as the Blackland Prairie Chapter's

TexasCoopPower.com

Black-capped vireo, left; a Heartwood Chapter master naturalist journals in Conroe.





"There's just a wealth of life up there in a seemingly barren environment. You just have to know where to look." –RUSSELL VOWELL, TEXAS HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER the group's attention to white, tick-sized specks on a prickly pear cactus. Squishing one between her fingertips to release

providing Plano students with weekly nature activities. A priority for the 140-member Blackland Prairie Chapter, which includes many young adults, is restoring 100-plus acres of endangered Blackland Prairie in Collin and Hunt counties. Other volunteers statewide play dirty by building fire lanes or removing cedar trees and other invasives at sites such as Enchanted Rock.

Judy Rowe, an educator at McKinney's Heard Natural Science Museum, is among members helping students revitalize a school butterfly garden and explore Plano's Heritage Farmstead Museum, just blocks away from Ammie E. Wilson Middle School. She has watched these junior naturalists develop from scrunchfaced and hesitant to hurrying between basins to see what friends have found while viewing diving beetles, common duckweed, dragonfly nymphs and other residents of local ponds or water features. "Just seeing them get excited about being outside and looking at bugs and critters gets me excited," Rowe says.

here's more: Master naturalists can choose office work, such as stuffing envelopes or answering phone calls, or accomplish field work by taking photographs and logging GPS information via a cellphone app.

Through observations like this, master naturalists expand available data about species that face challenges, including habitat loss and weather extremes. More than 200 species are considered endangered or threatened in Texas. These include orchids called Navasota ladies' tresses, the southwestern willow flycatcher and long-tailed Texas kangaroo rats. With detailed data on the population and whereabouts of flora and fauna, organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can adjust approaches to fostering their survival or reducing the stranglehold of aggressive, nonnative species that compete with natives for resources.

On a master naturalist tour of Enchanted Rock, volunteer docents Rose Ellis and Russell Vowell guide hikers and provide lessons about its native denizens, geology and history. Ellis draws its red juice, she describes how the cochineal insects once were prized as a dye for robes at the Vatican. Along the climb to the rock's windswept summit, Vowell points out a 2-foot-tall clump of bunchgrass, noting that the plant's leaves served Native Americans for basket weaving and early European settlers for rope making.

More than 900 unique plants and animals call Texas' Hill Country home. "There's just a wealth of life up there in a seem-

WEB EXTRAS Learn more about becoming a master naturalist. ingly barren environment," Vowell says. "You just have to know where to look."

Among the sightings master naturalists have posted on iNaturalist, a crowdsourcing website, are a rare spotted skunk in Milam County, a once-in-a-decade sighting of a spot-tailed earless lizard in the South Texas plains and the first confirmation of a nonnative and harmful

zebra mussel in one of the Brazos River basin lakes.

Conservation benefits aside, some master naturalists simply enjoy the excuse to step outside. Take Nita Schiro, an adjunct professor of digital media and web design at Lone Star College-Montgomery. A highlight of her master naturalist training at W.G. Jones State Forest was standing alone within the pine tree haven, with just the trill of a pine warbler to interrupt the silence. "That experience was really different from anything I'd done in such a long time," Schiro says. "I just really got lost in the peacefulness of it."

Now she posts butterfly and other sightings on iNaturalist, gives talks about the reliance of wildlife on native plants and invites passersby on tours of the butterfly garden she developed at home in the Woodlands. Tour-takers have included a couple reclaiming a vacant lot as a garden at their home in Harlem, New York. Sensing kindred spirits on the tour, Schiro slipped in a mention of becoming master naturalists. She says, "We are all trying to make a difference in some small way."

Writer and editor **Barbra A. Rodriguez** lives in Austin.

### **Steel of Approval**

### At \$49, this blade of Damascus steel is a real steal

amascus steel is legendary. Tales of its unmatched strength, sharpness and durability ring through the ages. There are stories of gun rifles being sliced in two by Damascus steel swords and individual strands of hair being sliced in half, even if they gently floated down on to the edge of the blade.

Now, you can be a part of the legend. The Legend Knife boasts nearly 4" of famed Damascus steel with it's signature, wavy pattern. Damascus steel blade knives can cost thousands. So, at \$49, the price itself is almost legendary.

Cast Damascus steel, known as wootz, was popular in the East and it's an exacting process that's part metalwork, part chemistry. It's produced by melting pieces of iron and steel with charcoal in a low oxygen environment. During the process, the metals absorb carbon from the charcoal and the resulting alloy is cooled at a very slow rate. The outcome is a beautiful one-of-a-kind pattern of banding and mottling reminiscent of flowing water.

Once a lost art, we sought out a knifemaker who has resurrected the craftsmanship of Damascus steel to create the Legend Knife. The genuine Damascus steel blade folds into a tri-colored pakkawood handle that's prepared to resist the ravages of the great outdoors. When not in use or on display, The Legend Knife stays protected in the included genuine leather sheath.

"If you have a Damascus steel blade knife, you have a knife blade with unique beauty. With its historical reputation as the metal used for the best swords over hundreds of years, and its distinctive wavy design, Damascus steel is a beauty to behold."

— knifeart.com

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### **CONSERVATION AND SAFETY INFORMATION**

### Prevent Power Line Problems

**NEARLY EVERYONE KNOWS NOT TO TOUCH** a downed power line, but you might not know that you do not have to touch a power line to be in danger. High-voltage electricity can jump to anyone who gets too close.

Anytime you're working or playing outside, stay at least 10 feet away from power lines and their connections. Look up before raising a ladder or pole, and use wooden or fiberglass ladders outdoors. Avoid using metal ladders because they conduct electricity.

### **Downed Power Line Safety Tips**

► If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. The ground around power lines—up to 35 feet—can be energized.

► You cannot tell whether a power line is energized just by looking at it. Assume that all downed power lines are live.

► The proper way to move away from the power line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock.

▶ If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 for help.

► Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything else in contact with it by using an object such as a broom or stick. Even nonconductive materials such as wood or cloth can conduct electricity if even slightly wet.

- ▶ Be careful not to touch or step in water near a downed power line.
- ▶ Do not drive over downed power lines.

► If your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line while you are inside, stay in the vehicle. Honk your horn to summon help, but direct others to stay away.

► If you must leave your vehicle because it is on fire, jump out with both feet together and avoid contact with both the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Shuffle away from the vehicle.





### Enjoy Water Wisely

**SINCE 1990, THERE HAVE BEEN** 60 electrocutions and nearly 50 serious electrical shocks involving electrical hazards in and around swimming pools in the U.S., reports the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Heed these pool and spa safety tips to swim safely and enjoy the water wisely.

All outdoor electrical receptacles should be covered to keep them dry. This is especially important around pools, spas and summer water activities.

► Use a ground-fault circuit interrupter for electrical devices used outside to help prevent electrocutions and electric shock injuries. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available for \$12-\$30.

Make sure all electrical equipment used for swimming pools (even the cleaning equipment) is grounded.

► Electrical devices and cords should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources such as pools and spas. When possible, use battery-operated electrical devices outside.

► Never handle electrical devices when you are wet—either from water activities or perspiration.

► Make sure there are no power lines over your swimming pool.

Do not swim during a thunderstorm.

► To avoid electric shock drowning, have an electrician inspect and upgrade your pool, spa or hot tub to see that it's in accordance with applicable local codes and the National Electrical Code.

### Easy Steps to Greater Efficiency

**DO YOU WANT TO SAVE MONEY** and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? A typical American family spends nearly \$2,000 per year on home energy bills, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Much of that money is wasted via leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several ways to save energy without a huge commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home—and you won't have to hire a specialist to help.

#### Where To Start

Improving the "envelope" of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations over the years can loosen up any home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and ductwork can spring leaks. By weatherstripping and caulking around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating during colder months.

Sealing gaps around ductwork, piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weatherstripping around overlooked spaces such as your attic hatch or pull-down stairs, too.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs is a fast way to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LEDs have an estimated life span of 10,000–20,000 hours, compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. By replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the Energy Star rating, you can save \$75 a year, according to the DOE.

### Wrapping Up Savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could save you about 7–16 percent in water heating costs. For an investment of about \$30, you can purchase precut jackets or blankets and install them in about an hour.

A safety note: The DOE recommends that you set the thermostat no higher than 130 degrees on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket because a higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure that your home's HVAC system is performing at an optimal level. A simple task like changing or cleaning the filters in your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. But if they aren't changed or cleaned regularly, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter lead to problems,



Help your air conditioner work efficiently by using weatherstripping to seal gaps around your attic hatch and pull-down stairs.

including reduced airflow in the home, up to 15 percent higher operating costs, lowered system efficiency, and even costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning or changing the filters monthly.

### **Take Control of Your Energy Savings**

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was programmed for the current season and family schedule?

This energy-saving tool enables you to fine-tune the temperature for particular hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules. Most come with an override option so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programing. You can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if the thermostat is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

Remember: You can take these and other easy steps now to improve the energy efficiency of your home. Contact your co-op to learn additional ways to save.

## Mayhaw Fruit Jells With Market

Once a treat only for foragers, this East Texas fruit finds a market among farmers

#### **BY LADAWN FLETCHER**

UNTIL RECENTLY, FRUIT FROM THE MAYhaw tree wasn't something you grew; it was something you found—and getting to it in the wild rarely was easy.

Finding edible plants in the backwoods and backyards of Texas is a specialty of Mark Vorderbruggen, author of *Idiot's Guide: Foraging*. He knows exactly where to find mayhaw.

"East Texas," he says. "In East Texas, they can be found along the Trinity River, the river bottoms, in the low swampy areas." Mayhaw also grows wild in swampy and woodsy areas of Louisiana and Georgia.

Demand for the regional fruit is growing just as its natural habitat is shrinking. Mayhaw never has been easily accessible, and with deforestation, land development and disease, the population of wild trees has shrunk while demand for the fruit is on the rise.

Mayhaw, a member of the hawthorn family, blooms in late spring, and its berries typically ripen in May. The plants are about 8–10 feet tall, and the white flowers give way to bright red and sometimes yellow fruit less than an inch across. These days, the plants are grown commercially and are available from nurseries to be planted in orchards and gardens.

The fruit, pucker-inducing and jewellike, becomes flavorful when married with sugar. Raw, it's similar in flavor and texture to crab apples, and good for you—high in vitamin C and beta-carotene.

"It's a little tart and somewhat acidic," Vorderbruggen says.

Historically, families sought out the fruit and made jelly from it as a welcome addi-

tion to the fruits and vegetables they grew.

The mayhaw fruit's tartness makes juice that's perfect for jelly and syrup. For appreciative Southerners, mayhaw jelly on a hot, buttered biscuit holds a special place. The taste is wildly fruity, like apple jelly with a little kick.

Jelly is the tasty reward for venturing into the wet, swampy and boggy areas where wild mayhaws prosper, even when their root structure is completely submerged. The tree is frequently found nestled among water-loving hardwood trees such as cypress, where it is shielded from full sun. Collecting the fruit almost always includes skimming the ripe berries from the water, where they float. Using nets, buckets and boats, foraging families scoop up the fruit then head home to extract the juice.

Now that mayhaw jelly is recognized as a Southern delicacy, a 12-ounce jar fetches up to \$20 online. Some local hardware stores and farmers markets offer the jelly, and even more mayhaw goods can be found at the annual Hull-Daisetta Mayhaw Festival held every spring in Liberty County.

Still, mayhaw lovers have been looking for new ways to get their berries, and a handful of agriculture programs around the country have stepped in to develop tree varieties that can be cultivated in a traditional orchard setting.

Mayhaw is adaptable. The trees grow wild in poorly drained soil but also can grow well in drier conditions. Grower Jackie Merket of Beckville, a member of Rusk County Electric Cooperative who



WEB EXTRAS

Learn how to make mayhaw syrup and about foraging for other wild, edible plants.

> Commercial growers are up against the same time constraints that foragers face: a short season with berries that must be harvested quickly. The berries continually ripen over the course of a week, requiring multiple harvests. At room temperature, they are good for only a day or two after picking but freeze wonderfully. Freezing the berries helps harvesters extract the juice that is the building block for sweet treats. Merket usually gets his berries into the freezer within four hours to ensure quality.

> Jelly might be what mayhaw is best known for, but once the juice is extracted, it can be fermented into wine or added to cakes and ice cream.

"There is a guy out of Arkansas who has been making ice cream for several years," Merket says. "It's very good, and they approached Blue Bell one time about making some, [but] there was no way they could supply enough mayhaws to even do a one-day run.

"That is the biggest problem: We just don't have enough growers right now."

**LaDawn Fletcher** is a Houston-area writer who enjoys writing about Texas.

#### Bill Jackson plucks mayhaws for jelly on his farm in Livingston.

lives southeast of Longview, has found the tree to be quite drought-tolerant. Merket is among a

handful of mayhaw growers who are successfully harvesting mayhaw fruits, and even he is amused by his success.

"I'm from West Texas. I didn't even know what a mayhaw was," he says with a laugh. A neighbor introduced the species to him, and once he had the jelly, he thought he'd try growing it himself. He has been so successful, he can't keep up with demand. Because the fruit is difficult to find and even more difficult to harvest on a large scale, jelly makers with an expanding market are turning toward commercial growers, including Merket.

"My biggest customer is a jelly maker out of Arkansas," he says.

# **Everything Eats Chicken**

National wildlife refuge protects Attwater's prairie chicken and its coastal habitat

**BY JOE SHERFY** 

THE SUN IS JUST COMING UP ON A CHILLY October Saturday, and I'm outside Eagle Lake in Southeast Texas, driving toward the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge to claim my seat on an 8 a.m. tour. As an enthusiastic birder, I'm excited at the promise of spotting the critically endangered Attwater's prairie chicken. The refuge is just about the only place to see the bird.

It's now 7:50, and traffic is at a standstill. I see a large truck ahead that appears to be on fire. My phone rings, and a voice

says "Joe, it's John Magera from the refuge. Are you going to be here for the tour?" Magera, who is the deputy refuge manager, offers to guide me away from the traffic jam and to the refuge on back roads. Directions in hand, I am flying down a dirt road across part of the refuge and thinking, "What if I run over a prairie chicken?"

Fortunately, that doesn't happen. I arrive at the refuge headquarters, a group of lowslung, pale, utilitarian buildings, to find several people waiting on me. As we move

toward a large van, Magera walks over to shake my hand and says, "Glad you made it."

Magera exhibits a warm and jovial manner as he explains he has worked eight years at the refuge. Over the course of the free three-hour tour, I see my first Attwater's prairie chicken and an expanse of native coastal prairie.

As we drive in search of the elusive prairie chicken, we crane our necks to identify other birds, and Magera explains the job of managing the prairie, a treeless combination of tall native grasses. He notes that controlled burns, invasive plant removal and the use of cattle to simulate the effect of buffalo on the prairie are all important steps to help maintain the native habitat. The Texas coast once was teeming with Attwater's prairie chickens, but conversion of coastal prairie to farm-



ing and ranching fragmented and destroyed the bird's ideal habitat. By the mid-1960s, little habitat remained. In addition to habitat fragmentation, several other factors conspire against the birds, including fire ants, a short life span and predators. As Magera says, "Everything eats chicken."



about the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge.

Since opening in 1972, the refuge has provided a home to a dwindling prairie chicken population and

enabled research designed to prevent the bird from becoming extinct.

Refuge employees battle all the risk factors and acknowledge the weather, as well. Because the prairie chicken builds its nest on the ground, rains cause trouble, and the past two years of spring rains reduced the success rate for the breeding season. The refuge partners with several zoos that breed the birds in captivity. Every year, 200–300 of the birds are released, which improves the odds of the species' survival.

Studies of fire ants have shown that they compete with chicks for insects, so a fire ant suppressant helps reduce the competition for food. Radio collars help biologists track the birds during breeding season, and this helps with predator control.

Public access to the refuge's 10,000 acres is limited. The staff maintains a 5-mile driving loop along with two hiking trails, each between 1 and 11/2 miles long. Still, the best opportunity to see a prairie chicken is on the monthly guided tour. The first Saturday of every month and every Saturday in April, up to 12 guests can sign up for a guided tour. Most of the tour is spent in the van, so opportunities for photography are limited. Even so, there are myriad birds in this prairie habitat, and birders will get a good opportunity to add to their life lists. Visitors spot crested caracaras, white-tailed hawks and Sprague's pipits, as well as up to 16 species of sparrow.

The prairie itself is worth the trip. "Even if the bird wasn't here," Magera says, "the refuge would be just as important for preserving the native coastal prairie." Estimates indicate that less than 1 percent of virgin coastal prairie remains today. Made up of four native grasses, the prairie is resilient and tolerates drought much better than the grasses more commonly used in commercial ranching. Some landowners see the benefit of native grasses and have converted acreage back to native prairie.

At the end of the tour, I'm elated and already thinking about a return trip. The male Attwater's prairie chicken performs an elaborate dance during April's breeding season to impress females. The male inflates yellow air sacks around his neck and stamps his feet while emitting a low booming sound. I want to see that, and I hope I won't have to worry about a fiery traffic jam and thoughts of running one over as I excitedly fly down backroads for the tour.

**Joe Sherfy** is a birder and outdoors enthusiast who lives in Austin.



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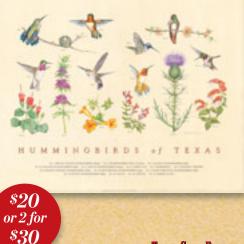
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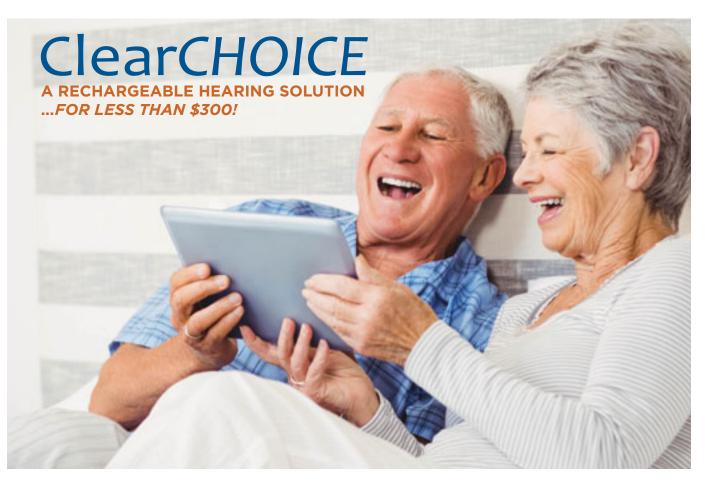
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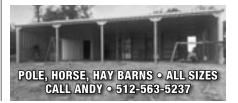
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### The Mystery of Sain-toh-oodie Goombi

Captured as a toddler, woman lives 66 years with Kiowa family

#### **BY GENE FOWLER**

AMONG THE FASCINATING STORIES FROM the collision of cultures in 19th-century Texas are those about the children of settler families kidnapped by Native Americans. Some, like Cynthia Ann Parker, mother of Comanche leader Quanah Parker, were unable to readjust to "civilization" after adopting native ways. Cynthia Ann, who did not willingly return to the white world, mourned the separation from her Comanche family for the rest of her life.

Other narratives, such as the story of Sain-toh-oodie Goombi, ended more peacefully. In 1930, long after she had married into a Kiowa family in Oklahoma and was blessed with several grandchildren, Goombi became convinced that she was actually Millie Durgan.

Durgan was 18 months old in 1864 when she was taken by Kiowa and Comanche who raided Elm Creek settlements in present Young County in north Central Texas.

Blue-eyed Goombi had been told early in life that she was white, but she adapted so well to Kiowa life that she didn't think of returning. Later, though, she began to wonder about her birth family.

In a 1955 letter to Dallas Morning News columnist Frank X. Tolbert, Ben Brothers of Mount Enterprise recalled how the Goombi-Durgan connection was established years earlier. In 1930, Brothers, who had been a friend of Quanah Parker, was in Lawton, Oklahoma, for the unveiling of a monument to Cynthia Ann Parker. One of Goombi's daughters, Mrs. George Hunt, shared a secret with Brothers. She said her mother was a white woman and asked Brothers if he might help Goombi find her family members. He replied that even though it sounded like a tough assignment, he was good at reading signs and following a trail.

After reading up on Indian raids, Brothers decided there was a good chance that



Goombi might be Durgan. He learned that a former slave named Britt Johnson had tracked the Elm Creek raiders into the Indian Territory and rescued his family. But the Kiowa claimed that Durgan, taken in the same raid, was dead.

Brothers contacted history-minded folks in Young County and Comanche County, Oklahoma. After consultations with George Poolaw, Kiowa historian and keeper of tribal "picture records," all agreed that Goombi must be the Durgan girl. Soon, Goombi, who presumably had been carried from Texas 66 years earlier as a toddler, left her home in Mountain Park, Oklahoma, to visit the people among whom she once lived.

In Newcastle, Texas, Goombi and family members were warmly received by the Kutch-Manning Pioneer Association. Sonin-law George Hunt served as interpreter because Goombi could speak only Kiowa. On the stage of the high school auditorium, her grandchildren performed Kiowa dances and songs. The group repeated the program in Archer City and Olney, and Goombi spoke on Wichita Falls radio. Barbara A. Neal Ledbetter, who witnessed the Newcastle presentation, said the Kiowa party also traveled to Austin. where Goombi met Gov. Dan Moody.

Though Ledbetter argued in her 1982 book, *Fort Belknap Frontier Saga*, that the "leathery bronze-skinned woman" was not Durgan,

Goombi toured North Texas annually until her death in 1934, meeting the public and soothing long-simmering interracial enmity with her grandchildren's smiling faces and performances. While in Jacksboro, she visited Fort Richardson, where she learned about the trials and imprisonment of Kiowa chiefs Satank, Big Tree and Satanta for the Warren Wagon Train Raid of 1871. *The Paducah Post* reported that the program included "war dancing, round dancing and numerous songs sung in Kiowa and English."

While later being treated for pneumonia at a Fort Sill hospital, Goombi told Western historian W.S. Nye that she wanted to go home for her "die day." Because one of Goombi's late husbands had been a scout for the U.S. Army, Nye arranged for a bugler to play taps, and an American flag was draped over her casket.

Gene Fowler specializes in Texas history.

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### Texas Gulf Shrimp

WHILE WORKING ON MY LATEST cookbook-devoted to "any night grilling"-I discovered that sweet Gulf shrimp is one of the most delicious foods to fire on a grill. Most recipes call for skewering shrimp, but I prefer to grill them in a preheated basket (see a photo online) or cast-iron skillet that allows me to work my grill like a range. I pour the marinated shrimp into the basket (an olive oil marinade prevents sticking) then flip, rotate and shake the basket as needed, so they cook evenly. The lightly charred shrimp is a natural partner for orzo flavored with lemon zest, grilled lemons, crumbled feta and olives.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

### Grilled Shrimp With Lemony Orzo and Feta

- 2 pounds (18-20) shrimp, peeled and deveined
   Extra-virgin olive oil, as needed
   Kosher salt, to taste
   Freshly ground pepper, to taste
   2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano or marjoram
   2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
   Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
   16 ounces uncooked orzo
  - 2 lemons
  - 1/2 cup thinly sliced scallions (white and green parts) or chopped red onion
  - <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup green olives (any variety) or Kalamata or oil-cured olives
  - 1/2 cup lightly chopped Italian parsley
  - 8 ounces crumbled feta cheese

1. Place the shrimp in a large mixing bowl, drizzle with enough olive oil to lightly coat, season with salt and pepper, and toss to combine. Add the oregano or marjoram, thyme and red pepper flakes, and toss again, CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

### **Recipes**

### **Texas Gulf Shrimp**



### CONNIE JO NEGRETE | COSERV

Spicy grilled shrimp and a crunchy, citrusy slaw create satisfying tacos that are "great to share on a warm summer day," Negrete says.

### **Spicy Grilled Shrimp Tacos** With Sweet and Sour Slaw

#### SHRIMP

- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1⁄4 teaspoon ground chipotle pepper (or other chile pepper)
- 2 pounds medium Texas Gulf shrimp, peeled and deveined

#### **SLAW**

- 1/2 head green cabbage, cored and shredded
- head red cabbage, cored and shredded 1⁄2
- 5-6 medium carrots, peeled and shredded
- 1 small bunch cilantro-stems removedcoarsely chopped
- Juice from 5 limes
- Juice from 1 lemon
- 1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons agave nectar Corn tortillas, for serving Lime wedges, for serving

**1.** SHRIMP: In a food processor, combine the salt, pepper, chipotle peppers, garlic, lime juice and ground chipotle, and purée until smooth. Place the shrimp in a gallon plastic bag and pour in the chipotle marinade. Seal bag and toss until shrimp is evenly coated with marinade, then refrigerate 1-2 hours.

**2.** SLAW: Combine the cabbages, carrots and cilantro in a large bowl. Combine the citrus juices, oil and agave nectar in a glass jar with a lid, and shake to combine. Pour the dressing over the vegetables, toss to combine, then cover and refrigerate until needed.

**3.** Heat a grill to medium and lightly oil the grate. Drain shrimp in a colander and discard excess marinade. Thread shrimp onto metal skewers, or bamboo skewers that have been soaked in water for at least 30 minutes. (Alternatively, you can grill shrimp in a grill basket. See opening recipe for method.) Grill shrimp about 3 minutes per side, until opaque, then remove from heat. **4.** Serve grilled shrimp with the slaw, tortillas and lime wedges on the side. Serves 4-6.

### \$5,000 Holiday Recipe Contest

December's issue will feature winners of the 13th 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.

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.

#### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

then set aside to marinate at room temperature while preparing the grill. **2.** Prepare grill for two-zone (indirect) grilling: Build a medium-high fire in a charcoal grill (or light a gas grill to high). If you're using a grill basket or cast-iron skillet, allow it to heat on the grill 5-10 minutes before cooking.

**3.** While the grill heats, bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil. Add the orzo and cook per package directions until al dente, then drain. Transfer orzo to a mixing bowl, drizzle with olive oil and toss to combine (to help prevent pasta from sticking).

**4.** Finely grate the zest from 1 lemon and add zest to orzo, then halve both lemons horizontally.

5. When you're ready to cook, place shrimp directly in preheated grill basket or directly on grates. Flip and rotate shrimp around the heat as needed until fully cooked, about 5-6 minutes total, then remove from heat.

6. Brush the cut-side of the lemons with olive oil and grill until deep char marks appear, about 2-3 minutes.

7. Combine the warm shrimp with the orzo and toss to combine. Add about 1/3cup olive oil, scallions, olives, parsley and feta, and toss gently to combine. Taste, and add salt or pepper as desired. Serve warm or at room temperature with grilled lemon halves. Serves 4-6.

**COOK'S TIP** If you prefer to grill directly on the grates, you can use large or jumbo shrimp, which are easier to turn. If you prefer to grill the shrimp on bamboo skewers, soak the skewers in water 30 minutes before grilling so they won't catch fire.

### **Texas Gulf Shrimp Cheddar Beer Soup**

**CARMEN LARA | BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES** This soup has fantastic flavor and a velvety texture. For best results, make sure you don't overcook the shrimp in the initial boil, since you'll reheat it again in the soup before serving.

- 1/2 pound medium or large Texas Gulf shrimp, unpeeled
- 1⁄4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 medium cloves garlic, minced or pressed



- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup unbleached flour
- 1<sup>3</sup>⁄<sub>4</sub> cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 bottle (12 ounces) beer
- 2 cups whole or low-fat milk
- 3 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup shredded American cheese
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch

#### Salt

Ground black pepper Chives, for garnish

 Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil, add shrimp and boil until pink and cooked through, about 2–3 minutes, then drain. When shrimp is cool enough to handle, shell, devein, rinse under cold water and set aside.
 Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and stir until lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in flour and cook until golden, about 1 minute. Slowly whisk in broth, beer and milk. Bring mixture to simmer, then reduce heat to low and simmer gently (do not boil) until thickened, about 20–25 minutes. Remove from heat.
3. Meanwhile, toss the shredded cheeses and cornstarch together in a large bowl until combined. Purée soup mixture in blender in 2 batches until completely smooth. Return to saucepan and simmer over medium-low heat. Add cheese mixture 1 cup at a time, whisking until smooth, then season with salt and pepper. Add cooked shrimp to the purée and use a ladle to gently combine.
4. Serve warm, with snipped chives on top for garnish. Serves 6–8.

### Southern-Style Shrimp & Rice Salad

**ROSEMARY KALINA** | BLUEBONNET EC Cooking rice in the spicy "shrimp boil" water gives this salad a wonderful flavor that's balanced by green olives.

- 4 cups water
- 1½ tablespoons Old Bay shrimp boil
- 2 pounds Texas Gulf shrimp, peeled and deveined

- Icup uncooked white rice½cup chopped onion½cup chopped green olivesBlack pepper, to taste
- I cup mayonnaise

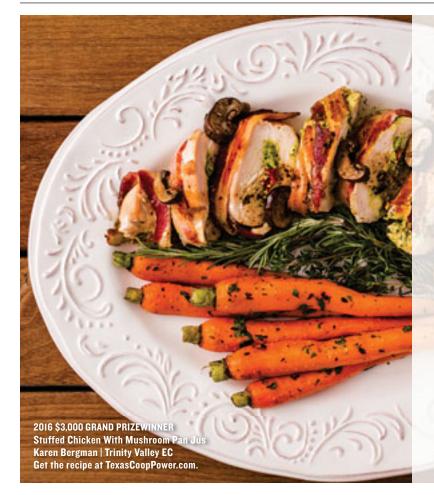
1. Combine water and shrimp boil in a pot and bring to a boil. Add shrimp and cook 4 minutes, until just cooked through, then drain, reserving the water. Chop shrimp into bite-sized chunks and allow them to cool on paper towels to help absorb excess moisture.

**2.** Return the shrimp water to a boil, add rice and cook until tender, then drain and set aside to cool.

**3.** In a large bowl, use a rubber spatula to combine the rice, onion, olives and black pepper. Fold in mayonnaise and cooled, dry shrimp, and gently stir to incorporate all ingredients.

**4.** Serve immediately or refrigerate up to 3 days. Serves 6.

WEB EXTRAS ► No skimping on shrimp: Check out a pasta dish and stuffed avocados.



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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.

Go to TexasCoopPower.com for details and official rules.

### TEXASCOOP 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 (S12) 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 uill be accepted. For official rules, visit TexasCoopPower.com. Entry deadline: July 10, 2017.

Deadline: JULY 10

### **Chicago Doctor Invents**

# Advanced Hearing Aid Technology for under \$300

### **Outperforms Many Expensive Hearing Aids**

Reported by J. Page

CHICAGO: A local board-certified Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medicalgrade, 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.

an affordable price, similar to "one-size-fits-most" reading the glasses available at drug stores.

### **Superb Performance** Affordable Hearing Aid

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

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

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated lead hearing loss could to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease. He could not the best low-cost hearing aid understand why the cost of hearing aids was so high when the prices of 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

without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the MDHearingAid PRO<sup>®</sup>, your price \$299. It has been declared to be that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.

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-Gerald Levy

"I have a \$2,000 Resound<sup>®</sup> Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid<sup>®</sup> 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

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### **Play Ball**

THE WEATHER IS FINE, and the smell of popcorn is in the air. No matter the game, Texans are great sports. And when it comes to capturing that perfect moment, these readers are ready for the big leagues. **GRACE ARSIAGA** 

WEB EXTRAS > See more photos online.

▼ LORY VON STADEN, Heart of Texas EC: The Lorena Dirtbags

show off their runner-up rings after a long tournament.

▲ CHERYL HOOPER, Nueces EC: "South Texas baseball dry and hot as this pitch."

▲ ELAINE VENTERS, Pedernales EC: "My corgi, Dylan, will chase a ball anywhere. His favorite thing is dock diving into the stock tank."



► MARVIN ANN PATTERSON: "The little guys were totally into their game."



▲ MICHAEL WADE, HILCO EC: Teamwork is what it's all about.



### UPCOMING CONTESTS

NOVEMBER INTO THE WOODS	DUE JULY 10
DECEMBER STAIRWAYS	DUE AUGUST 10
JANUARY SNOW DAY	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, selfaddressed 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.

### **Event Calendar**

### Pick of the Month Texas Lineman's Rodeo

#### Seguin July 15

1-800-223-4832, tlra.org

Electrical linemen from around the state converge at Nolte Island Recreation Area every year for a test of skills, including pole climbing and simulated pole-top rescues. The competition is spirited, and so is the camaraderie afterward. Fifteen Texas co-ops sent participants in 2016.



### July

Stephenville [1-Aug. 24] Celebrate Doilies, (254) 965-6190, ctfac.com

7

Kemp Annual Aley Picnic, (903) 498-6482

**McDade [7–8]** Watermelon Festival, (512) 332-1270, mcdadetexas.com

Laredo [7–9] International Sister Cities Festival, 1-800-361-3360, visitlaredo.com

**Clute** [7–9, 14–16] *Mary Poppins*, (979) 265-7661, bcfas.org

### 8

9

**Grand Prairie Festival de Mariachi,** (972) 647-2331, tradersvillage.com/grand-prairie

Weatherford Parker County Peach Festival, (817) 596-3801, parkercountypeachfestival.org

**Gruene** Gospel Brunch With a Texas Twist, (830) 629-5077, gruenehall.com

RODEO: DAVE SHAFER. DOILY: HORACE WAYNE CALLAWAY | COURTESY SUZANN THOMPSON. STARGAZING: AZPWORLDWIDE | DREAMSTIME.COM

July 1-August 24 Stephenville Celebrate Doilies

### 12

Fort Worth [12-15] Wild West History Association Roundup, (210) 490-2433, wildwesthistory.org

14

**Sugar Land** Dancing Under the Stars, (281) 276-6000, sugarlandtownsquare.com

**Waco** [14-15] Coryell Creek Critters BBQ Cook-Off & Festival, (254) 865-7163, coryellcreekcritters.org

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(800) TELL TDA texasagriculture.gov



36 Texas Co-op Power July 2017

### 15

**Fredericksburg** Night in Old Fredericksburg, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

20

Plano [20–29] 10-Minute Play Festival, (972) 849-0358, roverdramawerks.com

San Angelo [20-Sep. 24] Critical Angles: Featuring the Work of Cathy Cunningham Little, (325) 653-3333, samfa.org

21 Boerne Star Party, (830) 249-9511, visitboerne.org



Arlington CONCACAF Gold Cup, (817) 892-4000, attstadium.com

**Corpus Christi Nature CSI,** (361) 852-2100, stxbot.org

**Salado [22, 29, Aug. 5]** *Salado Legends,* (254) 947-9205, tablerock.org

25 Kerrville [25-28] Heart of the Hills Golf Tournament, (830) 895-1027, hohkerr.com

### 27

**Longview** [27-30] *The Pirates of Penzance Jr.*, (903) 236-7535, artsviewchildrenstheatre.com

29 Glen Rose

**Glen Rose** World Nature Conservation Day, (254) 897-2960, fossilrim.org

**Monahans** Butterfield Festival, (432) 943-2187, monahans.org

Orange National Dance Day, (409) 728-5970, octx.info

**Livestock Shelters** 



**Richmond** Murder and Moore: A Murder Mystery Party, (281) 342-6478, fortbendmuseum.org

**Smithville** Casino Night, (512) 237-2313, explorebastropcounty.com

### August

South Padre Island [2-6] Texas International Fishing Tournament, 1-800-657-2373, sopadre.com

3

**Bastrop** [3–5] Homecoming and Rodeo, (512) 303-0558, explorebastropcounty.com

Dalhart [3-5] XIT Rodeo and Reunion, (806) 244-5646, dalhart.org

Midland [3-5] Rock the Desert, (432) 563-3434, rockthedesert.com

### Submit Your Event!

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



Summer Break Fun Museums Art & Culture Parks & Recreation Historic Downtown Antiques Fairs & Festivals For more information and overnight accommodations: www.huntsvilletexas.com

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### **Panhandle Prosperity**

Childress bustles its way to historic restoration and retail reinvention

#### **BY RUSSELL A. GRAVES**

ON SATURDAY MORNINGS, CHILDRESS offers its true character to visitors. Even though its population is 6,500, it bustles with a tempo that belies its rurality.

U.S. Highway 287 runs through town and brings travelers from downstate, the Gulf Coast or the Rocky Mountain states. On Childress' west side, 287 intersects Highway 83, which runs from Mexico to Canada. With busy blacktops, Childress prospers as a center for retail, agriculture, government and medical care.

"Childress has come so far over the past couple of decades," says Adam Bishop, a vintner who owns **501 Winery** downtown. "We've got a good group of people who think big and are transforming the town into a special place, to make sure our kids have a reason to raise their families here."

Every Saturday, my wife, Kristy, and I spend the day in town to catch up with friends and do our weekly shopping. It's a date night on Saturday morning. While we shop for necessities to keep our hobby farm humming, others watch a mounted shooting competition in the event center. Nearby sits Rock Field, a historic 75-yearold Civilian Conservation Corps project with the character of a minor-league baseball park.

"We always look forward to stopping in Childress," says Coloradan Brian Strickland, who visits Childress on his way to see family in East Texas.

"I'm an avid golfer, so I look forward to playing a round on the course there," he says. While he plays, his wife walks downtown to take pictures of historic buildings.

"It's really got a great small-town feel," he says. "I've been fortunate enough to befriend some people who live in Childress and sometimes come back to hunt deer or turkey."

At about 1,800 feet elevation, the town



lies on a ridge that's the geographic divide between the Red River to the north and the Pease River to the south. Childress lives in the corner of Texas where the Panhandle meets the Red River, so the Oklahoma border is just a few miles northeast.

For Kristy and me, Saturday breakfast is always at **Dawson's Family Restaurant**. With décor that leans toward Western, friendly waitresses and a talkative clientele, Dawson's is the ideal diner.

After we leave Dawson's, we head to Amazing Grace Antiques and Gifts. The store is in a tiny house, but when you walk in and see the eclectic offerings that are stacked wall to wall, the place seems huge. I buy a couple of turquoise-colored antique telegraph insulators.

Kristy suggests we visit **Ballyhoo**, part home-décor showroom, part coffeeand-sweet shop. We each order a salted caramel macchiato to sip as we browse the farmhouse-inspired collection.

Recently named to the National Register of Historic Places, downtown Childress is marked by its brick streets and architecture that includes art deco and West Texas functional. The brick streets were laid by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. Around town, remnants of that era tell a story: the World War II army airfield that now serves as the municipal airport, and the living hedgerows, called shelterbelts, planted during the Dust Bowl to halt desertification.

The historic Childress downtown is making a comeback, with redevelopment funds transforming long-vacant buildings into commercial, public-use and residential space. Notable is the six-story Hotel Childress, the town's only "skyscraper," which dates to the 1920s.

By midday, Kristy and I are enjoying food at **JT's Drive In**, a barbecue place that stands as another standard-setter of local establishments. The smoke rolling from its train-shaped smoker lures passersby. By most modern indices, JT's is small about 1,200 square feet, with less than half reserved for the dining area. The flavor of the chopped barbecue sandwich, however, is huge. We eat at picnic tables outside as the cars pass by on the highway. The traffic is another reminder that the town, even for its small size, really bustles.

Writer and photographer **Russell A. Graves** is a member of South Plains EC.

WEB EXTRAS ► Area around Childress belies Panhandle's flat reputation.

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God Bless America -00006 Leather Cover and Labels - 00006 触



Faith, Hope, Christ - 00633 Fabric Cover and Labels - 00633 ☆



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A Walk on the Beach -01020 Leather Cover and Labels - 01020 🖈





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er be with my grandkids." - 00437 Cover and Labels - 00437 🎓

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Day of the Dead -01134 Leather Cover and Labels - 01134 😭



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