

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

After Dark

IN THE PARK

Nocturnal natives show
Rio Grande Valley in
a whole new light



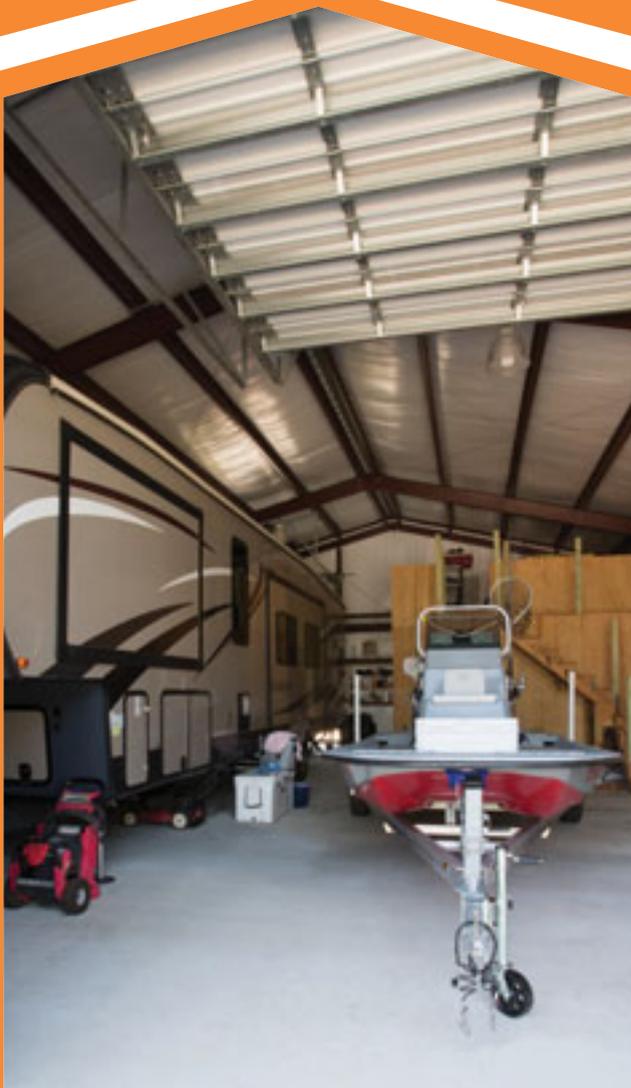


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Naturalists spot a wolf spider by catching the reflection of its eyes with their flashlights.

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ON THE COVER A bobcat sits beside a pond at Estero Llano Grande State Park. Photo by Larry Ditto

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Seeing Stars in Greenville

That game [*When Greenville Beat the Yankees*, June 2017] was the beginning and end of my baseball career. As a 14-year-old, I sold refreshments in the stands or shagged over-the-fence balls at Majors Field.

When the Yankees were warming up out on the field, I got my glove and ambled out on the field near Joe DiMaggio. I was much too awed to speak to him. Soon a medium-hot grounder came my way, and Joe said, "Wanna get that, kid?" Boy, did I! My chance to be recognized by the major leagues!

About a yard in front of me, that ball took a hop and beamed me. Next thing I knew, the great DiMaggio was standing over and looking down at me. "You OK, kid?" he asked.

I was, but my fantasy baseball career was beyond repair.

DAVID SMITH | SONORA
SOUTHWEST TEXAS EC

Look It Up in Alpine

Just finished the great bookstore article [*Blue Highway Literature*, June 2017]. One that you missed is my favorite bookstore in Texas, in little old Alpine.

Every time I visit, I find books that none of the chain stores carry. Next time you are in Alpine, give the store a look.

JACK L. COOPER
NUECES EC

Glory Days in Bremond

The first Polish settlers to arrive in Bremond were my great-grandparents, Joseph and Katherine Bartula [*Bremond Says "Witamy!"*, Currents, June 2017]. They came to America in 1873 from Austrian Poland.

Trinity Valley EC to the Rescue

Just want to thank Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative for its quick response to the power outages after the recent tornado destruction in the Canton, Eustace and Emory areas. I always tell people how wonderful our service is out here.

The morning after the storms, I was headed on Highway 19 toward Athens. Hardly any cars, just utility trucks, one after another, headed toward Canton.

A solid stream of repair trucks with poles and other necessary items.

The reality of the situation brought tears to my eyes.

ANDREA MEADOWS | ATHENS | TRINITY VALLEY EC



They worked for the Roberts family until they were able to save \$6.20 and then purchased their own 62-acre farm. As a kid, I remember summer vacations picking cotton, hunting squirrels and rabbits, and fishing in creeks. There were no lights (electricity).

I remember the excitement one summer in the '50s. The community was abuzz that the REA [Rural Electric Administration] was bringing electricity to the area. The next summer, each room had a bulb on the end of a wire in the middle of the room. Glory days!!

RAYMOND A. BARTULA | HOUSTON
SAM HOUSTON EC



Taking 42 to Nevada

Our family took the 42 dominoes game [*The Top Spot*, January 2017] to Nevada 50 years ago when we moved here. Parents, children and grandchildren have all learned to play. No tournaments here.

BETTY PAWELEK | ELKO, NEVADA
KARNES EC

Remembering the Explosion

In 1941, my parents moved to New London. The lady living next door to them had lost a son in the explosion [*The New London School Explosion*, January 2017]. When she found out that my mom was pregnant, she begged her to name the baby Donald, after the child she lost. My mother agreed to do it because she felt so sorry for the woman.

The baby turned out to be a girl, and they named her Linda. In later years, my mother thought about how silly it was

to make such a promise to a person she barely knew. She said she "just felt so sorry for her."

LINDA LIVELY | KINGSLAND
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

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   **Texas Co-op Power**

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HAPPENINGS

Come and Sit a Spell

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR HOT TUNES but hope to escape the hot weather this month, consider **MELODY RANCH'S 11TH ANNUAL DEEP SUMMER BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, AUGUST 23-26**, southeast of Sherman near Tom Bean.

WEB EXTRAS

► Find more happenings online.

The air-conditioned Chrystal Opry House, a member of **GRAYSON-COLLIN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**, will showcase two nationally known bands—the Little Roy and Lizzy Show, and Mark Phillips and IIIrd Generation Bluegrass Band—plus a host of local and Texas favorites.

Food and drinks are available, as is camping at Melody Ranch RV Park.

INFO ► (903) 546-6893, melodyranchbluegrassfestival.com

HISTORY LESSON

Brilliant!

Eclipse mania heads into its final weeks, and the U.S. Postal Service is putting its own special touch on the rare occurrence.

The total solar eclipse “for-ever” stamp transforms from a blocked-out sun to a full moon by the heat of a finger. The first-of-its-kind stamp, using thermochromic ink, commemorates the August 21 event, the first coast-to-coast total solar eclipse in America since 1918—the same year scheduled airmail service began. Totality will be visible in 14 states, from Oregon to South Carolina, but nowhere in Texas.



Little Roy and Lizzy Show

HISTORY LESSON

Smoke-Filled Shindigs

President Lyndon B. Johnson flew to his LBJ ranch near Johnson City 74 times during his five years in office. He spent 490 days there, almost 25 percent of his term.

He staged huge barbecues for visitors—foreign and domestic. Johnson thought they conveyed the idea that an everyday man was president. On occasion, he'd mix brisket and backroom deals on the White House grounds, leading the *New York Herald-Tribune* to coin the phrase “barbecue diplomacy.” Read about LBJ's first state dinner, a barbecue, in *Diplomacy on the Pedernales* on Page 29.

BY THE NUMBERS



Texas' total fall enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 1,555,462 in 2014, the latest figures from the National Center for Education Statistics.

The only state with more college students that year was California, with 2,696,415. The state with the fewest number of college students was Alaska, with 34,331.



CO-OPS IN THE COMMUNITY

Serving Their Neck of the Woods

AN EXCITING DAY AT FOSSIL RIM WILDLIFE CENTER near Glen Rose turned urgent January 13 when a manager noticed damage to an electric pole, causing one downed wire and another to barely hang.

Fifteen minutes after a call to United Cooperative Services, a crew was beginning repairs. Soon, though, the crew needed to kill the power to finish the job.

That caused quite a stir at the giraffe barn, where Fossil Rim employees had gathered to watch a video feed of Jurz, who was on the verge of giving birth.

"They were using a hands-off approach from the animal care office and observing with our cameras in the barn," said Louis Pienaar, a Fossil Rim co-manager of support services. "Then the power went off."

Thirty minutes later, the lights came back on, and the staff watched Opulence enter the world. Mother and daughter are doing fine.

"We always prepare for the unexpected," said United lineman Brad Morrow, "but when you go to Fossil Rim, you wonder what you're dealing with."

Did You Know?



A NEWBORN GIRAFFE IS CALLED A CALF.

Here are proper names for other newborns in the animal kingdom:

- COCKROACH** ▶ nymph
- FISH** ▶ fry
- GORILLA** ▶ infant
- LLAMA** ▶ cria
- OPOSSUM** ▶ joey

WORTH REPEATING

"I have far more confidence in the one man who works mentally and bodily at a matter than in the six who merely talk about it."

—**MICHAEL FARADAY**, British chemist and physicist who contributed significantly to the study of electromagnetism and electrochemistry. He died 150 years ago, on August 25, 1867.

ALMANAC

SURE IS HOT!



The winning dish in this month's *Some Like It Hot* recipe contest (Page 31), Sweet Habanero Onions, features a habanero pepper, which ranks high on the Scoville Heat Scale. The scale measures "hotness," or concentration of capsaicin, which produces the heat sensation. Here's how popular peppers rate on the Scoville Heat Scale:

- 5,300,000** Police-grade pepper spray
- 1,041,427** Ghost
- 100,000–350,000** Habanero
- 7,000–8,000** Tabasco brand habanero pepper sauce
- 6,000–23,000** Serrano
- 5,000–10,000** Chipotle (smoked jalapeño)
- 2,500–5,000** Jalapeño
- 1,000–2,000** Poblano
- 500–2,500** Anaheim
- 0** Sweet bell

OUCH MEH

= What =

LURKS

= in the =

MURK

Are you willing to roam the woods at night, alert to the sounds of armadillos, frogs, owls and bobcats?

In the dark—when our eyes try to make sense of shades of black and gray—people feel less secure and tend to group up, a strategy that helped our ancestors survive.

“When it gets pitch black out, the superpowers we have within us start coming out,” says Lauretee Acevedo, an administrator at Resaca de la Palma State Park near Brownsville. “At night, we rely more on other senses: listening, smelling and using dark-adapted eyes.”

Three Rio Grande Valley state parks offer night tours and a chance to explore parklands rustling with wildlife in the company of a knowledgeable guide. It’s an easy way to take back the night and enjoy parks safely after dark. Across Texas, state park programs vary with the seasons and the moon. Owl prowls, haunted hikes, stargazing events and creatures-of-the-night tours give you good reasons not to be afraid of the dark.

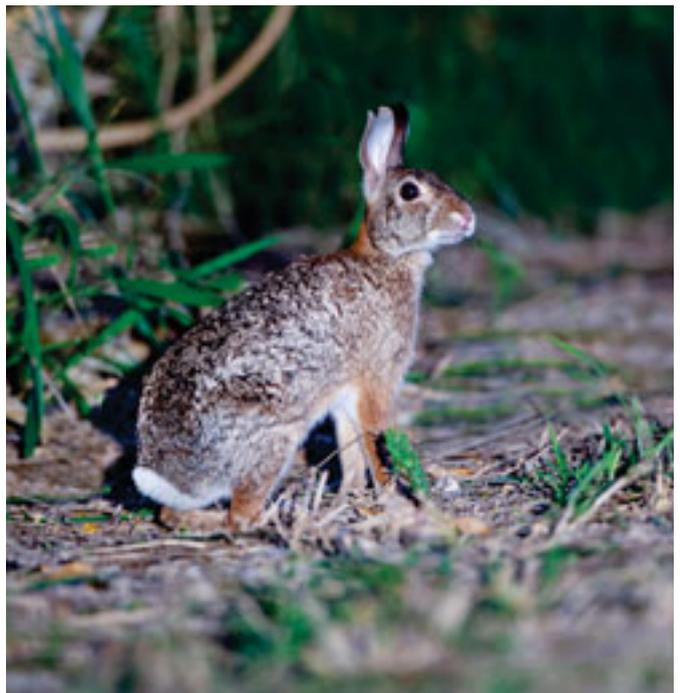
On a moonless Family Fun Night, Acevedo leads the after-dark tram tour that takes us to what feels like another world. “The key is, everybody has to be quiet so we don’t scare the animals,” says Ron Karter, park host and tram driver, as two electric



Rio Grande Valley state parks offer after-dark tours that keep your senses on edge

trams filled with family groups and Cub Scouts silently roll through 1,200 acres of resaca wetlands, thorn scrub and Texas ebony forest. The headlights illuminate midnight-dark patches in the road that suddenly rise up and fly off. These are pauraques, the Rio Grande Valley’s year-round nighthawks, easily identified by their wide, froglike mouths.

The electric tram stops, and we hop off for a 15-minute walk down Mexican Olive Trail. We observe and duck under spiderwebs strung from branches thrusting out from tangled thickets of guayacan, soapberry and ebony. Excited by the dark surroundings, the Scouts swing their heads, and their headlamps momentarily blind other members of the group. We can feel the increased humidity and smell the slightly swampy tang of water nearby, and in a couple of minutes, we reach the resaca for which the park is named. Our guide explains that leaves from the black willows around us were used in teas to cure headaches.



Opposite: Visitors look for critters during a night walk at Estero Llano Grande State Park in Weslaco. This page, from top: The park’s night life includes badgers; bark scorpions, shown under a black light; and eastern cottontails. “It’s a new world at night,” says park ranger John Yochum.

We stand on the bank of this former Rio Grande channel, now an oxbow lake, and see the stars overhead as clouds move across the night sky. A spotlight catches the eye shine of an owl flying low and fast across a nearby field.

On another night tour—Estero Llano Grande State Park's Full Moon Party—ranger John Yochum gives us a preview of what will be moving around in the dark. He suggests we look out for bark scorpions, raccoons, nine-banded armadillos and opossums. "It's a new world at night," he says, "We're always exploring. Coyotes are easier to hear than see."

Because we have a full moon to illuminate our path, Yochum discourages flashlights except when they are needed to pinpoint the source of a noise or catch the eye shine of a nocturnal creature. What I hear are leopard frogs, which sound like heavyweight hens clucking.

Venturing down the trail, we wade through an aromatic fog from the blooming coma trees and tune in to the tree crickets chirping. A bird rustles the leaves of a low tree, and wings beat past us. "If it flies and is noisy, it's a dove. If you can't hear anything, it's an owl," Yochum says.

Estero Llano Grande, near Weslaco, features eight resident alligators that move between ponds, Yochum tells us as he plays a spotlight over Alligator Lake. Because those reptiles rank as my No. 1 scary creature, all my senses are on alert, and I'm ready to flee. What looks like white lights on the end of a 7-foot-long log? That's the reflection from alligator eyes. Thank goodness they are on the far side of the lake.

The ranger directs us to hunt for bark scorpions. We wave small black lights across the bark of mesquite trees and the grass along the path until Yochum finds the first one. It shines with a luminescent sheen. Every leg and abdomen segment is visible, as is the wicked-looking curved tail that houses the stinger. Night-hike explorer Karen Fossum discovers another scorpion, which poses, unruffled by our gasps of excitement and countless cellphone photographs.

Under the full moon, Yochum introduces us to the free Google Sky app. Install it and point your cellphone at the sky, and the app identifies the planets, stars and constellations in the phone's line of sight.

On the wetlands boardwalk, I hear black-bellied whistling ducks overhead and the splashing of moorhens. Ranger Lorena Guerra tells us the folktale of La Lechuza, the witch who turns into a barn owl and chases children who wander outside after dark. "It screams and hisses instead of hooting, which makes it seem more creepy," she says. "Many people are still afraid of barn



WEB EXTRAS

▶ See more creatures in a slideshow.



owls because of stories they heard as children." Amid all the night sounds, I am happy not to hear the dying-animal scream of woodhouse toads.

With the coastal zone overlapping the temperate, tropical and desert zones in the Valley, the range of environments ensures exceptional biodiversity. "It's different every time," says Amber Schmitt, lead interpreter at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park in Mission, as we begin a two-hour Creatures of the Night tram tour at twilight. "Some people think it is boring at night with nothing happening, but if you stop and listen."

We listen at the Kingfisher Overlook. Schmitt holds up a bat detector that translates bats' high-pitched echolocation calls into cricket-like chirps. That lets us pinpoint the location of the bats fluttering above the pond in the purple-streaked western sky. "Northern and southern yellow bats roost in palm fronds in the park," Schmitt says. "At this time of night, they're flying above the water to eat insects. Their faces funnel sounds to their ears."

Why would animals be nocturnal? Many reasons: The dark-

“At night, we rely more on other senses:
listening, smelling and using
dark-adapted eyes.”



ness makes it more difficult for predators to see them; their preferred food is often more accessible; and nighttime activity requires less water.

The art of spider sniffing, Schmitt shows us, involves holding a flashlight up at ear and eye level. Suddenly we see dozens, or even hundreds, of sparkles in the grass: These are reflections from eyes of spiders all around us. “They are all over! It’s like someone dropped glitter,” says a startled Gayle Yepsen, visiting the park from Illinois.

Schmitt explains that many night animals have a reflective surface at the back of their eyes. She shines a red laser beam on a sparkle to reveal a hefty wolf spider.

Black lights in hand, we search for more bark scorpions and find an abundance of them glowing. “The more gnarled the mesquite, the more it is likely to have bark scorpions,” says Schmitt. Some tour participants are distracted from the scorpions by the luminescence of plastic forks, weed trimmer line and even shoelaces.

Clockwise from above: A great horned owl perches in a mesquite tree after sunset. A spider can’t hide against a backdrop of a full moon. Visitors hope to spy amphibians and fish in a small pool.

The wind shakes the mesquites, but I spot movement nearby. It is a white stripe undulating in the dark. A skunk! The tram rolls on as we sweep lights over the dense woods. We spot an eastern screech-owl, watching us watching it. An armadillo scuttles away from our group. Cicadas pitch their incessant messages. At a bird blind, snout butterflies are nectaring on orange halves set out by park staff, taking advantage of the darkness to get their turn at the food.

Circling back toward park headquarters in the tram, we spot three javelinas digging with their snouts for grubs and roots, but they retreat from our lights. Two more skunks run in front of the tram, so we slow down.

With the weather determining what creatures come out, Schmitt says, “It feels like an entirely different park at night.”

Eileen Mattei is a Harlingen writer and Texas master naturalist.

B R O A D B A N D A C R O S S T E X A S

Co-ops keep rural communities competitive by offering high-speed internet service

Bandera might be only an hour from San Antonio, the seventh-largest city in the United States, but that was little consolation for the town's schoolchildren. You could see them waiting in line at the library almost every afternoon because that was the only place in town where the computers had high-speed internet access.

"That's when I knew we had to do something," says William Hetherington, CEO of Bandera Electric Cooperative, which serves 25,000 members in seven counties in the Hill Country. "It wasn't right that they couldn't do their homework if they didn't get in before the library closed in the afternoon."

To that end, Bandera EC in 2017 started offering broadband internet service, the same kind urban residents take for granted. Those who want it will be able to purchase reliable, high-speed service delivered through fiber-optic cables, allowing students to do homework at home. With this internet access, members can apply for college loans, complete financial transactions, file taxes, run a business, video chat and shop. In other words, they can do everything that has become part of 21st-century life.

Today, internet access in rural areas is similar to electricity access before cooperatives electrified the countryside. In 1935, when only 11 percent of U.S. farms had electricity, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration, which led to the formation of electric co-ops. By 1946, more than 50 percent of American farms had electricity.

Now co-ops again are connecting the countryside to modern America—this time with broadband. Broadband is as vital today as electricity was then. Rural Texas is underserved, and the for-profit cable and telephone companies that dominate broadband delivery aren't interested in bringing the internet to areas where there isn't going to be a big enough return on their investment.

This is where co-ops can fit in.

"Internet service is an essential utility service these days," says Alyssa Clemsen-Roberts, a long-time co-op advocate who has worked for several years on rural broadband issues. "There's a huge gap that exists in rural areas, and co-ops are well-placed to fill that gap, just like they did for electricity."

As many as 1 in 3 adult Texans don't have access to broadband internet service, and most of them live in rural areas.

In rural areas with broadband service, the cost of a residential connection can be twice as high as in urban areas such as Dallas, Houston and Austin, and the cost of a business account also can be twice as high as business accounts in urban areas, says James Yohe, the executive director of the Nocona Economic Development Corporations in North Texas.

Nationally, about 6 in 10 city dwellers have access to three or more high-speed internet providers, while just 1 in 5 rural residents can say the same thing. This might be one reason that only 55 percent of people living in rural areas have access to the speeds that qualify as broadband, while 94 percent of the urban population does.

These days, broadband fits hand-in-glove with economic development and the education that is the 21st-century corollary to jobs and growth. Even libraries need to be connected, says Karin Gerstenhaber of the nonprofit Tocker Foundation in Austin, and most rural libraries do not have broadband. Tocker supports rural libraries in towns of 12,000 or fewer, providing grants so the libraries can offer broadband service.

The desire to foster economic development and education motivates co-ops across the country, not just in Texas, to provide high-speed service. Several Missouri co-ops offer the service,



As many as 1 in 3 adult Texans don't have access to broadband internet service, and most of them live in rural areas.

and a consortium that includes the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative; CoBank, a member of the Farm Credit System; Rural Broadband Association; and National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation has worked to help co-ops understand and embrace the challenge and offer possible solutions.

High-speed, reliable internet is a key to getting businesses to relocate to rural areas. A call center cannot function without high-speed internet, even if it does get cheaper land, lower taxes and reduced utility costs.

“That’s totally what we’re talking about,” says Yohe. “If you don’t have access, you can’t develop current economic opportunities. There are very few industries that don’t require the service, even from a retail perspective.”

So why are rural areas underserved?

It’s the difference between the business model of for-profit cable and telephone companies, and the nonprofit co-op model. The for-profits are in business to make money for shareholders, while the latter are in business to provide service to members. The situation is no different from the need for rural electrification more than 70 years ago, when for-profit utilities might have provided electricity to rural America. Investors balked and claimed the infrastructure costs—building substations, placing poles and stringing wire—were prohibitive in areas with great distances containing few people. Substitute the idea of building high-speed internet’s infrastructure—laying cable and building massive servers—and the result is the same.

One proposed solution that didn’t work as intended was the federal government’s Connect America Fund, which offered \$10 billion in subsidies to the largest telecom companies to begin offering service in unserved areas. However, the biggest companies didn’t use all the money, citing the increased costs and difficulty to make a return on their investment, even with a subsidy.

“I don’t think anyone faults the telcos and cable companies,” says Clemens-Roberts. “They need to earn a fair rate of return on their investment, and they don’t see a way to do that in rural areas. But co-ops don’t have to worry about that immediate return on investment; cooperatives are used to making long-term infrastructure investments.”

Another difficulty in connecting rural areas is the definition of broadband service. The Federal Communications Commission sets the standard and requires companies that receive federal subsidies to meet that standard. The FCC defines broadband in terms of a connection’s speed in each direction—the number of megabits per second that it can download or upload content, such as a YouTube video.

The FCC definition of broadband is appreciably slower than what Yohe says rural residents and businesses need. Compounding the confusion is that the FCC doesn’t mandate how high-speed service needs to be delivered. Yohe says fiber-optic cable, which is used by most urban cable and telephone companies to deliver 1-gigabit connections, is the best choice. That means download and upload speeds are 1 gigabit per second. Hetherington says Bandera EC will offer gigabit connections through fiber-optic cable.

On the other hand, Guadalupe Valley EC, which has been offering some form of internet service to its almost 60,000 members in 13 south-central Texas counties since 2003, today offers a mix of fiber optic and what’s called wireless point to point, a more sophisticated version of basic Wi-Fi service. Though the latter doesn’t offer gigabit speeds, Tammy Thompson, the co-op’s communications and public relations manager, says that it still qualifies as high-speed broadband.

The other difficulty? Despite a co-op’s advantages over cable and telephone companies in building a high-speed internet system in rural areas, it can still be a risky business venture, says Hetherington. There was a sense in the 1930s and ’40s that electricity was essential and that everyone would eventually want the service—and would pay for it. There’s no such assurance with broadband, and co-ops don’t want to be stuck building costly infrastructure to provide a service that not enough of its members will use.

Although they face the same obstacles as for-profit broadband providers, cooperatives choose to find ways to overcome them for the sake of their members. Bandera EC will add fiber-optic broadband service upon request. If half of a neighborhood commits to buying the service for one year, then the company will install the infrastructure to bring service to that area. “We need density and commitment,” Hetherington says. “That’s the only way the process is economically feasible for the co-op.”

Bandera EC has had 2,500 requests for service since the first announcement last year, and it’s working on adding broadband to part of Boerne after meeting the demand commitment threshold.

“As long as we do the due diligence, we’re going to find a way to make it work,” says Hetherington.

That is why so many people think the co-op model will work to deliver high-speed internet service: Those people work together to make a project succeed.

Learn more about writer **Jeff Siegel** at winecurmudgeon.com.

WEB EXTRAS

▶ Learn more about broadband terminology and broadband gaps in rural communities.

▶ To share your ideas about rural broadband, contact the editor at editor@texascooppower.com.

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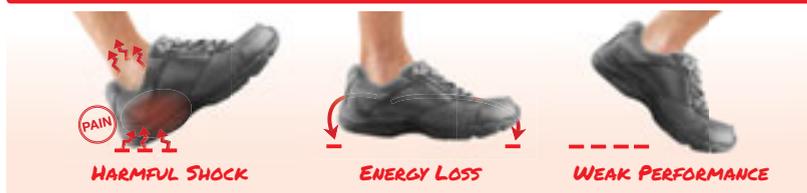
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ACCREDITED
BUSINESS

Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid

Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

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

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

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

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

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

Inspiration from a Surprising Source

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

- Designed by a Board-Certified Ear, Nose, & Throat (ENT) Doctor
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smart Phone for about \$700 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at an affordable price.”

Affordable Hearing Aid with Superb Performance

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical-grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the **MDHearingAid PRO®** for less than \$300. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

Tested by Leading Doctors and Audiologists

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

Doctors and patients agree:

“BEST QUALITY SOUND” “LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE”

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

—Gerald L.

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

—Dr. May, ENT Physician

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

—Al P.

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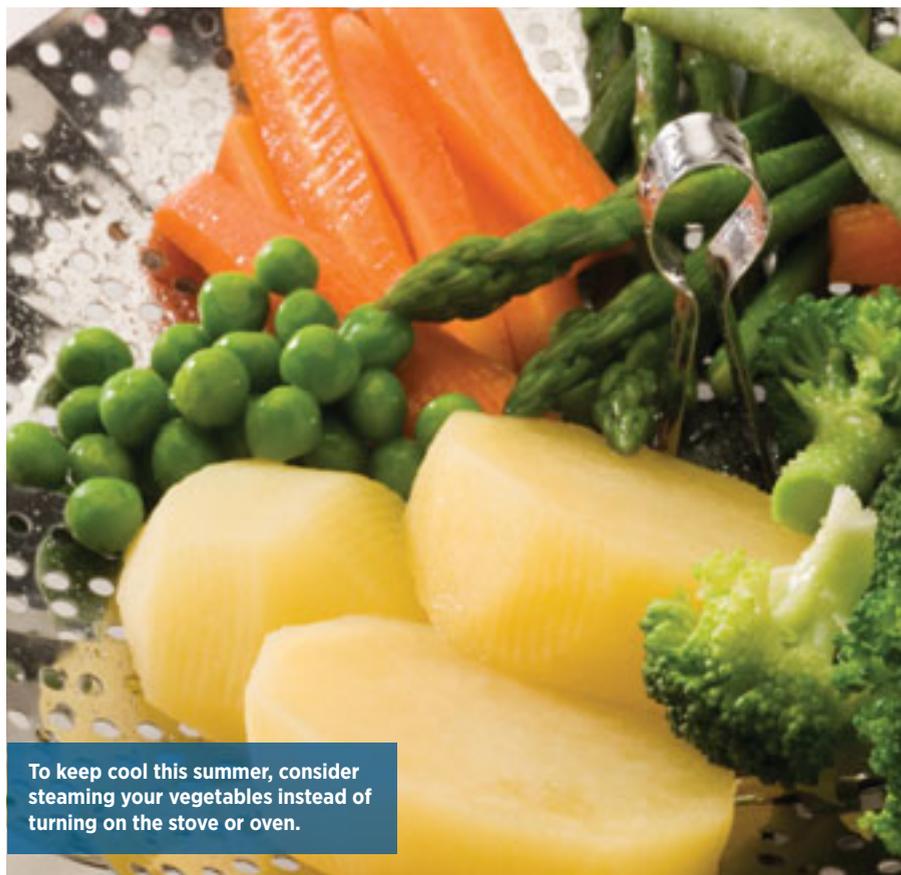


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Oven-Free Summer Cooking



To keep cool this summer, consider steaming your vegetables instead of turning on the stove or oven.

WE ARE IN THE MIDST of the season of high air-conditioning bills, and nobody wants to stand over a hot stove or oven to produce a good meal.

With some creative use of your smaller countertop appliances—toaster oven, microwave, pressure cooker and slow cooker—you still can easily make the dishes you usually cook on the stove or in the oven.

Electric Pressure Cooker

Something of a phenomenon in the kitchen, these are bringing back time-saving pressure cooking. New electric ones have more safety measures in place than the stovetop sort, and most of them can take the place of slow and rice cookers.

Pressure cookers can hard-boil eggs in about 5 minutes and are good for quick-steaming a surprising number of foods you would normally boil or bake. Some models can even cut out stovetop steps, like browning meat, with a sauté function.

Slow Cooker

They're not just for stews anymore! With the right recipes, slow cookers can perform a marvelous and surprising range

of culinary feats, like making bread, yogurt and gooey brownie desserts. Of course, pork and pot roasts cook while you're at work, and black-eyed peas are done overnight. But did you know that a slow cooker also can cook potatoes (properly pierced, oiled and foiled) to perfection in about 8–10 hours?

Rice Cooker

Besides making rice effortless, rice cookers are also good for cooking other grains, such as quinoa, and for steaming. Although making rice is already easy, many home chefs appreciate not having to turn on a stove or dedicate a burner to rice when the stove is already busy.

But many might not know of the rice cooker's ability to make entire one-pot meals. And eggs can be hard-boiled perfectly upon a steamer rack set in the top, or set in with rice to be prepared simultaneously.

A steaming tray or basket is essential in many pressure and rice cooker recipes. Many rice cookers even come with steaming baskets, but if yours didn't, you can buy one separately.

A common, useful style is a stainless steel, collapsible basket that fits in just about anything.

Toaster Oven

Besides making toast, a good toaster oven can save you the heat of turning on a full-sized oven. Although you might not trust one to heat evenly enough for baking a cake, it can roast veggies or fish in a snap. Some are also big enough to hold a 2.75-quart baking dish, the perfect size for casseroles and cobblers.

Microwave

These can do a lot more than heat up your leftovers, you know. Microwaves work by spinning water molecules, which means they can steam things easily, too. Also, they melt chocolates and cheeses more easily than a double boiler or an oven, with much less excess heat.

Microwaves easily cook rice in about 15 minutes, scrambled eggs in about a minute and a half, and pierced and oiled potatoes in 10 minutes with one flip. Unshucked corn on the cob cooks in 3–4 minutes; handled with care, the corn should slide right out of the husk and silk after cooking.



Avoid deadly electrical fires by getting an inspection of your home.

Don't Get Burned

ELECTRICITY MAKES life easier by powering the kitchen appliances, gadgets and electronics we use for convenience and entertainment. However, that same electricity contains the potential to destroy homes and take lives.

Electrical fires are more destructive than any other type of fire, and they are twice as deadly. Your electric cooperative offers the following information to help you keep your electrical system safe.

Consider getting an electrical inspection of your home, especially if it is an older home or you have never had an inspection.

If an electrical fire starts in your home, do not use water to extinguish it. Water conducts electricity, and you could get an electric shock. Buy extinguishers that are approved for use on electrical fires. Make sure to keep them charged and ready, and store them in easy-to-reach places in multiple rooms.

Flickering lights and warm, cracked or sparking outlets indicate electrical problems. Additionally, if circuits trip, fuses blow or someone gets a shock, your home has an electrical problem. Get an electrical inspection.

Do not overload outlets, use an extension cord as a permanent wiring solution or use lightbulbs that are not rated for the socket they're going into.

Contact an electrician about installing arc-fault circuit interrupters. AFCIs monitor the flow of electricity in your home. If the flow of electricity is irregular and creates a fault in the electrical system, it could cause a fire. In these cases, the AFCI shuts off electricity before a fault can develop.

An AFCI costs about \$35 plus the cost of professional installation. The cost also depends on the size of your home and how many circuit breakers you have.

Inspect electrical plugs and cords annually. If they are frayed or cracked, repair or replace them. Do not place cords under rugs or across walkways or other high-traffic areas, and do not staple or nail them to the wall.

Cool Summer Evenings Call for Fans, Not AC

EVEN THE HOTTEST SUMMER gives us a break occasionally, sending pleasant temperatures and gentle breezes our way, especially in the evenings.

When it's not too hot outside, you can cool your house more economically with fans than by running your central or window air conditioner.

Placing a fan in a window circulates the air and freshens the home by exhausting stale air. It also can remove odors from smoking and cooking that tend to linger in the air when all the windows are closed.

A ceiling fan can be used whether the air conditioning is on or off. During the summer, the blades send a slight breeze down into the room and will make anyone in that room feel more comfortable.

But remember: Fans don't actually cool the house off. Instead, they make the air feel cooler to people in rooms where they are located because they move the air around. So turn them off when you leave the room.

Place a fan in an open window to cool down in the evenings.



Concrete Example

One of several unlikely ships now resides in Galveston

BY MARTHA DEERING

IN THE OLD GANGSTER FILMS, A MAFIA figure who got crosswise with another boss might find himself wearing “concrete shoes” and tossed into the river to “sleep with the fishes.” With that legend in mind, it is surprising to note that concrete was once successfully used as a building material for the hulls of ships. One such vessel, the SS Selma, remains partially submerged in Galveston Bay and now is recognized as an archaeological landmark.

From the early days of shipbuilding until the mid-19th century, wood was the material of choice for seagoing vessels. The advent of steam propulsion fueled a desire to find improved shipbuilding materials, and the first iron ship, Aaron Manby, was built in London in 1821. Iron sinks, but iron ships displaced water, and were lighter and stronger than wooden ships.

Shipbuilders preferred steel for large vessels because it was very strong for its weight. But when the supply of steel for ships fell short during World War I, President Woodrow Wilson approved the Emergency Fleet program that called for the construction of 24 concrete ships. None were completed before the end of the war, but 12 ships eventually were built. Although they stayed afloat, most sailors referred to them as “floating tombstones” and preferred not to serve on them.

A ship with a concrete hull floats as long as the weight of the water it displaces is greater than its own weight. The density of an object is the mass divided by the volume, so the weight of the hull and the air or cargo inside it (the total volume) had

to be less than the water it displaced. British builders successfully experimented with concrete barges, tugs and fishing boats as early as 1917.

Flying in the face of logic, there were advantages to concrete ships, according to N.K. Fougner in the 1922 book *Seagoing and Other Concrete Ships*. They were cheaper to build, cost less in upkeep and were less subject to vibration from engines. More quickly and cheaply repaired than steel ships, they were fire-proof and not subject to corrosion. Of course, steel reinforcing rods were necessary inside the concrete hull to give it strength.

Some of the American concrete ships completed after World War I were dispatched to transport troops home from Europe and then sold to private companies. When steel became more abundant, the concrete ships proved too expensive to operate—requiring huge amounts of fuel to push their heavy hulls through the surf. The largest two were sister ships, identical oil tankers a bit over 400 feet long: the SS Latham and the SS Selma. The Latham struck a jetty on the way back from its maiden voyage between Tampa and Philadelphia and limped into Galveston for repairs. Eventually, it became a floating oil tank near New Orleans.

The Selma performed more impressively, serving several coastal ports until it, too, hit a jetty, outside Tampico, Mexico, and suffered a 60-foot crack in its side. It was towed back to Galveston for repairs, but no one knew how to repair a long crack in a concrete ship, so it languished in



Galveston harbor until 1922, when officials decided to scuttle it. Galveston Bay was too shallow, and sinking it there would cause a hazard to marine traffic. The Selma was towed into a trench 1,500 feet long and 25 feet deep dug on a shallow shelf off Pelican Island, where it is still visible today. It rests near the “marine battleground” where the Civil War’s Battle of Galveston occurred in 1863 and is clearly visible from the Bolivar Ferry.

That move did not signal the end of the Selma’s usefulness, however. Its career as a wreck is more exciting than its seagoing history. In 1926, it was used to store explosives. (Residents who considered the derelict ship an eyesore suggested that the dynamite stored in its hull be used to blow it up.) In 1928, an oil exploration company

used it as a work staging area. During Prohibition, U.S. Customs inspectors smashed at least 11,000 bottles of bootleg liquor in its hold, much to the chagrin of a major smuggling ring doing big business along the Gulf Coast.

In 1992, the Texas Antiquities Committee designated the Selma a State Archeological Landmark and named it the Official Flagship of the Texas Army. All this praise was confirmed with an official Texas Historical Marker. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. From 1992 until his death in 2011, A. Pat Daniels, owner of the Selma and retired city editor of the *Galveston Daily News*, threw a birthday party for the old vessel.

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

Only the hull of the SS Selma was concrete—5 inches thick at the bottom, tapering to 4 inches on the sides.

Another Year Finds Me in Texas

A young Ohio woman trapped in Texas by the Civil War recorded her life in a diary

EXCERPT BY VICKI ADAMS TONGATE

Editor's note: Lucy Pier Stevens, a 21-year-old Ohio woman, began a visit to her aunt's family farm near Bellville, Texas, on Christmas Day, 1859. The outbreak of war meant she was unable to return home until 1865. Author Vicki Adams Tongate explains Stevens' diary entries for August 1863. Stevens often ended thoughts with flourishing dashes instead of periods. The tilde symbol (~) is used to duplicate Stevens' style.

AS A NEW MONTH BEGAN, LUCY COMMENCED a new chapter in her life. She had contracted to teach the Brewer children in a subscription school and was about to begin her duties. Lucy agreed to teach for a term of five months, at five dollars per child, "to be paid her in good money when she wants to go home."

In addition to her teaching duties, Lucy began assisting Mr. Brewer as he calculated the tax rates for the residents of Austin County. In her usual fashion, she recorded details of the computations, unknowingly revealing for us the methods by which the taxes were assessed, even as she solidified her own understanding of the process. Lucy's repeated references describe an ongoing enterprise by which she and Sarah made a small income and rendered a service to the community by helping the local farmers maintain tax records and other documents.

As the months had slipped by, war news had claimed a more significant place in Lucy's journal, and now, in August, a month after Vicksburg's fall, she began to record horrific details of the siege and the state of mind of those involved. Jimmy Clemmons had returned home, having survived the nightmare, and bitterly reported the loss, with details of deprivation and scornful accounts of treatment by the Union soldiers. James McPherson's research clearly confirms the situation, stating that following six weeks of intense siege, during which time the Confederate forces were "reduced to quarter rations [and] subjected to artillery and mortar bombardments around the clock and

sharpshooter fire during the day." General John C. Pemberton received a petition signed by the starving troops, which demanded that if Pemberton could not feed them, he had better surrender. Six days later, on July 4, Pemberton acquiesced and formally surrendered. Despite the impossible conditions, Jimmy Clemmons and many other Southern soldier boys placed the blame for the loss squarely on the general's shoulders, regarding Pemberton's surrender as treason and the city of Vicksburg as a commodity for sale.

Lucy went on to write of the general sense of gloom that had fallen in the wake of Vicksburg. And for the first time, she hinted at an opinion that diverged from the almost universally accepted stance—one that, in retrospect, sounds suspiciously Unionist. Even as Lucy wore "Southernness" on the outside, the deeply personal thoughts expressed in her journal on August 27 could signal an absence of complete capitulation. She used a variation of the title of a popular tune, "God Defendeth the Right," as she expressed the war-weariness that the general population was experiencing. The song, published in 1861 in Macon, Georgia, by John C. Schreiner and Sons, furnished the catchphrase that resounded throughout the South, verbalizing for Southerners their belief in the justness of their cause. However, Lucy's words reveal a deep sense of ambiguity, raising questions about her true feelings and about certain less-polarized views concerning the war. Although she was quite fervent in her support of the local boys, this statement marks one of her few references to a diverg-



the cloudy & unpleasant days ~ rained in the morn. After school Mr Cleveland called to try [to] get the Edwards girls in my school, but I refused to take them.

Aug 8th saturday ~ Jimmy looks so badly ~ says he had a high fever when he got home

He told us all about the hard times they had at Vicksburg. Says that the whole of the 47 days they were besieged, they had but 3 small biscuits issued to them a day, and a part of the time $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. of flour made of peas & corn ground together. They had to drink the river water & lay in

ing opinion. It raises questions regarding her views of the rightness of the Southern Cause and the associated institutions that the Cause swore to protect. Although she publicly refrained from explicitly stating one position or the other, even among her most intimate friends, Lucy's words here hint at the very private possibility of another, differing perspective, one that she would acknowledge only in carefully veiled phrasing in the pages of her diary.

AUGUST 1863

August 1st saturday ~ I proposed teaching Mrs B's & E's children and they seemed well pleased with the arrangement ~ I am to commence on monday next I am glad & yet I am sad

August 3rd monday ~ Commenced teaching this morn with my five schollars

~ am in hopes to have no trouble this session ~ Dick came over this eve & brought my sachel.

Aug 5th wednesday ~ Left every body preparing peaches to dry. Walked over to school ~ found Rufus B ~ here. Had killed two deer this morn and shot a beef, so we are well supplied with fresh meat. I commenced drawing off Mr B's book of scholastic children for him this eve ~ includes all between the ages of 6 & 18 years

Aug. 6th thursday ~ Was up soon this morn & at work at my book again ~ finished it this eve. Then Mr B ~ learned me how to calculate the percentage: it is 12 per cent for the first 200, then between 400 & 500 which leaves 100 more is 8 per cent ~ then 6 for the next, then between 500 & 1000 is 500 at 5 per cent & all other at 3

Aug 7th friday ~ This has been one of

the ditches exposed to all kinds of weather. I asked him about Nick and he told me he saw him about a half hour before he left, rowing around in an old dug out ~ that no person saw him leave, but saw his dug out across the river & missed him at roll-call for the first time. J ~ says he does not think the war will last many months & that it will terminate to the disadvantage of the south.

He says the Fedrals called out to some of the pickets a few days after they had peas & corn given them to know how they liked their new rations of corn & peas ~ he says he feels confident Pemberton is a traitor & that Vicksburg was sold

Come Peace at least ~ We are tired of war — Lucy P. Stevens, August 27, 1863

Vicki Adams Tongate, author of *Another Year Finds Me in Texas* (University of Texas Press, 2016), teaches at Southern Methodist University.

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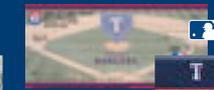
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Winter Calm - 00017 Leather Cover and Labels - 00017 ☆



Lightning Strikes - 00178 Leather Cover and Labels - 00178 ☆



Footprints w/verse "One night I dreamed that I was walking along the beach with the Lord." - 00667 Leather Cover and Labels - 00667 ☆



Live, Laugh, Love, Learn w/verse "Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away." - 00332 Leather Cover and Labels - 00332 ☆



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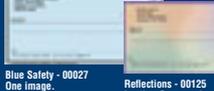
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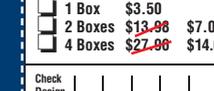
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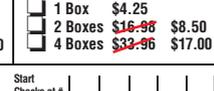
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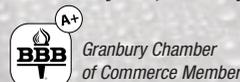


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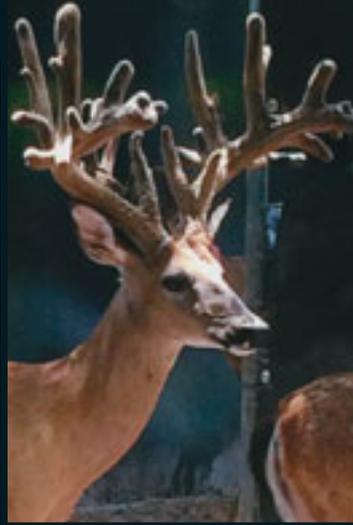
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Diplomacy on the Pedernales

LBJ's first official dinner was a barbecue in Texas

BY DAVID LATIMER

ON NOVEMBER 25, 1963, LUDWIG ERHARD, the chancellor of what was then West Germany, was scheduled to arrive in Washington, D.C., for a state visit with President John F. Kennedy. The event would take place with full military honors and a formal black-tie dinner. *The Washington Post* carried a story and details of the upcoming visit in its Friday edition, November 22, the day the president was assassinated in Dallas. Erhard ended up going to Washington one day early to attend the funeral of the young president.

Erhard's state visit was rescheduled for just one month later, but instead of the pomp and circumstance originally planned, this one would offer a truly Texan experience. Lyndon B. Johnson made the decision to brand his own personality—and that of his home state—on the revised agenda.

Erhard arrived at Austin's Bergstrom Air Force Base on December 28. Johnson had spent Christmas at the LBJ Ranch outside Johnson City, entertaining reporters and visiting relatives, but now he was in Austin to greet the chancellor as he stepped off the plane to the stirring sounds of a military band. Gov. John Connally was there, his right arm in a sling, a grim reminder of the wounds he had suffered in Dallas just five weeks before.

After a few formal words of greeting, helicopters defined a wide arc over the state Capitol, speeding the president and the chancellor toward the Hill Country and the LBJ Ranch. Johnson's house, near the cantankerous Pedernales River, was bedecked with West German flags.

Accommodations were somewhat cramped. Lady Bird Johnson gave up her bedroom, and staff members doubled up wherever they could. The transformation from ranch headquarters to Texas White House had just begun. With Secretary of State Dean Rusk and the German foreign minister in attendance, diplomatic talks



President Lyndon B. Johnson greets Ludwig Erhard, chancellor of West Germany, in Austin.

began but soon shifted into one of Johnson's famous tours of the ranch.

The next day was a Sunday, which began with a visit to nearby Fredericksburg, a community that bears the imprint of its German settlers to this day. The mayor's welcoming speech was in German, but that was just the beginning. As Johnson biographer Robert Caro tells it in *The Passage of Power*, "Then they went to church, where the hymns and *Silent Night* were sung in German; when, after the ceremony, Erhard told the pastor he had been surprised by that, the pastor told him that the hymns were always sung in German."

The state dinner took place in tiny Stonewall's high school gymnasium, a wooden structure barely adequate for a local commencement ceremony, much less an international event. Townsfolk applied a few dabs of paint and jammed 30 tables onto the basketball court to make it work. Caro noted that the fare included "five hundred pounds of brisket and three hundred pounds of spareribs ... together with hickory gravy, German potato salad, Texas coleslaw,

ranch baked beans and sourdough biscuits."

Time magazine reported: "Erhard was enchanted with all the trimmings—including the gift of a ten-gallon hat and a choral rendition of *Tief in Dem Herzen Von Texas* [*Deep in the Heart of Texas*]." Country music and a Mexican mariachi band gave way later in the evening to Texan Van Cliburn on a grand piano.

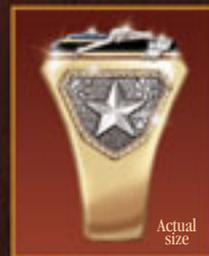
As Caro summed up this Hill Country state dinner, "Formal the dinner may not have been; it was, however, a triumph. Erhard's smile grew broader and broader with each German song."

The chancellor loved it all. Johnson's brand of German-American diplomacy had reinforced a key relationship with a crucial Cold War ally and charmed newspaper reporters who began to see a depth to Johnson beneath the rough-edged Texan, a president taking charge in his own way.

David Latimer lives in Austin and teaches at Austin Community College.

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Some Like It Hot

KICKING UP THE HEAT IN EVERYTHING from chili to burgers is a point of pride for Texans. Our readers' blistering recipes will be welcome additions to any chile lover's repertoire. Heat enthusiasts also will love recipes from *The Tacos of Texas*, a regional taco tour cookbook by Mando Rayo and Jarod Neece that features tacos filled with *guisado verde* from La Nueva Fresh & Hot taqueria in Dallas and *salsa de chile de árbol* from Veracruz All Natural food truck in Austin.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

La Nueva Fresh & Hot Guisado Verde Tacos

SALSA VERDE

- 1 pound whole jalapeño peppers, stemmed
- 1½ pounds tomatillos, husks peeled and rinsed
- 4 cloves garlic
- Pinch cumin
- Pinch black pepper
- ½ teaspoon oregano
- 6 cloves (optional)
- Salt
- 1 cup water (or less as desired for consistency)

GUISADO

- 4 pounds pork (such as shoulder), diced
- 2 teaspoons cooking oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped, divided use

1. **SALSA VERDE:** Place jalapeños in a pot with enough water to mostly cover the peppers and simmer 15 minutes. Add tomatillos and cook another 10 minutes, then drain.
2. Place peppers and tomatillos in a blender with the rest of the ingredients and blend until thoroughly mixed. Set aside.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



MANDO RAYO
& JAROD NEECE



PHOTOS: MARCO TORRES | COURTESY UT PRESS

Some Like It Hot



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

KIMBERLY HREHOR
KARNES EC

Striking a perfect balance of fiery and sweet, these onions are easy to prepare and surprisingly addictive. Consider serving them as a topping for pulled pork, roast beef sandwiches, charred sausages or even pizza—or as a sidekick to smoked brisket or grilled steaks.

Sweet Habanero Onions

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- 1 sweet onion, sliced into rings or crescents
- 1 habanero pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar, or more to taste
- Salt and ground pepper, to taste

1. Heat butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir onion, habanero, brown sugar, salt and pepper into the butter and cook, stirring, until the onions are soft and translucent, about 10 minutes.
2. Lower the heat and continue to cook until the onions are caramelized. Makes about 1½ cups.

\$100 Recipe Contest

January's recipe contest topic is **Nourishing Soups**, perfect for fighting off a cold—or just a cold winter day. What ingredients make your stock special? The deadline is **August 10**.

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

3. **GUISADO:** Place diced pork in a pot with oil. Cook on medium heat, stirring every 2–3 minutes, until liquid from the meat is almost evaporated. Add half the diced onion and cook until transparent.
4. When the meat is tender and liquid gone, add the salsa verde and bring mixture to a boil. Remove from heat.
5. Serve on warm corn tortillas with rest of sliced onions, cilantro and a slice of avocado, if desired. Makes 10 tacos.

Veracruz All Natural Salsa de Chile de Árbol

- 5 Roma tomatoes
- Handful of dried *chile de árbol* peppers, stemmed
- 3 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- Salt to taste

1. Boil tomatoes 20–30 minutes, then drain.
2. Sauté dried chiles with oil until they turn dark red.
3. Blend tomatoes and chiles with garlic and add salt. Consistency must be thick. *¡Listo!* Serves 4–6.

Scorpion Tails



These fiery appetizers from my first cookbook, *Cowgirl Cuisine*, are a play on jalapeño poppers, arguably the most beloved bar (or behind-the-wheel) snack in Texas. Broiling the peppers (as opposed to breading and frying them) allows the unique character of the jalapeño and the creamy, flavorful filling to shine. For an attractive presentation, consider serving them over *pequillo* pepper sauce (see Cook's Tip). —PD

- 16 large jalapeño peppers
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- ½ cup grated cotija, queso añejo or other aged white cheese
- ½ cup corn kernels
- 1 egg
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Dash hot sauce, to taste

1. Slice the stems off jalapeños and reserve. Using a paring knife, slice a vertical V-shaped opening into the sides of each pepper. Gently spread the opening and use a paring knife to remove ribs and seeds.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese to soften, then add cotija, corn, egg, garlic, cumin, basil, salt, pepper and hot sauce, and beat at low speed until blended. Refrigerate filling in a covered container at least 30 minutes or up to several hours.
3. Using a butter knife, fill each pepper with about 2 tablespoons of cheese filling. Top each pepper with the stem (frost stem inside with filling so it will adhere to pepper) and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate peppers at least 1 hour before broiling.
4. When you're ready to serve, unwrap peppers and broil until blistered but not overly blackened. If bottoms of peppers are still bright green, finish peppers at 350 degrees to warm through. Serves 4–6.

COOK'S TIP Serve Scorpion Tails over *pequillo* pepper sauce. Purée one 8- or 10-ounce jar of drained and stemmed *pequillo* peppers, 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil and 1 teaspoon sherry wine vinegar. Heat sauce gently just before serving, then place peppers atop a few tablespoons of the sauce.

From *Cowgirl Cuisine: Rustic Recipes and Cowgirl Adventures From a Texas Ranch* (William Morrow, 2007)

Habanero Jelly

RONALD BAUERLEIN | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

Jelly recipes are common and variations are easy. You can't go wrong serving this sweet and spicy pepper jelly with the classic combo of cream cheese and crackers, but consider trying it on turkey, brie and baguette sandwiches, tossed with baby back ribs, or alongside grilled chicken thighs or roasted duck.

- ¾ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¾ cups sugar
- ½ cup finely grated carrots
- ¼ cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 8 habanero peppers, finely chopped
- 1 package (3 ounces) liquid pectin

1. Combine vinegar and sugar in a saucepan and heat over medium-high heat, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Mix in carrots and bell pepper, and bring to a boil, 5 minutes. Add habaneros and boil an additional 5 minutes.

2. Remove from heat and add pectin, then return to a boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Skim off any foam and divide the mixture among four sealable jars. Makes four 8-ounce jars.

COOK'S TIP Store unopened jars in the refrigerator, where they will keep for several months. Opened jars last up to one month.

Mamaw's Hot Salad

DANNA CHAMPION | HILCO EC

This pasta salad has enough personality to serve on its own but is also a peppy partner alongside grilled sausage or fish. Champion's family and friends say more jalapeños just make the dish better. Adjust the quantity of peppers to your own heat preference.

- 1 pound small shell pasta
- 1 bunch green onions, thinly sliced
- 3-4 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 4-5 jalapeño peppers (as desired for heat), stemmed, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 jars (4 ounces each) diced pimientos, drained
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- Dash garlic powder
- Dash Accent seasoning
- Dash seasoned salt

1. Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling water per package directions. Drain noodles in a colander, rinse briefly in cold water, then place them in a large mixing bowl.

2. Add remaining ingredients and mix gently until combined. Serves 4-6.

COOK'S TIP Pasta salads tend to absorb seasonings after standing. If you make this dish in advance, perk it up before serving with additional lemon juice and seasonings.



Tame the Flame

A few years ago, I did an early-morning TV cooking demo about making salsa. As I was slicing serrano peppers for the camera, I urged viewers to wear rubber gloves to protect their skin, even though I wasn't following my own advice. Later that day, when it was time to take out my contact lenses ... well, you get the idea.

There's nothing complicated about working with chile peppers, but attention to a few key details will help you enjoy their heat—without suffering from it.

WEAR RUBBER GLOVES The chemical that gives peppers their thrilling heat is capsaicin, an oil that can stick to your skin. To avoid its sting, wear rubber gloves when slicing and chopping chile peppers, and avoid rubbing your eyes (and other sensitive areas) after handling.

REMOVE SEEDS TO DIFFUSE THE FIRE Most of a pepper's capsaicin resides in the seeds and the whitish membrane that holds them. Trimming these out reduces the heat level and lets you enjoy the nuanced flavor of the pepper's flesh. —PD

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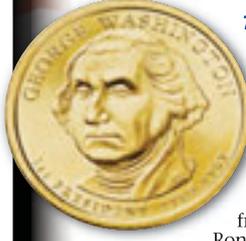
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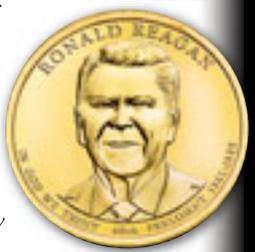
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WEB EXTRAS ▶ See more photos online.



▲ **SHELLY BORGFELD**, Pedernales EC: "What Texan's summer would be complete without a road trip to the Gulf Coast? The man o'war is lovely to look at, but beachcomber beware: They pack a punch!"

◀ **PAUL LAUDER**, Farmers EC: "Surfing off the north shore of Maui"

▼ **SANDRA BEGOTKA**, Central Texas EC: "A surfer walks toward the Pacific Ocean at Playa Cerritos, a well-known surf break" in Baja California Sur, Mexico.



▲ **ALLISON ANDERTON**, Sam Houston EC: "The sun is high, the surf is blue. The beach is twice as nice with you."

▶ **RODNEY HUFFMAN**, Bowie-Cass EC: Riding the waves



UPCOMING CONTESTS

DECEMBER STAIRWAYS	DUE AUGUST 10
JANUARY SNOW DAY	DUE SEPTEMBER 10
FEBRUARY JAILHOUSES	DUE OCTOBER 10

All entries must include name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo.

ONLINE: Submit highest-resolution digital images at TexasCoopPower.com/contests. **MAIL:** Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We do not accept entries via email. We regret that *Texas Co-op Power* cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.

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Pick of the Month Balloon Festival

Highland Village August 18-20
(972) 742-3689, lionsballoonfest.com

Enjoy the splendor of hot air balloons, live music, arts and crafts vendors, a car show, food court, kids zone with petting zoo and tethered balloon rides at Unity Park. Admission is free. Soft drinks, iced tea, water and beer are available for purchase, and the Lions Club uses the proceeds to provide vision and hearing screenings and eye-glasses to children in the area.

August

8

De Leon [8-12] Peach and Melon Festival and Tractor Pulls, (254) 893-6600, peachandmelonfestival.net

11

Junction [11-12] HCFA Rodeo and Dance, (210) 289-2982, junctiontexas.com

Ingram [11-26] Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

12

Brenham Chappell Hill Lavender & Wine Fest, (979) 251-8114, chappellhilllavender.com

Forestburg Watermelon Festival, (940) 964-2142

Goliad The Extremadura Regiment in Texas 1813-1821, (361) 645-3752, presidiolabahia.org

Lampasas Lampasas County Historic Courthouse Tour, (512) 564-0255

Palacios Fish Fest Family Tournament, (361) 972-2615, palacioschamber.com

Waco XTERRA Cameron Park Off-Road Trail Ride, 1-877-751-8880, xterraplanet.com

La Grange [12-13] D-N-T Trade Days, (979) 476-8338, dntradedays.com

16

New Braunfels [18-20] Lone Star Gourd Festival, (281) 222-3225, texasgourdsociety.org

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17

Johnson City [17-20] Blanco County Fair and Rodeo, (830) 868-7684, lbjcountry.com

18

Denton [18-26] North Texas Fair and Rodeo, (940) 387-2632, ntfair.com

19

Port Arthur [19-20] Exotic Bird Fair, (409) 626-1081, trianglebirdclub.org

24

Fort Davis [24-27] Davis Mountains Hummingbird Celebration, (432) 426-3015, fortdavis.com

Roaring Springs [24-26] Motley-Dickens Old Settlers Reunion and Rodeo, (806) 269-2659

Fredericksburg [24-27] Gillespie County Fair and Parade, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

25

Port Aransas [25-27] Texas Women Anglers Tournament, (361) 779-8025, gofishtx.com

Ennis [25-Sept. 9] *Moon Over Buffalo*, (972) 878-7529, ennispublictheatre.com



August 24-27
Fort Davis
Davis Mountains
Hummingbird
Celebration

26

Freeport Rotary Shrimp Boil, (979) 233-3306

Tomball Texas Music Festival, (281) 351-5484, tomballtx.gov

Jasper [26-27] Gem and Mineral Show, (409) 384-2762, jaspercoc.org

Mesquite [26-27] Halloween and HauntFest Show, (949) 427-0255, halloweenandhaunt.com

September

1

Port Lavaca [1-2] Flip Flop Festival, (361) 552-2959, flipflopfestival.com

Bedford [1-3] Blues & Barbecue, (817) 952-2128, bedfordbluesfest.com

Kerrville [1-3] Fall Music Festival, (830) 257-3600, kerrvillefolkfestival.org

2

Bastrop Colorado River 100, (512) 303-0558, explorebastropcounty.com

Doss Doss VFD Benefit Fish Fry, (830) 669-2220, dossvfd.org

Lake Jackson Abner Jackson Plantation Site Tour, (979) 297-1570, lakejacksonmuseum.org

Alvarado [2-9] Pioneers and Old Settlers Reunion, (817) 538-2337, alvaradopubliclibrary.org

Submit Your Event!

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Lumbering in Lufkin

Enjoy national forests of this East Texas landscape

BY MARILYN JONES

MICHELLE ROWE UNFOLDS A MAP AT THE Davy Crockett National Forest and points to Ratcliff Lake Recreation Area with its 20-mile-long Four C Trail and shorter hiking paths winding through the pines. The forest, 30 miles west of Lufkin, is an ideal destination for a day hike or camping.

“We offer fishing, hiking, camping, birding, picnicking and swimming,” says Rowe, a support specialist. “There are 160,000 acres for visitors to explore.”

I head for the recreational area just beyond the ranger station. This area of the forest, developed in 1936 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, includes a 45-acre lake with campsites hidden among the pines. The day I visit is quiet, and I see only a dozen campers and hikers. Even a short hike makes finding solitude easy and provides a first step into exploring the resources, history and recreational opportunities of Lufkin.

This part of East Texas is rich in natural resources, including Angelina National Forest north of Lufkin. I decide to find out more about the area’s history with a visit to the Texas Forestry Museum, where I learn that the Houston East & West Texas Railway arrived here in the 1880s, ushering in the logging industry. Lufkin, the Angelina County seat, was incorporated in 1890 and named for Abraham Lufkin, a Galveston cotton merchant.

The museum chronicles the history of sawmill towns and lumbering camps that sprouted up in the Pineywoods. “We’re protecting this heritage to educate the public about how lumbering evolved over the past 150 years,” says Kendall Gay, museum director. “The lumber industry affects everyone in Lufkin.”

The exhibits start with the early 20th century, featuring tools and equipment including a sawmill steam engine, used to



The History Center in Diboll features an original logging train.

harvest trees, transport logs and shape them into lumber. More exhibits, along with a wealth of photographs, document life in the sawmill towns. In addition to lumber, the story of paper—specifically Southland Paper Mills—offers another chapter in the area’s forest products, and that chapter is written on newsprint made from Southern yellow pine. The museum also explains the complexities of the forest as a natural resource and the role of forest management practices.

In the nearby Museum of East Texas, I find a collection of paintings, photography and needlework. The museum showcases African-American history, including a letter from Rosa Parks to Nicholas C. Chriss, a reporter covering the 1956 integration of Montgomery who appeared in an iconic photo alongside her on a public bus. An original print signed by Parks and sent to Chriss draws my interest.

My next stop is the Naranjo Museum of Natural History. Dr. Neal Naranjo “began in 1960 to find and preserve dinosaur bones,” says Veronica Amoe, museum manager. “With the exception of the T. rex, every dinosaur in the museum was found and excavated by Dr. Naranjo.”

The collection includes the fossils of a

26-foot tall hadrosaur standing near a full-grown woolly mammoth. Another room displays collections of Revolutionary War artifacts, Egyptian coins and Mayan artifacts.

I continue my quest for the region’s history 15 minutes away in Diboll, once a sawmill town and now home of the History Center. Archivist Emily Hyatt shows me an exhibit: *Diboll: An Enduring Community* before guiding me to see an original logging train outside. The center maintains two massive vaults of newspapers, photographs, diaries and historical documents that are available to the public.

I still have time to stop at Ellen Trout Zoo, celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2017. With nearly 800 wild and exotic animals from around the world, the zoo is a great place to end my exploration. I appreciate the setting of lush bamboo and palm trees, watching toddlers’ wonder at the animals, and seeing the zoo’s famous hippos. The park offers a welcome complement to the local history.

Marilyn Jones lives in Henderson and writes about travel.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ See more photos of Lufkin.

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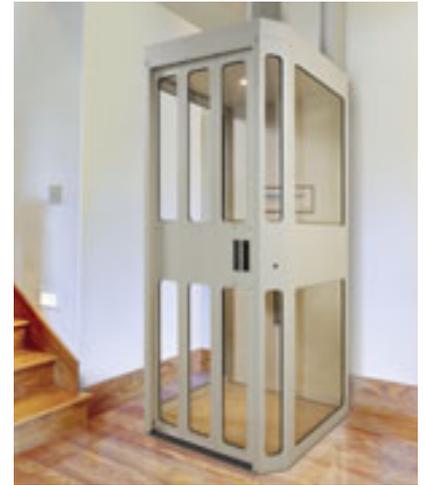
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