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2017 Wreaths Across America ceremony at Aggie Field of Honor.

FEATURES

8 Circle of Life Wreaths Across America program honors veterans in cemeteries across Texas at Christmas.

By Julia Robinson

34 2018 Holiday Recipe Contest Winners Our annual contest features the best from our readers' kitchens.

Photos by Jody Horton | Styling by Stephanie Bohn Philpott



WREATHS: WYATT MCSPADEN. HORSE: JULIA ROBINSON



ON THE COVER Sherry Zawadzki's grand prizewinning recipe, Sherry's Shrimp Clemenceau. Photo by Jody Horton | Styling by Stephanie Bohn Philpott

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Respect the Name

If you are going to quote a famous Texan, you need to get the name correct [*Heck of a Comment*, Currents, August 2018]. It is David Crockett [sic] not Davey [sic]. Davey came from a reporter—see the trend here—and he hated the nickname. Please show the defender of the Alamo the respect he is due.

PAMELA BIFFLE | VIA FACEBOOK

Recipe Testing

I was born in Mexico, and at the time, we didn't use the jalapeño chile fresh [*The Secret to Salsa*, August 2018]. Try salsa cruda with serrano chile.

VIGUE PERRY | SCHERTZ

There are many of us who must eat gluten free, and the number is growing. Could you print a couple of gluten-free, low-carbohydrate recipes each month, along with your other delicious recipes—so we don't feel left out?

HARRIET L. BISHOP | KYLE



Do You Tweet?

I made up a whistled tune and repeated outside for several days. Sure enough, I heard a mockingbird emulate it [*The Original Texas Songster*, August 2018].

GARY LEWIS | VIA FACEBOOK

A Ramble Sample

The travel issue with emphasis on the Hill Country was great [*Hill Country Ramble*, September 2018]. I have been to a musical performance at Cave Without a Name and recommend it. Doug Baum and his camels participated in San Antonio's Fiesta celebrations this past year—that was a sight to behold!

REBECCA MASSIRER LOPEZ | CRAWFORD | HEART OF TEXAS EC



I love playing with "mockers." You whistle, and they answer but one better. You can't beat them.

CHARLES BOOHER | VIA FACEBOOK

Lured to Luling

Lolling Around Luling [August 2018] aroused our interest, so we set off to explore Luling! Because it was Labor Day, both the oil museum and Luling Foundation were closed. We did walk through the grounds of the Zedler Mill. What hidden treasures! My husband and I plan on visiting again so we can discover more of Luling's history.

We have lived in Victoria almost eight years and have been to many places in Texas because they were featured in your magazine. They give us a feel of the people, culture and history of Texas.

LAVINA ZEMPEL | VICTORIA
VICTORIA EC

On Matters of Aid

As a Bolivian living in Texas, I was delighted to read that six electric cooperatives generously supplied electricity to three underdeveloped rural villages in Bolivia [*Bringing Light to Bolivia*, Currents, August 2018].

I'm not surprised that locals were appreciative. Both Texans and Bolivians share a mutual love of community. The electricity will certainly bring more commerce and opportunity to these remote villages.

MARIA INES GRANT | FORT WORTH
TRI-COUNTY EC

Very nice that our National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation would donate \$35,000 to Bolivian rural electrification. I do not begrudge the Bolivians, just want to see what can be done to help our own. Charity begins at home.

JOE ANNE DAIGRE | FRIENDSWOOD

On Top of the Globe

The Globe of the Great Southwest was started by Marjorie Morris, a professor at Odessa College [*All the State's a Stage*, August 2018]. My parents were hired by her to do summer Shakespeare festivals there for 10 years, from 1968 to 1978.

BRETT MCCALLY DAVIS | VIA FACEBOOK

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Texas Co-op Power

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WEB EXTRAS
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HAPPENINGS

Tribute to Veterans

Comanche County sent much of its population to fight in World War II, Garry Steele says, and the community hasn't forgotten. That's why, on **NOVEMBER 11**, the Comanche County Museum holds its annual **VETERANS DAY LUNCHEON & TRIBUTE** at the **COMANCHE COMMUNITY CENTER**.

"We roll out the red carpet for them," says Steele, president of the museum's board of trustees and a Comanche Electric Cooperative member. "It's a somber but very special day." He says 250–300 veterans and their families typically attend the event, which is open to the public.

The co-op regularly supports the museum, which has 15 rooms of historical exhibits and is part of the Texas Forts Trail. "History is so important, and without the volunteers who work so diligently in these organizations to preserve our history, it would all be lost," says Shirley Dukes, communications specialist at Comanche EC.

INFO ► (325) 356-5115, comanchecountytxmuseum.com



MUSICAL NOTES

AN OFFBEAT LEGEND

Scott Joplin, called the "King of Ragtime," was born 150 years ago near Linden. He grew up in Texarkana before moving to Missouri. Joplin's music was featured in the 1973 motion picture, *The Sting*, which won an Academy Award for its film score. In 1976, Joplin was posthumously awarded a Pulitzer Prize for *Treemonisha*, the first grand opera by an African-American. Joplin was born November 24, 1868.

ALMANAC

Peace at Last

November 11 marks the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. The conflict, at the time referred to as the Great War or the European War, started in 1914. It ended at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

About 198,000 Texans served in the armed forces during the war, and at least 5,170 Texas men and seven female nurses lost their lives.

Read about the extraordinary role Texas played in launching the U.S. into World War I on April 6, 1917, on Page 33.

YOUTH TOUR

Wreath-Laying Honor

SINCE 1979, Texas co-ops have provided a special opportunity for teens to honor missing service members. Every summer, when Texas sends as many as 150 students to Washington, D.C., as part of the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, four are chosen to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

HALLIE RICHARDSON, a senior at Guthrie High School who represented South Plains Electric Cooperative on Youth Tour, participated in the ceremony in June.

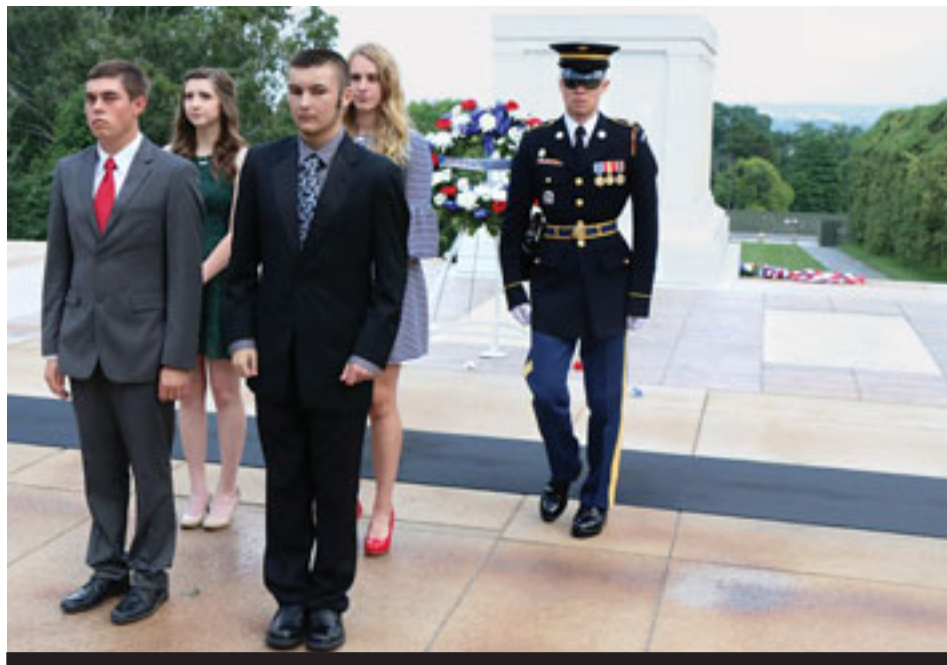
"It was a big deal for me because it was more of a family history thing," she says. Several of Richardson's family members served in the armed forces, including her great-grandfather, Sgt. Elma LeFevre, who lost a leg during World War II.

Did you know?



VETERANS ACROSS TEXAS are remembered at Christmas through **Wreaths Across America**. Read about the program's impact on Page 8.

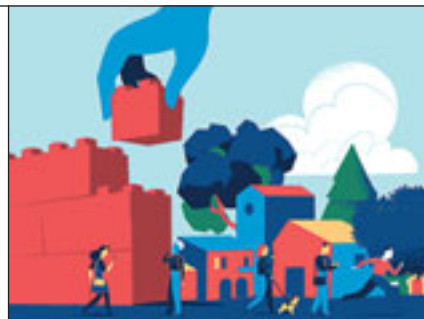
Back row, from left: Hallie Richardson, South Plains EC, and Jordan Cochran, North Plains EC. **Front row, from left:** Caleb Miller, Lighthouse EC, and Riley Carter, Jasper-Newton EC.



BY THE NUMBERS



That's how much garbage each Texan generates every day, on average, according to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. America Recycles Day, November 15, is an opportunity to considering reducing that amount.



SOCIAL STUDIES

Frisco's Frenzy

Frisco tops the U.S. Census Bureau's list of fastest-growing big cities in the nation, adding an average of 37 residents every day for a population jump of 8.2 percent between July 1, 2016, and July 1, 2017.

CoServ, the electric cooperative that serves Frisco, is well aware of the dramatic surge.

"We see the effects of the growth in every area of our organization—call volume, connects and disconnects, construction and work orders," says Donnie Clary, CoServ president and CEO. "However, the growth is very evident when you are sitting in traffic gridlock."

HISTORY LESSON

ELECTION HERSTORY


Two Texas women made history in the November elections 100 years ago.

Women obtained the right to vote in Texas primaries earlier in 1918, and they strongly supported Annie Webb Blanton, a teacher and suffragist, in the Democratic primary in the race for superintendent of public instruction. She went on to win in November, becoming the first woman elected to statewide office in Texas.

Nellie Gray Robertson of Hood County was elected the first female county attorney in Texas, defeating her male opponent by a vote of 446-2.

Circle of Life





Wreaths Across America program remembers veterans across Texas at Christmas

BY JULIA ROBINSON

ON A COLD SATURDAY last December, Desirée Gonzales awoke at 5 a.m. and drove to the Sutton County Cemetery in Sonora. Gonzales, along with her mother and brother, loaded dozens of unwieldy cardboard boxes onto the back of a golf cart and deposited them in each section of the cemetery.

Gonzales walked each row in the days before, marking on a map each veteran's headstone. She thought there might be 250, but there turned out to be 322. She checked and double-checked her list of names against the map of headstones then removed stacks of fragrant wreaths from each box. The goal: one wreath on each veteran's grave. Her group of extended family and volunteers lovingly fluffed the branches of lush balsam and straightened the bows of red ribbon. They created a pile of wreaths in each section of the cemetery, ready for family members or caring strangers to place on the grave of a veteran.

Gonzales spent the previous three weeks raising close to \$5,000 to cover the cost of the wreaths to be placed during the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony. Each wreath costs

Air Force Junior ROTC member Luis Barron during the 2017 Wreaths Across America ceremony at the Aggie Field of Honor in College Station.

\$15, and most come from the Worcester Wreath Company in Maine, though some originate with other vendors.

WYATT MCSPADDEN

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA grew out of an effort that started in 1992, when Morrill and Karen Worcester of the Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine, had extra wreaths near the end of their busy holiday season. The Worcesters arranged for the extra wreaths to be transported to Arlington National Cemetery and placed on headstones in one of the older sections of the cemetery.

The tradition continued each year as the Arlington Wreath Project, with the Worcesters systematically adding supporting organizations. Supporters included a trucking company that hauled the wreaths from Maine to Virginia, as well as local American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars groups that helped place the wreaths.

In 2005, a photo of snowbound wreaths at Arlington went viral, and requests to honor veterans in other state and national cemeteries poured in from across the country. The Worcesters formed the Wreaths Across America nonprofit in 2007 to help coordinate events and raise funds for the wreaths. Their mission: “Remember, Honor and Teach.”

By 2008, there were ceremonies in every state and 25 cemeteries overseas. In 2017, 1.6 million wreaths were laid at 1,433 cemeteries and memorial sites. Nearly 80,000 volunteers laid 245,000 wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery alone.

In Texas last year, 165,000 wreaths were placed on graves at 86 locations.

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website to see a map of the 86 Texas sites with Wreaths Across America ceremonies in 2017.



Clockwise from top: Wreaths Across America local organizer Desirée Gonzales prepares wreaths for the ceremony at Sutton County Cemetery in Sonora. Morgan Mathews remembers her best friend from high school, Shane Folmar, a Marine killed three weeks into his first deployment in Iraq in 2004. DuWayne Castro, left, and Mark Chavez salute a veteran's grave. From left, Hayes, Luke and Cooper Hopkins help deliver wreaths in Sonora.







ELLEN FULLER OF BRYAN first encountered Wreaths Across America after her father, Navy Capt. Raymond O’Neil, was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery in 2011. “During that first year after a loss, it’s an emotional time—a year of firsts without your loved one,” Fuller explains. “I heard about the program and said, ‘Let’s put a wreath on Dad’s grave!’ Then I wondered, ‘Who are these kind strangers?’ They were the WAA.”

Fuller started working for the organization in 2015 and last year helped coordinate ceremonies in the participating cemeteries in Texas. “To be able to pay it forward as a wreath-sister is why I do what I do,” says Fuller, a customer of Bryan Texas Utilities. “My wreath fam-

ily is the kindest people I know. Those kind strangers are now my family.”

Fuller invited Debra Coffey into the wreath family last year. Coffey’s father, Air Force Capt. Robert Russell “Bear” Barnett, was shot down during a secret combat mission over Laos in 1966, when she was 9. He was declared killed in action, but his remains were not recovered. Coffey attended a memorial service with her family at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio but never felt closure. She always hoped there had been some mistake and he was still alive somewhere. “I waited for so many years for him to show up to my classroom door,” Coffey says. As she grew older, she accepted his death, even though his remains hadn’t been returned. “I never thought I would still be alive and able to bring him home to Texas.”

But that changed when Barnett’s remains were identified



In 2017, 1.6 million wreaths were laid at 1,433 cemeteries and memorial sites.

and repatriated in 2017. Coffey attended a funeral service with full military honors at Texas State Cemetery in Austin. Her father was laid to rest near the Vietnam Memorial.

After hearing Coffey's story from Texas State Cemetery staff, Fuller contacted her and invited her to the 2017 WAA event in Austin. "I hadn't spent Christmas with my father since I was 9 years old," says Coffey, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative.

Groups across the nation began their ceremonies simultaneously at noon Eastern time December 16 with the national anthem. In Austin, Gov. Greg Abbott gave remarks before a

Clockwise from top: The viral photo from 2005 showing Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. The opening ceremony at Arlington in 2017. Naval officers place and salute a wreath at Ivy Green Cemetery in Bremerton, Washington.

13-fold flag ceremony and a 21-gun salute. Coffey presented the ceremonial wreath for the Air Force in remembrance of her father.

In Sonora, Boy Scout Troop 19 raised the American flag, and local veterans stepped forward to dedicate a wreath to each branch of the armed forces. With a wordless salute, the veterans took their places behind the wreaths for a moment of silence and remembrance.

A cold rain began to fall as a high school trumpeter played taps, then the 100 or so attendees fanned out across the cemetery, saying the name of their veteran aloud as they placed the wreath on the headstone.

Morgan Mathews of Sonora walked with her husband and two young sons to the very back of the cemetery, where her best friend from high school is buried. Marine Sgt. Shane Folmar was 21 when he was killed three weeks into his first tour in Iraq in 2004.

Mathews placed a wreath on Folmar's grave and took a photo with other classmates and friends. "You think you're never going to forget them, and then sometimes you wake up and realize you haven't thought about them at all," she says. "He gave his all for us. This is a little something we can do for him."

After lingering a few moments with Folmar's memory, Mathews walked through the rest of the cemetery with Gonzales and the volunteers. For veterans with no family in attendance, WAA volunteers read the veterans' names aloud and placed wreaths at their graves.

DuWayne Castro, chief deputy with the Sutton County Sheriff's Department, and Mark Chavez, a member of the Sonora High School class of 2018 who left for Marine Corps boot camp

in June, offered a matching salute as they finished laying each wreath. They followed the map of headstones until the last wreath was placed. The cold rain continued.

Coffey laid a wreath for

At Texas State Cemetery in Austin, Gov. Greg Abbott with family and Scouts at Medal of Honor recipients' graves, below. A family friend places a wreath at the grave of Chris Kyle, highly decorated Navy SEAL and sniper, right.



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA IN 2018

Wreaths Across America takes donations each year to support its annual wreath-laying program. The 2018 event is scheduled for December 15. For \$15, you can sponsor a wreath, either in honor of a living veteran or in remembrance of a deceased veteran. There are 111,000 active duty and 53,000 reserve service members in Texas and more than 1.5 million veterans living in Texas. Visit wreathsasscrossamerica.org by December 3 to participate.

If you would like to arrange a WAA ceremony at a cemetery in which a loved one is buried, Ellen Fuller, WAA volunteer co-chair in Texas, can help. "I know how much it means to surviving families and to the next generation to have veterans remembered," she says. Contact Fuller at (757) 478-4747 or texaswaa@gmail.com.

her father in Austin, finally home after more than 50 years. "The beauty of those wreaths with the simple green branches and red ribbons against the white of the headstones is so symbolic of hope, of lives lost and the sacrifice of so many lives to preserve the freedom we have," she says.

"It means so much to myself and my family that the WAA remembers our loved one at Christmastime. It had been so many Christmases gone," Coffey says. "Just seeing those volunteers spread out and put those wreaths on headstones—it's riveting. At the end of the ceremony, we didn't want to leave. We looked at it for hours."

See more of **Julia Robinson's** work at juliarobinsonphoto.com.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: COURTESY WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

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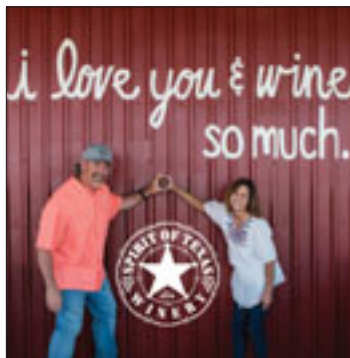
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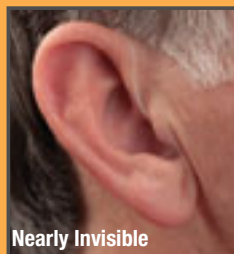
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This knife boasts a full tang blade, meaning the blade doesn't stop at the handle, it runs the full length of the knife. According to Gear Patrol, a full tang blade is key, saying "A full tang lends structural strength to the knife, allowing for better leverage ...think one long steel beam versus two."

With our limited edition **River Canyon Bowie Knife** you're getting the best in 21st-century construction with a classic look inspired by legendary American pioneers. What you won't get is the trumped up price tag. We know a thing or two about the hunt—like how to seek out and capture an outstanding, collector's-quality knife that won't cut into your bank account.

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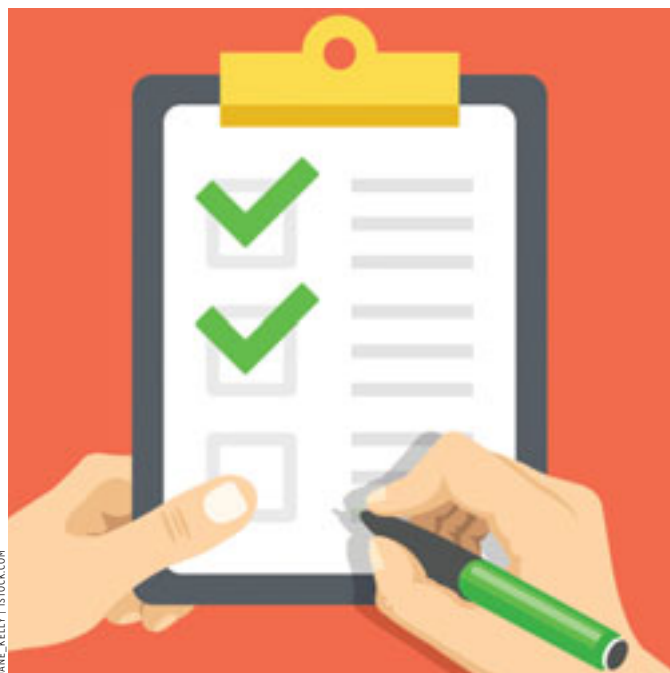
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Rating of A+



Home Safety Checklist



- ▶ Are all appliances located away from the sink? Electrical appliances can cause a shock if they come into contact with water. Plug kitchen appliances into ground-fault circuit interrupter outlets.
- 2. Check all large appliances.**
 - ▶ Have you ever received even a slight shock from any of these appliances? If so, do not touch the appliance until it has been checked by an electrician.
 - ▶ Is the area above the cooking range free of combustibles like potholders and dishcloths? Using the range for storage of flammable objects could result in fires or burns.
 - ▶ Is there excessive vibration or movement when the washer or dryer is operating? Movement during operation can put undue stress on electrical connections.

Bedroom

- 1. Inspect space heaters.**
 - ▶ Are space heaters placed away from flammable items, such as drapes and newspapers?
 - ▶ Are the heaters stable and placed where they will not be tipped over? Animals and even blowing drapes can cause space heaters to topple over, creating a fire hazard.
- 2. Ensure you have smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area.**

Bathroom

- 1. Check for ground-fault circuit interrupters.**
 - ▶ Are bathroom outlets protected by GFCIs? GFCIs should be installed in any areas where water and electricity may meet.
 - ▶ If you have GFCIs, do you test them regularly?
- 2. Check small electrical products, such as hair dryers and clippers.**
 - ▶ Are they plugged in when not in use? Plugged-in electrical appliances (even when switched off) may result in an electric shock hazard if they fall into water.

Garage

- 1. Check your fuse or breaker box.**
 - ▶ Is your fuse box or circuit breaker box accurately labeled so you can easily identify which circuits are used for each room?
 - ▶ Are you regularly resetting tripped breakers? Breakers that trip frequently may be a sign of overloaded circuits or other electrical hazards and warrant consulting a licensed electrician.
 - ▶ Is your home protected by arc-fault circuit interrupters? AFCIs are safety devices that replace standard circuit breakers and greatly reduce the risk of home electrical fires. Consult a licensed electrician if you are interested in adding AFCI protection to your home.

1. CHECK THE WATTAGE OF ALL LIGHTBULBS.

- ▶ Are the bulbs the appropriate wattage for the size of the fixtures? A bulb that uses excessive wattage may overheat and cause a fire.

2. Check all lamp cords and extension cords.

- ▶ Are cords placed out of walking areas and free of furniture resting on them to avoid a tripping hazard and excessive wear?
- ▶ Are cords in good condition?
- ▶ Are cords unwrapped? Tightly wrapped cords can lead to overheating.
- ▶ Are extension cords being used only on a temporary basis? Extension cords are not as safe as permanent home wiring. Have outlets installed where they are needed.

3. Check all wall outlets and switches.

- ▶ Are all outlets and switches working properly and cool to the touch? Faulty or warm outlets or switches may indicate an unsafe wiring condition.
- ▶ Do you hear crackling, sizzling or buzzing from your outlets? If so, call a licensed electrician to identify the cause.
- ▶ Are all outlet and switch cover plates in good condition? Replace any missing, cracked or broken cover plates.

Kitchen

1. Check all countertop appliances.

- ▶ Are all appliance cords placed away from hot surfaces? Pay particular attention to cords around toasters, ovens and ranges.

Scammers Heat Up During Cold Weather

DURING COLD WEATHER, SCAMMERS INCREASINGLY POSE AS ELECTRIC COMPANY

employees to try to get your money and other valuables or sensitive information for identity theft. Because we are all so dependent on electricity for heating our homes and much more, we can be particularly vulnerable when someone calls threatening to turn off our power.

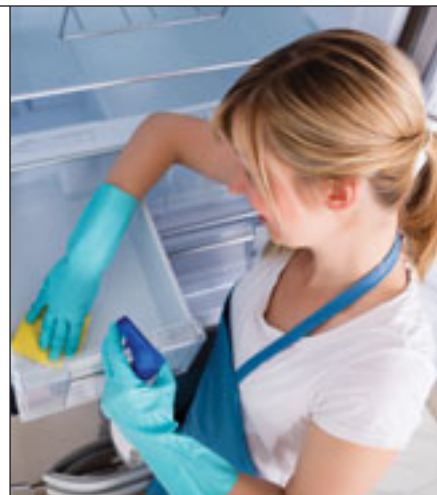
In the most common utility scam, customers get phone calls warning that their service is about to be shut off due to unpaid bills. The callers claim to be billing representatives from your utility but are actually crooks looking for a quick payoff. They tell you that to avoid an immediate shut-off, you need to settle an overdue bill by providing them with your credit card number or bank account information right away.

The scammers may use spoofing software that falsely displays the name and phone number of your utility company on your caller ID. But you should know that your electric cooperative will never call and demand payment. We mail or email notices to you based on your communications preference. If you get a disconnect notice (especially by phone), don't give the caller any information and verify the notice's authenticity by calling your electric cooperative.

Another common deception is an unscheduled visit from someone offering a free inspection of your furnace or a free home energy audit. But unless you've made an appointment with us or an independent home energy auditor, don't let them in.

Often, these fake inspectors are actually there for a quick burglary—especially if they arrive in pairs. One distracts you while the other scoops up valuables. Or they may be trying to sell you something you don't need or collect your personal information for identity theft. Don't be fooled if they sport official-looking badges or wear uniforms. Unless you have made an appointment, keep your door locked.

If you have any suspicion about the legitimacy of a payment request from your electric cooperative or a visit from one of our employees, call your electric cooperative for verification. A little caution can go a long way in keeping your money in your pocket.



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Keep the Refrigerator Clean

MAKE IT A WEEKLY HABIT TO CLEAN

out your refrigerator. It's true that a refrigerator operates more efficiently when it's fully stocked, but of course that doesn't mean you should leave spoiled food inside.

Try these tips to tidy your refrigerator.

You may find that you have more space than you thought—enough to unplug the extra refrigerator or freezer that might be eating up electricity in the garage.

- ▶ Gather the family for a total fridge cleanup. Throw away old leftovers. Check expiration dates on seldom used condiments and toss any that are past their prime.

- ▶ Adjust the height of each shelf so food is easier to see and reach. This could free up space. Designate spaces for fruits, vegetables, meats and drinks so nothing is out of sight, out of mind and left to rot.

- ▶ Store leftovers in transparent containers and label them with the date the food was prepared so no one eats spoiled food when they raid the fridge.

- ▶ Cool hot foods before you put them in the refrigerator to save energy.

- ▶ Vacuum the refrigerator coils monthly. Dust trapped underneath the unit forces the refrigerator to work harder and use more energy.

Pretty Paper

The story behind Willie Nelson's classic holiday song

BY COY PRATHER

FEW CHRISTMAS STANDARDS HAVE BEEN written by Texas songwriters. Gene Autry from Tioga wrote *Here Comes Santa Claus*. Charles Brown from Texas City wrote *Please Come Home for Christmas*. And Willie Nelson from Abbott wrote *Pretty Paper*.

In his autobiography, *It's a Long Story: My Life*, Nelson recalled how he wrote *Pretty Paper*. "Couple of months before Christmas. I was walking around, just looking over my land when my mind went back to someone I hadn't thought about for years: a man without legs who sold pencils and what he called pretty paper in front of Leonard's Department Store in Fort Worth. By pretty paper he meant wrapping paper. He had a way of crying out those words—'pretty paper, pretty paper'—that broke my heart.

"I can't tell you why, in October of 1963 I had this sudden and vivid memory. But it was so powerful that I picked up my guitar and set the story to music. I cast it as a Christmas scene, thinking that would heighten the drama."

Nelson took the song to Fred Foster of Monument Records. "I think it's perfect for Roy Orbison," Foster said. Nelson knew the music business. "As a songwriter, I've always wanted my songs covered by big stars." In those days, Orbison was a much bigger recording artist than Nelson.

Foster said, "Roy's in London right now, but I'll play it for him over the phone. If he likes it, I'll book studio time over there, and we'll rush it out in time for the holiday season."

Orbison loved *Pretty Paper*. He was

touring with a local band named the Beatles opening for him. Foster booked the studio, and Orbison cut the song in one take with English studio musicians.

Released in November 1963, *Pretty Paper* reached No. 15 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. It hit No. 6 on the UK charts. Orbison included it in *The All-Time Greatest Hits of Roy Orbison*. Nelson recorded his own version as an RCA single in 1964 and then recorded a new version on his holiday album *Pretty Paper*, released in 1979. *Rolling Stone* has ranked Nelson's *Pretty Paper* album the 11th-best Christmas LP of all time.

In December 2017, Bud Kennedy, a columnist with the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, confirmed the identity of the man who inspired the song. Kennedy had written articles about the song starting in 2004. Readers who shopped at Leonard's Department Store recalled the street vendor.

"We saw the man crept along on all fours outside of Leonard's Department Store wearing clunky gloves and kneepads made from old tire tread," one reader said. The man also wore a leather vest with a coin box sewn in back. But no one knew his name.

That is until Bob Neely, a rancher from Santo, read one of Kennedy's articles and called the columnist. Neely told Kennedy about his former neighbor, Frankie Brierton.

"You could always hear him in town, dragging himself over the gravel street," Neely said. Neely put Kennedy in touch with Brierton's daughter, Lillian Compte of Conroe. Compte explained to Kennedy that her father had died in 1973 at age 74



WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website and find links to Roy Orbison and Willie Nelson singing *Pretty Paper*.

and was buried in Mineral Wells.

"My father had his legs weakened as a child by spinal meningitis, and he could never walk," Compte said. "He declined a wheelchair and preferred to crawl. It's a pretty song," she said, "I just never thought of it as being about my father."

In Kennedy's account, Ernestine Wakefield of Amarillo wrote about how she watched the man from her window in the W.C. Stripling department store, across the street from Leonard's, where she worked. "I was just a West Texas girl in the big city

back then, and here was this poor man who had nothing. I cried every time I looked out that window," Wakefield recalled.

In the 1950s and '60s, the stores were so busy at Christmastime that up to 200 people crossed Houston Street each time the light changed. Some pedestrians had to wait for two light changes to cross the street.

As Kennedy tells it, Brierton would position himself on that corner along with a vision-impaired couple, Sylvia and Herman Douglas, who sang hymns.

One former store manager for Leonard's, Charlie Ringler, said the Leonard family allowed street vendors and missionaries to work outside the store even when other downtown merchants protested.

"My father worked as a vendor in Fort

Worth, Dallas and Houston," Compte said. "He also worked the Fort Worth Stock Show and the State Fair of Texas.

"My dad earned a living without government assistance. He crawled around on his hands and knees and sold pencils, but we never did without."

Pretty Paper has been recorded by other artists, including Randy Travis, Glen Campbell, Kenny Chesney, Chris Isaak and Asleep at the Wheel. The song is a programming staple at Christmas, and Nelson's poignant message still resonates: Love those on the outside looking in.

Brierton died without knowing *Pretty Paper* was written about him.

Coy Prather, a music writer and member of Trinity Valley EC, lives in Montalba.

Are Longhorns Short-Timers?

The fabled breed of cattle is listed as critically endangered

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

THE TEXAS LONGHORN IS IN TROUBLE, and we're not talking about the University of Texas football team. The breed that inspired UT's mascot is as iconic a symbol of Texas and its history as the Alamo or Spindletop, but the fabled breed is in danger of disappearing, according to the Livestock Conservancy and a handful of breeders dedicated to preserving the traditional strain of longhorn.

This news may come as a surprise to people who see imposing longhorns ruminating in pastures around the state and perhaps even to some producers who raise the breed for its horns more than for its meat. But the conservancy's 2018 report includes the 2013 census of livestock breeds, which lists the longhorn as "critically endangered" with about 3,000 purebreds in existence—1,200 in the U.S.—making one of Texas' best-known breeds one of its most threatened.

So how can a creature that's hardly an anomaly be on any endangered list? Quite simply: The old rugged longhorn isn't what it used to be. The first longhorns were hardy Spanish cattle that thrived in harsh conditions. They developed extra-long horns to fend off predators and tight bellies to protect them from thorny undergrowth. Heifers calved early and lived well into their teens. The calves were smaller than other breeds' calves and basically hit the ground running, as befits a four-legged prey animal in the wild.

Early ranchers valued longhorns for their hardiness and meat. They domesticated longhorns to some extent, but the animals went wild again during the

Civil War. After the war, Texas cattlemen trailed them north, where they sold at great profit. According to the Texas State Historical Association, contractors drove 5 million–10 million cattle out of Texas and brought back enough money to help the state bounce back from the postwar depression.

Barbed wire and the introduction of European breeds like the Hereford made longhorns expendable. Ranchers crossbred longhorns to other cattle or abandoned the breed altogether, commencing the longhorns' descent from iconic savior of a state's economy to endangered species. The U.S. Forest Service started a breeding program to preserve the Texas longhorn and American bison at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma in the 1920s. Later, the government called on Enrique E. Guerra to find more.

Guerra, who died in 2016 at the age of 86, was a 12th-generation Texan whose





family received one of the first Spanish land grants in what is now Starr County. He spoke at the Livestock Conservancy's 2014 annual conference in Austin about the 35 years he spent looking for true longhorns in Texas and Mexico.

"I knew where some wild ones were in Mexico," he said. "I drove and rode thousands of miles looking for purebred longhorns. I found them hanging out in the wild country. We found a few living in the scrublands, eating prickly pears, spines and all, roots and things that cattle just usually don't eat."

Ropers managed to lasso the wild cattle and tie them to mesquite trees to wait for a truck. Guerra and his vaqueros corralled the cattle and fed them chopped-up prickly pear mixed with cottonseed oil.

"They didn't know how to eat out of a trough or drink water if it hadn't rained," he said. "We had to teach them. Longhorns are hardy. Ticks don't bother them. They'll

walk 35 miles to water. They're rangy, bony and lean."

Debbie Davis of Boerne, a breeder, grass-finished longhorn beef producer and member of the Cattlemen's Texas Longhorn Registry, which strives to preserve historically correct longhorns, said many people who raise longhorns don't always know very much about them.

"It's shocking that so many in the industry can't distinguish traditional Texas longhorns," she said. "If the horns are straight, it's not a pure longhorn. The twist is a recessive trait. Mix it with something else and you lose that twist."

Not everybody in the business of breeding and raising longhorns believes they are endangered. The Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America counts almost 750,000 cattle in its registry. Rick Fritsche, TLBAA registrar, believes it's nigh impossible to identify a historically correct longhorn. "There was no DNA test-

ing in the 1930s," he said. "The longhorns ran wild for centuries, so there's no way of knowing the bloodlines of those cattle that were rounded up."

Ryan Walker, marketing and communications manager for the Livestock Conservancy, notes that a lot of cattle resemble Texas longhorns, but very few of them are free from outcrossing with other breeds.

"Even though genetically pure Texas longhorn cattle are critically endangered, they retain many traits that will be vital for the future of agriculture," Walker said. "Purebred Texas longhorn cattle retain some of the most unique genetics of all cattle in America. Those genetics can help the cattle industry cope with a changing climate, drought conditions, feed shortages, evolving parasites and many other threats, but only if we are able to prevent them from going extinct."

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

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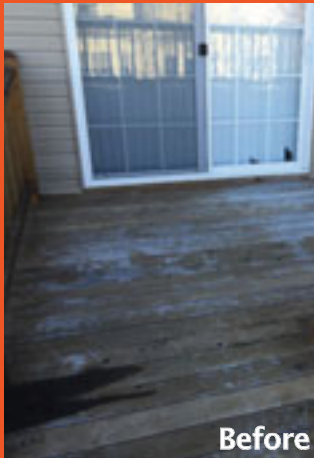
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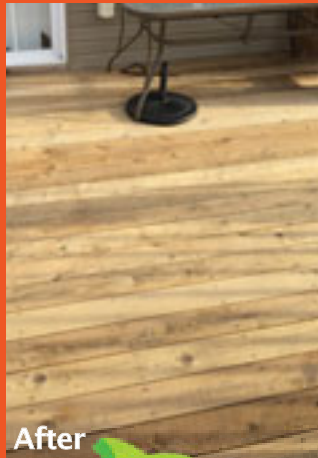
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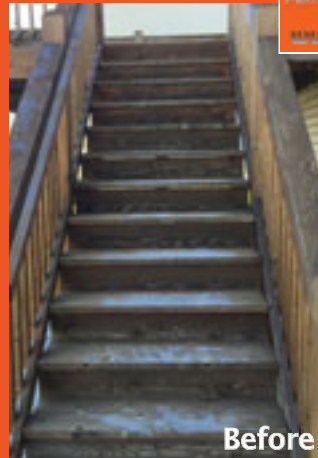
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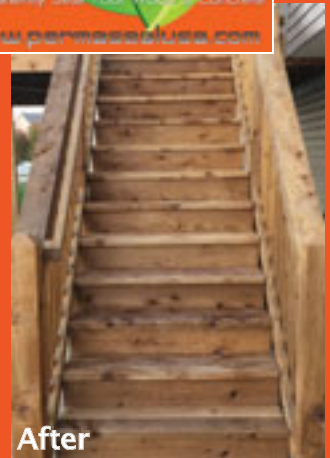
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Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

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



Dear
Darryl

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option.

I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly – Austin, TX

DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY: As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unclog the drain field as well. **SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs** deliver your system the fast active bacteria and enzymes needed to liquefy solid waste and free the clogs causing your back-up.

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(Required by 39 USC 3685)

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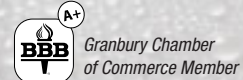
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World War I at the Doorstep of Texas

How border tensions and the cryptic Zimmermann telegram helped push the US into battle

BY GENE FOWLER

“GOVERNMENT SHOCKED AND AMAZED.”

The banner headline blazed across the front page of the *Palestine Daily Herald* on March 1, 1917. “Revelations of Past Twelve Hours Have Stirred the Capital as Never Before,” read the *Sherman Daily Democrat*. In newspapers across Texas, The Associated Press story revealed the discovery of a telegram sent from Arthur Zimmermann, Germany’s foreign minister, to the German ambassador to Mexico, Heinrich von Eckhardt.

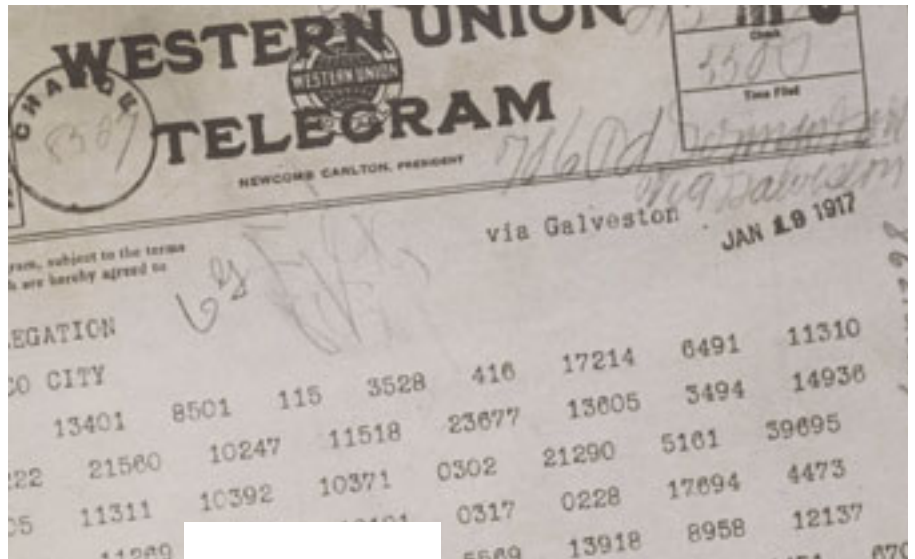
The incendiary missive outlined a potential Mexican attack on America.

When Zimmermann sent the coded message in January 1917, Germany feared it would not win World War I. The telegram, intercepted and decoded by British intelligence, confided that Germany would intensify its U-boat warfare, attacking the British naval blockade and merchant ships of neutral powers.

If that action drew America into the war, Zimmermann instructed, von Eckhardt should propose an alliance to Mexican authorities. If Mexico attacked the United States, they reasoned, American troops would thus be sent to fight Mexico instead of to Europe. If the effort was successful, Germany promised Mexico it could reclaim Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

The plan may seem far-fetched today, 100 years after the end of World War I, but it’s easy to see why border states, and the entire nation, viewed it with grave concern. Mexico had been embroiled in revolutionary turmoil since 1910, and sporadic unrest had spilled across the border. Even before the telegram, Germans had offered support to Mexican leaders, including Pancho Villa.

Two months later, Mexican combatants attacked the Texas hamlets of Boquillas and Glenn Springs. President Woodrow Wilson, who won re-election in 1916 on



WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website to see the full Zimmermann telegram and the decoded message.

the slogan, “He kept us out of war,” sent Army Gen. John J. Pershing and 6,000 American troops into Mexico in pursuit of Villa.

“Events associated with Mexico overshadowed the war across the Atlantic on the front pages of Texas daily newspapers and in the minds of everyday Texans,” wrote historian Patrick L. Cox in the July 2001 issue of *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. News of the Zimmermann telegram, Cox noted, “hit the streets of Texas like a political hurricane.”

Historian Michael C. Meyers traced the genesis of the telegram to a document known as the *Plan de San Diego*. The plan called for a revolution to begin in the southwestern U.S. on February 20, 1915, that would liberate Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and parts of California from U.S. control. “We must not lose sight of Mexico,” the *Frankfurter Zeitung* editorialized April 15, 1915, “because Mexico will become the focus of a gigantic movement of world power.”

As American authorities worked to authenticate the telegram, Wilson wanted

legislation passed that would arm American merchant vessels and authorize their self-defense. Opponents of the move generally changed their minds after the telegram’s publication March 1. Isolationists also supported the United States’ declaration of war April 6, 1917.

The Zimmermann telegram, along with Germany’s waging of unrestricted submarine warfare, is often cited as a major impetus for America’s entry into the war. But the most recent major work on the storied communiqué, the 2012 book *The Zimmermann Telegram: Intelligence, Diplomacy, and America’s Entry into World War I* by military and intelligence historian Thomas Boghardt, contends that the Zimmermann telegram was much less important as a motivation to declare war than the German declaration of open season on American merchant ships.

Still, Austrian native and North American immigrant Friedrich Katz, who became one of Mexico’s most important historians, said in his 1981 volume, *The Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution*, the Zimmermann telegram “has become one of the great spy stories of all time,” albeit one that “boomeranged.”

Writer Gene Fowler specializes in Texas history.





YOU COULD SAY THAT WE'RE BLESSED WITH TWO HOLIDAYS. Months before the official holidays roll in, *Texas Co-op Power* staff gets the pleasure of feasting (all in the name of testing, of course) on your cherished recipes as part of our annual holiday recipe contest. The fragrances of buttery pastries, minty confections and homey dinners fill the air—and, best of all, we get to share in your holiday memories. Among this year's winners: a riff on a Creole classic, a rich pecan torte crowned with creamy glaze, and bacon-spiked meatballs brightened with a lemony herb topping—just the kind of recipes that you want to tuck into on cold winter evenings. From our tables to yours, we wish you a delicious holiday season.

As long as you're showing off your cooking mastery between Thanksgiving and Christmas, consider entering your pride and joy in the 2019 Holiday Recipe Contest. The deadline isn't until June 10, but you can enter now on our website, while this season's rave reviews are still making you smile.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

\$1,000 GRAND PRIZE **Sherry's Shrimp** **Clemenceau**

SHERRY ZAWADZKI | HEART OF TEXAS EC

"My husband loves shrimp, so I'm constantly looking for and creating new recipes for him," Zawadzki says. Her shrimp Clemenceau, a classic New Orleans and Creole dish, is one of his favorites—and this year's grand prizewinner. Serve it for dinner or as a special brunch (topped with a poached egg) with a tomato salad or fresh crudité.

Vegetable oil

- 2 large Idaho russet potatoes, cut into small dice
- 2 teaspoons olive oil, plus more as needed
- ½ cup chopped red or yellow onion
- 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided use
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided use
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 6 ounces boiled ham, cut into small dice
- ¼ cup frozen baby peas
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic



- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- Prepared hollandaise sauce, for serving (optional)

Lemon wedges, for serving (optional)

1. In a deep pot or electric fryer, heat 2–3 inches of vegetable oil to 360 degrees. Adding potatoes in batches, fry until golden brown, stirring as necessary to avoid clumping, about 10–12 minutes. Remove the potatoes with a slotted spoon, allowing excess oil to drain, and transfer to a plate lined with paper towels.

2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot and shimmering, add the onion and shrimp and season with ¼ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper and cayenne. Cook, stirring, 2 minutes. Add the ham, peas, garlic, potatoes and the remaining salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, 3 minutes, then add the butter and cook 1–2 additional minutes until the ingredients are combined. Serve warm, drizzled with hollandaise and a squeeze of lemon, if desired. ▶ Serves 4.



\$500 BEST SWEET Pecan Torte With Creamy Glaze

TAMMY RAINWATER STARR | DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

This elegant dessert, perfectly at home on a pretty holiday table, is a mashup of the best pecan recipes. The torte combines the richness of pecan pie filling with a delicious cookie-like base and creamy glaze. Serve it with strong coffee for an afternoon get-together or as punctuation to a holiday dinner.

TORTE

- 2½ cups finely chopped pecans
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, plus more for pan
- 3 eggs, separated
- ¼ cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup buttermilk

GLAZE

- ¾ cup half-and-half
- 6 tablespoons light corn syrup
- ¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. TORTE: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread chopped pecans on a baking sheet and toast lightly, about 5 minutes. Heavily butter the inside of a 10-inch springform pan and sprinkle in ¾ cup of the toasted pecans, coating the bottom and sides.

2. In a small mixing bowl, beat egg whites on medium speed until stiff peaks form. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar. Add egg yolks, vanilla, flour, baking soda, buttermilk and ¾ cup of

toasted pecans. Fold in egg whites gently. Bake 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack about 10 minutes, then turn out onto a parchment- or waxed paper-lined rack and cool completely.

3. GLAZE: In a small saucepan, combine half-and-half, corn syrup, sugar, egg yolks and cornstarch. Whisk over medium heat until a low boil begins. Continue to boil about 1 minute or until mixture begins to thicken. Whisk in butter and vanilla and remove from heat. Allow to cool completely before spreading glaze over top of torte. Sprinkle top of glaze with remaining toasted pecans.

► Serves 6–8.

COOK'S TIP Torte may be baked in a regular 9-inch round pan. It also can be cut horizontally and spread with glaze between layers as well as on top, if desired.



\$500 BEST SAVORY **Osso Buco-Style** **Meatballs**

PATRICK SPAGON | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

Gremolata is a traditional Italian condiment that's often used to enhance rich meat dishes like these luscious bacon and beef meatballs. Spagon suggests serving the warm meatballs over polenta or with pasta or steamed rice.

MEATBALLS

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup milk
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 ounces (about 3 slices) smoked bacon, finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt

Finely ground pepper (5 twists of mill)

- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallots

- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil
- 1 cup breadcrumbs

SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{4}$ stick) butter
- 1 medium sweet onion, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped carrot
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped celery
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) chopped Italian tomatoes, undrained

GREMOLATA

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons finely grated lemon zest
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup minced parsley
- 1 medium clove garlic, finely minced

1. MEATBALLS: Combine the bread and milk in a large bowl. When bread is soft, mash it with a fork (or your fingers), then add the beef, bacon, egg, salt, pepper, parsley, Parmesan and shallots to the

bowl and mix thoroughly. Make meatballs $1\frac{1}{2}$ –2 inches in diameter.

2. Heat the olive oil in a 1-inch, high-sided skillet over medium-high heat. Dredge the meatballs in the breadcrumbs, then brown them on all sides. Remove meatballs from skillet and set aside.

3. SAUCE: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Add the butter to the drippings in the skillet. Add the onion, carrot and celery and cook, stirring, until softened. Add the wine and simmer 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes (with liquid) and simmer an additional 5 minutes.

4. Transfer the sauce and meatballs to a 3-quart casserole dish, cover and bake 1 hour. Allow the meatballs to cool briefly while you prepare the gremolata.

5. GREMOLATA: Combine the lemon zest, parsley and garlic in a small bowl. Serve the warm meatballs with a sprinkling of gremolata over each portion. ▶ Serves 6–8.

Recipes



\$250 HONORABLE MENTION

Helen's Danish Kringle

LINDA RUSH | SAM HOUSTON EC

DOUGH

- 2 cups flour
- 1½ tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup shortening, softened
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened (or ½ cup butter in lieu of shortening)
- ½ cup milk, scalded
- 1 egg, separated
- ¾ ounce active dry yeast
- ¼ cup warm water (110–115 degrees)

PECAN FILLING

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup finely chopped or ground pecans

POWDERED SUGAR ICING

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup powdered sugar

1. DOUGH: Measure flour, sugar, salt, shortening and/or butter into a bowl and blend well with a pastry cutter. Cool milk slightly, then stir in egg yolk (reserve white for later use). Pour into bowl with first ingredients.

2. Add yeast to warm water and let stand a few minutes. Add to all other ingredients, mixing thoroughly. Scrape dough from sides of bowl (it will be very soft). Cover tightly and chill 2 to not more than 48 hours in refrigerator.

3. FILLING: Prepare filling before shaping kringles. Cream butter and sugar until well mixed, then blend in pecans.

4. ICING: Over low heat, melt butter with milk. Remove from heat and add vanilla. Whisk in powdered sugar until smooth, adding a bit more milk if necessary for a smooth consistency.

5. Line a baking sheet that is at least 18-by-12 inches (or two smaller sheets) with parchment paper.

6. Divide dough into halves, returning one half to the refrigerator. Beat the egg white. On a floured surface, roll the first dough half into a 6-by-18-inch rectangle. (Dough will be very tender.) Spread 3-inch center strip with half of beaten egg white, then carefully spread with half of filling. Fold over one side of dough and then the other with 1½-inch overlap to cover filling. Pinch dough to close the fold. Pick up kringle carefully and arrange, seam side down, on baking sheet in horseshoe shape; pinch ends. Shape second kringle as first using remaining dough from refrigerator and place on baking sheet.

7. Cover kringles with a kitchen towel and let rise in warm place 30–45 minutes, or until dent remains when pressing finger gently on side of dough and dough is no longer cold. Place baking sheet in an oven that has been heated to 400 degrees and bake 20–30 minutes until golden brown.

8. Remove from oven and spread with icing while hot. Cut into wedges to serve.

► Serves 8–10.

\$250 HONORABLE MENTION

Dark Chocolate Mint Brownies

JILEEN PLATT | BOWIE-CASS EC



BROWNIES

- 4 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate, broken into pieces
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup flour

MINT FROSTING

- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, softened
- 2½ cups powdered sugar

- 3 tablespoons milk
- ¾ teaspoon peppermint extract
- 3 drops green food coloring

CHOCOLATE DRIZZLE

- 2 ounces bittersweet baking chocolate, broken into pieces
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and apply nonstick spray to a 16-by-10½-inch jelly roll pan.

2. BROWNIES: Place the chocolate and butter in a medium microwavable bowl. Melt in microwave 1 minute. Remove bowl from microwave and stir mixture until chocolate is completely melted. If needed, return bowl to microwave and heat 30 seconds longer. Set aside.

3. In a large stand mixer, beat together eggs and sugar. Add flour and mix on low until only a few white streaks remain. Pour in melted chocolate mixture while mixer is on low and mix until just combined.

4. Pour mixture on prepared jelly roll pan and spread evenly with a spatula. Place pan in oven and bake approximately 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Remove pan from oven and let cool completely.

5. FROSTING: In a medium mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add milk, peppermint and food coloring. Beat until well combined. Spread frosting on cooled brownie layer and place in refrigerator to chill.

6. DRIZZLE: Place the bittersweet chocolate and butter in a small microwavable bowl. Melt mixture in microwave 1 minute. Remove bowl from microwave and stir mixture until chocolate is completely melted. If needed, return bowl to microwave and heat 30 seconds longer.

7. Remove pan from refrigerator. Using a small spoon, drizzle melted chocolate mixture diagonally, horizontally and vertically until all chocolate is used. Return pan to refrigerator and let chill completely. When ready to serve, cut the bars into 1½–2-inch squares. ► Makes about 30 squares.

WEB EXTRAS ► Read these recipes on our website and check out all the winners from the previous 14 Holiday Recipe Contests.

\$100 Recipe Contest

April's recipe contest topic is **DIY Take-out**. In conjunction with our special travel issue that month, we'll feature your best treats for road trips. What do you pack in your picnic basket? The deadline is **November 10**. Readers whose recipes are featured will receive a special *Texas Co-op Power* apron.

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.

Abandoned Buildings

ONCE VITAL PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY, abandoned buildings now stand quietly as we go about our daily lives. Amidst the ruin there is beauty, as the surrounding landscape slowly takes over. **GRACE ARSIAGA**

WEB EXTRAS ► See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.

▼ **AMBER BENSON**, Grayson-Collin EC: Sunset at Big Bend Ranch State Park.



▲ **CAROL HOLBERT**, Concho Valley EC: Bob's Oil Well in Matador.



◀ **REAGAN FERGUSON**, Central Texas EC: Inside an old West Texas schoolhouse.

► **BOYD DREYER**, Pedernales EC: An old farmhouse.



▲ **REBECCA DAUGHTRY**, San Patricio EC: Travel the back roads of Texas and you'll find this abandoned treasure from generations past at the corner of FM 796 and 797.

UPCOMING CONTESTS

MARCH TREES	DUE NOVEMBER 10
APRIL MILES AND MILES OF TEXAS	DUE DECEMBER 10
MAY ON THE RANCH	DUE JANUARY 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. We do not accept entries via email. **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 regret that *Texas Co-op Power* cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.



Pick of the Month Country Christmas Ball

Lockney November 30
(806) 983-6228

The sounds of Wendell Sollis and the Sidekicks All Star Band will stir dancers all evening with big band and western swing standards. An auction with paintings by Kenneth Wyatt is part of a fundraiser that benefits the volunteer fire departments in Lockney and Floydada. South Plains and Lighthouse electric cooperatives are sponsors of the ball.

November

7

Blanco Neal Ford & Friends, (830) 833-1227, nealfordmusic.com

9

Waco [9-11] Brazos Fine Art Show and Gala, (830) 708-1436, pactart.org/bfas

Venus [9-11] Steampunk November, (817) 680-8483, steampunknovember.com

10

Burton Big Star Texas Night, (979) 525-5048, burtontexas.org/bigstartexasnight

Crockett Tony Orlando, (936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

Hamilton Holiday Market & Book Sale, (254) 372-4572

Hidalgo Got Faith Presents Jeremy Camp and Matthew West, (956) 358-2755, gotfaithmusic.com

Lumberton Lions Strides Walk & Car Show, (409) 898-3797, setxstrides.com

Streetman Richland Chambers Lake BBQ & Jamboree, (903) 389-7586, communitycareclub.com

Keller [10-11] Sharing the Joy Gift Fair, (817) 431-1332, www.kellerumc.com/events/sharing-the-joy

16

Athens Pea Pickers & Single Peas Square Dance Club, (903) 790-4565, etsrda.com

November 10
Hamilton
Holiday Market & Book Sale



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Ingram [16-17, 23-25, 30-Dec. 2] *Sanders Family Christmas*, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

17

Bonham Christmas Parade, (903) 583-4811, fannincountytx.com

Lake Jackson Festival of Lights, (979) 415-2600, lakejackson-tx.gov

Rockdale Rockdale Uncorked Swirl & Shop, (512) 446-2030, rockdalechamber.com

22

Hunt [22-25] Thanksgiving at Mo, 1-800-460-4401, moranch.org

27

Waxahachie Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting, (469) 309-4040, waxahachiecvb.com/events

29

Ennis Lights of Ennis Parade and Block Party, (972) 878-4748, visitennis.org

30

Brenham [30-Dec. 1] Christmas Stroll & Lighted Parade, (979) 836-3696, visitbrenhamtexas.com

November 30-December 1
Madisonville
Gingerbread Market



Clifton [30-Dec. 1] Arts of Christmas, (254) 675-3724, bosqueartscenter.org

Madisonville [30-Dec. 1] Gingerbread Market, (979) 703-6901, visitmadisonville.org

New Braunfels [30-Dec. 1] Christkindlmarkt, (830) 542-8448, christkindlmarktbnx.org

December

1

Groves Lighted Christmas Parade, (409) 962-3631, grovescofc.com

Henderson Lighting of the Trees at Lake Forest Park, (866) 650-5529, visithendersontx.com

McAllen Holiday Parade, (956) 681-1200, mcallenholidayparade.com

Hillsboro [1-2] Hillsboro Heritage League Tour of Homes, (254) 266-4484, hillsborochamber.org

Sherman [1-2] Christmas Pops, (903) 267-3227, shermansymphony.org

7

Austin Angels Among Us Breakfast, (512) 444-7199, bgcaustin.org/events/angels-among-us-breakfast

Submit Your Event!

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

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Waco's Mysterious Mammoths

Massive bones discovered along Bosque River transport visitors to the Pleistocene ice age

BY MARTHA DEERINGER

THE WOODLANDS ALONG THE BOSQUE River on the outskirts of Waco long obscured an astonishing paleontological discovery: partially fossilized remains of a nursery herd of Pleistocene mammoths.

The wooded land that covered the mammoths is cut by ravines washed out by periodic floodwaters. In 1978, in one of these ravines, two fossil collectors unearthed an enormous bone.

The bone was identified by scientists at Baylor University as the femur of a Columbian mammoth. Baylor quickly organized a team and began excavation of the site. A centimeter at a time over the next 30 years, Baylor scientists exposed a glimpse of life during an ice age in Central Texas, identifying the bones of 23 Columbian mammoths, a prehistoric camel and the tooth of a juvenile saber-toothed cat in an area now known as **Waco Mammoth National Monument**.

Unlike other similar discoveries, the bones of the Waco mammoths have not completed the fossilization process by which minerals gradually replace the organic material of the bones and transform them into a stonelike solid. "They are extremely fragile," says Anita Benedict, collections manager of Baylor's Mayborn Museum. "Before bones were removed from the site, they had to be stabilized inside plaster jackets."

The skeletons of the animals that made up the original nursery herd, a group that included females and juveniles of all ages, are now housed at the Mayborn.

How the animals died is still a mystery. Early scientific evidence pointed to a catastrophic flood about 65,000 years ago that trapped mammoths from the nursery herd in a steep, slippery-sided channel where they drowned. Sediment from later floods buried the remains.

More recent studies suggest that the mammoths did not all die at once but rather in a series of events over many years. A second flooding event produced an uniden-



tified animal associated with a juvenile saber-toothed cat, and a third, approximately 15,000 years later, left behind the skeleton of a large bull mammoth, a juvenile and an adult female. These remains are still at the site.

Because the juvenile lies across the massive 16-foot tusks of the bull, early theories posited that he might have been trying to lift the calf above the floodwater. Experts doubt this. "Adult male elephants certainly never do good deeds like saving calves," says University of Nevada anthropologist Gary Haynes, who has spent 40 years studying mammoths. "The bones of the bull and the calf at first glance seem to tell an inspiring story of failed rescue, but it is far more likely that the carcasses of the two mammoths were merely washed together after they were dead."

The Brazos and Bosque rivers converge northwest of downtown Waco, and some experts speculate that a drought may have drawn the large number of mammoths to the plentiful water of the Waco area, where flash floods led to their deaths. Or could it have been a poisonous algae bloom? The jury is still out.


A life-size mural of a Columbian bull mammoth inside the door of the \$3.5 million pavilion that houses the original dig

Visitors overlook the site of the nation's only recorded discovery of a nursery herd of Columbian mammoths.

site provides visitors with a dramatic view of the creatures. Dwarfing their distant cousins, the smaller woolly mammoths, Columbian mammoths grew to a height of 14 feet at the shoulder and weighed 8–10 tons. They lived in the temperate grasslands of the southern United States, Mexico and Central America. A warmer climate may mean that they had less hair than the woollies, which occupied colder northern regions. The discovery of bits of bone in the soil when holes were drilled for the pavilion indicates that other skeletons may still rest below the surface.

The site in Waco opened to the public near the end of 2009, and in 2015, President Barack Obama signed an executive order that made it a national monument and part of the National Park Service. Guided tours of Waco Mammoth National Monument are offered every 30 minutes, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., seven days a week.

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

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