

TEXAS CO-OP POWER



FIRST ON THE SCENE

Volunteer fire departments draw from electric co-ops to protect communities





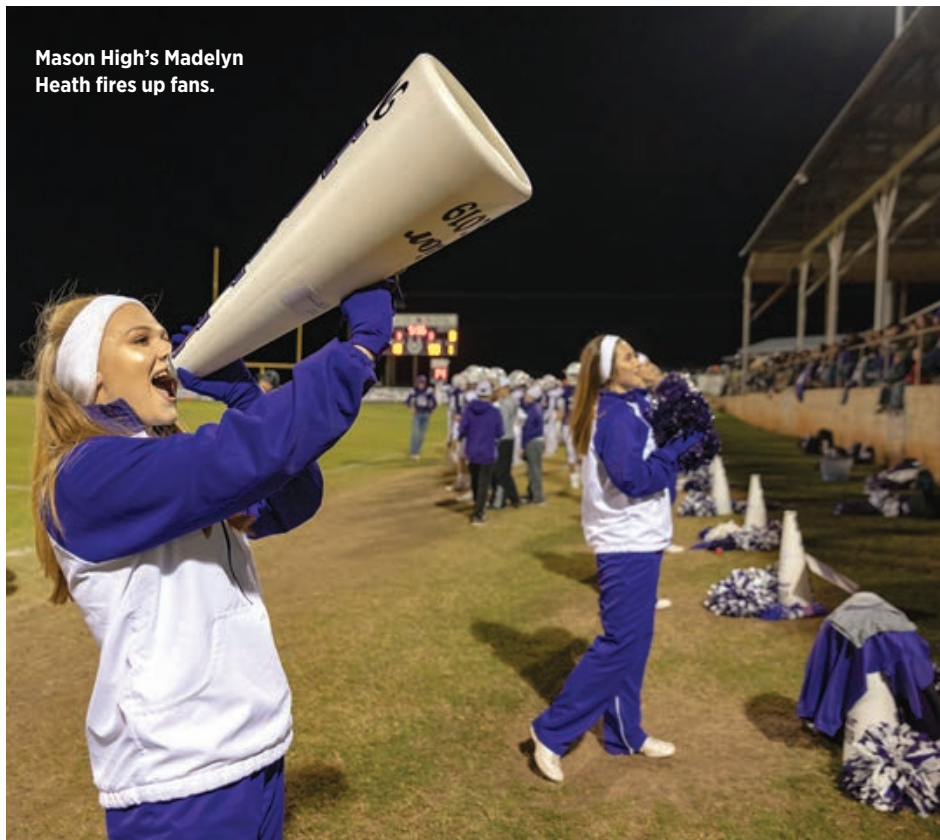
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Mason High's Madelyn Heath fires up fans.

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ON THE COVER Cindy Lott and John Holzer train as North Hays County Fire and Rescue volunteer firefighters. Photo by Eric W. Pohl

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More About Murata

There is a section about Sachiko Ono Murata and the Caddo Lake pearls [*Caddo's Gems*, August 2019] in my dad's book, *Caddo Was...* My dad writes that he interviewed Murata after the bombing of Pearl Harbor for a newspaper story. There were rumors that Murata was a spy and used "high-powered radio equipment" to report to the Japanese government.

But Murata had no electricity, and his radio equipment was "a collection of outdated throw-away junk, spliced together with pieces of discarded house wiring" powered by a dry-cell battery. After the article was published, the rumors disappeared.

FRANCES HARE | GARLAND
PANOLA-HARRISON EC

Early Days of Electricity

We were living in Knox County, where my daddy's family had settled around 1900. I remember the electric light that hung above my parents' bed [*Reliable as Electricity*, August 2019]. Daddy loved to read, so after his day of farming and supper, he stretched out on the bed under the light to read.



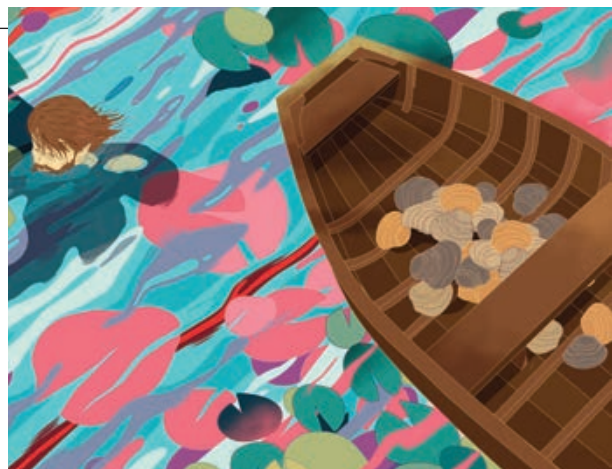
Caddo Legend Rings True

The lady who received \$900 for her pearl was a neighbor of my parents and grandparents in the Lewis community in Cass County [*Caddo's Gems*, August 2019]. Years ago, my mother told me about her

first cousin, Louis Thrower. He wanted to get married but had no money.

He went diving for pearls and found one that enabled him to buy his fiancée a ring, and he even had a little money left over to start their married life together.

MARY ECHOLS | KILDARE | BOWIE-CASS EC



One day in 1945, we had a thunderstorm, and like any 2-year-old, I sought safety next to my daddy when I was frightened. Imagine how scared we all were when lightning struck and a ball of orange fire came down that electrical wire and blew out the lightbulb.

MARILYN GODFREY | STEPHENVILLE
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Flicker of Truth

Enjoy the tidbit info like Smokey Bear turns 75 [*No Candles, Please*, Currents, August 2019].

DANNY GEROLD | VIA FACEBOOK

Not Pulling Your Chain

I noticed an error in *75th Anniversary Timeline: Rural Life* [August 2019].

Stihl would like people to think that it introduced the first one-man chain saw. In fact, the first one-man, gasoline-powered

chain saw was introduced in 1946 by IEL with the model name Beaver. This saw took the industry by storm and forced other chain saw manufacturers to either design a one-man chain saw or go bankrupt.

I have worked in the chain saw industry almost my whole life and have collected them for about 20 years—having amassed about 250, dating from the 1940s.

PAUL WATKINS | SAVOY
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

Big Screen, Big Memories

I think my first was *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*. The more I tried to remember the first movie I saw at my town's iconic drive-in, the more I remember all the great summer and early fall nights watching the big screen light up the whole parking lot.

Drive In, Chill Out [June 2019]

was quite a nice little invitation to remember an experience that newer generations can miss out on. I fully intend to make sure my children get to experience it.

ARGENTINA DEARING | NAVASOTA
MID-SOUTH SYNERGY

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Please include your town and electric co-op. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.



Texas Co-op Power

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Camp Craig Allen Fundraiser

Camp Craig Allen, a nonprofit dedicated to physically disabled adults, children and veterans of North Texas, holds its annual fundraiser, the **AMATEUR BBQ COOK-OFF AND MUSIC FEST, OCTOBER 11-12** at Toyota Stadium in **FRISCO**. The stadium is powered by CoServ, an electric cooperative based in Corinth.

Camp Craig Allen promotes advocacy and independence through educational, recreational and therapeutic programs. Its goal is to build a completely barrier-free facility where people with physical disabilities can participate in a variety of activities.

INFO ▶ (940) 395-0226, campcraigallen.org

WEB EXTRAS

▶ Find more happenings online.



TECH KNOWLEDGE

LAUDING LEDS

You already know residential LEDs use at least 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent bulbs—especially if they're Energy Star certified.

But did you know the first patented LEDs were developed in 1962 by Texas Instruments? They were used with IBM computers to control punch card readers.

Something to think about October 7, National LED Light Day.

◀ LOOKING BACK AT OUTDOORS THIS MONTH



IN THE 75 YEARS since *Texas Co-op Power* debuted in July 1944, the great outdoors of Texas has welcomed magnificent parks, breeding bats and even Willie Nelson.

1940s

1944 Big Bend National Park is established.

1948 The San Jacinto Battleground is the new home for the battleship Texas, which becomes the first permanent battleship memorial museum in the U.S. The site has closed and the ship will be repaired and relocated.



1950s

1953 Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower of the U.S. and Adolfo Ruiz Cortines of Mexico dedicate Falcon International Reservoir.

1957 Monahans Sandhills State Park, which boasts dunes up to 50 feet tall, opens in West Texas.

1957 Sweetwater holds its first rattlesnake roundup.

1960s

1960 The cavern that became Natural Bridge Caverns, the largest in Texas, is discovered.

1966 *Texas*, an outdoor summer musical at Palo Duro Canyon State Park, is performed for the first time.

1968 Padre Island National Seashore, encompassing a portion of the largest barrier beach in the U.S., is dedicated.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MEANINGFUL DAY

To commemorate National Dictionary Day, October 16, the writers and editors at *Texas Co-op Power* share words that recently sent them to a dictionary.

Chris Burrows

Stevedore: A dockworker responsible for loading or unloading ships in port.

Travis Hill

Prolix: So wordy as to be tiresome.

Charles Lohrmann

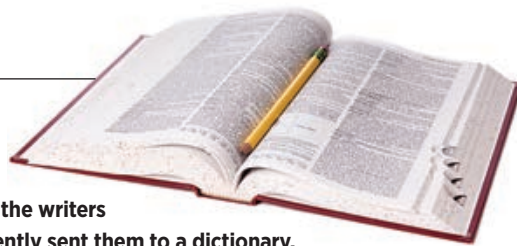
Magisterial: Having or showing great authority.

Jessica Ridge

Frontispiece: An illustration preceding and usually facing the title page of a book.

Tom Widlowski

S'more: Looked up not for its meaning but for its spelling.



ENERGY INFO

Going Hog Mild

ZERO S, ONE CLEAN MACHINE



IN 1894, two steam engineers and an inventor in Germany released the first production motorcycle, eponymously called the Hildebrand & Wolfmüller.

In 2018, more than 350,000 two-wheeled machines were registered with the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, but their mystique may be slipping. Eighteen percent more bikes were on Texas roads in 2013.

So manufacturers are going electric to broaden their appeal.

Harley-Davidson started taking preorders this year for its first all-electric motorcycle, called the LiveWire. The 2020 model boasts 146 miles of city range.

European manufacturers aren't far behind. Triumph and Ducati have plans to develop their own all-electric bikes.

But Zero Motorcycles, a California company, beat them all to market in 2006. Their latest model, the Zero S, packs a 223-mile city range.

HISTORY LESSON

Century of Advocacy

The League of Women

Voters of Texas turns 100 this month. The nonpartisan political organization, formed October 19, 1919, focused its efforts in the early years on educating the newly enfranchised women voters of the state.

Today, the league promotes voter education and participation, and advocates solutions in the public interest on key policy issues.

LOOKING BACK AT SOCIETY NEXT MONTH ►

1970s

1970 Lyndon B. Johnson State Park & Historic Site opens to the public.

1972 Guadalupe Mountains National Park, which includes Guadalupe Peak, the highest point in Texas at over 8,700 feet, is established.

1973 Willie Nelson holds his first Fourth of July picnic—at a ranch in Dripping Springs.



1980s

1980 Renovation of the Congress Avenue bridge in Austin inadvertently creates an ideal bat roost on the underside of the structure. Some 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats spend their summers under the bridge.

1986 The Don't Mess With Texas anti-littering campaign begins with a TV commercial featuring blues great Stevie Ray Vaughan.



1990s

1990 Travis County designates Hamilton Pool a nature preserve.

1991 Big Bend Ranch State Park opens on a limited basis.

1996 Sea Center Texas, an aquarium, fish hatchery and education center located on 75 acres in Lake Jackson, opens. The Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens also opens.

2000s

2007 Big Bend Ranch State Park opens fully to the public.

2011 The U.S. and Mexico announce a binational cooperative conservation plan to protect and preserve the Big Bend/Rio Bravo region—North America's largest and most diverse desert ecosystem.



AFTER-GAME MEALS AND FUN KEEP TEENS SAFE ON A Final Score



STORY BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

PHOTOS BY SCOTT VAN OSDOL

Each cobbler? With *ice cream*?" says Kelcey Doss, a junior at Mason High School, as she fist-bumps the air while waiting in a serving line with other cheerleaders and football players. It's nearly 11 p.m. on a Friday in October 2018, and the Mason Punchers have scored yet another victory on their way to a state championship. Win or lose, though, everyone makes a beeline from the stadium, nicknamed the Puncher Dome, to a postgame event called fifth quarter at the Mason Church of Christ.

Since 1969, teenagers have met inside the church's fellowship hall for camaraderie and a hot meal. Tonight, the hall is decked out with tablecloths, party ware and fresh carnations in the Mason Puncher colors of purple and white. Doss carries her plates to a purple-topped table and plops down with five other girls. "I'm going to eat my dessert first," she announces.

Seated next to her, fellow cheerleader Grace Perlichek ponders a question in between mouthfuls of a sloppy Joe, piled high with corn chips. "Why do we come to fifth quarter?" she says. "Because it gives us something to do after the game."

"And we can hang out," adds Doss, who's downed the cobbler and moved on to her sloppy Joe.

"Plus, we get free, delicious food," concludes Kendra Munsell, another varsity cheerleader sharing the table.

Across Texas, similar fifth quarter events shift into noisy gear once the Friday night lights go out. Each one's different, but most are hosted by volunteers from community churches who want to provide a positive and alcohol-free place for teens to go after home football games. Food is the big draw, but many offer basketball, bonfires, pingpong, video games, music or door prizes.

"Our fifth quarters bring the community and churches together and provide a safe alternative for our young people after

FOOTBALL FRIDAYS



Clockwise, from opposite page: Mason High’s Otto Wofford warms up before his final home game. Cheerleader Sydney Anderson springs into action. Mary Hemphill started Mason’s fifth quarter 50 years ago. Alexis Hernandez, left, and Isis Martinez have a blast.

football games,” says Laura Snyder, a member of St. Stephen Catholic Church in Salado, about halfway between Waco and Austin. “Our churches have hosted them for at least 10 years. New volunteers always step up and keep the tradition going.”

Exactly when and where the tradition started is difficult to pin down. Try to trace who originally came up with the name “fifth quarter,” and it gets even dicier. In Blanco, west of Austin, Florine and Harold Lord, members of Pedernales Electri Coop-

erative, both now in their 90s, recall hosting their first after-game parties in 1971. “Back then, we hardly had any kids in our Methodist church,” Florine says. “There was nothing for them to do, either. So we invited schoolkids to our church after home football games. They’d eat and have fun. If we could keep one child from being hurt or killed, it was worth it.”

These days, ministers and church representatives with the Blanco Ministerial Alliance coordinate fifth quarter schedules. Volunteers with participating churches host students. “Our goal is to provide a safe and spiritual place for our students after ballgames,” says Carlos Cloyd, pastor with the Blanco United



Above: Defensive back Tyson Keller becomes a trumpeter at half-time. **Right:** Punchers assistant coach Michael McLeod and player Jace Eckert in the chili line. **Opposite:** From left, Lucy, Trish, Jeff and Rudy Rochat celebrate a victory at the Puncher Dome.



Methodist Church, which is a member of PEC. “We want them to hear a message, have fun and get something to eat.”

In Mason, the tradition started in 1969, when members of the Church of Christ decided teens needed a place to go after home football games. “My husband was a church elder,” recalls Mary Hemphill, 85. “First, we fed them at our house. Then we cooked steaks at the church after the game. For 49 straight years now, we’ve cooked good stick-to-your-ribs food for the kids at the church.

“It doesn’t matter if they win or lose the football game,” Hemphill adds. “We celebrate the kids.”

Through the years, fifth quarters have spread across Texas. In Palestine, southeast of Dallas, local churches have hosted fifth quarters since at least the early 1980s. “I graduated in 1984 from Palestine High School, and I remember going to them,” says Danny Rodriguez, administrative pastor with the Evangelistic Temple in Palestine. “This year, 17 churches partnered together and hosted separate fifth quarters for students at Palestine Junior High and Palestine High School.”

After home games, kids met at their respective school gymnasiums for food and games. “Our churches and school district worked together for the benefit of the kids,” Rodriguez says. “Our goal was to connect with kids and develop relationships with them. That way, if they ever need help, they know pastors they can call on.”

In Eldorado, south of San Angelo, members with the First

Baptist Church budget for their fifth quarter ministry. The money goes toward pizza rolls, taquitos, cheese dip, chips, sodas and lemonade. Kids can just hang out or play games, like pingpong and foosball.

“We host about 40 students after home games in our basement youth room,” says youth minister Jason Crookham. “Fifth quarters give us a way to support our kids and invite them into our building so they’ll feel more comfortable. Adults can then share time with them and let them know they’re welcome here.”

After home games in Carrizo Springs, in South Texas, teens hang out in the fellowship hall at the First Baptist Church. “We’ve hosted fifth quarters for six years,” says youth minister Jeff Janca. “All kids are welcome, and we have them register and give an emergency number just in case. They start eating right away, and we let them chill down for 30 minutes. Then we have a worship time followed by games or activities.”

Across Texas, similar fifth quarter events shift into noisy gear once the Friday night lights go out. “We want them to hear a message, have fun and get something to eat.”



Back at the Mason Church of Christ, Corky Mueller ladles seasoned beef from a jumbo roaster oven onto buns while other volunteers divvy out corn chips and shredded cheese. “This is a way of giving back to our community, and I’m a 1958 Puncher graduate myself,” says Mueller, who spent his afternoon cooking up 50 pounds of hamburger meat. “Mason has good kids, and there’s not a one who doesn’t tell us ‘thank you.’”

Mueller and his wife, Brenda, are among a dozen church couples who sign up annually to prepare fifth quarter menus that feed 80–100 students. Pulled pork, Mexican stew and sliced barbecue rank among kids’ favorites.

“I came up with tonight’s concoction earlier today,” Mueller says. “Frito pie seemed too bland, so I decided to serve it on buns. We’ll see what happens. The kids may throw it back at me.”

Misty Martin, a member of Central Texas EC, who graduated in 2001 from Mason High School, moved from Austin back to her

hometown five years ago. “I had no intention of ever living in Mason again, but the people and community drew me back,” she says during halftime at the Puncher Dome. “Fifth quarters are

part of that. I remember how the food was always awesome. We didn’t have a winning team my senior year. We lost bad, but the food at fifth quarters always made up for it.”

Losing wouldn’t be a problem in 2018. The Punchers finished an undefeated season by winning the Class 2A Division 1 state championship in December—the school’s second football title.

Jim Bob Smith, class of ’95 and a CTEC member, fondly recalls attending fifth quarters. “When you live in a small town like Mason, football is the go-to thing,” he says. “Everyone attends Mason football games. Afterward, fifth quarters give kids a place to socialize in a safe environment. My oldest daughter, Steeley, went to fifth quarters.

Now our younger daughter, Sterling, who’s a junior varsity cheerleader, goes.”

Mason’s close-knit atmosphere impresses district superintendent John Schumacher. “There is a culture here where the school and community expect our kids to do their best,” he says. “With that expectation, they each support them in reaching excellence. Everyone is behind each child.”

Head coach Kade Burns, a 1995 Puncher graduate, attended fifth quarters as a teenager. “My late father, Melvin, was head coach here for 11 years, and he had the most wins in our school’s history,” says Burns, who stepped down from coaching in February, when he was named Mason High School’s principal. “After a game, we’d always rush out of the locker room over to here. Fifth quarters are a fantastic way for kids to hang out and share stories. They contribute to the overall culture of our school and give the kids a real sense of community.”

Over in the dessert line, Ethan Powell, a varsity football player, sums up the night while waiting for a bowl of cobbler topped with ice cream. “It’s neat how everyone comes to this church, no matter how the game turned out,” says the high school senior. “They’re always so supportive of us, and they make such great food. That was the first time I ever had a Frito pie hamburger, and I was not disappointed.”

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Blanco.

WEB EXTRAS

► Visit our website to see a video of Mary Hemphill talking about the fifth quarter tradition she helped start in Mason 50 years ago.

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY ERIC W. POHL

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS, WITH STRONG TIES



TO CO-OPS, SUSTAIN THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN RURAL TEXAS

For as long as he can remember, Mitch Creed dreamed of being a firefighter. He grew up in the North Texas town of Lindsay and, after getting married, moved to nearby Muenster. While working for a local machine shop, he realized his dream by joining the Muenster Volunteer Fire Department in 2009.

Creed enrolled in emergency medical technician courses at Grayson College and fire school at the Haz-Co Emergency Response Training Center in Denison, becoming certified as a firefighter and an EMT. When his wife, Kami, became pregnant, Creed sought a job with benefits. He found one at PenTex Energy, an electric cooperative based in Muenster, where he became a lineworker.

Working as a first responder for both the electric co-op and the volunteer fire department, he understands how the organizations work together in the community. “I’m surrounded by guys that I consider family,” says Creed, who moved up through the VFD ranks to become chief. “When you spend eight hours a day hanging out with your crew [at PenTex Energy], you make a tight bond. Then, of course, there’s a whole other group of guys at the fire department that you make tight bonds with.”

For Creed, the success of the co-op and VFD comes down to the people and the camaraderie. “Without bonds like these, both the co-op and fire department wouldn’t be able to function efficiently,” he says.

Across Texas, numerous co-op employees and board members serve their communities as volunteer firefighters. They comprise a diverse body of men and women who share a sentiment common among volunteer firefighters and electric cooperative team members—concern for community. Indeed, Concern for Com-

and my church taught me to put others first. In the rural areas, neighbors rely on neighbors in time of need and are there for each other.” Spiess spent 31 years with the Industry VFD—as a firefighter, an EMT, assistant chief and chief. Eight of his co-workers at San Bernard EC serve as volunteer firefighters.

Many Texas co-ops offer electricity safety training for first responders. Nueces EC, in South Texas, presents a 2.5-hour comprehensive safety class for fire departments. Live demonstrations show emergency personnel how to properly react to situations that involve electricity.

Lynn Simmons, director of communications for South Plains EC, in Lubbock, says several of her colleagues who are also volunteer firefighters exemplify the synergy among cooperatives, VFDs and the community. “South Plains EC appreciates and supports the local VFDs because they help protect our members and the co-op’s infrastructure,” she says. “We have about a half-dozen employees that are part of VFDs. Our employees wearing both a hard hat and fire helmet help us understand the value of cooperation in sustaining the quality of life in our local communities.”

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Small towns and unincorporated areas depend on volunteer fire departments. In rural areas, VFDs provide the only available fire and emergency medical responders. According to the State Firefighters’ & Fire Marshals’ Association of Texas, 77% of fire departments in Texas are composed of all-volunteer crews. That’s higher than the national average of 65%, according to a 2019 report by the National Fire Protection Association.

OTHERS FIRST

munity is one of the seven principles that guide cooperatives, which celebrate National Cooperative Month in October.

Sam Campbell serves as vice president of the board at Hamilton County Electric Cooperative and as secretary-treasurer for the Star Volunteer Fire Department. “Our motto for the Star Volunteer Fire Department is ‘Helping each other is what we do.’ We believe that if you help others when they need help, then they will help you in a time of need,” he says.

Volunteer firefighters with North Hays County Fire and Rescue in Dripping Springs gather for training. The department consists of volunteer and career first responders.

John Spiess, member services supervisor at San Bernard EC, west of Houston, and a former volunteer firefighter, explains, “Growing up in a rural community and being involved in Boy Scouts

As communities depend on volunteer fire departments, the departments themselves depend on their communities. Most VFDs are nonprofits and receive little funding from local taxes, relying instead on individual donors and community fundraising.

Steve Doty, president of the Bleiberville VFD, says his department’s annual fish fry is its only fundraiser. “All of our operating and equipment purchases must be covered by this single event,” Doty says. “Although we provide services to the community at no charge, we are a private, nonprofit corporation and receive no money from the government. Many people in our area are not aware of this and assume that their property taxes cover our expenses.” Bleiberville VFD has about 35 active firefighters, including lineworker Greg Giebel and supply warehouse manager Carl Kokemor, who work for San Bernard EC.



North Hays County firefighters undergo swift-water rescue training on the Comal River in New Braunfels.

VFD to help purchase a tender truck, \$50,000 to the Dale Volunteer Fire Department to buy a cab and chassis for a new brush truck, and \$25,000 to Salem VFD to help with a new storage building.

“We have awarded a lot of grants in support of the many volunteer fire departments and first responders across our 3,800-square-mile service area,” explains Melissa Segrest, manager of marketing and communications for Bluebonnet EC. “They are vital to the communities we serve.”

CoServ, based in Corinth, operates a charitable foundation that provides annual grants to volunteer fire departments. In the past two years, the foundation has awarded more than \$75,000 to four nearby VFDs.

Last year, Medina EC, in South Texas, provided grants to two volunteer fire departments. The Pearsall VFD received \$2,000 to purchase a portable defibrillator, and the Devine Fire and Rescue Department received \$4,900 toward a brush truck.

Campbell, of Hamilton County EC, knows firsthand how beneficial co-ops are to their communities. “As a director, I realize that other communities in our service area have special needs, and our electric co-op is always willing to lend a hand with equipment and employees,” he says. “Through the Hamilton Electric Co-op, our fire department has received grants from LCRA to establish a building to house our trucks, equipment and to provide a community center for our residents.”

Medina EC assists volunteer fire departments that serve its 17-county service area by donating retired co-op vehicles. Since the inception of its vehicle donation program in 2015, Medina EC has donated vehicles to eight local fire departments.

Bandera EC supports more than 18 VFDs in its service territory, including Leakey, Pipe Creek and Medina. The co-op has provided personal protective equipment and satellite phones for first responders.

Two Bandera EC employees are volunteer firefighters. Technician Kenneth Alf has worked for the co-op for 29 years and has been with the Tarpley VFD for 30 years. Donny Rambin, a facilities maintenance technician, has been with the co-op for 13 years and the Medina VFD for 10 years.

“BEC has close ties with VFDs because the safety and well-being of our members is important to us,” says Samantha Gleason, BEC communications design specialist, whose brother and grandfather volunteer with the Pipe Creek VFD. “Volunteer firefighters work hard in rural areas like ours. These volunteers respond to more than just fires. They also respond to car accidents, loose cattle, downed power lines—you name it.

“VFDs provide life- and property-saving services, which align with our cooperative principle, Concern for Community, and our mission to improve the quality of life for our members.”

Writer and photographer **Eric W. Pohl**, a member of Pedernales EC, lives in Dripping Springs.

CO-OPS LENDING A HAND

In addition to local support, rural fire departments receive grants from organizations such as the Texas A&M Forest Service, the Lower Colorado River Authority and electric co-ops.

In 2018, Pedernales EC provided grants to volunteer fire departments in its 24-county service area, including more than \$7,000 to Driftwood, North Hays County and Henly VFDs for training room and helipad upgrades.

“Volunteer fire departments are critical to our members’ safety, especially in the rural communities we serve,” says Caroline Tinsley Porter, community relations coordinator with Pedernales EC. “Without their commitment to serving others, many families and businesses in our service territory would be at elevated risk.”

Bastrop-based Bluebonnet EC partnered with LCRA last year to support fire departments. Grants included \$50,000 to South Lee County

WEB EXTRAS

► Read about how co-op members help fire departments when they round up their bills. Also, see how widespread the co-op connection is to VFDs.

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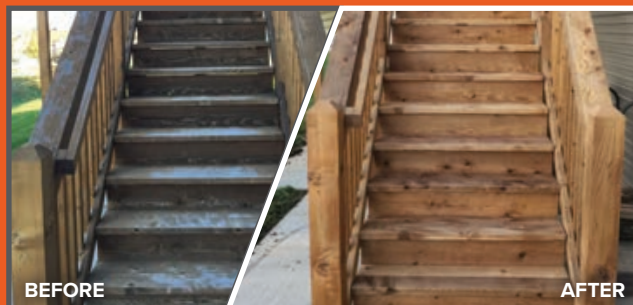


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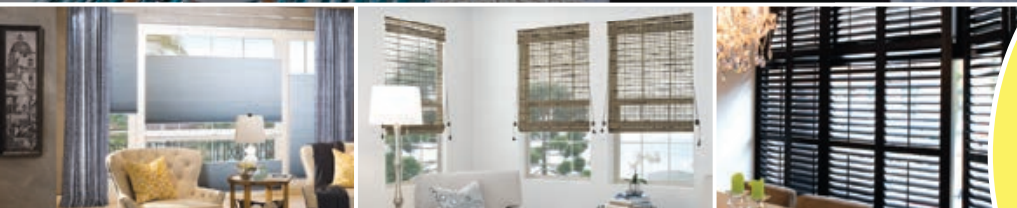
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Preparing for Winter

The main reasons your cold-weather bills may be higher



OLIVIER LE MOAL | ISTOCK.COM

THERE IS NO SINGLE COMPONENT THAT CONTRIBUTES MORE TO increased electric bills than heating in the winter. It accounts for 25% to 30% of a home's annual energy costs and takes place over a three- to four-month period. Weather, inefficiency and home habits determine how big your bill will get. Below are some tips for fighting those factors.

Weather

Keeping your home within a fairly consistent internal temperature range (65–75 degrees) means your heating system has to work harder when the temperature gap between the exterior and interior of your home increases.

If you have your home's thermostat set at 70 degrees and the temperature outside is 50, for example, your system must only adjust for a 20-degree variance. However, when the temperature drops to 30 degrees outside, your system now must compensate for a 40-degree difference.

You can't control the weather, but you can control your home's thermostat setting. The smaller the gap between that setting and the outdoor temperature, the less electricity your heating system will use—and the less you will pay.

Inefficiency

Wasted energy due to a home's inefficiency can contribute to an electric bill being higher than expected. Combined with a

very cold winter, inefficiency is a double whammy for winter electric bills.

The older your home is, the more likely it is to have air leaks and insufficient insulation. Seal up cracks and gaps, and make sure the attic has sufficient insulation.

An older or poorly maintained heating, ventilating and air conditioning system will also elevate energy use. Be sure to perform regular maintenance, including frequently changing filters. And if your system is more than 10 years old, it is probably worth exploring the potential return on your investment in energy savings if you replace the system with a more efficient one.

Like HVAC systems, older appliances are less efficient and more costly to operate, so consider

whether it's time to upgrade. Also, if you keep an extra refrigerator in the garage or elsewhere, consider pulling the plug. Secondary refrigerators are typically older and way less efficient, making the cost of keeping a few beverages cool pretty high.

Home Habits

It may be hard to accept, but higher bills are often due to our own habits. If your thermostat is set to 75 degrees in the winter, consider layering clothing and lowering the setting to achieve comparable comfort. And make sure you lower the thermostat even further at night, when you're snuggled up under the covers, or during the day, when everyone is away from home.

You should also pay attention to the temperature setting on your water heater (120 degrees is optimal for efficiency); your refrigerator should be set to 34–37 degrees and the freezer between zero and 5 degrees. If any of these appliances has been hanging around for more than 10 years, you also should consider replacing them.

Simple things like washing clothes in cold water and only doing full loads will increase efficiency. Full loads for the dishwasher should also be the norm. Turn off lights when you leave a room, and switch out less efficient bulbs for long-lasting, high-efficiency LED bulbs.

Making the adjustments you have control over can go a long way to keeping this winter's electric bills within your budget.



Can You Hear Me Now?

Be proactive in protecting your hearing

OCTOBER ISN'T JUST NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH. IT ALSO MARKS NATIONAL Protect Your Hearing Month. Though perhaps not the most glamorous of topics, noise-induced hearing loss—and its prevention—are important public health concerns, especially since the condition's ill effects are permanent.

As many as 24% of U.S. adults younger than 70 may have hearing loss in one or both ears from exposure to loud noise. Because the damage is often cumulative, the gradual pace of hearing loss can cause it to go unnoticed until symptoms become pronounced. Sounds might become distorted or muffled, or it might be difficult to understand conversations in person or on TV. Here is a primer on the categories of risk to help you gauge the auditory safety of your surroundings.

Sounds of up to 70 decibels are typically considered safe for any duration. A quiet barn, for example, is about 50 decibels, while most conversation occurs at around 60 decibels. A chicken coop is typically around 70.

Prolonged exposure to any noise at or above 85 decibels is where the risk of gradual hearing loss begins. A tractor with an enclosed cab or a crowded school cafeteria are good benchmarks for that level. The noise from a lawn mower is usually around 90 decibels.

No more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure to sounds at or above 100 decibels is recommended. A tractor without a cab falls in this category, as would the noise from a woodshop.

Finally, regular exposure of more than one minute at or above 110 decibels risks permanent hearing loss. A chain saw registers 110 decibels, and a shotgun firing could top 150.

The best way to protect your hearing is to move away from the noise or wear hearing protection, such as earplugs or earmuffs. Remember, the louder a sound is and the longer you listen to it, the more harmful it can be.

Slay Your Home's Energy Vampires

EVEN WHEN YOUR ELECTRONICS ARE turned off, they still use energy if they're plugged in. It's called "vampire energy," and it adds to your bill.

What better time to slay those vampires than Halloween? Here's how:

1. Unplug any appliance or electronic device whenever you're not using it, unless there's some reason to leave it plugged into the wall. It's not practical, for example, to unplug your cable box and wireless router. But you can unplug your TV, stereo, laptop, countertop kitchen appliances and cellphone chargers when they're not in use.

2. Use power strips. Plug the devices that can be turned off into power strips so all you have to do is turn one thing off instead of going around the room switching everything off one at a time.

3. Setting computers and video game consoles to sleep mode in case you forget to unplug them at the end of the day will save some energy.

4. Choose new appliances and electronics that use less standby power than your old ones. Any equipment marked with the Energy Star seal has that feature.



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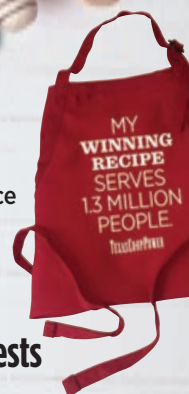
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Guiding Your Garden

Enjoy the late bloomers as you prepare for spring

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

FOOTPATHS WIND THROUGH MY YARD'S garden beds of native plants. Most are staked with metal markers, emblazoned with the plants' common names. Visitors often gasp at the diversity and volume of Texas species that my husband and I have planted since 2007. Their No. 1 question: How often do you water?

Hardly ever, we reply. Except, that is, during the hottest weeks of summer. Then we have to water every few days to help everyone get through the heat.

Trust me, it's our least favorite time of year here in Central Texas. Come July and August, James and I roll out of bed before sunrise. He heads for the front yard. I take the back. For nearly an hour, we drag our hoses from bed to bed, watering the leafy friends that most need moisture to survive.

Perhaps someday we'll consider an irrigation or sprinkler system. For now, we rely on mulch. We get as much as we need, compliments of our electric cooperative. Contractors who trim trees need places to unload chipped-up limbs. When we run low, I call Pedernales Electric Cooperative and ask to be placed on the mulch list. One delivery lasts for more than a year.

Waterwise, we're off the hook once summer ends. September and October bring cooler days and what we call our second spring. Salvias, lantanas, rock roses, firecracker bushes, fall aster, plateau goldeneyes and fragrant mistflowers bloom with abandon, drawing bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Some years in November, an early hard freeze ends the color show. Most plants turn brown and brittle. I don't mind. Though bleak and

brown, the dead foliage and seed heads serve as winter cover and food sources for insects, birds and other wildlife.

On sunny days in January, I pull henbit deadnettle, common chickweed, field madder, dandelions and other introduced weeds, using a large fork to separate roots from dirt. With garden scissors, I trim back dead vines and other thin stems. Hedge shears do nicely for inland sea oats and Gregg's mistflowers, while garden loppers handle the thick branches of Turk's cap, salvias, lantanas, Simpson's rosinweed, Maximilian sunflowers and fragrant mistflowers.

Last spring, I permitted our plateau goldeneyes, blue curls and white avens to grow wherever they wished. Goldeneyes may have crowded out a white gaura. The disappointing loss led to my new garden resolution: I must manage my plant friends with a stronger hand. It's hard, but this year I'm yanking desirable seedlings, repotting when I can for sharing. "I'm sorry," I tell the plants as I pull. "But you can't grow here. We've got to stay within the lines."

As for vegetables, we only plant a cherry tomato or two in the backyard. However, landscape designer Cheryl Beesley's *Landscaping with Edible Plants in Texas: Design and Cultivation* (Texas A&M University Press, 2015) tempts me to plant more. Her thorough manual covers site planning, fencing, soil preparation, fertilization, irrigation and mulches. Eight suggested designs range from formal hedged styles with geometric patterns to kid-friendly hideaways



that encourage exploration and healthy munchies. The low-input plan looks appealing. I'm all for plants that require minimal care and water.

Nearly two-thirds of the book delves into edible trees, shrubs, perennials, herbs and vegetables that Texas landscapes are conducive to. Perhaps we should consider planting carrots as a feathery ground cover. Or maybe I'll attempt pole beans on our chain-link fence again. Beesley offers a primer on each plant, including how to cultivate it and what varieties are available. Appendices address hybrid varieties, pest and disease control, and seed and plant resources.

In *Circle Gardening: Growing Vegetables Outside the Box* (Texas A&M University Press, 2018), plant-soil scientist Kenneth E. Spaeth Jr. digs deep on how to grow vegetables in circles instead of rows. Why? The arrangement "mimics natural plant distribution in the wild," Spaeth writes. It also makes more efficient

use of time, compost, fertilizer and water.

The author goes on to discuss garden pathways, garden ecology, soil textures and health, plant attributes and basic botany, climate considerations, layout, design and management, diseases, pests and weeds. Spaeth devotes half his book to selected vegetable guides on beans, carrots, broccoli, squash, onion, peppers, tomatoes and more. Appendices cover garden and soil scorecards, composting, plant hardiness and freeze zone maps, and calculating fertilizer rates.

Fertilizers? That's something we don't use in our native gardens. Insecticides and pesticides? Rarely. When I'm not looking, James sprays ants marching up our home's exterior walls and wasps' nests located in high-traffic areas. Me? OK, I confess. I squash nonnative milk snails and curse fire ants. Nobody's perfect, right?

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers of Blanco blogs about her gardening adventures at sherylsmithrodgers.blogspot.com.

Ranch Hands on the Wheel

Driving lessons, a bonding experience for many families, start early on the ranch

BY BRENDA KISSKO

LEARNING TO DRIVE IS A RITE OF PASSAGE for most ranch kids. We drive before we're old enough to carry a driver's license, before we can even reach the gas pedal. We learn by trial and error. It's a bonding experience—and free child labor—for many families.

I started driving from my dad's knee when I was about 3, and by second grade, I was steering solo in low gear while he shoveled out cottonseed from the bed of the truck.

I learned on a stick shift, gripping the wheel as my dad yelled from the passenger seat or my mom watched through split fingers over her eyes. Driving a standard transmission is a two-legged job. You need two legs, two hands—"at 10 and 2," as Dad always reminded me—and at least four eyes to watch for a cow or deer that may decide to wander into the road in front of you.

Starting out with a standard is not as easy as an automatic. There's a certain finesse that comes with hours of practice—and a lot of engine stalls.

My mom was definitely the more patient of my parents, but she had such fond memories of her father teaching her and her two sisters how to drive on their ranch that she felt that was how it should be for me and my sister with our dad. My mom was a self-described "Daddy's girl," and every time she heard Alan Jackson's *Drive (For Daddy Gene)* on the radio, her eyes teared up. *Drive* came out around the time my grandpa entered an Alzheimer's care facility. He could no longer remember those summers he let his three girls steer through the pastures for hours, giggling

as he grinned back at them over his horn-rimmed glasses.

So she left the driving lessons to Dad.

I had my first crash at age 8. Dad was trying to get some cattle to go through a gate, but the '76 Chevy my sister and I sat in was too close, so he hollered to me to back it up a bit.

"But I haven't learned how to back up yet," I yelled.

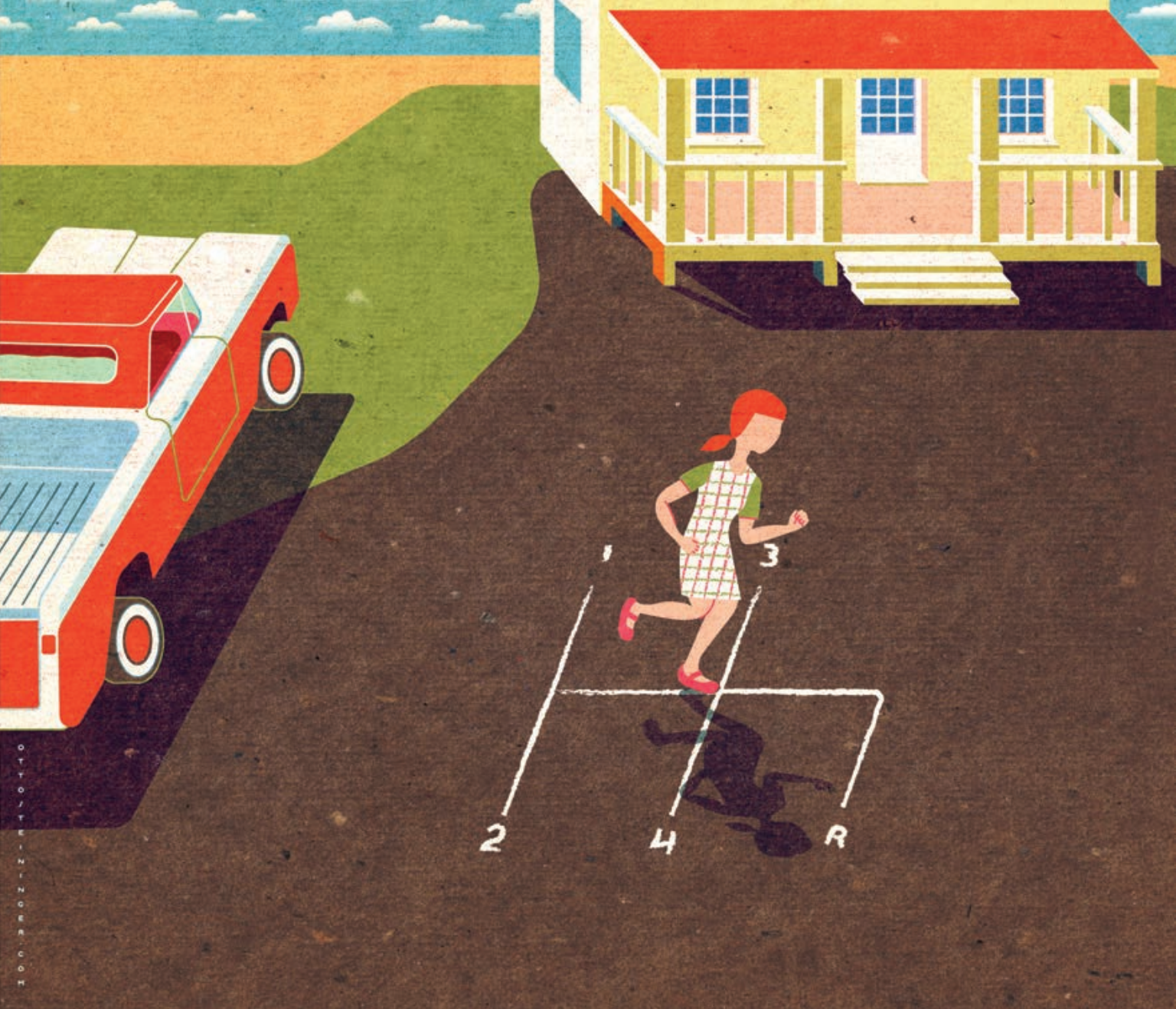
"Just put it in reverse," he shouted with eyes that added "—common sense."

"Ooookay," I thought, "this shouldn't be too hard. Just put it in reverse. Reverse. R. Over to the right and down."

I was so focused on remembering "R" that I forgot to push in the clutch before turning the key. When you forget to push in the clutch, your truck leaps forward really fast. And your life flashes before you. All 8 years. We headed straight for a corner fence post. The cows leapt to get out of our way. My younger sister was crying and yanked at her seat belt to get it buckled before we wrecked. We went through part of a fence and over some mesquite trees before ramming into the post with a loud thud.

That thud felt like my last heartbeat. It was followed by total silence. When I finally mustered up the courage to peer over the steering wheel, thinking since the crash didn't kill me, my father would, I was shocked to see Dad laughing. The trial-and-error method of teaching had backfired.

All the trucks we drove on the ranch had personalities of their own. They had names like Goldie, Crew Cab and Sammy. All of them very old. We needed hardy



vehicles that could climb rocky hills, traverse muddy draws and take being slapped around by thorny mesquites all day. Most didn't have a working air conditioner, so we rolled the windows down to smell the countryside. If you hit the seats too hard, dust clouded around you. Duct tape patched a cracked dashboard, and headliners sagged with age. We had grill guards to protect us from deer, headache racks to hold our gear.

When we got older, my sister and I started taking turns driving home from the mailbox—about 20 minutes down the road—where the bus dropped us off in the afternoons. Our rule still stands today: Shotgun gets the gate!

Dad made me learn how to change a flat and check my oil before I could get my driver's license. To this day, if I get a flat, I

don't need to call a man to come save me. By gosh, I can fix it myself. My husband thinks that's pretty cute, too.

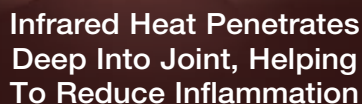
Why was learning how to drive so important to me as a kid? It was the freedom it promised. I knew that if I could drive, I could arrive anywhere. This narrow dusty road connected our ranch house to the highway that led to interstates and metropolises, beaches and mountains. This road led to friends' houses, to all the parties we would go to, to all the dates we would have. These roads led to a world of possibilities.

Now, I choose to drive in the opposite direction down these caliche roads. Back to the ranch. Back to where it all began.

Brenda Kisko is a native Texan who writes about nature, travel and our relationship with land. Visit her online at brendakisko.com.



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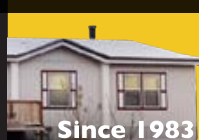


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Charming the Soviets

How piano virtuoso Van Cliburn twice helped thaw Cold War relations

BY DAVID LATIMER

ON MAY 20, 1958, A TICKER-TAPE PARADE through the streets of New York cheered America's hottest celebrity, a 23-year-old Texan named Van Cliburn. The honoree's accomplishment? He had conquered Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, winning first place in the first International Tchaikovsky Competition's piano division in Moscow.

The Soviet Union had intended for the event to demonstrate Russian superiority in music and achieve a propaganda victory.

The story of Cliburn's stunning success in Moscow has been told in two recent books, *Moscow Nights: The Van Cliburn Story* and *When the World Stopped to Listen*. Both books cover the competition, the improbable American victory and the historic Cold War context.

Harvey Lavan Cliburn Jr. was born July 12, 1934, in Shreveport, Louisiana, but his family moved to Kilgore in East Texas when he was 6. His father worked for the Magnolia Oil Company, and his mother, Rildia Bee, was a classically trained pianist. Her musical roots help explain Cliburn's deep affinity for the dramatic Russian style of performance.

Bee studied in New York at the Institute of Musical Art, the predecessor of the Juilliard School, and was a student of Arthur Friedheim, a pianist from St. Petersburg. This musicality was reinforced when Cliburn attended the Juilliard School in 1951, at age 17 and became a student of Rosina Lhévinne, who had graduated from the Moscow Conservatory. When Cliburn auditioned for her already-full class, she sensed in his technique the tradition that was her own.

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website to watch videos of Van Cliburn.



Texan Van Cliburn wowed the audience and judges in Moscow.

Seven years later, by the time of the Tchaikovsky Competition finals in Moscow, Cliburn had won over the crowds. "His admirers in the concert hall and those who heard him on the radio or saw him on television were hooked from the moment the 23-year-old appeared on stage," Stuart Isacoff writes in *When the World Stopped to Listen*. "But it wasn't the music alone that drew them. His Southern charm was as thick as gravy on fresh biscuits as he greeted his new fans with the prim decorousness of a proper East Texas gentleman, unfailingly gracious at every turn."

Following the Tchaikovsky piece, a Rachmaninoff concerto sealed the deal. Showers of flowers fell on the stage, and the audience chanted "Vanya, Vanya"—their name for Cliburn. It's likely that this frenzied adulation made sure the judges' decision in favor of the American would not be overturned by Soviet edict. Premier Nikita Khrushchev endorsed the choice and invited his new friend for return visits.

Cliburn enjoyed a successful concert

and recording career for the next 20 years. He stopped performing in 1977, though he continued to make public appearances and to support the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, held in his adopted hometown of Fort Worth.

He returned to public performance in December 1987, when President Ronald Reagan hosted the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Washington. Cliburn played an after-dinner concert starting with the state anthem of the Soviet Union followed by *The Star-Spangled Banner*. After the scheduled program, Cliburn played *Moscow Nights*, a popular Russian song that had the Russian delegation singing along. At Gorbachev's invitation, Cliburn returned to Russia for a series of concerts and found an enthusiastic welcome.

In 2012, Van Cliburn was diagnosed with bone cancer, and he died February 27, 2013. At his funeral in Fort Worth, the Fort Worth Orchestra and a chorus performed his favorite church hymns and then *Moscow Nights*.

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

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Company Dinner

BECAUSE IT WAS SERVED AT ALMOST every meal, some historians dubbed the 1950s “the meat decade.” After all, the era served up bacon and sausage for breakfast, saw the birth of Whataburger in Texas and celebrated special occasions with dishes like this simple yet sophisticated beef tenderloin served with a dollop of blue cheese butter, published in June 1959. To raise the bar (and add a modern touch or two), enhance the butter with a splash of cognac, roast the meat over sprigs of fresh rosemary or thyme, and garnish with flaky salt. You can also serve the sliced meat with your favorite aioli and roasted new potatoes, or over arugula, with lemon wedges on the side.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Imperial Tenderloin of Beef

- ¼ pound blue cheese, softened
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons cognac or other brandy
- 1 beef tenderloin (4–6 pounds)
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup (½ stick) melted butter
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 4–5 sprigs fresh rosemary (optional)
- Flaky salt, for serving

1. Use a rubber spatula to combine the blue cheese, butter and brandy until smooth. Transfer the mixture to a large square of plastic wrap, roll into a cylinder and chill (this can be done up to two days in advance).

2. Drizzle the tenderloin with enough olive oil to lightly coat, and generously season with salt and pepper. Allow the meat to marinate at room temperature at least

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



Watch Paula make this recipe in a video online.

Retro Recipes

Company Dinner



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

MELISSA TURLEY | BANDERA EC

This dressed-up take on pizza will feed a crowd. "For the prettiest presentation, I like to use half a yellow and half a red bell pepper," says Turley. "Served with a big salad, it's the perfect colorful, festive dinner for company and sure to be a hit with all palates. Just switch up the fillings to suit your tastes."

Supreme Pizza Braids

FILLING

- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- 1 bell pepper, halved, seeded and thinly sliced
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons dried basil
- 1 cup pizza or spaghetti sauce, divided use
- 12 slices salami
- 10–12 slices cheddar cheese
- 10–12 slices provolone or mozzarella cheese
- 1 can (2.25 ounces) sliced black olives
- Parmesan cheese to taste

DOUGH

- 5 cups flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt or garlic salt
- 2 cups hot water (120–130 degrees)
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 egg

1. FILLING: In a medium skillet over medium heat, melt butter, then sauté bell pepper, onion and basil until soft and lightly browned. Set aside.

2. DOUGH: In a stand mixer, combine dry ingredients, then slowly add wet ingredients while mixing on low speed. Continue to mix about 5 minutes, adding flour as necessary to keep bowl clean, but dough should still be soft and slightly sticky. Remove dough and cut in half.

3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. On a greased or parchment-lined cookie sheet, spread out half of dough to form a large rectangle, about 10 by 14 inches.

4. Spread ½ cup of sauce down center third of dough. Spread half of pepper and onion mix down center on top of sauce. Layer salami slices over peppers and onions. Layer cheese slices, alternating flavors, down center of salami. Sprinkle with half the olives. Sprinkle generously with Parmesan.

5. Cut 6–8 slits diagonally down each outer third of dough. Alternating sides, lift, twist, cross and pinch dough, forming a long, twisted braid shape that encloses all the filling.

6. Repeat steps 4–5 for the other half of dough, creating a second braid on a second pan.

7. Bake about 15–20 minutes, or until puffy and lightly browned.

► Serves 18–20.



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\$100 Recipe Contest

March's recipe contest topic is **Crawfish, Oysters, Crab and More**. March is prime time for Texas seafood, before Gulf waters warm up. Send us your favorite ways to prepare and serve our coastal bounty. The deadline is **October 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

30 minutes (or up to 1 hour). Meanwhile, combine the garlic and melted butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, just until the butter begins to sizzle. Remove from heat, stir in Worcestershire sauce and allow the mixture to cool at least 5 minutes.

3. Heat oven to 450 degrees. Place the tenderloin on a rack fitted into a roasting pan, tucking the rosemary sprigs under the meat, and brush the entire surface of the tenderloin with the butter-garlic mixture. Roast 45–60 minutes, basting the meat with garlic butter every 15–20 minutes, until a meat thermometer registers 145 degrees. Allow the meat to rest 10 minutes before slicing. Serve warm tenderloin slices drizzled with pan juices, if desired, and topped with a dollop of blue cheese butter (it should melt into the meat) and a sprinkle of flaky salt.

► Serves 6–8.

Shrimp BBQ

DARLYNDA CANALES | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

Perfect for a casual dinner, this messy favorite is meant for dipping bread and using your fingers. "My daughter Marlyss had just seen the movie *Forrest Gump* and asked me how Bubba would be able to make barbecued shrimp," Canales says. "Now we had made shrimp numerous ways, but never had I tried to make Shrimp BBQ. But I love a good challenge! This recipe is the one we came up with that we liked the best."

SAUCE

- 1 jalapeño pepper
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon cumin

SHRIMP

- 8 small frozen cobs of corn
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter
- 1 cup chopped onion



- 1 bottle (12 ounces) beer
- 2 pounds uncooked medium shell-on shrimp, deveined

1. SAUCE: Roast the jalapeño over an open flame 2 minutes, then set aside.

2. In a saucepan, melt butter, then add brown sugar. Bring butter-sugar mixture to a low boil.

3. Meanwhile, in a blender, place the roasted jalapeño (destemmed), tomato sauce, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, salt, cayenne pepper, garlic, onion and cumin. Blend ingredients until smooth. Add this to the butter-sugar mixture in the saucepan. Simmer about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

4. SHRIMP: Cook corn according to package directions. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt butter in a 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Add onion, stir to coat, and return to oven until onion is soft, about 5 minutes.

5. Remove dish from oven and carefully add beer, sauce, shrimp and corn. Stir together until all the shrimp and corn

cobs are coated with the sauce.

6. Return dish to oven and bake until shrimp are pink, 20–25 minutes, stirring halfway through cooking time. Serve with toasted baguettes and coleslaw. ▶ Serves 8.

COOK'S TIP To catch any spills, set the 13-by-9-inch dish on a larger rimmed baking sheet before adding all the liquids, then put both pans in the oven together.

Blue Cheese Salad Delight

PATRICK SPAGON | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

A big, tasty salad with lots of toppings is sometimes just the thing to make dinner special.

- 4 strips bacon
- 10–12 romaine lettuce leaves, washed
- 4 medium tomatoes
- 2–3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 12 pitted black olives, halved
- 3 tablespoons grated mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup blue cheese dressing

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup crumbled blue cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cups garlic croutons
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

1. Cook bacon until crisp. Crumble and set aside.

2. Tear lettuce leaves into bite-size pieces and arrange in a large, shallow salad bowl. Cut tomatoes into bite-size wedges and arrange on top of lettuce. Drizzle olive oil over tomatoes. Add salt and pepper, preferably freshly ground.

3. Arrange olives in a circle near edge of bowl. Sprinkle mozzarella over top. Pour blue cheese dressing over all. Sprinkle blue cheese bits over dressing.

4. Add croutons and crumbled bacon evenly over top of salad. Finish with a sprinkle of chopped fresh chives. Serve immediately. ▶ Serves 4–6.

WEB EXTRAS

▶ Read these recipes on our website to see the original Imperial Tenderloin of Beef recipe from June 1959.



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

▼ **DENNIS DURKEE**, Victoria EC: A chain of volunteers pass recycled oyster shells into the bay water at Goose Island State Park, near Rockport, to restore fragile oyster reefs.



▲ **DENISE SELLERS**, Pedernales EC: Volunteers read with students at Lago Vista Elementary School.



▲ **HEIDI FRAZIER**, Bluebonnet EC: As a Girl Scout troop leader for more than 15 years, Frazier has assisted Scouts with a number of community service activities. This year, her high school-age troop donated and installed a flagpole at the Caldwell Girl Scout House.

▼ **JESUS ROJAS**, Nueces EC: "Cooking for the Lenten season at our church."



▲ **MADELAINE PACK**, Tri-County EC: Pack and Melony Block serve dessert at the Tri-County EC Annual Meeting.

UPCOMING CONTESTS

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MARCH FIRST RIDE	DUE NOVEMBER 10
APRIL SUNSETS	DUE DECEMBER 10

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October 8

Lewisville [8, 15, 22, 29] Rocktober Concert Series, (972) 219-3401, visitlewisville.com

10

Driftwood Friends Foundation BBQ Fundraiser, (512) 592-1345, thefriendsfoundation.org

New Braunfels Bacon Brothers: The Shaky Ground Tour, (830) 606-1281, gruenehall.com

11

Fredericksburg [11-13] Texas Mesquite Arts Festival, (830) 997-8515, texasmesquiteartfestivals.com

12

Lago Vista St. Mary's Oktoberfest, (512) 267-2644, stmaryoktoberfest.org

Midland Patsy's Breast Cancer Cook-Off, (432) 312-5944, patsyscookoff.com

Rusk Fair on the Square, (903) 683-4242, ruskchamber.com

October 12
Midland
Patsy's Breast
Cancer Cook-Off



13

Pipe Creek PCVFD Annual BBQ and Raffle, (830) 535-4511, pipecreekvolfire.org

18

Canton [18-19] Texas Star Quilters Guild Annual Quilt Show, (903) 896-7100, texasstarquilters.wixsite.com/tsqg



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Jasper Fall Butterfly Festival, (409) 384-2762, jaspercoc.org

Taylor Bluebonnet Horse Expo, 1-888-542-5163, bluebonnethorseexpo.com

Waco Oakwood Cemetery's Walking Tales, (254) 717-1763, wacoheartoftexas.com

20

Brenham Butcher's Ball, 1-800-778-3196, butchersball.com

Huntsville St. Thomas Church Fall Festival, (936) 295-8159, saintthomashuntsville.org/bazaar

Smithville St. Paul's Catholic Church Bazaar, (512) 921-0751, stpaulsmithville.org

24

Wylie Boo on Ballard & Night of Wonder, (972) 516-6016, wylietexas.gov

Groves [24-27] Pecan Festival, (409) 962-3631, grovescofc.com

25

Grapeland [25-27] Lone Star Blues and Heritage Festival, (936) 687-2594, lonestarbluesfest.com

26

Athens Tomato Town: Henderson County Master Gardeners, (903) 675-6130, txmng.org/hendersonmng

Granbury Bow Wow Trick or Treat, (817) 964-0333



October 19
Jasper
Fall Butterfly Festival

Point Venture Holiday Bazaar, (281) 799-0114, facebook.com/pvannualartsbazaar

Waxahachie Texas Country Reporter Festival, (469) 309-4045, texascountryreporter.com/festival

November

1

Oakville Dobie Dichos: Campfires, Chili con Carne and the Words of J. Frank Dobie, (361) 319-3067, dobiedichos.com

2

Jacksonville Cherokee Craft & Trade Fair, (903) 268-1598, kimfelt94@icloud.com

Pearland Pearland Opry on the Square, (281) 997-5970, visitpearland.com

Pipe Creek Castle Lake Ranch VFD Annual Turkey Shoot, (830) 535-6611, banderacowboycapital.com

Submit Your Event!

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Team Spirit

Football field in San Saba, built over a cemetery, has a lively history

EVERY SPORTS FAN WITNESSES MOMENTS of inexplicable athleticism or a notable lack thereof: A baseball player misses an easy grounder; a basketball player hits a last-second jumper with eyes closed; or a football player running for a game-winning touchdown trips in the open field. When such things happen on San Saba's football field, the locals don't ask why because they know the reason: spirits!

I visited Rogan Field on a cold February day, when the wet chill seemed to penetrate directly to my bones. My first impression was that this field looked like a normal high school football field: 120 yards long, goal posts at each end and a scoreboard painted in Armadillo purple and gold. But what I couldn't see, and what makes Rogan Field eerily different, were the legends buried 6 feet below the turf. This field was built on top of a pioneer cemetery.

The tale begins in 1934, when San Saba's high school football team played on the infield of a horse track north of town. The team desperately needed a field closer to campus, and the coaches found the perfect lot adjacent to the Methodist church. The only problem was that this lot was already occupied, and the inhabitants would not move. Since 1858, the property had been an early settler cemetery, but after years of neglect, it was overgrown and weedy. This wouldn't have been a problem, except that when the Rogan family donated the land, they stipulated that it be maintained.

Even so, the team seized the opportunity. The Rogan family gifted the land



Make no bones about it: Rogan Field was haunted when Chet visited.

approached, with numerous bodies still unclaimed, the players simply moved the remaining tombstones and left the bodies to become the team's first season ticket holders.

Since that 1935 football season, San Saba has enjoyed an otherworldly home-field advantage that gives new meaning to the term "school spirit." Lucky for the Armadillos, the resident spirits seem to like their new placement and regularly perform strange feats in favor of the home team. Opposing players drop passes or trip for no apparent reason, leading fans to conclude that the spirits must be reaching up from the grave.

The Armadillos have used this legend to wage psychological warfare against opponents. Brad McCoy (father of former Longhorns quarterback Colt McCoy), who coached at San Saba 1989–1994, even placed a sign saying "Welcome to the Graveyard" near the visiting team's locker room. No team has been more cursed than

to the school, calling on all folks to come and claim the remains of their loved ones. As the season

the Goldthwaite Eagles, who won two state championships in the 1990s yet lost four consecutive times at Rogan Field.

Knowing the field's history, I expected to see an apparition in full uniform floating above the turf or a sign touting the field's ghostly origin. Sadly, I saw the stadium has been completely wiped clean of any reference to the graveyard. The current coaches seem more focused on winning games the traditional way than relying on help from the beyond.

But regardless of whether the team will acknowledge their presence, I'm sure that when the game is on the line, everyone on the home sideline is hoping the spirits will rise up once more and pull out another mysterious feat to help the Armadillos. For many Texans, high school football has always been a life-or-death matter. But perhaps the folks in San Saba have figured out that sometimes it can be both life *and* death.

Chet Garner shares his Texplorations as the host of *The Daytripper* on PBS.

WEB EXTRAS ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of his visit to San Saba High School's Rogan Field.

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Add Internet!
Blazing-Fast Internet
~~\$59⁹⁹~~
month for Internet

\$39⁹⁹
month for Internet

It's All Included!

- ✓ Includes 190 Channels with Locals
- ✓ Includes Hopper Smart HD DVR
- ✓ Includes HD Programming
- ✓ Includes One TV, Add More for \$5
- ✓ Includes Voice Remote

Requires internet connected Hopper.



Plus More!

FREE Premium Channels After 3 mos. you will be billed \$30/mo unless you call to cancel.

NETFLIX

– Fully Integrated –
Just Change The Channel
And Watch!
Netflix subscription required.

- Speeds from 25Mbps-1 Gbps
- No Matter Where You Live
- Now with Unlimited Data!

Save up to \$20/month!*

*\$ off discount offers vary by service address. Go to godish.com/internet to verify your discount. TV service not required for Internet.

\$200
Visa® Prepaid Card

**Get TV.
Get \$100.
Add Internet.
Get \$200.**

1234 5678 9012 3456

4000

Gift Card

Courtesy of GoDISH.com.

EXPIRES

END

Valid only in U.S.

01/25



Must mention offer code Card200 when you subscribe to both TV and Internet services.

1-866-290-7151

Mon-Fri: 7am-10pm • Sat: 7am-9pm • Sun: 10am-7pm Central Time

godish.com/pricelock



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*Prices include Hopper Duo for qualifying customers. Hopper, Hopper w/Sling or Hopper 3 \$5/mo. more. Upfront fees may apply based on credit qualification. Fees apply for additional TVs: Hopper \$15/mo., Joey \$5/mo., Super Joey \$10/mo. All offers require credit qualification, 2-year commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay. Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Qualification: Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 11/13/19. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$200, remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$59.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$69.99 for AT120+, \$79.99 for AT200, \$89.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, STARZ, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call to cancel. Requires credit qualification, 2-year commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay. Hopper upgrade fee may apply. Gift and Pre-paid Cards: Courtesy of GoDISH.com for credit-qualified customers. Customers who do not qualify may be eligible for a secondary gift offer. Cards are issued by Citibank, N.A. pursuant to a license from Visa® U.S.A. Inc. and managed by Citi Prepaid Services. Cards will not have cash access and can be used everywhere Visa® debit cards are accepted. Cards expire 6 months from date issued. Mail-in redemption form is required within 60 days of qualified activation to receive gift. Customer account must be current and in good standing at the time of redemption. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of gift. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. SHOWTIME is a registered trademark of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS Company. STARZ and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. Indiana C.P.D. Reg. No. - 19-08615 © 2019 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$39.99 price refers to 25Mbps plan. Restrictions apply. 25 Mbps internet service available nationwide, but may become temporarily unavailable to certain addresses based on local beam capacity. Availability is subject to change without notice. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately. Call for details.