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JANUARY 2011

ALL EYES ON POTATOES

HALLS OF FAME

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

EMERGENCY CALL

Texas' Rural Vet Shortage





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January 2011

VOLUME 68 NUMBER 7



FEATURES

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By Wes Ferguson and Camille Wheeler
Photos by Woody Welch

There are multiple reasons for a critical shortage of rural veterinarians in Texas. It's a problem leaving farmers and ranchers in some remote areas with no licensed veterinarian to call for help.

14 Lone Stars? Hardly

By Mark Miller and Charles Boisseau

From bowlers to fiddlers to cow-girls, there's room for Texans of all talents in eclectic halls of fame.

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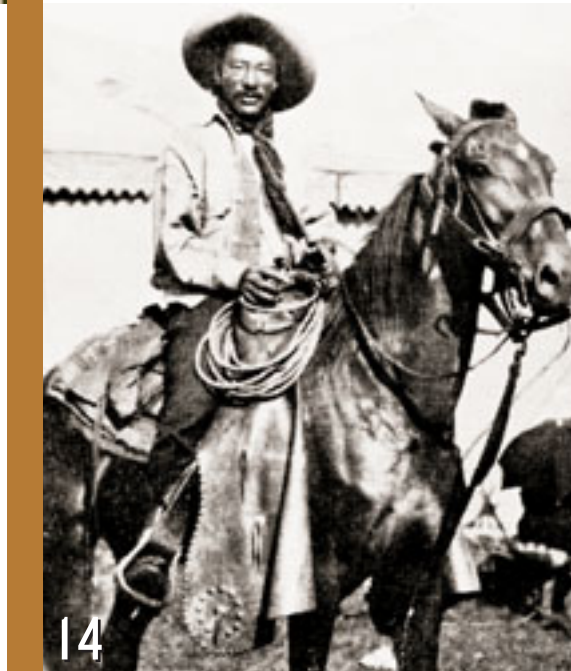
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TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Texas Co-op Power is published by your electric cooperative to enhance the quality of life of its member-customers in an educational and entertaining format.

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letters

JOYS OF SERVICE

I enjoyed reading Kaye Northcott's "Feeding the Hungry in Texas" feature in the November 2010 issue. In the fight to end hunger, a lesson in humility teaches us many things, including that we are all part of a larger community and need to work together for the good of the whole. Humility tells us to look outward rather than just inward at ourselves as it reminds us that we are not the only ones who count.

When we all go one step further in helping provide a hand up instead of just a hand-out, we can find ourselves happy and experiencing real joy in our service to community. Whether it's through the collection plate on Sunday, rounding up your electric bill with a few pennies for Operation Roundup (a community service program through which electric cooperatives give money to local charities), or delivering a few groceries at a local food drive this holiday season, you can make a differ-

POWER TALK

ence and set a great example for your kids, your neighbors and your friends.

JEFF MURSKI

*Immediate past president
Brazos Valley Food Bank
Bryan Texas Utilities*

READ MORE LETTERS

See "Letters to the Editor" in January's Table of Contents at www.TexasCoopPower.com

RAIL REVERIES

In October 2009, my husband and I also rode the Amtrak rails ("Still Riding the Rails," October 2010). Our trip consisted of six segments over a course of two weeks. We started our journey on the Sunset Limited from San Antonio to Los Angeles, then to Flagstaff, Arizona, and back to Los

Angeles on the Southwest Chief, and on to Seattle, Washington. After spending a few days with a friend in Washington, we returned to Los Angeles and finished our journey back to San Antonio once again on the Sunset Limited. We both enjoyed our trip but, unlike the description in Eileen Mattei's story, we didn't think to get a sleeper. We were stiff and sore from so much riding in the coach seats, but we really had fun. We are planning another train trip, but this time we will get a sleeper!

NELDA HOTCHKISS

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative

I truly enjoyed your wonderful feature article on the legendary Sunset Limited. I am a lifelong rail fan and was a frequent passenger on the Sunset Limited from Houston

to Alpine as a student at Sul Ross State University. Riding the rails is a superb substitute for the stress and discomfort of flying and is often less expensive. I am a former flight attendant, but given the present state of air travel, I now hate flying!

If Amtrak would only reinstate its former segment from New Orleans to Jacksonville, Florida, I would be as happy as a lark. The eastbound section was "temporarily put on hold" in August 2005 after Hurricane Katrina. Prior to 2005, Amtrak was the only true transcontinental passenger train in American history. My son and grandchildren live in Jacksonville, and I would love to travel there on Amtrak to visit. I know my grandchildren would be delighted also to come and visit Grandma by train.

MARIQUITA HOLLIDAY

Pedernales Electric Cooperative

BAND BENEFITS LINGER

The article on high school bands ("Marching to Different Drummers," October 2010) reminded me of the fun and camaraderie I had in band for five years. When I was a senior in 1960, the multiple-award-winning Lufkin High School band was invited to perform at halftime in the annual Cotton Bowl football classic. We were in Dallas for four days continuing our practice of a walking stick figure and performing with several other Texas bands. Also, we marched every year in the Houston livestock rodeo parade, sometimes in frigid weather. Discipline, teamwork and love of music are still useful to me today.

DONNA LEMKE BENNETT

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative

We want to hear from our readers. Submit letters online at www.TexasCoopPower.com, e-mail us at letters@TexasCoopPower.com, or mail to Editor, Texas Co-op Power, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please include the name of your town and electric co-op. Letters may be edited for clarity and length and are printed as space allows.



COW-TOWING

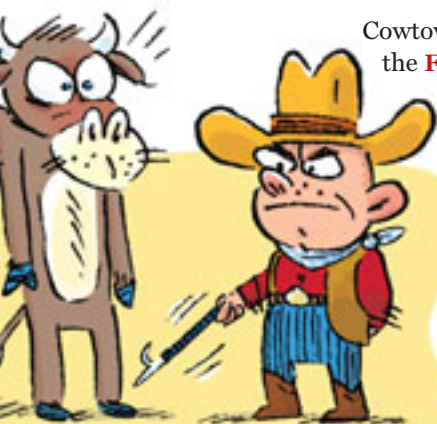
It was fun to see my family name in the "Texas Tongue Twisters" story (November 2010). My father's family is from Tow, Texas, and yes, it rhymes with cow, not crow. I spent a lot of frustrating years as a child being teased about my name being Tow, as in toe, and I'd always defend it as

Tow, as in now or cow. The small community was named after my ancestors who helped settle the area many years before Lake Buchanan made the area a hot fishing and vacation spot. There were Indians and wild animals back in those days, but my family of pioneers, along with others, made it their home, and it still bears the name in the Texas Hill Country: TOW, and that rhymes with COW. Thanks for getting it right.

Nancy Tow Falster, Wood County Electric Cooperative

Editor's note: "Texas Tongue Twisters" did not appear in all editions of Texas Co-op Power. To read the story and see a related video, go to www.TexasCoopPower.com.

H A P P E N I N G S



Cowtown. Yeah, it's a big town. But there's something about the **FORT WORTH STOCK SHOW AND RODEO**—scheduled for January 14–February 5—that makes us want to pull on our boots and connect with our rural roots.

The refrain “My grandparents brought my mom and dad, and years later my parents brought me ...” is a common thread knitting the experiences of city and country folk as they make the annual pilgrimage to the nation's oldest stock show, which dates to 1896. While some kids are busy learning the difference between a lamb and a goat, other nervous youngsters are making their first appearance in the show ring, wielding show sticks as they correct their calves' stances for the judge.

But the educational opportunities extend outside the show barn: A new art contest for youth offers \$20,000 in cash prizes and scholarships. And elsewhere in the Fort Worth Cultural District, your stock show grounds admission ticket earns free entrance to the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, the Cattle Raisers Museum and the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame.

For more information, visit www.fwssr.com or call (817) 877-2400.

CO-OP PEOPLE

*Bellville Man King
of Own Castle (Literally)*



Bellville's Mike Newman stands in front of his castle.

Years ago, Mike Newman, owner of a bakery in downtown Bellville, bought some land just outside of town (where he is a member of San Bernard Electric Cooperative). Then he did something that made his parents think he was crazy: He spent eight years erecting a 3,400-square-foot castle—and then he moved in. He surrounded the turreted structure with a moat and installed a working drawbridge and a catapult that can shoot big rocks about 100 yards. Naturally, we had a few questions. Here are excerpts from our interview.

Q. What possessed you to build a castle?

A. I bought 20 acres of land in the country and was going to put a house on it. But nothing really struck my fancy. There's nothing wrong with a trailer house, but I didn't want to put a

trailer house out here. The idea of the castle came up one afternoon when I was talking with a friend. That afternoon I drew some designs on a napkin. I played with that idea for several years (before the first concrete slab was poured in 1998). It's worked out well. It's a way for me to promote my bakery and the Bellville area.

Q. Can people come and visit?

A. The castle is open for tours of groups of 10 or more. The typical cost is \$12.50 per person, which includes lunch and a tour.

Q. What kind of groups visit?

A. People come in by the busload. It's popular for weddings. And, this summer I started working with Murder by Chocolate, a Houston group that stages [dinner theater] murder mysteries on weekends. There's a mock siege of the castle, and someone is kidnapped and murdered. People can participate and get into costumes and follow scripts. And I serve a medieval feast with a whole roasted pig and all the fixings.

For more information, go to <http://newmanscastle.com> or call (979) 865-9804.

Have a suggestion for a future Co-op People? Contact editor@texascoopower.com.

WHO KNEW?

Among the firearms on display at the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco is the “gun that won the West”: several versions of the Colt revolver. Patented by Connecticut inventor Samuel Colt in 1836, the five-shooter was the first practical revolving-cylinder handgun, but Colt's business failed until he made improvements suggested by Samuel H. Walker, a former Texas Ranger.



Texas Co-op Power (USPS 540-560) is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical Postage Paid at Austin, TX and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 74 electric cooperatives. Texas Co-op Power's website is www.TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or e-mail carolm@TexasCoopPower.com.

Subscription price is \$3.84 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each.

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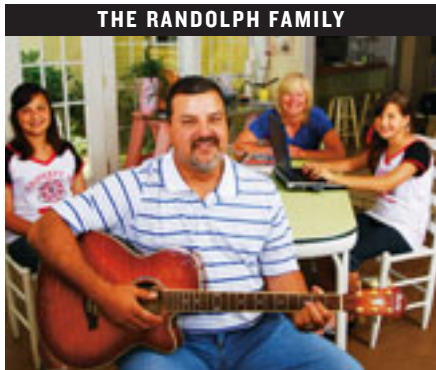
POWER CONNECTIONS

Home Energy Makeover Winners See Big Savings

It worked! The results are in for the five families who won energy-efficiency upgrades in the 2010 Texas Co-op Power Home Energy Makeover contest.

We compared each family's electricity costs for July 2009 and July 2010 and for August 2009 and August 2010, before and after the makeovers. In each case, there were significant savings.

THE RANDOLPH FAMILY



John and Cindy Randolph, members of Wood County Electric Cooperative, and their family saw a total cost reduction of \$163 for the combined periods.



Randolph House

July 2009 \$345	August 2009 \$272
July 2010 \$251	August 2010 \$203

Total combined savings **\$163**

THE JIMENEZ FAMILY



Richard and Nancie Jimenez, members of Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative, and their family saved a total of \$139—even though August 2010 was exceptionally hot and dry.



Jimenez House

July 2009 \$285	August 2009 \$259
July 2010 \$162	August 2010 \$243

Total combined savings **\$139**

THE STARK FAMILY



Jacque and Aubrey Stark, members of South Plains Electric Cooperative, saved \$153.



Stark House

July 2009 \$306	August 2009 \$292
July 2010 \$199	August 2010 \$246

Total combined savings **\$153**

THE DONALDSON FAMILY



Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative members B.J. and Linda Donaldson saw their electric bills decrease by \$306.



Donaldson House

July 2009 \$417	August 2009 \$398
July 2010 \$263	August 2010 \$246

Total combined savings **\$306**

THE ZUNIGA FAMILY



Our August magazine cover family—Brandon and Dawn Zuniga and their children, members of Grayson-Collin Electric Cooperative—saw savings of \$253, with temperatures relatively constant for the compared periods.



Zuniga House

July 2009 \$481	August 2009 \$384
July 2010 \$320	August 2010 \$292

Total combined savings **\$253**



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EMERGENCY CALL

Texas Grappling with Critical Shortage of Rural Veterinarians

BY WES FERGUSON AND

CAMILLE WHEELER

PHOTOS BY WOODY WELCH

Texas' rural veterinarians wear their work.

In Pecos, fresh green cow manure, a souvenir from a local dairy farm, clumps on Dr. Ronald Box's baseball cap above his ear.

In Gustine, Dr. Lisa Willis is elbow deep inside a heifer's rump, probing the animal's uterus to find out if she's pregnant. Willis' arm-length latex glove catches most of the heifer's digested waste. The rest, as Willis slowly extracts her arm, goes on the clinic's floor.

In Junction, Dr. Larry Brooks is docking the tails of two lambs. Blood pools on Brooks' cowboy boots, spatters the stripes of his dress shirt and smears with the mud on his jeans. He doesn't notice his soiled clothes until an assistant points out his appearance.

Brooks shrugs. "This is pretty common," he says. "It's what you get."

Make no mistake: The life of a rural veterinarian is romantic in notion only. For the men and women providing medical care for our state's large animals and livestock, there's no such thing as a uniform (clean or not) day.

Judging by their thinning ranks, the mental, emotional, physical and financial toll of their jobs is wearing them out—and scaring off many younger veterinarians who prefer the more comfortable and predictable lifestyle of the city. Typically saddled with enormous debt upon college graduation, often more than \$100,000, they're heading to urban areas for higher salaries and better hours.

But debt is just one culprit for a critical shortage of rural veterinarians nationwide that's being acutely felt in Texas. As the state's population shifts



There's no such thing as a uniform (clean or not) day for rural veterinarians such as Dr. Ronald Box, left, who discusses cow pregnancy tests with rancher Andy Stubbs near Alpine.

from predominately rural to mostly urban, so does its veterinarian work force. The result is what some are calling a misallocation of country doctors that's leaving farmers and ranchers in remote parts of the Panhandle, South Texas and West Texas with no licensed veterinarian to call for help.

For those Texans who have no idea what rural veterinarians do, here's a look at three who do it all. They deal with death, disease, injury and emergencies every day. But trade careers? No way, they say.

'It's me by myself. Like, completely by myself.'

Veterinarian: Dr. Lisa Willis, 39

Location: Gustine

College: Graduated from Auburn

University's College of Veterinary Medicine in 2005 with about \$130,000 debt (\$123,000 of that amount remains).

The sorrel filly hit the dirt with a thud.

As sedatives raced through the horse's body, Willis ran her hand over the animal's right hind leg. There was no doubt it was injured. The quarter horse, a 2-year-old named Tonto, had probably gotten tangled up kicking in her pen.

The real question was whether Tonto could be saved.

Digital X-rays revealed a fractured hock and, worse, a dislocated patella. Willis knelt beside the unconscious horse in owner David Pattillo's indoor corral, near Hamilton, and tried to coax the injured bone into place. She mas-

saged the thigh, then mashed it. Nothing.

She shoved with all her weight as her intern, Stetson Posas, a senior at Tarleton State University who's interested in pursuing a veterinary pharmaceutical sales career, held Tonto's leg by the hoof and tugged. Nothing. She tried again with the leg bent at different angles. Still nothing. Willis and Posas traded places, but the patella wouldn't budge.

Willis informed Tonto's owner of his options: costly, invasive surgery that might leave the horse crippled, or euthanasia.

"It's up to you," she told him.

It was a Monday in August. At the time, Willis had been in business for about a year and a half. Before opening her own practice in Gustine, near Comanche and northwest of Killeen—and buying on credit a \$32,000 hydraulic chute, a \$50,000 portable X-ray device and other equipment—she had worked in an Austin-area animal hospital. In Gustine, she's found a niche treating buckin' bulls and regularly does equine work.

Someday, Willis said, she hopes to bring a partner onboard to open the first state-of-the-art referral hospital in her area. When she does, neighboring ranchers and horse owners will no longer have to drive an hour and a half for major surgeries on their livestock.

"Right now," though, she said, "it's me by myself. Like, completely by myself. I'm the receptionist and the technician and all that."

As Tonto lay in the dirt, Willis waited for Pattillo's answer. He sighed and smiled ruefully. Of the 40 or so horses in his herd, Tonto wasn't one of the gentle ones.

"Well," he said, "just put her to sleep."

Willis retrieved a large, pink syringe containing a lethal dose of barbiturates from her pickup. The procedure was over in minutes.

"Did she go?" Pattillo asked.

"Yeah," Willis whispered. "Yeah, she died."

The veterinarian caressed Tonto's sleek, golden-brown neck. "Sorry, mama."

'I do everything except snakes.'

Veterinarian: Dr. Larry Brooks, 60

Location: Junction

College: Graduated from the Texas



TOP: A rural veterinarian's day is never done: As sunlight fades, a rancher hauls livestock to Dr. Lisa Willis' clinic in Gustine. **BOTTOM:** Willis routinely subdues sullen bulls who'd rather kick her than receive medical treatment. This one, however, seems to be taking eye surgery, and the follow-up care, in stride.



Ear tagging. Autopsies. Dr. Larry Brooks does it all. How long can the 60-year-old keep this up? 'Till I fall over dead,' he says. 'I love it.'

A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences in 1975 with about \$4,000 debt (college debt has been erased).

One time, Brooks was trying to castrate an unbroken stud horse when it kicked his thumb right off. "Got that put back on," he says.

Another time, an angry bull knocked him over, crushing two vertebrae in his neck. And he suffered a herniated back disk when a 350-pound buck sheep hit

Brooks wants his clients to be rattled about the realities of rural life.



him from behind. He's 60 years old. How long can he keep this up?

"Till I fall over dead," he says. "I love it."

Brooks has silver-gray hair, and tobacco flecks his teeth. He's the sole veterinarian in Junction and Kimble counties, on the western edge of the Hill Country. Money's been tight, and the past 3½ decades haven't been kind to his body. But Brooks isn't complaining. Other vets have had it tougher.

"Most of us have been beat up one way or the other—run over, kicked, stomped, drug—if we do it long enough," he says.

It's a Wednesday in August at Brooks' clinic. It's not even lunch time, and already he's frozen a cancerous skin tumor on a cow's eyelid with liquid nitrogen; prescribed medicine and advice when a deer breeder burst through the door and hollered, "I got a pen full of yearlings sick"; shown a woman how to set a trap for feral cats; and docked the tails of two lambs being groomed for livestock shows. When he showed up to work this morning, a bag

of sheep feces was hanging from the doorknob. No note. No label. In his lab, he diluted the dung with water to check for parasites, which resembled tiny footballs under his microscope.

"I do everything except snakes," he says. "Worked on giraffes last week. If you drag it in here or call me, I'll come try."

Now he's fielding a call from a rancher. "So you've got a dead calf," Brooks barks into the phone.

A steer has died mysteriously in the night, and the rancher wants to know if Brooks should perform an autopsy.

"It's up to you," the vet says. "Not gonna bring your calf back."

An hour later, Brooks is standing inside a little corral made of hewn cedar posts. His afternoon autopsy is lying in the hot summer sun. Brooks and the rancher chain the carcass to a tractor and drag it to a patch of shade. Brooks slices open the calf and digs out the heart. He examines it and turns to the rancher: "You're vaccinating."

"When?" the rancher asks.

"As soon as you can."

The heart is covered in speckles of

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blood, indicating the calf died from blackleg. The disease spreads through feed or forage that has been tainted by a bacterium called *Clostridium chauvoei*. Without vaccinations, more calves could be dead within days.

"Let's do it quick," the rancher tells Brooks.

"Yeah, let's do it tomorrow," the veterinarian replies. "We'll run 'em through as fast as we can shoot 'em."

'A veterinarian never knows where he's going or what he has to do.'

Veterinarian: Dr. Ronald Box, 57

Location: Pecos

College: *Graduated from Texas A&M in 1985 with \$5,000 debt (college debt has been erased).*

From his clinic in this dusty West Texas town, Box roams a stretch of desert as vast as some states. He leaves for work most mornings when the stars are shining.

He might drive 70 miles south to the Davis Mountains, 100 miles northeast to Midland, 150 miles west to Fort Hancock, or 140 miles north to Lovington, New Mexico.

He only schedules one ranch call a day: "A veterinarian never knows where he's going or what he has to do."

Half of his job is the treatment of beef and dairy cattle. One early morning in August, he tested more than 200 head of dairy cattle for bovine tuberculosis. He was back at his clinic by 8 a.m.

Later that morning, Box was spaying a dog when a young cowboy in a ten-gallon hat walked in unannounced through the back door. The cowboy said his horse had been snakebitten, but another couple was already waiting for Box to finish the spay so he could examine their dehydrated mare. The cowboy said he'd come back in a little while.

Then a different client, from Fort Stockton, 50 miles to the southeast, rolled in with a dead calf in the back of his pickup.

"We told him to be here after lunch," said Box, exasperated, as he stitched up the dog's belly.

"Well," his assistant replied, "he's early."

Box figures he could earn the same pay if he shuttered his clinic to eliminate overhead costs and just worked at dairies and ranches. But he can't do

that. Too many people—and their animals—rely on him.

Box started an intravenous drip in the mare's neck. He took a quick look at the stillborn calf, its hair wet and matted, and gave the same diagnosis he'd given over the phone: It was the mother's first pregnancy, and the calf got stuck in the birth canal. It happens. When the cowboy came back, Box determined the horse wasn't snakebitten. It was a puncture wound on the horse's knee. The prescription: penicillin and frequent flushing.

Box works 60 to 70 hours a week, but today was extra busy because one of his assistants was on vacation, and he lost his son to high school football practice. Nathan, a junior at Pecos High School, hopes to attend veterinary school at Texas A&M and follow his father into the practice.

"He could possibly be through in 10 years," Box said. "I'd be 68 years old. If I can last that long, I can give it to him."

Wes Ferguson is a freelance writer based in Northeast Texas. Camille Wheeler is associate editor for Texas Co-op Power magazine.

BY THE NUMBERS

Statistics help tell the story of a national shortage of rural veterinarians:

- **Debt:** According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), veterinary college graduates nationwide left school in 2009 carrying an average of almost \$130,000 in debt; 89 percent of all graduates that year left veterinary school with debt. In spring 2010, almost 37 percent of the 125-member graduating class at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences left school more than \$100,000 in debt.

- **Texas' veterinarian distribution:** According to the AVMA (see map at www.avma.org/fsvm/maps/tx.asp), remote areas in the Panhandle, South Texas and West Texas show the most severe shortages of veterinarians. Statistics indicate that almost one-quarter of Texas' counties, 62, have no food-animal veterinarians. And 63 Texas counties have just one veterinarian available to treat farm and ranch animals.

- **Gender about-face:** In 2010, in a statistic reflecting a national trend, women composed

about three-quarters of Texas A&M's graduating veterinarian class. Some studies indicate that female veterinarians, for many reasons, might not be as inclined to enter large-animal practice.

- **Tuition:** A report from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board states that Texas A&M University "has kept its tuition as affordable as possible, over \$7,000 less than the average veterinary school tuition in the 10 most populous states." Indeed, tuition for Texas A&M veterinary students has not increased over the past 10 years, although fees have increased dramatically during that same time frame. Generally speaking, it's expensive to attend any veterinary college because schools must stay on the cutting-edge of technology and healthcare by providing the best possible faculty members and medical equipment.

Potential Help on the Way

- **Texas A&M University request:** Texas A&M is requesting \$115 million in tuition revenue bonds from the Texas Legislature for a new classroom facility that would increase class

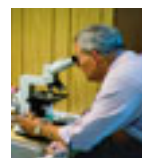
sizes by more than 13 percent, potentially sending more veterinarians into rural areas. The request includes money for a small-animal teaching hospital expansion.

• Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment

Program: This federal program will pay up to \$25,000 per year toward educational debt relief for eligible veterinarians who agree to serve in designated shortage areas for at least three years (Texas has eight designated areas). Two U.S. senators, from South Dakota and Idaho, have introduced legislation seeking tax-exempt status for the program. Currently, 39 percent of the funding is returned to the U.S. Treasury as a federal tax. Removing the tax, legislators say, would provide more money for rural veterinarians and allow for awarded funding to one additional veterinarian per every three now eligible.

On TexasCoopPower.com

- A Texas Veterinary Medical Association task force tackles the rural veterinarian shortage from all angles.
- Slideshow and video: rural veterinarians in action



Dr. Brooks

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LONE STARS? HARDLY



From bowlers to fiddlers, there's room for Texans of all talents in eclectic halls of fame.

BY MARK MILLER AND CHARLES BOISSEAU

Perhaps you dominate at dominoes. Maybe you bowl over the competition, or you're a hotshot skeet shooter, a cowgirl extraordinaire, a marvelous musician or a heavily decorated Texas Ranger.

That's all good, but these days, there's only one way to know if you've truly climbed to the top of your field, just one sure way to know if you have really made it: You're enshrined in a hall of fame.

The term "hall of fame" once only conjured images of famous sports stars, such as baseball great Ted Williams at Cooperstown, or music legend Hank Williams in Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

But the phrase "hall of famer" these days could just as likely refer to a massage therapist in Austin or the owner of a fence company in Plano. Didn't get the news? Sean Eubanks, owner of Texas State Fence Co. and a karate fighter and teacher, was inducted into the Irvine, California-based Martial Arts Hall of Fame in 2008. Oh, and this just in: David Lauterstein, co-founder of Austin's Lauterstein-Conway Massage Therapy School, will be enshrined into the Massage Therapy Hall of Fame (a "virtual" hall with no permanent home) at an induction ceremony in North Carolina in July.

Suffice to say: There are now halls for the famous—and not so famous—in just about every field you can imagine. Recent issues of The University of Texas at Austin's alumni magazine

highlight inductees to the Texas Film Hall of Fame, the Texas Soccer Hall of Fame, the Texas Sports Hall of Fame, the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, the Texas Track & Field Coaches Association Hall of Fame, the American Combat Airman Hall of Fame at the CAF Airpower Museum on the Midland International Airport grounds, and the Bay City/Hilliard Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame.

All the halls can trace their roots to the nation's first hall of fame, fittingly called the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, which was founded in 1900 in Bronx, New York. It showcases busts of 98 statesmen, artists and inventors, such as Thomas Jefferson, Walt Whitman and Thomas Edison. But the trend didn't really take off until 1939 with the opening of the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, which has become the model and remains one of the nation's most visited halls of fame.

Erecting halls of fame seems our newest pastime, America's way to honor our most distinguished. "British monarchs bestow knighthoods. France immortalizes its most illustrious citizens in the Panthéon," wrote the authors of *The Volvo Guide to Halls of Fame* (Living Planet Press, 1995). "We North Americans honor our heroes in Halls of Fame."

An Internet search turns up dozens of halls of fame in every corner of Texas: from Alice (Tejano music), to Amarillo (quarter horses and their jockeys, train-

ers, breeders and owners), to Waco (Texas Rangers and sports stars).

While some halls include impressive museums, engaging interactive displays and extensive archives that will keep history and nostalgia buffs happily occupied for hours, others are thinly supported and may occupy just a small room—or less. For example, just about everything in the Texas State Domino Championship Hall of Fame, which honors some 20 inductees, fits into a single display case at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Hallettsville. (It shares the space with the Fiddlers' Frolics Hall of Fame, which honors almost 50 fantastic fiddlers.)

Alas, we didn't have the time to visit all of the halls of fame, so we settled for dropping by a few notable ones. Here's a sampling of what we found.

Bowled Over in Arlington

Arlington became the kingpin of bowling in January 2010 when the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame was relocated here from St. Louis, Missouri. The facility, recognizable by a nearly 23-foot-high white metal pin sculpture, is part of the International Bowling Campus across from Six Flags Over Texas.

Visitors learn about more than 500 of the sport's biggest names, as well as some odd-ball facts. For example, did you know that before ancient Egyptians began writing in hieroglyphics or building pyramids they went bowling? Yep. A strangely lifelike mummy explains how bowling dates back to ancient Egypt where players used rocks and stones to represent balls and pins.





Texas is no underachiever when it comes to establishing shrines to its stars, mostly from sports, entertainment and the American West.



Most have regular hours and exhibits; check www.TexasCoopPower.com for an expanded list and websites.



**American Quarter Horse
Hall of Fame & Museum**
AMARILLO



**National Cowgirl Museum
and Hall of Fame**
FORT WORTH



**National Multicultural
Western Heritage Museum
and Hall of Fame**
FORT WORTH



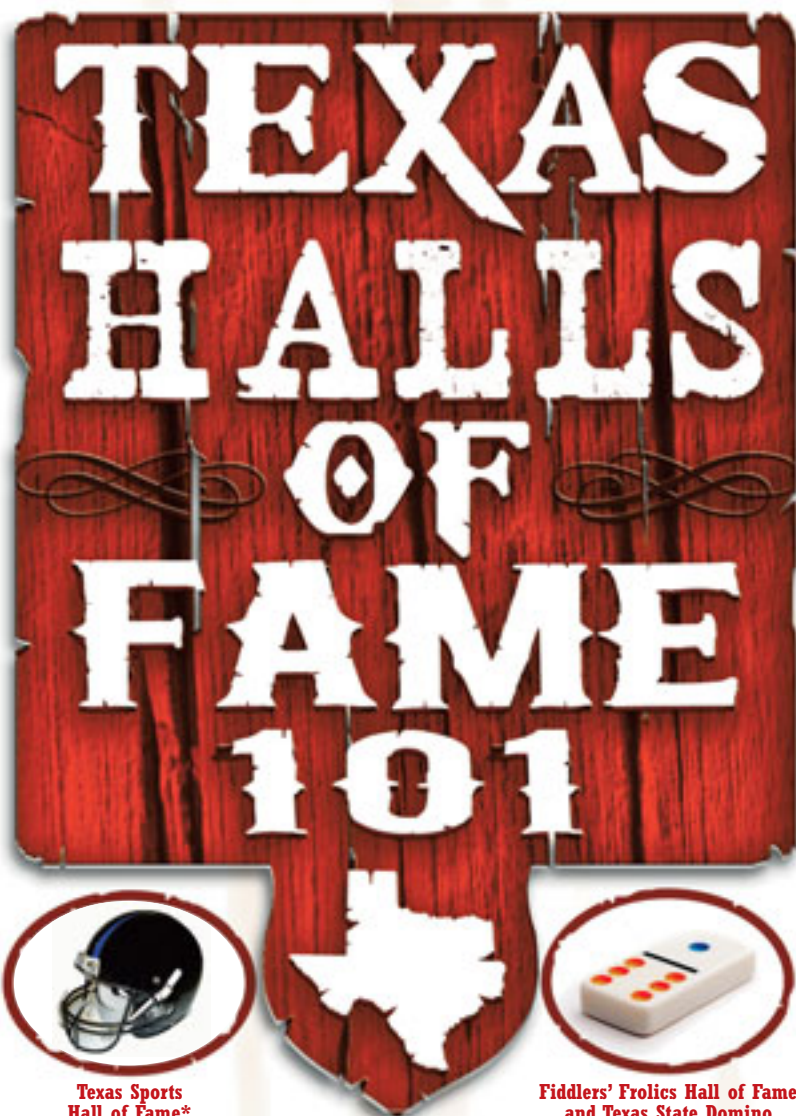
**Texas Cowboy
Hall of Fame**
FORT WORTH



**Texas Rodeo Cowboy
Hall of Fame**
FORT WORTH



**National College Baseball
Hall of Fame and Museum**
LUBBOCK



**Texas
Trail of Fame**
FORT WORTH



**Petroleum
Hall of Fame**
MIDLAND



**International Bowling
Museum and Hall of Fame**
ARLINGTON



**National Skeet Shooting
Museum & Hall of Fame**
SAN ANTONIO



**Cockroach
Hall of Fame Museum**
PLANO



**Texas Ranger
Hall of Fame and Museum**
WACO



**Texas Sports
Hall of Fame***
WACO



**Fiddlers' Frolics Hall of Fame
and Texas State Domino
Championship Hall of Fame**
HALLETTSVILLE



**Texas Country Music
Hall of Fame**
CARTHAGE



**Tejano Roots
Hall of Fame and Museum**
ALICE



**Texas Business
Hall of Fame**
HOUSTON



**Texas Baseball
Hall of Fame**
HOUSTON



**Hospitality Industry
Hall of Honor**
HOUSTON



**Texas Aviation
Hall of Fame**
GALVESTON

* The Texas High School Football Hall of Fame and the Texas Tennis Museum and Hall of Fame are both located inside the Texas Sports Hall.





You might be bowled over by a diorama about pin boys, youths who manually set pins before automatic pinsetters took over in the early 1950s. Walk up to one pin boy, named Ronnie, and he magically comes to life to tell you his story. There's also an interactive coaching exhibit where people can view and answer quizzes on computer terminals.

Cowtown Cowgirls

The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame has come a long way since it was founded in the basement of a library in Hereford in 1975. Today, the shrine occupies a sparkling facility in Fort Worth's cultural district.

Honorees are selected in five categories: artists-writers, rodeo performers-champions, ranchers (stewards of the land and livestock), pioneers-trailblazers and entertainers. Alternating exhibits give visitors peeks at the fascinating lives of the nearly 200 honorees. One of last year's biggest draws was an exhibit about Georgia O'Keeffe, whose art was inspired by Western landscapes.

Among other inductees: Country Music Hall of Famer Patsy Cline, Little House on the Prairie author Laura Ingalls Wilder, former Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O'Connor (who grew up on an Arizona cattle ranch), and Phoebe Ann Moses Butler, better known as sharpshooter Annie Oakley, the only female performer in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

Forgotten Cowboys

In a working-class Fort Worth neighborhood is the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum and Hall of Fame, which tells the story of the forgotten cowboys of Hispanic, Native American, African American and European American descent. Until October 2009, it was known as the National Cowboys of Color Museum and Hall of Fame.

TOP TO BOTTOM: Visitors are sure to find something to strike their fancy at the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame in Arlington.

Ride 'em, cowgirl! The bucking-bronc simulator provides perhaps the best seat in the house at the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth.

African-American cowboy Bill Pickett, a rodeo star who invented the technique of bulldogging, was inducted into Fort Worth's National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum and Hall of Fame in 2003.

Fort Worth's Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame honors men and women who have excelled in rodeo and the Western lifestyle. Inductees include cattleman and baseball strikeout king Nolan Ryan, rancher and actor Tommy Lee Jones, and rodeo legend Ty Murray.

Some of the prominent names include country singer Charley Pride; one-time Texas Poet Laureate and multicultural advocate Red Steagall; Herb "The Bronze Buckaroo" Jeffries, a singer in the Duke Ellington Band; and Bill Pickett, known as the father of bulldogging.

You could spend hours viewing the displays, which show how the inductees lived (or live), what they wore (impressive belt buckles) and sat on (check out the saddles of world calf roping champion Fred Whitfield and rodeo legend Charles Sampson).

Fort Worth Stockyards

If you haven't had your fill of Western shrines, mosey over to the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District where you will find more: the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame, the Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame and what local boosters have named the Texas Trail of Fame, which is Texas' country cousin to the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

But instead of Barbra Streisand and Cary Grant, you'll find sidewalks paying tribute (with bronze stars set in concrete) to Western greats such as Clayton Moore (The Lone Ranger), Jay Silverheels (Tonto), and entertainers Ernest Tubb and Will Rogers.

Keep Plano Weird: the Cockroach Hall of Fame

You'll find what is arguably Texas' weirdest hall of fame in a suburban strip mall between a computer repair shop and a women's lingerie store. Right here, at 2231-B W. 15th St. west of downtown Plano, is the Cockroach Hall of Fame Museum, home of such stars as Elvis Roachly, Liberoachi, Ross Peroach and Marilyn Monroach.

Michael Bohdan, a pest control expert and business promoter, founded his roach gallery in 1988 after traveling the country to locate contestants for Combat Roach Control's "best-dressed" cockroach contest.

"Once the promotion was done, they were going to throw them away," Bohdan says. "I said 'you can't do that' so I created the museum."

The cockroach shrine is housed in seven glass display cases in the front of Bohdan's pest control business, The Pest Shop. "I'm a pest control specialist in the morning, and in the afternoon I'm the curator of the museum and hall of fame," says Bohdan, who estimates his museum gets 7,000 visitors a year.

Mark Miller is a freelance writer in Flower Mound and a member of CoServ Electric. Charles Boisseau is a writer living in Austin.





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Rolling Shutters Improve Windows' Efficiency

BY JAMES DULLEY

DEAR JIM: My windows are not the most efficient, but they are still in good condition. To improve efficiency and provide more security and safety from storms, I'm considering installing rolling shutters. What features should I look for? —*Jerri H.*

DEAR JERRI: Having windows that are still in good condition but are not the most energy efficient is common. If good-quality windows were installed within the past decade, they should last a very long time with little maintenance. This is particularly true for windows with vinyl or thermally broken aluminum frames. Windows with pultruded fiberglass may well last a lifetime.

Although rolling window shutters offer many advantages in addition to energy efficiency, there are other lower-cost options to consider. Installing magnetically attached acrylic interior storm windows is a relatively low-cost option to improve efficiency.

Some of the new low-emissivity permanent window films save energy year-round. They are nearly clear, and you can install them yourself. Both of these options also block much of the sun's fading UV (ultraviolet) rays. Installing insulating window shades or curtains is also effective.

Adding rolling shutters on the exterior of your windows improves efficiency and also offers security and storm protection. These shutters are commonly used in coastal hurricane zones.

The actual energy savings from installing rolling shutters depends on the type of window glass you have and, to a lesser extent, the types of slat in

the shutter. If your house has double-pane windows, adding the shutters will about double the insulation value of the windows. With single-pane windows, the efficiency increase will be even greater.

You can get additional energy savings during summer because the rolling shutters also block the direct heat from the sun's rays through the windows. The shutters can be lowered to any position to allow in only as much light (and heat) as you desire. When completely lowered, they block nearly all of the light.



Rolling shutters provide increased security and energy savings.

Rolling shutters are extremely strong and secure because they operate similarly to a rolltop desk. Narrow slats roll up into a box housing above the window. The ends of each slat slide in vertical tracks on each side of the window, making them very secure and relatively airtight when fully closed. The slat itself provides insulation, as does the dead air space created between the shutter and the window glass. In cold climates, this also reduces indoor window condensation problems.

If you want security and privacy but also light and ventilation, slightly raise the rolling shutter. The bottom of the shutter will not rise, but the slats will

separate slightly, exposing the interlocking flanges between them. Many of the shutters are designed with narrow slots in the flanges, which allow some light and fresh air to filter in.

Roll-formed metal, plastic or extruded aluminum are used to make the slats. All are suitable for most areas. The extruded aluminum slats are the strongest and most expensive and are often used on shutters for large windows. The roll-formed metal slats can be filled with foam insulation for higher efficiency and rigidity. Check your local building codes for

required materials and strength.

An important feature to consider is how the rolling shutter is opened and closed—usually with a pull strap, a crank handle or an electric motor. Keep in mind, if your shutters are inconvenient to use, you will not close them as often as you should.

For most small- to average-sized windows, a pull strap is easy to use and inexpensive. Large shutters or ones made from heavy-gauge aluminum may be easier to operate with a hand crank. Electric motor operators are most convenient, but also are more expensive.

If the pull strap, or crank, is indoors, there will have to be a hole in the wall connecting it to the outdoor housing. This will allow a slight amount of air leakage. An electric motor operator will eliminate the need for a hole.

The following companies offer rolling window shutters: **AC Shutters**, 1-800-745-5261, www.acshutters.com; **Roll-A-Way**, 1-866-749-5424, www.roll-a-way.com; **Rollac Shutters**, 1-888-276-5522, www.rollac.com; **Titan Security**, 1-866-691-3667, www.titansecurity.com; and **Wheatbelt**, 1-800-264-5171, www.rollupshutter.com.

© James Dulley

Businesses Can Pad Bottom Line with Energy Efficiency

In all the talk about ways to save energy, sometimes we forget that it's just as important to conserve at work as it is at home. By instituting some energy-saving practices in the workplace, you can help reduce expenses.

Encourage co-workers to:

- Turn off lights when not in the office/restroom/breakroom. Or, with a small investment, install motion-sensitive switches that automatically turn out lights when no one has been in those rooms for a while.

- Enable energy-saver settings on computer monitors, or if not available, turn off monitors when no one is in the office (even for an hour or two). There is software available that can be

ment, look for Energy Star labels—only purchase energy-efficient equipment.

- Buying recycled products and instituting recycling programs at your business decreases energy use on the large scale, so it is the right thing to do even if it doesn't result in direct energy savings for your business. It is an example of "Think globally, act locally."

Maintenance/Building

- Caulk windows and doors where fittings are not snug.

- Install UV protective film on windows where none exists. This film reduces heat gain through the glass.

- Perform routine maintenance of air-conditioning, heating and ventilation systems. When replacing, go with high-efficiency systems.

- Keep temperatures at comfortable, yet reasonable, levels for the season—76 to 78 degrees in summer, and 68 to 70 degrees in winter.

- When possible, allow more daylight into rooms to reduce the need for artificial lighting. Studies have found that workers are more productive with natural lighting.

- When building new facilities, use green design. Consider solar panels and other renewable technologies. Use the new International Energy Conservation Code.

Other

- Plant trees and lighten pavements and roofs to reduce the urban "heat island" effect. Lots of paved, dark, impermeable surfaces raise temperatures and create the need for more artificial cooling.

- Include water conservation in your efforts. Repair leaky sinks, toilets and water fountains. Replace old toilets with the low-flow variety. This saves energy because water pumping is a huge energy drain.



The power button is the key to saving energy.

put on a network to put monitors "to sleep" when not in use.

- Turn off computers, printers, copiers and lights when leaving for the day. Make that task simple by plugging all devices into a power strip and switching it off when work is done.

- Put signs by elevators asking people to walk up one flight or down two.

Purchasing

- When replacing lights, use compact fluorescent bulbs or other high-efficiency models.

- When buying new office equip-

RESOLVE TO STAY SAFE

Most of our lists of New Year's resolutions include some common elements: Spend less, save more, eat less, exercise more, work less and spend more time with family.

This year, consider adding a few things to the list to help keep your family safe.

1. Practice "out with the old, in with the new" with appliances. If an appliance snaps, crackles or pops and shouldn't, toss it out and replace it with a safer, energy-efficient model. Check cords carefully for cracks and nicks. If you find any, it's time to replace that appliance.

2. If you have switchplates or outlets that get warm to the touch with use, or your lights dim when certain appliances come on, it's time to call an electrician. The electrical load of most homes has increased substantially in the past 10 years, but your home's wiring may not be up to the challenge. To keep your loved ones safe, have it checked out and make the necessary improvements and repairs.

3. If you regularly find yourself headed to the breaker box with flashlight in hand to restore power, it's probably time for repairs or an upgrade. Have an electrician do an inspection and make repairs.

4. Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers only help if they work properly. Regularly test and replace the batteries on smoke detectors. Replace or recharge fire extinguishers so they'll be ready in the event of an emergency.

CLEBURNE

All Shook Up

*Elvis sure had us
North Texas boys
rattled, but a fence
kept him away from
our screaming,
blushing girls.*

By Tom Dodge



Texas teenagers were among the first to recognize the supercolossality that was, and is, Elvis Presley. He knew and appreciated it. "Texas put me over the top," he told a reporter once.

But what Elvis didn't know, which was the real beauty of him, was that he was over the top from the first time he dressed the way he wanted, wore his hair the way he wanted, spoke, sang and moved the way he wanted. When his first record producer, Sam Phillips, asked him whom he sounded like, Elvis said, "I just sound like myself." When we, the teenage boys of Johnson County, saw him for the first time, the way he looked and dressed, we realized we had been dressing like Mickey Rooney in the Andy Hardy movies.

Mothers, though, must have seen Elvis as a threat. Reporters called him "Elvis the Pelvis" and so on. Teachers warned us about him, and after the preachers got a load of Elvis, they gave Satan a break for a while. But Elvis was immune to their rejection because his mama loved him. He simply went on being himself until he found regular work at the Louisiana Hayride in Shreveport and began playing small East Texas sites on his nights off.

In Cleburne, Floyd "Buddy" Halyard was the first Elvis imitator I knew, at least one of the first to wear white buck shoes and comb his hair in ducktails. He was the first kid I knew who bought an obscure 45 record on the Sun label called "That's All Right (Mama)" with "Blue Moon of Kentucky" on the flip side. As soon as we heard that sound we knew instantly that, for us, then, all other music was obsolete.

Elvis-itis was epidemic with kids everywhere by then, and when news spread that he would be playing at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas on October 11, 1956, Cleburne girls mailed in their \$1.25 money order for a ticket posthaste. One caller to the Cleburne office of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation program wanted tickets to Elvis' Cotton Bowl show, saying there must be tickets for sale there because "cotton was part of its business."

They were open with their Elvis adoration. Boys also loved him but never admitted it to the girls. Like the adults, we ridiculed the "oily haired truck driver." But secretly, we wanted to look like him and have what he had.

Which might include our girls for an evening, maybe forever.

We had read those newspaper accounts of his shows: "Lewd and dangerous," one report said. So we knew the looming danger as our girlfriends prepared to join the motorcade that would depart on the afternoon of October 11 for the Elvis hysteria at the Cotton Bowl.

In those days, Cleburne's Chaf-In diner had booths along the north side with windows facing West Henderson Street, which becomes U.S. 67 leading to Dallas. We gathered there to watch, maybe get a last look, at our lovelies in hoopskirts, sweaters and bobby sox, radiant with Revlon, passing by in cars driven by desperate mothers bound for "Love Me Tender" land.

We fed our sorrow with cheeseburgers and fed our fears that our girlfriends would be among the ones rumored to follow him after the show. Sometimes, it was wildly speculated, they were never seen or heard from again.

"There's 5,000 girls in his fan club already," somebody said. "Maybe that's the way he gets them, just collects them after the shows."

"He probably keeps them in his hundreds of mansions that he has around the country," someone else said.

Will we ever see them again? This was the unspoken but understood fear.

But they came back, all right, unharmed by the spectacle of rolling hips and quivering lips. "There was a high fence around the stage," one told us, cementing then and there our life-long affection for fences.

Not long after that, Elvis became a soldier at Fort Hood in Killeen. When he was discharged, he went to Hollywood, got married—became a father like the rest of us.

In later years, he came back to Texas, where he had first gone over the top, but it wasn't the same. The Elvis girls were wives and mothers by then with grown-up obligations. The boy that had been lewd, crude and dangerous to know had become respectable. His once raw, simmering wail with its otherworldly echo was now a cool and earthly baritone, crooning out gospel songs. He even wore a girdle so his glittering Liberace-like outfit wouldn't rend asunder.

Today, the Elvis girls have grown grandchildren. But somewhere in their safe suburban houses, there may be a little Elvis shrine, the centerpiece a photo of the young Elvis with the petulant, heartbreaking eyes following them wherever they go in the room.

As for their husbands, Buddy Halyard and the rest of us, we also have a shrine. In a secret corner of our memory, there is a distant image of a cool-cat, ducktailed daddy-o that we probably never were—and couldn't have even dreamed of being had Elvis never existed.

Tom Dodge is an author and frequent contributor to Texas Co-op Power.



ELVIS!!!! Teenage girls scream their adoration of the emerging superstar at a 1956 show in Memphis, Tennessee. That same year, Elvis performed at Dallas' Cotton Bowl—how about that \$1.25 ticket?

Mom's Last Lesson

*Just knowing
about the folder
sustained us
through waves
of grief.*

BY REBA
KOCHERSPERGER

The first time Mom let us know she had planned her own funeral was in the early 1990s. One afternoon in a hasty conversation about some vague future when she might perhaps die, she showed my sister and me the top drawer of a low file cabinet where a folder was stored. The manila file occupied one of the front slots among the records of my parents' 50-plus years of marriage and family: insurance policies for houses and lives, 25 years of tax returns, warranties for appliances replaced decades ago, accounts of paid-up loans to needy grandkids, and, more recently, receipts for Medicare, hospital stays, Daddy's hearing aids, Mom's walker.

Occasionally, she would remind us of the folder, usually after another bout with the congestive heart failure that was beginning to debilitate her. "I've written out every detail," she would say. "You don't have to worry about a single thing. When the time comes, just go to the folder. The power of attorney is there and everything else you'll need—even some programs from friends' services."

My sister and I would nod, glance away and change the subject. No one ever dared to hold or even look at the infamous folder. As long as we didn't touch it, it wasn't real; if it wasn't real, we would surely never need it.

That system saw us through 15 years of hospitals, Mom's increasingly sedentary existence, and her dependence on the pacemaker that would keep her alive until it simply couldn't. Then in 2007, when her surgeon declared her valve repair operation successful and sent us home to rest, we believed him, never expecting his 1:30 a.m. call saying that, indeed, her heart had stopped and couldn't be revived. I called my sister, who with her husband raced across Houston to my house; together we woke Daddy and let him know his wife of 63 years was gone.

Still in complete shock but dressed and packed for a week, we left Houston and drove half an hour before anyone spoke. We stopped for breakfast then headed toward home two hours farther south. In between sobs and questions about how to even start thinking about making arrangements, I remembered the folder.

"What folder?" my brother-in-law asked, and we explained what we would find safely at home.

For the rest of the journey, our mantra was, "When we get there, everything will be in the folder." This promise sustained us—it was incredibly calming to know that Mom had already made all the decisions for us, so we were free to deal with



the grief that alternately numbed and overwhelmed us. Every 10 minutes, one of us would forget and ask, “What hymns should we include?” The strongest of us would repeat, “It’s in the folder.” We must have said it 40 times.

When we got to the file cabinet, I opened the thin file and found a page from a pocket-sized notebook listing who got what jewelry and two photocopied programs from her friends’ recent services. NOTHING ELSE! This had to be the wrong folder. I found another with notes for Daddy’s service and other records—but nothing else for Mom. And she was no longer available to take a phone call and clear up the mystery.

The miracle was that by the time we actually located her meager notes, we were five hours into life without Mom and were composed enough to call the church and funeral home and start the process of burying someone who was still alive in our minds. With no information from her for reference, we gave ourselves over to her longtime minister and the professionals at the funeral home. It was their job to know what to ask, but they also answered our blank stares with kindness and got us through that very long day. For answers, somehow we pieced together old conversations and spied her favorite hymn hanging in the kitchen.

We never found what we had waited for, but just the promise that such a plan existed had helped us face all the decisions. The importance of that manila folder made me realize that we could all remove some of our families’ strain if we record a few of the choices they’ll have to make when we die: Formal funeral service/celebration of life? Burial/cremation? Open/closed? Endless details.

I don’t really have strong feelings about my funeral service, but I’m writing things down anyway. No matter how far I get on the list, at least my family will have somewhere to start. I’ve tossed everything into a folder and told them where to look. After all, this record isn’t for me; it’s Mom’s last lesson and a little comfort I can give my sons at a time they’ll need it most.

Freelance writer Reba Kochersperger lives in Houston.

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Pass the Black-eyed Peas, Please

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

If you're superstitious or Texan (or Southern), the odds are good that black-eyed peas serve as part of your New Year's Day menu every year. If you possess both traits, it's a given that you are among the true believers who eat black-eyed peas on January 1, because doing so is supposed to bring good luck and prosperity the rest of the year.

Popular U.S. folk wisdom holds that the tradition started during the Civil War when Union troops burned Confederate farm fields but considered cowpeas, as they were called, to be livestock feed and left them alone. People in the war-torn South might have starved without the black-eyed peas to sustain them. Ever since, they have been part of the New Year's Day meal for Southern folks as a symbol of gratitude and hope for a happier new year.

Depending on how you feel about black-eyed peas, we have primarily two people to either thank or blame for the popularity they enjoy in Texas and beyond. One is J.B. Henry, an Athens businessman who first decided to grow black-eyed peas on a commercial scale around 1909. In trying to figure out a way to combat the weevils that bedeviled his plants, he dried them in an oven on East Tyler Street in Athens and found that dried peas were easier to ship, which transformed the black-eyed pea into a viable agricultural product.

Athens was soon billed as the Black-Eyed Pea Capital of the World and functioned as such for several decades; peas were grown there, canned there and shipped from there. Even after the commercial production of black-eyed peas in the area declined, the city paid homage to their historical importance with a Black-Eyed Pea Jamboree.

Elmore "Tiger" Torn, the father of actor Rip Torn and founder of the International Black-Eyed Pea Appreciation Society, entered the black-eyed pea picture some time after World War II. He was what was then called a chemurgist, or one who researched industrial applications for organic, raw materials, especially farm products; today he would be called a biochemical engineer. His work took him all over the world, and he said he discovered that serving one kind of black-eyed lentil or another was a good-luck tradition in India and also in Egypt and France. The Babylonian Talmud, written in about the year 500, also instructs Hebrews to eat certain foods for good luck, including the black-eyed pea.

"One explanation is that these lentils are great soil builders," he theorized. "Ask any farmer. You plant black-eyed for a few years, and they restore soil worn out, for instance, by long cotton cultivation. So this business of the legume restoring the soil may have something to do with the superstition that the black-eyes bring good luck for all the year."



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This wasn't exactly a new idea. Another chemurgist, George Washington Carver, touted the black-eyed pea (along with peanuts and sweet potatoes) not only for their soil-amending qualities, but also for their nutritional wallop. The peas are a good source of protein and provide beneficial amounts of calcium, folate, iron, potassium and fiber.

It's been suggested that Tiger Torn created the American "tradition" as a paid public relations man for the Henderson County Chamber of Commerce, suggesting that he had an ulterior motive for his enthusiasm for black-eyed peas. At any rate, Torn was for many years the black-eyed pea's biggest booster and ambassador. He even attempted (unsuccessfully) to expand the black-eyed pea into Vietnam in the 1960s, during the height of the war as part of an agricultural project, and also offered to supply U.S. troops with black-eyed peas for their New Year's Day meals. (The Army politely declined because, as U.S. Gen. William Westmoreland said, there was no significant troop demand for that particular food.)

Today, Torn's Black-Eyed Pea Association and the Black-Eyed Pea Jamboree in Athens are gone but not forgotten. A black-eyed pea cook-off is part of the annual Fall Festival at the East Texas Arboretum & Botanical Society, which has revealed the black-eyed pea's versatility in ways that might have perplexed even J.B. Henry and Tiger Torn. There have been black-eyed pea enchiladas, cowpea quiche, and black-eyed pea cheesecake along with Jell-O and adult beverages such as a "peatini" and black-eyed pea wine. A marinated version of the peas is called Texas Caviar.

That kind of culinary creativity on the part of people doesn't leave a lot of black-eyed peas for the cows and hogs, not that they get black-eyed peas anymore, but it makes for a fine tradition. It really doesn't matter if the tradition is 60 years old or a thousand, as long as it's tasty.

*Clay Coppedge is a regular contributor to Footnotes in Texas History. His book, *Hill Country Chronicles*, recently was published by The History Press.*

All Eyes on Potatoes

BY KEVIN HARGIS Meat and potatoes: The phrase brings to mind food that is simple and hearty and perhaps somewhat boring.

But the starchy tubers, which originated in South America, are anything but boring. There are many varieties of potatoes from which to choose, each with its own texture and flavor. And preparing a potato dish doesn't mean just boiling and mashing them up (although that can be delicious).

A couple of recent cookbooks feature recipes in which potatoes provide the foundation for tasty and interesting dishes.

One, *Recipes from the Root Cellar* (Storey Publishing, 2010) devotes many pages to recipes starring spuds. It also delivers this interesting fact: The typical American consumes more than 140 pounds of potatoes a year. That's a lot of taters.

And those spuds are nutritious. A potato with the skin is rich in vitamin C, potassium and fiber.

Here is a Root Cellar recipe that uses three kinds of root vegetables to create an appetizing, simple-to-prepare dish that could serve as an entrée or vegetable course.

POTATO-CARROT TART

- 1 large russet potato (about 12 ounces), sliced very thinly, and peeled if desired
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, halved then sliced thinly
- 1 carrot, peeled and shredded
- ½ cup (2 ounces) shredded Swiss, Gruyère or Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease 10-inch tart pan or pie pan. Combine potato, butter, thyme, mustard, salt and pepper in bowl. Toss gently to coat. Press into

bottom and up sides of tart pan to form shell. Bake 20 minutes. As tart shell bakes, heat oil in medium skillet over medium heat. Add onion and carrot and sauté until onion is limp and well colored, about 10 minutes. When tart shell comes out of oven, top with onion mixture, spreading evenly. Sprinkle with cheese. Return to oven and bake until cheese melts and turns golden, about 10 to 15 minutes. Allow to cool at least 5 minutes before slicing into wedges and serving. Can also be served at room temperature.

Servings: 4. Serving size: 1 wedge. Per serving: 247 calories, 6 g protein, 15.6 g fat, 20.5 g carbohydrates, 2.2 g dietary fiber, 339 mg sodium, 2.6 g sugars, 27 mg cholesterol

COOK'S TIP: Slice potatoes thinly and evenly for best results.

Another recently published cookbook features more than 900 pages of recipes that will appeal to scores of different tastes, all of them with a decidedly Southern drawl. *Southern Living's 1001 Ways To Cook Southern* (Oxmoor House, 2010) isn't cornpone and cracklins, but features a sophisticated Southern fare. Nevertheless, there are a few twists on old favorites, including this cornbread recipe that adds in the flavor of sweet potatoes.

SWEET POTATO CORNBREAD

- 2 cups self-rising cornmeal mix
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1½ cups milk
- 1 cup mashed, cooked sweet potato
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 1 large egg, beaten

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Combine all ingredients, whisking together just until dry ingredients are moistened. Spoon batter into greased 8-inch cast-iron skillet or baking pan. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 1 piece. Per serving: 244 calories, 5.4 g protein, 8.1 g fat, 37.3 g carbohydrates, 3.2 g dietary fiber, 419 mg sodium, 11.1 g sugars, 46 mg cholesterol

COOK'S TIP: Be sure to use self-rising cornmeal mix or your bread will be flat and hard.



Potato-Carrot Tart

RECIPE ROUNDUP

1st

JOANNE KNIGHT, *Karnes and Medina electric cooperatives*

Prize-winning recipe: **Loaded Baked Sweet Mashed Potatoes**

We call them spuds and taters. The French (*la pomme de terre*), Dutch (*aardappel*) and Swiss-German (*erdapfel*) words translate to “apples of the earth.”

Whatever they’re termed, potatoes are a universal and standard part of many diets. They can be baked, boiled, fried and made into soup. There are hundreds of varieties (although we see only a handful of those in our supermarkets). And potatoes appear in hundreds of dishes.

The potato chefs among you sent in many fine examples of your favorites. The combination of sweet and white potatoes in our winning dish couldn’t be beat.

LOADED BAKED SWEET MASHED POTATOES

- 1 3/4 pounds russet potatoes
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) sweet potatoes in syrup, drained, crushed, and mashed
- 1 package (4 ounces) low-fat cream cheese, softened
- 3 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup light sour cream
- 1/3 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Boil russet potatoes with garlic until tender; drain. Add remaining ingredients. Beat with mixer until blended. Pour into greased 9-inch square baking dish. Bake, uncovered, for 20 minutes.

Servings: 10. Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 168 calories, 5.1 g protein, 4 g fat, 28.1 g carbohydrates, 2.8 g dietary fiber, 458 mg sodium, 0.8 g sugars, 12 mg cholesterol

SEAFOOD TWICE-BAKED POTATOES

- 4 large baking potatoes
- Vegetable oil
- Coarse sea salt
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 can (12.5 ounces) cream of mushroom or cream of shrimp soup, undiluted
- 1 can (4.5 ounces) cocktail shrimp or thawed package (5 ounces) small, frozen shrimp
- 1 package frozen scallops and/or crabmeat (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Shredded Cheddar cheese to taste

Wash potatoes, rub skins with oil, roll in coarse sea salt, wrap in foil and bake at 425 degrees for 1 hour. Allow to cool,

then cut potatoes in half lengthwise, carefully scoop out insides and mash pulp in small bowl. Combine pulp with butter, cream cheese, soup and desired seafood—shrimp, scallops and/or crab—salt and pepper. Stuff shells with this mixture. Top with cheese. Place on a cookie sheet and bake 8 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted.

Servings: 8. Serving size: 1/2 potato. Per serving (made with shrimp only): 245 calories, 9.3 g protein, 13.7 g fat, 18.4 g carbohydrates, 1.4 g dietary fiber, 574 mg sodium, 1.6 g sugars, 82 mg cholesterol

TERRY WEAVER

Southwest Texas Electric Cooperative

POTATO NACHO FRITATA

- 2 large Yukon Gold potatoes
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 1/2 pound pork breakfast sausage
- 8 large eggs, beaten
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup diced tomatoes with green chilies
- 1 1/4 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon course ground black pepper
- 3 pickled jalapeño peppers, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Scrub potatoes, but don’t peel. Cut into quarter-inch-thick slices. Heat oil in medium-size nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Place half of the potato slices into the hot oil and fry until golden brown on one side, then flip and brown on other side. Remove with a slotted spoon onto paper towels to drain. Add the rest of potatoes and repeat process. In small skillet over medium heat, sauté the sausage until no longer pink. Crumble it as it cooks. Drain on paper towels. Break eggs into a medium-size bowl. Whisk until well blended; add green onions, tomatoes, half a cup of cheese, salt, pepper and cooked sausage. Stir well and pour into a buttered 8-inch square glass baking dish. Bake for about 10 minutes or until the eggs are loosely set. Remove from oven and place the potato slices, one at a time, over the top of egg mixture. Top with remaining cheese and sprinkle with jalapeños. Return to oven and cook for 5 to 7 minutes or until cheese is bubbly and eggs have set. Serve immediately.

Servings: 4. Serving size: 1/4 of dish. Per serving: 602 calories, 34.1 g protein, 33.3 g fat, 34.3 g carbohydrates, 3.1 g dietary fiber, 1,296 mg sodium, 3.1 g sugars, 500 mg cholesterol

ANN BAKER

Bowie-Cass Electric Cooperative

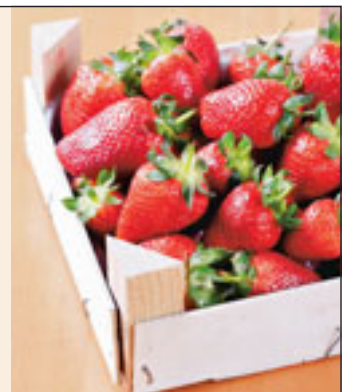


\$100 RECIPE CONTEST

May’s recipe contest topic is **Spring Fruit**. When spring is fully mature, so are luscious seasonal fruits like peaches and berries. How do you like them? The deadline is January 10.

Submit recipes online at www.TexasCoopPower.com under the Submit and Share tab. Or mail them to Home Cooking, 1122 Colorado, 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You may also e-mail them to recipes@TexasCoopPower.com or fax them to (512) 763-3408. Please include your name, address and phone number, as well as the name of your electric co-op. Also, let us know where you found the recipe or whether it’s one you developed yourself. The top winner will receive \$100, a copy of 60 Years of Home Cooking and a Texas-shaped trivet. Runners-up will also receive a prize.

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DEAR DORRIS: I am a vibrant woman of 55 years old. I feel 25 years old still, but I have lately developed these wrinkles and dark

circles under my eyes along with puffy bags, that make me look older than I am.

I have tried many products that the Celebrities endorse, but they didn't work. Is there any product out there that can really get rid of these wrinkles, bags and dark circles?

Dark and Baggy, Tyler, TX

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fibromyalgia | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High Blood Pressure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obesity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neuropathy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint Pain | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restless Legs Syndrome | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Edema | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diabetes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Constipation | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arthritis |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Sclerosis |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knee Pain |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spinal Stenosis |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lymphedema |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stress |



81 year old with pacemaker using the Exerciser 2000 Elite®

You owe it to yourself to own the **Exerciser 2000 Elite®**

Receive some of the benefits of aerobic exercise without stress or impact on the joints!

The Exerciser 2000 Elite® is a passive exercise machine capable of providing positive results. Studies indicate passive exercise can be extremely beneficial, especially to those who are unable to do aerobic type exercise. Exercising on a regular basis is essential to our overall well-being.

The Exerciser 2000 Elite® is superior to similar models on the market and will easily accommodate individuals weighing up to 425 pounds. It does not take up a great deal of space and is low maintenance. Operating the machine is simple...just lie down and relax. The machine creates a gentle, right to left movement, which cycles up through the whole body.

People of all ages, with a wide variety of health issues, are using the Exerciser 2000 Elite® on a daily basis and receiving wonderful results.

The Exerciser 2000 Elite® comes with a standard **2 year parts and labor warranty!** It is built for long term use and will provide many years of in-home therapy, as well as peace of mind knowing you own the highest quality machine available.

Tone muscles

Increase mobility

Relieve stiffness from head to toe

Increase circulation throughout the body

Energize the body



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A+ Rating

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Customer Feedback

I have had such lower back pain that I could hardly stand it. I saw your ad two years ago and thought it wouldn't help me. But, I ordered one anyway. I have used it for four months now. I have very little back pain, am more regular, and I sleep much better thanks to the Exerciser 2000. —C. Cordes

Little did I know when I ordered the Exercise 2000 Elite® that it would prove valuable to my wife of 62 years. I got it for the stiffness in my legs and it works perfectly to get me loosened up after playing tennis in the morning. When I come home I immediately get on the Exerciser 2000 Elite® for ten minutes and I feel great! My wife suffers from restless leg syndrome at night. Instead of walking the floor for a long period of time, she just gets on the Exerciser for ten minutes and the symptoms subside. —Dick P.

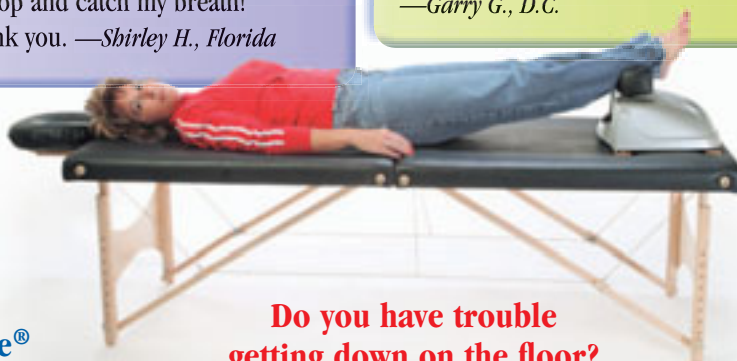
I am 76 years old, heavy, stiff with arthritis and a leukemic for the past nine years. Using your machine twice a day has made me feel ten years younger. I also have a great deal more energy. When you say that your company is in the business of "helping people feel better", it is no fib! —Kate B.

I am 97 years old and have edema in my left foot and leg. My daughter saw the Exerciser 2000 in an ad and encouraged me to try it. It is helping a lot and I feel alive again. Thank you!—Grace R.

After using the Exerciser 2000 Elite® twice a day for one week the swelling in my ankles went away. It has also helped my breathing, as I can get out and walk without having to stop and catch my breath! Thank you. —Shirley H., Florida

I am an 88 year old woman with multiple health problems. After seeing the ad for the Exerciser 2000 Elite® I ordered it and use it daily. I can tell it has improved circulation in my legs and by doing that it has helped my balance and walking problems. To those of you that think that you can't do regular exercise anymore, try this piece of equipment and you will be amazed how much better you will feel.—Mildred F.

As a Chiropractor, I would say the Exerciser 2000 enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and freeing up a spine that had become stiff and arthritic. —Garry G., D.C.



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new necklace design for less than \$200...
and get a \$100 Stauer Gift Coupon!*

Halfway into our ambitious trek through the rain forest I had to remind myself that "Nothing good comes easy." These days it seems that every business trip to Brazil includes a sweltering hike through overgrown jungles, around cascading waterfalls and down steep rock cliffs. But our gem broker insisted it was worth the trouble. To tell you the truth, for the dazzling emeralds he delivered, I'd gladly go back to stomping through jaguar country.

Now our good fortune is your great reward. Don't miss this rare opportunity to own an impressive 50 carat strand of genuine South American emeralds for under \$200. And for a limited time, we'll sweeten every necklace order with a **\$100 Stauer Gift Coupon!**

Faced with this embarrassment of riches, our designer transformed this spectacular cache of large stones (each is over 8 carats average weight) into a stunning 50 ctw necklace of faceted emeralds set into .925 sterling silver. Each emerald is surrounded by delicate sterling silver rope work and filigree in the Bali-style. The 18" necklace dangles from a sterling silver chain that fastens with a secure double-sided shepherd's hook clasp.

What is the source of our emerald's timeless appeal?

The enchanting color of the Stauer **Carnaval Faceted Emerald Necklace** comes from nature's chemistry. Our polished and faceted, well-formed natural emeralds are immediately recognized as something special. Indeed, when we evaluated these emeralds, color was the most important quality factor. Today, scientists tell us that the human eye is more sensitive to the color green than to any other. Perhaps that is why green is so soothing to the eye, and why the color green complements every other color in your wardrobe.

Emeralds are, by weight, the most valuable gemstone in the world.

Now you can wear genuine emeralds and feel great about knowing that you were able to treat yourself to precious gems without paying a precious price. A 100+ carat emerald necklace found on Rodeo Drive or 5th Avenue could cost well over \$250,000...but not from Stauer. Wear and admire the exquisite Stauer **Carnaval Faceted Emerald Necklace** for 30 days.

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Receive a \$100 Stauer
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purchase of this necklace.
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that right.**

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an emerald necklace with
50 carats and certainly not
at this price!"**

— **JAMES T. FENT, Stauer**
GIA Graduate Gemologist

If for any reason you are not dancing the Samba with pure satisfaction after receiving your faceted emerald necklace, simply return it to us for a full refund of the purchase price. But we're confident that when you examine this stunning jewelry, you'll be reminded of the raw beauty of the Amazon rain forests mixed with the flash and dazzle of the exotic Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. **Call Today.** *This cache of genuine emeralds is extremely limited.*

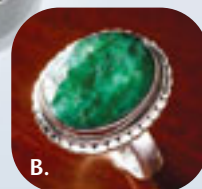
A.
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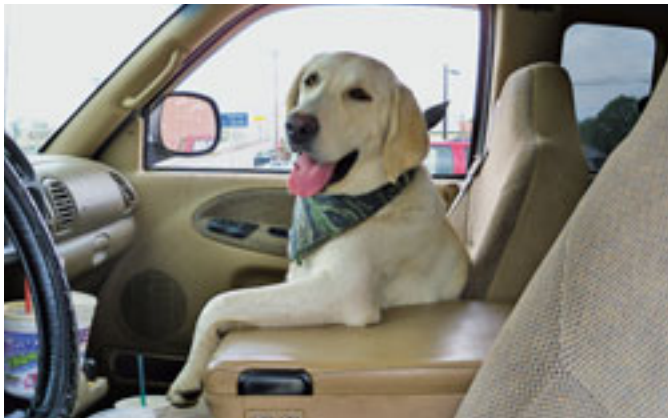
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▲ Lady and Banx, decked out in their life jackets aboard a pontoon boat, keep an eye on the family during a swim. The two are the grand-dogs of Central Texas Electric Cooperative member **Judy Bettison**.



▲ Farrah is always happy to ride shotgun with Central Texas Electric Cooperative member **Donnie Hopson**.

Comanche Electric Cooperative member **Meridith Martin** sent us this inspiring picture of her sister **Jennifer Martin** and her dog Bailey. "That photo truly tells the story of their relationship," Meridith says. ►

Upcoming in Focus on Texas

ISSUE	SUBJECT	DEADLINE
Mar	Springtime in Texas	Jan 10
Apr	Catch of the Day	Feb 10
May	Unlikely Duos	Mar 10
June	Murals	Apr 10
July	Those Were the Days	May 10
Aug	Milestones	Jun 10

SPRINGTIME IN TEXAS is the topic for our **MARCH 2011** issue. Send your photo—along with your name, address, daytime phone, co-op affiliation and a brief description—to *Springtime, Focus on Texas*, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701, before **JANUARY 10**. 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. If you use a digital camera, submit your highest resolution images on our website at www.TexasCoopPower.com. We regret that Texas Co-op Power cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline. Please note that we cannot provide individual critiques of submitted photos.

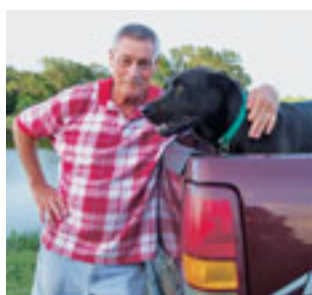
MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Scratch a dog's back, and you'll have yourself a full-time job. No matter what cloud darkens your day, your dog is always there to warm your heart and cheer your soul. He practices what humanity should strive for: Love unconditionally. Forgive and forget. Play often. This month, we salute the most loyal of companions.

—ASHLEY CLARY

We received far too many wonderful photos to print. Go to www.TexasCoopPower.com to see more.

Squeals is the best friend that 2-year-old **Wyatt** could possibly have. Wyatt is the son of Hamilton County Electric Cooperative members **Rebecca** and **Cody Alderson**. ▼



◀ Even though Fayette Electric Cooperative member **Julius Bartek** was dead set against having pets, a certain little puppy that his wife, **Clara**, brought home one day won him over. Julius named him Butch before that night was over, and they've been inseparable ever since.



AROUND TEXAS AROUND TEXAS

This is just a sampling of the events and festivals around and about Texas. For the complete listing, please visit www.TexasCoopPower.com.

PICK OF THE MONTH

JANUARY 15 LAKE JACKSON

Bird Banding (979) 480-0999,
www.gcbo.org



BIRD: 2010 © MICHAEL SKELTON. IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM. CALF: 2010 © PJMORLEY. IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM. PIANO: 2010 © ANTHONY ELSETINOW. IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM.

JANUARY

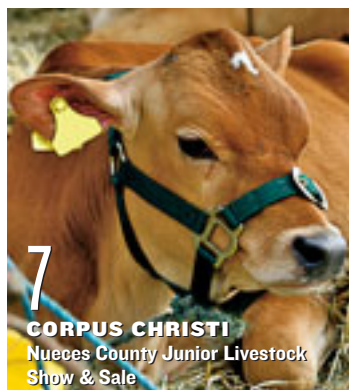
07 STEPHENVILLE [7-9, 21-22] Chicken House Flea Market, (254) 592-6674

CORPUS CHRISTI [7-15] Nueces County Junior Livestock Show & Sale, (361) 387-5395, www.ncjls.com

08 BRENHAM [8-9] Winter Antiques Show, 1-888-273-6426, www.ruraltexasantiques.com

09 TYLER East Texas Wedding Extravaganza, (903) 484-4309, www.easttexasweddingevents.com

13 AUSTIN [13-16] Travis County Youth Show, (512) 278-8498, www.traviscountyouthshow.org



7

CORPUS CHRISTI
Nueces County Junior Livestock Show & Sale

13 SAN ANGELO
Live Music in the Courtyard, (325) 653-4936

15 SURFSIDE BEACH
Surfside Shuffle 5K/10K, (979) 233-1531, www.surfsideshuffle.com

FREDERICKSBURG [15-16] Hill Country Gem & Mineral Show, (830) 895-9630, www.fredericksburgrockhounds.org

22 ROUND TOP
International Festival Institute Music Series—James Dick Piano Recital, (979) 249-3129, www.festivalhill.org

PORT ARANSAS
Tour of Homes, (361) 834-4130, www.portaransasgardenclub.org

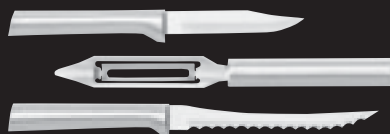
LAKE JACKSON Yvonne Washington Concert with Brazosport Jazz, (979) 230-3156, www.clarion.brazosport.edu



22

ROUND TOP
International Festival Institute Music Series—James Dick Piano Recital

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January 20-22 - Fort Worth, TX
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February 10-12 - Del Rio, TX
Val Verde County Arena

April 7-9 - Canutillo, TX
Rio Grande Valley Ranch Arena

June 2-5 - Burleson, TX
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U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Wild Horse and Burro Program

AROUND TEXAS AROUND TEXAS

22 KILLEEN
KNCT Wine Classic, (254)
526-1442, www.knct.org

29 CLIFTON
BARK Hearts & BARKs
Gala, (254) 675-0089,
www.barkrescue.org



ATHENS
All Things Bridal Show,
(903) 677-2001, www.athenscaincenter.com



29 FREDERICKSBURG
Hill Country Indian
Artifact Show

29 MIDLAND
West Texas Winds Spring
Concert, (432) 563-0921,
www.visitmidlandtexas.com

FREDERICKSBURG
Hill Country Indian
Artifact Show,
(830) 626-5561

ATHENS [29-30]
Jack Russell Dog Show,
(903) 670-3324

31 PORT ARANSAS
Port A Merchant's Dine
Around, 1-800-452-6278,
www.portaransas.org

FEBRUARY

05 STONEWALL
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Wild Game Dinner,
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So no matter if you're fixin' to get away to the Piney Woods or the Panhandle Plains (and all points between), your getaway just got easier.

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Event information can be submitted on our website at www.TexasCoopPower.com, mailed to Around Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701, or faxed to (512) 763-3407. **Please Note:** We are no longer accepting e-mailed submissions. Please submit events for March by January 10.

DOG: 2010 © ERIC ISSELEE. IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM. ARROWHEADS: 2010 © MICHELE BAGDON. IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM. GAME DINNER: 2010 © PHILLIP MINNIS. IMAGE FROM BIGSTOCK.COM.



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It's not on the road to anywhere big. It's considered part of East Texas' Piney Woods belt but also is a showcase for dogwoods in spring and spectacular leaves in the fall. And because it's a bit off the beaten path, Winnsboro has developed as a destination in its own right.

Winnsboro, southeast of Sulphur Springs in the northeastern corner of the state, was one of the first East Texas towns to bring music downtown in a big way. **THE CROSSROADS MUSIC COMPANY** was started in 2005 by singer/songwriters Lynn Adler and Lindy Hearne, honoring Winnsboro's 1854 name—Crossroads. The venue's owner, Gus Gustafson, is crafting a new home for the music hall with concerts being held in the city's downtown arts district. "We want to be the venue that supplies Winnsboro with some fantastic entertainment opportunities," Gustafson says. "We'll keep the big names coming and, partnered with the Center for the Arts, we'll expand what we're offering."

Crossroads isn't a restaurant, and it's not a bar—it's a music venue. You can usually get a cup of coffee, a bottle of water or a soft drink, but any other beverages you'll have to bring yourself. Most of all, patrons are asked to bring a healthy love for and respect of music.

Once Crossroads found success in Winnsboro, other music venues sprang up.

ART & ESPRESSO features music most Friday nights, serving assorted coffee drinks, pastries and ice cream. And there's the occasional poetry reading. "We've got great coffee, great pastries, great lunches," says owner Marilyn Arnaud. "And we have a diverse talent selection here on Fridays."

Although the **DOUBLE C STEAKHOUSE AND SALOON** makes its home in what may have been a stand-alone saloon or gambling hall long ago, it has found other ways nowadays to entertain its clientele. Huge flat-iron steaks, chicken-fried steaks and catfish start diners on their way while homemade

EAST TEXAS GEM

Winnsboro couples small-town charm with the sights and sounds of the big city.

BY JAN ADAMSON



desserts—such as apple, peach, apricot and cherry fried pies and coconut-cream pie—polish off the experience. The steakhouse also hosts concert nights featuring live music.

BREWBAKER'S RESTAURANT & PUB is one of the newer music venues, offering a wide assortment of musical styles, both indoors and outdoors in its brew garden. The restaurant serves food all day, and my favorite lunch here is the sizzling goat cheese salad—mixed greens with roasted red peppers, kalamata olives and sautéed rounds of breaded goat cheese dressed with a balsamic vinaigrette.

For a really special dinner before one of the concerts in town, **CIBOVINO** is a great choice. You'll feel like you've just arrived in Tuscany when you open the restaurant's doors. Dark woods and Italian-style murals just make ciboVino

feel special, and the food doesn't change one's opinion. Extremely well-prepared Italian entrées and wood-fired pizzas are served along with steaks and lamb.

When it's time to settle down for the night, there are plenty of choices. **AUNT ANN'S COTTAGE** is a three-bedroom cottage on a working cattle ranch. You'll have your own kitchen and lots of privacy for relaxing. **THE FARMHOUSE** at Hunter's Moon Farm is a 1930s farmhouse that has been updated for the comfort of today's traveler. The cottage has two bedrooms, two porches and a kitchen for the use of overnight guests. And **THE HUBBELL HOUSE** is a southern plantation estate nestled among gardens and 400-year-old oak trees. In addition to a separate cottage, there are five rooms in the mansion and six in the carriage house. Both houses are wrapped with porches just right for enjoying the setting.

After all that music, big plates of great food and a good night's sleep, a little shopping is definitely in order.

BEAUWEEVIL'S is an antiques mall with vendors all showing the best of their wares. Soy candles and goat's milk soap and lotions are specialties of the house.

To deck out your home and kitchen, **LADLES TO LINENS** can equip the most demanding gourmet. There's also a wine-tasting bar, and you can get a bottle of wine with a personalized label to make any occasion special.

Winnsboro has worked hard at distinguishing itself as a go-to place for food and music, but it's also a haven for the arts. The **3RD FRIDAY ARTS FEST CRAZY DAZE** is a monthly arts festival featuring downtown vendors, art classes and exhibits, and the Winnsboro Center for the Arts sponsors an art gallery with original works for sale.

Winnsboro may be off the beaten path, but you've definitely arrived at someplace special when you get here.

Jan Adamson is a freelance writer based in Grand Saline.

U.S. GOV'T GOLD AT-COST

TODAY - The United States Rare Coin & Bullion Reserve has scheduled the final release of U.S. Gov't Issued \$5 Gold Coins previously held at the U.S. Mint at West Point. Please be advised: These Gov't Issued Gold Coins are being released on a first-come, first-serve basis and our U.S. Gov't Gold inventory priced at \$154.27 per coin could very possibly sell out! Call immediately to avoid disappointment. This "at-cost" Gov't Gold offer could be cancelled at any time. Do not delay. Call a Sr. Gold Specialist today.

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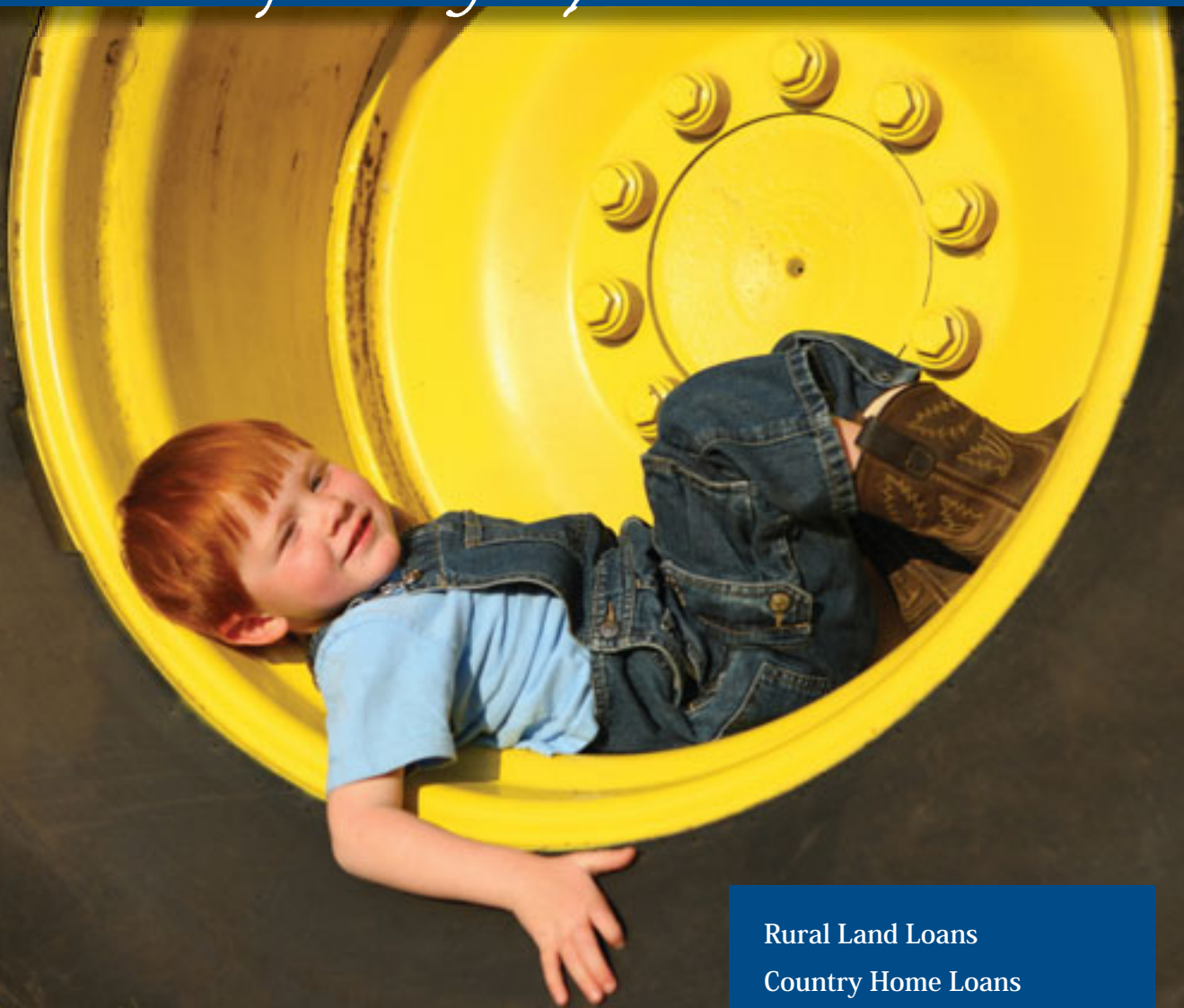
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