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NOVEMBER 2023

Happy Tales

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November 2023



08

'Its Own Sweet Sound'

Cowboy poetry devotees ensure a Western tradition continues to find reverent audiences.

Story by Jessica Ridge
Photos by Dave Shafer

ON THE COVER

Burleson singer-songwriter
Kristyn Harris at the Lone Star
Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

ABOVE

An ensemble of artists
performs the finale, a tribute
to Charles Goodnight.

Photos by Dave Shafer

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Like No Other
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Richardson

World Renown

WILEY POST, pictured below, famous for his around-the-world flights in the 1930s, was born 125 years ago this month near Grand Saline, east of Dallas.

Post, credited with discovering the jet stream, twice set speed records for circling the globe. The celebrated adventurer, born November 22, 1898, perished with close friend Will Rogers in a plane crash in Alaska in 1935.



Glorious Overtones

Pamela Dawson, choir director at DeSoto High School, south of Dallas, won a Grammy Music Educator Award in February—a lofty honor for a teacher whose students have performed at Carnegie Hall in New York City and have landed on Broadway.

“I am this lady from Detroit, Michigan, who just loves music and wants to impart that into my students,” says Dawson, who began at DeSoto in 2006.



“Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.”

—GEORGE BURNS

TCP Contests and More

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FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Why doesn't somebody invent ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town.

Here are some of the responses to our September prompt: **My favorite swimming hole is ...**

As a teen it was Menard Creek, but at 83 it is my bathtub.

PAUL PAGE
JASPER-NEWTON EC
KIRBYVILLE

The creek in my backyard.

RAY WOLBRECHT
PEDERNALES EC
BLANCO

The next one. I have always been a sucker for swimming holes, ever since childhood. They always have a "Huck Finn" feel to me—very nostalgic—so if I see one, and I have shorts nearby, I jump in.

DAVE BOHN
PEDERNALES EC
CANYON LAKE

Balmerhea State Park pool—nothing better.

LISA HOLLOWAY FITZSIMMONS
VIA FACEBOOK

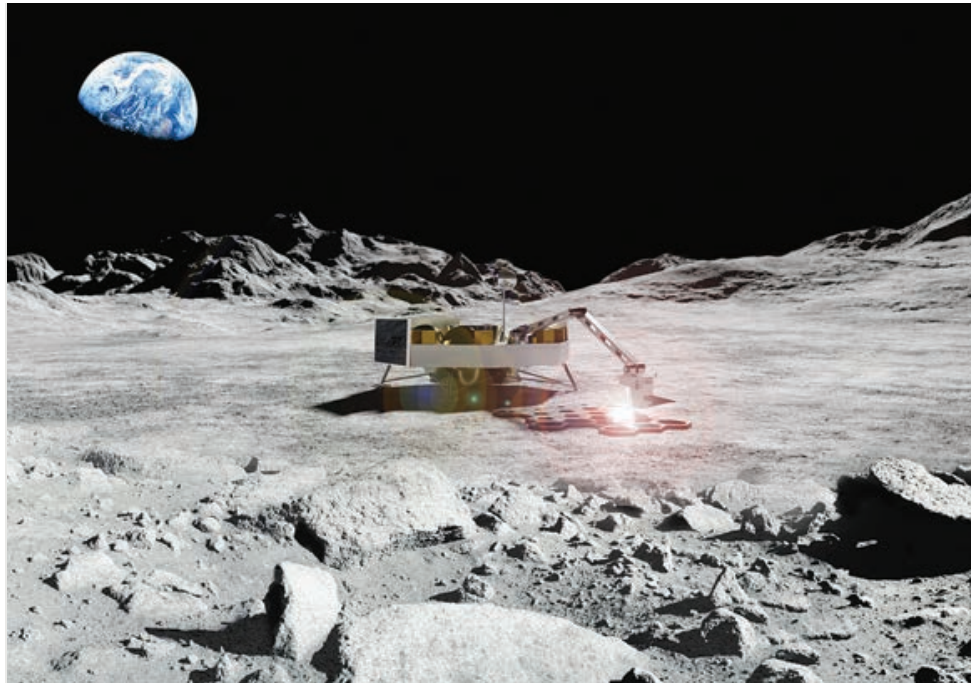
Hamilton Pool.

ALAN ARROWOOD
VIA FACEBOOK

Visit our website to see more responses.

In Favor of Heat Pumps

Heat pumps are gaining popularity in the U.S, outselling gas furnaces by a wide margin in 2022. They're more energy-efficient, using much less electricity than traditional heating and air conditioning units.



There Goes the Neighborhood

TEXAS' STRONG TIES to the moon are indisputable. After all, the world listened in as Neil Armstrong uttered these words during the Apollo 11 mission July 20, 1969: "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed."

Now, as NASA prepares to send astronauts back to the moon and establish a long-term presence there, the agency has contracted Austin 3D printing firm Icon to launch construction technologies for lunar landing pads, habitats and roads.

Closer to home, Icon has been creating 3D-printed houses and military barracks using gigantic robotic printers that layer the company's proprietary concrete mix.



ERICH SCHLEGEL

SEPTEMBER 2023 Dance Hall Darlings

“The Triumphs played at our Somerville High School prom, and we went to most of the dance halls mentioned. Brought back many great memories.”

JULIE PAZDRAL FULLER
COSERV
FRISCO

Labyrinth Love

My son built a labyrinth in Denton for his Eagle Scout project in 2006 [*Circles of Life*, August 2023]. It's at First Christian Church, 1203 Fulton St., in the grassy area adjacent to the parking lot.

Betsy Deiterman
Sam Houston EC
Livingston

It was always a good day when the Triumphs came to town.

BRUCE GOODWYN
VIA FACEBOOK

Prize of the Pasture

About the only time my mom would submit to bouncing around the pasture in the pickup with my dad and me on our ranch at Big Lake was when she was on her annual quest for agarita berries [*Make Your Shelf Useful*, August 2023].

We would find the plants here and there and pick off the little berries. When she had enough, Mom would make the most succulent pale red agarita jelly that would complement our breakfast table for months.

Jim McCoy
Southwest Texas EC
Big Lake



WYATT MCGSPADDEN

Massive Mums

I attended San Marcos High School 1968–71. We had Texas-sized mums back then—real mums [*Bigger and Better—Together*, September 2023]. Most had masses of ribbons, buttons, charms and bells attached. It was a big deal to have one.

Paula T. Phillips
Pedernales EC
San Marcos

Literary Great

Lonesome Dove may be the best book I've ever read [*A Page of the Past*, August 2023]. Since I'm 92, I've read a lot of books.

If he had never written anything other than *Lonesome Dove*, Larry McMurtry would still be known among any of the prior great writers.

Jerry Pentecost
Jackson EC
Port Lavaca

WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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

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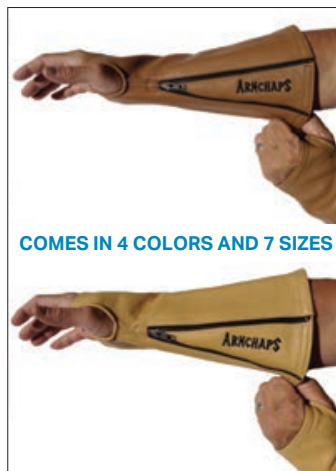
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COWBOY POETRY devotees ensure a Western tradition continues to find rapt audiences

A pint-size poet steps up to a microphone stand that towers over her. It's a February morning in far West Texas as Bethia Baize, 5, recites *The Well-Used Cayuse*, inspired by her horse. Emcee Karen McGuire holds the mic at the kindergartener's height. Bethia speaks softly, from memory, to a rapt audience in a Sul Ross State University lecture hall, her voice and words kicking off a youth poetry contest. When she's finished, the

room thunders with applause, and Bethia claims the first-place plaque for her age group.

For the rest of the session, which is one of dozens at the annual Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Alpine, the energy in the room is electric. Parents, grandparents and other supporters fill every seat and line the walls as 16 young poets recite their award-winning works about cattle and coyotes, cowboys and cowgirls, and the rhythms of




Montana brother-sister duo Brigid and Johnny Reedy rehearse before one of their sessions at the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Alpine. Their stirring vocal harmonies left audiences spellbound that weekend in February.

'Its Own Sweet, Sound'

BY JESSICA RIDGE • PHOTOS BY DAVE SHAFER

ranch life. The room pulses with pride, love and nerves—like a spelling bee, but giddier and more exuberant.

Bethia's aunt, Elizabeth Baize, a member of the poetry gathering's board of directors, co-hosted the youth poetry contest with McGuire, also a board member. In the weeks before the event, Baize visits area schools to spur students to enter. She encourages them to talk with older relatives who might have ranch life experience and to look at photographs or paintings that might inspire them to write a story in the form of a poem.



*“Poetry is
a language
of the heart.
It’s a language
of emotion.
Prose is language,
but poetry is
what sears it
into our being.”*



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
Andy Wilkinson of Lubbock
reviews his notes back-
stage. Kristyn Harris calls
the gathering a place for
“sharing your art, sharing
yourself.” Mornings begin
outside with cowboy coffee
over a fire.

It’s no mean feat winnowing down the annual crop of entries to the winners. As the judges read the entries, “there are giggles and good belly laughs, tears and sniffles, and ‘Oh my, listen to this!’” McGuire says.

The future of cowboy poetry is in good hands.

McGuire and Baize—and scores of organizers and volunteers—work hard to ensure that future. They helped stage this year’s gathering, which drew north of 2,200 attendees and featured 40-plus performers of cowboy poetry, which encompasses music, spoken-word poetry and storytelling by ranch hands, cowboys and cowgirls and has been enshrined as an oral tradition by Library of Congress folklorists.

In North America, the Texas gathering is second in size only to the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, according to Bob Saul, the gathering’s volunteer event producer. This year’s event delivered at least five times as many free performances and sessions as ticketed





ones. That's by design, Saul says.

"We want people to come. Some of the cowboy poetry gatherings have gone to all paid; there's nothing free you can go to," Saul, 79, says. "But our board has decided that we're going to carry on the tradition and the mission, that we will do our best to provide cowboy poetry, as much of it as possible, free of charge.

"In other words, it's for ranching families."

In 2019, Saul was in the audience at the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering (the original iteration of the event in Alpine) when it was announced that that year's gathering would be the last. Saul immediately began canvassing for volunteers to keep the event, or some semblance of it, alive.

"I just started talking to people and asking if they would be willing to help, if we could get it restarted, would they volunteer," Saul says. "And I came back to Fort Worth after two days with 142 email addresses in my pocket."

Over several months, Bob and his wife, Nancy Saul, a graphic designer who creates the gathering's annual programs, made more than a dozen 15-hour round trips

between their North Texas home and Alpine to help the new gathering find its footing. Those pilgrimages were rooted in a deep affinity.

"Poetry is a language of the heart," Saul says. "It's a language of emotion. Prose is language, but poetry is what sears it into our being. And today poetry is mostly academic. You don't hear, like you used to, people going to hear people quote poetry; except when you go hear the fishermen and the miners and the loggers and the cowboys.

"Those kinds of industries, where people are working long hours and they are more alone, they've got time to think. And they've got time to sing. And they've got time to recite to themselves."

That reverence reverberates across the gathering, which takes place the third weekend in February. At sessions with names like Western Harmony, Ranch Women and Working Ranch Families, audiences are focused and present, bearers of a quietude

punctuated only by bursts of applause or laughter. Almost every cellphone is out of sight, every eye on the performers. Those wearing cowboy hats are kindly asked to remove them so as not to obstruct the view for others.

Kay Nowell, co-chair of the gathering, describes the genre as a celebration of a tradition and a way of life. “What cowboy poetry is is real,” she says. “People get taken into rural people’s life, and they get to experience it through their poems and their songs. It’s a culture that adheres to a code.”



The Mellard brothers from outside Marfa found success during the youth poetry contest. From left, Travis and Thomas earned honorable mentions, and Aiden claimed second place in his age group.

Nowell has conformed to that code for decades. She was a featured poet at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in 1989, which led to an appearance on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, where she recited her poem *A What?!!!*

A chuck wagon breakfast kicks off each day of the Alpine gathering. This year temperatures stay below freezing as Alpine Lions Club members serve scrambled eggs and biscuits and gravy in the peaceful Poet’s Grove at Kokernot Park. Cups of coffee skate across iced-over tables as the sun crests a hill, and a blazing firepit and easy conversation counter the chill.

The spirit of camaraderie and mindful attention extends to the gathering’s open mic sessions, another free daily offering open to the public. Musicians and spoken-word performers sign up in advance, wait for their names to be called and then amble down to speak, sing or play their piece. Jan Hartman is up first Friday and plays *Amazing Grace* and taps on her fife.

The instrument “has its own sweet sound, I think,” Hartman says. “It has more of a country sound than an orchestra sound.” Hartman, who lives in Alpine and has participated in the open mic for the past five years, says she still gets nervous before she plays. It’s worth it, though.

“It makes you stand out a little bit, just to be able to play before some people, and be able to tell a testimony or a story or, there again, a poem that you’ve heard,” Hartman says. “So it just makes you feel a little special.”

One of the musicians Hartman most looks forward to each year is Kristyn Harris, who first appeared at the gathering’s open mic more than a decade ago. The singer and yodeler, songwriter, swing rhythm guitarist, and winner of multiple International Western Music Association awards performed in several sessions at this year’s event.

“The audiences here are really here to soak it up, and you really connect with them,” says Harris, a Burleson resident and member of United Cooperative Services, an electric cooperative in the Metroplex. “Rather than just performing for people, it’s like sharing your art, sharing yourself

PLAN FOR
Poetry

The next Lone Star
Cowboy Poetry
Gathering is set
for February 15–17,
2024, in Alpine.



Nevada rancher Waddie Mitchell has been a performing poet for decades.

of Juni Fisher's spare, moving rendition of Simon and Garfunkel's folk classic *The Boxer*. The talent on display is dizzying, the audience enraptured, and the trio onstage—with poet Amy Hale emceeding—exude a sisterhood in their banter and backing of each other.

"I've played festivals that are *festivals*, and then the gathering is different," Harris says. "There are performers here that I really look up to, that I could see as celebrities, but here no one is a big celebrity."

Loren Schooley, a musician from Marfa who works in information technology and performs at Friday's open mic, echoes that sentiment. "Usually you go to a gig, and then you see the band or two, and then that's it," Schooley says. "But here it's almost like a conference. You never know what you're going to step into if you go into some of these rooms. And when you find the sweet spot—I've shed more tears here and laughter. You just can't get that anywhere else."

The gathering's performers are similarly compelled. "The best way I can describe it is it's family," Harris says.

and sharing your history."

In a Saturday afternoon show, Harris covers the jazz standard *All of Me* in a Western Swing style on the heels

"There's a big, big, big Texas spirit about this gathering that's also different from some other poetry gatherings that are in other parts of the country. Everyone is just so Texan: friendly, wants to give you a big hug and just gives you that warm feeling."

The sweet spots and Texas spirit alchemize into what Nowell calls magic sessions. "They're intoxicating," she says. "A lot of times when I've been in one you just throw away your setlist and feed off the last guy's stuff. And it's all one piece. A lot's going on up there on that stage, and the audience feels it, and they're taken along on the ride. But the performers are having a blast."

Community investment helps sustain that improvisation. "Volunteers are critical to this," Nowell says. "We can't put this on without support from members and support from sponsors."

Tradition and fortitude are woven into the gathering's rough-hewn fabric. "The Lone Star is bound and determined to keep it cowboy," Nowell says. "Weather, government, markets; it's a hard life. But it's something people want to raise their children in." ■

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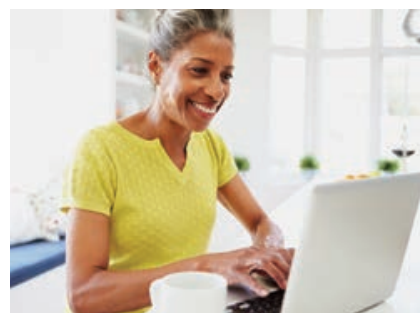
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Stay Safe at Home

EACH YEAR, ELECTRICAL MALFUNCTIONS account for thousands of home fires and injuries, hundreds of deaths, and more than \$1 billion in property damage. The average American home was built in 1977, and many existing homes simply can't handle the demands of today's electrical appliances and devices. Keep safety in mind with these helpful tips from your electric cooperative.

Learn the warning signs of an overloaded electrical system.

- ▶ Frequent tripping of circuit breakers or blowing of fuses.
- ▶ Dimming of lights when other devices are turned on.
- ▶ Buzzing or humming sounds from switches or outlets.
- ▶ Discolored outlets.
- ▶ Appliances that seem underpowered.

Know how to avoid overloading circuits.

Label your circuit breakers to understand the different circuits in your home. Analyze the load for each to be sure it does not exceed the circuit's capacity. If it does, redistribute the load or have an electrician upgrade the circuits. These devices should have their own dedicated circuit:

- ▶ Electric range
- ▶ Electric dryer
- ▶ Space heater
- ▶ Air conditioner
- ▶ Furnace
- ▶ Dishwasher
- ▶ Hot tub
- ▶ Garbage disposal
- ▶ Large toaster
- ▶ Washer

Have your home inspected by a qualified electrician if it was built more than 40 years ago or if you've added a major appliance or other electrical load.

Have a qualified electrician install new circuits for high energy use devices.

Reduce your electrical load by using energy-efficient appliances and lighting.

Working from home? Follow these safety tips to keep you and your home safe from electrical hazards.

- ▶ Avoid overloading outlets.
- ▶ Unplug equipment when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock or fire.
- ▶ Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage. Discontinue use immediately if a cord is damaged.
- ▶ Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis.
- ▶ Never plug a space heater or fan into an extension cord or power strip.
- ▶ Never run cords under rugs or carpets, across doorways, or through windows.
- ▶ Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards.
- ▶ Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least 3 feet away from heat sources.
- ▶ Keep liquids well away from any electrical devices.
- ▶ Make sure you use the proper wattage for lamps and lighting.
- ▶ Ensure your home has smoke alarms. Test them monthly, change batteries annually and replace each unit at least every 10 years. ■

Don't Let a Full House Send Energy Bills Through the Roof

PREPARING A THANKSGIVING feast means you'll be using more energy than usual. Here's how to keep it under control:

Lower the thermostat a couple of degrees before company arrives. You'll be using the stove and oven all day, so the house will be warmer than usual anyway. Plus, people generate heat, so a cooler house will feel more comfortable.

Consider alternative versions of your Thanksgiving favorites for a fresh, healthy spin on tradition that doesn't require as much energy to cook. A bean salad could replace green bean casserole. Try a green salad with dried cranberries and feta cheese. Smoke or fry a turkey outside instead of in the oven. Or make mashed potatoes in the slow cooker or electric pressure cooker instead of on the stove. Fresh fruit for dessert could replace apple pie and provide a refreshing, light option.

Keep an eye on the refrigerator and freezer so you'll know the doors are snugly closed. Doors that aren't tightly sealed will send cold air into the kitchen.

Wait until leftovers cool off a bit before placing them in the refrigerator. The appliance has to work harder to cool hot food than to keep cool food cold.

Place lids on pots and pans as you use them for cooking. The lids keep heat in, so food cooks quicker.

Heat up whatever you can in the microwave instead of on the stovetop or in the oven. Microwaves use about half as much energy as your oven.

Fill your oven with as many different dishes as you can fit and cook them all at once. As long as the recipes don't call for temperatures that vary by more than 25 degrees, everything should cook or bake evenly.

Resist the temptation to open the oven door and peek at dinner's progress. Every time you open the oven door, the appliance loses heat and sets back the cooking time.

Don't buy a bigger turkey than you need. A smaller turkey takes less time to cook. If you're roasting your turkey for several hours, then it isn't necessary to preheat the oven. Just make sure the meat reaches an internal temperature of at least 165 degrees. ■



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Replace alarm batteries at least once a year. If an alarm chirps or beeps to indicate low batteries, replace them immediately.

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Texas Waterman

Saltwater savvy and lifesaving skills keep beachgoers safe on the coast that Gene Gore loves

STORY AND PHOTO BY ERICH SCHLEGEL

GENE GORE'S earliest memory of the ocean was a family trip to Galveston in the 1970s.

"Dad smashed us kids in the back of the station wagon with a loaf of bread," Gore says. "Once at the beach, Mom was floating on an inflatable raft, on a super calm day. I just remembered these little glassy waves peeling that caught my eye."

He never forgot those waves. How could he?

Gore grew up in southwest Houston, and his family had a beach house on the Bolivar Peninsula. When he knew his family was beach-bound, he would sprint the 2 miles home from school because he was so excited to go to the coast.

Like a lot of kids who grow up around the beach, Gore went on to become a lifeguard, working in Galveston. But unlike a lot of kids, he turned the beach into a career. And then a lifestyle.

After decades in the surf, Gore, now the owner of South Padre Surf Co., is a waterman—a master of the sea, sensitive to the ever-changing conditions of the ocean and the weather above it. And he uses his special abilities to help swimmers in distress.

In the 1980s, Gore went to Hawaii to compete in the U.S. Lifesaving Association National Lifeguard Championships. He found a greater purpose there.

"Back in Texas, lifeguarding is a seasonal occupation," Gore says. "During my Hawaii visit, I realized that lifeguarding was a year-round job, so in 1991, I bought a one-way plane ticket to Honolulu. I went to Hawaii to be a full-time lifeguard."

On the islands, Gore found not just lifeguards—but watermen.

Bradley Melekian, writing for *The Surfer's Journal* in 2016, said that watermen are "men and women who not only know or knew how to do certain things in the ocean with incredible skill, but men and women who knew why they were doing these things, and dedicated their lives to existing in deep harmony and accordance with that profound sense of purpose."

That spoke to Gore. "In Hawaii, I worked my tail off and gained respect from the local Hawaiians," he says. "It's their territory, their country. I got to the point where Hawaiian waterman and lifeguard Brian Keaulana—his family is like Hawaiian royalty—would drop his kids off at the beach at my lifeguard tower. I had earned respect from the king."

Eventually Gore returned to Texas to teach people how to surf, but he brought to Texas a lot more than surfing know-how.

While working as a surfing instructor around Isla Blanca Park on the southern tip of South Padre Island, Gore made more than 100 surf rescues on the Texas coast over the course of 10-plus years. He also recovered more than a dozen bodies from the surf. Rip currents are a major danger on Texas beaches, and many don't know how to swim out of a rip.

Gore says he started going to city council meetings, then county commissioners' meetings, to push for a lifeguard program. In 2008, South Padre Island Fire Department Beach Patrol was started as a pilot program, and Gore was the head lifeguard. Gore's children, Melia, 21, and Micah, 23, have been lifeguards there as well.

On South Padre Island, Gore also learned how to spearfish. "Spearfishing in the Gulf of Mexico off Texas beaches is amazing," he says. "Better than in Hawaii."

On days with clear water, he'll spearfish for mangrove snapper around the end of the jetties that protect the Brazos Santiago Pass ship channel.

"I love when I walk past all these rod-and-reel fishermen and jump in the ocean and see all these fish not paying attention to the lures and bait these fishermen put out there," he says. "Spearfishing is a lot more satisfying but a lot more dangerous."

Gore's knowledge of the sea helps Texans in other ways, too. He does consulting work for the local National Weather Service office in Brownsville.

For Gore, being a waterman means staying finely attuned to changing weather conditions, different cloud formations and the ocean's constant state of flux. For example, insects, especially dragonflies, appear in abundance when the winds are out of the west, he says. West winds here mean offshore winds, which are better for surfing.

"The most important thing I do as a waterman is to teach people to respect the ocean and its power," he says. "It's a delicate resource that needs to be preserved." ■

Waterman Gene Gore greets a new day at the end of the South Padre Island jetties.



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Appraising the Texas Landscape

When Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of New York's Central Park, first laid eyes on a new state

BY W. F. STRONG

SOME SAY TIME TRAVEL will be possible one day, and some say it's the stuff of fairy tales.

For now, books are the next best thing. They can help us understand how people lived, thought and talked long ago, especially when they're written for the express purpose of cataloging such things.

Frederick Law Olmsted did exactly that when he toured Texas in the 1850s.

With his brother, he traveled a couple thousand miles around Texas on horseback, chronicling his experiences for the *New-York Daily Times*, a predecessor of

The New York Times. His book, *A Journey Through Texas: Or a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier*, is an absolute treasure—a priceless, time-sensitive ethnography that includes observations about and objections to slavery.

And it's more than a snapshot. It's an intricate mural of Texas around a decade after it became a state and as the U.S. headed toward civil war.

Many know Olmsted as the father of American landscape architecture. He designed New York's Central Park, the U.S. Capitol grounds and some 100 parks

TCP Listen as W.F. Strong narrates this story on our website.



and recreation grounds.

But before all that, Olmsted arrived in Nacogdoches in December 1853 and then meandered the state. He explored the Piney Woods, Hill Country, coastal plains, Southwest Texas and even some of northern Mexico.

When he arrived in Austin, population 3,000 back then, Olmsted found his hotel dirty and the food inedible. He was also dismayed that there was not one bookstore in town.

But he loved New Braunfels. The German communities and natural magnificence of the lands along the Guadalupe River were so impressive to Olmsted that he almost stayed. He was enchanted by the springtime wildflowers in the Hill Country, and he affirmed the German saying that “the sky is nearer in Texas.”

Riding out west to Eagle Pass, Olmsted killed an enormous 5½-foot rattlesnake. Olmsted worried in the daytime that his horse would get bitten, and at night he worried that a rattler would snuggle up with him in his bedroll. He also saw his first horny toads and so loved the little creatures that he shipped some back home to New York to be kept as pets.

In San Antonio he fell in love with the river. “We are so struck by its beauty,” he wrote. “It is of a rich blue and pure as crystal, flowing rapidly but noiselessly over pebbles and between reedy banks.”

But Texas was still the Wild West, and gunfights were common in the plaza. “As the actors are under ... excitement, their aim is not apt to be of the most careful and sure, consequently, it is, not seldom, the passers-by who suffer,” he wrote.

Maybe time travel is best done at the library after all. ■

Holiday Desserts

Fruity flavors rise to the occasion during the season of sharing

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

This delicious cake makes for a sweet ending to a holiday meal. Cranberry sauce baked into a vanilla-scented batter balances tart and sweet flavors to please palates that like a bit of both.

Cranberry Cake

3 eggs
2 cups sugar
¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter,
room temperature
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
2 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups flour
1 can whole berry cranberry sauce
(14 ounces)
¼ cup powdered sugar
1 cup cranberry jam, optional

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Liberally coat a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, beat eggs and sugar for 5 minutes, until eggs have increased in volume.

3. Add butter and vanilla and continue beating for an additional 2 minutes. Beat in milk and salt.

4. Stir in flour and then fold in cranberry sauce. Spoon into baking pan.

5. Bake 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

6. Let cool, slice and serve dusted with powdered sugar. Top with cranberry jam, if desired.

SERVES 12

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez while she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Cranberry Punch.





Mini Cherry Muffins

ANN BASHARA
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

Mini muffins sweetened with maraschino cherries are the tastiest little holiday bites. Bashara's mother made these tiny treats every year for Christmas parties, and they soon became a family tradition.

4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter, room temperature, plus 2 tablespoons for buttering muffin pans

½ cup brown sugar

½ cup sugar

2 eggs, separated

1 cup flour

¼ teaspoon baking powder

1 jar maraschino cherries (10 ounces), drained, juice reserved

½ cup finely chopped pecans

1 cup powdered sugar, for dusting muffins

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease mini muffin pans with butter.
2. In a medium bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and creamy. Slightly beat egg yolks and add to mixture along with flour, baking powder and 3 tablespoons of reserved cherry juice and blend.
3. Beat egg whites until light and fluffy. Gently fold into batter.
4. Sprinkle ¼ teaspoon of pecans into the bottom of each muffin tin. Spoon 1 teaspoon of batter over pecans, then place one cherry in center of batter. Top with an additional teaspoon of batter to cover cherries.
5. Bake 10–12 minutes.
6. Dust with powdered sugar and serve warm.

MAKES 3 DOZEN

[MORE RECIPES >](#)



\$500 WINNER

Mom's Pear Cake

GINGER CLARDY
BANDERA EC



A quick and easy Bundt cake is the perfect dessert for the holiday table or feeding a breakfast crowd. Clardy's creation is studded with pears, cinnamon and pecans and drizzled with a sweet glaze.

SERVES 12

CAKE

3 eggs

2 cups sugar

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1 cup vegetable oil

3 cups flour

½ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

1 cup chopped pecans

4 cups diced pears, plus ½ cup for garnish, if desired

GLAZE

2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter

2 cups powdered sugar

2 tablespoons milk

1. CAKE Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Liberally coat a Bundt pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, sugar, vanilla and vegetable oil until smooth.
3. Stir in flour, salt, baking soda and cinnamon. Batter will be thick.
4. Fold in pecans and pears.
5. Spoon batter into Bundt pan. Bake 40–50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
6. GLAZE Melt butter over low heat. Add powdered sugar and milk, whisk until smooth. Drizzle over warm cake. Garnish with diced pears, if desired.

\$500 Recipe Contest

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Everybody looks forward to your contribution. Share your potluck specialty and you might win \$500. Submit your favorite online by November 10.





Holiday Bark

RITA PAUL
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

If you're searching for a last-minute holiday treat that everyone will love, Paul's holiday bark has you covered. This bark can easily be adapted to include a variety of nuts, dried fruits or candies. It's done in a little over an hour and makes for the ultimate edible gift.

16 ounces chopped white chocolate
1 cup dried cranberries

1 cup shelled, chopped pistachios
1 cup cashew halves

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment.
2. In a double boiler melt white chocolate, stirring occasionally until smooth.
3. Pour melted chocolate onto baking sheet. Using a knife or rubber spatula, spread into a 9-by-12-inch rectangle.
4. Sprinkle chocolate with cranberries, pistachios and cashews.
5. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Break into pieces before serving.

MAKES ABOUT 1 DOZEN PIECES

TCP Want more dessert options heading into the holidays? We're happy to help with that. With more than 1,000 recipes from Co-op Country in our archives, you're sure to find the perfect sweet treat. You can find them all on our website.

Over the River and Through the Woods

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Tips for traveling with holiday treats:

Use muffin tins for deviled eggs, cupcakes and cold appetizers.

Frost and decorate cupcakes and cakes after you arrive to avoid smudges.

Add ice to a cooler before adding a cold dessert.

Wrap the entire cookie tray in plastic wrap to keep it secure.

When stacking frosted cookies, place waxed paper between each layer.

Place four toothpicks into your frosted cake then gently drape foil over the cake to protect frosting.

Use canning jars to transport sauces, fudge, cocoa mix and spiced nuts.



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Kid Stuff

Legend has it that outlaw Billy the Kid lived out his days in Hico

BY CHET GARNER

I REMEMBER sitting around the campfire telling stories about the Wild West. Specifically, the story of how infamous gunslinger Billy the Kid outsmarted everyone and lived to old age in Hico under a fake name. Was it true? I headed to the small town southwest of Fort Worth to find out.

There are a couple things I do every time I'm in Hico. First I eat a chicken-fried steak at Koffee Kup Family Restaurant, and then I buy pecan toffee from Wiseman House Chocolates. After that, I'm ready to investigate.

Hico's historic downtown is booming these days, and the Billy the Kid Museum is right in the middle of it. The museum archives all the stories of Hico's history and its infamous (alleged) resident.

I walked the displays and dug deep into the legend of Henry McCarty, aka William H. Bonney, aka Billy the Kid. It seems even his real name is up for debate. What is certain is that Billy was a notorious outlaw who stole cattle and gunned down many men across the Southwest.

Many say that lawman Pat Garrett shot and killed Billy in Fort Sumner, New Mexico, in 1881. There's even a grave in that town with his name on it. But some say Garrett granted Billy mercy on the condition that he promise to never kill again.

In the 1940s, a reporter with a hot tip tracked down a man named "Brushy Bill" Roberts in Hico. Brushy claimed he was indeed the outlaw, with the scars and stories to prove it. However, before he could receive an official pardon from the governor of New Mexico, he died of a heart attack. Many questions remain, but the folks in Hico believe it was Billy himself.

Take a trip to Hico, conduct your own investigation and decide for yourself. ■

ABOVE Billy the Kid, in sculpted form, maintains a presence in downtown Hico.

TCP See more of Chet's search into the Billy the Kid mystery in the video on our website. And see all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

Call ahead or check an event's website for scheduling details, and check our website for many more upcoming events.

NOVEMBER

10

The Colony [10-11] American Heroes: A Salute to Veterans & First Responders, (972) 625-1106, thecolonytx.gov

11

Brenham The Gatlin Brothers, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Fredericksburg St. Martin's Day Celebration, (830) 990-2044, visitfredericksburgtx.com

San Marcos Hangar Dance, (737) 285-0015, hangardance.org

16

Corsicana Holiday Tree Lighting, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

Marble Falls Pastel Demo With Dina Gregory, (830) 693-7324, visitmarblefalls.org

18

Bluff Dale Front Porch Christmas Market, (817) 946-0141, facebook.com/thefrontporchbluffdale

Bowie Hanging of the Greens, (940) 872-6246, cityofbowietx.com

Burnet Sip n' Shop, (512) 766-0555, tornalochs.com

Fredericksburg Willow City Quilt Show and Live Auction, (830) 685-3376, willowcityfd.com

Henderson A Very Merry Market, (318) 780-0620, thechurchatlakecherokee.com

Kerrville Holiday Lighted Parade, (830) 257-7300, kerrvilletx.gov

19

Giddings Sip & Shop Christmas Market, (979) 542-3455, giddingstx.com

25

Stonewall Deck the Halls, (830) 644-2252, tpwd.texas.gov

Ingram [25-26, Dec. 1-3, 8-10, 15-16] A Christmas Carol, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

28

Columbus Christmas on the Colorado Lighted Parade, (979) 732-8385, columbus.texas.org

29

Tyler [29-Dec. 2] Mistletoe & Magic, (903) 595-5426, juniorleagueoftyler.org

DECEMBER

01

Bowie Sweet Gingerbread Sip and Stroll With Me, (940) 872-6246, cityofbowietx.com

Kerrville [1-2, 8-10, 15-17] One Christmas Eve at Evergreen Mall, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

02

Lufkin Christmas in the Pines, (936) 633-0359, visitlufkin.com

Post Light Up Post, (806) 495-2811, postcitytexas.com

07

New Braunfels Christmas Market at Historic Old Town, (830) 629-2943, newbraunfelsconservation.org

TCP Submit Your Event

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10. Owner: Complete Mailing Address: Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., is a nonprofit association of rural ECs organized as a cooperative membership corporation under Article 1528b, Texas Civil Statutes. Its members are: Bailey County ECA, Muleshoe; Bandera EC, Bandera; Bartlett EC, Bartlett; Big Country EC, Roby; Bluebonnet EC, Giddings; Bowie-Cass EC, Douglassville; Brazos EC, Waco; Bryan Texas Utilities, Bryan; Central Texas EC, Fredericksburg; Cherokee County ECA, Rusk; Coleman County EC, Coleman; Comanche County ECA, Comanche; Concho Valley EC, San Angelo; CoServ EC, Corinth; Deaf Smith EC, Hereford; Deep East Texas EC, San Augustine; East Texas EC, Nacogdoches; Fannin County EC, Bonham; Farmers EC, Greenville; Fayette EC, LaGrange; Fort Belknap EC, Olney; Golden Spread EC, Amarillo; Grayson-Collin EC, Van Alstyne; Greenbelt EC, Wellington; Guadalupe Valley EC, Gonzales; Hamilton County ECA, Hamilton; Harmon EA, Hollis, Oklahoma; Heart of Texas EC, McGregor; HILCO EC, Itasca; Houston County EC, Crockett; J-A-C EC, Bluegrove; Jackson EC, Edna; Jasper-Newton EC, Kirbyville; Karnes EC, Karnes City; Lamar County ECA, Paris; Lamb County EC, Littlefield; Lea County EC, Lovington, New Mexico; Lighthouse EC, Floydada; Lower Colorado River Authority, Austin; Lyntegar EC, Tahoka; Magic Valley EC, Mercedes; Medina EC, Hondo; MidSouth EC, Navasota; Navarro County EC, Corsicana; Navasota Valley EC, Franklin; North Plains EC, Perryton; Northeast Texas EC, Longview; Nueces EC, Robstown; Panola-Harrison EC, Marshall; Pedernales EC, Johnson City; PenTex Energy, Muenster; Rayburn County EC, Rockwall; Rio Grande EC, Brackettville; Rita Blanca EC, Dalhart; Rusk County EC, Henderson; Sam Houston EC, Livingston; San Bernard EC, Bellville; San Miguel EC, Jourdanston; San Patricio EC, Sinton; South Plains EC, Lubbock; South Texas EC, Victoria; Southwest Rural EA, Tipton, Oklahoma; Southwest Texas EC, Eldorado; Swisher EC, Tulia; Taylor EC, Merkel; Tex-La EC of Texas, Nacogdoches; Tri-County EC, Azle; Trinity Valley EC, Kaufman; United Cooperative Services, Cleburne; Upshur-Rural EC, Gilmer; Victoria EC, Victoria; Wharton County EC, El Campo; Wise EC, Decatur; Wood County EC, Quitman.

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgages, and Other Security Holders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None	
12. Tax Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months	
13. Publication Title	14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
Texas Co-op Power	October 1, 2023	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies	1,897,512	1,922,849
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	1,886,539	1,912,006
<small>(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS 3541 (2-4) In-County, Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Other Classes of Mail through USPS</small>		
c. Total Paid Distribution	1,886,539	1,912,006
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	6,292	6,357
<small>(1) Free Outside-County Included on PS 3541 (2-3) Free In-County/Other Classes</small>		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	3,722	3,868
<small>(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail</small>		
f. Total Distribution	10,014	10,225
g. Total Distribution	1,896,553	1,922,231
h. Total	959	618
i. Percent Paid	1,897,512	1,922,849
	99.47%	99.47%
16. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	none	none
b. Total Paid Print and Electronic Copies	1,886,539	1,912,006
c. Total Print and Electronic Distribution	1,896,553	1,922,231
d. Percentage Paid	99.40%	99.42%
I certify that 50% of all my distribution copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.		
17. Publication of Statement of Ownership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publication required. Will be printed in the November 2023 issue of this publication.	

Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner Date
Karen Nejtek, Production Manager October 1, 2023

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Golden Hour

There are magical moments each day when the rising and setting sun kisses the surface of all it touches, transforming the world into hues of fiery gold. If you're quick, you can capture it as these Texans have. Now pull up a chair and rest a spell. It's the golden hour.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ

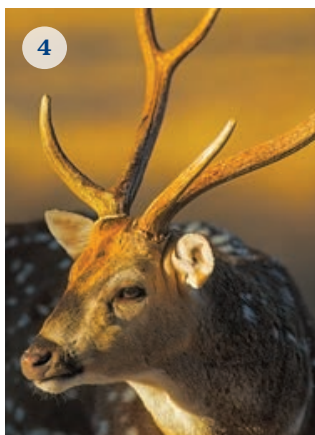
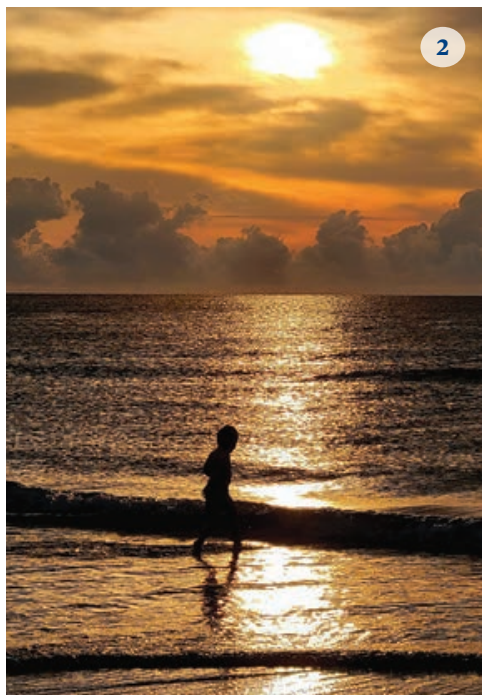


1 RICK KIEFFER
BLUEBONNET EC
"A beautiful spring sunrise over Beaver Lake."

2 ANGELA ROBERTSON
BANDERA EC
"Dancing on the water."

3 PAUL LAUDER
FARMERS EC
"Canoeing on a small lake near Anchorage, Alaska, at sunset."

4 JOHN TELFORD
CENTRAL TEXAS EC
"Taken in the Hill Country during the last light of a cold December day. One look and then he was gone."



Upcoming Contests

- DUE NOV 10 Architecture
- DUE DEC 10 Pollinators
- DUE JAN 10 Rides



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for more Golden Hour photos from readers.



A School Day Like No Other

60 years ago this month, time stopped for Texans wherever they were

BY KATHLEEN COX RICHARDSON
ILLUSTRATION BY
STEPHANIE SHAFER

ON NOVEMBER 21, 1963, the principal of Dolores School in South Austin told the teachers that President John F. Kennedy and his beautiful wife were coming to visit Austin. We were to take the children downtown from our Catholic school in the old yellow buses, stand along the main drag and wave to them as they drove through the city in an open car.

After lunch the next day, the children lined up in order in the parking lot, first grade up to eighth grade. They stood quietly, but I could sense a wave of controlled excitement rippling through us. This was an opportunity of a lifetime—seeing our hero, our president.

All eyes were on the mother superior, our principal, while we watched for her signal to begin boarding the buses. “Mother, mother!” the school secretary

called as she ran toward us. She whispered to the principal, handing her a transistor radio. Then Mother turned to us and said, “Gov. Connally has been shot. We’re going into the church to pray for him.”

Stunned, we turned around, still in orderly lines, first graders first.

We filed into the pews and knelt, hands clasped, heads bowed. Mother stood in front of us, holding the small radio close to her ear; we heard a muted voice but could not make out the words. Then she moved the radio away from her ear and said to us, her voice steady, “The president has been shot. Pray for the president.”

A universal gasp coursed through the church. The little children squirmed as they knelt. The older girls began crying, softly. The radio continued its secret words. Little candle flames trembled in their blood-red holders, poised for news.

Then we heard the worst: “The president is dead. Pray for our president, John F. Kennedy”—all of this delivered by a calm, tearless woman. Shocked, I mumbled some sort of prayer, tears running down my face.

In orderly lines, we returned to our classrooms. With fearful eyes, my second graders stared at me. They knew something bad had happened but weren’t sure what it was. A few of the girls began crying.

I swiped my face with a tissue and reassured them that I was OK. They returned to their seats. One of the boys raised his hand.

“Miss Cox.”

“Yes, Jimmy.”

“Does this mean we don’t get out of school?”

“Yes, that’s what it means.”

A hushed “aw” came in unison from out of their innocent mouths. What did they know? They were so young; they didn’t comprehend the impact of the horrible news.

Mother stopped by my classroom to tell me the children would be dismissed early.

Thank goodness. I didn’t have to continue the facade. ■

1920s Style for a 1920s Price

It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. It was here that I got the idea for our new 1920s Retrograde Watch.

Never ones to miss an opportunity, we carefully steadied our glasses of bubbly and climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch, a genuinely unique timepiece that marries timeless style with modern technology.

With its remarkable retrograde hour and minute indicators, sunburst guilloche face and precision movement, this design is truly one of a kind. What does retrograde mean? Instead of displaying the hands rotating on an axis like most watches, the hands sweep in a semicircle, then return to their starting point and begin all over again.

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MONTHLY RATES

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	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
30	8.86	7.69	9.77	8.61	14	11	18	16	58	27.68	21.78	50.44	36.04	89	62	172	117
36	9.04	8.07	10.33	9.43	15	13	22	18	59	30.35	23.38	55.51	38.76	98	68	190	129
37	9.21	8.30	10.52	9.79	15	13	22	20	60	33.50	25.27	59.99	41.71	109	73	207	140
38	9.21	8.42	11.69	10.14	16	14	24	21	61	36.50	27.13	66.44	47.11	122	84	236	155
39	9.39	8.55	12.35	10.48	17	15	25	22	62	40.06	29.18	73.91	51.33	137	92	261	172
40	9.63	8.76	12.94	11.01	18	16	27	24	63	43.47	34.39	84.94	59.61	151	100	284	187
41	10.05	8.97	13.66	11.61	20	17	30	27	64	48.24	38.53	93.16	64.39	168	110	323	206
42	10.44	9.18	14.21	12.41	22	19	33	29	65	52.56	41.15	100.34	69.75	188	122	356	229
43	10.90	9.39	14.73	13.25	24	20	38	31	66	59.15	44.62	115.13	75.41	208	135	392	248
44	11.49	9.73	15.68	14.10	26	22	41	34	67	65.66	49.09	129.28	83.65	231	148	436	272
45	12.17	10.15	16.87	15.16	28	24	46	38	68	74.33	59.65	145.11	112.92	262	174	491	322
46	12.76	10.61	17.85	15.83	30	25	49	41	69	82.98	65.91	161.68	129.33	293	188	548	352
47	13.27	11.09	19.15	16.84	33	27	54	44	70	93.20	73.30	181.25	148.72	330	204	615	387
48	13.39	11.90	20.46	17.78	35	29	58	48	71	102.45	82.71	204.38	159.34	374	235	702	443
49	13.69	12.16	21.78	18.78	38	31	63	52	72	113.68	94.13	232.46	172.23	427	272	807	512
50	14.13	12.83	23.42	20.01	40	34	69	57	73	127.55	108.24	267.15	188.15	493	319	937	596
51	15.38	13.74	25.39	21.19	45	35	78	62	74	142.08	123.01	303.50	204.84	562	367	1074	685
52	16.37	14.89	28.03	22.77	49	38	87	67	75	159.25	140.48	346.45	224.56	644	424	1235	789
53	17.47	15.89	30.97	24.82	55	44	101	77	76	200.03	174.92	418.29	276.67	785	530	1489	982
54	18.69	16.73	34.01	26.22	60	46	112	83	77	249.54	216.74	505.52	339.94	956	658	1797	1215
55	20.64	17.51	37.15	27.87	67	50	122	90	78	310.70	268.40	613.27	418.11	1167	817	2179	1504
56	22.70	19.49	41.68	31.08	74	53	139	97	79	374.78	322.52	726.16	500.00	1389	983	2578	1807
57	24.70	20.64	45.60	33.44	81	58	155	107	80	450.51	386.48	859.57	596.78	1651	1180	3050	2164

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