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Texan by Nature
inspire conservation

Trinity Valley EC
Local News
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The Winters of Their Lives They come from colder climes, and while they’re here, winter Texans volunteer and spread warmth.



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ON THE COVER Allen Williams and Laura Bush speak to schoolchildren about native plants in Pharr. Photo by Grant Miller | Courtesy Texan By Nature

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Nasty Trees: A Lesson

The devil's walking stick and Hercules club are not the same tree [*What the Devil?*, March 2018]. Both are nasty if one grabs hold of them. The Hercules club can be found along many fences, as the birds excrete the seeds while sitting on the fence. The devil's walking stick can be found in wet areas and has super nasty spines if grabbed.

RALPH RIGGS | DENSON SPRINGS
HOUSTON COUNTY EC

Thursday Night Legend

In the fall of 1971, I began my 40-year teaching career at John H. Reagan High School in Austin. W.E. Pigford, who was associate principal, became my mentor. He was truly a great, gentle man who had previously been coach and principal at the old black L.C. Anderson High School. He told me about coaching Dick "Night Train" Lane [*Thursday Night Lights*, February 2018] back in the mid-'40s and was honored to introduce Lane in 1974 when he was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Mr. Pigford shared with me some of the challenges and struggles that black players faced during the years of segregation. However, he always seemed to dwell on the positives—emphasizing the rich and rewarding experiences he and his players had.

JOHN T. WENDE | DALE
PEDERNALES EC

This took me back to my teenage years in Abilene, where my dad and I would go to Fair Park on Thursday nights and

Devil History

I enjoyed this story a lot [*What the Devil?*, March 2018]. There seems to be some devil history missing, however. Before Amistad Reservoir, there was a Devils Lake on the Devils River. There was also Lake Walk. Both were covered by Amistad.

There was also a large area on maps in the 1940s and 1950s that was labeled Hell's Half Acre. The area was southeast of Marathon and was rumored to be where the devil lived.

KENNETH HOLMES | DRIPPING SPRINGS | PEDERNALES EC



watch Woodson High play football. We would walk up and sit with the local supporters and revel in some of the comments. So long ago, and so many fond memories. Thanks for the trip back to my younger days.

EUGENE BEYER | JOHNSON CITY
PEDERNALES EC

Winning Recipe

I made Warm Gingerbread With Lemon Basil Sauce, below, [*Holiday Recipe Contest*, December 2017] today and it was delicious—moist and complemented by



the sauce and whipped cream. I left off apple compote but think it would be a great addition.

MARY DUNN VIA FACEBOOK | BOERNE
BANDERA EC

Wow-Worthy Borscht

This recipe [*Celery Borscht With Rye Croutons, Radish and Sour Cream*; Recipes; January 2018] is insanely delicious! I'd never even tasted borscht before. My husband found the recipe in the co-op magazine, and I decided to make it. Wows

all around the table—second and even third helpings.

MICHELLE FRANCO | AUSTIN
PEDERNALES EC

Vintage Look

I really like the vintage look to many of the illustrations

and pictures used in your magazine. My husband and I look forward to every monthly issue. Even better, I can review these again on your website.

D. MCBRIDE | GORDONVILLE
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

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   **Texas Co-op Power**

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WEB EXTRAS
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HAPPENINGS

Leighton's Gift for Newborns

Chris and Amy Skaggs are determined to ease the stress and helplessness parents experience when they can't constantly be present with their newborns who must spend time in neonatal intensive care units.

In 2011, Amy gave birth to premature twins, Leighton and Jaxon, who remained hospitalized in the NICU for specialized medical care. But three weeks after she was born, Leighton died from a serious infection.

To memorialize Leighton, the Skaggses, members of Grayson-Collin Electric Cooperative, started **LEIGHTON'S RIDE**, an annual motorcycle ride to raise money to purchase web cameras for NICU beds so parents can see and speak to their babies any time. Leighton's Ride is **MAY 19** in **CELINA**, north of Dallas. The 75-mile ride includes an after-party with a car show, music, raffle and food.

Since 2013, Leighton's Ride has purchased 45 webcams for Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Plano, where the twins were born. Leighton's brother, Jaxon, is 6 and doing fine as he finishes kindergarten.

INFO ► (972) 977-8156, leightonsgift.com

SPORTS SECTION

SUPER SCHOOL

Nick Foles, a 2007 graduate of Westlake High School in Austin, became the second Chaparral quarterback to be named Super Bowl MVP, joining 1997 Westlake grad Drew Brees. Foles (below), who plays for the Philadelphia Eagles, threw for three touchdowns and caught one from his own tight end in a 41-33 upset of the New England Patriots in Super Bowl LII in February. Brees won a championship with the New Orleans Saints in 2010.

The only other high school to produce two Super Bowl quarterback MVPs is Isadore Newman School in New Orleans, a private school that produced brothers Peyton and Eli Manning.



Did you know?



25 YEARS AGO: The Alamodome in San Antonio, built for an NFL team that never came, opened May 15, 1993. The arena was home to the San Antonio Spurs from 1993–2002.

Historic Election



Wilhelmina Delco was elected to the Austin school board 50 years ago, in 1968, making her the first African-American elected to public office in Austin. In 1974, she won a seat in the Texas House of Representatives, making her the first black official elected at-large in Travis County. In 1991, she was appointed speaker pro tem, becoming the first woman and the second African-American to hold the second-highest position in the Texas House.

Darkness in Big Bend

AN ESTIMATED 80 PERCENT OF AMERICANS have never seen the Milky Way. If that includes you, Big Bend Ranch State Park can help you change that.

THE PARK HAS BEEN DESIGNATED an International Dark Sky Park, joining Copper Breaks, South Llano River and Enchanted Rock state parks with this designation. Night skies are fading, and natural darkness is disappearing because of the growing glow of artificial lights.

THE INTERNATIONAL DARK-SKY ASSOCIATION works to preserve the darkness as the authoritative voice on light pollution, educating lighting designers, manufacturers, technical committees and the public about controlling light pollution.



Farewell to a Pioneer

Weatherman John Coleman might not have been a household name when he died in January, but he dramatically changed how TV viewers get their weather news.

The Alpine native was working at a Chicago station in 1972 when he developed the first green-screen weather map ever used. The innovation not only enlivened forecasts, it allowed him to become the first weatherman to display weather satellite information on-screen for viewers to see.

In 1975, he became the original meteorologist on *Good Morning America*.

Then, in 1981, in the early days of cable TV, he co-founded the Weather Channel, where today millions of Americans turn for news about hurricanes, blizzards and wildfires.



INFANT WEGAN & DARK SKY: SHAW NIELSEN, SUPER BOWL: PATRICK SMITH | GETTY IMAGES, DELCO: ERIC MORALES, UMBRELLA: HVOSTIK | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Naturally Protective

by Melissa Gaskill

When Sue Stutzman added native plants on part of her 2 acres in Magnolia in 2016, she immediately began

seeing more butterflies. Early on, she counted 35 species, then a few months later, 53.

Stutzman is an official member of the Monarch Wrangler program, launched to encourage people to create habitat for the iconic butterfly, whose numbers have dropped as much as 90 percent in the past 20 years mainly due to loss of habitat. Much of Texas lies on the route that millions of the butterflies follow on their spring and fall migrations.

The program comes from Texan by Nature, an organization founded in 2011 by former Texas and U.S. first lady Laura Bush, Katharine Armstrong and Regan Gammon. The three friends share a mutual interest in the natural resources of Texas and some serious conservation chops: Bush served as honorary chair

of the National Park Foundation; Armstrong previously chaired the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission; and Gammon had been on advisory boards for the National Park Foundation and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

Right away, the women decided not to reinvent the wheel but to find successful conservation work and encourage more of the same. The organization's official mission became "to spur Texan-led conservation that produces tangible benefits for people, prosperity and natural resources." Or, as Bush says, "to keep Texas, Texas, for the benefit of Texans and wildlife."

In one of its first projects, Texan by Nature partnered with Goldthwaite, a Central Texas city, to create the Texas Botanical Gardens, a native landscape and education program.

The organization hosted a symposium on nature and human health at the Houston Methodist Research Institute and one on monarch butterflies at Austin's Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. That event drew more than 80 organizations.

"Part of the purpose of the monarch symposium was bringing



Texan by Nature—Laura Bush’s conservation-minded organization—aims to “keep Texas, Texas”

all those groups together,” says Joni Carswell, Texan by Nature executive director. At the event, 15 partners agreed to conduct research, create habitat and offer educational workshops. Texan by Nature decided to focus on education, including encouraging landowners to plant native milkweed. Monarchs lay their eggs solely on this plant, so it is critical to their survival—as is the survival of other native plants that provide food for adult butterflies.



To further encourage monarch habitat across the state, Texan by Nature then partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the National

Clockwise from top left: Laura Bush stands among the native grasses on her ranch in Crawford. A monarch butterfly on lantana. Native milkweed is an important food resource for monarch caterpillars.

Wildlife Federation to create the Monarch Wrangler program. Landowners like Stutzman as well as civic organizations and corporations can apply for the designation.

Monarchs particularly appeal to Bush, Armstrong says, because the butterflies need prairie habitat. “Laura did extensive work developing a native prairie on the Central Texas ranch she and George [former President Bush] own. She’s not just talking about this stuff, she’s actually done it. She is an example of the kind of things she wants other people to do, what Texan by Nature is charged to do.”

While the program focuses on a single species, improving habitat for monarchs benefits many other species as well. Quail, for example, prefer the same habitat.

To date, Monarch Wranglers representing 65 residences, 14 landowners and 16 civic organizations have established



To date, Monarch Wranglers have established more than 850 acres of new monarch habitat.

Fields with milkweed abound on the BAE Systems campus in Austin, above. Laura Bush visits with representatives from George W. Bush Elementary at Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, right.

more than 850 acres of new monarch habitat.

“The idea of acres and acres can discourage some people, but a dedicated plot with nectar flowers doesn’t have to be huge to attract an amazing number of butterflies,” Stutzman says. “Overall, trees, shrubs and grasses provide shelter and can be larval host plants.” Natives, she adds, don’t require a lot of maintenance.

Corporate Monarch Wranglers include Dell and BAE Systems, representing a combined 124 acres. Stephen Ford, program director at BAE’s Austin Business Center, notes that changes inspired by the program on that campus led to long-term savings on mowing, fertilizing and watering.

Dell removed invasive species, planted milkweed and native plant plots, and reduced mowing on its 38-acre Round Rock campus. The company’s efforts also include an employee engagement program and interpretive signage that informs employees and visitors about conservation of native habitat. Physical changes to a landscape that benefit butterflies also improve the quality of work



life for employees. “When companies involve employees in their outdoor workplace environment and educate them about conservation, they can apply these ethics to their life, for example by practicing conservation at home,” Carswell says. “Research shows that it all ties back to the benefits nature has on both physical and mental health.”

Another Texan by Nature initiative, Conservation Wrangler, goes beyond monarchs, recognizing conservation projects of all types, so long as they

provide tangible returns, reach new and diverse audiences, and are science-based with measurable conservation outcomes.

According to Carswell, the organization recently decided to focus mainly on this program. “Monarchs are beautiful and we all identify them with freedom and nature itself,” she says. “But Conservation Wrangler is more general and has a broader reach. It highlights all the best conservation initiatives in Texas that are true to our mission and make an impact on our natural resources and economy.”

Taylor Keys, conservation associate for Texan by Nature, points out that the Conservation Wrangler program also reaches people in areas of Texas not on the monarch’s migration pathway.

Current Conservation Wranglers include the Texas Botanical



Gardens in Goldthwaite and Bracken Cave near San Antonio, home to the largest bat colony in the world. Texan by Nature helped generate support for the private purchase of 1,500 acres adjoining the cave that were slated for a major residential development.

For another Conservation Wrangler project, students at York Junior High School in Spring use GPS technology to help track the state bison herd in Caprock Canyons State Park, some 500 miles away. That partnership teaches students skills such as fundraising, research and use of technology; saves the park much-needed funds while increasing public awareness of the herd; and improves management of park habitat for the bison.

Lake Livingston Friends of Reservoirs, which recently became a Conservation Wrangler, works to restore and protect natural habitat in and around the 85,000-acre lake. A multigenerational group of volunteers, including high school students and inmate horticulturists from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Ellis Unit in Huntsville, has planted more than 10,000 American water-willows at 18 sites.

Another Conservation Wrangler, the Lower Rio Grande Valley Learning Landscapes Collaborative, plans to incorporate native gardens throughout school districts in the area. Five school districts in the Valley already have committed to planting native butterfly gardens on their campuses, creating the potential for more than 150 gardens and 7,550 native plants. The wildlife these attract will benefit local ecosystems, and the gardens also will be used to promote outdoor education.

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story online to find more information from Texan by Nature about monarch habitats.

Electric cooperatives can participate easily, Carswell says, by using native plant species and water conservation practices in landscaping at offices and other facilities.

The organization provides step-by-step instructions for corporate entities to become recognized as Texan by Nature businesses.

"Many of these projects need additional partnership, funding and volunteers," Carswell says, "and Texan by Nature works to pair interested businesses with vetted, science-based projects."

Texan by Nature supports its Wranglers with 12–18 months of tailored support, connecting participants with industry expertise and sharing their efforts through blogging, social media, and newspaper and magazine articles.

"Electric utilities, including co-ops, have done a lot," says Armstrong. "We want to encourage them to keep doing it and to do more. You can always do more."

"If you're a Conservation Wrangler, you are among the best stewards in Texas," she adds. "The business community in Texas wants to do the right thing but for various reasons is sometimes tentative. One focus of the organization has been to help them see what they can do. Laura is a positive force for good and viewed as an honest broker. She brings out the best in people."

For Texan by Nature, it all goes back to a love for the special nature of Texas. "Our lives are enriched by the land beyond our back doors," Bush said in a presentation about the monarch conservation plan, "and each of us has a stake in its future."

As she documents butterfly species fluttering across her yard, Stutzman couldn't agree more.

See more of **Melissa Gaskill's** work at melissagaskill.blogspot.com.

Local high school students plant American water-willows at Lake Livingston during a Conservation Wrangler event.



EAST
TEXAS
MOJO

WRITER JOE R. LANSDALE'S GRITTY PINEYWOODS FICTION

CAPTIVATES HOLLYWOOD AND INTERNATIONAL FANS

FLORENCE, ITALY, is possibly the last place you'd expect to find a bookshop named after a novel by a small-town Texas author. Florence is known for Basilica di Santa Croce, the resting place of Galileo, Michelangelo and Machiavelli, and home of a statue and funerary monument to Dante. The city's Accademia Gallery is home to Michelangelo's *David*, and its Uffizi Gallery houses Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus*.

But not far from the heart of Florence, across the Arno River at Ponte San Nicolò and a few blocks east on Via Giampaolo Orsini, sits a slice of Lone Star literary culture known as Libreria Mucho Mojo, a bookstore dedicated to the work of East Texas writer Joe R. Lansdale.

Mucho Mojo is the second book in Lansdale's Hap and Leonard series of crime novels. It's also the title of the second season of *Hap and Leonard*, a series on SundanceTV. Lansdale's writing has become significant in Italy perhaps because he garners Italian fascination with jolting horror and bare-knuckled crime fiction conveyed in a down-home East Texas drawl.

Lansdale's characters ply the muddy waters of the Sabine River and the backcountry roads that crisscross the Pineywoods.

They talk like Texans and navigate the world like Texans. If they haven't been in a tornado, they've seen one, and they're as comfortable in the 107-degree summer heat as they are facing a norther bearing down after it crosses the Red River. They don't all wear 10-gallon hats or swill Lone Star beer, but, at one point or another, every one of them has stepped over William Barrett Travis' line in the sand and is willing to fight for what they think is right, regardless of the odds.

So it's no wonder Hollywood came calling.

Lansdale's *Cold in July*, the story of an unassuming Texas everyman turned accidental hero, received film treatment in 2014, and Sundance recently aired a third season of *Hap and Leonard*. Meanwhile, several of Lansdale's other works, including *The Bottoms*, *A Fine Dark Line*, *The Thicket* and *Freezer Burn* have been optioned for the big screen. In an upcoming independent film project, *The Projectionist*, Lansdale will assume the director's chair and try his hand at translating his writing to film. And all this comes after the 2002 cult classic B-movie, *Bubba Ho-Tep*. Based on Lansdale's book of the same name, it features an elderly, spotlight-dodging Elvis and an African-American JFK (played

STORY BY E.R. BILLS | PHOTO BY WYATT MCSPADEN

"I WAS
BORN
RURAL
AND
STILL
LIVE
RURAL."

by Ossie Davis) battling a misplaced ancient Egyptian mummy in an East Texas nursing home.

"He's so incredibly prolific," says Steven L. Davis, curator of the Southwestern Writers Collection at Texas State University in San Marcos. "It's like you're in this river that's at flood stage and all these logs are floating by and each one is a Lansdale book. And you grab one and it's

the ride of your life and your favorite for a while—but then there's another and another. He's a wholly original literary voice that's created masterpieces that really explore and play with what it means to be Texan."

Even though Lansdale can boast more than 44 books, 400 short stories, and numerous articles and essays, most of his neighbors in the Lone Star State might not be familiar with his writing. He enjoys the respect of noted authors such as Stephen King and James Patterson, and counts *Game of Thrones* creator George R.R. Martin a close friend, and yet he can remain unnoticed on many main streets in Texas.

Lansdale, 66, grew up in a family of modest means in Glade-water. "I've plowed with mules, raised my own food and worked as a truck cropper," says Lansdale, currently a resident of the Nacogdoches area and a member of Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative. "I was born rural and still live rural."

Lansdale's father was hardworking but illiterate; his mother had creative leanings and encouraged him to read. At a very early age, he knew he wanted to write. "I got interested in writing through comic books first," Lansdale says. "I enjoyed the stories. As I got older, I became more interested in characters and began to read more widely. I realized that a writer could create his or her own mythology. That excited me when I was young and it still excites me today. I still like telling stories and exploring new ideas."

Lansdale dabbled at college in Tyler, Austin and Nacogdoches and worked several blue-collar jobs. He never stayed away from East Texas very long. His first novel, *Act of Love*, went to press in 1981. In *The Bottoms*, which came out in 2000, Lansdale chronicles

a series of murders in Jim Crow Texas as seen through the eyes of a constable's children. In *A Fine Dark Line* (2002), Lansdale examines life in a small Texas town from the perspective of a teenager who discovers a box of forgotten love letters. And the narrative of *Lost Echoes* (2006) details the experiences of a grimly gifted young Texan bent on getting his life back on track. The list of Lansdale's offerings goes on and on, and it's distinguished by originality, suspense and a keen eye for the darkly humorous.

Lansdale is not the first East Texas writer to attract attention at the national or international level. Trinity native William Goyen (1915–1983) published several critically acclaimed novels—the most successful of which was *The House of Breath*—and short story collections in the 1950s and, like Lansdale, was highly regarded in Europe. Dubbed "The Voice of the Pines" by *Texas Monthly* in 2015, Goyen garnered the MacMurray Award for the best first novel by a Texan for *The House of Breath* and received Guggenheim Fellowships in 1951 and 1952.

Clarksville native William Humphreys' (1924–1997) first book, *Home From the Hill*, was well-received by critics in 1958 and made into a film starring Robert Mitchum and Eleanor Parker in 1960. His second novel, *The Ordways*, also enjoyed critical success and inspired comparisons to William Faulkner.

Goyen and Humphreys left East Texas to pursue their writing careers. Lansdale stayed put, and the region informs every page of his work. "I instantly recognize the characters," says Dale Lafleur, whose Port Neches bookshop, Fleur Fine Books, houses the largest collection of Lansdale titles for sale in the state. "I grew up with those guys and have been around them all my life. They remind me of family members, neighbors and friends."

And Lafleur can attest to the popularity of Lansdale's Pineywoods noir. "Joe's stuff is always in demand," Lafleur says. "He has a huge, loyal following, and the *Hap and Leonard* series has really boosted his visibility."

"The hardest thing for a writer to do is translate the feel of a good story onto the page," Davis says. "And then it's a matter of keeping the audience on the edge of its seat. Lansdale does both. He's earthy and eloquent at the same time. He's written some of the most important fiction ever to come out of the state, stuff that puts him in the top rank of Texas writers."

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story online to see a clip from Joe Lansdale's SundanceTV series, *Hap and Leonard*.

Mark Sanders, chairman of the English department at Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, where Lansdale is a writer-in-residence, suggests that Lansdale is to East Texas what William Faulkner was to northern Mississippi. "He understands the culture of the characters," Sanders says. "The language, the folklore and the superstitions. He recreates the local color masterfully, and that's why he's probably the greatest active writer in Texas letters."

Literally and figuratively, East Texas may be a long way from Florence, Italy, but Joe Lansdale is a giant of letters in both, delivering unique universal characters in an East Texas drawl.

E.R. Bills is a writer from Aledo.



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Upcoming Contests

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The Great Pumpkin
Deadline: May 10

NOVEMBER ISSUE
Quick and Easy Holiday Appetizers
Deadline: June 10

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FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTO CONTEST

Every month, Focus on Texas features Texas photos submitted by our readers. Send us your best photos for a chance to see your entry in the magazine!

Upcoming Contests

SEPTEMBER ISSUE

Wedding Funnies

Deadline: May 10

OCTOBER ISSUE

Clocks

Deadline: June 10

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Empowering You to Stay Safe



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO JERRY BOZE

AT TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC
Cooperative, we take seriously our duty to provide reliable electricity to our members in the safest, most

affordable manner possible. Though we work hard to fulfill that promise year-round, perhaps there is no better time to reiterate our commitment than during National Electrical Safety Month.

Over these next few weeks, as our lineworkers and behind-the-scenes staff go about their vital work as steadfastly as ever,

few as 10 milliamps can cause paralysis and drowning. That is one-fiftieth the amount used by a 60-watt lightbulb. You should not swim near a dock or marina unless you know its wiring is in good repair. You should also never swim near a boat while it's running.

If you see an electric shock drowning taking place, never enter the water. You could become a victim, too. Turn the power off if possible, call 911 and throw a life preserver to the victim or reach out with a fiberglass hook to help the victim get out of the water.



we ask you, our members, to consider your role as our partners in ensuring your comfort and safety. Amid the drumbeat of daily routines, balancing work and family, we all can sometimes grow complacent about seemingly innocuous habits or practices that could bear tragic consequences.

One critically important example of this during swimming and boating season involves the risk of electric shock drowning. Docks and marinas carry electricity sources, which faulty wiring or damaged cords can release into water invisibly. As

We recommend hiring a licensed electrician to inspect home pools, spas and hot tubs and make any repairs or upgrades necessary to keep the wiring up to date and safe.

Here are a few additional tips for enjoying a day at the pool without risking your well-being or anyone else's:

- ▶ Outdoor electrical outlets (including pools and spas) should be covered and kept dry when not in use.
- ▶ Use a ground-fault circuit interrupter for electrical devices used outdoors. Portable GFCIs are available for \$12–\$30 and don't require tools for installation.
- ▶ Make sure all electrical equipment used for swimming pools, including cleaning equipment, is grounded and working properly. If you notice pool lights flickering, stay out of the water until a licensed electrician has resolved the issue.
- ▶ Electrical devices and cords should be kept at least 10 feet away from pools and spas. Whenever possible, use battery-powered devices outdoors instead.

▶ Never handle electrical devices while you are wet, either from swimming or perspiration. 60190819002

▶ Make sure there are no power lines over a swimming pool, and never swim during a thunderstorm. Thunder means lightning is close enough to put you at risk of electrocution.

Our intent in relaying this information is not to frighten but to illustrate how we all must keep a watchful eye toward safety whenever and wherever electricity is present, and remain especially vigilant in settings where its presence may not be obvious.



MOUSSABI | ISTOCK.COM

Memorial Day Monday, May 28

“A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.”

—Joseph Campbell, Author

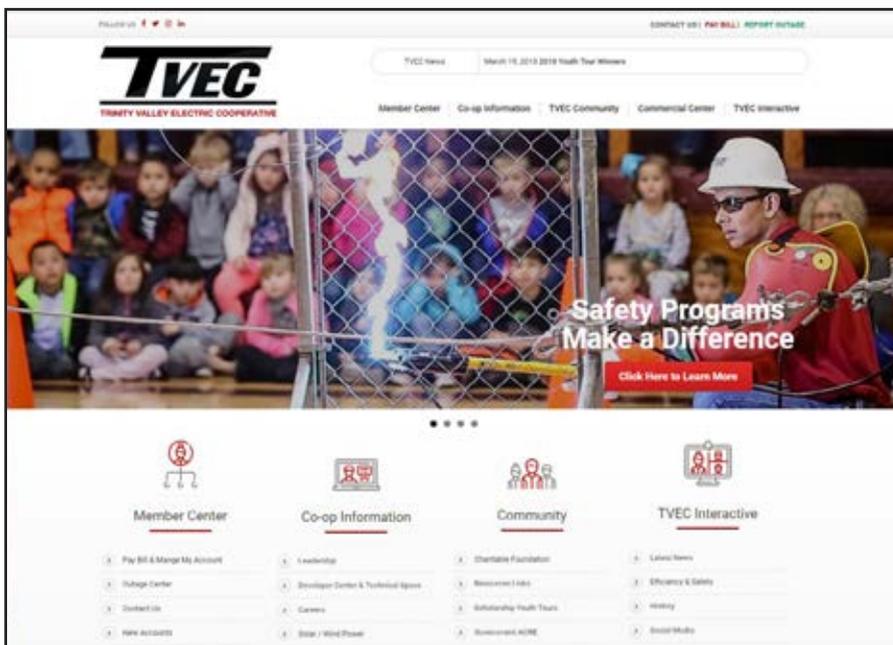


M-IMAGEPHOTOGRAPHY | ISTOCK.COM

Happy Mother’s Day Sunday, May 13

“All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.”

—Abraham Lincoln



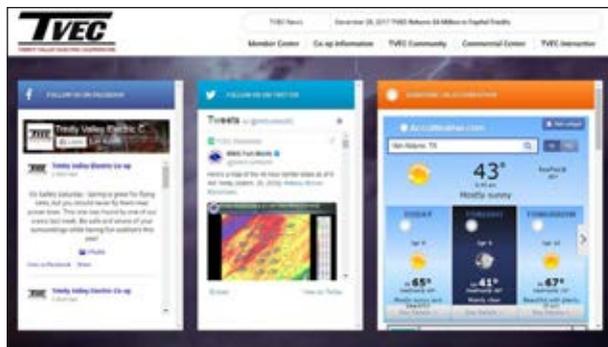
TVEC Website Gets A New Look

With more than 15,000 visitors each month, TVEC.NET is a key hub for Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative members, new area residents, developers, builders and others looking for co-op information. The site has recently had a major face lift, making it easier to navigate and adding some new features.

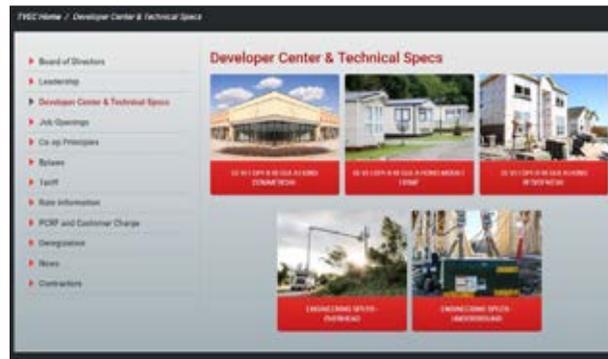
“Our website is an important part of how TVEC members interact with the co-op, and a source of information for builders, developers and members of the community,” said Jeff Lane, TVEC Assistant General Manager/Chief Communications Officer. “Our first priority was to make the website as easy to navigate as possible, while adding some features that members will find helpful.”

The new look includes integration of TVEC social media channels and improved news and information sections. Other updates include a new Outage Center and a News section for regular Co-op information updates.

Tell us what you think about the new site by email at communications@tvec.coop.



The new TVEC.NET incorporates social media and weather information to be a one-stop information hub.



Builders and developers will find specifications and information in the new Developer Center at TVEC.NET.



SCHULZIE | ISTOCK.COM

Do-It-Yourself Savings

HOME IMPROVEMENT SHOWS INSPIRE A LOT OF US TO REDECORATE, BUT IF YOU ARE A DIYer, you could put those same skills to work saving energy—and money.

Insulate Your Water Heater Tank

Unless you have a new model, your water heater tank is probably not insulated. All you'll need is an insulation blanket and a friend to help you hold it in place. First, turn off your water heater and then measure it carefully. Cut the insulation blanket to fit the tank, and then wrap it around, temporarily taping it into place. Once it's secure, cut out holes where the control panels are, then tape the blanket permanently in place. This project can reduce heat loss by 25–45 percent.

Seal Air Leaks

When you have tiny air leaks around your windows and doors, hot air can make its way into your house during summer and cold air can come in during winter. This forces your heating and cooling system to work harder to maintain a comfortable temperature. Clean the area thoroughly, removing any old, cracked caulking. Hold a caulking gun at a 45-degree angle and apply caulk while moving the gun smoothly from one side of the door or window to the other. If the caulk does not make it all the way into the crack, use a craft stick or spoon to push it in before it dries.

Install Window Film

If you have a bigger budget for home improvement projects, you should consider replacing windows with Energy Star models. If you don't, installing a window film is a great alternative. Window films block the sun's heat from coming into the house so your air conditioner does not have to consume as much energy to cool down the space. Materials are inexpensive, and installation is relatively quick and easy.

Create a Rain Barrel

Instead of letting rainwater fall to the ground, capture this valuable resource with a rain barrel. Place the barrel underneath your gutter's downspout to collect rainwater, which you can use to water plants or your lawn or to wash the dog.

Win \$25 Just for Reading

Somewhere, hidden on Pages 18–23, is a TVEC account number. Read closely. If the account number is yours, contact the Member Services Department by May 31 to receive a \$25 credit on your electric bill. Don't miss out—you could be a winner!



Quick Tips for Safety

WORKING OUTDOORS? PLAY IT SAFE!

- ▶ Use a wooden or fiberglass ladder. Remember to keep a minimum of 10 feet between the ladder and power lines.
- ▶ Never touch anyone or anything that's in contact with a downed power line! Power lines may be live, so it's best to stay a safe distance away.
- ▶ Smoke detectors should be installed in every bedroom, outside of each sleeping area and on every level of your home. Test them every month to ensure they are properly working.
- ▶ Frayed or damaged extension cords are dangerous and should never be used. Damage to the cord can expose wires and cause fire and shock hazards.
- ▶ Do you have a wobbling ceiling fan? This can wear out the fan's motor over time. Turn off the fan and tighten the screws to correct the problem.
- ▶ For outdoor equipment, use lighting and power tools that are made for outdoor use.
- ▶ DIY project for the home? Always turn off the power to the circuit that you plan to work on by switching off the circuit breaker in the main service panel.
- ▶ Flying a kite is great for outdoor fun! But remember to always stay away from overhead power lines.



SERANOVIK | ISTOCK.COM

A Full House of Energy Savings



ATTIC

In many homes, attic insulation is one of the easiest, least expensive and most effective ways to reduce your energy use year-round. Check with your electric cooperative to find out how much insulation is right for your climate.

DEN/OFFICE

Plug all electronic gadgets, such as phone and laptop chargers, printers, gaming consoles and BluRay players, into a power strip with an on/off switch. When not in use, turn the power strip off to eliminate all those energy vampires.



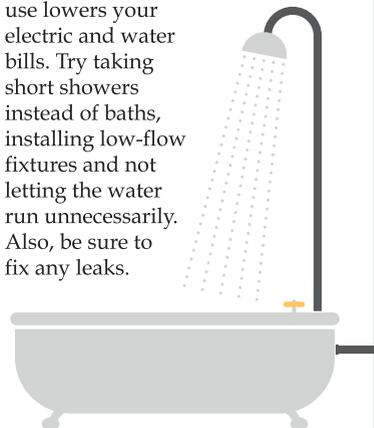
BEDROOM

Ceiling fans can help save energy all year long. In the summer, fans should rotate counterclockwise to push cool air down. In the winter, fans should rotate clockwise to help draw cool air up toward the ceiling and push the warm air that naturally rises down to you and your family.



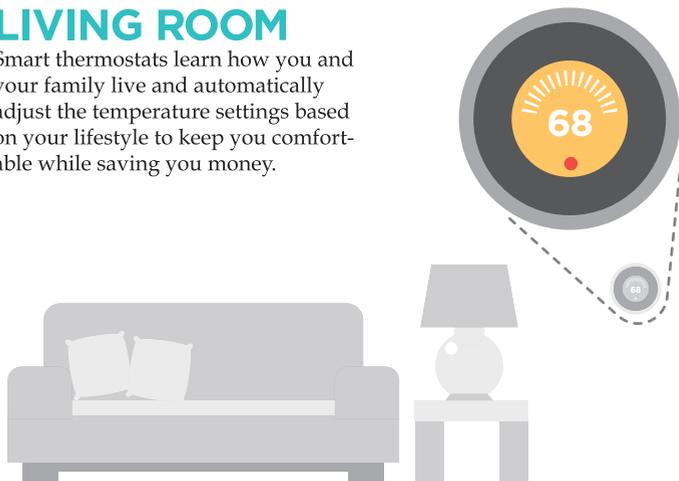
BATHROOM

Cutting hot water use lowers your electric and water bills. Try taking short showers instead of baths, installing low-flow fixtures and not letting the water run unnecessarily. Also, be sure to fix any leaks.



LIVING ROOM

Smart thermostats learn how you and your family live and automatically adjust the temperature settings based on your lifestyle to keep you comfortable while saving you money.



KITCHEN

Make sure your burner isn't bigger than the pan, and use flat-bottomed pans to maximize surface contact with the burner. Don't preheat the oven until you're ready to use it. Minimize the number of times you open and close the refrigerator or oven door.



BASEMENT



For more energy-saving tips, contact Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative or visit tvec.net.



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GREGORY DUBUIS | ISTOCK.COM

Practical Pointers for Electrical Safety Month

MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH, AND TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC Cooperative is working to raise awareness about potential home electrical hazards and the importance of electrical safety.

Our modern lives depend on electricity, and if you don't properly maintain your electrical products, they can create hazards. The good news is that eliminating electrical hazards from your home doesn't have to be difficult or expensive.

Many homes and their electrical systems were built before most modern-day home electronics and appliances were even invented. Today's increased demand for energy can overburden an older home's electrical system. If you notice flickering or dimming lights, it may indicate your home's wiring is inadequate for your needs. Have it checked by an electrician.

TVEC offers the following tips to help identify and eliminate electrical hazards to protect yourself, your family and your home:

- ▶ Make sure televisions, game systems and computer equipment have plenty of space around them for ventilation.
- ▶ Use extension cords as temporary solutions only.
- ▶ Do not place extension cords in high-traffic areas or under carpets.
- ▶ Use a surge protector to help protect your computer, televisions and other electronic equipment from damage caused by voltage changes.
- ▶ Heavy reliance on power strips is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have additional outlets installed by a licensed electrician.
- ▶ Keep liquids away from electrical items such as televisions and computers.
- ▶ Make sure a lightbulbs wattage is right for the fixture. Lightbulbs with wattages that are too high for the fixture can overheat and cause a fire.
- ▶ Create a guide for your breaker box so that you know which breaker to turn off when needed.
- ▶ Recurring tripped circuit breakers or multiple blown fuses can signify a serious and dangerous electrical problem. Contact a licensed electrician immediately. As always, TVEC encourages you and your family to stay safe.



Contact Us

For information during office hours and outages after hours

CALL US

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1-800-766-9576 toll-free

24-HOUR AUTOMATED ASSISTANCE

1-800-720-3584

24-HOUR OUTAGE REPORTING

1-800-967-9324

FIND US ON THE WEB AT
tvec.net



Edgewood Police Department Adds Technology for Finding Missing Kids

The Edgewood Police Department received an TVEC Charitable Foundation grant for an innovative program that could be instrumental in helping to locate missing children.

According to EPD Investigator Robert Dearing, the system includes a digital database to significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to get critical identification information to first responders involved in the search. The voluntary program is provided at no charge to families.

“This allows us to go into our schools, and, with the parent’s permission, digitally fingerprint and photograph the kids and give them an ID card,” Dearing said. “Along with that, we then have a database which can send all of the information to first responders with the touch of a button to email or text.”

The first 48 hours of a missing child search is considered the most important, and, according to Dearing, this system can save valuable hours during a time when parents are most stressed.

“Finding a current photo, all of these things, it takes time,” he said.

For parents with privacy concerns, Dearing noted that the system is only used for missing children searches.

“This system cannot be used for criminal investigations, so hopefully that takes care of any privacy concerns,” Dearing said. “The records are also purged from our system at the child’s 19th birthday.”

The system is portable, allowing the department to visit individual school campuses. There is also a printer, allowing officers to create flyers for searchers in a matter of minutes, and every minute is important.

“It gives us more time actually going out to find a child,” Dearing said.



Edgewood PD Investigator Robert Dearing receives a grant check from TVEC PR Representative Joy Long.

Edgewood Police Department
\$1,500

THE TVEC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION recently awarded 13 grants totaling \$32,500. Recipients of the grants including the above and:

St. Therese Catholic Charity
\$3,000

Lila Lane Outreach, Athens
\$2,000

Terrell ISD Excellence Foundation
\$3,000

Gun Barrel Quilters Guild
\$500

Lake Area Shared Ministries
\$5,000

Malakoff Teenage Baseball/Softball Association
\$500

Jesus Connection
\$4,500

Henderson County 4H Adult Leader Council
\$1,000

Cheatham Memorial Methodist Church Ramp Program
\$4,000

Grace House of Cedar Creek Lake
\$2,500

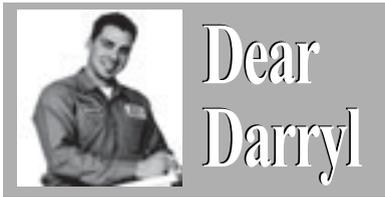
Henderson County Black History Committee
\$2,000

FBC Eustace Weekend Snack Pack Program
\$3,000

Founded in 2013, the TVEC Charitable Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization. The foundation was created to serve the community and help improve the quality of life for residents in our service area. **The foundation is funded entirely by donations from TVEC members who participate in Operation Round Up.** For more information, please call 1-800-766-9576 or visit tvec.net.

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

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



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

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

Clogged and Smelly – Corpus Christi, TX

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

This fast-acting bacteria multiplies within minutes of application and is specifically designed to withstand many of today's anti-bacterial cleaners, soaps and detergents. It comes in dissolvable plastic packs, that you just flush down your toilets. It's so cool. Plus, they actually Guarantee that it restores ANY system, no matter how bad the problem is.

SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "TXS4", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.

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Texas Co-op Power presents an illustrated *Seashells of Texas* poster by artist Aletha St. Romain, 20x16 inches, suitable for framing.

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The *Damascus Curva Knife* celebrates those legendary blades.

It uses modern Damascus steel, with the same rippled texture pattern on the blade, to create a curved folding knife that's 7 1/2" in total length. With a liner lock mechanism, which allows the knife to be opened and closed using just one hand, and an ergonomic handle made of buffalo horn and colored bone, this \$79 knife is a trophy for any hunter or collector.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the impeccable craftsmanship of Damascus steel. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price. But we believe that once you hold the *"The most common aspects of Damascus steel knives that enthusiasts consider ideal are the aesthetics and high performance."* — Knife Informer



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"Very hefty, well-built knife and sheath. Extremely good-looking and utilitarian."

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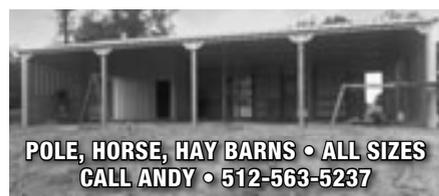
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‘He Was About the Work’

Thomas Jefferson Rusk wore many hats in Texas’ early days

BY ROBERT SPRINGER

THE EARLY TEXAS REPUBLIC WAS RIFE with partisanship, and to make it function effectively, the mercurial Sam Houston needed a get-the-job-done counterweight. Fortunately, Thomas Jefferson Rusk came forward.

“Houston was flamboyant. He was larger than life,” says Scott Sosebee, associate professor of history at Stephen F. Austin State University. “Rusk was your typical genteel Southerner.”

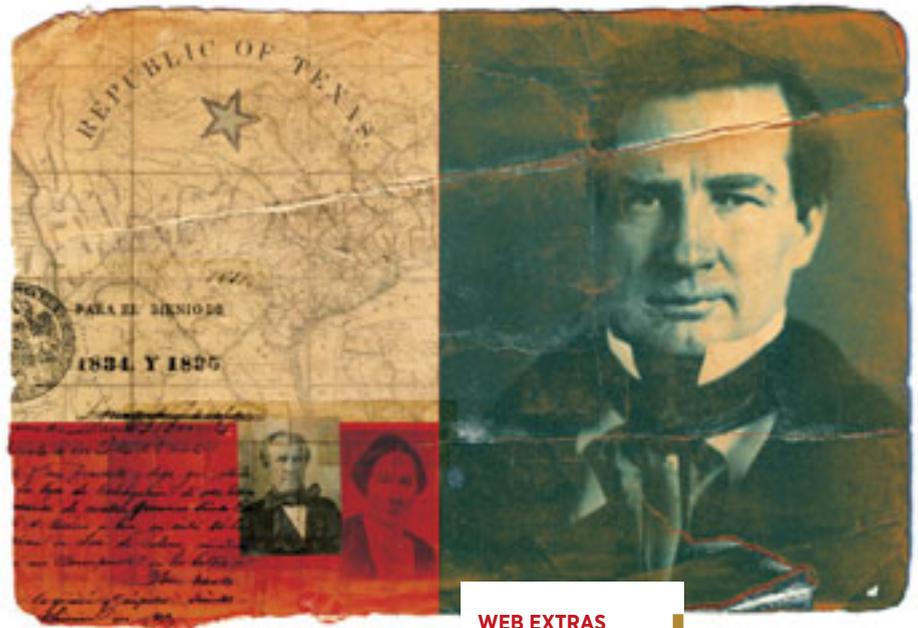
Rusk adapted his skills to a range of challenges. He served as secretary of war for the Texas Republic, inspector general for the army for the Nacogdoches District, chief justice of the Supreme Court for the Texas Republic and U.S. senator from the state of Texas. Rusk was mentioned as a presidential candidate in 1856, putting him on the national stage.

Though a gifted politician, he was also a “moody man and prone to bouts of despair,” says Sosebee.

In 1834, Rusk came from Georgia to the Mexican territory of Texas to recover money embezzled by his business partners. He caught one of the men, who informed Rusk that all of the money had been lost in a card game, according to Charles Swanlund, professor of history at Blinn College in Bryan. Ruined back home, Rusk learned he could get a couple thousand acres for staying in Texas, so he remained in Nacogdoches.

Rusk sensed opportunity in Texas. “There was a chance for him to advance, particularly if the Texas revolution was successful,” says Swanlund. “There was plenty of work for a man like Rusk to do in Texas at that time.”

After organizing recruits to help Stephen F. Austin, Rusk was quickly promoted to inspector general for the army for the Nacogdoches District then to sec-



retary of war for the Texas Republic.

Rusk then joined Houston to help defeat Santa Ana at the Battle of San Jacinto. Swanlund says Rusk wasn’t as volatile as Houston, and this served him well in dealing with his more famous colleague. “They’re both drinking men, and that certainly gave them common ground,” he says. “Rusk was just kind of a middle-of-the-road, down-to-earth guy, and he tried to not really get involved in the personal politics. He was about the work.”

Given the opportunity to become the first president of the Republic of Texas, Rusk declined. He had arrived in Texas to rebuild his personal fortune and had been too busy fighting the war to achieve his goal, so he opened a law practice to support his family. “He always seems to be more comfortable in the background,” says Swanlund.

Rusk played so many roles in Texas history that it’s difficult to choose a defining one. Sosebee believes that Rusk himself would choose secretary of war, an important role that he enjoyed despite his lack of military training. “He liked that military bearing, and being the secretary of war allowed that,” Sosebee says.

Swanlund and Sosebee agree that Rusk’s

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website to learn more about Thomas Jefferson Rusk.

legacy-defining contribution was as one of the two first senators from the new state of Texas (Houston was the other). True to

his get-the-work-done nature, Rusk was instrumental in the Compromise of 1850, according to Swanlund. As part of the accord, Texas was persuaded to give up territory north of the Missouri Compromise parallel and any claims on New Mexican lands. In return, the federal government would assume Texas’ war debt of \$10 million. Rusk was such an effective senator that his term was renewed before it expired, according to Swanlund.

In 1856, while Rusk was in Washington, D.C., he received word his wife had died. Later, still deeply saddened by the loss, Rusk committed suicide at his ranch in Nacogdoches.

Rusk managed to thrive in hyper-partisan times with the volatile and contradictory Houston as a contemporary. Among the Republic of Texas’ unsung founders, Rusk has a notable standing.

Robert Springer is a freelance writer who loves Tex-Mex and armadillos.

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Cake Walk

SPRING USHERS IN CELEBRATIONS—graduations, baby and bridal showers, and special confections made just for mom. What better way to celebrate your loved ones than with a luscious, beautiful homemade cake? This month's winning recipes range from a three-tiered masterpiece perfumed with lemon and rosemary to a pretty pink cake flavored (and colored) with cherry juice. Moist and fragrant from brandy-plumped prunes and citrus zest, the following pound cake is one of my favorites. With a dusting of powdered sugar, it's pretty enough to serve at brunch or a backyard barbecue. I like it best for breakfast (is that wrong?) with a cup of strong coffee. Note that the brandy-plumped prunes should be prepared a day in advance, and feel free to substitute dried cherries or cranberries.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Drunken Prune Pound Cake

BRANDY-PLUMPED PRUNES

16 ounces prunes
Brandy to cover

POUND CAKE

3 cups flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
2 cups sugar
1 cup dark brown sugar
4 eggs
1 cup buttermilk, well-shaken
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon almond extract
Grated zest of 1 medium orange
Grated zest of 1 lemon
½ cup chopped brandy-plumped prunes

1. PRUNES: Place prunes in a clean, sealable glass jar and pour brandy over the top until it covers them by about an inch.

2. CAKE: Preheat oven to 325 degrees and position the rack in the lower third

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Recipes

Cake Walk



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

ALI WHITEHEAD | TRINITY VALLEY EC

Eleven-year-old Ali Whitehead enjoys the unique combination of flavors in this three-tiered show-stealer, including rosemary from her grandmother's herb garden. "I like to bake this cake around the holidays and any time my parents or grandparents will let me make a mess in the kitchen," she says.

Lemon Rosemary Cake With Cream Cheese Frosting

BATTER

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (2¼ sticks) butter, softened
- 2½ cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 4 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅜ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary

FROSTING

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 8 cups powdered sugar
- 2¼ teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest

1. BATTER: Preheat oven to 350 degrees; grease and flour three 9-inch round baking pans.

2. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the

eggs and yolk, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

3. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt and baking soda. Alternating with the sour cream, add dry ingredients to butter mixture, beating well after each addition. Mix in lemon juice, zest and rosemary.

4. Divide the batter evenly between the three pans and bake 25–30 minutes, or until edges begin to brown. (For even baking, rotate the pans after 15 minutes.) Cool the cakes for 10 minutes in pans before inverting onto a wire rack to cool completely.

5. FROSTING: Beat together cream cheese and butter until fluffy. Add powdered sugar, 2–3 cups at a time, along with lemon juice and zest and mix until smooth. Spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake, and garnish with lemon and rosemary. ▶ Serves 16.



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\$100 Recipe Contest

October's recipe contest theme is **The Great Pumpkin**. Pumpkin appears in just about everything, from quick breads to creamy soups—even lattes! Send us your favorite recipe that makes the most of this versatile ingredient. The deadline is **May 10**.

ENTER ONLINE at TexasCoopPower.com/contests; MAIL to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; FAX to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

of oven. Apply cooking spray to a tube or Bundt pan, or coat generously with butter and flour (tapping out excess).

3. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, salt and baking soda. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream butter and sugars at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Beat in eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Add the flour mixture alternately with the buttermilk. Mix in extracts and zests and fold in the chopped prunes.

4. Pour in tube or Bundt pan and bake for 1 hour, until the cake pulls away from the pan and a toothpick inserted in center of cake comes out clean. ▶ Serves 8–10.

COOK'S TIP Plumping dried fruit in brandy or another spirit is an old-fashioned way of preserving them. I keep a container of these in my pantry—for this cake and as a fast topping on vanilla or coffee ice cream. Kept in a cool, dark place, the prunes will keep for months. Wrapped in plastic, this cake keeps well (actually improving in flavor) for about five days.

Cherry Almond Cake With White Chocolate Custard Filling

LARKANN STEFFENS | VICTORIA EC

Maraschino cherry juice imparts a pale pink hue to this elegant cake. Chopped cherries and almonds lend an appealing texture, while the whipped topping adds a festive element. For best results, prepare the white chocolate custard a day in advance so it has plenty of time to chill before assembly.

CUSTARD

- 1¼ cups sugar
- 1½ tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1½ cups whole milk
- 2 egg yolks
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅔ cup white chocolate morsels
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, cut into slices

BATTER

- ½ cup coarsely chopped sliced almonds
- 16 maraschino cherries, cut into eighths
- 16 whole maraschino cherries, drained
- ¾ cup whole milk



- ¼ cup maraschino cherry juice
- 3 cups cake flour, sifted
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup (about ⅔ stick) butter, softened
- ⅓ cup vegetable shortening
- 1½ cups sugar
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract
- 5 egg whites

TOPPING

- ¾ cup heavy cream
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract

1. **CUSTARD:** Whisk sugar, cornstarch and salt together in a small saucepan. Turn heat to medium-high and whisk in milk and egg yolks. Stir constantly, until mixture is thickened and bubbly, about 10–15 minutes.
2. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla and white chocolate morsels, and whisk in butter slices one at a time. Place the custard in a bowl, covering with plastic

- wrap to prevent a skin, and refrigerate until cold.
3. **BATTER:** Combine almonds and cut cherries in a small bowl; set aside. Place whole cherries on paper towels to drain. Combine milk and cherry juice in a measuring cup and set aside.
 4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans, or line with parchment.
 5. Sift flour, baking powder and salt into a bowl and set aside. In a large bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the flour mixture alternately with the cherry milk mixture, beginning and ending with dry ingredients, blending well after each addition. Add almond extract.
 6. Using a clean bowl and beaters, whip egg whites until stiff.
 7. Fold almonds and cherries into batter, then fold in egg whites. Divide batter between the two pans and bake 30–35 minutes or until springy to touch.
 8. Cool cakes in pans for 5 minutes, then invert onto wire racks to cool completely

- (carefully peel away parchment, if using).
9. **TOPPING:** Using beaters or a standing mixer, whip the heavy cream, powdered sugar and extracts to a thick whipped cream for piping, or slightly smoother consistency for spreading. Refrigerate the whipped cream until you're ready to use it.
 10. To assemble cake, gently spread 1 cup of cold custard over the first layer of cooled cake, allowing some to drip down sides. Place the second layer on the cake and gently spread another cup of custard over the top. Pipe or spread whipped cream onto the cake, and garnish with the whole cherries. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving. ▶ Serves 10–12.

COOK'S TIP Store any leftovers in the refrigerator for up to three days.

WEB EXTRAS ▶ Read this story online to see a recipe for Chile Chocolate Cake With Cherry Chipotle sauce. Plus you'll find dozens more cakes in our archive of more than 700 recipes.



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 Rebekah Stewart | San Bernard EC
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Go to TexasCoopPower.com for details and official rules.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com. Each entry MUST include your name, address and phone number, plus the name of your Texas electric cooperative, or it will be disqualified. Specify which category you are entering, Sweet or Savory, on each recipe. Mail entries to: Texas Co-op Power/Holiday Recipe Contest, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You can also fax entries to (512) 763-3401. Up to three total entries are allowed per co-op membership. Each should be submitted on a separate piece of paper if mailed or faxed. Mailed entries all can be sent in one envelope. No email entries will be accepted. For official rules, visit TexasCoopPower.com. **Entry deadline: June 8, 2018.**



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HAIR AND MAKEUP? CHECK. HEELS AND FORMALS? CHECK. Dressing up or down, arriving by limo or tractor, Texans love a high school prom. It's a rite of passage and a celebration of youth; it's time to get a little crazy and cut loose. **GRACE ARSIAGA**

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

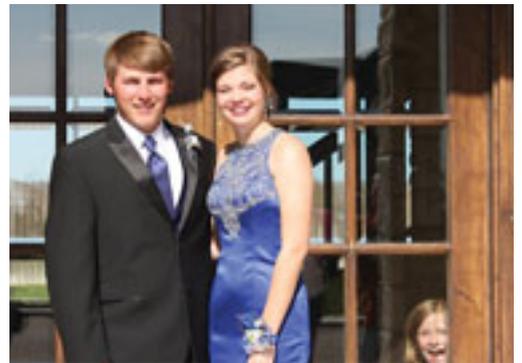
◀ **CAROLYN SCHLINKE**, Karnes EC: "My granddaughter, Caryn Smart, 17, took her favorite show bull, Zeus, to the Runge High School prom so she could take pictures with him."

▼ **KARA KLEIMANN**, San Bernard EC: "A little rain did not keep this group from having fun at their high school prom in Columbus."



▲ **BONNI WILSON**, Wise EC: Prada pre-prom in Valentine

▶ **SUSAN O'BRIEN**, Lyntegar EC: "My granddaughter, Jayli, and her date, Corbin, posing before the 2017 Spearman prom are surprisingly joined by Jayli's little sister, Brooklyn."



▲ **LOIS JACKSON**, Cherokee County EC: "When brothers Tate and Cade Duncan headed to the prom, they decided to go in true redneck style!"

UPCOMING CONTESTS

SEPTEMBER	WEDDING FUNNIES	DUE MAY 10
OCTOBER	CLOCKS	DUE JUNE 10
NOVEMBER	ABANDONED BUILDINGS	DUE JULY 10

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

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



Pick of the Month Music in the Park

Comfort May 8–Oct. 9
(830) 285-9345, gaddischurch.org/events

Music in the Park starts its third season with the Almost Patsy Cline Band. The concerts, at the gazebo in Comfort Park, are held every second Tuesday and feature a different artist each month. They are sponsored by Gaddis United Methodist Church. Bring lawn or camp chairs and enjoy the music.

May 9

Kerrville Circle of Service Dinner,
(830) 315-5762, kerrvillekroc.org

Marble Falls [9–12] MayFest,
(830) 693-2815, marblefalls.org/mayfest

10

Grapevine Education Express,
(817) 431-3340, educationexpresstx.com

Crockett [10–12] Lions Club PRCA
Rodeo, (936) 544-5641,
facebook.com/crockettnoonlions

11

Decatur [11–13] Texas Scottish Festival
& Highland Games, (469) 424-1930,
texasscots.com

12

Edinburg Music Festival, (956) 383-6246

Greenville Audie Murphy Day,
(903) 450-4502, amacmuseum.com

Kyle Squeeze Me on the Square,
(512) 262-3939, cityofkyle.com/recreation

Ladonia Spring 20 Mile Garage Sale,
(214) 226-2046, cocladonia.org

Round Top A Night With the Tribute
to George Strait, (979) 249-3390,
stonecellarwines.com

Wimberley Garden Club Garden Tour,
(512) 842-3142, wimberleygardenclub.org

Beaumont [12–26] *Young Frankenstein*,
(409) 833-4664, beaumontcvb.com

May 18
Columbus
Magnolia Days
Festival



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Visit our website for a tour map and information on our historic schools and community centers.

All schools listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
Member of Country School Association of America.

WWW.HISTORICSCHOOLS.ORG

13

Palestine Throw Mama on the Train, (855) 632-7729, texasstaterailroad.net

16

Vernon [16-19] Santa Rosa Roundup 74th Rodeo and Parade, (940) 552-6868, santarosaroundup.com

18

Seguin Hotshot's Reunion and Fish Fry, (830) 379-6382, seguinchamber.com

Clifton [18-19] Syttende Mai Parade and Celebration, (254) 652-3499, bosquecountynst.org

Columbus [18-19] Magnolia Days Festival, (979) 732-8385, columbus-texas.org

Star [18-20] Cowpokes for Kids Trail Ride, (325) 437-1852, cowpokesforkids.com

19

Navasota First Responders Day, (936) 870-4700, firstrespondersdaytx.com

San Marcos [19-20] Dirt Dauber Clay Festival, (512) 558-1723, eyeofthedog.com

20

Bleiberville VFD Fish Fry, (979) 249-6382, bellville.com



25

West Tawakoni [25-26] VFD Hand Fishing Tournament, (972) 670-1715, facebook.com/laketawakonihandfishing

26

Cuero Main Street Farmers Market, (361) 275-2112, cuero.org

Lewisville Fiesta Charra, (972) 219-3401, cityoflewisville.com

Hubbard [26-28] Memorial Day Weekend Trade Days, (254) 576-2521, hubbardcity.com

31

Tyler [31-June 3] Texas State Federation Square and Round Dance Festival, (972) 822-3533, squaredancetx.com

June

1

Amarillo [1-2] Coors Cowboy Club Ranch Rodeo, (806) 376-7767, coorsranchrodeo.com

Bonham [1-2] Highway 82 Yard Sale, (903) 583-9830, visitbonham.com

2

Little Elm Craft Brew & Que, (214) 618-1401, lakefrontlittleelm.com

McKinney Date Night at the Heard, (972) 562-5566, heardmuseum.org

Submit Your Event!

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

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Presidential Aspirations

Denison invites visitors to tour Eisenhower's birthplace

BY DAWN COBB

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER CASTS A LONG presidential shadow over the North Texas town of Denison, but he's not the only famous former resident. For a contrast of historic characters with local ties, consider that gunfighter and gambler John Henry "Doc" Holliday once practiced dentistry here.

Denison's Eisenhower monument, at 16 feet tall, offers the first and most visible clue from Interstate 75 that Denison relishes its role as birthplace to the 34th president.

Denison also is known as Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger's childhood home. The airline pilot achieved international fame in January 2009 when he successfully landed the disabled Flight 1549 in the Hudson River, saving all 155 people on board.

Even though Eisenhower's connection to Denison is tenuous because his family moved back to Abilene, Kansas, when the future president was only a year old, the family's history is on display in a white two-story house where he was born in 1890. The house joins several historic buildings, including a general store at 609 S. Lamar Ave., in the **Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site**. Guided tours of the home, which features period furniture, relate the story of the Eisenhower family's stay in Denison.

The historic park's perennial plant gardens attract monarch butterflies in the area as they follow their seasonal migration. A bronze of Eisenhower is surrounded by benches, convenient for a moment of reflection.

For a more vigorous experience, explore **Eisenhower State Park's** 420 acres, where wooded areas invite hiking or camping and the nearby lake allows access for boaters.

A 15-minute drive south and east from the state park delivers you to **Grayson County Frontier Village**, where more than a



The President Dwight D. Eisenhower Veterans Monument in Denison

dozen buildings dating to the 19th century were relocated to the property by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s to create a historic town on a 17-acre park.

The village includes a log cabin, a jail and a school. Just outside the school's door is a bell affixed to a pole with a rope attached to ring the children in for lessons. Nearby Loy Lake is open for fishing, kayaking and picnicking.

Back in Denison, you'll find a green and yellow Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad train parked on tracks behind the brick **Katy Depot** on Main Street, once the center of a regional transportation hub. **The Red River Railroad Museum**, on the back side of the Katy Depot, preserves pieces of history from when the building reigned as a Union Passenger Depot (i.e., a train station used by more than one railroad company or line).

The MKT Railroad established the rail-

head in Denison in 1872, and the town grew up around the station. In 1901, Denison established an interurban railway that ran from Denison to Sherman. The town itself is named for MKT Vice President George Denison.

The depot continued as a bustling business until the late 1980s, when a merger shuttered the station for good. The building, with landscaped grounds punctuated by historical markers, now serves as an events center.

"Doc" Holliday opened a dentist's office in downtown Denison after leaving Dallas under a cloud, but the exact location is neither known nor marked—befitting, in some ways, his status as an Old West legend.

Dawn Cobb is the PR communications specialist at CoServ, the electric co-op in Corinth.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Visit our website to see our March 2018 story about how a Denison viticulturist saved the French wine industry.

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