

METER READERS STILL  
MAKE THE ROUNDS

CHET GETS CHARMED  
BY POLKA MUSIC

CUERO SHARES ITS TIES  
TO TURKEYS

# Texas Coop Power

FOR TRINITY VALLEY EC MEMBERS

OCTOBER 2022

## Monarch Matriarch

One woman's quest to protect  
the butterfly's future



TRINITY  
VALLEY EC  
NEWS

SEE PAGE 18



# MUELLER STEEL BUILDINGS AND METAL ROOFING



## READY TO BUILD YOUR **DREAM?**

With Mueller, you have access to a wide range of high-quality steel buildings, residential metal roofing, and components. From complex buildings to self-storage units, from living spaces to backyard buildings, Mueller manufactures our products to ensure years of reliability. We invite you to see our many options at [muellerinc.com](http://muellerinc.com), then call or come by one of our 36 locations.



Learn more at: [www.muellerinc.com](http://www.muellerinc.com)  
877-2-MUELLER (877-268-3553)

# October 2022



12

## 08 Funnel Vision

How one woman is earnestly spreading the word about monarch migrations through Texas.

By *Laura Tolley*  
Photos by *Julia Robinson*

## Reading Between the Lines

Decades after new tech started taking over, meter readers are still a valued part of co-op connections.

By *Chris Burrows*  
Illustration by *Michael Koelsch*

ON THE COVER  
Monika Maeckle in her pollinator-friendly backyard in San Antonio.  
Photo by *Julia Robinson*

ABOVE  
Meter readers have ready friends in Co-op Country. Ready enemies, too.  
Illustration by *Michael Koelsch*

04

**Currents**  
The latest buzz

06

**TCP Talk**  
Readers respond

18

**Co-op News**  
Information plus energy and safety tips from your cooperative

29

**Footnotes in Texas History**  
Bison at the Brink  
By *W.F. Strong*

30

**TCP Kitchen**  
Nuts About Nuts  
By *Megan Myers*

34

**Hit the Road**  
Oodles of Oompahs  
By *Chet Garner*

37

**Focus on Texas**  
Photo Contest: Hometown Pride

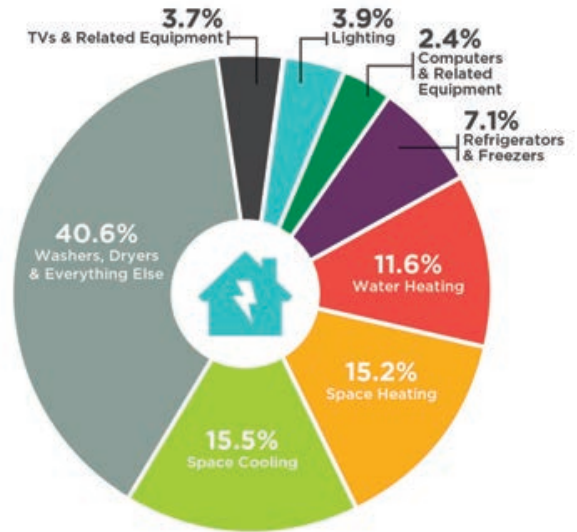
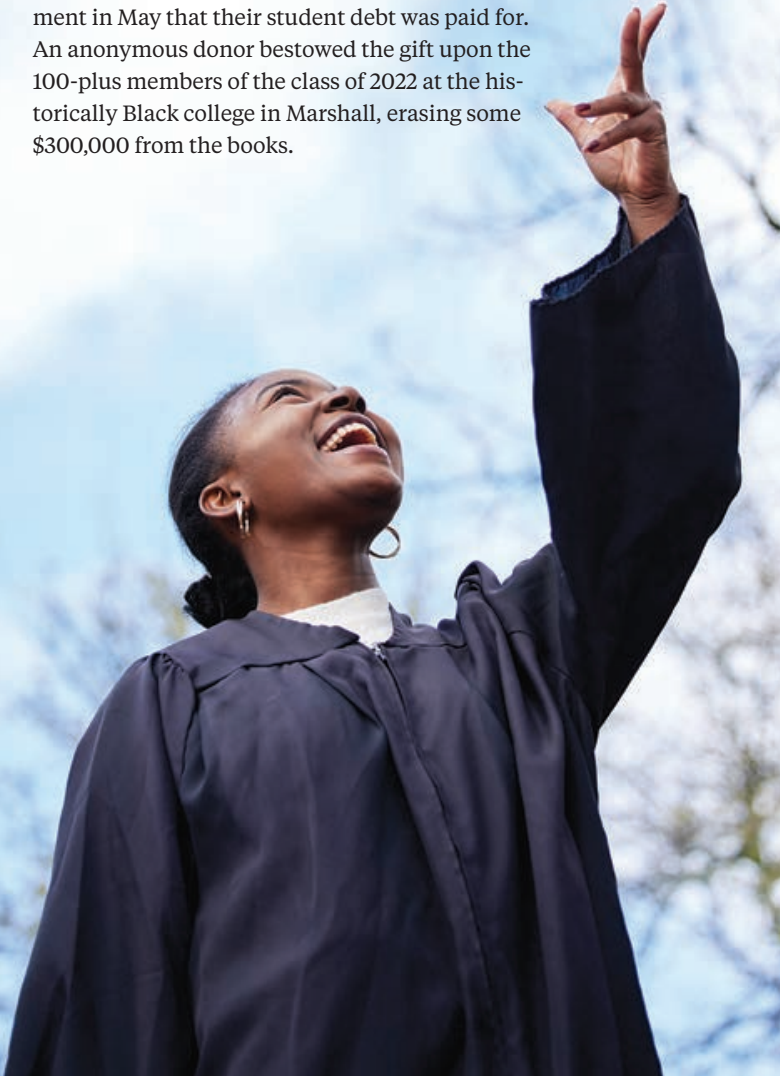
38

**Observations**  
Not for the Birds  
By *Caytlyn Phillips*



# Extra Credit

**WILEY COLLEGE** graduates learned at commencement in May that their student debt was paid for. An anonymous donor bestowed the gift upon the 100-plus members of the class of 2022 at the historically Black college in Marshall, erasing some \$300,000 from the books.



## How We Use Electricity

This National Co-op Month, your electric cooperative and trusted energy adviser wants to show you where your money goes—and where you might focus on cutting back.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

### THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT I EVER GAVE WAS ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our August prompt: **The song that takes me back to high school is ...**

1999 by Prince. I graduated high school in 1999, and we played the song all year.

JENNIFER MAYFIELD OKERE  
VIA FACEBOOK

*Before the Next Teardrop Falls* by Freddy Fender.

PEGGY DARSEY  
VIA FACEBOOK

*Bohemian Rhapsody* by Queen. Every time I hear the song, I have to sing along and let my mind wander back to those glorious high school days.

JACINDA MOORE  
TRI-COUNTY EC  
GRANBURY

*Don't Bring Me Down* by Electric Light Orchestra. It was playing every day at lunch on our cafeteria jukebox.

LESLIE CHATHAM JAMES  
WISE EC  
PARADISE

To see more responses, read Currents online.



## TCP Contests and More

ENTER CONTESTS AT  
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM



### \$500 RECIPE CONTEST

Cast-Iron Cooking

### FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS

First Responders

### SKILLET GIVEAWAY

Enter now to win a Texas-made cast-iron skillet, sponsored by Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co.



## Gourd as Gold

When Sherry Nelson attended a Texas Gourd Society show in 2017, she was stunned by the gourds she saw. "It's just amazing what people can do with them," she said. "But I thought I could never do that."

She was hooked. The Kerrville native and Central Texas Electric Cooperative member joined TGS and took classes. After a *Texas Co-op Power* illustration by David Danz in March 2021 caught her eye, she reached out to TCP for permission before spending three weeks burning it into a gourd for a Kerr Arts and Cultural Center contest in May.

It won—beating out 151 other gourds. "I'm going to enjoy this win for a while," she said.



# Rangers Flashback

**HALL OF FAME** outfielder Ted Williams was a phenomenal baseball player, but he met little success as a manager.

His four-year managerial career started with the Washington Senators in 1969 and ended 50 years ago this month, in 1972, when the Senators relocated to Arlington and became the Texas Rangers.

Williams went out with a whimper, losing the season finale 4-0 on October 4 and finishing with a 273-364 record as manager.

## Did You Know?

That Rangers team played in Arlington Stadium, a converted minor-league ballpark originally called Turnpike Stadium. Whatever the name, the summer heat plagued players and fans alike. One writer called the outfield stands "the world's largest open-air roaster."





WYATT MCSPADDEN

**Why'd the Chicken Cross the Pit?**

“I have tried barbecued chicken at Kreuz Market and around the state. Most (including Kreuz) do a great job, but the best is at Mumphord’s Place BBQ in Victoria.”

JOHN GEORGE  
VICTORIA EC  
VICTORIA

**Raving and Squawking**

If you haven't tried the Kreuz Market barbecued chicken, you need to [*Why'd the Chicken Cross the Pit?*, July 2022]. It's great.

Tom Faulkner  
Pedernales EC  
Leander

We were motivated to visit Kreuz after reading your glowing endorsement. What a disappointment. The chicken did not taste any better than a \$5 deli chicken from Sam's Club.

Gary and Gaye Kriegel  
Pedernales EC  
Williamson County

Walked a few yards onto it once and crawled back [*Colorado's Texas Bridge*, July 2022].

MARTHA BEIMER  
VIA FACEBOOK

**The Coach's Coach**

The story about Tom Landry and his senior football season at Mission High School does not identify who his coach was [*The Most Glorious Autumn*, August 2022]. I believe it was my uncle, Robert Martin, as he was a lifelong friend of Landry and took Landry's father to many Cowboys games.

Ralph E. Martin Jr.  
Medina EC  
New Braunfels

**EDITOR'S NOTE** Landry's coach at Mission was indeed Robert L. "Bob" Martin.

**The Cotton Patch**

My family farmed west of Krum [*Prized Fibers*, July 2022]. Many days I was in the cotton patch hoeing weeds. I "missed" out on the picking as Dad hired a crew of pickers.

Ken Fairman  
Wise EC  
Krum



FOCUS ON SPORT | GETTY IMAGES

**TCP WRITE TO US**  
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power  
1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor  
Austin, TX 78701

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

Facebook Instagram Twitter YouTube Texas Co-op Power

**TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Chair Kelly Lankford, San Angelo • Vice Chair Neil Hesse, Muenster  
Secretary-Treasurer Avan Irani, Robstown • Board Members Dale Ancell, Lubbock  
Julie Parsley, Johnson City • Doug Turk, Livingston • Brandon Young, McGregor

**PRESIDENT/CEO** Mike Williams, Austin

**COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Mike Ables, Bellville • Matt Bentke, Bastrop • Marty Haught, Burlson  
Gary Miller, Bryan • Zac Perkins, Hooker, Oklahoma • John Ed Shinspaugh, Bonham  
Rob Walker, Gilmer • Buff Whitten, Eldorado

**MAGAZINE STAFF**

**Vice President, Communications & Member Services** Martin Bevins

**Editor** Chris Burrows • **Associate Editor** Tom Widlowski

**Production Manager** Karen Nejtek • **Creative Manager** Andy Doughty

**Advertising Manager** Elaine Sproull

**Communications Specialist** Alex Dal Santo • **Communications Specialist** Suzanne Featherston

**Print Production Specialist** Grace Fultz • **Communications Specialist** Travis Hill

**Food Editor** Megan Myers • **Digital Media Specialist** Caytlyn Phillips

**Communications Specialist** Jessica Ridge • **Senior Designer** Jane Sharpe

**TEXAS CO-OP POWER** Volume 79, Number 4 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power's* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** Subscription price is \$4.44 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50. Individual copies and back issues for the previous 12 months are available for \$3 each.

**POSTMASTER** Send address changes to *Texas Co-op Power* (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of *Texas Co-op Power* showing old address and key numbers.

**ADVERTISING** Advertisers interested in buying display ad space in *Texas Co-op Power* and/or in our 30 sister publications in other states, contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251. Advertisements in *Texas Co-op Power* are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication. Product satisfaction and delivery responsibility lie solely with the advertiser. © Copyright 2022 Texas Electric Cooperatives Inc. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of it is expressly prohibited without written permission. Willie Wirehdand © Copyright 2022 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.





# HELPING YOU PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST



**TEXAS FARM BUREAU®  
HEALTH PLANS**

New, Affordable Health Care Coverage Options for Texans!

- ✓ Individual and Family Plans
- ✓ Dental and Vision Options
- ✓ Better Coverage
- ✓ Better Rates
- ✓ Better Service

For more information and to get a quote, click or call today!

**tfbhp.com**  
**877.500.0140**



## Fredericksburg

### Getaway Contest

Enter online for a chance to win a two-night getaway in Fredericksburg, including midweek lodging for two, dining and things to do.

**TCP** *Enter Today*  
**TexasCoopPower.com/contests**



A woman wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat, glasses, a white long-sleeved shirt, and blue patterned shorts stands in a natural, wooded area. A brown and black dog is sitting on the ground next to her. The background features a large, gnarled tree on the left and a rocky hillside on the right. The overall scene is bright and natural.

# Funnel Vision

How one woman is earnestly spreading the word about monarch migrations through Texas





**M**onika Maeckle found her passion in a dry streambed of the San Saba River.

It was October 2004 when she and her husband drove from their ranch, a Hill Country getaway on the Llano River, over to a friend’s place near tiny Hext for a “tagging event.” She didn’t know what that was really, but Maeckle likes an adventure and loves the outdoors.

At sunset, monarch butterflies started cascading from the sky. The group caught them in long nets, carefully plucking the bright orange marvels out to tag their wings with coded stickers. They tagged a couple hundred monarchs that evening, then set them free. Maeckle was completely smitten.

“It was a passion play from the beginning,” says Maeckle, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative. “It was this magical thing. I was entranced.”

The San Antonio-based communications and marketing pro spent the following months reading and researching everything she could find about the monarchs’ annual migration to Mexico. A year later, on a Saturday in October, Maeckle climbed into her kayak and ventured out on the clear-running Llano near Mason. She was equipped with tags, each about as big around as a pencil eraser.

“I figured they had to be at our place, too, because everything they needed was here: water, tall trees, nectar up against a limestone escarpment that shielded them from wind and held the heat during the cool nights,” she says.

She guided the kayak to a spot near three pecan trees, and as she stepped out, there they were.

“I started tagging and ripped through a sheet of 25 tags in about 15 minutes, went back and got another sheet and tagged 25 more,” she says. “They weren’t dropping from the sky that day; they were already fluttering around, finding a spot to spend the night.”

What captured Maeckle’s heart, and a lot of her time, is the splendid monarch butterfly and its remarkable migration—up to 3,000 miles—from the northeastern United

States and southeastern Canada to the mountain forests of central Mexico, where they hibernate during the winter. The Central and South Texas region, called the Texas funnel, is part of the path south for all monarchs east of the Rocky Mountains.

Adult monarchs are easily identifiable, with two pairs of deep orange wings that have black veins and white spots along the edges. On average they weigh about as much as half of a dollar bill, with a wingspan of about 4 inches. Tagging doesn’t harm the delicate creatures.

Maeckle is part of a groundswell of advocates who are tagging and tracking the monarchs’ migration as well as planting and sustaining habitat that will help attract and protect them and other important pollinators, including bees.

But she’s an overachiever when it comes to monarchs. The citizen scientist launched an educational website called the Texas Butterfly Ranch, writes and gives talks about monarchs, and is the founding director of the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Festival, the seventh of which will be held October 8 at San Antonio’s Brackenridge Park.

The free one-day festival offers children and adults opportunities to learn about the monarch migration and the importance of other wildlife pollinators to our own food sources. The festival also features arts and crafts activities and other entertainment, as well as monarch butterfly tagging demonstrations. An estimated 2,500 people attended last year’s festival, and more than 550 butterflies were tagged.

## Monarchs Matter

The monarch population has been in decline in recent years, but there is hope for this fall’s migration despite the continuing drought and its detrimental effect on native habitat.

The World Wildlife Fund announced in May that a survey found that the number of monarch butterflies in Mexico’s forests last winter actually increased 35% from the previous year. The rise “marks a sign of recovery—albeit a fragile one—and gives some reason for hope against a backdrop of several decades of decline for the iconic species,” the organization said in a release.

“The increase in monarch butterflies is good news and indicates that we should continue working to maintain and reinforce conservation measures by Mexico, the United States and Canada,” says Jorge Rickards, general manager of WWF’s Mexico office. “Monarchs are important pollinators, and their migratory journey helps promote greater diversity of flowering plants, which benefits other species

OPPOSITE Monika Maeckle launched the website Texas Butterfly Ranch and is the founding director of the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Festival in San Antonio. ABOVE A monarch feeds on a blue mistflower.

BUTTERFLY: COURTESY LEE MARLOWE





in natural ecosystems and contributes to the production of food for human consumption.”

Butterflies are pretty, fanciful things that don’t bite or sting, and that makes them interesting to humans, prompting a willingness to help them, which can help all pollinators, says Judit Green, urban wildlife biologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. She calls the monarch an “ambassador for all pollinators.”

“Our beautiful rural Texas landscapes are in existence because pollinators helped pollinate it, producing the various native plants from wildflowers, bunchgrasses, vines, shrubs, small trees to canopy trees,” Green says. “These plants make up habitat for a host of wildlife. Therefore all wildlife benefit from actions we take to support our pollinators.”

These insects also support crop production, which the scientific world is quick to remind not to take for granted. “They say, ‘Thank a pollinator with every third bite you take,’ since about 33% of the food we eat is pollinated by pollinators,” Green says.

## How To Help

There are simple steps Texans can take to attract monarchs and other pollinators: Grow and cultivate native plants, and don’t use pesticides, Green says. In addition, you can plant native milkweed, the host plant for monarch caterpillars, which feed on the leaves. Migrating monarchs lay their eggs on these plants.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Monika Maeckle paddles the Llano River. Yellow cestrum planted beside the San Antonio River Walk. Queen butterflies fuel up on frostweed at the Llano River. Bees collect pollen from a coneflower plant. ABOVE A child holds a monarch at the San Antonio festival.

FESTIVAL: COURTESY DRAKE WHITE. BUTTERFLIES: COURTESY MONIKA MAECKLE





**M**aeckle is part of a groundswell of advocates who are tagging and tracking the monarchs' migration as well as planting and sustaining habitat that will help attract and protect them and other important pollinators, including bees.

There are larger endeavors underway as well. The city of San Antonio's advocacy for monarchs dates back to 2015, when then-Mayor Ivy Taylor signed the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, a commitment to creating better habitats for pollinators and educating the public about them. Today 42 Texas mayors have active pledges through NWF, including those from small towns like Cuero, Liberty and Nolanville.

NWF named San Antonio the first Monarch Champion City, and current Mayor Ron Nirenberg has continued those efforts. The city's pledge consisted of 24 specific actions, including holding or supporting a butterfly festival to raise awareness about pollinators. Not surprisingly, Maeckle took on that challenge.

"When I say I'm going to do something, I do it," says Maeckle, who, with her husband, Robert Rivard, founded a nonprofit digital news website now called the San Antonio Report.

Green says the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Festival has been important to raising awareness about the problems pollinators face and how the public can help.

"Getting the public to support our pollinators, like the monarch, is crucial," Green says.

Cheri Tondre, an instructional specialist for San Antonio Independent School District, participated in a 2017 festival workshop that led to the creation of a pollinator garden at Collins Garden Elementary. She says the festival offers children the chance to explore the natural world.

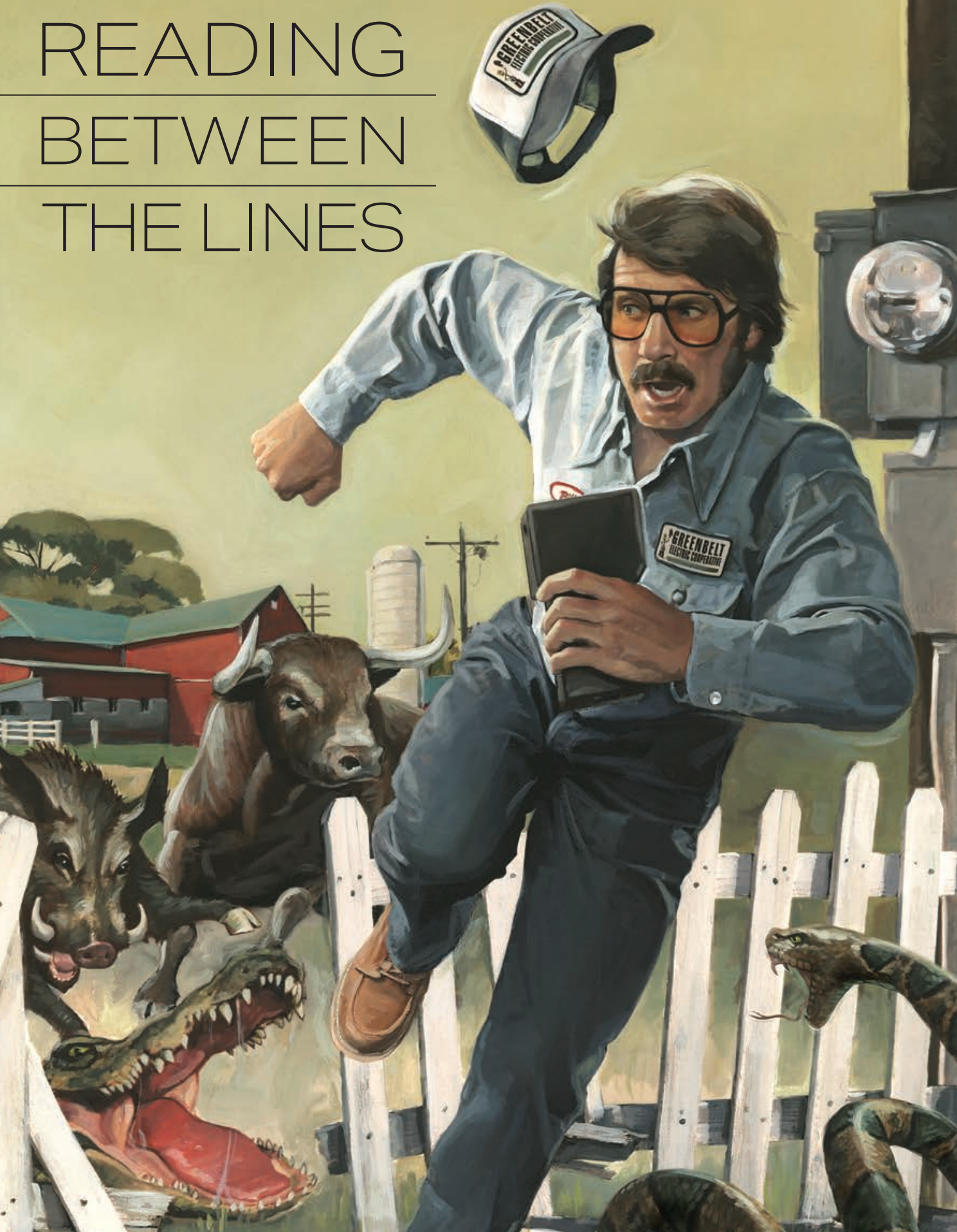
"Opportunities to engage with science, nature and community are important to engage students in the type of learning we need," Tondre says. "They need to know they are part of the problem and solution."

Maeckle sees the monarch as an access point for viewing a number of complex issues—migration, climate change, sustainability. And she still takes joy in recalling how that evening in Hext ignited a lasting passion.

"They had always been there; I just hadn't realized," Maeckle says. "And it underscores the connectedness of us all." ■



READING  
BETWEEN  
THE LINES



## Decades after new tech started taking over,

## METER READERS are still a valued part of co-op connections

BY CHRIS BURROWS • ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL KOELSCH

Connie Turner can tell you all about the time she cracked three ribs battling a gate over a cattle guard, slipping on ice in the process. Or about the time an electric meter exploded in her hands, knocking her unconscious. Or the time she injured her foot jumping from a fence.

“And since then, I’ve had shoulder surgery,” she says. “I really think that that injury came from the repetition of pushing on gates.”

But in the last week of her 40-year career at Coleman County Electric Cooperative, Turner can also tell you that she misses working as a country meter reader, despite the toll it took on her body. Seventeen years into that career, she was able to move into an office role, but her injuries weren’t the only factor in that move.

Another was the folks on her route. They were like family to her—and aging.

“I could hardly stand to go out there, and they wouldn’t be there anymore,” she says. “A lot of them kind of adopted me. I used to load furniture; I’d get the lawn mower started for them and help them pick their garden. I just did everything that you wouldn’t really think that a meter reader would be out there doing.”

Turner was part of a group like no other—one accustomed to outsmarting dogs, boars, snakes, and the odd alligator or goose; to knowing the roads, power grid and land better than anyone; and to dealing with the occasional unhappy member, flat tires and whatever else came their way as they scoured the countryside, read dials and displays, and relayed kilowatt-hour usage to co-op accounting departments for accurate billing.

But ever since co-ops started installing automated meter reading systems in the 1990s, these neighborly, workaday men and women seemed doomed to be replaced by the very devices they regularly visited.

However, many still haven’t been. Sure, there aren’t as many meter readers working today, but Texas co-ops still employ dozens. And now many of them are armed with more technical skills than ever.

### A GOOD READ

John Gross is one of them. For 19 years he’s been reading meters on his rural routes in Parker County, west of Fort Worth, for Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

“People didn’t know that we still walked around,” he says.

As others in his line of work do, he has plenty of stories. Like the time he tore his ACL climbing a fence to get to a meter—“I actually read about three more meters until I said I can’t keep doing this because I was hopping on the one good leg,” he says—or the time a bull chased him around a meter pole (he still got the reading).

“You don’t know what you’re going to walk into: coyotes, cows, deer, bulls,” he says. “A lot of times you have to run. Otherwise you’re going to have to tangle with some of the dogs.”

Gross says he drives hundreds of miles daily and gets plenty of walking in, but since TCEC started to deploy smart meters across its system in 2019, he’s part of a shrinking team.

Gross, co-worker Bobby Collins and a handful of others at TCEC no longer read all the co-op’s 125,000 meters. Collins has read meters for 23 years in an upscale area closer to Fort Worth, where he’s met celebrities Terry Bradshaw, Sandra Bullock and Josh Hamilton in the course of his work, but it’s the everyday folks who he especially appreciates.

“They’ll start a story, and you’ll end up leaving; and then next month, they’ll pick up right where they left off,” Collins says.

### THE FUTURE IS HERE

Economist David Autor famously pointed out that the invention of the ATM in the 1970s seemed sure to spell the end for bank tellers. But a funny thing happened: As ATMs quadrupled between 1995 and 2010, the number of tellers actually increased over that period.

“The last 200 years, we’ve had an incredible amount of automation,” Autor said in a 2017 interview with CBS News. “We have tractors that do the work that horses and people used to do on farms. We don’t do bookkeeping with books. But this has not, in net, reduced the amount of employment.”



# TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**Binoculars for reading meters from the road.**

**Extra meters and meter seals for making repairs in the field.**

**Nontoxic dog repellent.**

**Sunglasses, hat and sunscreen.**

**Fiberglass hot stick for adjusting lines and transformers.**

**Four-wheel-drive pickup.**

**Keys for Co-op Country gates.**

**Car jack, for fixing flats.**

**Fence stretcher for slinking through barbed wire.**

Since the 1990s, when electric utilities began to implement AMR systems, jobs for electric meter readers in the U.S. fell by more than half, from a peak of 55,000 in 1996 to 24,000 in 2021, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Today, nearly all co-ops in Texas have deployed some form of advanced metering infrastructure—a further revolution in metering technology that unleashed myriad benefits for co-ops and their members. But like any complex system, even AMI needs humans to watch over it and fix it when it falters.

When that happens, a worker still has to drive out, find the meter, get a reading and make a fix.

“We generally troubleshoot,” says Kevin Gray, one of two meter readers at Fort Belknap Electric Cooperative. “If we have a meter not sending a reading in, you go out to see: Is the transformer fuse blown? Is the AMR itself dead and not sending a reading? We check transformer connections, look for trees burning on the line.”

As meters have become more complex, so too have the jobs of meter readers like Gray, who has developed new skills to troubleshoot issues in the field.

“I can remember back when the technology began to get a good foothold in the market, obviously the meter readers got very nervous,” says Mike Cleveland, manager of meter products at Texas Electric Cooperatives, the statewide association for co-ops. He says a lot of co-op leaders initially used that as an excuse to delay upgrading to the new meters.

“It took a while for people to understand the benefits and understand that you can take meter readers and turn them into more advanced technicians for running the AMR system,” Cleveland says. “You’re implementing something that has to be babysat all the time. It’s a complex piece of technology that doesn’t just run on autopilot in the background. Somebody has to monitor and manage it.”

## MORE THAN METERS

In the 1970s and '80s, many electric cooperatives started meter reading departments, some citing frustrations with the self-reporting postcards that most utilities of the era relied on.

At Southwest Texas Electric Cooperative, that meant closing the office for about a week every month. Each of the co-op's employees would grab a pickup, take a meter route and gather readings from rural West Texas. General Manager Buff Whitten did his part when he started at the co-op in 1977.

“You don’t get to see the system like we once did,” he says. “You’re looking at poles, you’re looking at crossarms, you’re able to see the system and recognize problems that you take back, keep track of and correct. And there’s always an opportunity, when you’re out there, to meet the members.”

AMI won’t spot a broken crossarm or start a lawn mower for a member, but these systems of smart meters, communications networks and data management systems can do so much more. The granular data they capture increases

reliability by enabling advanced outage management systems and troubleshooting and provides cost savings for co-ops and their members.

“The old mechanical meter, as good as it was, it was pretty dumb,” Cleveland says. “All it could sit there and do was just count revolutions, but these new meters, they just have so much horsepower under the hood. They’re very powerful instruments.”

Meter readers Mario Manriquez and Donald Priesmeyer keep Wharton County Electric Cooperative’s powerful instruments humming.

“My main thing right now is helping with the AMI system,” says Manriquez from the side of a South Texas road where he and Priesmeyer are installing a communications relay for WCEC’s AMI system.

Over 23 years at WCEC, Manriquez’s work has changed a lot, but the dangers of the job haven’t. “I almost stepped on a snake once,” he says. “They say good snake, bad snake. I say all bad snakes.”

But Scott Thomas, who was the last full-time meter reader at PenTex Energy in North Texas, will tell you that it’s still the folks at the end of the line who make his job so gratifying.

“The best part is going out into the community and visiting with the customers because every one of them liked to talk and visit,” he says, in between greeting folks by name at the co-op’s annual meeting in April. “You had a schedule, and you tried to stay on schedule, but you had to visit.” ■



# SPOOK-TACULAR SAVINGS

**FREE  
INSTALLATION  
& LABOR**

OR  
**NO INTEREST  
FOR 18  
MONTHS<sup>^</sup>**

**PLUS RECEIVE A  
\$200  
GAS CARD WITH  
PURCHASE<sup>~</sup>**



**UPGRADE YOUR OUTDATED BATHROOM IN AS LITTLE AS A DAY**



 **Locally owned and Family  
Operated for over 20 Years.  
Born, Bred and Based in Texas.**

Master Plumber • Mark Williams • License # 37134

- Low Maintenance
- Easy to Clean
- Replacement Showers
- Replacement Tubs
- Tub to Shower Conversions
- Tub & Shower Combos
- Walk-in Tubs
- Accessibility Systems
- Factory Trained & Certified Installers
- Made in the USA

**CALL NOW 800.364.2498**



**MILITARY DISCOUNT  
SENIOR DISCOUNT  
FIRST RESPONDERS DISCOUNT  
HEALTHCARE WORKER DISCOUNT**

\*Free Installation equals 12% off the total price. Valid only for new product replacement customers who purchase products and have them installed through Zintex Remodeling. Not valid with any other offer or promotion. Repairs to existing products including parts and service excluded. Prior sales excluded. Other restrictions may apply. See local exclusive dealer for details. <sup>^</sup>84 payments. Up to 6 month purchase window. At the earlier of purchase window expiration date or job completion, an 18 month promotional (promo) period begins with 18 payments of 2.10120%-2.53052% (based on creditworthiness) of aggregate purchases, not to exceed principal balance required. Promo period followed by 66 amortized payments based on the balance at the end of promo. Your fixed 17.99%-24.99% interest rate is based on creditworthiness and is disclosed in your loan agreement. Interest is billed during the promo period but all interest is waived if the purchase amount is paid in full before the end of the promo period. Making initial minimum monthly payments will not pay off your loan before the end of the promo period. ~\$200 Shell gift cards with purchase paperwork verification. ©2022 Zintex Remodeling. Expires 11/30/2022.




REQUEST MUST BE RECEIVED WITHIN 30 DAYS

Dept. 6XZ422  **YES!** Please send me the following:

QTY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
1	2022 Kennedy Half Dollar	<b>FREE</b>
	Shipping	<b>FREE</b>
	Total \$	<b>FREE</b>

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Apt# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please print clearly  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  Dept. 6XZ422  
 Littleton Coin Company  
 1309 Mt. Eustis Road  
 Littleton NH 03561-3737

# FREE!

## 2022 Kennedy Half Dollar

- ◆ Uncirculated Condition
- ◆ Low Mintage

Along with your **FREE** coin, you'll also receive a handpicked trial selection of fascinating coins from our No-Obligation Coins-on-Approval Service, from which you may purchase any or none of the coins - return balance within 15 days - with option to cancel at any time.



Reverse Actual Size



Special Offer for New Customers Only Ages 18+

**Mail Coupon Today!**  
**For Faster Service Visit:**  
[LittletonCoin.com/Specials](http://LittletonCoin.com/Specials)

 **Littleton**  
 Coin Company®

Serving Collectors Since 1945

©2022 LCC, Inc.



**FALL SPECIAL**  
 DON'T WAIT—CALL NOW!  
**WALK-IN TUBS** FROM \$9,995 INSTALLED  
**ONYX SHOWERS** FROM \$9,995 INSTALLED

Don't let Mom or Dad spend \$20K on a walk-in tub. Call us today to find the perfect custom solution for you. We service all of Texas.  
 Visit our showroom at 311 Kings Plaza in Granbury.



  
**BEST BUY WALK-IN TUBS**  
 FEATURING "SEALTITE" TECHNOLOGY  
 ★ CELEBRATING 17 YEARS ★  
**888-825-2362**  
[bestbuywalkintubs.com](http://bestbuywalkintubs.com)



### If North Texas Is Your Market, We've Got You Covered.

Target customers close to home with the North Texas advertising section of *Texas Co-op Power*. Be part of a statewide magazine—without the statewide cost. Call or email today.



**NORTH TEXAS AUDIENCE**  
 Circulation 590,500  
 Readership 1,358,150

**Texas Co-op Power**

Contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251 or [advertising@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:advertising@TexasCoopPower.com)



# LONE STAR STATE PRIDE



**6.5 Carat Created  
Star Sapphire**

**Rich Sterling Silver  
Plating with  
18K Gold-plated Accents**

**Powerful Texas Images in  
Sculpted Relief on Either Side**



## “THE LONE STAR” TEXAS TRIBUTE RING

*“The Lone Star” Texas Tribute Ring* is crafted in a custom design that speaks to the spirit of Texas in every aspect of its bold look. The centerpiece is a 6.5 carat deep blue created star sapphire—a magnificent symbol of the Texas Lone Star that will always shine bright as a reminder of the state’s fight for independence. On either side of the ring, which is plated in sterling silver, are more custom details: the outline of the state on one side, and the state flag with its Lone Star and stripes representing courage, liberty and loyalty on the other side. Both stand out in raised relief against a tooled leather-look pattern, and both are plated in 18K gold along with the rope borders around the Texas images and the center stone. As a final tribute, the ring is engraved inside the band with *“Texas Pride.”*

### A Remarkable Value...With Satisfaction Guaranteed

An exceptional value at \$149.99\*, the ring is payable in 5 installments of just \$30.00 each and is backed by our 120-day guarantee. Each ring is made to order in mens’ whole and half sizes from 8 to 15 and arrives in a custom case along with a Certificate of Authenticity. To reserve yours, send no money now; just mail the Priority Reservation. This custom designed ring is exclusive to The Bradford Exchange. You won’t find it anywhere else, and this is a limited time offer. So don’t delay... order your ring today!

Order online at  
[bradfordexchange.com/29311](http://bradfordexchange.com/29311)

©2022 The Bradford Exchange 01-29311-001-BIBR

**PRIORITY  
RESERVATION**

**The  
Bradford Exchange**  
• Since 1973 •

**SEND NO  
MONEY NOW**

P.O. Box 806, Morton Grove, IL 60053-0806

**YES.** Please reserve *“The Lone Star” Texas Tribute Ring* for me as described in this announcement. **Ring Size** \_\_\_\_\_ (if known)

**Limited-time Offer... Please Respond Promptly**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs. Mr. Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Plus a total of \$16.00 shipping and service, plus sales tax (see [bradfordexchange.com](http://bradfordexchange.com)). All sales are subject to product availability and order acceptance.

**01-29311-001-E54801**





MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

JEFF LANE

## It's a Matter of (Co-op) Principles

ALL COOPERATIVES, INCLUDING Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative, adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater community good.

October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time and provide a framework for the future. Let's take a look at the first three cooperative principles.

### Voluntary and Open Membership

TVEC was created out of necessity—to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. A group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity.

Key parts of that heritage remain—the focus on our mission and serving the greater good. In this, we include everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire community. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory.

### Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well-suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each

member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. TVEC's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board is made up of co-op members, and they have been elected by neighbors just like you.

### Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op we are also motivated by service to the community rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of TVEC. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments and supporting other activities.

Because we are guided by the Seven Cooperative Principles, it's not just about dollars—it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members.

TVEC is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place. And that, by the way, sums up the seventh co-op principle, Concern for Community. ■

**Community born.  
Community led.  
Focused on YOU.**

October is  
**National Co-op Month!**



Matthew Kulwicki shares information about pre-paid electrical service with members at the 2019 TVEC Annual Membership Meeting. The event is more than just a meal and a business meeting—TVEC employees will be on hand to discuss technology solutions, member concerns, co-op programs and more.

## TVEC October Highlights: Annual Meeting, Energy Costs and More

- You should receive this magazine just a few days before the TVEC Annual Membership Meeting on October 6 at the Canton Civic Center. If you are unable to attend, you can register for the livestreaming option at [tvec.net/annual-meeting/](http://tvec.net/annual-meeting/).

- October bills will include a 2.5 cent-per-kWh PCRF adjustment. Global demand for natural gas combined with instability and war in Europe is driving the price increase. The PCRF increase is currently expected to last through December, but could continue if fuel costs continue to be high.

While the effective TVEC rate is lower than statewide averages, it is significant increase in cost, so members are encouraged to be as efficient as possible during this time.

- The November General Election is right around the corner! Voting is one of our foundational rights as citizens that brave men and women have fought to preserve. As a rural co-op family, we depend on voters like you to ensure our elected officials truly represent us. Besides, when we don't vote, we are letting others decide who wins and what issues matter.



Although we all live hectic and busy lives at times, put time aside to educate yourself on candidates and issues. Talk to other family members, friends, members of your church and community and remind them how important voting is.

The last day to register to vote in the November election is October 11, and the last day to apply for a mail-in ballot is October 28.

Early voting will run from October 24-November 4, and election day is November 8.

Find voting information at [votetexas.gov](http://votetexas.gov).

- Be sure to check out our reader appreciation contests for two chances to win \$100 bill credits. See below for details on the hidden account number contest, and answer our energy trivia on page 24. ■

## Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

### CONTACT US

1800 E. Highway 243  
Kaufman, Texas  
Local (972) 932-2214  
Toll-Free 1-800-766-9576  
Web [tvec.net](http://tvec.net)

### Board of Directors

Howard Tillison, Chairman, District 6  
Carolyn Minor, Vice Chairwoman, District 1  
Jo Ann Hanstrom, Secretary, District 4  
Jeff Priest, District 2  
Paul Weatherford, District 3  
Edward Reeve, District 5  
Jack Endres, District 7

### General Manager/CEO

Jeff Lane

**24/7**

## Outage Hotline Numbers

For information and to report outages, please call us.

**TOLL-FREE**  
1-800-967-9324

**AUTOMATED ASSISTANCE**  
1-800-720-3584

### ABOUT TRINITY VALLEY EC

TVEC operates in Anderson, Dallas, Henderson, Hunt, Kaufman and Van Zandt counties.

### OFFICE LOCATIONS

#### Kaufman District Headquarters

1800 E. Highway 243, Kaufman

#### Athens District Office

909 W. Larkin St., Athens

#### Cedar Creek District Office

1012 W. Main St., Ste. 102  
Gun Barrel City

#### Wills Point District Office

582 N. Fourth St., Wills Point

#### Lobby Hours

Monday–Friday, 8:15 a.m.–4:45 p.m.

### VISIT US ONLINE

[tvec.net](http://tvec.net)







TVEC ENERGY  
MANAGEMENT  
SUPERVISOR

**CHRIS WALKER, BAP**

## Shoo Away Vampires This Halloween

**LITTLE GHOSTS, GOBLINS** and princesses are a welcome sight outside your door for trick-or-treating on Halloween night. But beware of the vampire lurking inside your home.

You could be paying for vampire energy—electricity that leaks from your appliances, computers and entertainment systems—if you leave them plugged in even when they're turned off

Any cord that's plugged into an electrical outlet draws electricity. So if you leave your mobile phone charger plugged in after you've removed the phone or you leave your computer and scanner plugged in after you shut down for the evening, you could be wasting—and paying for—unused energy.

Most people leave electronics plugged in all the time because it's convenient to be able to turn them on without having to plug them in again and again, day after day. The worst offenders are "remote-ready appliances, like computers, cable boxes, stereos, TVs, microwave ovens, garage door openers and video game consoles. As long as they're plugged in, they remain in a "ready" state so they don't have to wake up or warm up when you turn them on.

That can cost you between \$165 and \$440 per year in wasted electricity, depending on how many devices you have.

**A tip:** Invest in a high-quality power strip—one that will sacrifice itself during a power surge rather than letting the surge ruin the appliance. Plug multiple items into the power strip and unplug the strip before bedtime. That's easier than unplugging and replugging lots of appliances.

**A caution:** Don't overload your home's electrical circuits by plugging too many appliances into a single power strip. Especially if you live in an older home, consult an electrician about how much of an electrical load your single outlets can handle. ■



MCANDY | ISTOCK.COM

## Time To Bundle Up?

**YOUR FURRY FRIENDS** may not appreciate a new fur coat, but your water heater just might. Most water heaters have minimal insulation and are often located in areas that aren't air conditioned. Sound like yours?

If so, adding an insulation jacket can reduce standby heat losses by 25%–45%, cutting your water-heating costs by 4%–9%.

Take advantage of mild temperatures to dress up your water heater for winter. Insulating a water heater tank is fairly simple and inexpensive, and it will pay for itself in about a year. You can find pre-cut jackets or blankets available from around \$20–\$30. Choose one with an insulating value of at least R-10.

You can probably install a pre-cut insulating jacket or blanket on your electric water heater tank yourself. Read and follow the directions carefully and be sure to leave the thermostat access panel uncovered. Don't set the thermostat higher than 120 degrees on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket—the wiring may overheat.

You also might consider placing a piece of rigid insulation—a bottom board—under the tank of your electric water heater. This will help prevent heat loss into the floor, saving another 4%–9% of water heating energy. ■



GPETRIC | ISTOCK.COM



## Drone Programs Show Promise in Key Maintenance Efforts

**THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH OF THE TOP** of an electrical distribution pole that can be seen from the ground. Fortunately, technology is offering solutions to give Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative line crews, system operators and engineers a more thorough view of the equipment they work with on a daily basis.

A recent test of drone technology in the Walton area in Van Zandt and Henderson counties will show just how useful a visual inspection—along with images and thermal-sensing technology—might be in giving TVEC crews a head start on preventive maintenance.

Identifying equipment, connections or damage that may cause future outages will help target maintenance and repair work before outages occur.

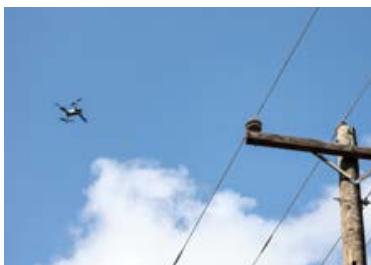
When combined with advanced mapping solutions, images of each pole can be stored and retrieved during restoration efforts. Crews could then be better prepared as they prepare to respond.

Another recent drone test in Kaufman County involved right-of-way clearing using drone spray application of targeted herbicide.

The certified applicators are able to be very specific in treating only the right-of-way areas, and choosing particular trees and species of trees that pose a threat to lines. Trees that are unlikely to grow into the lines are not treated, and the herbicides used only affect the portions of the tree that are directly sprayed.

The advantage of this method is efficiency and safety. A small crew drone operator can treat areas much more quickly and with less heavy equipment compared to fleets of bucket trucks, wood chippers and chainsaws.

As always we are looking for the best solutions to provide reliable service while being mindful of members' property. ■



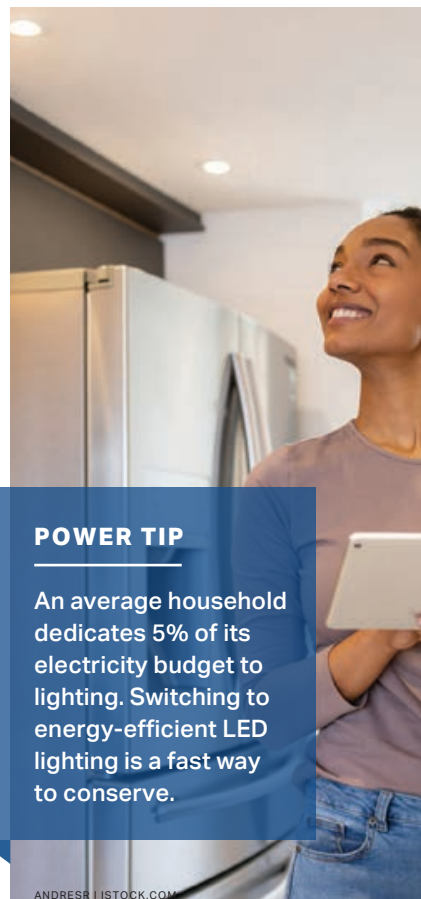
A line inspection drone is used to look for equipment condition problems or damage near Walton.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The inventor of the microwave oven received only \$2 for his discovery.

GC SHUTTER | ISTOCK.COM

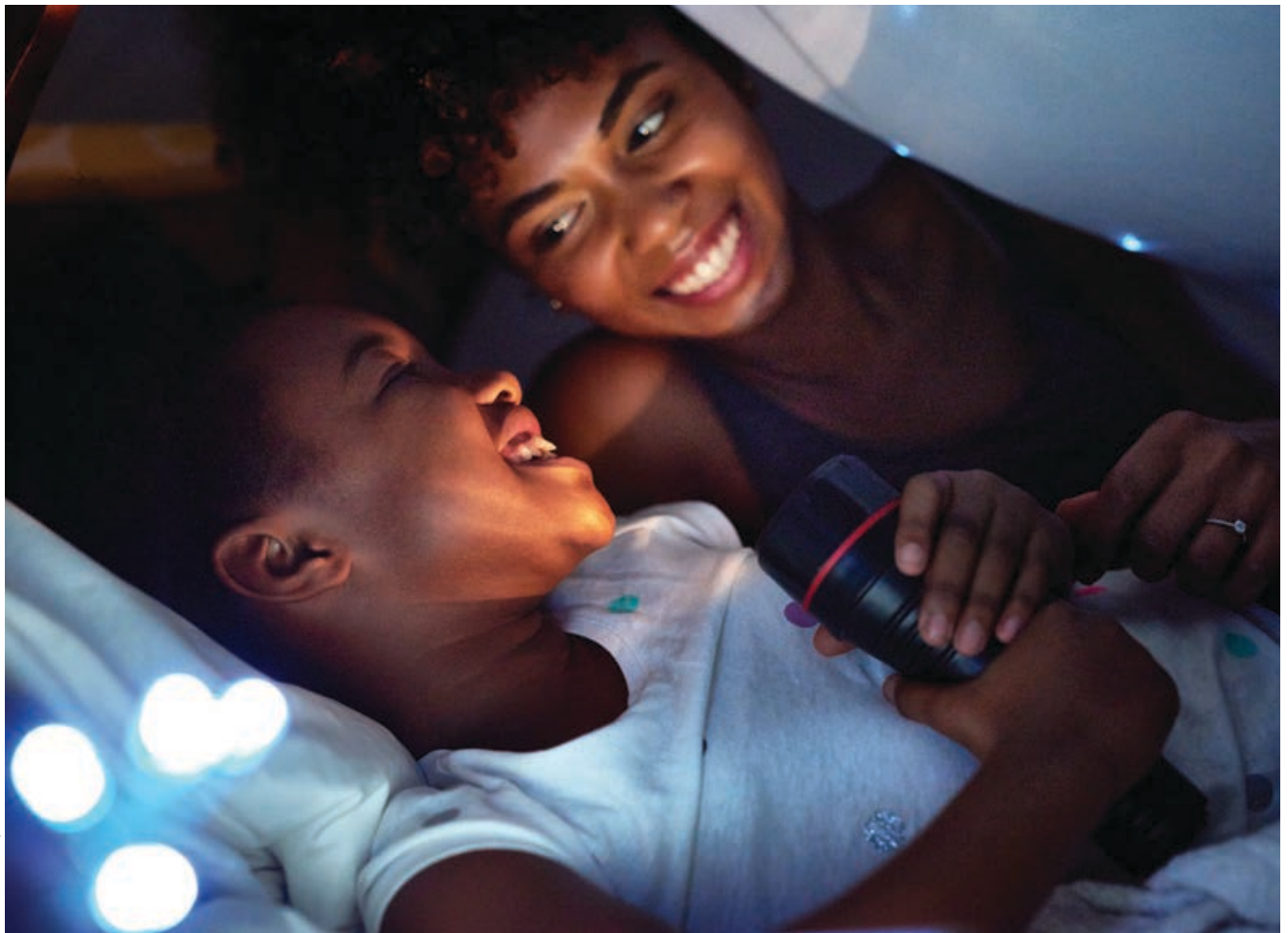


### POWER TIP

An average household dedicates 5% of its electricity budget to lighting. Switching to energy-efficient LED lighting is a fast way to conserve.

ANDRES | ISTOCK.COM





DEAN MITCHELL | ISTOCK.COM

## Best Tips for Battery Safety

**BATTERIES ARE BECOMING MORE EFFICIENT** and power an increasing number of electronics, energizing everything from remote controls and toys to radios and flashlights. The Saf Electricity program reminds consumers to be safe when storing, using and disposing of batteries.

Always read the manufacturer's instructions. Use the correct size and type of battery needed for each device, and be sure to insert batteries with the positive and negative terminals properly aligned.

Store batteries in a dry, secure location that is kept at normal room temperature. Batteries could leak if exposed to extreme heat.

Batteries that are easy to access can be hazardous when they are within the reach of small children. Be sure to store them in a safe location. Check the covers of devices' battery compartments to ensure that they're closed and functioning properly to prevent children from accessing them.

Some batteries, such as button batteries, are quite small and could be mistaken for pills or candy. Hearing-aid batteries are particularly small. Do not place them anywhere near where medicine or food is stored.

The consumption of batteries by children is a serious safety concern. A swallowed battery could possibly get stuck or cause tissue burns or other damage to the esophagus. If someone is

suspected to have swallowed a battery of any kind, immediately call 911.

Remember to promptly remove and safely dispose of dead batteries. Some dead batteries have been known to leak, so it is best to safely dispose of them right away.

Do not mix old and new batteries in any device because doing so could cause battery leakage or rupture. It's best to replace all the batteries at the same time.

Rechargeable, lithium, lithium ion and zinc air batteries should be recycled. Get into a habit of putting old batteries in a plastic bag that can be sealed and delivered to a battery recycling center. To find a facility near you, visit [call2recycle.org](http://call2recycle.org). ■

### Win \$100 Just for Reading

Hidden somewhere on pages 18–25 is a TVEC account number. Read closely. If the account number is yours, contact the member services department by October 31 to receive a \$100 credit on your electric bill. Don't miss out—you could be our winner.





ADOBE STOCK 436306409

## Saving Together Helps Us All

**ENERGY CONSUMERS, INCLUDING CO-OP MEMBERS,** buy the final product in the electric energy market. That means all of the costs—from buying the fuel for the generation plants to the wire that leads to your home—are eventually paid for by you, the consumer.

As a nonprofit co-op, however, we do have a big advantage in knowing that, for our distribution lines to all of our nearly 60,000 TVEC members, this is an at-cost service. No profits are sent to investors and our local employees are here to serve you as neighbors and friends.

One way we are trying to help save money for members is in reducing the cost of payment transactions. For those of you who have already changed to bank draft or e-check payments, thank you! If you haven't taken that step, please consider doing so and help us all save together.

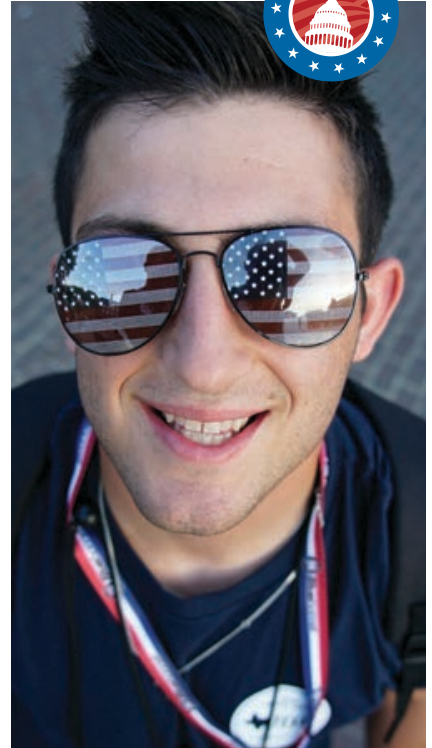
Thank you from all of us here at TVEC. ■

### Average Transaction Expense by Payment Type

Payment Method	Average Cost per Payment
Auto Bank Draft	\$.15
Electronic Check	\$.50
Mailed Check	\$.67
Phone/In-Person Payments	\$1.48
Credit Card Payments	\$1.63

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

## GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION YOUTH TOUR



Are you a Texas high school student? Would you like to travel to Washington, D.C., and visit historic landmarks—all without spending a dime of your own money?

Perhaps you'd like to meet elected officials or maybe you're looking for an inspirational experience in the company of other Texas teens. If that sounds like you, then the Government-in-Action Youth Tour is your tour. 2023 details coming soon!

[tvec.net/youth-tour](https://tvec.net/youth-tour)

Start your adventure at  
[TexasYouthTour.com](https://TexasYouthTour.com).



## TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

# Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Hurricane season is June 1–November 30

### Preparedness Checklist

- ▶ **Make an evacuation plan.** Find activated evacuation routes at [drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org) or by dialing 1-800-452-9292. Call 211 to find out if you live in an evacuation zone.
- ▶ **Sign up for emergency alerts.** Make sure your mobile device is enabled to receive wireless emergency alerts.
- ▶ **Prepare an emergency supply kit.** Learn how to build an emergency kit at [ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://ready.gov/build-a-kit).
- ▶ **Review your home insurance policy.**
- ▶ **Register with the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry** at [stear.tdem.texas.gov](http://stear.tdem.texas.gov) or by dialing 211 if you live in an evacuation zone and:
  - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have a car or other vehicle to use in an evacuation.
  - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation.

*Information collected for STEAR is confidential*

### Hurricane Preparedness Online Resources

Texas Division of Emergency Management: [tdem.texas.gov](http://tdem.texas.gov)

Texas Department of State Health Services: [texasready.gov](http://texasready.gov)

American Red Cross: [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: [ready.gov](http://ready.gov)

Office of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott [gov.texas.gov](http://gov.texas.gov)

## DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

# Preparación para huracanes

La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de junio al 30 de noviembre

### Lista de verificación de preparación:

- ▶ **Haga un plan de evacuación.** Encuentre rutas de evacuación activadas en [drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org) o marcando 1-800-452-9292. Llame 211 para averiguar si usted vive en una zona de evacuación.
- ▶ **Regístrese para recibir alertas de emergencia.** Asegúrese de que su dispositivo móvil esté habilitado para recibir alertas de emergencia inalámbricas.
- ▶ **Prepare un kit de emergencia.** Aprenda como construir un kit de emergencia en [ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://ready.gov/build-a-kit).
- ▶ **Revise su póliza de seguro de hogar.**
- ▶ **Regístrese con el Registro de Asistencia de Emergencia del Estado de Texas** en [stear.tdem.texas.gov](http://stear.tdem.texas.gov) o marcando el 211 si vive en una zona de evacuación y:
  - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene un auto u otro vehículo para usar en una evacuación.
  - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene amigos o familiares para ayudar en una evacuación.

*La información recolectada para STEAR es confidencial*

### Recursos en línea para la preparación para huracanes

División de Administración de Emergencias de Texas: [tdem.texas.gov](http://tdem.texas.gov)

Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado: [texasready.gov](http://texasready.gov)

Cruz Roja Americana: [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)

Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos: [ready.gov](http://ready.gov)

Oficina del Gobernador de Texas Greg Abbott: [gov.texas.gov](http://gov.texas.gov)

DEEPBLUE4YOU | ISTOCK.COM

# TVEC

TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Energy Quiz



What does ERCOT stand for?

**A. Electric Resource Community Observation Team**

**B. Electric Reliability Council of Texas**

**C. Energy Resource Control, Observation and Transmission**

Win **\$100!**

Send your answer and contact information to [contest@tvec.coop](mailto:contest@tvec.coop) or contact TVEC Member Services by October 31. One \$100 bill credit winner will be chosen from all correct replies. Look for the correct answer in a future *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

## September Energy Quiz: Wind Turbines

TEXAS RANKS FIRST IN INSTALLED U.S. wind capacity and number of electricity-generating wind turbines. Just over 13,000 of the massive windmill generators dot the Texas landscape, with many of those in the western and northwestern parts of the state.

That give a total generation capacity of about 24.2 gigawatts when the wind is blowing.

Congratulations to Laura Paulin of Terrell, who correctly answered our August quiz about water heater settings.



Charitable Foundation  
Your Generosity in Action

## Operation Round Up Spotlight: In His Hand's Children's Home



In His Hand's Children's Home's Candice Roberts, Assistant Administrator accepts an Operation Round Up grant from Kari Wilmeth, TVEC public relations representative.

TVEC ILELAINE FROSCH

**AN UNUSED CHURCH BUILDING** in need of a new purpose and a couple in search of a new mission to serve were brought together by fate. The former First Baptist Church of Trinidad now serves as the home of In His Hands Children's Home. With 146 children in the the care of the Texas Department of Child Protective Services in Henderson County, the need was evident for a local facility.

The founders of In His Hands Children's Home are Hugh and Charlotte Roberts. After 39 years of marriage, the Roberts knew the Lord had something in store for them to help others, they just didn't know yet what it .

The Roberts were approached by the pastor of First Baptist Church of Trinidad with a service opportunity that he believed fi them. The pastor explained to the Roberts that the church members voted to end church services due to lack of attendance and they would no longer use the building. He then presented the Roberts with the idea of opening a children's home in the space. The family visited the church, fell in love with the building and saw a big picture of what they could do to serve children. The members of the church voted to donate the church building.

After two years of renovations and lots of prayer, the children's home is expected to be operating in November. The home will house up to 20 female children ages 0 to 13 years old. They hope to expand the building in the near future to be able to house boys as well. There will be two sets of foster parents living at the home at all times, allowing flexibility for taking childr n to and from school, taking care of their medical needs and appointments, and getting the children to visitation with their parents. The children can be housed at the home for a few weeks up to a year, CPS will facilitate all children that live in the home.

The home will provide children with activities and opportunities to learn basic skills to take care of themselves. "We want to send them out with as much as we can," said Roberts. "They need to know basic things like making their bed, cleaning their room, cooking, and keeping things clean."

In His Hands Children's Home will host their fish fry fundraiser at noon on October 23 at the home located at 302 Lawrence Street in Trinidad. There will be bounce houses, tours of the home will be given, and the new administrator will also be in attendance to meet everyone. 60219511002

In His Hand's Children's Home will be using the Operation Round Up grant funds towards attic insulation and a commercial refrigerator. More information on how to donate or become a volunteer can be found at [inhishandschildrenhome.com/](http://inhishandschildrenhome.com/) or contact [inhishandschildrenhome@gmail.com](mailto:inhishandschildrenhome@gmail.com) for questions.

## August 2022 Operation Round Up Awards

### Grants:

- In His Hands Children's Home- \$5,000
- The Community Food Pantry of Tool-\$5,000

### Bill Assistance:

- Helping Angels- Kaufman- \$2,500
- Henderson County Help Center- \$2,500



Joy Long, TVEC public relations representative presents the Community Food Pantry of Tool's Joanna Polk, Vice President and Vicki Dumont, Executive Director with an Operation Round Up grant.

TVEC ILELAINE FROSCH



# Uncharted Territory

World-renowned cave explorer Bill Steele is adding new passages to Texas maps, foot by foot

BY PAM LEBLANC • PHOTO BY ERICH SCHLEGEL

**IN A DARK TUNNEL** near the entrance of Honey Creek Cave, Bill Steele buckles his helmet and tugs on a pair of swim fins.

The world-renowned speleologist scoots to the edge of a ledge, then eases into a chilly underground creek. He'll spend the next two hours swimming through this dark, watery passage beneath the Texas Hill Country.

Steele, 73, has crept through more than 2,500 caves around the globe, from Sistema Huautla in Oaxaca, Mexico—the deepest known cave in the Western Hemisphere—to two of the longest known caves in China. He belongs to the prestigious Explorers Club, whose members include divers, astronauts and mountain climbers, and in 2018 researchers named a hairy-legged species of cave tarantula *Hemirrhagus billsteelei* in his honor.

Today he's wearing a wetsuit over Batman-themed swim trunks. His headlamp cuts a cone of light through the bleak darkness, illuminating thousands of stalactites that drip from the arched ceiling like long, mud-colored teeth. At one point, the ceiling drops to within a few inches of the water's surface, and Steele removes his helmet, tips back his head and floats through the passage, breathing from a narrow pocket of air.

Steele has been exploring Honey Creek Cave, the longest known cave in Texas, for nearly four decades. Several times a year, cavers from around the state get special permission to access the private property near Bulverde where it's located. They've mapped more than 21 miles so far, and on this March weekend, they're adding to that total.

What they've found might surprise Johnny Goss, who ranched this land in the 1960s. Goss knew about the cave but didn't realize how far it extended beneath the scrub- and cactus-covered fields.

Steele knows the cave's twists and turns well. Years ago, he became the first person to enter an area called the Boneyard, where remains from ancient camels, horses and saber-toothed cats were found.

At camp he spreads out a map.

"This is the longest cave in Texas, and it just got longer," Steele says, noting that other cavers exploring this weekend added 300 or 400 feet to the total.

That's the kind of stuff that has kept Steele crawling into underground passages since he was a boy

in Dayton, Ohio. His Boy Scout troop visited several caves, including one where Steele squeezed through a passage that had never been explored.

He was hooked. He became an Eagle Scout, saying it gave him a chance to explore, then joined the National Speleological Society. During a 34-year career working in administration at the Boy Scouts of America, he spent much of his spare time squirming through caves.

"It's original exploration, done on a weekend," he says.

He still crawls—and swims—through caves frequently, but most of his work now involves spearheading expeditions from aboveground.

"Everybody who's a caver in this state knows Bill Steele or knows of him," says Kurt Medking, former head of mapping for the Bexar Appraisal District. "He's legendary—he's published books and writes articles; he loves to tell stories and goes to caving events all over the country."

Medking remembers following Steele into the labyrinths of Honey Creek Cave shortly after surveying began in the early 1980s. "We'd swim with flippers on for hours, get to a side passage and slog through a couple more hours, then survey for a few hours," he says. "Then we'd do it all again coming out—a six-hour trip.

"Bill would fly through that cave. He knew exactly where to step and what to avoid."

Steele, who lives in Irving, is best known for his work in Mexico, where he has helped lead explorations of Sistema Huautla, which reaches depths of nearly a mile. He helped create the Huautla Deep Caving Expedition in 2014 to map the entire cave system. He has personally crawled through about 40 of the cave's 55 mapped miles, sometimes camping inside its damp crevices for weeks at a time.

"Some people get overwhelmed at the thought of how long it takes to get out," he says. "But I like that kind of thing."

He feels the same way about the watery tunnels of Honey Creek Cave.

"They say there's an explorer's gene, and I think I've got it." ■





# For the Man Who Gives Everything and Expects Nothing

Stauer®  
Impossible Price  
ONLY  
**\$59**



If you're anything like my dad, you give your family everything. Your name, your time, your values — the people in your life know they can depend on you for practically anything. In exchange for imparting all of this energy and experience, you expect nothing in return.

The point? You deserve to treat yourself once in a while. You do so much for the people you care about. Now it's time to focus on you for just a few minutes. That's where the Men's Due Volta Watch comes in. This astonishing innovation provides a digital readout that's powered by a precise quartz engine, combining both analog and digital timekeeping.

Outfitted with a stopwatch, alarm, a.m./p.m. settings, and day, date and month complications, this timepiece stands out from the crowd. With its large face and handsome, masculine design, this watch is perfect for the back nine and the happy hour afterwards. Water-resistant up to 3 ATM, this timepiece won't wimp out if you have a run-in with a water hazard.

Other hybrid watches can sell for thousands of dollars, but because we've built more than 1 million watches, we know how to create real value. That's why we can offer this timepiece for just \$59! If you're not completely satisfied with this watch, return it for a full refund.

Act quickly! This one-of-a-kind watch has been one of our fastest sellers this year. Of our original run of 2,872, we only have 389 left for this ad! In the last couple of years there's been a watch shortage, but Stauer has got you covered. If you're the kind of man who gives everything and expects nothing in return, it's time to treat yourself.

#### Watch Specifications:

- Complications: stopwatch, alarm, a.m./p.m. settings, and day, date and month
- Precision movement chronograph
- Stainless steel caseback and crown
- Water-resistant to 3 ATM

Men's Due Volta Watch ~~\$399~~ **\$59\*** + S&P **Save \$320**

*\*Special price only for customers using the offer code.*

## 1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: DVW146-02

JOIN MORE THAN 1 MILLION SMART  
PEOPLE WHO OWN STAUER WATCHES

Stauer, 14101 Southcross Drive W., Ste 155, Dept. DVW146-02, Burnsville, MN 55337 [www.stauer.com](http://www.stauer.com)

Stauer® | AFFORD THE EXTRAORDINARY®

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

# 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 – Austin, TX*

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

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](http://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 "TXS17", 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.

**PERMA-ROOF**  
from Southern Builders

**Steel Mobile Home Roofing**

High energy bill?  
Roof rumble?  
Leaks?

MOBILE HOME ROOFER SYSTEMS

Since 1983

Contact us at 800.633.8969 or [roofover.com](http://roofover.com)

**Bank C.D.'s Due?**  
**CALL US NOW**

1-800-359-4940 TEXAS TOLL-FREE

[www.mattsonfinancialservices.com](http://www.mattsonfinancialservices.com)

**BLAKE MATTSON, CFP™**  
Signal Securities, Inc., 5400 Bosque, 4th Floor, Waco, TX 76710  
Serving Customers All Over Texas

All C.D.'s are insured to \$250,000 per institution by the F.D.I.C. All C.D.'s are subject to availability. Securities offered thru Signal Securities, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC 700 Throckmorton, Ft. Worth, TX 76102. (817) 877-4256.

**ARK-LA-TEX**  
SHOP BUILDERS  
"WE GOTCHA COVERED!"  
SHOPS - BARNs - CABINS - [WWW.SHOPSBUILT.COM](http://WWW.SHOPSBUILT.COM)

**830-730-0515**  
8670 IH 35 N NEW BRAUNFELS, TX

**BUILDINGS OF ALL SIZES**  
Shops • Garages • Barns • Equipment Sheds • Barndominiums

**WE MAKE DREAMS COME TRUE!**

Price includes all labor and materials with 4" steel reinforced concrete slab with moisture barrier, one 10'x10' heavy duty roll up door, one 3 foot steel entry door, concrete aprons, electric slab \*Dirt may be extra

**WE PAY TOP PRICES FOR COLLECTIBLES**

Coins • Banknotes • Gold & Silver Jewelry & Scrap  
Vintage Costume Jewelry • Watches • Stamps  
Tokens • Historical Documents • Other Collectibles

**TEXAS BUYERS GROUP • FREDERICKSBURG, TX**  
All transactions private, confidential & secure.

830-997-6339 • [rzcoins@twc.com](mailto:rzcoins@twc.com)

**BRUSH SHARK**

**SKID STEER MOUNTED SHEAR**

- 1/2" to 6" diameter trees and brush.
- Perfect for cedar, shin oak, persimmon, mesquite.

(512) 263-6830 • [www.brushshark.com](http://www.brushshark.com)

**TCP Marketplace**  
Across Town | Across Texas

Advertise in Texas Co-op Power Marketplace  
Elaine Sproull (512) 486-6251  
[advertising@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:advertising@TexasCoopPower.com)



# Now, THIS is a Knife!

This 16" full tang stainless steel blade is not for the faint of heart —now **ONLY \$99!**

In the blockbuster film, when a strapping Australian crocodile hunter and a lovely American journalist were getting robbed at knife point by a couple of young thugs in New York, the tough Aussie pulls out his dagger and says "That's not a knife, THIS is a knife!" Of course, the thugs scattered and he continued on to win the reporter's heart.

Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

Secured in a tooled leather sheath, this is one impressive knife, with an equally impressive price.

This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

**But we don't stop there.** While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99, 8x21 power compact binoculars, *and* a genuine leather sheath **FREE** when you purchase the *Down Under Bowie Knife*.

**Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed.** Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the impeccable craftsmanship. 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.

**Limited Reserves.** A deal like this won't last long. We have only 1120 *Down Under Bowie Knives* for this ad only. Don't let this beauty slip through your fingers at a price that won't drag you under. Call today!

**Down Under Bowie Knife \$249\***

Offer Code Price Only **\$99** + S&P **Save \$150**

## 1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: **DUK340-01**

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.



Rating of **A+**



**Stauer®** 14101 Southcross Drive W., Ste 155, Dept. DUK340-01  
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 [www.stauer.com](http://www.stauer.com)

\*Discount is only for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.

**California residents please call 1-800-333-2045 regarding Proposition 65 regulations before purchasing this product.**

- Etched stainless steel full tang blade ; 16" overall • Painted natural bone and wood handle • Brass hand guards, spacers & end cap • Includes genuine tooled leather sheath

Stauer... *Afford the Extraordinary.*®

**EXCLUSIVE  
FREE**

**Stauer® 8x21  
Compact  
Binoculars**  
-a \$99 value-  
with purchase of  
**Down Under Knife**



### What Stauer Clients Are Saying About Our Knives



*"This knife is beautiful!"*

— J., La Crescent, MN



*"The feel of this knife  
is unbelievable...this  
is an incredibly fine  
instrument."*

— H., Arvada, CO



**BONUS!** Call today and you'll also receive this genuine leather sheath!





# Bison at the Brink

When just 23 were left in Yellowstone National Park, a Texan revived the herd

BY W.F. STRONG • PHOTO BY JULIA ROBINSON

**IF IT WEREN'T FOR TEXAS**, there would likely be no bison in Yellowstone National Park. This is a large claim, but it's not without merit.

To be honest, Texas had considerable liability in driving the poor bison to near extinction in the first place. However, once people finally realized the range just wouldn't be as happy a home if the buffalo didn't roam, Texas took a leading role in saving these magnificent creatures. Here's how it came about.

In the early 1900s, the U.S. Army, which patrolled the park in those days, estimated that there were just 23 bison left in Yellowstone. They believed that

those might be all the bison that remained in the whole of the wild, wild West. Imagine—just 23 bison left when, 100 years before, there had been some 30 million of them on the American plains. At one time, there were 10 bison for every American, but by 1900, they were nearly gone.

Despite efforts to protect the Yellowstone herd, the poachers poached away. After all, one impressive bison head could fetch \$2,000 to forever gaze across a bar in someplace like Chicago. That's \$60,000 in today's money. Profit was high, and the risk was low. This was the reality that nearly doomed the creatures.

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



After the Army managed to intimidate and scare off most of the poachers, Yellowstone needed some good, purebred bulls to rebuild the meager herd. And it needed them fast.

The problem was that most of the bison then in captivity were cattalo—a mixture of bison, or buffalo, and cattle. But in Texas the famous Charles Goodnight—perhaps the most omnipresent figure in Texas history—had his own herd of bison. His herd had been gathered and nurtured by his wife, Mary Ann Goodnight, who personally saw to it that the orphans found wandering the ranch were saved and protected. And so Goodnight, at his own expense, sent three fine, purebred bulls up to Yellowstone to help rebuild that herd.

It worked. Today there are some 5,500 bison in Yellowstone, thanks in part to Goodnight. True, Congress created Yellowstone, and the U.S. Army did its part to help protect the herd from poachers in that enormous park. But it was Goodnight's gift that truly saved the majestic creatures.

In fact, Yellowstone now says it has too many bison, and the herd needs culling. If you add those to the herd that Goodnight donated to Caprock Canyons State Park in Texas, you can say that Texas is largely responsible for bringing bison back from the brink of absolute extinction. And that's no bull. ■



# Nuts About Nuts

These tasty treats draw unique flavors out of their shell

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

While walnuts are traditional in Greece, and Turkey uses pistachios, in Texas our thoughts naturally turn to pecans for baklava. This sticky, nutty dessert is easier than it seems—it's simply a matter of layering. Use a basting or pastry brush to lightly apply the butter to each layer, taking care to not rip the delicate phyllo dough.



## Pecan Baklava

**1 cup water**  
**1½ cups sugar, divided use**  
**½ cup honey**  
**1 tablespoon lemon juice**  
**4 cups pecan halves, finely chopped in a food processor**  
**1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**  
**¼ teaspoon ground cloves**  
**1 pound (1 box) phyllo dough, thawed according to package instructions**  
**¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, melted**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a small saucepan, combine water, 1 cup sugar and honey, and bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking to dissolve sugar. Once boiling, reduce heat to low and simmer 5–7 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice and let syrup cool.
2. In a bowl, combine pecans, remaining ½ cup sugar, cinnamon and cloves.
3. Unroll phyllo dough and trim as necessary to fit a 9-by-13-inch pan. Brush a thin layer of melted butter on the bottom and sides of the pan, then begin building the baklava.
4. Lay down a sheet of phyllo and brush butter over it. Repeat until you have 15 layers. Spread 1 cup of pecan mixture on top. Add 5 layers of phyllo, brushing on butter between each layer, then add 1 cup of pecans. Repeat twice until all pecans are used, then place on remaining phyllo layers, buttering between each.
5. Using a very sharp knife, cut baklava into squares or diamonds, making sure to cut through each layer. Hold the phyllo in place as you cut. Pour over any remaining butter.
6. Bake 40–50 minutes, turning the pan halfway through. Remove from oven and immediately pour the cooled syrup over the top; you should hear it sizzle. Let cool completely before serving.

SERVES 24

**TCP** Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at [stetted.com](http://stetted.com), where she features a recipe for Honey Pistachio Shortbread.



## Bostock (Almond Toast)

MELISSA TIDWELL  
PEDERNALES EC

If you're a fan of bakery almond croissants, you'll love this easy bostock (BOH-stock) recipe. It's perfect for serving at brunch, and you can also freeze the unbaked slices and simply bake one or two as desired.

- 1 loaf challah or brioche**
- 1 cup sliced almonds, divided use**
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter**
- ⅓ cup sugar**
- 2 teaspoons flour**
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch**
- 1 egg**
- ½ teaspoon almond extract**
- Powdered sugar, for serving**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment. Slice the bread into ½-inch slices and arrange on the baking sheet.
2. In a food processor, pulse ¾ cup almonds until finely chopped. Add butter, sugar, flour, cornstarch, egg and almond extract. Purée until a smooth almond cream is formed.
3. Spread 2–3 tablespoons of the almond cream onto each slice of bread, leaving a small border around the edge to allow for spreading. Sprinkle each piece with a few of the reserved sliced almonds.
4. Bake 15–20 minutes, until almond cream is puffed and browned. Let cool 5–10 minutes, then serve with powdered sugar sprinkled on top.

**SERVES 6**

[MORE RECIPES >](#)

\$500 WINNER

## Spaghetti Squash With Cashew Pesto

RHAE BROWN  
SAM HOUSTON EC



Fresh and flavorful, this dish uses cashews to create a dairy-free pesto you'll love. Depending on the size of the squash you use, you might have leftover sauce. Use it as a zesty vegetable dip or spread on crusty bread.

**SERVES 2–4**



- 1 spaghetti squash**
- ¼ cup plus 1–2 teaspoons olive oil, divided use**
- ¾ cup raw cashews, divided use**
- 2 lemons**
- 2 cups fresh basil**
- 1 avocado, pitted**
- 3 tablespoons water**
- 1 clove garlic**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment. Halve the spaghetti squash and scoop out the seeds. Rub the insides of the squash with 1–2 teaspoons olive oil, then place cut-side down on the baking sheet. Bake 40 minutes or until tender.
2. Meanwhile, chop ¼ cup cashews, then toast in a dry pan over medium heat until golden brown. Set aside for topping.
3. Zest 1 lemon for topping if desired, then juice both. Measure out ¼ cup juice and set aside the rest.
4. In a food processor, combine basil, remaining cashews, avocado, ¼ cup lemon juice, remaining olive oil, water, garlic, salt and pepper. Blend until a smooth pesto forms. Taste and add more lemon juice, salt or pepper if desired.
5. Once the squash is done, use a fork to shred the inside to make "noodles" and scoop into a bowl. Add pesto and mix well. Serve topped with toasted cashews and lemon zest.

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

SPONSORED BY FREDERICKSBURG CAST IRON CO.

**CAST-IRON COOKING** DUE OCTOBER 10

Indoors and out, this simple cookware has been filling bellies for centuries. What's your specialty? Submit your recipes on our website by October 10 for a chance to win \$500 and a No. 10 skillet from Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co. valued at \$160.







## Walnut Surprise

GALE HEEP  
TRI-COUNTY EC

This simple dessert is a cross between a cookie, a bar and a candy. Heep recommends it warm with ice cream, but it's just as good enjoyed simply with a cup of tea.

- ½ cup flour
- ⅞ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg

- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees and coat an 8-inch square pan with nonstick spray.
2. In a small bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt. In another bowl, beat egg until foamy, then stir in brown sugar and vanilla. Add flour mixture and stir until completely incorporated. Stir in walnuts; the batter will be thick.
3. Spread the batter into the prepared pan, using a greased spatula or spoon to spread to the edges, if needed.
4. Bake 18–25 minutes, until golden brown.

SERVES 9

**TCP** Find more recipes on our website that make the most of nuts—as the featured or accompanying ingredient. They're perfect heading into the holidays, and most come from the kitchens of *Texas Co-op Power* readers.

## Tips for Toasting Nuts

BY MEGAN MYERS

**Many recipes call for toasting nuts, which enhances their flavor and makes them deliciously crunchy.**

**Stovetop method:** Set a dry skillet over medium heat and add nuts in a single layer. Cook 3–5 minutes, stirring, until fragrant and starting to darken.

**Oven method:** Place nuts in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees until fragrant and starting to darken, 5–8 minutes depending on the nut.

To prevent burning, remove nuts from heat as soon as they are toasted.



## Cast-Iron Skillet

### Giveaway Contest

Enter today for your chance to win an heirloom-quality No. 10 cast-iron skillet from Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co.

**TCP** Enter Today  
[TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://TexasCoopPower.com/contests)



## TCP Gift Shop

### Find Texas Treasures

Texas food, music, housewares, gifts and more—find it all on our website, along with great deals for *TCP* readers.

Just pick and click—it's easy to shop for friends and family without leaving home.

**TCP** Shop now  
[TexasCoopPower.com/shop](https://TexasCoopPower.com/shop)



# HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

In the magazine and on [TexasCoopPower.com](https://www.texascooppower.com), we make it easy to shop for friends and family.



## Ideal Arm Protection for Any Activity

**Helps Prevent Bruising and Protects Those With Thin Skin!** Soft leather protective sleeves help protect you from 100's of injury-prone chores you do at work, home, farm, or ranch. Even has adjustable airflow!

(651) 492-4830  
[armchaps.com](https://www.armchaps.com)

COMES IN 4 COLORS AND 7 SIZES



## Homegrown Texas Pecans and Pecan Treats

**Berdoll's Has Been Family-Owned for 43 Years.** We make delicious pecan pies, chocolate pecans, honey-glazed pecans and more! Visit our squirrel, Ms. Pearl, at our retail store or order online.

(512) 321-6157  
[berdoll.com](https://www.berdoll.com)



## Texas Red Grapefruit and Avocados

**Always a Gift in Good Taste!** Orchard-fresh grapefruit and other Texas products are all hand-selected, carefully packed and shipped to be delivered just in time for the holidays.

1-800-580-1900  
[crockettfarms.com](https://www.crockettfarms.com)



## The 2022 Texas Capitol Ornament

"Welcome to Songfest" celebrates the tradition of music in Austin as well as the diverse cultural traditions that came together to form Texas. Get 20% off orders over \$100 with coupon code COOP20.

1-888-678-5556  
[texascapitolgiftshop.com](https://www.texascapitolgiftshop.com)



## Fudge and Divinity for the Holidays

**The Best Fudge in Texas. The Best Divinity in the World.** Bring back those childhood memories of Christmas with the sweet gift of fudge and divinity from Holiday Farms.

[holidayfarmscandy.com](https://www.holidayfarmscandy.com)  
[etsy.com/shop/DivinitybyDave](https://www.etsy.com/shop/DivinitybyDave)



## 2023 Texas Cardinal Calendar

**Enjoy a Beautiful New Bird Every Month!** 2006 Official Texas State Artist George Boutwell's 2023 calendar features 12 watercolors of cardinals. \$12.50 each plus tax and \$3.50 shipping.

1-800-243-4316  
[gboutwell.com](https://www.gboutwell.com)





COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Oodles of Oompahs

A Schulenburg museum preserves polka's enduring power

BY CHET GARNER

**IF YOU PASS THROUGH** the rolling prairies northeast of San Antonio and listen carefully to the wind, chances are you'll hear the faint sound of a tuba and an accordion floating along. Follow the sound to its source and you could end up in any of dozens of old German and Czech dance halls as polka bands play the music of their ancestors.

Since the late 1800s, polka has been the soundtrack of life for many residents of Fayette County. To learn more about how this unique musical style keeps the beat, I headed to the Texas Polka Music Museum in downtown Schulenburg.

I stepped into the small repository on Lyons Avenue and immediately felt my feet bouncing to the signature "oompah-oompah" playing on the speakers. I was helpless to repel the power of the polka. The walls are covered in pictures, records and stories of the numerous polka artists who have hailed from the Lone Star State—bands like Vrazel's Polka Band, which toured Texas for more than 50 years.

There are also dozens of cases and displays filled with instruments and mementos going back well over 100 years, including booths from local radio DJs that kept the polka power going around the clock. Of course, any proper polka band needs an accordion, tuba and saxophone. But just as important are the matching outfits. This museum has some that would give Elton John a run for his money.

Like most folks, I don't listen to a lot of polka music, but after visiting this museum, I discovered a newfound appreciation for the art and culture of polka. I even bought a CD so I could oom-pah-pah all the way home. ■

ABOVE Chet takes in the polka grooves that resonate in Fayette County.

**TCP** Toe-tap with Chet in 2/4 time to this nearly two-century-old music. Our website features his latest video, and watch all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



## Know Before You Go

Call ahead or check an event's website for scheduling details.

## OCTOBER

07

**Fredericksburg [7-9] Texas Mesquite Arts Festival**, (830) 997-8515, [texasmesquiteartfestivals.com](http://texasmesquiteartfestivals.com)

08

**Lexington Blue Volunteer Fire Department Fund-raiser**, (512) 229-8533, [facebook.com/bluevfd](https://facebook.com/bluevfd)

**Stonewall Fish Fry**, (830) 990-8793, [stonewallvfd.com](http://stonewallvfd.com)

**Tyler Rose City Music Festival**, (903) 593-6905, [therosecitymusicfestival.com](http://therosecitymusicfestival.com)

**Chappell Hill [8-9] Scarecrow Festival**, (979) 836-6033, [chappellhillhistoricalsociety.com](http://chappellhillhistoricalsociety.com)

**Edom [8-9] Art Festival**, (903) 258-5192, [edomarts.com](http://edomarts.com)

**Pearland [8-9] Art on the Pavilion**, (281) 997-5971, [visitpearland.com](http://visitpearland.com)

13

**Collinsville 42 Bed Bash**, (903) 465-6041, [texomafamilyshester.com](http://texomafamilyshester.com)

**Tyler [13-16] Texas Rose Festival**, (903) 593-6905, [texasrosefestival.com](http://texasrosefestival.com)

14

**Kyle Halloween Movie in the Park**, (512) 262-3939, [cityofkyle.com](http://cityofkyle.com)

**Canton [14-15] Texas Star Quilters Guild Quilt Show**, (903) 312-5252

**Henderson [14-15] Rusk County PRCA Rodeo**, (903) 657-3699, [visithendersontx.com](http://visithendersontx.com)

15

**Driftwood [14-16] Austin String Band Festival,**  
(512) 644-0212, aftm.us

**Canyon Lake BBQ Cook Off,** (830) 964-2223,  
canyonlakechamber.com

**Clifton FallFest,**  
(254) 675-8337,  
cityofclifton.org

**Conroe Fall Herb/Vegetable and Succulent Sale,**  
(936) 539-7824, mcmga.com

**Frisco The Boho Market at Frisco Square,**  
(214) 202-2668,  
thebohmarket.co

**Plano International Festival,**  
planointernationalfestival.org

**Waco Oakwood Cemetery's Walking Tales,** (254) 717-1763

**Brenham [15-16] Texas Arts & Music Festival,**  
(979) 337-7580,  
texasartsandmusicfestival.com

21

**Cisco [21-22] Pie Fest,**  
(254) 334-9621,  
ciscotxpiefest.com

**Austin [21-23] Gem Capers,**  
(512) 458-9546,  
agms-tx.org

**Plano [21-23] Hollydays Market,** (972) 941-5840,  
visitplano.com

22

**Burnet Zombie Color Run,**  
(512) 756-6182,  
burnet.revtrak.net

**Fredericksburg Food & Wine Fest,** (830) 997-8515,  
fbgfoodandwinefest.com

MORE EVENTS >

**TCP** *Submit Your Event*

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your January event by November 1, and it just might be featured in this calendar.

## PROTECTING YOUR ENDLESS ADVENTURES

Savings for a Limited Time



Experience limited time savings on RV and other storage and hobby buildings, savings now through November during Building Value Days!

To learn more or to get started today, visit [mortonbuildings.com](http://mortonbuildings.com).

800-447-7436 | [MORTONBUILDINGS.COM](http://MORTONBUILDINGS.COM)

©2022 Morton Buildings, Inc. Certain restrictions apply. A listing of GC licenses available at [mortonbuildings.com/licenses](http://mortonbuildings.com/licenses).



## Retreat... Relax in Kerrville

Capital of the Texas Hill Country!



Welcome Home Fest  
October 7 - 16, 2022  
[www.kerrvillefolkfestival.org](http://www.kerrvillefolkfestival.org)



Kerrville Chalk Festival  
October 15 - 16, 2022  
[www.kerrvillechalk.org](http://www.kerrvillechalk.org)



[www.KerrvilleTexasCVB.com](http://www.KerrvilleTexasCVB.com) • 830-792-3535





## Hit the Road Event Calendar

Fairs, festivals, food and family fun! Pick your region. Pick your month. Pick your event.

With hundreds of events across Texas listed every month, [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com) has something for you.

**TCP** *Plan now*  
[TexasCoopPower.com/events](http://TexasCoopPower.com/events)



## **TCP** E-news Fast and Direct

Get our best content delivered to your inbox every month!

We bring you everything Texas: its culture, people, food, history and travel, plus our monthly contest winners and more.

**TCP** *Sign up now*  
[TexasCoopPower.com/join](http://TexasCoopPower.com/join)



DREAMSTIME AGENCY | DREAMSTIME.COM

### Pick of the Month

#### Festival of the Wolves

Navasota, October 15  
(936) 894-9653  
[saintfranciswolfsanctuary.org](http://saintfranciswolfsanctuary.org)

Learn about wolves and wolf-dogs, browse booths, dine at food trucks, bid on items at a silent auction, and have a howling good time at the Saint Francis Wolf Sanctuary.

### OCTOBER EVENTS CONTINUED

22

**Kyle Center Street Trick-or-Treat**, (512) 262-3939, [cityofkyle.com](http://cityofkyle.com)

**Palestine Hot Pepper Festival**, (903) 723-3014, [visitpalestine.com](http://visitpalestine.com)

**Plano Fall Harvest Festival and Outdoor Market**, (469) 467-9995, [visitplano.com](http://visitplano.com)

**Round Rock Diwali Festival**, [info@rrdiwalifest.com](mailto:info@rrdiwalifest.com), [rrdiwalifest.com](http://rrdiwalifest.com)

**Cottonwood Shores [22-23] Legends of the Falls**, (830) 693-3830, [cottonwoodshores.org](http://cottonwoodshores.org)

**Kerrville [22-23] Mountain Bike Festival**, (830) 896-6864, [kerrvillemountainbikefestival.com](http://kerrvillemountainbikefestival.com)

25

**Kenney [25-29] Hodges Farm Antique Show**, (979) 865-9077, [hodgesfarmtexas@gmail.com](mailto:hodgesfarmtexas@gmail.com)

28

**Imperial [28-29] Horsehead Crossing Trails of Time**, (432) 336-6316, [pecoscountyhistoricalcommission.org](http://pecoscountyhistoricalcommission.org)

**Kerrville [28-30] Texas Fleece and Fiber Festival**, (361) 537-0503, [texasfleeceandfiber.com](http://texasfleeceandfiber.com)

29

**Copperas Cove Fall-O-Ween Festival**, (254) 542-2719, [www.copperascovetx.gov](http://www.copperascovetx.gov)

**Llano Llano River Pumpkin Float**, (325) 247-5354, [llanochamber.org](http://llanochamber.org)

**Sanger Sellabration**, (940) 458-7702, [sangertexas.com](http://sangertexas.com)

**Salado [29-30] Table-rock's Fright Trail**, (254) 308-2200, [tablerock.org](http://tablerock.org)

31

**Kerrville Family Fright Night**, (830) 257-7300, [kerrvilletx.gov](http://kerrvilletx.gov)

## NOVEMBER

04

**New Braunfels [4-13] Wurstfest**, (830) 625-9167, [wurstfest.com](http://wurstfest.com)

05

**Brenham Radney Foster & Darden Smith**, (979) 337-7240, [thebarnhillcenter.com](http://thebarnhillcenter.com)

**Jefferson Fall History Haunts and Legends Event**, (903) 601-3375, [visitjeffersonstexas.com](http://visitjeffersonstexas.com)

07

**Georgetown Wurstbraten 50th Sausage Festival**, (512) 863-3065, [zionwalburg.org](http://zionwalburg.org)

# Hometown Pride

Sports, artwork, history and landmarks all make us proud as peacocks to call our town home, no matter the size. These reader offerings just make us beam with Texas pride. So pull up a lawn chair and gather the kids. Here comes the parade.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



**1** JOAN WILSON  
BLUEBONNET EC

Wilson's granddaughter, Maddie Wilson, gets an early start experiencing Friday night lights with the Hendrickson Hawks cheerleaders in Pflugerville.

**2** JONNIE ENGLAND  
NUECES EC

Pecos, in far west Reeves County, shows hometown pride with the Pecos Boot Trail, a public art project.

**3** JULIE TUPY  
HILCO EC

Willie Nelson, painted on a downtown garage in his hometown of Abbott.

**4** KATE MANRRIQUEZ  
WHARTON COUNTY EC

Taylor Manriquez plays first base for the El Campo High School Ricebirds.



**2**



**3**



**4**

## Upcoming Contests

- DUE OCT 10** First Responders
- DUE NOV 10** Land, Sea or Sky
- DUE DEC 10** Riding the River



Enter online at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://TexasCoopPower.com/contests).

**TCP** See Focus on Texas on our website for more Hometown Pride photos from readers.





Quay Rathbone of Victoria was the first Turkey Trot sultana, in 1913.

**TCP** Go to our website to see Caytlyn Phillips' documentary, *Because Two Birds Raced*.



turkey capital of the world.

Thus began the Great Gobbler Gallop, with a Cuero turkey perpetually named Ruby Begonia facing Worthington's Paycheck ("nothing goes faster than a paycheck").

Ruby Begonia heads to downtown Worthington for the first leg every year at King Turkey Day, a month before Turkeyfest. Then the birds race again along Main Street in Cuero, a frenzy of feathers spurred on by crowds lining the way. The bird with the best cumulative time claims the Traveling Turkey Trophy of Tumultuous Triumph for its town.

It's no surprise that the gallop is one of my fondest childhood memories. Cuero's peculiar history with gobblers has long been my favorite aspect of my hometown and even became the focus of my master's thesis. It's not every day that you get to see flightless fowl excitedly plod down an ordinarily busy street. Our silly little tradition enthralled me and drew me in every October.

But the birds barely scrape the surface. It's the enriching union of the communities that brings the festival to life.

Turkeyfest organizers are still moved to tears recalling the generosity of their Worthington friends over the years. Five years ago, when Hurricane Harvey's winds whipped through Cuero, Worthington's residents sent a tractor trailer loaded with essentials, including bottled water and cleaning supplies, to our community.

So at Turkeyfest this year, October 7–9, we will again relish gathering with friends, family and visitors. We'll enjoy cool beverages, good food and all kinds of fun activities. And we'll treasure our bond with that faraway town up north.

It's true: Birds of a feather do flock together. ■

## Not for the Birds

Trotting turkeys—and so much more—unite towns separated by a thousand miles

BY CAYTLYN PHILLIPS

**AMID THE PASTURES** on the main road between San Antonio and the Gulf Coast sits the turkey-centric town of Cuero.

Its long history with the fowl dates back to 1908, when its first turkey processing plant opened. Crowds flocked to witness farmers parade their poultry down the streets, and the town seized the opportunity, dubbing it the Turkey Trot. The first one occurred in 1912, and they continued intermittently into the 1970s.

Fifty years ago this month, the Turkey Trot shifted to a four-day festival known as Turkeyfest. No longer did thousands of turkeys march down Main Street. Instead, Cuero partnered with rival turkey town Worthington, Minnesota, and they jointly decided an annual turkey race was the best way to determine the



# A True American Classic! Get Morgan Silver Dollars by the Pound!

It's been more than 100 years since the last Morgan Silver Dollar was struck for circulation. The most revered, most-collected vintage U.S. Silver Dollars ever, the Morgan had a well-earned reputation as the coin that helped build the Wild West. Cowboys, ranchers, outlaws... they all preferred "hard currency" Morgan Silver Dollars in their saddle bags, to flimsy paper money favored by Easterners at the time.

These 90% Silver Dollars were minted from 1878 to 1904, then again in 1921. They came to be known by the name of their designer, George T. Morgan, and they were also nicknamed "cartwheels" because of their large weight and size.

### Fewer Than 15% of Morgans Still Exist

Sadly, coin experts estimate that fewer than 15% of all Morgan Silver Dollars ever minted still exist today, due to the ravages of time and to U.S. government legislation that authorized the melting of hundreds of millions of Morgan Silver Dollars for their fine silver.

Our buyers are constantly on the lookout for Morgans and we've assembled a limited supply of these desirable Silver Dollars. Which is how we're able to give you the opportunity to add them to your collection...by the pound!

### Get Morgan Silver Dollars by the Pound!

That's right! You can get a full pound of 1878 to 1921 classic American Morgan Silver Dollars—all in very good collector condition, with fully-visible dates and mint marks—GUARANTEED! Simply call 1-877-564-6468 to learn more and secure collector-grade U.S. Morgan Silver Dollars, the coins that built the Wild West, by the pound. PLUS, receive a BONUS American Collectors Pack, valued at \$25, FREE with every order. Call now, before our limited supply is gone, gone, gone!

**FREE SHIPPING!** Limited time only. Standard domestic shipping only. Not valid on previous purchases.



**Call 877-564-6468** Offer Code **PKA178-01**

GovMint.com • 1300 Corporate Center Curve, Dept PKA178-01, Eagan, MN 55121

*Dates will vary.* GovMint.com® is a retail distributor of coin and currency issues and is not affiliated with the U.S. government. The collectible coin market is unregulated, highly speculative and involves risk. GovMint.com reserves the right to decline to consummate any sale, within its discretion, including due to pricing errors. Prices, facts, figures and populations deemed accurate as of the date of publication but may change significantly over time. All purchases are expressly conditioned upon your acceptance of GovMint.com's Terms and Conditions ([www.govmint.com/terms-conditions](http://www.govmint.com/terms-conditions) or call 1-800-721-0320); to decline, return your purchase pursuant to GovMint.com's Return Policy. © 2022 GovMint.com. All rights reserved.



Actual size  
is 38.1 mm

**90% Silver Dollars  
by the Pound!**

**BONUS**  
**American Collectors Pack**  
**\$25 Value - FREE with every order**







# Save A Bundle On TV And Internet!

## Same Bill. Same Price. **\$69<sup>99</sup>** month for TV Every Month. For 2 Years.



## It's ALL Included with DISH!

- ✓ Includes 2 Year Price Lock
- ✓ Includes 190 Channels with Locals
- ✓ Includes Hopper Smart HD DVR
- ✓ Includes Home Service + Streaming Requires internet connected Hopper.
- ✓ Includes Free Installation
- ✓ Includes FREE Premium Channels After 3 mos. you will be billed \$30/mo. unless you call to cancel.
- ✓ Includes HD Programming



## ADD BLAZING-FAST INTERNET! No Matter Where You Live!

# ~~\$59<sup>99</sup>~~ \$40

month for Internet

- ✓ Now with Unlimited Data!
- ✓ Speeds from 25Mbps - 1 Gbps
- ✓ Available Nationwide!



### Save up to \$20/mo.\*

\*\$ off discount offers vary by service address. TV service not required for Internet. Speeds and prices vary by provider. Call for details or visit [godish.com/internet](http://godish.com/internet).

### FREE Streaming on 5 Devices with DISH Anywhere App



Watching live and recorded TV anywhere requires an internet-connected Hopper w/Sling or Hopper 3 and compatible mobile device. On Hopper Duo, there is no live TV streaming for DISH Anywhere.

### Smart Remote w/ Voice and Google Assistant



Requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. Google is a trademark of Google LLC.



### Your Favorite Apps in One Place!



Netflix and Amazon Prime Video streaming memberships required. YouTube is a trademark of Google LLC. Amazon Prime only available on Hopper 3.

## ¡Se Habla Español!

[godish.com/pricelock](http://godish.com/pricelock) 🔍

# 1-866-290-7151

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

## dish

Authorized Retailer

Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions:

Advertised price requires credit qualification, 24-month commitment, and eAutoPay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 11/9/22. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$69.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$79.99 for AT120+, \$89.99 for AT200, \$99.99 for AT1250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$10.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D. Reg. No. - 19-08615. ©2021 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly means that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.