

# TEXAS CO-OP POWER



*After Dark*

## IN THE PARK

Nocturnal natives show  
Rio Grande Valley in  
a whole new light

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Naturalists spot a wolf spider by catching the reflection of its eyes with their flashlights.

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**ON THE COVER** A bobcat sits beside a pond at Estero Llano Grande State Park. Photo by Larry Ditto

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## Seeing Stars in Greenville

That game [*When Greenville Beat the Yankees*, June 2017] was the beginning and end of my baseball career. As a 14-year-old, I sold refreshments in the stands or shagged over-the-fence balls at Majors Field.

When the Yankees were warming up out on the field, I got my glove and ambled out on the field near Joe DiMaggio. I was much too awed to speak to him. Soon a medium-hot grounder came my way, and Joe said, "Wanna get that, kid?" Boy, did I! My chance to be recognized by the major leagues!

About a yard in front of me, that ball took a hop and beamed me. Next thing I knew, the great DiMaggio was standing over and looking down at me. "You OK, kid?" he asked.

I was, but my fantasy baseball career was beyond repair.

DAVID SMITH | SONORA  
SOUTHWEST TEXAS EC

## Look It Up in Alpine

Just finished the great bookstore article [*Blue Highway Literature*, June 2017]. One that you missed is my favorite bookstore in Texas, in little old Alpine.

Every time I visit, I find books that none of the chain stores carry. Next time you are in Alpine, give the store a look.

JACK L. COOPER  
NUECES EC

## Glory Days in Bremond

The first Polish settlers to arrive in Bremond were my great-grandparents, Joseph and Katherine Bartula [*Bremond Says "Witamy!"*, Currents, June 2017]. They came to America in 1873 from Austrian Poland.

## Trinity Valley EC to the Rescue

Just want to thank Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative for its quick response to the power outages after the recent tornado destruction in the Canton, Eustace and Emory areas. I always tell people how wonderful our service is out here.

The morning after the storms, I was headed on Highway 19 toward Athens. Hardly any cars, just utility trucks, one after another, headed toward Canton.

A solid stream of repair trucks with poles and other necessary items.

The reality of the situation brought tears to my eyes.

ANDREA MEADOWS | ATHENS | TRINITY VALLEY EC



They worked for the Roberts family until they were able to save \$6.20 and then purchased their own 62-acre farm. As a kid, I remember summer vacations picking cotton, hunting squirrels and rabbits, and fishing in creeks. There were no lights (electricity).

I remember the excitement one summer in the '50s. The community was abuzz that the REA [Rural Electric Administration] was bringing electricity to the area. The next summer, each room had a bulb on the end of a wire in the middle of the room. Glory days!!

RAYMOND A. BARTULA | HOUSTON  
SAM HOUSTON EC



## Taking 42 to Nevada

Our family took the 42 dominoes game [*The Top Spot*, January 2017] to Nevada 50 years ago when we moved here. Parents, children and grandchildren have all learned to play. No tournaments here.

BETTY PAWELEK | ELKO, NEVADA  
KARNES EC

## Remembering the Explosion

In 1941, my parents moved to New London. The lady living next door to them had lost a son in the explosion [*The New London School Explosion*, January 2017]. When she found out that my mom was pregnant, she begged her to name the baby Donald, after the child she lost. My mother agreed to do it because she felt so sorry for the woman.

The baby turned out to be a girl, and they named her Linda. In later years, my mother thought about how silly it was

to make such a promise to a person she barely knew. She said she "just felt so sorry for her."

LINDA LIVELY | KINGSLAND  
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

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   Texas Co-op Power

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## HAPPENINGS

# Come and Sit a Spell

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR HOT TUNES but hope to escape the hot weather this month, consider **MELODY RANCH'S 11TH ANNUAL DEEP SUMMER BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, AUGUST 23-26**, southeast of Sherman near Tom Bean.

### WEB EXTRAS

► Find more happenings online.

The air-conditioned Chrystal Opry House, a member of **GRAYSON-COLLIN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**, will showcase two nationally known bands—the Little Roy and Lizzy Show, and Mark Phillips and IIIrd Generation Bluegrass Band—plus a host of local and Texas favorites.

Food and drinks are available, as is camping at Melody Ranch RV Park.

**INFO** ► (903) 546-6893, [melodyranchbluegrassfestival.com](http://melodyranchbluegrassfestival.com)

## HISTORY LESSON

### Brilliant!

**Eclipse mania** heads into its final weeks, and the U.S. Postal Service is putting its own special touch on the rare occurrence.

**The total solar eclipse** “for-ever” stamp transforms from a blocked-out sun to a full moon by the heat of a finger. The first-of-its-kind stamp, using thermochromic ink, commemorates the August 21 event, the first coast-to-coast total solar eclipse in America since 1918—the same year scheduled airmail service began. Totality will be visible in 14 states, from Oregon to South Carolina, but nowhere in Texas.



Little Roy and Lizzy Show

## HISTORY LESSON

### Smoke-Filled Shindigs

**President Lyndon B. Johnson** flew to his LBJ ranch near Johnson City 74 times during his five years in office. He spent 490 days there, almost 25 percent of his term.

**He staged huge barbecues** for visitors—foreign and domestic. Johnson thought they conveyed the idea that an everyday man was president. On occasion, he'd mix brisket and backroom deals on the White House grounds, leading the *New York Herald-Tribune* to coin the phrase “barbecue diplomacy.” Read about LBJ's first state dinner, a barbecue, in *Diplomacy on the Pedernales* on Page 29.

BY THE NUMBERS



Texas' total fall enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions was 1,555,462 in 2014, the latest figures from the National Center for Education Statistics.

The only state with more college students that year was California, with 2,696,415. The state with the fewest number of college students was Alaska, with 34,331.



CO-OPS IN THE COMMUNITY

## Serving Their Neck of the Woods

**AN EXCITING DAY AT FOSSIL RIM WILDLIFE CENTER** near Glen Rose turned urgent January 13 when a manager noticed damage to an electric pole, causing one downed wire and another to barely hang.

Fifteen minutes after a call to United Cooperative Services, a crew was beginning repairs. Soon, though, the crew needed to kill the power to finish the job.

That caused quite a stir at the giraffe barn, where Fossil Rim employees had gathered to watch a video feed of Jurz, who was on the verge of giving birth.

"They were using a hands-off approach from the animal care office and observing with our cameras in the barn," said Louis Pienaar, a Fossil Rim co-manager of support services. "Then the power went off."

Thirty minutes later, the lights came back on, and the staff watched Opulence enter the world. Mother and daughter are doing fine.

"We always prepare for the unexpected," said United lineman Brad Morrow, "but when you go to Fossil Rim, you wonder what you're dealing with."

### Did You Know?



**A NEWBORN GIRAFFE IS CALLED A CALF.**

Here are proper names for other newborns in the animal kingdom:

- COCKROACH** ▶ nymph
- FISH** ▶ fry
- GORILLA** ▶ infant
- LLAMA** ▶ cria
- OPOSSUM** ▶ joey

WORTH REPEATING

*"I have far more confidence in the one man who works mentally and bodily at a matter than in the six who merely talk about it."*

—**MICHAEL FARADAY**, British chemist and physicist who contributed significantly to the study of electromagnetism and electrochemistry. He died 150 years ago, on August 25, 1867.

ALMANAC

## SURE IS HOT!



**The winning dish** in this month's *Some Like It Hot* recipe contest (Page 31), Sweet Habanero Onions, features a habanero pepper, which ranks high on the Scoville Heat Scale. The scale measures "hotness," or concentration of capsaicin, which produces the heat sensation. Here's how popular peppers rate on the Scoville Heat Scale:

- 5,300,000** Police-grade pepper spray
- 1,041,427** Ghost
- 100,000–350,000** Habanero
- 7,000–8,000** Tabasco brand habanero pepper sauce
- 6,000–23,000** Serrano
- 5,000–10,000** Chipotle (smoked jalapeño)
- 2,500–5,000** Jalapeño
- 1,000–2,000** Poblano
- 500–2,500** Anaheim
- 0** Sweet bell

OUCH MEH

= What =

# LURKS

= in the =

# MURK





**A**re you willing to roam the woods at night, alert to the sounds of armadillos, frogs, owls and bobcats?

In the dark—when our eyes try to make sense of shades of black and gray—people feel less secure and tend to group up, a strategy that helped our ancestors survive.

“When it gets pitch black out, the superpowers we have within us start coming out,” says Lauretee Acevedo, an administrator at Resaca de la Palma State Park near Brownsville. “At night, we rely more on other senses: listening, smelling and using dark-adapted eyes.”

Three Rio Grande Valley state parks offer night tours and a chance to explore parklands rustling with wildlife in the company of a knowledgeable guide. It’s an easy way to take back the night and enjoy parks safely after dark. Across Texas, state park programs vary with the seasons and the moon. Owl prowls, haunted hikes, stargazing events and creatures-of-the-night tours give you good reasons not to be afraid of the dark.

On a moonless Family Fun Night, Acevedo leads the after-dark tram tour that takes us to what feels like another world. “The key is, everybody has to be quiet so we don’t scare the animals,” says Ron Karter, park host and tram driver, as two electric



## Rio Grande Valley state parks offer after-dark tours that keep your senses on edge

trams filled with family groups and Cub Scouts silently roll through 1,200 acres of resaca wetlands, thorn scrub and Texas ebony forest. The headlights illuminate midnight-dark patches in the road that suddenly rise up and fly off. These are pauraques, the Rio Grande Valley’s year-round nighthawks, easily identified by their wide, froglike mouths.

The electric tram stops, and we hop off for a 15-minute walk down Mexican Olive Trail. We observe and duck under spiderwebs strung from branches thrusting out from tangled thickets of guayacan, soapberry and ebony. Excited by the dark surroundings, the Scouts swing their heads, and their headlamps momentarily blind other members of the group. We can feel the increased humidity and smell the slightly swampy tang of water nearby, and in a couple of minutes, we reach the resaca for which the park is named. Our guide explains that leaves from the black willows around us were used in teas to cure headaches.



**Opposite: Visitors look for critters during a night walk at Estero Llano Grande State Park in Weslaco. This page, from top: The park’s night life includes badgers; bark scorpions, shown under a black light; and eastern cottontails. “It’s a new world at night,” says park ranger John Yochum.**

**W**e stand on the bank of this former Rio Grande channel, now an oxbow lake, and see the stars overhead as clouds move across the night sky. A spotlight catches the eye shine of an owl flying low and fast across a nearby field.

On another night tour—Estero Llano Grande State Park's Full Moon Party—ranger John Yochum gives us a preview of what will be moving around in the dark. He suggests we look out for bark scorpions, raccoons, nine-banded armadillos and opossums. "It's a new world at night," he says, "We're always exploring. Coyotes are easier to hear than see."

Because we have a full moon to illuminate our path, Yochum discourages flashlights except when they are needed to pinpoint the source of a noise or catch the eye shine of a nocturnal creature. What I hear are leopard frogs, which sound like heavyweight hens clucking.

Venturing down the trail, we wade through an aromatic fog from the blooming coma trees and tune in to the tree crickets chirping. A bird rustles the leaves of a low tree, and wings beat past us. "If it flies and is noisy, it's a dove. If you can't hear anything, it's an owl," Yochum says.

Estero Llano Grande, near Weslaco, features eight resident alligators that move between ponds, Yochum tells us as he plays a spotlight over Alligator Lake. Because those reptiles rank as my No. 1 scary creature, all my senses are on alert, and I'm ready to flee. What looks like white lights on the end of a 7-foot-long log? That's the reflection from alligator eyes. Thank goodness they are on the far side of the lake.

The ranger directs us to hunt for bark scorpions. We wave small black lights across the bark of mesquite trees and the grass along the path until Yochum finds the first one. It shines with a luminescent sheen. Every leg and abdomen segment is visible, as is the wicked-looking curved tail that houses the stinger. Night-hike explorer Karen Fossum discovers another scorpion, which poses, unruffled by our gasps of excitement and countless cellphone photographs.

Under the full moon, Yochum introduces us to the free Google Sky app. Install it and point your cellphone at the sky, and the app identifies the planets, stars and constellations in the phone's line of sight.

**O**n the wetlands boardwalk, I hear black-bellied whistling ducks overhead and the splashing of moorhens. Ranger Lorena Guerra tells us the folktale of La Lechuza, the witch who turns into a barn owl and chases children who wander outside after dark. "It screams and hisses instead of hooting, which makes it seem more creepy," she says. "Many people are still afraid of barn



**WEB EXTRAS**  
▶ See more creatures in a slideshow.



owls because of stories they heard as children." Amid all the night sounds, I am happy not to hear the dying-animal scream of woodhouse toads.

With the coastal zone overlapping the temperate, tropical and desert zones in the Valley, the range of environments ensures exceptional biodiversity. "It's different every time," says Amber Schmitt, lead interpreter at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park in Mission, as we begin a two-hour Creatures of the Night tram tour at twilight. "Some people think it is boring at night with nothing happening, but if you stop and listen."

We listen at the Kingfisher Overlook. Schmitt holds up a bat detector that translates bats' high-pitched echolocation calls into cricket-like chirps. That lets us pinpoint the location of the bats fluttering above the pond in the purple-streaked western sky. "Northern and southern yellow bats roost in palm fronds in the park," Schmitt says. "At this time of night, they're flying above the water to eat insects. Their faces funnel sounds to their ears."

Why would animals be nocturnal? Many reasons: The dark-

“At night, we rely more on other senses:  
listening, smelling and using  
dark-adapted eyes.”



ness makes it more difficult for predators to see them; their preferred food is often more accessible; and nighttime activity requires less water.

The art of spider sniffing, Schmitt shows us, involves holding a flashlight up at ear and eye level. Suddenly we see dozens, or even hundreds, of sparkles in the grass: These are reflections from eyes of spiders all around us. “They are all over! It’s like someone dropped glitter,” says a startled Gayle Yepsen, visiting the park from Illinois.

Schmitt explains that many night animals have a reflective surface at the back of their eyes. She shines a red laser beam on a sparkle to reveal a hefty wolf spider.

Black lights in hand, we search for more bark scorpions and find an abundance of them glowing. “The more gnarled the mesquite, the more it is likely to have bark scorpions,” says Schmitt. Some tour participants are distracted from the scorpions by the luminescence of plastic forks, weed trimmer line and even shoelaces.

**Clockwise from above: A great horned owl perches in a mesquite tree after sunset. A spider can’t hide against a backdrop of a full moon. Visitors hope to spy amphibians and fish in a small pool.**

The wind shakes the mesquites, but I spot movement nearby. It is a white stripe undulating in the dark. A skunk! The tram rolls on as we sweep lights over the dense woods. We spot an eastern screech-owl, watching us watching it. An armadillo scuttles away from our group. Cicadas pitch their incessant messages. At a bird blind, snout butterflies are nectaring on orange halves set out by park staff, taking advantage of the darkness to get their turn at the food.

Circling back toward park headquarters in the tram, we spot three javelinas digging with their snouts for grubs and roots, but they retreat from our lights. Two more skunks run in front of the tram, so we slow down.

With the weather determining what creatures come out, Schmitt says, “It feels like an entirely different park at night.”

Eileen Mattei is a Harlingen writer and Texas master naturalist.

# B R O A D B A N D      A C R O S S   T E X A S

**Co-ops keep rural communities competitive by offering high-speed internet service**

**B**andera might be only an hour from San Antonio, the seventh-largest city in the United States, but that was little consolation for the town's schoolchildren. You could see them waiting in line at the library almost every afternoon because that was the only place in town where the computers had high-speed internet access.

"That's when I knew we had to do something," says William Hetherington, CEO of Bandera Electric Cooperative, which serves 25,000 members in seven counties in the Hill Country. "It wasn't right that they couldn't do their homework if they didn't get in before the library closed in the afternoon."

To that end, Bandera EC in 2017 started offering broadband internet service, the same kind urban residents take for granted. Those who want it will be able to purchase reliable, high-speed service delivered through fiber-optic cables, allowing students to do homework at home. With this internet access, members can apply for college loans, complete financial transactions, file taxes, run a business, video chat and shop. In other words, they can do everything that has become part of 21st-century life.

Today, internet access in rural areas is similar to electricity access before cooperatives electrified the countryside. In 1935, when only 11 percent of U.S. farms had electricity, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration, which led to the formation of electric co-ops. By 1946, more than 50 percent of American farms had electricity.

Now co-ops again are connecting the countryside to modern America—this time with broadband. Broadband is as vital today as electricity was then. Rural Texas is underserved, and the for-profit cable and telephone companies that dominate broadband delivery aren't interested in bringing the internet to areas where there isn't going to be a big enough return on their investment.

This is where co-ops can fit in.

"Internet service is an essential utility service these days," says Alyssa Clemsen-Roberts, a long-time co-op advocate who has worked for several years on rural broadband issues. "There's a huge gap that exists in rural areas, and co-ops are well-placed to fill that gap, just like they did for electricity."

**A**s many as 1 in 3 adult Texans don't have access to broadband internet service, and most of them live in rural areas.

In rural areas with broadband service, the cost of a residential connection can be twice as high as in urban areas such as Dallas, Houston and Austin, and the cost of a business account also can be twice as high as business accounts in urban areas, says James Yohe, the executive director of the Nocona Economic Development Corporations in North Texas.

Nationally, about 6 in 10 city dwellers have access to three or more high-speed internet providers, while just 1 in 5 rural residents can say the same thing. This might be one reason that only 55 percent of people living in rural areas have access to the speeds that qualify as broadband, while 94 percent of the urban population does.

These days, broadband fits hand-in-glove with economic development and the education that is the 21st-century corollary to jobs and growth. Even libraries need to be connected, says Karin Gerstenhaber of the nonprofit Tocker Foundation in Austin, and most rural libraries do not have broadband. Tocker supports rural libraries in towns of 12,000 or fewer, providing grants so the libraries can offer broadband service.

The desire to foster economic development and education motivates co-ops across the country, not just in Texas, to provide high-speed service. Several Missouri co-ops offer the service,



**As many as 1 in 3 adult Texans don't have access to broadband internet service, and most of them live in rural areas.**

and a consortium that includes the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative; CoBank, a member of the Farm Credit System; Rural Broadband Association; and National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation has worked to help co-ops understand and embrace the challenge and offer possible solutions.

High-speed, reliable internet is a key to getting businesses to relocate to rural areas. A call center cannot function without high-speed internet, even if it does get cheaper land, lower taxes and reduced utility costs.

“That’s totally what we’re talking about,” says Yohe. “If you don’t have access, you can’t develop current economic opportunities. There are very few industries that don’t require the service, even from a retail perspective.”

So why are rural areas underserved?

It’s the difference between the business model of for-profit cable and telephone companies, and the nonprofit co-op model. The for-profits are in business to make money for shareholders, while the latter are in business to provide service to members. The situation is no different from the need for rural electrification more than 70 years ago, when for-profit utilities might have provided electricity to rural America. Investors balked and claimed the infrastructure costs—building substations, placing poles and stringing wire—were prohibitive in areas with great distances containing few people. Substitute the idea of building high-speed internet’s infrastructure—laying cable and building massive servers—and the result is the same.

One proposed solution that didn’t work as intended was the federal government’s Connect America Fund, which offered \$10 billion in subsidies to the largest telecom companies to begin offering service in unserved areas. However, the biggest companies didn’t use all the money, citing the increased costs and difficulty to make a return on their investment, even with a subsidy.

“I don’t think anyone faults the telcos and cable companies,” says Clemens-Roberts. “They need to earn a fair rate of return on their investment, and they don’t see a way to do that in rural areas. But co-ops don’t have to worry about that immediate return on investment; cooperatives are used to making long-term infrastructure investments.”

**A**nother difficulty in connecting rural areas is the definition of broadband service. The Federal Communications Commission sets the standard and requires companies that receive federal subsidies to meet that standard. The FCC defines broadband in terms of a connection’s speed in each direction—the number of megabits per second that it can download or upload content, such as a YouTube video.

The FCC definition of broadband is appreciably slower than what Yohe says rural residents and businesses need. Compounding the confusion is that the FCC doesn’t mandate how high-speed service needs to be delivered. Yohe says fiber-optic cable, which is used by most urban cable and telephone companies to deliver 1-gigabit connections, is the best choice. That means download and upload speeds are 1 gigabit per second. Hetherington says Bandera EC will offer gigabit connections through fiber-optic cable.

On the other hand, Guadalupe Valley EC, which has been offering some form of internet service to its almost 60,000 members in 13 south-central Texas counties since 2003, today offers a mix of fiber optic and what’s called wireless point to point, a more sophisticated version of basic Wi-Fi service. Though the latter doesn’t offer gigabit speeds, Tammy Thompson, the co-op’s communications and public relations manager, says that it still qualifies as high-speed broadband.

**WEB EXTRAS**

▶ Learn more about broadband terminology and broadband gaps in rural communities.

The other difficulty? Despite a co-op’s advantages over cable and telephone companies in building a high-speed internet system in rural areas, it can still be a risky business venture, says Hetherington. There was a sense in the 1930s and ’40s that electricity was essential and that everyone would eventually want the service—and would pay for it. There’s no such assurance with broadband, and co-ops don’t want to be stuck building costly infrastructure to provide a service that not enough of its members will use.

**A**lthough they face the same obstacles as for-profit broadband providers, cooperatives choose to find ways to overcome them for the sake of their members. Bandera EC will add fiber-optic broadband service upon request. If half of a neighborhood commits to buying the service for one year, then the company will install the infrastructure to bring service to that area. “We need density and commitment,” Hetherington says. “That’s the only way the process is economically feasible for the co-op.”

Bandera EC has had 2,500 requests for service since the first announcement last year, and it’s working on adding broadband to part of Boerne after meeting the demand commitment threshold.

“As long as we do the due diligence, we’re going to find a way to make it work,” says Hetherington.

That is why so many people think the co-op model will work to deliver high-speed internet service: Those people work together to make a project succeed.

Learn more about writer **Jeff Siegel** at [winecurmudgeon.com](http://winecurmudgeon.com).

▶ To share your ideas about rural broadband, contact the editor at [editor@texascooppower.com](mailto:editor@texascooppower.com).

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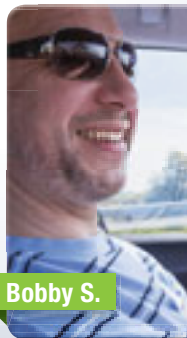


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# Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid

## Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

**CHICAGO:** A local board-certified Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

**“Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry” — Dr. Babu, Board-Certified ENT Physician**

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer’s disease. **He could not understand why the cost of hearing aids was so high when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones, and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance plans do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which traditionally run between \$2,000-\$6,000 for a pair, many of the doctor’s patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri’s goal was to find a reasonable solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, similar to the “one-size-fits-most” reading glasses available at drug stores.

He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, almost all of these were found to amplify bass/low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and were not useful in amplifying the frequencies related to the human voice.

### Inspiration from a Surprising Source

The doctor’s inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a new cell phone he had just purchased. **“I felt that if someone could devise a**

- Designed by a Board-Certified Ear, Nose, & Throat (ENT) Doctor
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smart Phone for about \$700 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at an affordable price.”

### Affordable Hearing Aid with Superb Performance

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical-grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the **MDHearingAid PRO®** for less than \$300. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

### Tested by Leading Doctors and Audiologists

The **MDHearingAid PRO®** has been rigorously tested by leading ENT physicians and audiologists who have unanimously agreed that the **sound quality and output in many cases exceeds more expensive hearing aids.**

### Doctors and patients agree:

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*“I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years and these are the best behind-the-ear aids I have tried. Their sound quality rivals that of my \$3,500 custom pair of Phonak® Xtra digital ITE.”*

—Gerald L.

*“I have a \$2,000 ReSound® Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid PRO® in the right ear. I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids.*

—Dr. May, ENT Physician

*“They work so great, my mother says she hasn’t heard this well in years, even with her \$2,000 digital! It was so great to see the joy on her face. She is 90 years young again.”*

—Al P.

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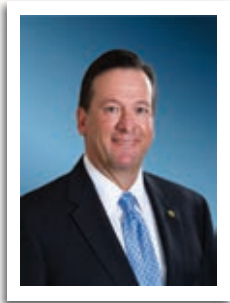
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# Appreciating Electricity, One Penny at a Time

You can still get value for just a penny's worth of electricity



**John W. Herrera**

## MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

*I recently ran across a column written by Curtis Condon, editor of Ruralite magazine in Hillsboro, Oregon. His points were so enlightening, I thought I'd share them with you this month.*

Some of us are old enough to remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. But what does a penny buy these days? Not much. The government can't even make a penny for a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one.

About the only thing of value that you can still get for a penny is electricity. I'm not kidding.

Let's pretend the average rate for a kilowatt-hour of electricity is 10 cents. That's 60 minutes of 1,000 watts of electricity for a dime, so a penny of electricity equates to 100 watts. It's enough to power a 9-watt LED lightbulb—the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb—for 11 hours, all for only a penny.

The value is just as evident when powering things besides lighting. Take, for instance, your smartphone. Using the same 10 cents per kWh price, one penny's worth of electricity allows you to fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times. You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total.

We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it. We tend to forget that.

Electricity is not expensive. The expense is due to our using it for so many different things: lighting, heating, cooking, cooling, refrigeration, cleaning, washing, pumping, entertainment, communications—even transportation these days.

Unfortunately, we don't always appreciate it. When our monthly electric bill comes, we open it and might complain about the cost. It's a knee-jerk reaction ingrained in us as consumers. We don't stop to think about the value we receive for the money.

In 1940, when many co-ops were built, a penny had as much buying power as 17 cents today. This means the residential price of electricity—which now averages 12 cents a kWh nationally—is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940. And it won't rot your teeth.



**John W. Herrera**  
General Manager

## Magic Valley Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 267  
1 3/4 Mi. W. Hwy 83  
Mercedes, TX 78570



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# Magic Valley Is Committed to Members



**By Sierra Rhodes**  
*MVEC Member*

I hear a lot of my friends' parents complaining about their electric bill. But my parents and I have reason to celebrate when we talk about our electric cooperative—because I won the Magic Valley scholarship this year.

My co-op cares about its communities and local youth—that's why my co-op matters to me.

I heard about the Magic Valley's scholarships through my guidance counselor and I thought I'd give it a shot. I had to fill out an application and submit an essay, a couple of months later, I received a phone call to schedule a formal interview. I was excited, since I love interviews. A day after my interview, I was surprised to get the phone call with the exciting news that I had been awarded one of the seven \$15,000 scholarships. It was a monumental moment for me since I'd have fewer college expenses to worry about.

I'm attending Texas Tech University in the fall, and like most students, scholarships are really important to me. I'm so grateful to Magic Valley for supporting higher education and investing in my future. It's also a nice feeling that my hard work all through school has been rewarded.

When I went to Magic Valley's Annual Meeting in April for the award ceremony, I learned that scholarships aren't the only cool thing the co-op does. High school juniors can apply to go on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour—a weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., in June—and they also do safety demonstrations in elementary schools, so kids know how to use electricity safely. The annual meeting itself was really fun, too—my parents voted for candidates running for the board of directors and we heard about the co-op from the General Manager, John W. Herrera. We also were able to eat some great chocolate chip and macadamia cookies, and we had an opportunity to check out the exhibit, where they displayed a timeline of MVEC's 80th years of history.

Most people think their electric company just charges them for electricity—it's nice to know that Magic Valley is more than that. My co-op's commitment to its members matters to me.





# YOUR BACKYARD AT NIGHT

By Eileen Mattei

When I sleep with my windows open, the smell of a skunk drifts in occasionally. Late at night, I hear screech owls trilling and the pauraques' strange call which sounds like a broken toy whistle. Whenever a train goes past, chachalacas wake the neighborhood with their shrieks of chachalac-chachalac. Some mornings I find new, shallow baseball-size holes in the backyard, the sign of an armadillo digging for insects. Neighbors complain that possums are eating their nearly-ripe papayas and peaches.

What is going on in my backyard and yours at night? What wildlife moves into our yards once we turn off the lights?

Depending on where you live, you could easily have a small zoo parading around your patio, through your garden, up your trees, and across your lawn, drinking at your water feature, bird bath, pool or dogs' water bowl, and trotting down trails in your brush or pasture. And you sleep right through this nightly parade.

The wildlife most active in the Valley at night and twilight includes nine-banded armadillos, coyotes, mice and rats, skunks, rabbits, deer, possums, and raccoons along with bats, frogs, nighthawks and owls.

Why are these animals active when much of the animal kingdom is sleeping? For one thing, small animals are safer at night from predators like hawks. Of course, coyotes, owls and other predators are hunting for food then. But competition for food and water decreases at night, and animals can avoid the sun's heat, so they need less water.

In comparison to daytime animals, nocturnal creatures tend to have much larger eyes and other vision adaptations that let them see better in the dark, to hide and to hunt more effectively. So they move through our yards seeking food and water.

Larry Luff sets up a trail camera at Estero Llano Grande State Park where he and his wife are park hosts during

the winter. The camera is motion-activated and takes time-stamped photographs illuminated by a red flash that doesn't disturb the animals. The camera's chip slips into your computer to let you view what has been passing by.

"Sometimes an armadillo goes past, and two hours later the camera shows an armadillo, possibly the same one, going in the opposite direction. I believe some animals move around from one area to another on regular routes," he said. Bobcats, javelinas, coyotes and possums have starred in some of the night shows.

Intrigued, I borrowed a friend's trail camera. For three nights, it captured the same visitors to the tiny water feature on my patio. A raccoon with its bandit mask and fluffy, ringed tail came every night between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. One image showed the raccoon with an arm elbow-deep in the little pond. Was it trying to catch some of the mosquito-larva-eating fish that swim there or washing off food? Three neighborhood cats stopped by at odd hours.

Wanting to see the nocturnal visitors for myself, I took up watch in a patio chair in the middle of the night. When I turned on the flashlight, a possum was tottering across a trail about 20 feet from me, not disturbed by the light. A cottontail in the side yard dashed away when the beam of light hit it. A local cat wandered over. Insects, I discovered, are active at night: use mosquito repellent. But dozens of fireflies come out, as well as tarantulas, scorpions, crickets and cockroaches.

Although we live just inside city limits, several neighbors have spotted bobcats at dusk. On pre-dawn walks, I've encountered bats swooping low and nearly tripped over an armadillo. Whistling noises overhead mark the flight of up-late black-bellied whistling ducks. Night sounds can include the deep-pitched whoo-who- whoo of great horned owls, the lighter tones of mourning doves, and the rumbles and screeches of frogs and toads. If you stop to listen, it's a not such a silent night.

All those hours, when I'm not using my yard, wild visitors are certainly welcome to hunt, drink and shelter there.



# Keep Food Safe

## Before, During and After a Power Outage

Unfortunately, power outages do occur from time to time. It's important to know how to keep your food safe during an outage. Use these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of illness.

### Before power outage



Keep refrigerator at **40° or below**. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately. Keep freezer set to **0° or below**. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

### During power outage

**Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!**

If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 hours**.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for **four hours**.

### After power outage

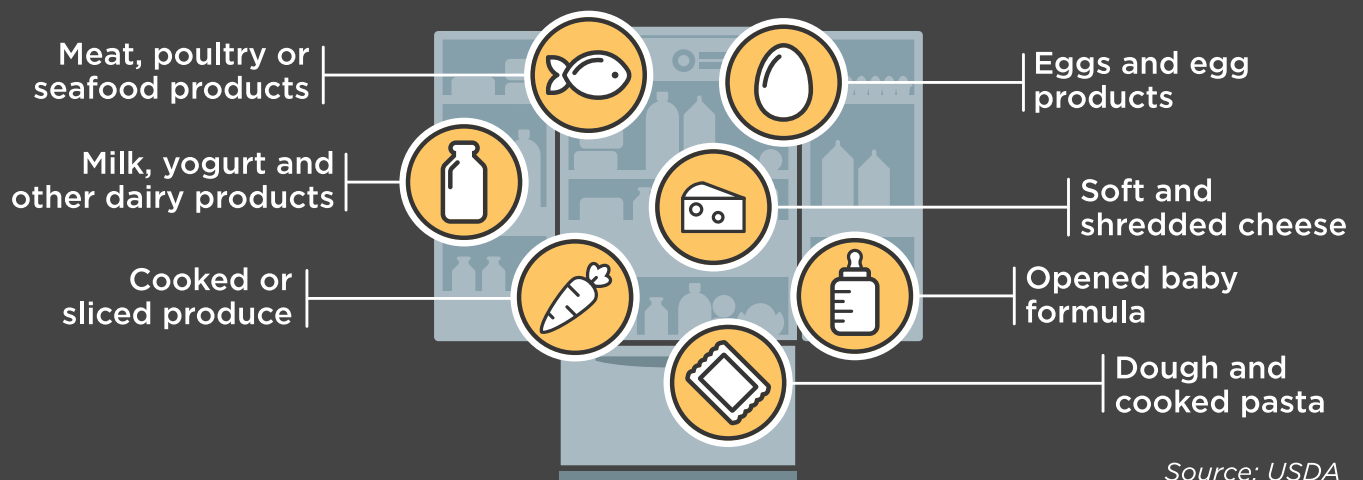


Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer.



If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

### Foods that should be thrown out after an extended power outage:



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# Valorando la electricidad, centavo a centavo

Todavía es posible recibir electricidad por el valor de un centavo



## MENSAJE DEL DIRECTOR GENERAL

Recientemente me encontré con el escritor columnista Curtis Condon, editor de la revista Ruralite en Hillsboro, Oregon. Sus puntos de vista fueron tan interesantes que me gustaría compartirlos con ustedes.

Algunos de nosotros tenemos la edad suficiente para acordarnos de cuando podíamos comprar dulces que efectivamente costaban un centavo.

**John W. Herrera** Pero realmente ¿qué puedes comprar con un centavo en hoy en día? No mucho. El gobierno no puede ni siquiera producir un centavo al costo de un centavo. Según la casa de la moneda de E.E.U.U., producir un centavo hoy cuesta un centavo y medio.

La única cosa de valor que todavía puede comprar un centavo es la electricidad. No estoy bromeando.

Supongamos que la tarifa promedio por un kilovatio-hora de electricidad es de 10 centavos. Eso corresponde a 60 minutos de 1,000 watts de electricidad por diez centavos, así que un centavo de electricidad equivale a 100 watts. Es suficiente para alimentar una bombilla LED de 9 watts, el equivalente a una bombilla incandescente de 60 watts por 11 horas, tan solo por el costo de un centavo.

El valor es igual de evidente al encender otras cosas aparte de la iluminación. Veamos, por ejemplo, el teléfono inteligente o Smartphone. Utilizando el mismo precio de 10 centavos de dólar por kWh, el valor de un centavo de electricidad permite cargar el iPhone más de 18 veces. Puedes cargarlo una vez cada día del año por un total de 20 centavos.

Somos afortunados al tener un excelente valor por la electricidad, porque tenemos un enorme apetito por ella. A veces se nos olvida.

La electricidad no es cara. El gasto es debido al consumo de tantos aparatos diferentes como las luces, calefacción, cocina, aire acondicionado, lavado, bombeo, entretenimiento, comunicaciones y hoy en día, incluso el transporte.

Lamentablemente, no siempre la valoramos. Cuando recibimos la factura eléctrica mensual la abrimos y a veces nos quejamos del costo. Es una reacción instintiva en todos nosotros como consumidores. No nos detenemos a reflexionar sobre lo que recibimos por ese dinero.

En 1940, cuando muchas cooperativas eléctricas fueron creadas, un centavo tenía el poder de comprar el equivalente a 17 centavos de hoy. Esto significa que el precio de la electricidad residencial, que ahora es en promedio 12 centavos por kWh a nivel nacional, es en realidad una mejor oferta hoy de la que era en 1940. Y no te daña los dientes.



Respetuosamente,

  
**John W. Herrera**  
General Manager

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# El compromiso de Magic Valley con sus miembros



**Por Sierra Rhodes**  
*Miembro de MVEC*

Escucho mucho a los padres de mis amigos quejarse de sus facturas eléctricas. Pero mis papás y yo tenemos grandes razones para celebrar cuando hablamos de nuestra cooperativa eléctrica, porque me gané la beca de Magic Valley este año.

Mi cooperativa apoya a las comunidades y a la juventud local, por eso me importa mi cooperativa.

Me enteré de la beca de Magic Valley a través de mi consejera de la escuela y me dijo, “voy a darme una oportunidad, a ver qué pasa”. Tuve que llenar una solicitud y escribir un ensayo; después de un par de meses, recibí una llamada para programar una entrevista formal. Yo me emocioné, porque me encantan las entrevistas. Al día siguiente de la entrevista, me sorprendió recibir una llamada con la emocionante noticia de que me habían otorgado una de las siete becas de 15,000 dólares. Fue un momento muy emotivo, ya que tendría menos gastos universitarios de qué preocuparme.

Estaré asistiendo a la Universidad de Texas Tech en el otoño y, como para la mayoría de los alumnos, las becas son muy importantes para mí. Estoy tan agradecida con Magic Valley por apoyarme en mi educación superior e invertir en mi futuro. También es muy bonito saber que todo el esfuerzo que realicé en mis estudios ha sido recompensado.

Cuando asistí a la junta anual de Magic Valley en abril para la ceremonia de entrega de becas, me enteré que las becas no es la única cosa interesante sobre la cooperativa. Los estudiantes de High School pueden aplicar para ir al programa estudiantil del Youth Tour – una semana de viaje en Washington, D.C. en junio; MVEC también realiza demostraciones de seguridad pública en las escuelas primarias, para que las y los niños sepan cómo utilizar la electricidad de forma segura. La junta anual fue muy interesante; por ejemplo, mis papás votaron por los candidatos para la junta directiva y escuchamos acerca de la cooperativa a través del Director General, John W. Herrera. También comimos una galletas muy ricas de chocolate y macadamia y tuvimos la oportunidad de ver una exposición, con información y fotografías de los 80 años de historia de Magic Valley.

La mayoría de la gente piensa que la compañía eléctrica solamente cobra por la electricidad, pero es bueno saber que Magic Valley es mucho más que eso.

El compromiso de mi cooperativa de apoyar a sus miembros es importante para mí.





# EL PATIO DE TU CASA POR LA NOCHE

Por Eileen Mattei

Cuando duermo con mi ventana abierta, de vez en cuando se cuela el olor de un zorrillo. A altas horas de la noche escucho a las lechuzas y el extraño canto de los pauraques, que suena como el silbato de un juguete roto. Cuando pasa el tren, las chachalacas despiertan a todos los vecinos con sus gritos de chachalac-chachalac. Algunas veces por las mañanas me parece interesante descubrir nuevos hoyos, del tamaño de una pelota de béisbol, en el patio trasero: son la señal de la excavación de un armadillo en busca de insectos. Los vecinos se quejan de que los tlacuaches se comen las papayas maduras y duraznos de sus jardines.

¿Qué pasa por la noche en mi casa y en la tuya? ¿Qué animales visitan nuestros patios cuando apagamos las luces?

Dependiendo de dónde vivas, fácilmente puedes tener un pequeño zoológico desfilando por tu patio a través

del jardín, por los árboles y el césped; pueden beber agua de la fuente que tienes afuera, de la bañera de pájaros, la piscina o del recipiente de agua para el perro y desfilan por entre los arbustos de tu patio. Y tú duermes tranquilamente, sin disfrutar el desfile nocturno.

La vida silvestre en el Valle es más activa durante la noche y la obscuridad incluye armadillos de nueve bandas, coyotes, ratas y ratones, ciervos, conejos, zorrillos, mapaches y tlacuaches, junto con murciélagos, ranas, halcones nocturnos y lechuzas.

¿Por qué estos animales están más activos cuando gran parte del reino animal duerme? Por una parte, los animales pequeños se sienten más protegidos de depredadores como los halcones. Por supuesto, los coyotes, lechuzas y otros depredadores cazan por la noche para conseguir su comida. La competencia por el alimento y el agua disminuye durante la noche, y

los animales se protegen del calor del sol, por lo que necesitan menos agua.

En comparación con los animales diurnos, las criaturas nocturnas tienden a tener mayor visión y otras adaptaciones que les permiten ver mejor en la oscuridad, a esconderse y cazar de forma más eficaz. Por esta razón desfilan a través de nuestros patios en busca de alimentos y agua.

Larry Luff programa una cámara en el Parque Estatal Estero Llano Grande, donde él y su esposa son guías del parque durante el invierno. La cámara utiliza un flash rojo que no molesta a los animales y está programada para captar fotografías que indican la hora. El chip de la cámara después será utilizado para descubrir qué tipo de animales han pasado durante la noche.

"Captamos la imagen de un armadillo y, dos horas más tarde, la cámara muestra la imagen de un armadillo, posiblemente es el mismo, que camina en la dirección opuesta. Creo que algunos animales caminan por una misma área y tienen rutas regulares," dijo Larry. He capturado imágenes de gatos monteses, jabalíes, coyotes y tlacuaches en algunos de los videos nocturnos.

Intrigada, le pedí prestado el equipo a mi amigo. Durante tres noches, la cámara captó a los mismos visitantes al pequeño estanque de agua de mi patio. Un mapache, con su antifaz de bandido y su cola rayada y esponjosa vino cada noche entre 1 a.m. y 2 a.m. Una

imagen mostró al mapache con su pequeño brazo metido en el agua hasta el codo. ¿Estaba tratando de atrapar larvas de mosquito o tal vez intentaba lavar su comida? Tres gatos también hicieron su aparición en horas raras.

Quise ver con mis propios ojos a estos visitantes nocturnos, así que instalé una silla en medio de mi patio a media noche. Encendí una linterna y descubrí que un tlacuache caminaba aproximadamente a 20 pies de mí, y no se espantó por la luz, pero un conejo huyó. Un gato también andaba vagado por ahí. Los insectos, he descubierto, están activos durante la noche; hay que utilizar repelente de mosquitos. Pero hay decenas de luciérnagas, así como tarántulas, escorpiones, grillos y cucarachas.

Aunque vivo justo dentro de los límites de la ciudad, varios vecinos han visto gatos monteses al anochecer. Por la madrugada, descubrí murciélagos volando muy bajo y casi me tropecé con un armadillo. Los silbidos en lo alto revelan el vuelo desvelado de los patos chifladores.

Los sonidos nocturnos pueden incluir el grave ulular de los búhos cornudos, los tonos más ligeros de las palomas y el croar de ranas y sapos. Si te detienes a escuchar, la noche no es tan silenciosa como pensamos.

Durante todas esas horas, cuando no estoy utilizando mi patio, los animales nocturnos son bienvenidos para cazar, beber y refugiarse.



# Protege la seguridad de los alimentos

## Antes, Durante y Después de un Apagón

Desafortunadamente, las interrupciones eléctricas pueden suceder de vez en cuando. Es importante saber cómo mantener seguros los alimentos durante una interrupción eléctrica. Usa estos consejos del USDA para ayudar a minimizar la pérdida de comida y reducir los riesgos de enfermedades.

### Antes del apagón



Mantén la temperatura del refrigerador a **40 grados** o menos. Congela los alimentos como carnes frescas y pollo que no vayas a usar inmediatamente.

Mantén la temperatura del congelador a **cero grados o menos**. Coloca junta la comida congelada para que se mantenga fría por más tiempo.



Si anticipas que la interrupción eléctrica va a ser prolongada, compra hielo seco o un bloque de hielo para mantener la comida fría congelada.

### Durante el apagón

**Mantén cerradas las puertas del refrigerador y del congelador!**

Si las puertas se mantienen cerradas durante la interrupción eléctrica,



el congelador lleno mantendrá la temperatura durante **48 horas**.



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### Después del apagón

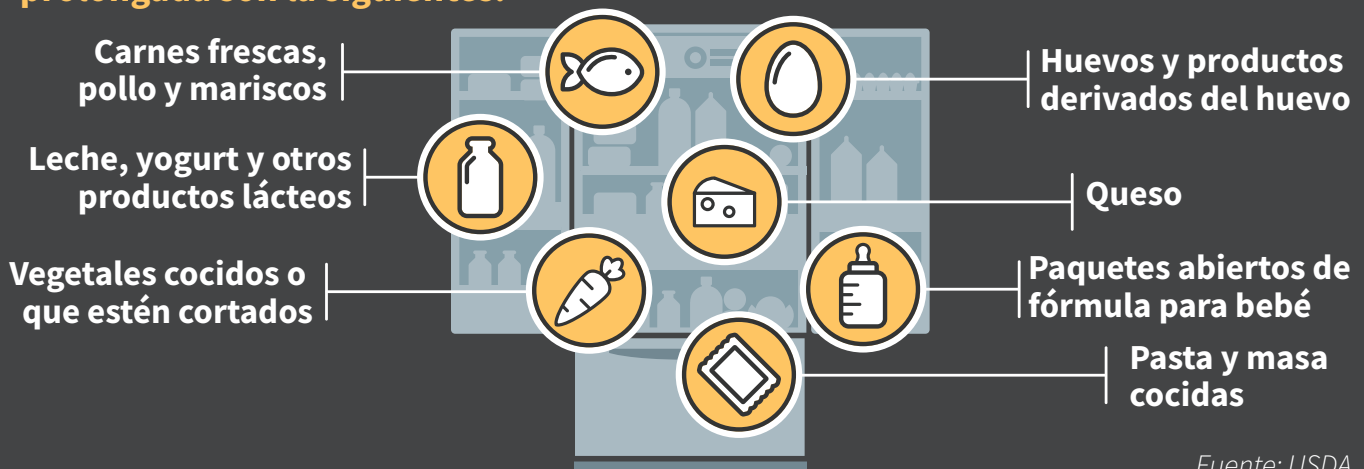


Revisa la temperatura del refrigerador y el congelador.



Si la temperatura es segura, la comida también será segura para comer.

### Las comidas que necesitan tirarse después de una interrupción eléctrica prolongada son las siguientes:



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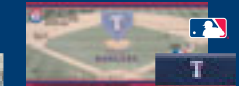
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Winter Calm - 00017 Leather Cover and Labels - 00017 ☆



Lightning Strikes - 00178 Leather Cover and Labels - 00178 ☆



Footprints w/verse "One night I dreamed that I was walking along the beach with the Lord." - 00667 Leather Cover and Labels - 00667 ☆



Live, Laugh, Love, Learn w/verse "Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away." - 00332 Leather Cover and Labels - 00332 ☆



John Wayne: An American Legend - 00204 Leather Cover and Labels - 00204 ☆



Cowboy Hats - 00965 Leather Cover and Labels - 00965 ☆



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Cowboy Kids - 00527 Leather Cover and Labels - 00527 ☆



Hawaiian Sunsets - 00181 Leather Cover and Labels - 00181 ☆



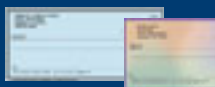
Dreamcatchers - 01045 Leather Cover and Labels - 01045 ☆



Ride Hard, Live Free - 00021 Leather Cover and Labels - 00021 ☆



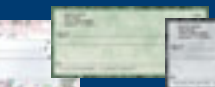
Moments of Majesty - 00001 Leather Cover and Labels - 00001 ☆



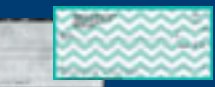
Blue Safety - 00027 One image. Leather Cover and Labels - 00155 ☆



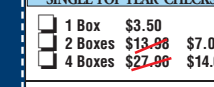
Reflections - 00125 Leather Cover and Labels - 00125 ☆



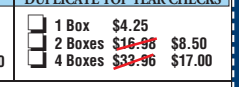
Parchment - 00612 Burgundy Leather Cover - 00030-004 Labels - 00032-008 ☆



Lena Liu's Floral Borders - 00088 Leather Cover and Labels - 00088 ☆



Wall Street - 00167 Leather Cover and Labels - 00167 ☆



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Customer Rating **★★★★★**

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# Diplomacy on the Pedernales

LBJ's first official dinner was a barbecue in Texas

BY DAVID LATIMER

ON NOVEMBER 25, 1963, LUDWIG ERHARD, the chancellor of what was then West Germany, was scheduled to arrive in Washington, D.C., for a state visit with President John F. Kennedy. The event would take place with full military honors and a formal black-tie dinner. *The Washington Post* carried a story and details of the upcoming visit in its Friday edition, November 22, the day the president was assassinated in Dallas. Erhard ended up going to Washington one day early to attend the funeral of the young president.

Erhard's state visit was rescheduled for just one month later, but instead of the pomp and circumstance originally planned, this one would offer a truly Texan experience. Lyndon B. Johnson made the decision to brand his own personality—and that of his home state—on the revised agenda.

Erhard arrived at Austin's Bergstrom Air Force Base on December 28. Johnson had spent Christmas at the LBJ Ranch outside Johnson City, entertaining reporters and visiting relatives, but now he was in Austin to greet the chancellor as he stepped off the plane to the stirring sounds of a military band. Gov. John Connally was there, his right arm in a sling, a grim reminder of the wounds he had suffered in Dallas just five weeks before.

After a few formal words of greeting, helicopters defined a wide arc over the state Capitol, speeding the president and the chancellor toward the Hill Country and the LBJ Ranch. Johnson's house, near the cantankerous Pedernales River, was bedecked with West German flags.

Accommodations were somewhat cramped. Lady Bird Johnson gave up her bedroom, and staff members doubled up wherever they could. The transformation from ranch headquarters to Texas White House had just begun. With Secretary of State Dean Rusk and the German foreign minister in attendance, diplomatic talks



President Lyndon B. Johnson greets Ludwig Erhard, chancellor of West Germany, in Austin.

began but soon shifted into one of Johnson's famous tours of the ranch.

The next day was a Sunday, which began with a visit to nearby Fredericksburg, a community that bears the imprint of its German settlers to this day. The mayor's welcoming speech was in German, but that was just the beginning. As Johnson biographer Robert Caro tells it in *The Passage of Power*, "Then they went to church, where the hymns and *Silent Night* were sung in German; when, after the ceremony, Erhard told the pastor he had been surprised by that, the pastor told him that the hymns were always sung in German."

The state dinner took place in tiny Stonewall's high school gymnasium, a wooden structure barely adequate for a local commencement ceremony, much less an international event. Townsfolk applied a few dabs of paint and jammed 30 tables onto the basketball court to make it work. Caro noted that the fare included "five hundred pounds of brisket and three hundred pounds of spareribs ... together with hickory gravy, German potato salad, Texas coleslaw,

ranch baked beans and sourdough biscuits."

*Time* magazine reported: "Erhard was enchanted with all the trimmings—including the gift of a ten-gallon hat and a choral rendition of *Tief in Dem Herzen Von Texas* [*Deep in the Heart of Texas*]." Country music and a Mexican mariachi band gave way later in the evening to Texan Van Cliburn on a grand piano.

As Caro summed up this Hill Country state dinner, "Formal the dinner may not have been; it was, however, a triumph. Erhard's smile grew broader and broader with each German song."

The chancellor loved it all. Johnson's brand of German-American diplomacy had reinforced a key relationship with a crucial Cold War ally and charmed newspaper reporters who began to see a depth to Johnson beneath the rough-edged Texan, a president taking charge in his own way.

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

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## Some Like It Hot

KICKING UP THE HEAT IN EVERYTHING from chili to burgers is a point of pride for Texans. Our readers' blistering recipes will be welcome additions to any chili lover's repertoire. Heat enthusiasts also will love recipes from *The Tacos of Texas*, a regional taco tour cookbook by Mando Rayo and Jarod Neece that features tacos filled with *guisado verde* from La Nueva Fresh & Hot taqueria in Dallas and *salsa de chile de árbol* from Veracruz All Natural food truck in Austin.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

### La Nueva Fresh & Hot Guisado Verde Tacos

#### SALSA VERDE

- 1 pound whole jalapeño peppers, stemmed
- 1½ pounds tomatillos, husks peeled and rinsed
- 4 cloves garlic
- Pinch cumin
- Pinch black pepper
- ½ teaspoon oregano
- 6 cloves (optional)
- Salt
- 1 cup water (or less as desired for consistency)

#### GUISADO

- 4 pounds pork (such as shoulder), diced
- 2 teaspoons cooking oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped, divided use

- 1. SALSA VERDE:** Place jalapeños in a pot with enough water to mostly cover the peppers and simmer 15 minutes. Add tomatillos and cook another 10 minutes, then drain.
- 2.** Place peppers and tomatillos in a blender with the rest of the ingredients and blend until thoroughly mixed. Set aside.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



MANDO RAYO & JAROD NEECE



PHOTOS: MARCO TORRES | COURTESY JT PRESS

## Some Like It Hot



**THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER**

**KIMBERLY HREHOR  
KARNES EC**

Striking a perfect balance of fiery and sweet, these onions are easy to prepare and surprisingly addictive. Consider serving them as a topping for pulled pork, roast beef sandwiches, charred sausages or even pizza—or as a sidekick to smoked brisket or grilled steaks.

### Sweet Habanero Onions

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- 1 sweet onion, sliced into rings or crescents
- 1 habanero pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar, or more to taste
- Salt and ground pepper, to taste

1. Heat butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir onion, habanero, brown sugar, salt and pepper into the butter and cook, stirring, until the onions are soft and translucent, about 10 minutes.
2. Lower the heat and continue to cook until the onions are caramelized. Makes about 1½ cups.

### \$100 Recipe Contest

January's recipe contest topic is **Nourishing Soups**, perfect for fighting off a cold—or just a cold winter day. What ingredients make your stock special? The deadline is **August 10**.

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

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

3. **GUISADO:** Place diced pork in a pot with oil. Cook on medium heat, stirring every 2–3 minutes, until liquid from the meat is almost evaporated. Add half the diced onion and cook until transparent.
4. When the meat is tender and liquid gone, add the salsa verde and bring mixture to a boil. Remove from heat.
5. Serve on warm corn tortillas with rest of sliced onions, cilantro and a slice of avocado, if desired. Makes 10 tacos.

### Veracruz All Natural Salsa de Chile de Árbol

- 5 Roma tomatoes
- Handful of dried *chile de árbol* peppers, stemmed
- 3 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- Salt to taste

1. Boil tomatoes 20–30 minutes, then drain.
2. Sauté dried chiles with oil until they turn dark red.
3. Blend tomatoes and chiles with garlic and add salt. Consistency must be thick. *¡Listo!* Serves 4–6.

### Scorpion Tails



These fiery appetizers from my first cookbook, *Cowgirl Cuisine*, are a play on jalapeño poppers, arguably the most beloved bar (or behind-the-wheel) snack in Texas. Broiling the peppers (as opposed to breading and frying them) allows the unique character of the jalapeño and the creamy, flavorful filling to shine. For an attractive presentation, consider serving them over *pequillo* pepper sauce (see Cook's Tip). —PD

- 16 large jalapeño peppers
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- ½ cup grated cotija, queso añejo or other aged white cheese
- ½ cup corn kernels
- 1 egg
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Dash hot sauce, to taste

1. Slice the stems off jalapeños and reserve. Using a paring knife, slice a vertical V-shaped opening into the sides of each pepper. Gently spread the opening and use a paring knife to remove ribs and seeds.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese to soften, then add cotija, corn, egg, garlic, cumin, basil, salt, pepper and hot sauce, and beat at low speed until blended. Refrigerate filling in a covered container at least 30 minutes or up to several hours.
3. Using a butter knife, fill each pepper with about 2 tablespoons of cheese filling. Top each pepper with the stem (frost stem inside with filling so it will adhere to pepper) and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate peppers at least 1 hour before broiling.
4. When you're ready to serve, unwrap peppers and broil until blistered but not overly blackened. If bottoms of peppers are still bright green, finish peppers at 350 degrees to warm through. Serves 4–6.

**COOK'S TIP** Serve Scorpion Tails over *pequillo* pepper sauce. Purée one 8- or 10-ounce jar of drained and stemmed *pequillo* peppers, 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil and 1 teaspoon sherry wine vinegar. Heat sauce gently just before serving, then place peppers atop a few tablespoons of the sauce.

From *Cowgirl Cuisine: Rustic Recipes and Cowgirl Adventures From a Texas Ranch* (William Morrow, 2007)

### Habanero Jelly

- RONALD BAUERLEIN | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC**
- Jelly recipes are common and variations are easy. You can't go wrong serving this sweet and spicy pepper jelly with the classic combo of cream cheese and crackers, but consider trying it on turkey, brie and baguette sandwiches, tossed with baby back ribs, or alongside grilled chicken thighs or roasted duck.
- ¾ cup apple cider vinegar
  - ¾ cups sugar
  - ½ cup finely grated carrots
  - ¼ cup finely chopped red bell pepper
  - 8 habanero peppers, finely chopped
  - 1 package (3 ounces) liquid pectin

**1.** Combine vinegar and sugar in a saucepan and heat over medium-high heat, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Mix in carrots and bell pepper, and bring to a boil, 5 minutes. Add habaneros and boil an additional 5 minutes.

**2.** Remove from heat and add pectin, then return to a boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Skim off any foam and divide the mixture among four sealable jars. Makes four 8-ounce jars.

**COOK'S TIP** Store unopened jars in the refrigerator, where they will keep for several months. Opened jars last up to one month.

## Mamaw's Hot Salad

DANNA CHAMPION | HILCO EC

This pasta salad has enough personality to serve on its own but is also a peppery partner alongside grilled sausage or fish. Champion's family and friends say more jalapeños just make the dish better. Adjust the quantity of peppers to your own heat preference.

- 1 pound small shell pasta
- 1 bunch green onions, thinly sliced
- 3-4 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 4-5 jalapeño peppers (as desired for heat), stemmed, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 jars (4 ounces each) diced pimientos, drained
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- Dash garlic powder
- Dash Accent seasoning
- Dash seasoned salt

**1.** Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling water per package directions. Drain noodles in a colander, rinse briefly in cold water, then place them in a large mixing bowl.

**2.** Add remaining ingredients and mix gently until combined. Serves 4-6.

**COOK'S TIP** Pasta salads tend to absorb seasonings after standing. If you make this dish in advance, perk it up before serving with additional lemon juice and seasonings.



## Tame the Flame

A few years ago, I did an early-morning TV cooking demo about making salsa. As I was slicing serrano peppers for the camera, I urged viewers to wear rubber gloves to protect their skin, even though I wasn't following my own advice. Later that day, when it was time to take out my contact lenses ... well, you get the idea.

There's nothing complicated about working with chile peppers, but attention to a few key details will help you enjoy their heat—without suffering from it.

**WEAR RUBBER GLOVES** The chemical that gives peppers their thrilling heat is capsaicin, an oil that can stick to your skin. To avoid its sting, wear rubber gloves when slicing and chopping chile peppers, and avoid rubbing your eyes (and other sensitive areas) after handling.

**REMOVE SEEDS TO DIFFUSE THE FIRE** Most of a pepper's capsaicin resides in the seeds and the whitish membrane that holds them. Trimming these out reduces the heat level and lets you enjoy the nuanced flavor of the pepper's flesh. —PD

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# Surf's Up

DUDE, DO YOU SHRED MONDO WAVES? We asked for your favorite surf scenes and have been riding a wave of tubular photos ever since. These readers have some primo moves, so grab your board, and let's hit the surf! **GRACE ARSIAGA**

**WEB EXTRAS** ▶ See more photos online.



▲ **SHELLY BORGFELD**, Pedernales EC: "What Texan's summer would be complete without a road trip to the Gulf Coast? The man o'war is lovely to look at, but beachcomber beware: They pack a punch!"

◀ **PAUL LAUDER**, Farmers EC: "Surfing off the north shore of Maui"

▼ **SANDRA BEGOTKA**, Central Texas EC: "A surfer walks toward the Pacific Ocean at Playa Cerritos, a well-known surf break" in Baja California Sur, Mexico.



▲ **ALLISON ANDERTON**, Sam Houston EC: "The sun is high, the surf is blue. The beach is twice as nice with you."

▶ **RODNEY HUFFMAN**, Bowie-Cass EC: Riding the waves



## UPCOMING CONTESTS

DECEMBER STAIRWAYS	DUE AUGUST 10
JANUARY SNOW DAY	DUE SEPTEMBER 10
FEBRUARY JAILHOUSES	DUE OCTOBER 10

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

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

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## August

8

**De Leon [8-12] Peach and Melon Festival and Tractor Pulls**, (254) 893-6600, peachandmelonfestival.net

11

**Junction [11-12] HCFA Rodeo and Dance**, (210) 289-2982, junctiontexas.com

**Ingram [11-26] Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery**, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

12

**Brenham Chappell Hill Lavender & Wine Fest**, (979) 251-8114, chappellhilllavender.com

**Forestburg Watermelon Festival**, (940) 964-2142

**Goliad The Extremadura Regiment in Texas 1813-1821**, (361) 645-3752, presidiolabahia.org

**Lampasas Lampasas County Historic Courthouse Tour**, (512) 564-0255

**Palacios Fish Fest Family Tournament**, (361) 972-2615, palacioschamber.com

**Waco XTERRA Cameron Park Off-Road Trail Ride**, 1-877-751-8880, xterraplanet.com

**La Grange [12-13] D-N-T Trade Days**, (979) 476-8338, dntradedays.com

16

**New Braunfels [18-20] Lone Star Gourd Festival**, (281) 222-3225, texasgourdsociety.org

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17

**Johnson City** [17-20] Blanco County Fair and Rodeo, (830) 868-7684, lbjcountry.com

18

**Denton** [18-26] North Texas Fair and Rodeo, (940) 387-2632, ntfair.com

19

**Port Arthur** [19-20] Exotic Bird Fair, (409) 626-1081, trianglebirdclub.org

24

**Fort Davis** [24-27] Davis Mountains Hummingbird Celebration, (432) 426-3015, fortdavis.com

**Roaring Springs** [24-26] Motley-Dickens Old Settlers Reunion and Rodeo, (806) 269-2659

**Fredericksburg** [24-27] Gillespie County Fair and Parade, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

25

**Port Aransas** [25-27] Texas Women Anglers Tournament, (361) 779-8025, gofishtx.com

**Ennis** [25-Sept. 9] *Moon Over Buffalo*, (972) 878-7529, ennispublictheatre.com



August 24-27  
**Fort Davis**  
Davis Mountains  
Hummingbird  
Celebration

26

**Freeport** Rotary Shrimp Boil, (979) 233-3306

**Tomball** Texas Music Festival, (281) 351-5484, tomballtx.gov

**Jasper** [26-27] Gem and Mineral Show, (409) 384-2762, jaspercoc.org

**Mesquite** [26-27] Halloween and HauntFest Show, (949) 427-0255, halloweenandhaunt.com

# September

1

**Port Lavaca** [1-2] Flip Flop Festival, (361) 552-2959, flipflopfestival.com

**Bedford** [1-3] Blues & Barbecue, (817) 952-2128, bedfordbluesfest.com

**Kerrville** [1-3] Fall Music Festival, (830) 257-3600, kerrvillefolkfestival.org

2

**Bastrop** Colorado River 100, (512) 303-0558, explorebastropcounty.com

**Doss** Doss VFD Benefit Fish Fry, (830) 669-2220, dossvfd.org

**Lake Jackson** Abner Jackson Plantation Site Tour, (979) 297-1570, lakejacksonmuseum.org

**Alvarado** [2-9] Pioneers and Old Settlers Reunion, (817) 538-2337, alvaradopubliclibrary.org

## Submit Your Event!

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



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# Lumbering in Lufkin

Enjoy national forests of this East Texas landscape

BY MARILYN JONES

MICHELLE ROWE UNFOLDS A MAP AT THE Davy Crockett National Forest and points to Ratcliff Lake Recreation Area with its 20-mile-long Four C Trail and shorter hiking paths winding through the pines. The forest, 30 miles west of Lufkin, is an ideal destination for a day hike or camping.

“We offer fishing, hiking, camping, birding, picnicking and swimming,” says Rowe, a support specialist. “There are 160,000 acres for visitors to explore.”

I head for the recreational area just beyond the ranger station. This area of the forest, developed in 1936 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, includes a 45-acre lake with campsites hidden among the pines. The day I visit is quiet, and I see only a dozen campers and hikers. Even a short hike makes finding solitude easy and provides a first step into exploring the resources, history and recreational opportunities of Lufkin.

This part of East Texas is rich in natural resources, including Angelina National Forest north of Lufkin. I decide to find out more about the area’s history with a visit to the Texas Forestry Museum, where I learn that the Houston East & West Texas Railway arrived here in the 1880s, ushering in the logging industry. Lufkin, the Angelina County seat, was incorporated in 1890 and named for Abraham Lufkin, a Galveston cotton merchant.

The museum chronicles the history of sawmill towns and lumbering camps that sprouted up in the Pineywoods. “We’re protecting this heritage to educate the public about how lumbering evolved over the past 150 years,” says Kendall Gay, museum director. “The lumber industry affects everyone in Lufkin.”

The exhibits start with the early 20th century, featuring tools and equipment including a sawmill steam engine, used to



The History Center in Diboll features an original logging train.

harvest trees, transport logs and shape them into lumber. More exhibits, along with a wealth of photographs, document life in the sawmill towns. In addition to lumber, the story of paper—specifically Southland Paper Mills—offers another chapter in the area’s forest products, and that chapter is written on newsprint made from Southern yellow pine. The museum also explains the complexities of the forest as a natural resource and the role of forest management practices.

In the nearby Museum of East Texas, I find a collection of paintings, photography and needlework. The museum showcases African-American history, including a letter from Rosa Parks to Nicholas C. Chriss, a reporter covering the 1956 integration of Montgomery who appeared in an iconic photo alongside her on a public bus. An original print signed by Parks and sent to Chriss draws my interest.

My next stop is the Naranjo Museum of Natural History. Dr. Neal Naranjo “began in 1960 to find and preserve dinosaur bones,” says Veronica Amoe, museum manager. “With the exception of the T. rex, every dinosaur in the museum was found and excavated by Dr. Naranjo.”

The collection includes the fossils of a

26-foot tall hadrosaur standing near a full-grown woolly mammoth. Another room displays collections of Revolutionary War artifacts, Egyptian coins and Mayan artifacts.

I continue my quest for the region’s history 15 minutes away in Diboll, once a sawmill town and now home of the History Center. Archivist Emily Hyatt shows me an exhibit: *Diboll: An Enduring Community* before guiding me to see an original logging train outside. The center maintains two massive vaults of newspapers, photographs, diaries and historical documents that are available to the public.

I still have time to stop at Ellen Trout Zoo, celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2017. With nearly 800 wild and exotic animals from around the world, the zoo is a great place to end my exploration. I appreciate the setting of lush bamboo and palm trees, watching toddlers’ wonder at the animals, and seeing the zoo’s famous hippos. The park offers a welcome complement to the local history.

Marilyn Jones lives in Henderson and writes about travel.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ See more photos of Lufkin.

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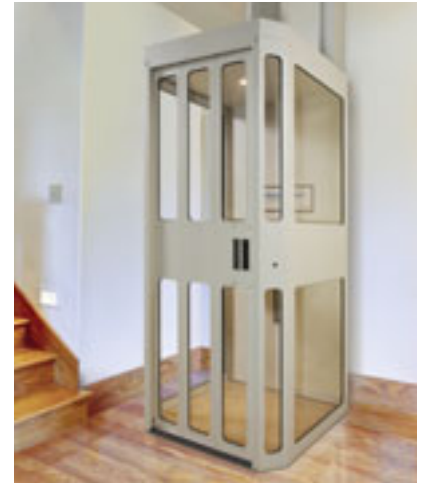
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