

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

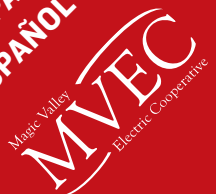
TEXAS' MUSICAL POETS

Songwriters'
association
honors
hit-makers

SONGWRITER BRUCE ROBISON



SEE PAGE 18
MVEC ESPAÑOL PÁG. 20D



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Joe Ely, 2016 Texas Heritage Songwriters' Association Hall of Fame inductee

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Thursday Night Lights *The largely unknown story of segregated African-American high school football programs*



JOE ELY; TED PARKER JR. FOOTBALL PLAYER; COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS

ON THE COVER Bruce Robison was inducted into the Texas Heritage Songwriters' Association Hall of Fame in 2007. Photo by Kenny Braun

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Harvey's Superheroes

Our daughter teaches in Woodsboro, southwest of Refugio. Like the other towns in that coastal area, Woodsboro incurred a lot of damage from Hurricane Harvey [*It's Just What You Do*, November 2017]. Power poles were snapped off one after another along long stretches of Highway 77, and fallen trees ripped down power lines throughout the town.

Teams of linemen arrived with fleets of bucket trucks, and what a welcome sight they were! I just want these linemen to know how grateful these storm victims are for your dedication and endless hours of work, often far from your own homes, to restore power to the area. You guys are real superheroes.

MARILYN MARSHALL | NEW BRAUNFELS
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

I have nothing but heartfelt gratitude and admiration for all the linemen and techs—those from the various co-ops and those who were borrowed or volunteered to come to the Texas coast—who got our power back on.

Yet well before all of Harvey's destruction was taken care of, many of those same linemen had to rush to Florida to assist after Hurricane Irma. Men and women, you are to be praised, thanked, commended and blessed.

JOYCE SCHAEFER | PORT LAVACA
VICTORIA, PEDERNALES AND KARNES ECS

Those Who Served

My father and many of my uncles served in World War II. My brother-in-law served in

Restoring Service

We live in a very rural part of Rockport and have enjoyed San Patricio Electric Cooperative service for over 12 years. Our area was devastated by Harvey, and we would like to thank San Patricio EC employees for their outstanding performance in restoring service.

While all of the larger power providers were struggling to get their customers back in service, San Patricio EC went above and beyond our expectations to get us on the road to recovery.

ROBERT BOSTON | ROCKPORT | SAN PATRICIO EC



Vietnam. Countless friends have served this country so that we have freedom. I love my country and our flag, and I'm forever grateful for those who have served this country. We as a nation owe them [*Welcome Home*, November 2017].

CONNIE THOMAS | BOWIE
WISE EC



Checking Up on the Chicks

Well, first you had me hooked, but now I'm just irritated. I have

spent an hour trying to find the answer online for *Here a Chick, There a Chick* [Currents, October 2017]. What is the answer? KATHLEEN PHILLIPS | CAMP WOOD
PEDERNALES EC

Editor's note: The riddle we printed in Currents was supposed to be fun, but more than a dozen readers let us know they couldn't find the answer at TexasCoopPower.com (it is there, we promise). Here is the riddle: 100 chicks sit peacefully in a circle. Suddenly, each chick pecks the chick immediately to its left or right. What is the expected number of unpecked chicks? The answer is 25. For any one chick, there are four possible outcomes: getting pecked only by the chick to its left, pecked only by the chick to its right, pecked by both chicks, or pecked by neither. Each of the four outcomes

is equally probable, so there is a one in four chance of any chick being unpecked. Because there are 100 chicks in the circle, each with a 25 percent chance of not being pecked, 25 is the expected outcome.

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   **Texas Co-op Power**

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HAPPENINGS

Destination: Crockett

A **LARRY GATLIN** show **JANUARY 27** is one of several the Piney Woods Fine Arts Association brings to **CROCKETT** as part of its 2017–18 event series. The goal is to make Crockett a destination for the arts in East Texas, says Glenn Barnhart, executive director of the association.

Upcoming shows at the Crockett Civic Center, a member of Houston County Electric Cooperative, include *The Great Gatsby* and Wynonna Judd. The co-op is a longtime sponsor and supporter of the association.

Piney Woods also features an arts-in-education program, including a Houston County youth talent show. “I’m most proud of the children’s programming,” Barnhart says. “Being able to bring artists from all over the world to share their music, art and talents with the kids is a wonderful experience.”

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WEB EXTRAS
▶ Find more happenings online.



515,000!

BY THE NUMBERS

515,000—The number of milk cows in Texas as of July 2017, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Pour yourself a glass and celebrate National Milk Day on January 11.

ALMANAC

BEFORE AIR FORCE ONE

Franklin D. Roosevelt became the first American president to travel by airplane 75 years ago. He flew in a Boeing 314 Clipper Flying Boat to a World War II strategy meeting with Winston Churchill at Casablanca in North Africa.

He and his entourage left Florida on January 11, 1943. After a stop in the Caribbean, they flew down the coast of South America to Brazil and then flew across the Atlantic to Gambia, then Morocco. They reached Casablanca on January 14.

Did you know?



THEODORE ROOSEVELT flew in a plane in 1910, but it was after he left the presidency. He flew in a Wright Model B biplane.

“Electricity seems destined to play a most important part in the arts and industries. The question of its economical application to some purposes is still unsettled, but experiment has already proved that it will propel a street car better than a gas jet and give more light than a horse.”

— **AMBROSE BIERCE**, American Civil War soldier, author and wit



LIFESTYLE

Hyperloop Highway

ELON MUSK, he of Tesla and SpaceX, is behind Hyperloop One, a transportation system that he hopes will propel pods of people through vacuum tubes at more than 700 mph. The pods would float in the tube via magnetic levitation or an air-bearing system (like an air-hockey table) and be propelled by an electric linear motor.

A Texas vision for Hyperloop anticipates endpoints in Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, Houston and San Antonio, with a leg down to Laredo. People could zoom from Austin to Dallas in 19½ minutes.

The scientific community is energized by Musk’s dream and has been trying to advance the idea since about 2012. Two University of Texas teams participated in August 2017 in a competition, won by a German team, to design and build the best transportation pod. The highest speed reached at a test track near SpaceX headquarters in California was 220 mph.

SPORTS SECTION

A HOOPS HOME RUN



Fifty years ago this month, a college basketball matchup called the Game of the Century took place in Houston. No. 1 UCLA, riding a 47-game winning streak, faced No. 2 Houston.

Why was it the Game of the Century? The January 20, 1968, game was in the Astrodome, before a crowd of 52,693—unprecedented at that time. It was televised live to a prime-time audience, which had never happened before. The Houston Cougars won 71-69, ending the UCLA Bruins’ winning streak.

The court was set up in the middle of the stadium, more than 100 feet from the spectators. “We played the game at second base in the Astrodome,” said UCLA star Lew Alcindor (who later became Kareem Abdul-Jabbar). “It was weird. It was like playing out on a prairie someplace.”

Legendary broadcaster Dick Enberg remembers Houston fans storming the court, racing past the press and officials, who were positioned in 18-inch-deep trenches dug at the court’s edges.

“When Houston won, it was like the return to the Alamo,” Enberg said. “People were leaping over us in the fox-holes. It was just this thundering herd.”

Musical

TEXAS HERITAGE SONGWRITERS' ASSOCIATION SPOTLIGHTS STATE'S LYRICAL POETS

Frontier



‘Most people think GEORGE STRAIT wrote

Joe Ables, board member for the Texas Heritage Songwriters' Association, headquartered in Austin. That's no knock on the pride of Pearsall, where Strait grew up (he was born in Poteet). It takes a special talent to pick good songs and to sing them so artfully that you make them seem indelibly your own. But it underscores the reason Terry Boothe founded the association in 2005.

“Songwriters are the poets of our culture,” Boothe says. “But in many cases, they're also its unsung heroes.” One of the most Texarific individuals who ever trod Lone Star soil, Boothe became an aficionado of the songsmith arts in the 1950s while attending then-rural Del Valle High School south of Austin. He discovered Willie Nelson as a songwriter long before the Red-Headed Stranger was a household name. Hoyt Axton became another early hero. “Hoyt's mother was even a songwriter,” Boothe adds. “She wrote *Heartbreak Hotel* for Elvis.”

Since 2006, the association has annually inducted at least two musical poets into its Texas Heritage Songwriters' Association

Hall of Fame. At its Hall of Fame Show at the Austin City Limits Moody Theater on February 23, the THSA will honor Buddy Holly, Liz Rose, Mickey Newbury and Ray Wylie Hubbard, who once lived in Poetry, Texas.

BY GENE FOWLER Commemorating the recognition, inductees each receive a small statue of Nelson. Willie got his own Willie when the Abbott native was inducted in 2009.

While Austin brags about its self-proclaimed status as the Live Music Capital of the World, and the bigger cities of Dallas, Houston and San Antonio each boast a rich musical legacy, many of the Hall of Fame songwriters hail from—and found their inspiration in—small-town and rural Texas. Several had their compositions covered by Strait, the perennial hit-maker.

“I'm from Meadow,” said Sonny Curtis in the short biographical video shown during his induction in 2013. “It's a pretty small town with not much to do, so my uncle used to let us come down



LYLE LOVETT, STEVE EARLE (ON BEHALF OF TOWNES VAN ZANDT) AND ROBERT EARL KEEN



**RAUL MALO
TRIBUTE TO ROY ORBISON**



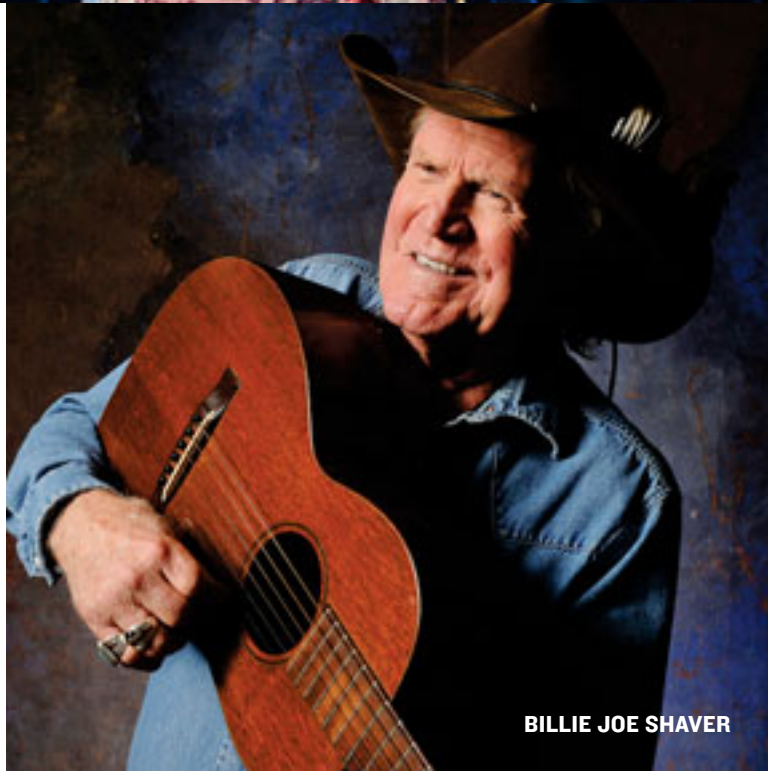
**RITA COOLIDGE
TRIBUTE TO WILL JENNINGS**

all those songs,' says

to his dry cleaners and try on other people's clothes." Born in a dugout in 1937, Curtis learned to play guitar at age 6 when his cotton-farmer father bought Curtis and his brothers some inexpensive instruments strung with baling wire. The family and neighbors made their own entertainment with "musical Saturday night" get-togethers.

By 1955, he was playing with Buddy Holly, reportedly becoming the first rocker to record playing a Fender Telecaster guitar. Several of Curtis' songs—including *I Fought the Law*, *Walk Right Back* and *I'm No Stranger to the Rain*—received so many radio plays that BMI inducted him into its Million-Airs Club. Another Curtis composition, *Love Is All Around*, the theme song for *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, proved that a Texas country boy could interpret the 1970s feminist movement.

Another Sonny, Sonny Throckmorton from Wichita Falls, inducted in 2006, penned the 1984 Strait classic, *The Cowboy Rides Away*.



BILLIE JOE SHAVER



JOE ELY



MICKEY NEWBURY



BUDDY HOLLY



2018 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



RAY WYLIE HUBBARD



LIZ ROSE

Brownsville native KRIS KRISTOFFERSON, inducted in 2007, yard in 1969 to get a song-demo cassette into the Man in

The 11 songs Strait recorded by Whitney native Sanger D. “Whitey” Shafer include the plaintive *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind?* and the infectious novelty singalong, *All My Exes Live in Texas*. Born into a gospel-singing family in 1934, Shafer began performing as a child. In 1950, when he first heard Corsicana native Lefty Frizzell singing *If You’ve Got the Money (I’ve Got the Time)* on a jukebox, it changed his life.

“It cost me quite a few nickels,” Shafer recalled, “but I learned that song right away.” In 1972, Frizzell became Shafer’s collaborator-mentor when Shafer knocked on the door of Frizzell’s Nashville home. For one of their best-known co-writes, *That’s the Way Love Goes*, Shafer sang the first three lines, then Lefty declared, “Well, that’s the way love goes.” The Texans had the classic eight-line verse in minutes.

When Frizzell died at 47 in 1975, Whitey wrote the aching *Lefty’s Gone*, and it, too, later received the tasteful Strait treatment.

Some THSA honorees have been even more proactive in efforts to get their songs heard and recorded by major stars. Brownsville native Kris Kristofferson, inducted in 2007, landed a National Guard helicopter in Johnny Cash’s front yard in 1969 to get a song-demo cassette into the Man in Black’s hands. When Waylon Jennings appeared to renege on a 1972 promise to record an album of songs by Corsicana-born Billy Joe Shaver

(inducted 2008), Shaver tracked him down at a Nashville recording studio and threatened to “whip his ass” if Jennings didn’t honor his word. The resulting landmark album, *Honky Tonk Heroes*, included only one song not written by Shaver.

When Mart native Cindy Walker’s cotton-broker father took the family to Hollywood on a business trip in 1941, the 23-year-old songwriter made him stop when she spotted the Crosby Building so that she could run inside and look for the heartthrob crooner Bing Crosby. She found his brother and publicist Larry Crosby and sang her song *Lone Star Trail* for him. Larry took her to meet Bing at Paramount the next morning.



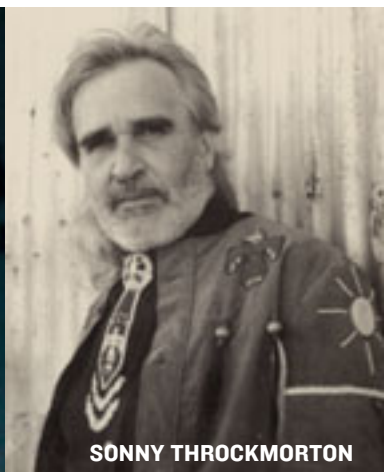
Willie Nelson statuette for inductees

Bing recorded the song, and Walker (inducted 2011) was on her way. The family relocated to Hollywood, and her songs were waxed by everyone from Grandpa Jones to Bette Midler. Bob Wills recorded more than 50 Walker tunes, including *Cherokee Maiden*, *Bubbles in My Beer* and her very first song, *Dusty Skies*, written as a teenager after reading about the Dust Bowl in her grandmother’s scrapbook. Ernest Tubb recorded some two dozen, including *Warm Red Wine* and *Two Glasses, Joe*.

Walker returned with her now-widowed



LEE ROY PARNELL AND KRIS KRISTOFFERSON



SONNY THROCKMORTON



CINDY WALKER

landed a National Guard helicopter in JOHNNY CASH's front Black's hands.

mother to Texas in 1954, settling in Mexia and spending part of each year demoing new songs in Nashville. In 1955, she wrote one of her most resonant tunes, the melancholic *You Don't Know Me*, a song recorded by Eddy Arnold, Elvis Presley, Patti Page, Van Morrison and Ray Charles. Nelson included it on an all-Walker CD he released shortly before her death in 2006. A pink granite guitar marks her grave in the Mexia City Cemetery.

Asked about her writing process, Walker once said, "I always write from the title. The title tells the story, and the words and music just come together. The songs just sing themselves to me. They kind of write themselves."

Amarillo-born and Lubbock-bred Joe Ely, inducted in 2016, expresses similar views. "When you start a song and start to like it," he expounds, "the easiest thing to do is overwork it. Just get out of the way and let it make its own course." And though Ely has been based in Central Texas since the 1970s, the Panhandle still fuels his muse. "I find myself going up there every time I start a new record. There's just something magical about it to me. I guess it comes down to the emptiness of everything and the desire to fill it up. It's flat.

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story online to see a list of the inductees into the Texas Heritage Songwriters' Association Hall of Fame and winners of the Darrell K. Royal Texas Music Legend Award.

There's sky forever. And the only way you can fill it up is with a good song."

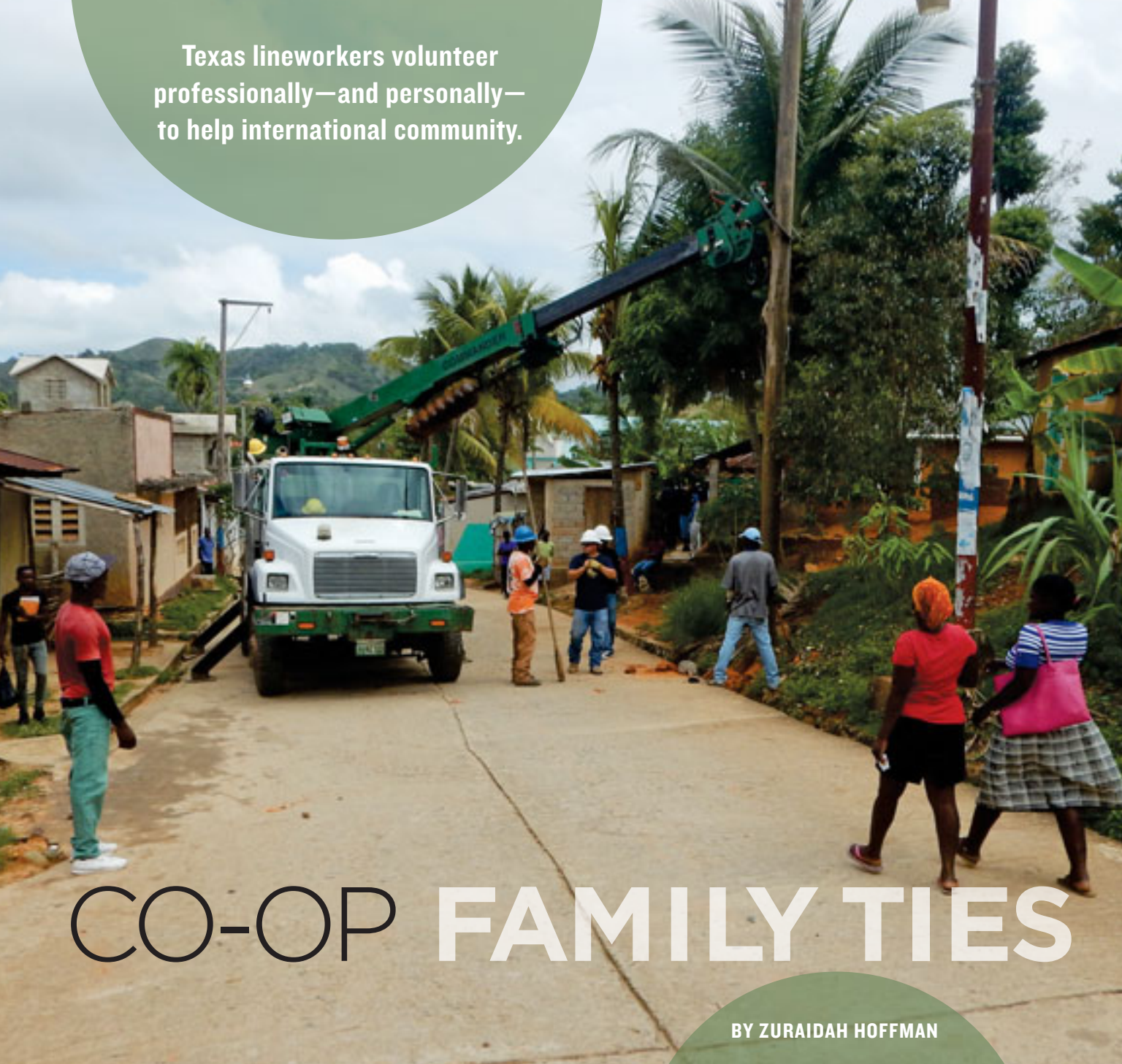
Bandera native Bruce Robison, inducted in 2007, filled the Hill Country with music while growing up in the "Cowboy Capital of the World." Relocated to Austin, his songs found their way onto records by Lee Ann Womack, Faith Hill and Tim McGraw—and, yes, Strait. While wooing his future wife, songwriter Kelly Willis, he took her to see his Medina River roots. "Part of the way he won me over was taking me to Bandera," says Kelly. "I fell in love with that—his personality being from that place."

Robison has reclaimed that small-town vibe, opening a recording studio, Bruce's Country Bunkhouse, in Lockhart. "The music that comes out of Texas is amazing," he says. "It seems like we're on a frontier, and I'm really excited to be a part of figuring out where it's headed."

"I have no idea why Texas has so much music," adds Lubbock native Delbert McClinton, inducted in 2011. "I used to have this book by John and Alan Lomax, called *Folk Songs of North America*. I just loved that book. In the front there was a map of the United States, and it shows where the different musical influences entered the country and then spread. The largest part of them came together all across Texas. The map was color-coded, and Texas had the most colors coming together."

Gene Fowler is a fan of these artists, and he also likes the songs George Strait has been writing in recent years with his son Bubba Strait and Dean Dillon.

Texas lineworkers volunteer professionally—and personally—to help international community.



CO-OP FAMILY TIES

BY ZURAI DAH HOFFMAN

Texas electric cooperatives have a long history of collaborating with NRECA International, formed by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association to bring electricity to communities in need. Over the past five years, 20 Texas co-op lineworkers have traveled to northern and southwestern Haiti with the organization.

In the southwestern town of Côteaux, Texas volunteers worked with an NRECA International team to help establish Haiti's first electric co-op. This area was devastated in October 2016 by Hurricane Matthew, which severely damaged the power system that had gone live just 13 months earlier. Efforts are underway to re-establish the system and help the community rebuild.

Since 1962, NRECA International has provided safe and reliable electricity access to more than 126 million people in 43 countries across Latin America, Southeast Asia and sub-

Saharan Africa. This work is supported by more than 300 American electric co-ops through donations and volunteer aid from hundreds of co-op directors, linemen, engineers, managers and other employees who provide communities with training and first-time access to electricity.

In Caracol, a town in northern Haiti, the Texas volunteers worked alongside NRECA International staff on the Pilot Project for Sustainable Electricity Distribution, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. Every day, the lineworkers set out to extend power lines from the PPSELD generation station. This is the only utility in Haiti that provides reliable electricity 24 hours a day. With the help of American volunteers, NRECA International eventually will connect 10,000 consumers in the area—about a third of the region's population—with electricity.

VILLAGE & CREW. COURTESY NRECA INTERNATIONAL

Most recently, ahead of Hurricane Irma striking Haiti in September 2017, NRECA International staff in Caracol shut down the PPSELD power plant, boarded up the offices, moved vehicles and materials to the utility's warehouse and sheltered in place. The hurricane skirted the northern edge of the island, and damage was limited to a fallen tree that took down a line.

Volunteers who travel to Haiti through NRECA International work side by side with Haitian lineworkers, who gain knowledge, expertise and skills from the Americans. As with all co-op lineworkers, the family bonds know no borders.

TEXAS CO-OP TEAMS

When Mike Grisham from HILCO Electric Cooperative agreed to volunteer his skills and expertise in Haiti, he expected culture shock and difficult working conditions in addition to missing his family. But he did not expect to make deep connections with the local lineworkers, nor the way their families and communities would become a part of his own family and community, creating a bond that would last long after he returned to Texas.

In February 2016, Grisham got on a plane with Clayton Thompson, also from HILCO, and Brannon Nichols from Homer Electric Association in Alaska. Once in Haiti, it didn't take long for them to understand that the local lineworkers faced many challenges to live what Americans would consider normal lives.

"They lacked basic needs like clothing, food and a decent place to live with their families," Grisham said. "But despite it all, their positive outlook on life was amazing."

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative joined the project, and

RUN DEEP

Josh Lathem, Adam Wolking and Zach Pollett put their knowledge and expertise to work in Haiti. The Haitian linemen did not have much hands-on experience because PPSELD was only four years old.

"Their most senior guy has four years of experience," Lathem said. "We have a little more than 30 years of experience between us, so there was just a lot that we were able to do and to show them."

The transfer of knowledge is critical for this young utility in Haiti to be sustainable and successful. The HILCO and Trinity Valley linemen shared countless tips and techniques on the job site and spent several hours of their last day teaching an impromptu class in basic electricity for a group of the local workers.

"Linemen over there are like rock stars," Lathem said. "They're the ones who turn the lights on. It was amazing to watch them unload off a truck, getting high-fives from the adults and kids."

Challenging work conditions are the norm in Haiti, and the availability of supplies is unpredictable. Despite language barriers, both the HILCO and Trinity Valley volunteer crews managed to fit right in with the local team, and all worked well together.

ARM-WRESTLING DIPLOMACY

Grisham and his fellow linemen were celebrated at special community gatherings, where food and drink were offered as a form of gratitude and fellowship. It was at the first gathering after the first week of work that Haitian lineworker Luco challenged Grisham to a friendly arm-wrestling competition. Before a raucous, cheering crowd, Grisham won, and a friendship between the two men was born.

"I realized then that I want to help Luco and the other linemen live better lives," Grisham explained. "Many co-ops are already supporting the work NRECA International does to help communities get electricity, but I want to help the people who do the work, like Luco."

When Grisham returned to Texas in late February 2016, he started a GoFundMe page to help Luco at gofundme.com/lightuphaiti. His goal is to raise \$5,000 to help the Haitian linemen and their families buy food and clothing. Now that these commu-



Opposite: Haitian and Texas linemen work together to bring electricity to Caracol. Above: HILCO EC's Mike Grisham, blue shirt, and Clayton Thompson, in the bucket, teamed with Brannon Nichols from Homer Electric Association in Alaska to build lines in Haiti.

With the help of American volunteers, NRECA International eventually will connect 10,000 consumers in the area—about a third of the region’s population—with electricity.



Mike Grisham hands treats to a girl who came out to watch his crew bring electricity to her home.

regularly via the smartphone messaging app WhatsApp.

Trinity Valley EC’s contribution didn’t end with power lines. Along with their skills and hard work, the linemen also brought with them three large bags of personal hygiene items for the families of the Haitian linemen. All were donated by students at Trinity Valley Community College in Terrell through the Phi Theta Kappa honor society. While items like toothpaste, deodorant and soap are available, they’re often too expensive for many Haitians to buy; they make about \$5 a day.

“Deodorant can cost up to \$20,” Lathem said. “When I opened one of the bags to show the head lineman,

he sat down and nearly cried. We let him distribute one bag to his guys, and it was a really big thing for them.”



Haitian lineworkers join the crew from Trinity Valley EC: Josh Lathem, second from left; Zach Pollett, fourth from left; and Adam Wolking, far right.

nities have electricity, some of the linemen also have bigger dreams—to break out of the poverty cycle.

“Luco told me he wants to build a house for his wife and baby to live in, and that it’s going to cost

him U.S. \$1,800,” Grisham said. “He’s already saved about half of what he needs, and he asked for help. By our standards, that’s not much at all to build a house, but it’s a luxury to them.”

Today, Luco’s house is under construction and on track for completion early this year. As money comes in through the GoFundMe page, Grisham transfers the funds to his Haitian friends. Using Google Translate to overcome language barriers, they communicate

ON TO BOLIVIA

Texas co-ops have mobilized again—this time to Bolivia, under the leadership of Mid-South Synergy CEO Kerry Kelton, a long-time supporter of NRECA International. A Texas team of volunteer linemen from Mid-South, United Cooperative Services, CoServ, and Pedernales, Bartlett and Bluebonnet electric cooperatives traveled to the northern part of the country in November to bring electricity to a few hundred people who live without it.

“Nothing illustrates Cooperation Among Cooperatives better than six Texas cooperatives partnering with Texas material suppliers to bring power to the people of Bolivia,” Kelton said.

It’s common to hear stories of how underserved communities benefit from reliable electricity made possible by NRECA International and its volunteers. With the growth of interest and support from American electric co-ops to help NRECA’s international work, more

volunteers are given the opportunity to provide the help that is sorely needed in these communities.

But the results are clear: Cultural bridges that extend beyond the construction of power lines can connect worlds and fill communities with hope and friendship.

Zuraidah Hoffman is communications manager for NRECA International.

WEB EXTRAS

▶ Read this story online to learn more about NRECA International and how you can help Mike Grisham improve lives in Haiti.



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actual size.

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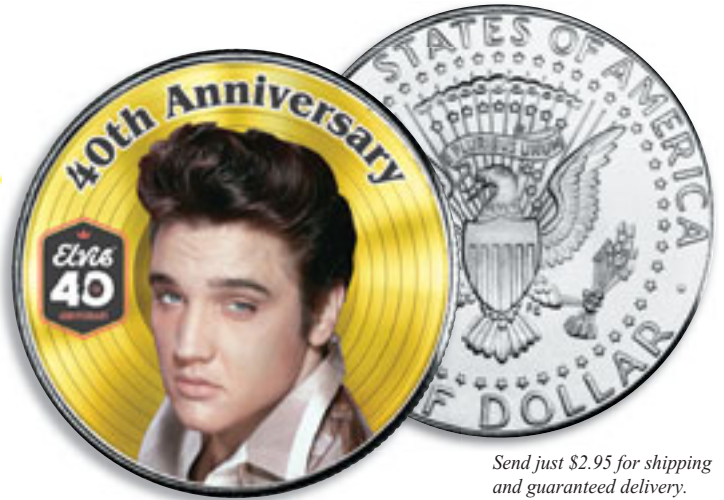
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Beachcombing at home.

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

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Bonus offer: Get 2 posters shipped to the same address for just \$30.

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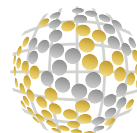
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MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Youth Tour Provides Road to Self-Discovery

— John W. Herrera

For many teens, the Government-in-Action Youth Tour is full of firsts. It may be the first time they leave Texas, fly on a plane, visit the Nation's capital or travel away from their families for an extended period of time. They will see and experience the larger world through their own eyes, rather than through their parents' perspectives—that's the most important first, as it's truly a leap to their next phase, where their journey to adulthood begins.

In preparation for Youth Tour, teens learn about cooperatives, our history and grassroots advocacy. Youth Tour sprang from a suggestion of then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson to a national gathering of co-ops. Johnson believed youths from rural areas would benefit from visiting Washington, D.C., to see firsthand how government works and gain a wider perspective through the experience. From this idea, Youth Tour formed. Every year, high school students from around the country are selected by their respective electric co-ops to participate in a weeklong trip to the nation's capital, where they learn about our Country and the world by visiting museums, monuments, memorials and more.

The program has grown exponentially since its inception; last year's tour saw more than 1,800 high school students participate from co-ops in 46 states. Texas sent a delegation of 147 students, including 4 students from the Rio Grande Valley that represented Magic Valley EC. Youth Tour is one of the most important programs that Magic Valley Electric Cooperative undertakes. I am consistently impressed by the caliber of students that our co-op sponsors.

The week is interspersed with visits to important D.C. sites, including Capitol Hill. Activities with Youth Tour delegations from across the Country enable teens to meet a broad spectrum of co-op kids. The program creates a safe space for teens to discover the adults they are striving to be. Teens leave behind their hometown identities and venture forward with a fresh slate. Students are encouraged to stretch themselves by talking to people they ordinarily wouldn't.

A highlight of Youth Tour is a meeting with congressional delegates. Teens learn firsthand that their elected officials work for their hometown communities. Students often have the opportunity to discuss issues with legislators, and our chaperones always are impressed with the interactions and questions asked by our students.

Youth Tour culminates in a farewell evening that centers on challenging and inspiring teens to go forward from the tour and make an impact in their communities. As conversations evolve, so do the teens' worldviews. Their definition of "community" often changes from their hometown to a broader meaning.

I can say that nearly all teens who have participated in our Youth Tour program look back with fond memories of an educational, interesting and eventful week. Many make lifelong friends. For a few, Youth Tour is a transformational experience. Parents often remark how their children return noticeably different—more mature, more confident, with bigger goals and aspirations; they have a sense of purpose.

Our teens are our future, and it's looking brighter every day. I hope you will consider urging your teen to "take the leap" and join our next Youth Tour delegation.

For more information about the Youth Tour program, contact us by calling 866-225-5683 or visit our website magicvalley.coop

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This ad was designed in collaboration with PSJA marketing students.





ASK WILLIE, THE ENERGY EXPERT

DO-IT-YOURSELF ENERGY CHECKUP

THE FIRST STEP TOWARD GREATER COMFORT AND LOWER COSTS

THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR IS A PERFECT TIME TO TAKE STOCK

of your home's energy efficiency and take the steps needed to improve it. Americans can save 5–30 percent of annual energy costs simply by conducting energy checkups in their homes, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of an energy checkup is to save money without sacrificing comfort. Conducting a basic energy checkup is a simple process that can lead to savings on monthly energy bills and increase in-home comfort levels.

What You Need

Make sure you have:

- Time to conduct a room-by-room walk-through of your home
- Pen and paper to note problem areas

Begin Inside

Close:

- All doors
- All windows
- All fireplace flues

Turn off:

- Furnace
- Water heater
- Space heaters

Dampen your hand and place it near areas where drafts might occur. Air passing through even small openings will feel cool against your skin.

Find Hidden Leaks

Check for drafts along:

- Baseboards
- Floor covering edges
- Bay windows jutting out from the house
- Partition walls between garage and basement
- Exterior wall penetrations for fans, electric lines, cables, condensate lines, etc.
- Areas where walls or ceilings meet
- Electrical outlets
- Switch plates
- Window frames
- Doors
- Bath and kitchen exhaust fans
- Shower/tub drain lines
- Attic hatches
- Wall- or window-mounted air conditioners
- Fireplace dampers and inserts
- Pipes
- Concrete or block foundations in basements and crawl spaces
- In the attic, around:
 - Pipes
 - Ductwork
 - Hatches
 - Chimneys



JANE KELLY | ISTOCK.COM

If possible, look behind insulation for vapor-barrier material such as:

- Tar paper
- Plastic
- Kraft paper attached to fiberglass batts

Make sure:

- Insulation is not blocking attic vents
- Attic floors are covered with adequate insulation
- In the basement, check HVAC equipment for signs of air leaks, including:
 - Dirt accumulation in ducts and at duct seams
 - Drafts around pipes and vents
- In the crawl space, you should have:
 - A minimum 6-millimeter plastic vapor barrier
 - Foundation insulation

Locate Outdoor Draft Sources

Inspect all areas where building materials meet, such as:

- Where siding, brick or block meet foundations
- All exterior corners
- Where siding and chimneys meet

Note any cracks or gaps in these areas, so you can come back later to seal them.

Now that you've determined the problem areas in your home, take a trip to the hardware store to gather the supplies you need to address them or contact a professional to make the improvements.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH CHEESY CHICKEN & SALSA SKILLET

RECIPE BY KRAFTRECIPES.COM



PREP TIME

30 MIN.

TOTAL TIME

30 MIN.

Servings: 4 servings, 2

Turn regular chicken into salsa chicken with Cheesy Chicken and Salsa Skillet recipe!

WHAT YOU NEED

- 2 cups multi-grain penne pasta uncooked
- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1-1/4 cups TACO BELL® Thick & Chunky Salsa
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1 large green pepper, cut into strips
- 1 cup KRAFT Mexican Style 2% Milk Finely Shredded Four Cheese

HOW TO MAKE IT

- Cook pasta as directed on package, omitting salt.
- Meanwhile, cook and stir chicken in large nonstick skillet sprayed with cooking spray on medium heat 2 min. Stir in salsa, corn and peppers. Bring to boil. Simmer on medium low heat 10 min. or until chicken is done, stirring occasionally.
- Drain pasta. Add to chicken mixture; mix lightly. Top with cheese. Remove from heat; cover. Let stand 1 min. or until cheese is melted.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



AVDEEV007 | ISTOCK.COM

Happy New
Year!
From Magic Valley



HANUSST | ISTOCK.COM

Martin Luther
King Jr. Day
January 15

OUTSIDE ART

By Eileen Mattei

Would you be surprised to discover beautiful pieces of art in the Rio Grande Valley that are not in a museum? Outdoor artworks in the form of sculptures and murals are easy to find and appreciate - in parks and gardens, on school grounds and city streets. Art provides a visual, emotional connection to cultural heritage and history and offers us a different perspective on beauty.

The Iwo Jima Monument, the largest and most identifiable sculpture in the Valley, dominates the skyline at the Marine Military Academy in Harlingen. Artist Felix de Weldon donated this full-size working model, which was used to cast the iconic masterpiece at Arlington National Cemetery - the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial. Representing Marines raising the flag on Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima, during the World War II battle, the plaster mold is protected by fiberglass and repainted every four years with latex paint. Harlon Block, a Weslaco native, is among the six Marines depicted raising the 32-foot tall flag pole.

Downtown Harlingen hosts at least 18 large, public murals. (Pick up the Mural Guide at the Texas Travel Information Center.) Without a doubt, the most spectacular is 'The History of Mexico and Mankind' in Centennial Park (West St. and W. Jackson) by Raul Esparza. Consisting of handmade ceramic tiles spread across nine large panels, the mural presents New World history in vibrant colors and images. Nearby, the city's newest mural 'From Farm to Market through Harlingen' by Brett Oberthaler recalls the Valley of the 1920-40s. The 160-foot-long mural spotlights northbound trains being loaded with ice to chill the produce and is

bordered by fruit and vegetable crate labels. Don't miss the exuberant extravaganza titled 'Tropical Rio Grande Valley' by Ben Varela and Celeste De Luna celebrating Valley culture from accordions to parrots and vaqueros at 213 W. Monroe.

Walking through downtown, you spot murals showcasing 'The Golden Age of Hollywood & Mexican Cinema,' Bill Haley & the Comets, and 'Where the Past is Present,' which shows nearby historic buildings that are still in use although repurposed.

In McAllen, the Veterans War Memorial of Texas, next to Palms Crossing, is a moving, skillfully crafted reminder that freedom is not free, given the 1.3 million lives lost serving the country since 1775. Larger than life WAC (Women's Auxiliary Corps) and WAVE (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) bronze statues represent World War II veterans, while The Warrior throwing a grenade honors the 3,500 Medal of Honor recipients. Edinburg sculptor Doug Clark created the memorial's eight bronze statues as well as the nine high-relief bronze panels that graphically tell the story of the Korean War. The Pusan Breakthrough panel, in particular, is a dynamic interpretation of the uncommon valor and courage, seen here in the Marines bursting out of the background. "Col. Plummer, who started the Veterans War Memorial and served in Korea, coached me on every scene and what it should look like," Clark says.

The five-acre park, both solemn and peaceful, offers plentiful benches, shade and yellow trixis flowers amid the granite walls engraved with heroic

"Art provides a visual, emotional connection to cultural heritage and history and offers us a different perspective on beauty."

Photos courtesy of downtownharlingen.com



histories. In the Revolutionary War plaza, look for Clark's remarkable high-relief bronze panel of Patrick Henry proclaiming 'Give me liberty or give me death.'

At Quinta Mazatlan, 38 bronze sculptures parallel the walking trails. Doug Clark created most of these wonder-provoking creatures - javelinas, owls, bats. "The reluctance to put up public art often comes down to a committee's fear of winding up with an ugly piece," he says. That is certainly not an issue with Clark's sculptures, which grace the Valley, Austin, Houston and Mexico.

Once you start looking, you will find outdoor art almost

everywhere. Metal sculptor Brian Wedgworth's 'Mother with Child' stands tall outside IMAS, while McAllen's Performing Arts Center is fronted by 'Vaquero of Nuevo Santander,' complete with longhorn cow and calf, by Sebastian. The colorful, restored 'Key to the Gulf' mural covers the front of Port Isabel's Champion Building. At the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan, 30 life-size bronze figures illustrate the Stations of the Cross. Sculptures span the distance between the Brownsville Museum of Fine Arts and the Federal Courthouse.

Seek beauty and you will find it in surprising places.



Photos courtesy of Marine Military Academy



MENSAJE DEL DIRECTOR GENERAL

El programa estudiantil juvenil "Youth Tour" ofrece un camino al auto-descubrimiento.

— John W. Herrera

Para muchos adolescentes, el programa estudiantil Government-In-Action Youth Tour es el principio de muchas cosas. Puede ser la primera vez que salen del estado, que vuelan en avión, que visitan la capital de la nación o que viajan lejos de su familia durante un período largo. Podrán ver y apreciar el mundo más amplio a través de sus propios ojos, en lugar de hacerlo a través de las perspectivas de sus padres, eso es lo más importante ya que, en realidad, es un salto a su siguiente fase, donde empieza su trayecto a la edad adulta.

Al prepararse para el Youth Tour, las y los adolescentes aprenden acerca de las cooperativas, nuestra historia y esfuerzos. El programa estudiantil surgió de una sugerencia del entonces senador Lyndon B. Johnson, en una reunión nacional de cooperativas. Johnson consideraba que las y los jóvenes de las zonas rurales se beneficiarían de visitar Washington, D.C., para que pudieran ver de primera mano cómo funciona el gobierno y obtener una perspectiva más amplia a través de su propia experiencia. A raíz de esta sugerencia se formó el programa Youth Tour. Cada año, estudiantes de High School de todo el país son seleccionados por sus respectivas cooperativas eléctricas para participar en un viaje de una semana a la capital de la nación, donde aprenden sobre el país y el mundo al visitar museos, monumentos y mucho más.

El programa ha crecido exponencialmente desde sus inicios; el año pasado, el programa tuvo una participación de más de 1,800 estudiantes de High School, que representaban a cooperativas de 46 estados. El estado de Texas envió una delegación de 147 estudiantes; Magic Valley envió cuatro estudiantes del Valle del Río Grande. El programa estudiantil es uno de los más importantes para Magic Valley Electric Cooperative. Siempre me impresiona la calidad de estudiantes que representan a nuestra cooperativa.

La semana del viaje combina visitas a sitios importantes de D.C., incluyendo Capitol Hill (el palacio del congreso). Las actividades del programa incluyen conocer a otros estudiantes de todo el país. El programa crea un espacio seguro para que las y los adolescentes descubran a la persona adulta que están buscando ser. Las y los estudiantes dejan atrás la identidad de su ciudad natal y se aventuran por un nuevo camino. Quienes participan en el viaje tienen la oportunidad de conocer y hablar con personas con quienes normalmente no lo harían.

Algo de lo más sobresaliente del programa es reunirse con delegados del congreso. Las y los viajeros aprenden de primera mano cómo las y los funcionarios electos trabajan para sus comunidades de origen. Los estudiantes a menudo tienen la oportunidad de hacer preguntas a legisladores y nuestros chaperones/acompañantes siempre están impresionados con el nivel de preguntas de nuestros estudiantes.

El programa Youth Tour culmina con una gran noche de despedida que se centra en inspirar a las y los participantes a seguir adelante en sus estudios y en el impacto que pueden tener en sus comunidades. Así como las conversaciones evolucionan, también lo hacen las y los adolescentes y cómo miran al mundo. Su definición de "comunidad" a menudo cambia de su ciudad natal a un significado más amplio.

Puedo decir que casi todos los y las adolescentes que han participado en nuestro programa Youth Tour miran hacia atrás con gratos recuerdos de un programa con fundación educacional, interesante y una gran semana. Muchos inician amistades que durarán toda la vida. Para unos, el Youth Tour es una experiencia transformacional. Padres y madres pueden ver cómo sus hijos e hijas regresan notablemente diferentes, más maduros, con mayor confianza en sí mismos, con grandes metas y aspiraciones; tienen un sentido de propósito.

Nuestra juventud es nuestro futuro y con las y los jóvenes tendremos un futuro más brillante. Espero que compartas esta información con tu hijo/hija; motívalo y "échale la mano" para que sea parte del próximo programa estudiantil de Youth Tour.

Para obtener más información acerca del programa Youth Tour, llámanos al 866-225-5683 o visita nuestra página web magicvalley.coop

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Director General

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TE GUSTARÍA VIAJAR?

Si eres un estudiante de segundo o tercer año de High School, puedes ganarte un viaje con todos los gastos pagados a Washington, DC. Cada año, MVEC selecciona a 4 estudiantes de nuestra área y se unen con mas de 140 delegados de Texas para conocer la capital de nuestra nación.

FECHA LIMITE: FEB 1, 2018

Para mas informacion sobre el programa Youth Tour, llamanos al 866-225-5683

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Este anuncio fue diseñado en colaboración con los estudiantes de marketing de PSJA.





PREGÚNTALE A WILLIE, EL EXPERTO DE ENERGÍA

DO-IT-YOURSELF ENERGY CHECKUP

THE FIRST STEP TOWARD GREATER COMFORT AND LOWER COSTS

El principio del año es un momento perfecto para hacer una auditoría de eficiencia energética en tu casa y tomar las medidas necesarias para mejorarla. De acuerdo con el Departamento de Energía de EE.UU. las y los estadounidenses pueden ahorrar de un 5% hasta un 30% en sus costos anuales de energía simplemente al hacer revisiones de energía en el hogar. El objetivo de una auditoría de energía es ahorrar dinero sin sacrificar la comodidad. El proceso es simple y te puede ahorrar mensualmente en la factura de energía y aumentar los niveles de confort en el hogar.

Lo que necesitarás:

Asegúrate de tener lo siguiente:

- Tiempo suficiente para revisar completamente cada una de las habitaciones de tu hogar
- Lápiz y papel para apuntar las observaciones de cada área

Empieza Adentro

Cierra:

- Todas las puertas
- Todas las ventanas
- La chimenea

Apaga:

- Calefacción
- Calentador de agua
- Calentador portátil

Humedece tu mano y colócala cerca de las áreas donde pueda haber grietas. Si hay aire que sopla, incluso por pequeñas aberturas, sentirás fresco en la piel.

Comprueba si hay fugas

Verifica que no haya grietas por donde se cuele el aire en:

- Las molduras
- Las orillas del piso
- Ventanas que sobresalgan de la casa
- Las paredes de la cochera
- Las paredes exteriores con aires acondicionados de ventana, cables eléctricos, cables, líneas de condensado, etc.
- Áreas donde paredes y techos se juntan
- Contactos eléctricos
- Encendedores de la luz
- Los marcos de las ventanas
- Puertas
- Los ventiladores de escape del baño y cocina
- Líneas de drenaje de la regadera/bañera
- La escalera del ático
- Tubos

En los cimientos de block o cemento o en los sótanos y espacios pequeños del ático o alrededor de:

- Tubos
- Ductos
- Chimeneas



JANE KELLY / ISTOCK.COM

En los cimientos de block o cemento o en los sótanos y espacios pequeños del ático o alrededor de:

- Tubos
- Ductos
- Chimeneas

Si es posible, mira detrás del aislante y busca basura que pueda derretirse con el vapor así como:

- Papel negro de construcción
- Plástico
- Papel café pegado a la fibra de vidrio

Asegúrate de que:

- El aislante no esté bloqueando las ventilas en el ático
- El ático esté cubierto con suficiente aislante

En el exterior busca fuentes donde pueda haber escapes de aire

Inspecciona todas las áreas donde los materiales de construcción se junten, así como:

- Donde el revestimiento exterior, ladrillo o bloque se junten con los cimientos de la casa
- Todas las esquinas exteriores
- Donde las paredes y la chimenea se junten

Busca si hay cualquier grieta o rendija en esa área, para que puedas volver más tarde y sellarla.

Ahora que ya has determinado las áreas problemáticas de tu casa, ve a la ferretería para comprar el material que necesitas para sellar todo o llama a un profesional para que haga el trabajo.

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TIEMPO TOTAL

30 MIN.

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¡Transforma un pollo regular en un pollo cremoso en salsa al sartén!

LO QUE NECESITAS

- 2 tazas de pasta corta (penne) de multi-grano, sin cocer
- 1 lb. Pechuga de pollo sin hueso, cortada en trozos pequeños
- 1-1/4 tazas de salsa de Taco Bell® Thick & Chunky
- 1 taza de elote congelado
- 1 chile morrón verde grande, cortado en tiras
- 1 taza de KRAFT Mexican Style 2% Milk, queso Mexicano de cuatro quesos rallado finamente

FORMA DE PREPARARLO:

- Cocer la pasta según las instrucciones del paquete, no ponerle sal.
- Cocina el pollo en el sartén a calor medio 2 minutos; menear. Añadir la salsa, maíz y chile morrón. Cocinar hasta que hiervan. Cocinar a calor medio por 10 minutos o hasta que el pollo esté cocido, meneando ocasionalmente.
- Escurrir la pasta. Agregar la pasta a la mezcla de pollo; revolver ligeramente. Agregar el queso. Retirar del fuego y cubrirlo. Dejar reposar 1 minuto o hasta que el queso se derrita.

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ARTE AL AIRE LIBRE

Por Eileen Mattei

¿Te sorprendería descubrir hermosas piezas de arte en el Valle del Río Grande que no se encuentran en un museo? Las obras de arte al aire libre en forma de esculturas y murales son fáciles de encontrar y apreciar; la encontrarás en parques y jardines, en patios de escuelas y calles de la ciudad. El arte proporciona una representación visual de la conexión emocional con el patrimonio cultural e histórico y nos ofrece una perspectiva diferente de la belleza.

El monumento Iwo Jima, la escultura más grande identificable en el Valle, domina el horizonte en la Academia Militar de Marina en Harlingen. El artista Felix de Weldon donó este modelo completo, el cual fue utilizado para fundir la icónica obra maestra en el Cementerio Nacional de Arlington - U.S. el Marine Corps War Memorial. El molde de yeso es repintado cada cuatro años con pintura de látex; representa marinos alzando la bandera en Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima, durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial y está protegido por fibra de vidrio. Harlon Block, nativo de Weslaco, es uno de los seis marinos representados en esta estructura de 32 pies de altura.

El centro de Harlingen cuenta con al menos 18 grandes murales públicos. (Recoge la guía de murales en el Centro de Información Turística de Texas.) Sin duda, la más espectacular es "La Historia de México y la Humanidad" en el Parque Centenario (West St. y W. Jackson) por Raúl Esparza. Realizado con azulejos de cerámica artesanal, el mural se extiende en nueve secciones y muestra la historia del Nuevo Mundo en vibrantes colores e imágenes. Muy cerca, el mural más nuevo de la ciudad "From Farm to Market through Harlingen" o en español "de

la granja al mercado a través de Harlingen" por Brett Oberthaler, cuenta la historia del Valle de 1920-40s. El mural, de 160 pies de largo, muestra trenes siendo cargados con hielo para enfriar los productos agrícolas y está bordeado por etiquetas de cajas de frutas y verduras. Tampoco te puedes perder el espectacular mural "Tropical Río Grande Valley" por Ben Varela y Celeste de Luna, que celebra la cultura del Valle, desde acordeones hasta loros y vaqueros, en 213 W. Monroe. Al caminar por el centro, también puedes encontrar el mural "La época de oro de Hollywood y del cine mexicano", por Bill Haley y los Cometas y "Donde el pasado está presente," que muestra edificios históricos que están todavía en uso, aunque dedicados a funciones diferentes.

En McAllen, el Veterans War Memorial of Texas, junto al centro comercial de Palms Crossing, es un emocionante recordatorio de que la libertad no es gratis, ya que cuenta con una lista de 1.3 millones de personas han perdido la vida sirviendo al país desde 1775. Las estatuas de bronce de WAC - Women's Auxiliary Corps o el cuerpo auxiliar de mujeres y el WAVES - Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service o mujeres aceptadas como voluntarias en el servicio de emergencia, representan a veteranos de la II Guerra Mundial, mientras que la estatua del guerrero arrojando una granada, honra a las y los 3,500 receptores de la medalla de honor. El escultor Doug Clark de Edinburg, hizo el memorial de ocho estatuas de bronce y también los nueve paneles en bronce que relatan gráficamente la historia de la Guerra de Corea. El panel de Pusan, que es una ciudad de Corea, es en particular una interpretación dinámica del valor y valentía de la lucha de los Marinos. "El coronel Plummer, quien

"El arte proporciona una representación visual de la conexión emocional con el patrimonio cultural e histórico y nos ofrece una perspectiva diferente de la belleza."



Fotos cortesía de downtownharlingen.com



inició el Veterans War Memorial y luchó en la guerra de Corea, me entrenó en cada escena y el aspecto que cada panel debería tener," dijo Clark.

El parque de cinco acres, solemne y pacífico, cuenta con bancas, sombras y flores trixis de color amarillo en medio de las paredes de granito, grabado con historias heroicas. En la plaza de la Guerra Revolucionaria, busca el panel de Clark, que es un panel histórico en sobre relieve de bronce de Patrick Henry donde proclama "Give me liberty or give me death" (dadme la libertad o dadme la muerte.)

En Quinta Mazatlán hay 38 esculturas de bronce que bordean los senderos. Doug Clark creó la mayoría de las criaturas que representan maravillosos jabalíes, lechuzas, murciélagos. "El miedo más grande de un comité es aprobar una pieza de arte público y que resulte ser una escultura fea", dijo Clark. Esto ciertamente no es un problema con las esculturas de Clark que adornan el Valle, Austin, Houston México.

Una vez que empieces a buscar, encontrarás arte al aire libre en casi todas partes. La escultura de "Madre con Hijo" del escultor de metal Brian Wedgworth se encuentra afuera del museo de arte IMAS, mientras que en el McAllen's Performing Arts Center encontrarás la estatua del "Vaquero del Nuevo Santander," completo con una vaca longhorn (cuernos largos) y un becerro, por Sebastián. El colorido y restaurado mural de "Key to the Golf," o la llave del golfo, cubre la parte frontal del edificio Champion en Puerto Isabel. En la Basílica de Nuestra Señora de San Juan hay 30 figuras de bronce de tamaño natural que ilustran las estaciones de la cruz o el viacrucis.

Hay esculturas que abarcan la distancia entre el Museo de Bellas Artes de Brownsville y la Corte Federal.

Busca la belleza y la encontrarás en lugares sorprendentes.



Fotos cortesía de la Marine Military Academy

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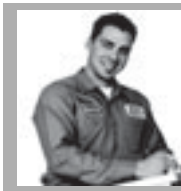
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A D V E R T I S E M E N T

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.



Dear Darryl

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

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

Clogged and Smelly – Corpus Christi, TX

DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY: As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unplug 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.

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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 unplug and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "TXS3", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.

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The Astonishing Ride of the Abernathy Boys

Young sons of legendary U.S. marshal ride horseback from Oklahoma to New York

BY MARTHA DEERINGER

LOUIS “BUD” ABERNATHY, 10, AND HIS brother, Temple, 6, inherited their father’s spirit of adventure and set out in 1910 to ride their horses more than 2,000 miles from Frederick, Oklahoma, to New York City.

Sensational accomplishments ran in the Abernathy family. The boys’ father, Texan Jack “Catch ‘em Alive” Abernathy, a United States marshal with a leaning toward picturesque behavior, was born in Bosque County in 1876 and grew up punching cows on his father’s ranch. As an adult, he astonished President Theodore Roosevelt by running down a prairie wolf on his horse, leaping from the horse onto the wolf and capturing it alive with his gloved hands. “This beats anything I’ve ever seen, and I’ve seen a great deal,” Roosevelt commented.

The boys’ father agreed to their cross-country ride and helped them plan the route. Abernathy postulated a few rules before they set out: They could not travel more than 50 miles in one day; they could not cross water without an adult present unless they could see the bottom; they could not carry more than \$5 with them at one time; and they could not travel on Sundays. The boys’ arrival in New York was planned to coincide with the return of Roosevelt from an African hunting expedition. Abernathy, a longtime friend of Roosevelt, planned to meet them there.

On the trip to New York, Bud rode Sam Bass, his father’s wolf-chasing horse, and Temple rode Geronimo, a half-Shetland pony. Temple was so small he had to mount from a porch or tree stump, and Bud had to saddle his horse for him every morning. They left home in April, carrying a few clothes, two bedrolls, oats for the horses, and some bacon and bread. At night, Bud laid his lariat around their bedrolls, an old



cowboy trick he learned from his father to keep snakes and scorpions at bay.

“We prepared for the trip,” Temple explained in the book *Bud and Me*, written by Temple’s wife, Alta Abernathy, many years later, “estimating how far to ride each day and pinpointing the best places to spend the nights.”

Crossing Indian Territory, the boys stopped to visit their father’s friend, Quannah Parker, the last chief of the Comanche. News of the Abernathy boys’ odyssey spread, and families living along the route frequently invited them to stop and share a meal. They carried a note from their father stating that they were not runaways, and Bud had a checkbook with a \$100 emergency fund set aside in case it was needed.

Early in the ride, the boys awoke one morning in Hominy, Oklahoma, to discover that Geronimo, Temple’s pony, was down and could not get up. He had foundered, a crippling disease that often renders horses permanently lame. Bud was forced to pull out the checkbook and buy a new horse. Temple chose a red-and-white paint that he named Wylie Haynes after the sheriff of Hominy.

The Abernathy Boys rode to adventure on a variety of steeds.

The first part of the journey was the most difficult. Long stretches of open land, snowstorms and a treacherous river crossing slowed their progress. As they rode east, newspaper reporters gathered to meet them.

“Special entertainment is to be provided for the young sons of United States Marshal John R. Abernathy,” the newspaper in Columbus, Ohio, reported. “They are in Columbus en route to greet ex-president Roosevelt when he arrives from Europe. The father of the boys was one of Roosevelt’s Rough Riders.”

The Abernathy boys’ first glimpse of the New York skyline came two months after they started their amazing ride. Abernathy was waiting. He rode with Bud and Temple down Fifth Avenue with the Rough Riders in the parade to welcome Roosevelt home. More than 1 million people lined the streets of Manhattan that day, but no one enjoyed the day more than the two resourceful boys.

Martha Deeringer, a member of Heart of Texas EC, lives near McGregor.

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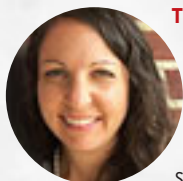
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Nourishing Soups



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

JILEEN PLATT | BOWIE-CASS EC

Green chiles were a staple in Platt's childhood home in southern Arizona. "Making this soup reminds me of my heritage," she says. Served over steamed rice and topped with lime juice, cilantro and Monterey Jack, this hearty stew is a comforting meal you'll be eager to make again.

Sonoran Pork Stew

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 pounds lean, boneless pork butt or shoulder roast, cut into 1½-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ¾ teaspoon dried oregano
- 3 fresh tomatillos, husked, rinsed and chopped
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chiles
- 2 Roma tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 can (14 ounces) chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice, plus more as desired

Hot, steamed rice, shredded Monterey Jack cheese and chopped fresh cilantro for serving

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a wide, deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot and shimmering, add the pork in a single layer. (You might need to do this in batches to avoid overcrowding.) Turn pork occasionally until all sides are nicely browned.
2. Transfer the pork to a slow cooker. Add all remaining ingredients except lime juice, rice and garnishes. Cook on low 5–6 hours until the pork is very tender.
3. Just before serving, stir in the lime juice. Serve pork stew over rice and top with shredded Monterey Jack cheese and additional chopped cilantro, if desired. ▶ Serves 6–8.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

1. **TOMATOES:** Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Halve the tomatoes and squeeze each lengthwise to open the seed pockets. Place tomatoes, seed pockets facing up, on a rimmed baking sheet or in a baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil, then sprinkle with salt and the dried herbs of your choice. Rub the seasonings evenly over the tomatoes. Roast about 8 hours, until they are shriveled but not blackened.
2. **SOUP:** Heat olive oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add leek, onion, carrot, celery and a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Vegetables should not brown. Add garlic, bay leaves, thyme and red pepper flakes, and cook 2–3 minutes, until fragrant.
3. Scrape up any vegetables sticking to the bottom of the pot, then add wine. Simmer until volume is reduced by half, then add stock or water, and stir. Add canned tomatoes with their juice, breaking them apart with your fingers or a wooden spoon. Add the dried chile and bring soup to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the roasted tomatoes—including any rich, red tomato oil that has accumulated—and continue to simmer, partially covered, 30–40 minutes.
5. Remove the chile and bay leaves, and cool the soup briefly. Transfer soup to a blender, in batches if necessary, and purée until smooth.
6. Return soup to the pot and season to taste with additional salt and freshly ground pepper. If the soup seems too thick, thin it with a little water or stock. Garnish with Mexican crema or crème fraîche and fresh, chopped herbs, if desired, and serve. ▶ Serves 6–8.

COOK'S TIP Roasted tomatoes should be meaty and moist, not completely dry. They can be slow-roasted up to two days in advance and stored in the refrigerator until you're ready to make the soup. When using fresh bay leaves, tear them in a few places to better release their flavor.



IF YOUR RECIPE IS FEATURED, YOU'LL WIN A TCP APRON!

\$100 Recipe Contest

June's recipe contest topic is **Your Best Grilled Cheese**. This yummy, easy sandwich is beloved by most everyone from preschoolers to grandparents. What makes yours special? The deadline is **January 10**.

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



Celery Borscht With Rye Croutons, Radish and Sour Cream

HELEN FIELDS | WISE EC

Brightly colored and full of flavor, this sophisticated soup will impress guests at your next cold-weather dinner party. Fields developed the recipe when she was a contestant in the World Food Championships, in which 10 finalists were charged with creating a dish that featured celery.

BORSCHT

- ½ tablespoon olive oil
- 12 ounces rib-eye steak, trimmed and cut into thin strips
- ½ cup finely chopped yellow onion
- ½ large carrot, peeled and grated
- 5 ounces applewood smoked bacon
- 1 medium potato, peeled and diced
- 1 pound fresh, large red beets, peeled and shredded
- 5 cups thinly sliced celery
- 1 medium tomato, peeled, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 quarts water or more as needed
- 2½ teaspoons kosher salt, or more to taste

- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 3 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
 - 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - ¼ cup chopped fresh dill
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1 small black radish, peeled and shredded (or substitute another type of radish)
 - 1 cup sour cream
 - 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh dill

CROUTONS

- 1 loaf dark rye bread, uncut (preferably day-old)
 - 4 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

- 1. BORSCHT:** Pour olive oil into a large stockpot, then add steak, onion and carrot, and cook 10 minutes over medium-low heat, stirring frequently.
- 2.** Trim most of the fat from bacon and reserve for another use. Finely chop the lean bacon and add with potato to stockpot. Cook another 5–6 minutes, or until bacon begins to brown. Stir frequently and adjust heat if necessary to keep

ingredients from sticking.

3. Add beets, celery, tomato, water, salt and pepper to stockpot. Cover and simmer soup 1–1¼ hours.

4. Add oregano, garlic, dill and lemon juice to stockpot. Cover and simmer an additional 5 minutes, then remove from heat. Add salt and pepper to taste.

5. CROUTONS: Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Slice rye bread into ½-inch cubes and drizzle with olive oil. Season cubes with salt and pepper. Use your hands or a rubber spatula to toss cubes until evenly coated.

6. Spread cubes in a single layer over a large, rimmed baking sheet. Bake 10–20 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes, until crisp and lightly browned. Remove from oven and set aside.

7. Top each serving with a portion of croutons, shredded radish, sour cream and chopped dill. ▶ Serves 8–10.

WEB EXTRAS ▶ Read this story online to see a recipe for Mexican-Style Greek Red Lentil Soup.



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Snow Day

*There's a patch of old snow in a corner / That I should have guessed
Was a blow-away paper the rain / Had brought to rest.*

*It is speckled with grime as if / Small print overspread it,
The news of a day I've forgotten— / If I ever read it. —Robert Frost*

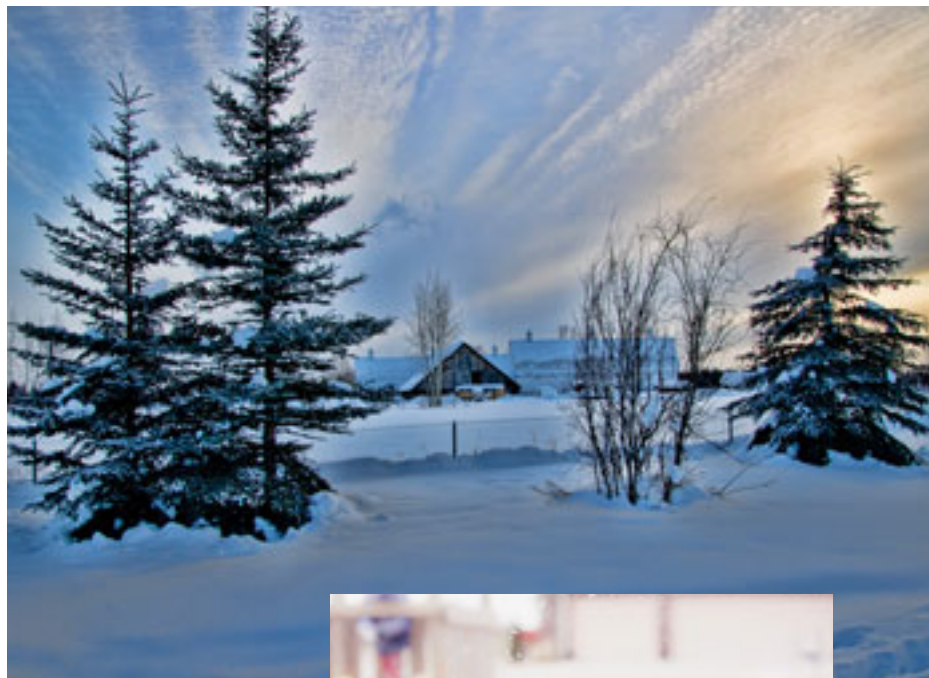
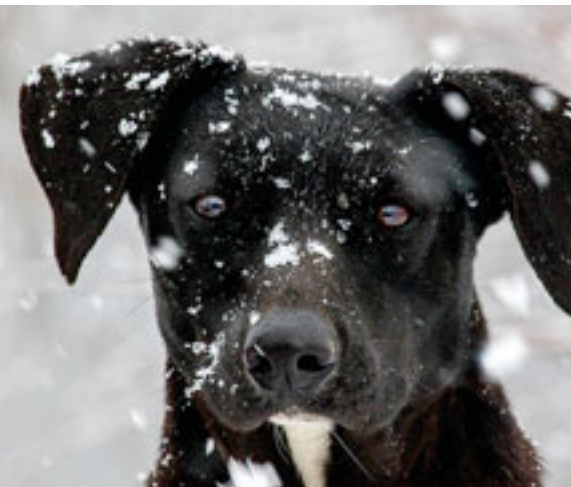
GRACE ARSIAGA

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



▲ **VIRGINIA GLOVER**, Farmers EC: The front entry to Glover's driveway in Wylie

▼ **DANNY PICKENS**, Cherokee County EC: "This little dog caught my attention as he was chasing and catching snowflakes."



▲ **MIKE PRESTIGIACOMO**, Bartlett EC: Tranquility on a snowy day



▲ **LAUREN MCCLAIN**, Cooke County EC: "Abigail, 6, delights in unexpected snow in North Texas."



▲ **CHARLOTTE SANDERS**, Cherokee County EC: "The gals, Sadie and Nadine, our late 1940s 8N Fords, and Oscar, the orange Kubota"

UPCOMING CONTESTS

MAY PROM NIGHT	DUE JANUARY 10
JUNE TRACTORS	DUE FEBRUARY 10
JULY OPPOSITES	DUE MARCH 10

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

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



Pick of the Month Spring Blossoms Quilt Show

Brenham February 2-3
(979) 830-1950, friendshipquiltguild.weebly.com

This show is judged and features contemporary and traditional quilts, as well as quilts for sale, a boutique and vendors. Attendees have a chance to win a door prize or participate in a raffle.

January

7

Galveston Symphony Orchestra,
1-800-821-1894, thegrand.com

12

Comfort [12-13] Kendall County Junior Livestock Show and Sale, (830) 249-9343, visitboerne.org

San Angelo [12-13] Tom Green County Fair and Junior Livestock Show, (325) 659-6522, sanangelorodeo.com

13

Beaumont 117th Anniversary of the Lucas Gusher, (409) 880-1750, spindletop.org

College Station Boots and Barbecue, (979) 696-2787, acbv.org

Round Top Thomas Burritt and James Dick in concert, (979) 249-3129, festivalhill.org

18

Tyler Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella*, (903) 566-7424, cowancenter.org

20

Lake Jackson Dee Dee Bridgewater in concert, (979) 230-3156, clarion.brazosport.edu

Luckenbach 11th Annual Blues Festival, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com



January 13
College Station
Boots and Barbecue

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Surfside Beach Dunes Day, (979) 864-1541, brazoriacountyparks.org

21

McAllen Marathon, (956) 681-3333, mcallenmarathon.com

Waco With This Ring Bridal Extravaganza, (254) 772-8890, withthisringbridalshow.com

25

Lufkin The Lettermen in concert, (936) 633-0349, thepines.visitlufkin.com

Orange A Night With Janis Joplin, (409) 886-5535, lutcher.org

Wimberley [25-28] Art and Soul, (512) 847-2201, facebook.com/wimberleyartandsoul

26

Fredericksburg Women's Ranch Seminar, (325) 622-4625, hccwseminar.com

27

Fredericksburg Hill Country Indian Artifact Show, (830) 626-5561, hillcountryindianartifacts.com

Nocona Mardi Gras Ball, (940) 825-3526, nocona.org

February 7-10
Laredo
Birding Festival



Bulverde [27-28] Chamber Rodeo, (830) 438-4285, bsbchamberrodeo.com

31

Pine Springs Sunset Hike to the Salt Basin Dunes, (915) 828-3251, nps.gov/gumo

February

1

South Padre Island [1-3] SPI Kite Fest, (956) 761-1248, spikitefest.com

2

Clute [2-4, 9-11] Cabaret, (979) 265-7661, bcfas.org

3

Corpus Christi Chamber Music Society: Jeremy Denk and Stefan Jackiw, (361) 877-8393, corpuschristichambermusic.org

6

Bandera Cowboy Capital Opry, (830) 796-4969, silversagecorral.org

7

Laredo [7-10] Birding Festival, (956) 718-1063, laredobirdingfestival.org

Submit Your Event!

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

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Weekend in The Woodlands

Natural experiences weave in well with downtown development

BY MELISSA GASKILL

THE WOODLANDS TOWN CENTER, THE heart of the master-planned community north of Houston, feels like a small town, with hotels, restaurants and shops. But it has a natural side, too. The combination makes for a perfect getaway.

The Woodlands Waterway Marriott gave me easy access to the Waterway, a walkable, 1.4-mile water feature that connects parts of **Town Center**. At Grimaldi's Pizzeria, in a two-story brick building with a patio overlooking Waterway Square, I dug into a classic pizza Margherita cooked in a coal-fired brick oven, serenaded by a cascading water wall that puts on a light-and-music show every evening.

After lunch, I strolled along the water and into a lush landscape surrounding a 60,000-gallon koi pond populated by more than 30 fish in a bright palette—every combination of orange, white, black and yellow. The scene brought to mind an ice cream truck that spilled a load of Dream-sicles, Eskimo Pies and lemon sherbet. The peaceful spot invites lingering, but I had an appointment with a kayak at the **Riva Row Boat House**, another short walk away.

The boathouse faces a pleasant lagoon, but the more adventurous can paddle about 20 minutes to 200-acre **Lake Woodlands**. Circle **Mitchell Island** to see bird and plant life, including great blue herons, and paddle another 30 minutes to a park at the south end of the lake, or 20 minutes north to Hughes Landing. Hop ashore and walk to one of a half-dozen restaurants (if you didn't order a picnic from Riva Row).

Those who bring gear can try their hand at catch-and-release fishing for bream, bass and catfish on the lake. In addition to kayaks, the boathouse rents



The Woodlands Waterway

standup paddleboards, and staffers provide tips and techniques.

After a quick stop back at the hotel, I took advantage of a free trolley ride to the **Market Street** area. Evoking a small-town main square, Market Street contains more than 70 shops and restaurants around a central green area punctuated with playful bronze sculptures. These include *Two Plus Two Equal One*, a pair of bicyclists by Harry Marinsky; *Primrose*, a life-sized donkey by Dawn Weimer; and *Spammy*, an adorable pig in a wheelbarrow by Joffa Kerr. In fact, at least 54 sculptures grace The Woodlands proper, ranging from a lifelike herd of whitetail deer to a cluster of geometric boulders.

On Market Street, **1252 Tapas Bar** serves Spanish tapas and entrées, an international wine list, craft beers, house-made sangria and craft cocktails beneath a swirling, life-sized representation of a flamenco dancer. My ceviche had just the right tang, and succulent shrimp topped shrimp aioli tapas.

The next morning, I enjoyed a hearty breakfast of Texas-cut challah French toast with eggs, sausage and potatoes at **Black Walnut Café** to fuel up for a morning of hiking at **George Mitchell Nature Preserve**.

The 1,700-acre preserve occupies the flood plain of Spring Creek, and the mix of wetlands, bottomland and forest took me back in time to this area's wild days. From the Flintridge Drive trailhead, I walked a 2-mile loop through thick stands of pine, oak and sweetgum trees along with yaupon holly, American beautyberry and wax myrtle. A side trail leads to **Bedias Lake**, where bald eagles, osprey and herons appear in season. A longer bike trail twists inside the hiking loop for 3 miles. According to Fred LeBlanc, environmental manager for The Woodlands, plans call for a 12,000-acre linear park system stretching nearly 40 miles along Spring Creek from Tomball to the San Jacinto River.

Some 200 miles of wooded hike and bike paths weave between The Woodlands' parks, lakes, ponds, and shopping and entertainment venues. I look forward to exploring on two wheels during my next trip and, if I time it right, enjoying a concert at the outdoor **Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion** amphitheater.

Read more of **Melissa Gaskill's** writing at melissagaskill.blogspot.com.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story online to see a slideshow from The Woodlands.

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50-54	\$11.50	\$9.70	\$18.50	\$15.50	\$36.00	\$30.00	\$88.50	\$73.50
55-59	\$14.20	\$11.95	\$23.00	\$19.25	\$45.00	\$37.50	\$111.00	\$92.25
60-64	\$17.20	\$13.30	\$28.00	\$21.50	\$55.00	\$42.00	\$136.00	\$103.50
65-69	\$20.50	\$16.00	\$33.50	\$26.00	\$66.00	\$51.00	\$163.50	\$126.00
70-74	\$27.40	\$21.40	\$45.00	\$35.00	\$89.00	\$69.00	\$221.00	\$171.00
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Not available in all states. In NY, during the first two years, 110% of premiums will be paid. Website unavailable for NY residents. EASY WAY Whole Life Insurance is underwritten by United of Omaha Life Insurance Company, Omaha, NE 68175, which is licensed nationwide except NY. Life insurance policies issued in NY are underwritten by Companion Life Insurance Company, Hauppauge, NY 11788. Each company is responsible for its own financial and contractual obligations. *Age eligibility and benefits may vary by state.

**In FL policy is renewable until age 121.

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