

TEXAS CO-OP POWER



**ANNUAL
MEETING**
APRIL 16, 2018

**JUNTA
ANUAL**
16 DE ABRIL, 2018

Magic Valley

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My Co-op Powers Me

HARLINGEN MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

MAGIC VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Cordially invites you to join us for our 2018 Annual Meeting.

MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2018

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

HARLINGEN MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM

1204 Fair Park Blvd, Harlingen, TX 78550

● BUSINESS MEETING ● PRIZES ●

All members encouraged to attend

AVISO OFICIAL

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16 DE ABRIL, 2018

7:00 PM - 8:00PM

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● JUNTA DE NEGOCIOS ● PREMIOS ●

Se les extiende una cordial invitación a todos los miembros

Interpreters for Spanish-speaking members will be available at the meeting.

Habr  traductores al espa ol disponibles en la junta.



TEXAS CO-OP POWER

BACK
= to the =
BEACH

Pack up for
a coastal
comeback



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REPORTE ANUAL 2017 PÁG. 18





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A great blue heron at Boca Chica Beach near the U.S.-Mexico border

FEATURE

8 Back to the Beach The Texas coast, battered by Hurricane Harvey in some spots, perseveres and lures beach dwellers and visitors alike.

Story and photos by Julia Robinson

FAVORITES

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ONLINE

TexasCoopPower.com

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Texas USA

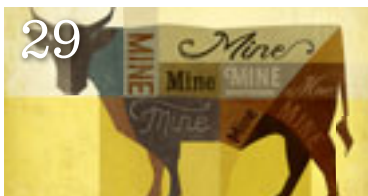
A Mother's Day Haven
By Paige Eaton

Observations

Five Finds on the Beach
By Melissa Gaskill

NEXT MONTH

Naturally Protective *Texan by Nature—a conservation-minded organization founded by Laura Bush—aims to “keep Texas, Texas.”*



HERON: JULIA ROBINSON. BUTTERFLY: AMY TSENG | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



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ON THE COVER *A clean, groomed beach and colorful umbrella await visitors in Port Aransas.* Photo by Julia Robinson

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Bryan Lightfoot, Chair, Bartlett; Blaine Warzecha, Vice Chair, Victoria; Alan Lesley, Secretary-Treasurer, Comanche; Mark Boyd, Douglassville; William F. Hetherington, Bandera; Mark Stubbs, Greenville; Brent Wheeler, Dalhart • **PRESIDENT/CEO:** Mike Williams, Austin • **COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE:** Jerry Boze, Kaufman; Clint Gardner, Coleman; Rick Haile, McGregor; Greg Henley, Tahoka; Billy Marricle, Bellville; Mark McClain, Roby; Gary Raybon, El Campo; Kathy Wood, Marshall • **MAGAZINE STAFF:** Martin Bevins, Vice President, Communications & Member Services; Charles J. Lohmann, Editor; Tom Widlowski, Associate Editor; Karen Nejtak, Production Manager; Andy Doughty, Creative Manager; Elaine Sproull, Advertising Manager; Grace Arsiaga, Print Production Specialist; Chris Burrows, Senior Communications Specialist; Christine Carlson, Administrative Assistant; Paula Disbrowe, Food Editor; Travis Hill, Communications Specialist; Qasim K. Johnson, Administrative Assistant; Taylor Montgomery, Digital Field Editor; Jessica Ridge, Communications Specialist; Jane Sharpe, Senior Designer; Shannon Oelrich, Proofreader



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Thursday Night Legend

Growing up in Abilene, we were integrated from junior high onward, so this was educational [*Thursday Night Lights*, February 2018], and I look forward to the book.

I was delighted to see mention of Alphonse Dotson, who played for Houston Yates, Grambling State and the Oakland Raiders. We met Alphonse at the tasting room for his amazing Dotson-Cervantes wines. What a talent and a true gentleman. If you find yourself in Pontotoc and the tasting room is open, stop in to meet a Texas legend.

LINDA NESMITH | AUSTIN
PEDERNALES EC

Texas Pride is OK, Too

A recent letter to the editor from Luke D. Jessup was hurtful [*OK With Us*, February 2018]. He states that he dislikes all things Texas and never says why. I was born in Texas and have lived in other places, but my heart is in Texas.

JUDY PICKEL | MAGNOLIA
SAN BERNARD EC

I have to say, Luke from OK, you prefaced your letter most distinctly. I understood your feelings when I saw your location, and I'm assuming the contempt stems from the Texas-Oklahoma football rivalry. I have a coworker who is a devout Longhorn fan, and I've often sat and listened to him tell his tales with spirited vigor.

That aside, your note was refreshing to read. I don't harbor any hate or ill feelings toward any of our 50 states, but I'm certain the good ol'

Remembering Those Thursday Nights

I remember going to segregated football games as a child but forgot what night they were played on [*Thursday Night Lights*, February 2018]. The players in their uniforms along with the game noises from the band, people yelling and visiting, and announcers calling the plays all made for a fun night.

It is always good to learn about a part of Texas history that we forgot and how far we have come in becoming a truly integrated nation.

CYNTHIA L. MATLOCK | TROUP
CHEROKEE COUNTY EC



USA is strong enough to weather our love-hate sibling relationships without flinching.
ANTHONY PIWETZ | VICTORIA
NUECES EC

Spreading the Love

Nancy Johnson [*Open Hearts*, February 2017] has done a wonderful job in spreading the need for sending a little love



to these special children with heart defects. It truly touched me that such a small act could impact so many lives. Several years ago, a dear friend of ours lost their baby girl to a heart condition. The Driscoll Children's Hospital in Corpus Christi took such good care of not only the baby but the family as well.

I have begun crocheting hats for Nancy. Each time I work on a red hat, I think about and pray for the baby who will wear it. Thank you for bringing her mission to all of your readers.
NORMA GAYLE | CONCAN
BANDERA EC

Old Theaters Revived

Great article about the Globe Theatre [*Saving the Globe*, January 2018]. I wish you could have mentioned the Lyric Theater in Flatonia. Much like

the Globe, it sat idle—from 1967 until 2007. Finally, on April 7, 2017, it hosted its first film, *Secondhand Lions*, with tickets at the old cost of only 35 cents.
JAMES LONGMIRE | FLATONIA

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

   **Texas Co-op Power**

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HAPPENINGS

Painting the Heavens Blue

The skies over Waco will rumble **APRIL 7-8** when the Blue Angels bring their precision aerobatics to the **HEART OF TEXAS AIRSHOW** at Texas State Technical College.

The team of U.S. Navy pilots and their F/A-18 jets perform around the world, flying at speeds approaching 700 mph and sometimes just 18 inches apart.

The Blue Angels were formed right after World War II when Chester W. Nimitz, chief of naval operations, ordered the creation of a flight demonstration team to showcase and promote naval aviation. Nimitz, born in Fredericksburg, commanded all land and sea forces in the Pacific during the war.

The show will include a C-130 nicknamed “Fat Albert,” the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Parachute Demonstration Team (known as the Black Daggers) and other flying performances. In the 72 years since the Blue Angels formed, more than 500,000 people have seen their shows.

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NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

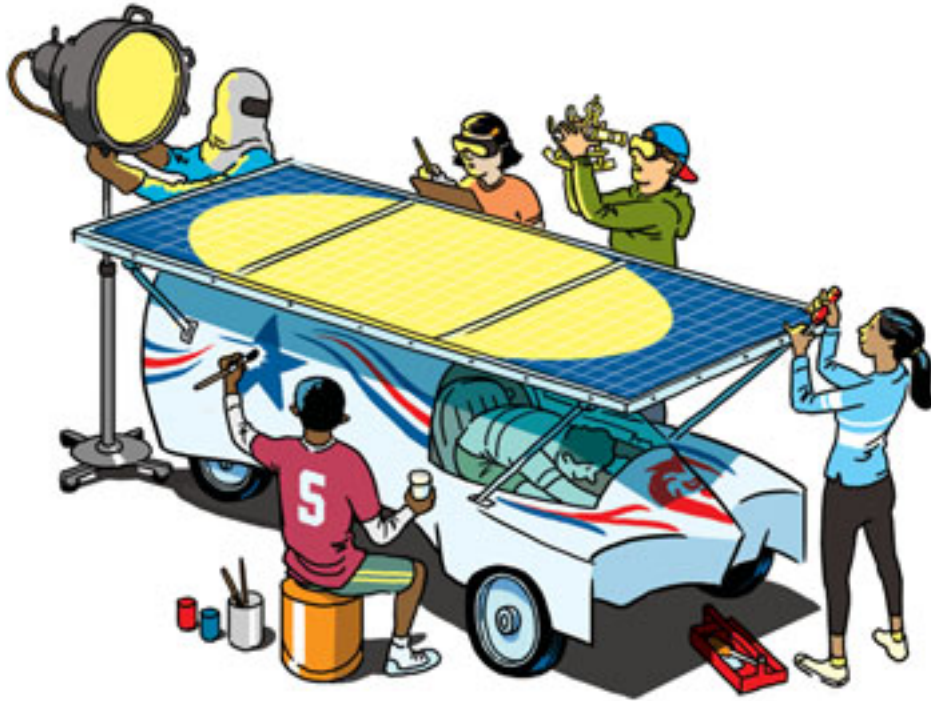
National Lineman Appreciation Day, April 9 this year, celebrates the highly trained workers who keep the electricity flowing to our homes in the face of all kinds of nasty conditions.

Days after Hurricane Harvey struck last August, mosquitoes took over the Texas Coast. “These mosquitoes were huge. They were like small hummingbirds,” says journeyman lineman Corey Turner, above, a foreman at Victoria Electric Cooperative. “They’re just all over our faces—in your eyes, in your ears. They go in our mouth, up our nose. We ate plenty. I promise you that.”

What is it about linemen that makes them willing to deal with challenges like mosquitoes and foul weather as part of their job?

“**I think if you get** in this line of work and you commit to it, I think you finally get it in your head: You know what, I’m a lineworker. I’m going to do this,” Turner says. “We’ve got people with no lights. And as long as there’s people with no lights... you’re not going to go home and feel good about yourself.”

MOSSQUITO: MOSQUITO; MOSQUITO: NECHAEVON | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; TURNER: VICTORIA EC; SUTHERLAND SPRINGS; SCOTT OLSON | GETTY IMAGES; SAND DOLLAR; MCCURE | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



CO-OP PEOPLE

Solar-Powered Speedsters

DEDICATION, COMMITMENT AND INTEGRITY have propelled a team of Greenville High School students to multiple championships, says Joel Pitts, a Farmers Electric Cooperative member and advisor of the school's solar car team, which hopes to notch another win at this year's Solar Car Challenge, July 17-23.

Since 2012, the Greenville Iron Lions have designed and built solar-powered cars to compete in the annual race that attracts high school teams from across continental North America and the Caribbean. Greenville's first win came in 2016 in a cross-country race from Fort Worth to Mendota Heights, Minnesota, where it beat the nearest competitor in its division by more than 121 miles. The following year, in closed-track events at the Texas Motor Speedway, it placed first in two divisions.

The Iron Lions are currently re-engineering some aspects of their car, which they hope will lead the pack in this year's 1,400-mile race, from Fort Worth to Palmdale, California. "I think our chances are really good," Pitts says.

But competition goes beyond getting to the winner's podium, he says. It's also about providing students with lifelong skills and fostering their growth through problem-solving. "Because ultimately, this project is not so much about winning than it is about the learning process."

CO-OPS IN THE
COMMUNITY

RESPONDING TO TRAGEDY

Tragedy struck the small town of Sutherland Springs on November 5, 2017, when a gunman opened fire on the First Baptist Church, killing 26 men, women and children. Within hours of the shooting, thoughts, prayers and material support for the victims and their families poured in from across the country. Of course, the call to action was loudest for those closest to the catastrophe, including Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative.

GVEC employees sprang to action by contributing equipment to help power care stations for first responders and grieving families. In the weeks that followed, co-op employees donated \$4,270, which GVEC matched dollar-for-dollar, to victims' families. The \$8,540 total went into an account to be distributed evenly among those affected.



"When we learned of the tragedy in the Sutherland Springs community, there was no question we needed to move to action," says Darren Schauer, GVEC general manager and CEO.

ALMANAC

Texas' Shore Thing



Padre Island National Seashore turns 50 this month. On April 8, 1968, Lady Bird Johnson dedicated the park, the longest seashore in the national park system.

THE TEXAS COAST, BATTERED BY HURRICANE HARVEY IN SOME

BACK
= *to the* =
BEACH



SPOTS, PERSEVERES AND LURES BEACH DWELLERS AND VISITORS ALIKE

I

have always wanted to touch the very edges of Texas—to stand on the corners of this great state to see what I could see. After Hurricane Harvey, the mission became a quest to see what's still standing along the Gulf after the largest storm in state history.

When Harvey made landfall August 25, 2017, in the San Patricio EC service area, the Category 4 storm ravaged the central coast before dumping biblical torrents of rain on Houston, Beaumont and some East Texas co-ops. The Texas Gulf Coast has seen more than 40 hurricanes in the past century, but Harvey tops the list of damage inflicted, with estimates of \$125 billion, far outpacing second-place Hurricane Ike's \$30 billion in 2008.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JULIA ROBINSON

My Gulf Coast trip begins in early January at the point where the Rio Grande merges into the Gulf of Mexico. I drive through Brownsville, past Magic Valley Electric Cooperative, and I play hide-and-seek with bits of a border wall as I drive south on Boca Chica Boulevard, State Highway 4.

I stop at the historic marker for the Battle of Palmito Ranch. This remote patch of coastal marsh, salt prairie, mesquite and palm is the site of the last land battle of the Civil War. More than a month after Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Union troops advanced to retake Brownsville from the Confederates they thought were retreating. The battle of advances, retreats and skirmishes lasted a few hours, but the Union lost more than 30 soldiers. The Confederates won the day, but the war was already lost.

Just a few miles farther, the Gulf of Mexico opens up, wide and sunny. I take a right onto Boca Chica beach, and in another mile or so, the Rio Grande is shallow and muddy. Black skimmer terns congregate in the middle of the river while herons and egrets stalk the shallows. I wave across the water, a dozen short yards to Mexico, where families and fishermen enjoy their day at the beach. A family visiting from Toronto drives up from the Texas side, curious to see the much-debated border. We sit and watch the birds, the cast of fishing nets, the steady breeze off the Gulf, then slowly drive back down the beach.

It's three hours north on U.S. 77 to Padre Island National Seashore, where I pitch a tent for the night on South Beach. This 70-mile stretch of coastline is the longest undeveloped barrier island in the world. You need four-wheel drive to make it past the five-mile marker, but even a couple of miles down, the beach feels isolated. I find a flat spot at the base of the dunes and settle in for a gorgeous sunset. A half-mile away, I spot a family who ascends the dunes and marvels at the color and expanse of the Texas sky. The Gulf waters turn a shadowy blue as the heavens take on pastels of pink, purple and orange.

A family feeds sea-gulls near Historic Pleasure Pier on Galveston Island.

In the morning, I take my coffee on a bench of driftwood and watch a great blue heron wade through the waves in search of breakfast. At the national seashore's Malaquite Visitor



A path leads to the Gulf at Padre Island National Seashore, which protects 70 miles of coastline.

Center, I find a ranger-led birding tour starting on the expansive deck. Patrick Gamman, chief of interpretation, tells me they dodged a bullet with Harvey. “I expected to come back and see nothing of the visitor center, but Harvey moved just a little bit north and hit Rockport instead.” The park reopened three days after the storm with minor damage to the bayside campgrounds.

2018 marks the 40th year the park has been protecting and releasing sea turtles. Kemp’s ridley hatchlings emerge from late June through mid-July and crawl their way into Gulf waters. This is the only place in Texas where five of the seven species of sea turtles can be found.

Just 20 miles farther north, Mustang Island was not so lucky. Harvey destroyed the bathhouse and damaged roads, jetties and campgrounds. Port Aransas, Corpus Christi and Rockport also suffered major damage. Now, four months after the storm, piles of debris line the roads as families and businesses gut their wind- and water-damaged structures. Everyone is in a hurry to be up and running by spring break.

In Port Aransas, Harvey’s winds peaked at 132 mph, and the damage increases in size and scope. No one is untouched, but everywhere there is renewal. The salty smell of the Gulf is interrupted by roofing tar and sawdust.

The sounds of hammers and power tools punctuate the cries of gulls. A new fleet of shiny, candy-colored golf carts awaits beachgoers.

The Port Aransas Museum complex includes a kit house erected in the early 1900s that has survived

Patrick Gamman, below left, chief of interpretation, says Padre Island National Seashore dodged a bullet with Hurricane Harvey. In Port Aransas, right, a business recovers along Alister Street.

“WE’RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT. IF THERE’S A NICE PART, IT’S THAT WE ALL PULLED TOGETHER AND THAT WE’RE PRETTY TOUGH.”

seven hurricanes, including the 1916 storm that wiped out much of the city. Rick Pratt, museum director, says staff prepared the buildings then evacuated and hoped for the best.

“Once we got back into town, we got a lot of volunteers together and we worked 85 or 90 straight hours,” Pratt says. The group removed 3 inches of mud in the boat shop and salvaged what tools they could. “We’re open. We’re not repaired, but we’re open.

“We’re all in the same boat. If there’s a nice part, it’s that we all pulled together and that we’re pretty tough.”

Historic photos lining the walls show resilient islanders recovering from previous storms, the surf culture of the 1960s and 1970s, and the fishing industry that goes back to the 19th century.

Farley Boat Works, an extension of the museum a few blocks away, suffered structural damage and flooding. The active boat-building workshop honors the history of the Farley family, which produced hundreds of wooden skiffs and other craft from 1915–1970. Boat works manager Frank Coletta gives me a short tour of the workshop. A dirty waterline marks the peak of the flood 2 feet above the floor. They already have replaced tools and reopened classes where kids and adults can make model boats, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards and full-sized skiffs.





**A surfer leaves the water
after a late afternoon
session in Galveston.**

Drinking coffee on a picnic table outside are volunteers Steve Potter and George McDermid, winter Texans from Michigan. The two have been helping build and repair boats at Farley for several years. “If God had intended boats to be made of fiberglass, he would have planted fiberglass trees,” explains McDermid. “Plastic boats are for nothing,” agrees Potter. “Working with wood gets in your blood. We started coming down here in 2002.”

North of Port Aransas, the coastal oaks are stripped of leaves

ornate architecture and stained-glass windows give the aura of a royal residence.

Nearby Reedy Chapel and Ashton Villa witnessed another great moment of American history. On June 19, 1865, Union Gen. Gordon Granger read aloud, according to some accounts, from the balcony of the villa General Order No. 3, which announced the total emancipation of all slaves, more than two years after it was first issued by President Abraham Lincoln. The order was read

again on the steps of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, later called Reedy Chapel.

Down on the seawall, teenagers rush to the Historic Pleasure Pier for rollercoasters and bumper cars. As the sun sets over the water, the lights from the midway splash across the quickly darkening waters.

Back on the mainland, I head to Beaumont to visit the



The Port Aransas Museum, left, contains artifacts from the island's settlement and rich surfing and fishing history. A fisherman, below, casts a net from the Mexico side of the border into the Rio Grande delta as it pours into the Gulf of Mexico.

and limbs. A huge pile of debris lines the median of State Highway 35. The pile is crushed down daily, but the mountain is substantial and still growing as rebuilding continues.

In Rockport, the Fulton Mansion State Historic Site is closed for repairs to the roof while the education center and interactive exhibits remain open. This stately home from the late 1800s has seen many storms over the years and will see many more to come. At nearby Goose Island State Park, the 1,000-year-old live oak called the Big Tree survived the winds and rain even as dozens of younger trees fell.

Galveston is famously the site of the deadliest natural disaster in U.S. history, when the hurricane of 1900 came ashore as a Category 4. The residents had little warning of the approaching storm that destroyed most of the town and killed at least 6,000 people. The Galveston Historical Foundation shows a 30-minute documentary called *The Great Storm* at Pier 21 Theater with photos and voices narrating eyewitness accounts.

The Moody Mansion and Gresham's Castle offer visitors a glimpse of Galveston's gilded era in the East End Historic District. The Gresham family welcomed hundreds of survivors into their home, later called Bishop's Palace, after the 1900 hurricane. The





The Moody Mansion, left, in Galveston survived the great hurricane of 1900. The Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown Museum, below, recreates a small, turn-of-the-century town during the oil boom of Beaumont in 1901.

birthplace of the Texas oil boom. The Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown Museum memorializes the day in 1901 when the Lucas geyser erupted over 100 feet in the air from the salt dome flats. The population of Beaumont quintupled in a few short months. Land that didn't sell for hundreds of dollars in 1900 suddenly sold for tens of thousands.

The replica oil town has 15 buildings, blacksmith demos, a barbershop and saloon, gunfights and a geyser blast of water that recreates the Lucas gusher of 1901.

Swamps and bayous become more prevalent the closer you get to the Louisiana border. I drive through what was the epicenter

WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website to watch a video of this trip to the coast and see more photos.



of Harvey floodwaters—more than 60 inches of rain fell in Nederland near Beaumont—to get to Sea Rim State Park. This 4,000-acre marshland offers 5 miles of beachfront and 10 miles of unique paddling trails.

I take a stroll on the ¾-mile Gambusia Nature Trail, a looping boardwalk suspended a few inches above a marsh lagoon. Seaside sparrows and sedge wrens vie for bugs in the waning afternoon light. An alligator slinks through the shallows, momentarily stopping my heart.

I end my Texas coast journey on the beach again, more than 300 miles from the Rio Grande. I have seen miles of debris and hollowed-out homes but also the resilience and perseverance of thousands of Texans.

Learn more about [Julia Robinson](http://juliarobinsonphoto.com) at juliarobinsonphoto.com.



The boardwalk of the Gambusia Nature Trail runs for three-fourths of a mile above the salt marsh at Sea Rim State Park near Sabine Pass.



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Go to TexasCoopPower.com for details and official rules.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

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



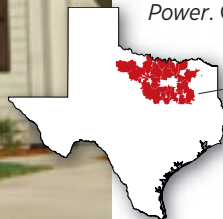
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You've come prepared with your **River Canyon Bowie Knife** sheathed at your side. This hand-forged, unique knife comes shaving sharp with a perfectly fitted hand-tooled sheath. The broad stainless steel blade shines in harmony with the stunning striped horn, wood and bone handle. When you feel the heft of the knife in your hand, you know that you're ready for whatever nature throws at you.

This knife boasts a full tang blade, meaning the blade doesn't stop at the handle, it runs the full length of the knife. According to Gear Patrol, a full tang blade is key, saying "A full tang lends structural strength to the knife, allowing for better leverage ...think one long steel beam versus two."

With our limited edition **River Canyon Bowie Knife** you're getting the best in 21st-century construction with a classic look inspired by legendary American pioneers. What you won't get is the trumped up price tag. We know a thing or two about the hunt—like how to seek out and capture an outstanding, collector's-quality knife that won't cut into your bank account.

This quintessential knife can be yours to use out in the field or to display as the art piece it truly is. But don't wait. A knife of this caliber typically cost hundreds. Priced at an amazing **\$49**, we can't guarantee this knife will stick around for long. So call today!

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the sale price. But we believe that once you wrap your fingers around the **River Canyon's** handle, you'll be ready to carve your own niche into the wild frontier.



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

What customers are saying about Stauer knives...

★★★★★

"First off, the shipping was fast and the quality is beyond what I paid for the knife. Overall I am a satisfied customer!"

— D., Houston, Texas



Not shown
actual size.

River Canyon Bowie Knife ~~\$79*~~

Offer Code Price Only **\$49** + S&P Save **\$30**

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Your Insider Offer Code: RCK314-01

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



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Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

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



Rating of **A+**



• Full tang 4 1/4" stainless steel blade, 9" overall length • Genuine horn, wood and bone handle • Polished brass guard and spacers • Includes leather sheath

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™

“To you, it’s the perfect lift chair. To me, it’s the best sleep chair I’ve ever had.”

— J. Fitzgerald, VA



Sit up, lie down —
and anywhere
in between!

Easy-to-use remote for
massage, heat, recline and lift

We’ve all had nights when we just can’t lie down in bed and sleep, whether it’s from heartburn, cardiac problems, hip or back aches – it could be a variety of reasons. Those are the nights we’d give anything for a comfortable chair to sleep in, one that reclines to exactly the right degree, raises feet and legs to precisely the desired level, supports the head and shoulders properly, operates easily even in the dead of night, and sends a hopeful sleeper right off to dreamland.

Our Perfect Sleep Chair® is just the chair to do it all. It’s a chair, true – the finest of lift chairs – but this chair is so much more! It’s designed to provide total comfort and relaxation not found in other chairs. It can’t be beat for comfortable, long-term sitting, TV viewing, relaxed reclining and – yes! – peaceful

sleep. Our chair’s recline technology allows you to pause the chair in an infinite number of positions, including the Trendelenburg position and the zero gravity position where your body experiences a minimum of internal and external stresses. You’ll love the other benefits, too: It helps with correct spinal alignment, promotes back pressure relief, and encourages better posture to prevent back and muscle pain.



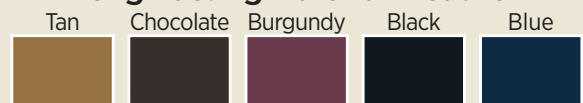
This lift chair puts you
safely on your feet!

And there’s more! The overstuffed, oversized biscuit style back and unique seat design will cradle you in comfort. Generously filled, wide armrests provide enhanced arm support when sitting or reclining. The high and low heat settings along with the multiple massage settings, can provide a soothing relaxation you might get at a spa – just imagine getting all that in a lift chair! It even has a battery backup in case of a power outage. Shipping charge includes white glove delivery. Professionals will deliver the chair to the exact spot in your home where you want it, unpack it, inspect it, test it, position it, and even carry the packaging away! You get your choice of fabrics and colors – **Call now!**

The Perfect Sleep Chair® 1-888-649-6823

Please mention code 109180 when ordering.

Long Lasting DuraLux Leather



DuraLux II Microfiber



46471

Seven Steps to a Safer, Spotless Spring

HERE ARE SEVEN WAYS TO AVOID MISHAPS, maximize efficiency and beautify your home as you embark on spring cleaning and other projects this month.

1. When using a ladder or step stool, ensure it is placed on a stable surface and that you are wearing nonslip shoes. Be mindful of any health conditions or medications that may cause dizziness or vertigo. And be certain there are no power lines nearby.

2. Mirrors are a lovely way to increase light and open up a smaller space. Placed strategically, these affordable accent pieces can add a breath of fresh air to your home. For the most impact, situate mirrors across from visually appealing or interesting items—a fireplace or window is ideal.

3. When applying insecticide in or around your home, be sure it is human- and pet-friendly if you have small children or four-legged family members. The same goes for plants—many beautiful succulents can be toxic to pets. Doing a little research before adding to a garden can help protect your loved ones.

4. Make sure to wake up on the right side of the bed each morning after a good night's sleep by investing in blackout draperies or shades for bedrooms, increasing efficiency and comfort by reducing heat gains.

5. Dust ceiling fan blades and attached light fixtures and bulbs. While doing this, you also can change the direction the blades move by flipping the small switch just above the blades. In preparing for summer heat, you want the fan to push air down into the room to help cool it off, which is achieved with a counterclockwise spin. In winter, the reverse applies.

6. Salt is an excellent multipurpose home cleaning product. Use a handful dissolved in 1 gallon of warm water to clean a refrigerator's interior nonabrasively and without releasing any chemical fumes. You also can apply salt to a cut lemon half to lightly scour and polish brass. Just rinse with warm water when finished, and it should shine like new. A similar method works to clean wooden cutting boards. Sprinkle coarse salt onto the surface, squeeze juice from a lemon onto it, then scrub with a small brush to work the mixture into the cutting board. Finish by rinsing in hot water, and after allowing it to dry, enjoy your



OWART | ISTOCK.COM

HAVE A FRIDGE IN NEED OF DEEP CLEANING? BREAK DOWN THE TASK INTO MANAGEABLE PIECES USING THESE STEPS.

1. Clear everything out of the refrigerator, taking care to separate items that will be thrown out from those you will be keeping.
2. Remove shelves (if possible).
3. Using a solution of salt and hot water, wipe down all interior surfaces.
4. Wash shelves in warm, soapy water and dry before replacing.
5. With a damp cloth, wipe down exterior of all items before returning them to the fridge.

newly disinfected meal prep tool.

7. Save more than a few pennies by investing in a programmable thermostat. While some “smart” models cost more, a basic programmable thermostat can cost as little as \$30 and, used properly, can net a 10 percent savings on the heating and cooling portion of your electric bill. Set it to around 68 degrees during waking winter hours (and lower while asleep or away), and set it to 78 degrees in summer (and higher while asleep or away).



INCANDESCENT

EFFICIENCY



LIFE SPAN



CFL

EFFICIENCY



LIFE SPAN

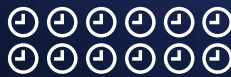


LED

EFFICIENCY



LIFE SPAN



THEHODERKANWAS | iSTOCK.ADOBE.COM

Saving Money Is No Joke

WE'VE ALL HEARD THIS ONE: HOW MANY (INSERT TYPE OF PERSON HERE) DOES IT TAKE to change a lightbulb? While the comedic value of the answer sometimes leaves a bit to be desired, the underlying principle—simple changes can become needlessly complicated—stays the same.

The average home contains 40 light fixtures, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Thanks to a series of staggered federal standards and more lighting choices than ever before, the average homeowner could save \$50 or more each year by using more energy-efficient lightbulbs.

Federal regulations now prohibit the manufacture of any bulb not meeting specific energy efficiency standards. This doesn't mean traditional incandescent bulbs went away, but keep in mind that those bulbs waste 90 percent of your lighting costs as heat.

Compact fluorescent lightbulbs slash energy use by 75 percent compared to incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer.

But for folks who don't like the pigtail CFL shape or who worry about the very small amount of mercury in these bulbs, another, brighter option is available: LED bulbs. These bulbs require 75–80 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs and can last 25 times longer—by far the longest life span yet. While the upfront cost for LEDs is slightly higher, the savings over the 20 years or more the bulb will last makes it a great investment. They are particularly advantageous for light fixtures that are difficult to access.

CFLs and LEDs are available in a variety of brightnesses, come in several hues and offer styles for all types of light fixtures—from chandeliers with dimmers to floodlights.

So what's the punchline? Every time you change a lightbulb, buy a more efficient replacement. No matter which you opt for, you'll save money every time you flip a light switch—and that's nothing to chuckle about.

Boost Efficiency Outdoors

COULD YOUR GARAGE, SHED, BARN OR other outdoor building use an energy efficiency boost? Try these tips to save energy and money:

- ▶ The same rules apply for outdoor buildings as houses: Add insulation, install energy-efficient windows and seal ductwork.
- ▶ Unplug power tools and battery chargers when not in use.
- ▶ Install an insulated door and seal the sides and bottom around it to reduce air leaks.
- ▶ Install motion sensors on outdoor lights.
- ▶ Look into LED retrofits for outdoor security lights. The bulbs cost more upfront, but payback takes only a few years, and LEDs can last up to 20 years.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 2018

—— Martin E. Garcia

I am pleased to inform you, our member-owners, that the state of your Cooperative is vibrant and strong. Vibrant, because our membership is so diverse, and strong, because we are unified in support of our electric Cooperative.

In 2017, we added 2,143 new members to the co-op, which gave us a total of over 99,000 members at year's end. We will surpass the 100,000 mark by mid year 2018. Besides adding members, we are also adding physical plant; that includes meters, wires, poles and transformers. In essence, we are adding value to our plant. At the end of 2017, our total net value in plant, after depreciation, was over \$293 million.

We ended 2017 with a total of 114,297 meters connected to our system. You may ask, why so many more meters than members? The answer is: some members have multiple meters. For example, school districts are considered one member, but have multiple meters under their account.

Modern technology enables us to read the vast majority of those meters from our office. This represents considerable savings for our members. If we had to physically read over 114,000 meters on a monthly basis, our operating cost would be significantly higher than it is today.

MVEC employs 271 of the most capable, talented and dedicated individuals in the Valley, who operate the Cooperative on a day to day basis. They are committed, both individually and as a whole, to delivering safe, reliable and affordable electricity to each and every one of our members.

My fellow board members and I strive to make MVEC one of the best places to work in the Rio Grande Valley. We realize that the men and women who work for you are truly one of the great strengths of our Cooperative.

As some of you may be aware, last year we completely re-designed our web site, in an effort to make it more user friendly. We wanted to make it easier for our members to do business with Magic Valley. On our new web site, you can manage and pay your bill, report an outage and stay up to date on the news about your Cooperative. Members also have the option to sign up for service, which saves them time and money. I encourage you to join the more than 40,000 fellow members who visit our website monthly.

Texas weather has never been known for being easy, but this past year we fared well during a very active hurricane season, with no major hits to our system. Unfortunately, some of our sister co-ops north of us experienced extensive damage to their systems due to Hurricane Harvey.

One of the seven cooperative principles is Cooperation Among Cooperatives. And when the call went out for help, Magic Valley Electric answered in true cooperative tradition. Your co-op sent a total of 11 employees, who worked for more than a week to help restore power to Victoria Electric members. This is what we do, this is who we are; it's the co-op way of doing business.

During the recent snow and ice events that swept through the Valley this winter, our system again stood strong. MVEC had far fewer outages than other electric utilities in the Valley. Reliability has always been a priority for us; that's why we design and build our system to withstand the test of time.

It is a known fact that the electric utility industry is heavily regulated at both the national and state levels. It is also a known fact that there is strength in numbers. Through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, or NRECA, we are part of the more than 900 electric cooperatives across the country who come together with one voice. NRECA closely monitors legislation that could have a negative or positive impact on electric co-ops. They also keep track of activities at the EPA and other federal agencies that could have an impact on our business. In Texas, more than 60 electric cooperatives rely on our statewide association, Texas Electric Cooperatives, (TEC) to monitor and report any legislation that may affect our industry.

Electric cooperatives were born in politics and we understand that we live in politics. Therefore, it is vitally important that the leadership of our Cooperative maintain an active and ongoing relationship with our elected officials. It is important that our elected officials understand the impact that their decisions have on our Cooperative and our members.

In summary, be assured that Magic Valley Electric is strong. We understand that the co-op has an impact on our members' day to day lives. We are committed to providing reliable energy and resources, so that our members can do more in their lives, businesses and communities.

I'm Martin Garcia and my co-op powers me.



MENSAJE DEL PRESIDENTE

— Martin E. Garcia

Me complace informales a ustedes, nuestros miembros-propietarios, que el estado de su cooperativa es vigoroso y fuerte. Vigoroso, porque nuestros miembros son diversos, y fuerte, porque nos unimos para apoyar a nuestra Cooperativa eléctrica.

En el 2017, añadimos 2,143 miembros a la Cooperativa, sumando un total de más de 99,000 miembros a finales del año. Superaremos los 100,000 miembros a mediados del 2018.

Además de añadir miembros, también estamos aumentando nuestra planta física, que incluye medidores, cableado, postes y transformadores. En sí, estamos agregando valor a nuestra planta. A finales de 2017, el valor neto de la planta, después de la depreciación, era de más de \$293 millones.

Terminamos el 2017 con un total de 114,297 medidores conectados a nuestro sistema. Usted podría preguntarse, ¿por qué más medidores que miembros? Y la respuesta es que algunos miembros tienen varios medidores. Por ejemplo, los distritos escolares se cuentan como un solo miembro, pero tienen varios medidores a su nombre.

La tecnología moderna nos permite leer la gran mayoría de los medidores desde la oficina. Esto representa un ahorro enorme para nuestros miembros. Si tuviéramos que leer físicamente más de 114,000 medidores mensualmente, nuestro costo operativo sería significativamente mayor de lo que es hoy.

MVEC emplea a 271 de las personas más capacitadas, talentosas y dedicadas del Valle, que operan la Cooperativa día a día. Están comprometidas, como personas y como equipo, a proporcionar energía segura, confiable y accesible a todos y cada uno de nuestros miembros.

Todos los miembros de la junta directiva nos esforzamos por hacer que MVEC sea uno de los mejores lugares para trabajar en el Valle del Río Grande. Nos damos cuenta de que los hombres y mujeres que trabajan para ustedes son de verdad una de las mayores fortalezas de nuestra Cooperativa.

Como algunos de ustedes ya saben, el año pasado rediseñamos totalmente nuestro sitio web, con el propósito de que el usuario tuviera una mejor experiencia. Queremos facilitar los trámites de nuestros miembros con Magic Valley. En nuestro nuevo sitio web, usted puede manejar y pagar su factura, reportar apagones y mantenerse actualizado con la información acerca de su Cooperativa. Las y los miembros también tienen la opción de tramitar su servicio de luz, para ahorrar tiempo y dinero. Los animo a sumarse a los más de 40,000 miembros que visitan nuestro sitio web mensualmente.

El clima de Texas nunca se ha caracterizado por ser simple, pero el año pasado superamos una temporada de huracanes muy activa, sin ninguna pérdida en nuestro sistema. Lamentablemente, algunas de nuestras cooperativas hermanas al norte de nosotros sufrieron grandes daños a sus sistemas debido al Huracán Harvey.

Uno de los siete principios cooperativos es cooperación entre cooperativas. Cuando recibimos la llamada de auxilio, respondimos. Magic Valley Electric fue fiel a la tradición de cooperación. Su Cooperativa envió un total de 11 empleados, que trabajaron durante más de una semana, para ayudar a restaurar la energía eléctrica de los miembros de Victoria Electric Cooperative. Esto es lo que hacemos, esto es lo que somos; es el estilo de las cooperativas.

Durante las nevadas y heladas recientes que ocurrieron en el Valle este invierno, nuestro sistema se mantuvo firme y fuerte. MVEC tuvo menos interrupciones que las demás empresas de luz en el Valle. La confiabilidad ha sido siempre una prioridad para nosotros, por eso diseñamos y construimos nuestro sistema para resistir la prueba del tiempo.

Es un hecho conocido que la industria eléctrica está fuertemente regulada a nivel nacional y estatal. También es un hecho conocido que hay fuerza cuando se trabaja juntos. A través de la National Rural Electric Cooperative Association o NRECA, somos parte de las más de 900 cooperativas eléctricas de toda la nación, que se unen en una sola voz. La NRECA vigila detalladamente la legislación que pueda tener un impacto, ya sea negativo o positivo, en las cooperativas eléctricas. También, les da seguimiento a las actividades de la EPA y otras agencias federales que pudieran tener un impacto en nuestra industria. En Texas, más de 60 cooperativas eléctricas confían en nuestra asociación estatal, Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC), para estar alerta y reportar cualquier legislación que pudiera afectar nuestra industria.

Las cooperativas eléctricas nacieron en la política y entendemos que vivimos en la política. Por lo tanto, es importante que las y los líderes de nuestra Cooperativa mantengan una relación activa y permanente con nuestros funcionarios electos. Es importante que las y los funcionarios electos entiendan el impacto que sus decisiones tienen sobre nuestra Cooperativa y nuestros miembros.

En resumen, pueden estar seguros de que el estado de Magic Valley Electric es excelente. Entendemos que la Cooperativa tiene un impacto en la vida diaria de nuestros miembros. Nuestro compromiso es proporcionar energía confiable y los recursos para que nuestros miembros puedan hacer más en sus vidas, negocios y comunidades.

Soy Martin Garcia y Mi Cooperativa Me Da Luz y Fuerza.

BALANCE SHEET

BALANCE

OPERATING STATISTICS

ESTADÍSTICAS DE OPERACIÓN

ASSETS: WHAT WE OWN

ACTIVOS: LO QUE TENEMOS

Net Utility Plant	\$293,459,669
<i>Activos Fijos</i>	
Cash in Bank	\$1,922,629
<i>Efectivo en Banco</i>	
Temporary Investments	\$10,371
<i>Inversiones Temporales</i>	
Investments in Associated Organizations	\$112,573,922
<i>Inversiones en Organizaciones Asociadas</i>	
Accounts Receivable	\$11,741,241
<i>Cuentas por Cobrar</i>	
Material and Supplies	\$3,985,546
<i>Materiales y Suministros</i>	
Prepayments	\$799,238
<i>Pagos Adelantados</i>	
Deferred Charges and Other Assets	\$3,943,904
<i>Cargos Diferidos y Otros Activos</i>	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$428,436,520
Total de Activos	

LIABILITIES: WHAT WE OWE

PASIVOS: LO QUE DEBEMOS

Membership Fees and Consumer Deposits	\$7,049,347
<i>Derechos de Membresía y Depósitos de los Miembros</i>	
Long-Term Debt to CFC and CoBank	\$140,336,058
<i>Pasivos a Largo Plazo a CFC y CoBank</i>	
Notes and Accounts Payable	\$20,670,527
<i>Notas y Cuentas Por Pagar</i>	
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	\$10,826,957
<i>Pasivos Corrientes y Acumulados</i>	
Patronage Capital and Equities	\$248,693,251
<i>Capitales de Patrocinio y Equidades</i>	
Deferred Credits	\$860,380
<i>Créditos Diferidos</i>	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$428,436,520
Pasivos Totales	

REVENUES: WHAT WE TOOK IN

INGRESOS: LO QUE COBRAMOS

Sale of Electric Power	\$205,051,220
<i>Ventas de Electricidad</i>	
Miscellaneous Electric Revenue	\$5,898,156
<i>Ingresos Diversos de Electricidad</i>	
Nonoperating Revenue	\$10,820,279
<i>Ingresos No Operativos</i>	
TOTAL REVENUES	\$221,769,655
Total de Ingresos	

EXPENSES: WHAT WE PAID OUT

GASTOS: LO QUE PAGAMOS

Purchased Power	\$158,312,382
<i>Suministro Eléctrico</i>	
Operations and Maintenance	\$13,137,973
<i>Operación y Mantenimiento</i>	
Consumers Accounting	\$8,472,618
<i>Gastos de Contabilidad</i>	
Sales Expense	\$230,087
<i>Gastos de Ventas</i>	
Administrative and General Expenses	\$9,408,709
<i>Gastos Generales y de Administración</i>	
Depreciation	\$11,218,006
<i>Depreciación</i>	
Interest	\$5,214,450
<i>Interés</i>	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$205,994,225
Total de Gastos	

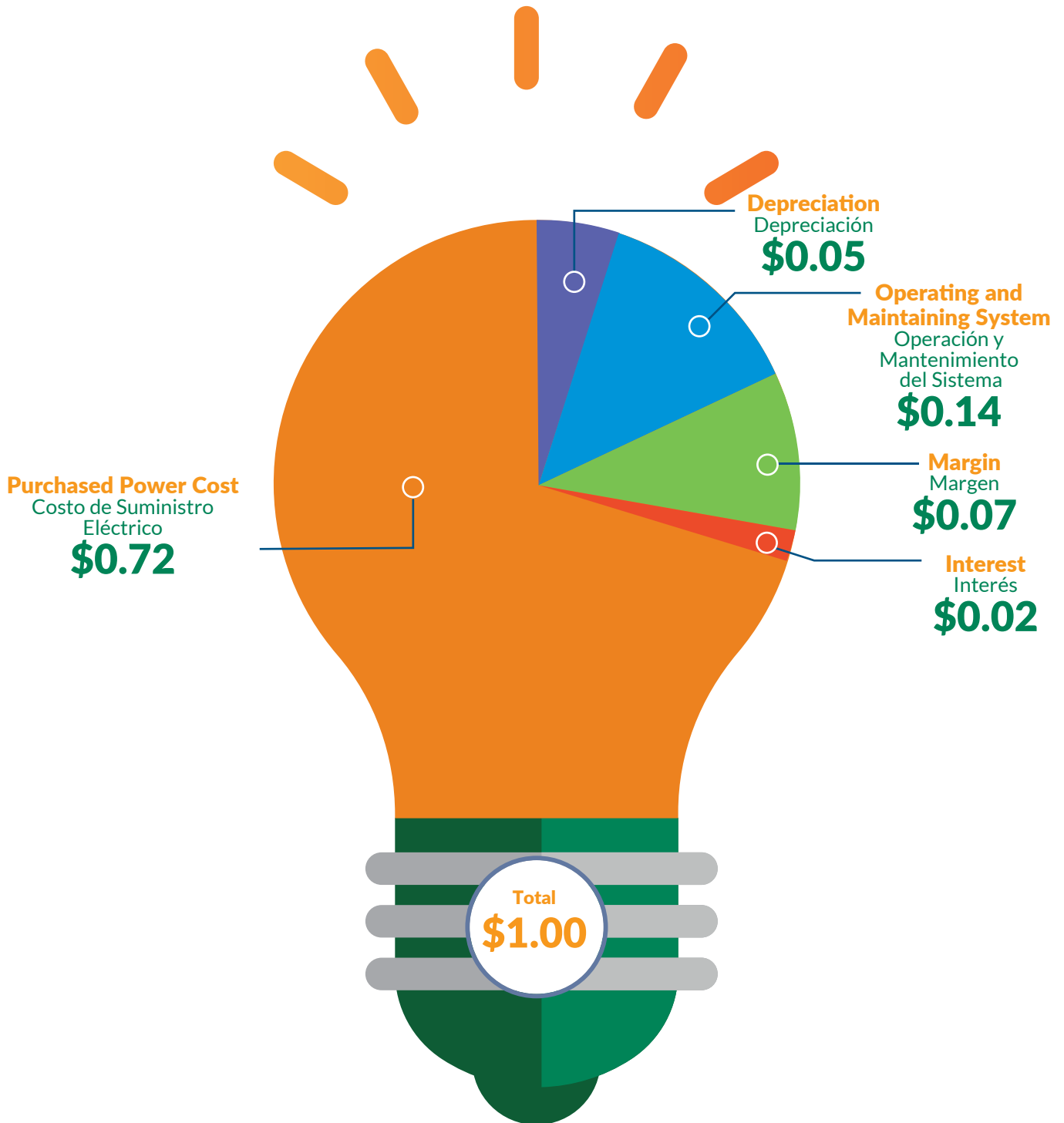
MARGINS: WHAT WE HAD LEFT

MÁRGENES: LO QUE NOS SOBRÓ

Operating Margins	\$4,955,151
<i>Márgenes de Operación</i>	
Nonoperating Margins	\$10,820,279
<i>Márgenes No Operativos</i>	
TOTAL MARGINS	\$15,775,430
Márgenes Totales	

HOW EACH DOLLAR WAS SPENT

CÓMO SE GASTÓ CADA DÓLAR



NOMINATING COMMITTEE COMITÉ DE NOMINACIONES

The Nominating Committee met February 8, 2018 at Arturo's Restaurant, 2303 W. Exp 83 Weslaco, and made the following nominations for directors to be elected at the membership meeting on April 16, 2018.

El comité de nominaciones se reunió el 8 de febrero del 2018 en Arturo's Restaurant, 2303 W. Exp 83 Weslaco, y las siguientes personas fueron nominadas para el puesto de director. La elección se llevará a cabo en la junta anual de miembros el 16 de abril del 2018.

District (Distrito) 3 - Nila T. Wipf **(Distrito) 5** - Adrienne Peña-Garza

2018 NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

DISTRICT 1 Martin E. Garcia	Lydia Chavez Salome Saenz Gary Palousek <i>Alternate-Dennis Hoot</i>
DISTRICT 2 Reynaldo L. Lopez	Eddie Cruz Felipa Cortez Delia L. Chavez <i>Alternate-Lydia Reyes</i>
DISTRICT 3 Nila T. Wipf	Clarence Gray James Cantrell Thomas L. Pincelli <i>Alternate-José Guerrero</i>
DISTRICT 4 Barbara S. Miller	Robert Lyle David Tresnicky Linda Mancillas <i>Alternate-Alejandra Montenegro</i>
DISTRICT 5 Adrienne Peña-Garza	Carina Cantu Maritza Pruneda Christopher Meehan
DISTRICT 6 Doug Martin	Roy C. Roegiers Osvaldo Longoria Jr. Elias Longoria, Jr. <i>Alternate-Charles Stewart</i>
DISTRICT 7 Rolando Alaniz	Dick Chesshir Lydia Martinez Susan E. Garza <i>Alternate-Simona Moya</i>



CELEBRATE LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

APRIL 9, 2018

THANK YOUR CO-OP'S LINEMEN
FOR KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON.

#ThankALineman



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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

BANANA-STRAWBERRY TRIFLE



RICK PATRICK

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large box vanilla pudding
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 6 bananas

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Prepare pudding according to directions on box.
2. Bake cake according to directions on box. Allow to cool.
3. Whip heavy cream with sugar to form soft peaks.
4. Thinly slice fruit. Cut cake into small cubes.
5. Layer cake cubes on bottom of trifle dish. Add a layer of vanilla pudding. Arrange bananas and strawberries on top of pudding. Spread whipped cream in a thin layer over fruit.
6. Repeat layers: cake, pudding, fruit, whipped cream.
7. Chill and serve.

Find this recipe and more at:
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CELEBRATE NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

on April 9
#ThankALineman

MVEC'S ANNUAL MEETING

April 16 at 7:00 pm

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

April 22

RECETA DEL MES

TRIFLE DE PLÁTANO Y FRESAS

(Trifle es un postre inglés que consiste en capas de pastel (a veces pan o galletas), fruta, pudín y crema; típicamente se prepara en un recipiente especial de vidrio, para que se aprecien las capas. También puedes usar un recipiente para ponche. Si no tienes una vasija así, puedes preparar porciones individuales en copas de vidrio o cristal).



RICK PATRICK

INGREDIENTES:

- 1 caja grande de pudín de vainilla (pudding)
- 1 caja de pastel amarillo
- 2 tazas de crema espesa de batir
- 2 cucharadas de azúcar
- 6 plátanos
- 2 pintas o 16 onzas de fresas, lavadas y sin las hojas

INSTRUCCIONES:

1. Preparar el pudín siguiendo las instrucciones de la caja.
2. Hornear el pastel siguiendo las instrucciones de la caja. Dejar enfriar.
3. Batir la crema con el azúcar hasta formar picos suaves.
4. Cortar la fruta en rebanadas finas. Cortar el pastel en cuadros pequeños.
5. Acomodar cuadritos de pastel en el fondo del molde para el trifle.
Agregar una capa del pudín cremoso de vainilla. Agrega otra capa de plátanos y fresas encima del pudín. Extender la crema batida en una capa final capa sobre la fruta.
6. Repetir las capas: pastel, pudín, fruta, crema batida.
7. Refrigerar y servir.

Encuentra esta receta y muchas más en línea en:

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20' x 24' Starting at \$31,700

Shown: 30x40, 4:12 roof pitch, two 10x10 Garage Doors

One Story Gable Garages



20' x 20' Starting at \$22,000

Shown: 20' x 24', 8:12 roof pitch, 16' x 7' garage door, concrete lap siding

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Rousting the Rustlers

Cattle raisers' organization employs special rangers to fight centuries-old crime

BY LADAWN FLETCHER

THE THIEVES ARE BRAZEN. COWS, HORSES, sheep—any livestock—can be swiped and sold relatively quickly at full market value. Depending on what is stolen, it can be days and sometimes weeks before the rightful owner even notices. But when the theft comes to light, one of the first calls to be made is to the special rangers.

The special rangers, not to be confused with Texas Rangers, are a select group of law-enforcement agents licensed by the states of Texas and Oklahoma and dedicated solely to agriculture crimes.

Hal Dumas, a special ranger since 1993, has seen a lot in the decades since he joined the force. It is a far cry from his days as a Houston police officer or as the sheriff of Wharton County. His uniform on any given day is crisp jeans, a white shirt and the hat he places beside him on the sofa as he talks. The only tells that confirm his special status: his badge and the gleaming black gun holstered to his side.

“Almost all of what we do as a special ranger is cold cases,” says Dumas. Theft and fraud to be exact.

Catching cattle thieves is why the force was created in 1877 by the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. Cattle raisers, tired of losing their profits to rustlers, banded together to create this specialized and dedicated force.

To this day, the 30 agents who roam the rural roads of Texas and Oklahoma are funded by the TSCRA, not by either state's government. The rangers investigate crimes not just for members but for any rancher or farmer who experiences theft.

Dumas has his work cut out for him. He supervises Region 5, which includes Milam and all counties east of it, up to Leon County. His region and Region 6 to the north contain 70 percent of the cattle in the state and 70 percent of the sale barns.



Cattle raisers not familiar with the special rangers often call the local sheriff when their equipment or livestock is stolen. The special rangers work closely with other law enforcement agencies.

“We work with sheriff's departments all the time,” Dumas says. “Usually that is what we are doing, assisting another agency. We have the information on all the cattle sold in the state. They are a great help to us, and we're a great help to them.”

There are more than 120 sale barns in Texas, and on any given day, some of them are open for business. Buyers and sellers from surrounding counties converge in metal buildings on dusty lots and, with little more than a handshake and exchange of checks, make deals to transfer ownership of livestock.

In some cases, Dumas says, if a bad check or similar issue has delayed payment, the rangers give buyers a chance to pay before stepping in. Some of these cases involve millions of dollars.

“We filed a case several years ago that ranged from Crockett to Caldwell, and we recovered close to 30 pieces of equipment

worth close to a half-million dollars,” Dumas says breezily.

Livestock can be worth even more.

There have been multimillion-dollar deals where the buyer will purchase cattle from an organization that sells to individuals or puts cattle in a feedlot, Dumas explains. They buy as many as 10 or 15 truckloads and pay for them on time. If they get slow on paying or they go bankrupt, then the special rangers might have to get involved.

As old-fashioned as cattle rustling sounds, modern technology helps to catch the bad guys. Branding, the most effective way to identify cattle, was at one time identified via microfiche. Now each special ranger is equipped with a tablet and has instant access to databases across the state. Surveillance cameras on property also sometimes help.

Dumas believes cattle thieves will always be among us. Technology helps stop them or catch them, but he has old-fashioned advice for the modern rancher. “Brand your cattle.”

LaDawn Fletcher is a Houston-area writer.

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Breakfast Pastries

WHAT BETTER WAY TO WAKE UP THAN to the aroma of freshly baked pastries? Whether it's fragrant banana muffins, buttery scones or the sheer delight of a high-rising, oven-baked pancake, breakfast pastries are a delicious way to make any day feel special. This month's winners are ideal for celebratory brunches ('tis the season for bridal showers and graduation parties), but they're also easy enough to prepare on a weekday. A family favorite is this cinnamon-scented quick bread that combines a moist, tender texture with a crackly, almond crust. Consider baking two and freezing one to brighten up a future morning.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Snickerdoodle Loaf

BATTER

- 2½ cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1¼ cups sugar
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup whole milk yogurt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon almond extract

CINNAMON SUGAR

- 3 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup sliced almonds

- 1. BATTER:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and cinnamon.
- 3.** In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the sour cream, yogurt and extracts and beat until well-combined. Add the dry ingredients and mix until the batter just

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

MELISSA BRISKO

Recipes

Breakfast Pastries



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

HELEN COUNTS | GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

Counts' Puff Oven Pancake is also known as a Dutch baby, a large, fluffy pancake that's whisked together in minutes and bakes into a billowy show-stealer. Vary the toppings to suit your mood or occasion.

Sprinkle with Parmesan or Gruyère for a savory bite, or top with fresh fruit and powdered sugar.

Puff Oven Pancake

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup flour
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- Powdered sugar
- Fresh fruit or berries

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. In a large mixing bowl, briefly beat the eggs. Whisk in milk, flour, sugar and salt until fairly smooth (do not over mix). Cover the batter and let stand for 30 minutes.
3. Place the butter in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, or similarly sized

baking dish, and heat in oven until melted. Swirl skillet to coat the bottom and sides with melted butter.

4. Pour batter into skillet and bake 15–20 minutes, or until it rises very high and is billowy on the edges and golden brown.

5. Remove from heat and cool for 5 minutes. Place fruit in the center crevice of pancake and dust with powdered sugar. ▶ Serves 4–6.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

comes together (do not over mix).

4. Pour half the batter into the pan and smooth the top with a rubber spatula.
5. CINNAMON SUGAR: In a small bowl, whisk together the brown sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle half the cinnamon-sugar mixture evenly over the batter in the pan.
6. Pour the rest of the batter over the cinnamon sugar and smooth the top. Sprinkle the remaining cinnamon sugar over the batter and top with the almonds.
7. Bake 50–60 minutes or until a tester inserted in the middle of the loaf comes out mostly clean. Remove from oven and cool for 10 minutes before running a knife around the sides of the pan and turning out the loaf onto a wire rack to cool completely. ▶ Serves 6–8.

COOK'S TIP Wrapped in plastic wrap or foil, this bread will keep 3–4 days.

Spiced Banana Muffins

JILEEN PLATT | BOWIE-CASS EC

An unexpected blend of spices and a moist texture set these banana muffins apart. Adding a bit of whole-wheat flour lends a satisfying texture and balances the sweetness. For a crunchy topping, sprinkle cinnamon and coarse sugar over the tops of the muffins before baking.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon cardamom
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1½ cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 5–6 ripe bananas, mashed
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Apply cooking spray to 2 muffin tins or line with paper baking cups.
2. Whisk together flours, baking soda, spices and salt in a medium bowl.
3. In a separate mixing bowl, cream butter and sugars. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Add bananas,



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\$100 Recipe Contest

September's recipe contest topic is **All Hail the Cookie Jar**. What fresh-baked goodies do you stock in your cookie jar? The deadline to send recipes is **April 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.

oil and vanilla; mix well. Add the dry ingredients and mix until moistened, being careful not to over mix.

4. Spoon batter into muffin tins. Bake 15–17 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

5. Remove from heat and cool muffins in tins for 5 minutes. Invert and finish cooling, right-side up, on a wire rack.

► Makes 24 muffins.

Cranberry Scones

CHRISTINE HENDERSON | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

These tender crumb scones are easy to assemble. For optimal texture, use very cold butter. “These are great fresh from the oven or split open and spread with butter, honey, or my favorite—whipped cream,” Henderson says.

- 3 cups flour**
- ½ cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided use**
- 1 tablespoon baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**

- ¾ cup (½ sticks) butter**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- 1 cup buttermilk**
- ½ teaspoon almond extract**
- 1 cup dried cranberries**
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (optional)**
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray or line with parchment.
 - 2.** Whisk together the flour, ½ cup sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl. Using a fork (or your fingers) cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Mix in egg, buttermilk and almond extract until it forms a slightly moist batter. Stir in cranberries, nuts and orange zest.
 - 3.** Using a spoon, scoop 3-inch rounds of batter onto baking sheet (keeping them about 2 inches apart). Sprinkle remaining sugar over each scone. Place baking sheet on center oven rack and bake 15 minutes or until lightly browned.
- Makes 12 scones.



Top of the Morning

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TOAST AND SLATHER Top toasted quick breads, poundcake or muffins with cream cheese, lemon curd, seasonal jam or lightly sweetened ricotta cheese.

INFUSE SYRUP Gently heat pure maple syrup with blackberries, raspberries or blueberries (fresh or frozen), and include a cinnamon stick and/or vanilla bean. —PD



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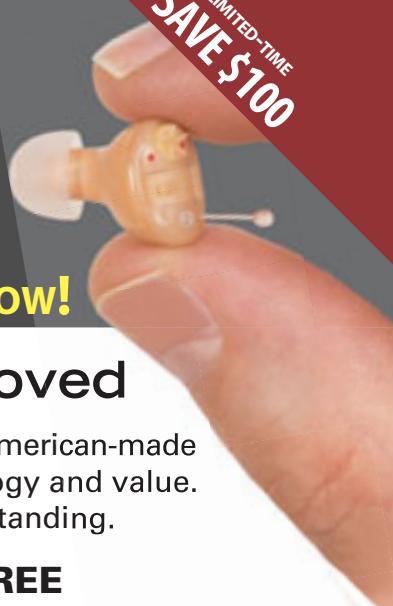
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▲ CAROL POPE, Bowie-Cass EC: Tad Hobbs of Hooks shares a gentle touch with his horse, Gingersnap.



▲ KANDICE LAMMERT, Heart of Texas EC: "Lucas Lammert, age 4, mutton bustin' at the HOT Fair in Waco"



▲ JULIE KLAMMER, Pedernales EC: Mylie Pearl, 3, wears chaps and a cowgirl hat for a Texas birthday party.



▲ DAVID PENA, Pedernales EC: "My son loved the sound the spur made as he walked."



UPCOMING CONTESTS

AUGUST SCHOOL'S OUT	DUE APRIL 10
SEPTEMBER WEDDING FUNNIES	DUE MAY 10
OCTOBER CLOCKS	DUE JUNE 10

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◀ BECCA BRIDGE, South Plains EC: These 1952 cowgirls—Jane Powell Bridge, left, and sister Pat Powell Hightower—are ready for the rodeo.

Pick of the Month Cajun Heritage Festival

Port Arthur April 7
(409) 835-2787, cajunheritagefest.com

Food, drink and music mark this annual festival, which takes place as the coastal community of Port Arthur continues to recover from Hurricane Harvey. The Category 4 hurricane, which struck Texas on August 25, 2017, caused \$125 billion in damage and dropped 4 feet of rain on Port Arthur and 5 feet on neighboring communities.



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April 7

Kilgore Gregg County Walk Like MADD, (903) 534-6000, walklikemadd.org

Terrell Big Band Hangar Dance & Dinner, (972) 551-1122, bftsmuseum.org

8

Crockett Ernie Haase & Signature Sound, (936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

11

San Angelo [11-14] Just Between Friends, (325) 716-7356, sanangelo.jbfsale.com

13

Georgetown [13-14] Quilt and Stitchery Show, (512) 658-6973, handcraftsunlimited.com

Neches [13-22] 1836 Chuckwagon Race, (903) 721-9111, 1836chuckwagonrace.com

14

Cedar Park Austin Walk for PKD, (508) 981-3011, walkforpkd.org/austin



April 14
Sherman
Are You Smarter
Than a Raccoon?

Hearne Crossroads Hometown Festival, (979) 279-5372, crossroadshometownfestival.com

San Saba Music Series Presents Jason Boland, (325) 372-5144, visitsansabatexas.com

Schulenburg Sausagefest, (979) 743-4514, schulenburgsausagesfest.com

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Waco Rootstock: A Texas Wine Festival, (254) 848-4343, rootstockwinefest.com

Chappell Hill [14-15] Official Bluebonnet Festival of Texas, (979) 836-3696, visitbrenhamtexas.com

19

San Angelo [19-21] Regional Cavalry Competition, (325) 657-4444, fortconcho.com

Waxahachie [19-22] Crossroads of Texas Film Festival, (469) 309-4045, crossroadsoftx.com

20

Edinburg Got Faith Concert Series, (956) 358-2755, gotfaithmusic.com

Carthage [20-21] Piney Woods Quilt Festival, (903) 646-1791, carthagetexas.us/main-street

Henderson [20-21] Antique Tractor Show, (903) 889-2671, visithendersontx.com

Grandview [20-22] Antique Alley Texas, (817) 666-5024, antiquealleytexas.com

21

Calvert Calvert 150: A Texas Celebration Fit for a Queen, (979) 364-2323, calverttx.us

Hillsboro Hill County Master Gardeners Plant Sale, (254) 582-4022, hill.agrilife.org

Brazoria [21-22] Migration Celebration, 1-844-842-4737, migrationcelebration.com

Dripping Springs [21-22] Redbud Artisan Market, (512) 858-7892

Whitney [21-22, 27-29] *Doublewide, Texas*, (254) 694-5105, lakewhitneyarts.org

April 20-21
Henderson
Antique Tractor Show



22

Wilson VFD Fundraiser Dinner and Auction, (806) 778-7326

26

Freeport [26-28] RiverFest, (979) 233-6061, freeportriverfest.com

Fredericksburg [26-29] Hill Country Film Festival, 1-866-224-7714, hillcountryff.com

27

Clute [27-29, May 4-6] Little Theater's Production of *Hamlet*, (979) 265-7661, brazosportcenter.org

May 6

Wylie Wylie 500 Pedal Car Race, (972) 516-6016, wylietetexas.gov

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World Birding Center spans nine sites along Rio Grande Valley

BY EILEEN MATTEI

FROM SOUTH PADRE ISLAND ALONG THE Rio Grande to Roma, 134 miles to the west, nine World Birding Center sites entice serious birders and amateur naturalists with extraordinary, year-round watchable wildlife. Easily accessible, the WBC includes three state parks and six urban nature preserves where it is possible to enjoy one-on-one encounters with birds, butterflies, Texas tortoises and semi-tropical, thorny, flowering Mother Nature.

Beginning birders count red-crowned parrots, great kiskadees and green jays among the Rio Grande Valley's large, loud and colorful species that make it easy to enjoy wildlife watching. Veteran birders come from around the world to spot birds not seen anywhere else. World Birding Center habitats range from tidal wetlands to thorn-scrub forests. Brimming with native plants, the sites attract an abundance of semitropical and migratory birds. This inspires locals to grow native plants to nourish and shelter wildlife.

The WBC's easternmost location is on South Padre Island, and the other eight sites lie within a few miles of Interstate 2 and Highway 83, which traverse the lower RGV.

At **South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center**, you can observe birds up close because the birds here don't spook easily, says Javier Gonzalez, park naturalist. In contrast, he adds, the alligators living in the freshwater wetland tend to shy away from noisy groups. "The adjacent salt marsh lets you compare the differences in habitats and wildlife," Gonzalez says. "With only one trail and one boardwalk, you share experiences with people you meet and learn from each other."

Thirty-six miles inland, **Resaca de la Palma State Park's** diverse habitats include



The Edinburg Scenic Wetlands and World Birding Center

a wetland that weaves through the park's 1,200 acres. As guests roam the park's grassland, thorn scrub and old-growth ebony forests, they are likely to spot Altamira orioles, groove-billed anis, green jays and kingbirds.

The **Harlingen Arroyo Colorado** site of the WBC encompasses the 54-acre Hugh Ramsey Nature Park and the 40-acre Harlingen Thicket. Volunteer Texas master naturalists have collaborated to transform parts of the park into an indigenous habitat densely packed with native plants.

Scattered through **Estero Llano Grande State Park's** 230 acres of grassland and woods are ponds that host alligators, black-bellied whistling ducks, roseate spoonbills and wood storks. A wildlife-watching pavilion overlooks Ibis Pond and serves as the ideal starting point for the popular owl prowls and night hikes.

In addition to the birds and butterflies crowding the gardens, the **Old Hidalgo Pumphouse Museum** boasts an up-close perspective on the massive steam-driven pumps that drew water from the Rio Grande to irrigate farm fields starting in 1909.


Quinta Mazatlan, a historic 1930s adobe mansion, takes center stage at McAllen's

urban wildlife habitat. Resident semitropical birds perched along the trails blend in with 38 bronze sculptures of leafcutter ants, bats, owls, horned lizards and javelinas.

At **Edinburg Scenic Wetlands**, two large ponds and several small ones act like magnets for kids, wading birds, songbirds, foxes and dragonflies. "We're an educational nature center, an urban oasis for watchable wildlife rather than a native forest," says Marisa Oliva-Rodriguez, who manages the 40-acre site. "The idea is to get kids outside and enjoying it." Park admission includes use of binoculars and playsets with dip nets.

Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park is renowned for hawk watches during seasonal migrations, while **Roma Bluffs'** observation deck high above the Rio Grande looks out over the river and islands and into Mexico. Every step on the World Birding Center trail delivers wildlife encounters in this lively, semitropical environment.

Eileen Mattei, a member of Nueces and Magic Valley ECs, lives in Harlingen.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story on our website to see more photos from the World Birding Center.



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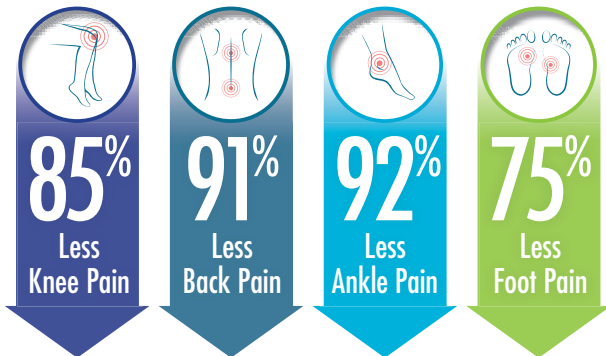
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ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, April 16, 2018 • 7PM

Harlingen Municipal Auditorium

This is your official Registration and Voting Credential for the Magic Valley Electric Cooperative annual meeting of April 16. A married couple constitutes one (1) vote, regardless of the number of accounts.

This will also serve as your card for the drawing for attendance prizes to be given away at the meeting. Be sure to bring this card with you to the meeting.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, we urge you to send in your proxy card, attached to the March issue of Texas Coop Power, prior to April 9, 2018. This is to assure a quorum at the Annual Meeting, for the purpose of transacting any business before the Cooperative and the election of directors. The following individuals have been nominated:

JUNTA ANUAL

Lunes, 16 de abril, 2018 • 7PM

Harlingen Municipal Auditorium

Esta es su boleta oficial para poder votar en la junta anual de Magic Valley Electric Cooperative, que se efectuará el 16 de abril de 2018. Una pareja casada constituye un solo voto, sin importar el número de cuentas.

Esta también es la boleta oficial para poder participar en el sorteo de regalos. El sorteo se efectuará en la junta anual. No olvide traer esta boleta a la junta.

Si usted no puede asistir a la junta, favor de regresar la carta, que fue incluida en la edición de marzo de esta revista, antes del 9 de abril de 2018. Es importante que regrese la boleta a tiempo, para poder lograr el quorum y poder proceder con la elección de directores. Las siguientes personas han sido nominadas:

District (Distrito) 3 - Nila T. Wipf

District (Distrito) 5 - Adrienne Peña-Garza

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- Get on I-69E/US-77 South towards Harlingen
- Take the exit toward US-83 BUS/TX-54 Spur/Fair Park Blvd from I-69E S
- Turn left onto Fair Park Blvd
- Continue onto Fair Park Blvd
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From McAllen

- Get on I-2/US-83 East towards Harlingen
- Take the exit toward Tyler Ave/Dixieland Rd from I-2/US-83 E
- Continue onto US 77 Frontage
- Turn left onto US 77 N. Frontage
- Turn right onto Fair Park Blvd
- Destination is on your left

From Brownsville

- Get on I-69E/US-77 North towards Harlingen
- Take the exit toward Tyler Ave/Fair Park Blvd
- Continue onto US 77 Frontage
- Turn right onto Fair Park Blvd
- Destination is on your left





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