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SEPTEMBER 2023

Mum's the Word

Kisha Clark makes no
secret of her network
of mum-makers





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September 2023



08

Bigger and Better—Together

Makers grow Texas' colorful homecoming mum tradition—and their own skills—by working cooperatively.

Story by Kristen Pettineo
Photos by Wyatt McSpadden

ON THE COVER

Kisha Clark, right, with Lundyn Byrd, whom she mentored in the art of mum-making.

ABOVE

Materials that will blossom into mums.

Photos by Wyatt McSpadden

12 Dance Hall Darlings

After decades of rocking the countryside, the beloved Triumphs take a final bow.

Story and photo by Erich Schlegel

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Wild Blue Yonder
By Pam LeBlanc

Planter Banter

RESEARCHERS HAVE LEARNED that plants “talk,” using a process called cavitation, when tiny bubbles burst and produce mini shock waves inside a plant’s vascular system. Sort of like what happens in your joints when you crack your knuckles.

Nice to meet you.



Come here often?



“There’s two kinds of coaches: Them that’s fired and them that’s gonna be fired.”

—BUM PHILLIPS

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

My favorite swimming hole is ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our July prompt: **Darkness is only scary when ...**

You’re 91 years old, living alone a mile from a neighbor, the power goes out and you can’t find your cellphone.

HAROLD R. CLARK
NUECES EC
KINGSVILLE

It’s the bottom of your empty bag of chocolates.

MONICA MILLER
COSERV
CARROLLTON

You’re 10 years old and have to go to the outhouse at night.

NORMA KRANZ
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES
SOMERVELL COUNTY

You feel something furry and you know the dog is outside.

GAYLA LEECH
CECA
ALBANY

You can’t see what is making noise and coming toward you.

BOBBY REA
TRINITY VALLEY EC
ELKHART

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LIGHTBULB MOMENT

Here's a reading recommendation for children that will enlighten them about how rural electrification changed America for the better.

Wish Upon a Crawdad takes place in 1940 Oregon. It tells the tale of 12-year-old Ruby Mae Ryan, whose family is about to get electricity for the first time thanks to the electric cooperative formed by her parents and neighbors and who is trying to earn enough money to buy a surprise gift for her mother.

"I hope kids will take away a greater appreciation for all the wonderful things they can do because of electricity," says author Curtis Condon, a retired co-op magazine editor.



In a Manner of Speaking

KINDLY NOTE that Austin is the politest American city.

That's according to a survey of more than 1,500 residents of the 30 largest metropolitan areas in the U.S. Preply, a language learning app and e-learning platform, conducted the survey.

Fort Worth ranks third.

Pardon us for saying so, but the same survey lists Houston as the 10th-rudest city.

September 4

National Newspaper Carrier Day

"Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." So said Thomas Jefferson.



JULIA ROBINSON

JULY 2023 'I Love All the Love Here'

“As a parent of an autistic child who participated in Camp CAMP for many years, I was overjoyed to see this fine organization recognized in your magazine.”

MARTIN GIBLIN
PEDERNALES EC
SPRING BRANCH

Knowing Natives

Native grasses? Really? The first grass you list (Johnson grass) was imported from Turkey [Ranchland Revival, July 2023]. I can remember my father cursing it and the man it was named for when I was a boy. It is listed as a noxious weed in 19 states and under certain circumstances becomes deadly to cattle and horses.

Jim Evans
Victoria EC
Port Lavaca

EDITOR'S NOTE Sharp eye, Jim. Rancher Jon Taggart has planted Johnson grass until native grasses become established, but it's not native to Texas.

My grandmother was one of the original Rangerettes [Kilgore's Kickers, June 2023].

HOLLY ANTHONY
VIA FACEBOOK

Historical Details

I had never known about the post-revolution battles with Mexico [Second Sacking, July 2023]. I also learned a new word or two from the author.

Keith Brown
Pedernales EC
Lago Vista

I noticed a discrepancy. At the end it says the two attacks on Texas drove the Texians to join the United States six years after the Mexican

attacks in 1842. That would make it 1848 when Texas joined the U.S. In school, we learned that Texas joined the U.S. on December 29, 1845. Did I miss something somewhere?

Bill Beverly
Trinity Valley EC
Canton

EDITOR'S NOTE Our mistake, Bill. Texas joined the U.S. three years after the 1842 attacks. The story has been corrected on our website.

Old-School Luxury

These fantastic hotels are true reminders of old-school luxury and comfort [Sleeping Giants, July 2023]. I recommend stepping out and trying all these magnificent hotels.

Bill Koenig
Fayette EC
West Point



COURTESY GAGE HOTEL

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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

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

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Mums Inc.
Homecoming Mum Professionals

Makers grow Texas' colorful homecoming mum tradition—and their own skills—by working cooperatively

BIGGER AND BETTER—TOGETHER

Homecoming season is upon us.

How can you tell? Well, there's football, for sure. And the unflinching heat finally starts standing down. But maybe the biggest—BIGGEST—clues are the over-the-top mum assemblies that high school students flaunt in the name of school spirit and Texas tradition.

It used to be that homecoming mums meant corsages, a nice arrangement easily pinned to a dress. But sometime in the 1970s, Texas mums became Texas-sized—extravagant masses of ribbons, buttons, charms and bells.

Families could spend hours creating them. Or they can turn to someone like Kisha Clark, for whom mums are serious business. Just don't call them cute.

"When I hear someone call my mum business cute, that's like nails on a chalkboard to me," Clark says, laughing. "This isn't a hobby. I'm not just throwing glitter at the kitchen table. Mums are works of art. I take them seriously, and I take my business seriously, too."

So seriously that Clark launched Mums Inc., a professional organization for mum-makers. Clark, who lives in Providence Village, near Denton, believes there's power in numbers and in working cooperatively—whether it's for sourcing materials in bulk, staying on top of new trends, referring customers or building skills.

"Really anything," Clark said. "When I first got started making mums, the business was competitive. But I think



we're better together. I mean, doctors have professional membership organizations. Attorneys do too. But nobody was talking about the mum industry this way. Why not?"

Clark, a member of CoServ, an electric cooperative based in the Metroplex, has been in the mum business for more than 20 years, first learning the trade from her grandmother while growing up near Fort Cavazos (formerly Fort Hood) in Killeen. She loved making mums in high school but never dreamed of making a career of them. Instead, she went to college and studied something totally different: cybersecurity.

But she wasn't out of the mum business for long.

"It was 2002. I was 23 years old and driving home from my first cybersecurity job in Plano, and I passed a school with a big sign out front," Clark said. "It said something about picking up homecoming mums, and I suddenly

OPPOSITE Kisha Clark, a cybersecurity expert, is fully immersed in the mum-making business.

RIGHT A vast array of ribbons serves as Clark's palette.



remembered how much I loved making them in high school. I thought, ‘Hey, I could do that.’ And from that moment, I became kind of obsessed with learning the business and making mums again.”

Clark scoured the internet to source supplies, get a better understanding of the market and network with other mum-makers. But in the early 2000s, information was scarce online. The mum business was driven mostly by word-of-mouth referrals, and it could be tough to get a foothold.

Clark saw an opportunity. With her unique combination of crafting skills and computer expertise, she says she became one of the first mum-makers to sell supplies, mum kits and custom mum designs on the internet.

Her first year was slow. She sold just two mums. But each homecoming season, Clark’s customer base grew, and within just a few years, it became less a hobby and more a bona fide side hustle. Today that business, DK Florals, produces 30–35 mums every season. Some take up to 24 hours of work, and they sell for anywhere from \$250 to well over \$800.

Maybe it’s because of Clark’s day job—managing a team of engineers—or maybe it’s because she’s a self-described leader by nature. But as her mum business grew more successful, Clark felt like there was potential for something much bigger.

“I was talking to another mum-maker friend,” Clark says. “She needed some supplies, and we ended up trading some items we both needed. We got to talking about the business, and we realized we needed to create some kind of network.”

“When I first got started making mums, the business was competitive. But I think we’re better together.”

That’s when Mums Inc. was born. It started as a Facebook group for mum-makers in 2012, but the conversation kept getting bigger.

“We started buying supplies together, which got us a better cost,” Clark says. “And as our numbers grew, we began teaching marketing. And from there, it just took off.”

Before long, Clark was hosting events for Mums Inc. members and leading in-person and virtual classes. What started as a homegrown Facebook group has now spun into a full-fledged professional membership organization with 188 members from all over Texas and some from Oklahoma, New Mexico and Florida. For an annual fee of \$35, mum-makers become part of a professional network, gaining access to its tips and techniques, resources, and referrals.



FROM OPPOSITE Clark shows Lundyn Byrd some of her techniques for crafting a mum. Byrd, a 2023 Aubrey High School graduate, has had her own mum business for three years. Mums can easily weigh 10 pounds and sometimes twice that.

friends' high school-aged kiddos needed a mum or a garter, they'd call me and I'd do it."

Clark saw McGlothin's work and saw the potential for a business. She reached out through Facebook and encouraged McGlothin to consider joining Mums Inc.

"That's when I realized that this could be more than just a hobby," McGlothin says. "I was just barely breaking even at the time, and I wasn't really approaching this as an entrepreneur. And now I have a profitable business."

But mostly, McGlothin is grateful that there's a group of skilled artisans passing down a Texas tradition.

"In our group, there are so many years of professional mum-making experience," she says. "We have people who have been making mums for their kids and grandkids, going back decades. That kind of experience is priceless—and it's being handed down generation by generation in our group. We share braiding techniques, know-how and new trends. I find it all incredibly valuable.

"And I'm glad it's not getting lost."

For Clark, that kind of connection embodies the potential she envisioned when she started the mum collective. Yes, the big, beautiful mums themselves are the end product. But for Clark, Mums

Inc. is really about people reaching their potential and building a community.

"Whether I'm managing engineers or leading Mums Inc., deep down, it's about people growth," Clark says. "I like to see people beyond what they see in themselves. Mums Inc. was like a bunch of flower seeds. They were going to grow, but now they're in the same pot, growing together. And now we have this beautiful rainforest."

Clark takes pride in knowing Mums Inc. members can help put their children through college, pay for family vacations or leave their jobs—because of mums.

"Yes, I love mums," Clark says. "But my joy? It's in seeing this community succeed." ■

Mums Inc. has its own TikTok account where Clark shares social media marketing expertise. After all, the video-sharing social media network is practically tailor-made for showing off her big, colorful, ornate designs. And these days, most of Clark's Generation Z customers are on there, too.

"TikTok has been great for us, but this is about so much more," Clark says. "This is about us being taken seriously and giving people the tools they need to realize their full potential. And we're not just a bunch of crafty moms. We're businesswomen."

Erica Muñoz McGlothin, a mum-maker and Mums Inc. board member, wholeheartedly agrees. The Temple mom began making mums for friends and family as a hobby.

"I'm kind of a creative person by nature," she explains. "I love the pageantry of it. I love that it's so Texas. So when my

Dance Hall Darlings

After decades of rocking the countryside, the beloved Triumphs take a final bow

IT ALL BEGAN in the summer of 1959 in Rosenberg, southwest of Houston. Tim Griffith's dad was a traveling salesman and came home one day with a used electric guitar and amp.

Obviously, the younger Griffith needed a band.

"I played saxophone in the nearby Needville High School band," Don Drachenberg says. "We got a few other friends together, and next thing you know, we're playing our first gig in January of 1960. A sock hop in Richmond."

Band member Denny Zatyka's dad was a distributor for Lone Star beer and allowed the teens—the Triumphs—to practice in a beer warehouse, Drachenberg says. "Through the years we all had regular jobs," he says. "I became an American history high school teacher; Denny inherited the Lone Star beer distributorship; Tim Griffith was a civil engineer; Teddy Mensik worked in a machine shop; and Gary Koeppen was an insurance salesman."

In 1966 the band recorded the Hank Williams tune *I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry*, sung by another founding member, B.J. Thomas. It became a national hit. The song launched a solo career for Thomas, a Grammy winner whose hit songs included *Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head* and *Hooked on a Feeling*.

From there the Triumphs started playing the Central Texas dance hall circuit, through the '60s and into the '70s, bringing their rock tunes to dance halls in towns including Brenham, East Bernard, El Campo, Hillje, La Grange, Schulenburg, Shiner, Tate and Weimar.

Dance hall historian Gary E. McKee, editor of *Texas Polka News*, says Saturday nights were for rock 'n' roll dances; Sunday afternoons were for polka bands and an older crowd. On Friday nights, of course, folks were busy with high school sports.

Through the 1960s, the Triumphs were among the best-known circuit bands in Central Texas, along with the Barons and Roy Head and the Traits.

By 1980, as the world embraced disco and the Triumphs missed spending time with their families after more than a decade of working weekends and holidays, the band took a break. They regrouped in 1992.

But on a chilly Saturday night this past February, the Triumphs took their final bow in appropriate surrounds: at Swiss Alp Hall near Schulenburg in Fayette County. Sixty-three years after that first sock hop in Richmond, they played their last show.

Butch Bosak was there—along with about 450 loyal fans. Bosak played guitar with the Barons way back when. "When we were playing, we owned the place," he says. "We competed with [the Triumphs], but they were always family to us. We'd go to their New Year's Eve dances. Now that they are gone, there is a void."

"These old dance halls have wooden floors on pier-and-beam foundations," Drachenberg explains. "The floor would bounce like crazy when our fans danced and stomped to our music. The floors were going 'whoomph! whoomph!' We had big speakers stacked on top of each other in front of the stage, and we figured we better tie them down so they don't fall down on our fans."

Jonathan Socha, owner of Lee County Peanut Co., followed the Triumphs through the ages. "If you weren't soaking wet with sweat from dancing, you weren't having a good time," he says. "Swiss Alp was basically a hay barn with windows. We sweated our tails off."

Sandy Randolph grew up in Smithville. She would catch a ride with friends to any performance nearby. "I started sneaking into the dances when I was 13," she says. "The shows were the big social gathering of our area."

The Triumphs played at lifelong fan Catherine Poppe's 50th wedding anniversary.

"They play all kinds of music, they attract all kinds of people," says Poppe, who retired from Fayette Electric Cooperative in 2021. "It's just truly amazing the draw that this band has, and now they're going to be part of history."

Over the past few years, as the band's members aged, "the band lost its family feeling," Drachenberg says. "We discussed that it might be time to stop."

Co-founder and lead guitarist Tim Griffith died in December 2022. "Tim's death was the exclamation point on our decision to hang it up," says Drachenberg, 81, a member of Fayette EC. "Our band had a magical *something*. From that magic, our fan base grew and grew. It was great to see fans that have been following us for 60 freaking years.

"We had a hell of a run."

During intermission of the final performance, McKee presented the Triumphs with an honor from Texas Dance Hall Preservation.

"It was bittersweet," McKee says. "They played the soundtrack of my life." ■



The Triumphs play their final show February 18 at Swiss Alp Hall near Schulenburg.

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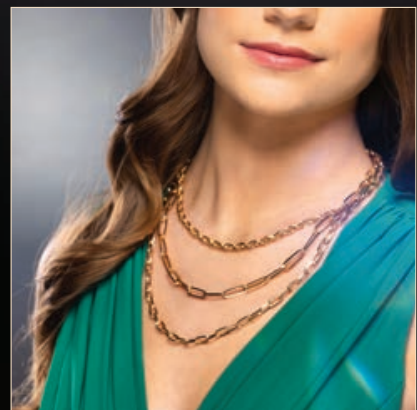
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MESSAGE
FROM CEO

**HERBERT
"TREY" GREBE**

A Year of Growth

I HOPE YOU'LL CONSIDER JOINING US at this year's 84th Annual Membership Meeting. This is an important time to join with your fellow members and meet the team behind your power. I'm looking forward to meeting you and sharing about the growth we're experiencing here at Medina EC this year.

We do our best to share that information throughout the year—through this magazine, our website, social media and other member communication tools like SmartHub—but the meeting is a chance to meet in person to talk about what happens at Medina EC locally, and at the state and national levels.

There continue to be conversations regarding reliability and the Environmental Protection Agency's new rules that were released in May for cutting carbon emissions, which impact new and existing coal and natural gas-powered plants. These rules could cause strain to all power grids at the state and national levels, resulting in critical, always available power plants—like natural gas and coal—being forced into early retirement and making new natural gas power plants exceedingly difficult to permit, site and build.

I think most people would agree the desire to continue making strides to improve the environment for the benefit of our children and grandchildren is very important. But we must be mindful of doing so in a reasonable way that ensures a reliable power supply necessary for the immediate health and safety of all. Moving too rapidly in transitioning to renewable energy will not only have negative effects on reliability but could also have costly economic effects if there is not enough energy available when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine.

Our state officials have recognized this problem and have been grappling with it over the course of the last two years as we emerged from the effects of Winter Storm Uri. This last spring, the Texas Legislature passed a couple of key bills that are intended to provide incentives for existing dispatchable generation to remain operational and to encourage new dispatchable generation to be built. Texas lawmakers also passed legislation that included requirements for new renewable generation to guarantee their production at peak intervals through a mechanism known as firming. As we move forward, we know maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources is critical to meeting the growing demand for electricity.

Medina EC staff and directors will continue to be present at future legislative rallies to ensure that political leaders hear firsthand the hurdles facing electric cooperatives. We will also continue to monitor growth locally and make changes and adjustments to meet the increase in demand. A large handful of this growth is seen in Medina County as more people and businesses are moving out of bigger cities like San Antonio to put down roots in more rural and smaller communities like Castroville, Hondo, Devine and many of the other towns in the county. In 2022, we finalized a sale of the property adjacent to our current

Hondo service office on Highway 173. This property gives us the needed space to expand our office and warehouse to be better equipped to accommodate the growth in construction and population. We continue to make upgrades to our power lines through voltage conversions that increase the capacity of our power lines, allowing us to maximize the use of our existing infrastructure. In the last year, we've completed 11 voltage conversions and have three more scheduled through the end of the year.

In 2022, we broke ground on the system operations building located at the general office in Hondo, and we moved in at the beginning of this year. The building allowed us to grow our system operations center. The operators not only improve the safety of employees, contractors and the public, they ensure the reliable and efficient operation of our distribution system, including grid monitoring and control operations for the flow of electricity, outage management and crew dispatching, and coordination with our generation and transmission partner.

Growth isn't limited to people and demand. Technology continues to grow and evolve and has many benefits to keep us interconnected and always on. However, we also recognize the risk a digitized world brings. Medina EC prioritizes a robust cybersecurity plan to protect our assets, our grid and our members. We constantly work to improve spam filtering, provide extensive internal training on cyber risks and preventions, complete server backups, and have physical security measures such as video surveillance.

An important part of being a cooperative is supporting the communities we live and serve in. In 2022, we gave back \$89,000 in donations to a variety of organizations in our service area including Little Leagues, chambers of commerce, civic clubs, schools, first responders and more. We also gave \$5,500 in grants to organizations that focus on improving their quality and quantity of viable services in our community and supported 25 students who each received \$1,000 scholarships for secondary education. We put a high value on helping the communities we've been a part of since 1938 thrive to power our future for generations to come.

You should know that your cooperative continues to be a financially strong and viable organization. In 2022, our total margins were \$3.9 million, and we retired \$2.08 million in capital credits. Every decision made at the cooperative is made with the benefit of our members in mind. We look forward to the next year, and many more to come, to safely power your life with reliable and equitably priced energy.

I hope to see you on Saturday, September 23!

Trey Grebe



MESSAGE
FROM BOARD
PRESIDENT

KENNETH
WHITE

Get Involved! Join us at the Annual Meeting

ONE OF MY FAVORITE EVENTS IS COMING UP on September 23, when Medina Electric Cooperative will host its annual meeting for you, the members we proudly serve. I always look forward to this event because it's a great opportunity for me and the rest of the board plus our employees to talk with our members and hear what's on their minds.

We hope you'll join us for the annual meeting, which will take place at Graff 7A Ranch in Hondo. For those who are unable to attend in person, we also offer a virtual option via Zoom. Whether you attend in person or online, we thank you in advance for getting involved because your participation means so much to us. Learn more about the meeting, RSVP or register to watch the Zoom meeting at MedinaEC.org/AnnualMeeting2023.

During the annual meeting, we'll share a few brief co-op business updates and introduce our new board member. But we're going to have a lot of fun too! We'll have activities for the kids, a tasty breakfast, several prizes, including a \$1,000 grand prize.

Spending time with you and hearing your take on our community's energy future is so important to us. In fact, it's essential because everything we do is shaped by the members of our community. As I'm sure you know, the energy industry is in the midst of massive change. Consumer needs and changing technology impact nearly every aspect of how we manage and deliver energy to local homes, schools and businesses.

As we navigate major changes in the coming years, we need to hear from you and your neighbors to help with our planning as we strive to meet the long-term needs of all Medina EC members.

This local input means those closest to the community know its needs and priorities and help direct where the co-op's dollars are spent. Every year, we invest funds to make updates to our local system, which helps maintain reliability and grid resilience. Think of it this way: Every time you pay your electric bill, you're actually investing in your community because all the money we take in stays here in the local community. By making these investments in our local system, we can ensure you have reliable power for everyday life.

Most consumers likely don't equate active involvement with their electric company with helping their community. But Medina EC is not an ordinary utility company. We're a co-op, and our business model is meant to serve the members and the community in which it operates.

Our core purpose and mission are to provide energy services that are safe, reliable and equitably priced to enhance the lives of our members. But as a co-op, we're also motivated by service to our community, rather than profits. We hope you'll exercise the benefits of your co-op membership and join us for the annual meeting on September 23. I look forward to seeing you!

CONTACT US

Toll-Free 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532)

Email Info@MedinaEC.org

Web MedinaEC.org - Chat Feature Available

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Voting District 1

Larry Huesser, (830) 363-7651

Wayne W. Scholtz, (830) 426-1328

Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

Voting District 2

Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437

Kenneth White, (830) 232-6541

Joe Foley, (830) 261-1304

Voting District 3

Annette Sorrells, (361) 231-0173

J. L. Gonzalez, (956) 286-1863

Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

CEO

Trey Grebe, 1-866-MEC-ELEC, ext. 1045

Call us.

TOLL-FREE

1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532)

Option 2: Report an outage

Option 3: Pay bill, get account balance

Option 5: Speak to a representative

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Bruni 1300 FM 2050 N., Bruni 78344

Dilley 1718 W. FM 117, Dilley 78017

Hondo 237 Hwy. 173 N., Hondo 78861

Rio Grande City 601 N. FM 3167,
Rio Grande City 78582

Uvalde 2604 Hwy. 90 E., Uvalde 78801

Corporate Office 2308 18th St., Hondo 78861

VISIT US ONLINE

MedinaEC.org



This institution is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

Información sobre todos los programas y servicios que ofrece Medina Electric Cooperative están disponibles en Español al llamarnos al 1-866-MEC-ELEC o visitando una de nuestras oficinas.

Operating Statistics

ASSETS	2022	2021
Total Utility Plant	\$254,851,823	\$239,001,293
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(37,326,061)	(38,600,452)
Net Utility Plant	217,525,762	200,400,841
Cash and Temporary Investments	2,006,702	907,511
Investments in Associated Organizations	68,004,113	64,228,791
Accounts Receivable	10,311,250	9,342,651
Materials	49,467	69,132
Deferred Charges & Other Assets	654,147	656,650
Total Assets	\$298,551,441	\$275,605,576
EQUITIES AND MARGINS	2022	2021
Memberships	\$103,145	\$100,700
Patronage Capital	120,118,042	115,085,140
Other Equities and Income	7,772,294	11,503,692
Total Equities and Margins	\$127,993,481	\$126,689,532
LIABILITIES	2022	2021
Long-Term Debt	\$126,176,147	\$124,853,673
Accumulated Provision for Pensions and Benefits	3,607,656	3,082,862
Accounts Payable	20,150,400	10,895,262
Consumer Deposits	3,012,068	2,763,482
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	1,182,903	2,797,814
Deferred Credits	16,428,786	4,522,951
Total Liabilities	\$170,557,960	\$148,916,044
Total Equities and Liabilities	\$298,551,441	\$275,605,576
REVENUE	2022	2021
Sales of Electric Power	\$154,509,483	\$124,870,755
Miscellaneous Electric Revenue	1,890,956	835,169
Total Revenue	\$156,400,439	\$125,705,924
EXPENSES	2022	2021
Purchased Power	\$113,497,390	84,047,371
Maintenance and Operations	15,931,787	15,441,391
Consumer Accounts and Member Services	3,478,777	3,123,345
Administration / General	6,886,857	7,692,401
Depreciation	8,794,001	8,282,854
Interest and Other Deductions	5,119,355	4,863,075
Total Expenses	\$153,708,167	\$123,450,437
MARGINS	2022	2021
Operating Margins	\$2,692,272	\$2,255,487
Generation and Transmission / Other Capital Credits	4,307,263	4,763,740
Nonoperating Margins	(3,055,249)	276,642
Total Margins	\$3,944,286	\$7,295,869



ANNUAL AUDIT

Medina EC is audited annually. The audit of the 2022 financials was performed by Certified Public Accountants Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss, L.L.P. of Lubbock.

The audit covered the period from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Per the auditor's March 31, 2023, report, "in our opinion, the financial statements ... present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc. as of December 31, 2022, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

Dollar Breakdown

Medina EC is a **not-for-profit** business, so each dollar you send the cooperative covers **business costs**. Here is how your dollar was spent in 2022.

POWER COST
73.85%

MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS
10.36%

DEPRECIATION
5.72%

ADMINISTRATION
4.48%

INTEREST
3.33%

CONSUMER ACCOUNTS & MEMBER SERVICES
2.26%

Where Your Electricity Came From

THERE ARE MANY STEPS involved in getting electricity to your home. The first step is procuring the fuel used to produce it.

As a cooperative, we purchase our power from our wholesale power supplier, South Texas Electric Cooperative. With all fuel sources for energy production, there are advantages and disadvantages. The goal, very much like with a financial portfolio, is to take a balanced approach and to adjust as the market changes.

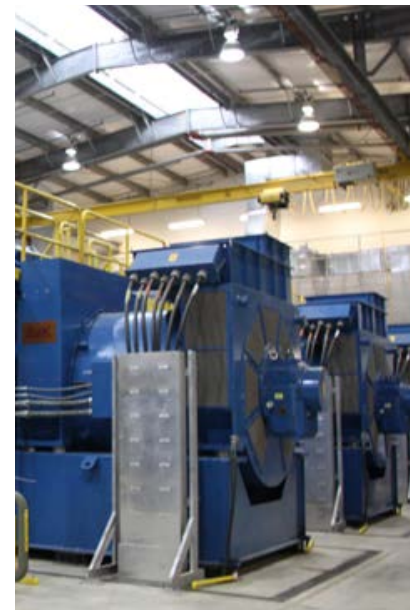
Here are the resources that made up the fuel for the power the cooperative provided to members during 2022.

Natural gas—54.9%

Texas lignite—25.9%

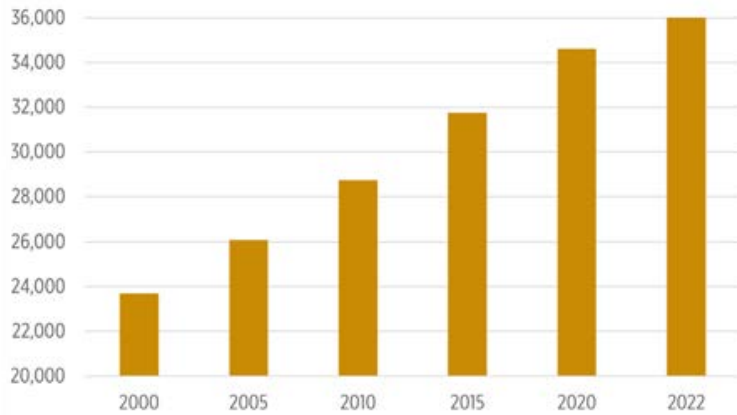
Renewables—16.7%

Nuclear —2.4%



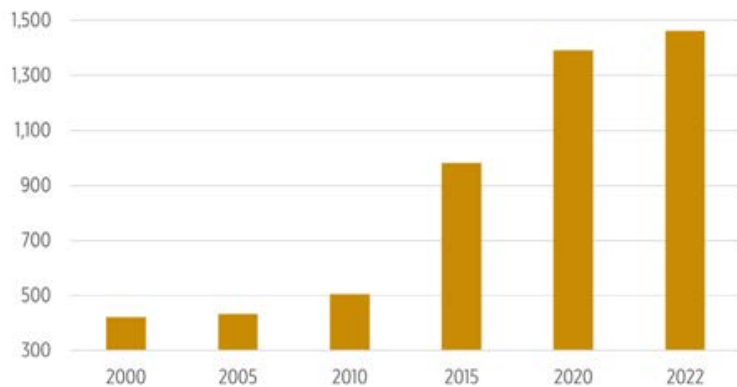
Active Services (Meters & Security Lights)

2000: 23,702 2022: 36,101



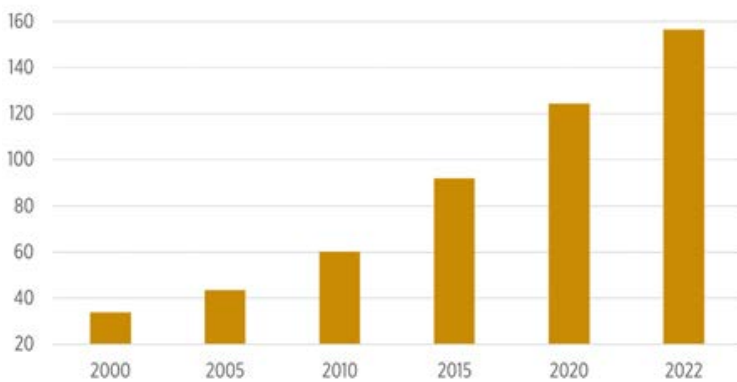
kWh Sold (in millions)

2000: 420M kWh 2022: 1,462M kWh

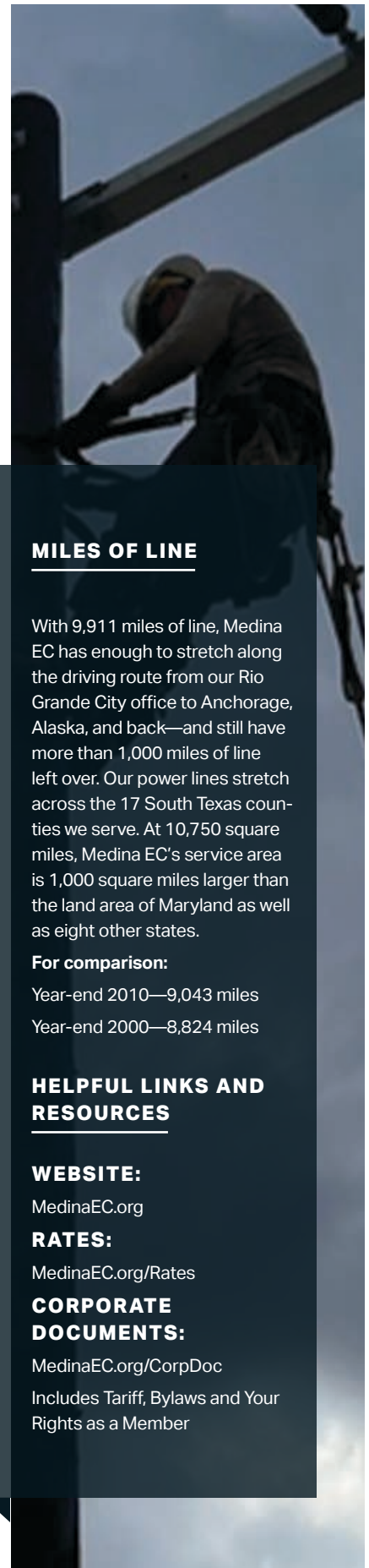


Revenue (in millions)

2000: \$33.8M 2022: \$156.4M



ALL NUMBERS AS OF 12/31/2022



MILES OF LINE

With 9,911 miles of line, Medina EC has enough to stretch along the driving route from our Rio Grande City office to Anchorage, Alaska, and back—and still have more than 1,000 miles of line left over. Our power lines stretch across the 17 South Texas counties we serve. At 10,750 square miles, Medina EC’s service area is 1,000 square miles larger than the land area of Maryland as well as eight other states.

For comparison:

Year-end 2010—9,043 miles

Year-end 2000—8,824 miles

HELPFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

WEBSITE:

MedinaEC.org

RATES:

MedinaEC.org/Rates

CORPORATE DOCUMENTS:

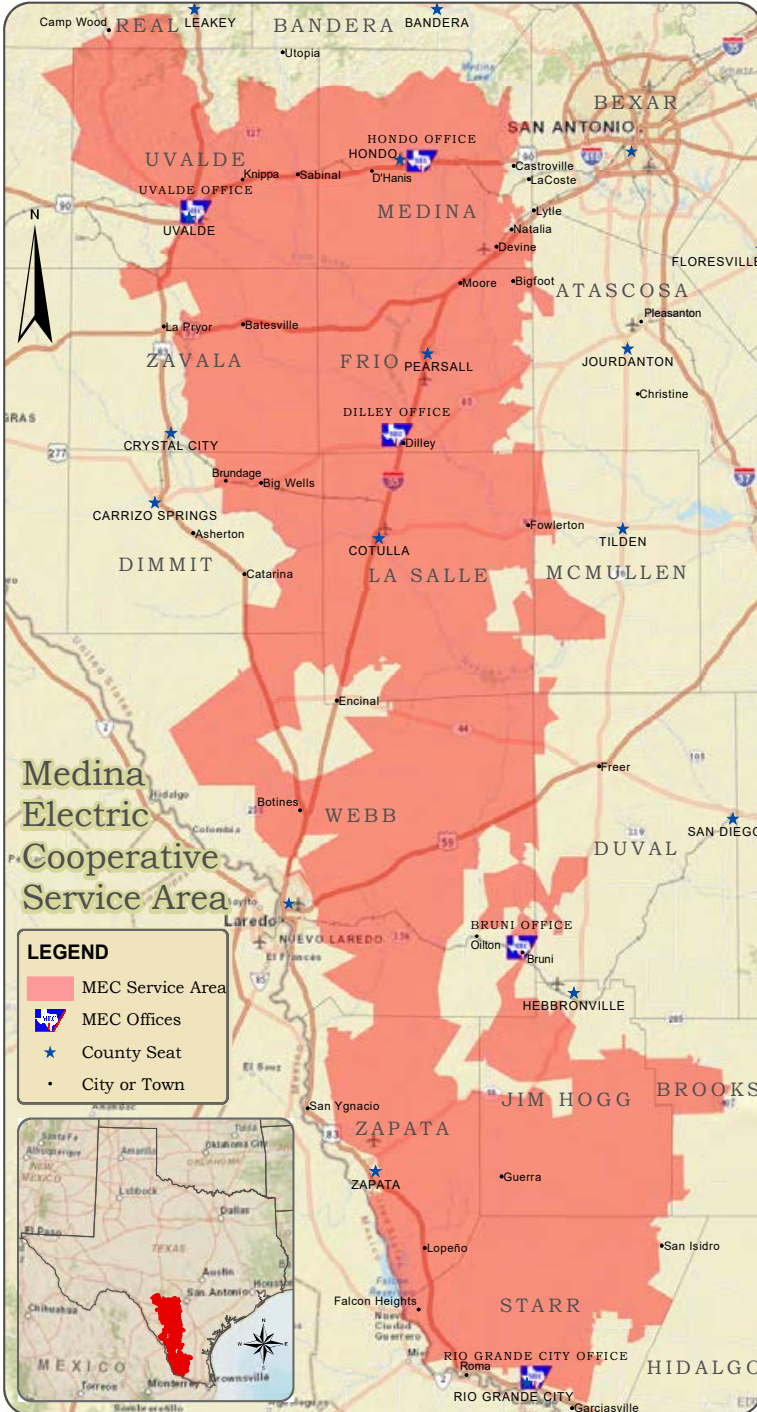
MedinaEC.org/CorpDoc

Includes Tariff, Bylaws and Your Rights as a Member

Our Service Area

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE may be our name, but we serve more than just Medina County. Medina EC actually serves all or parts of 17 counties across South Texas.

We have five offices that members can visit for business, located in Bruni, Dilley, Hondo, Rio Grande City and Uvalde, and two additional offices where internal staff operate, the corporate office in Hondo and a Laredo facility that houses materials and vehicles for staff in that area.



Benefits of Membership

SMARTHUB

Have your account information at your fingertips with this free tool. Available at MedinaEC.org or as an app for Android and Apple devices. Pay your bill, review past use, report outages and more.

REBATES

You can take advantage of rebates for multiple energy efficiency upgrades. Get all the details and information at MedinaEC.org/Rebates.

PREPAID ELECTRICITY

PrePaid Electricity is a great option if you want to pay for your electricity as you use it. Learn more about the program at MedinaEC.org/PrePaid.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

We offer many payment options. See details at MedinaEC.org/BillPay.

CRITICAL CARE—LIFE-SUPPORT REGISTRY

If someone in your home depends on an electrically operated health aid, they need to be on the life-support registry. The form and details are at MedinaEC.org/Registry.

SOLAR

You can purchase a ground-mount solar panel system with installation from your cooperative. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/Solar.

GENERATORS

You can purchase a 22kW propane generator with installation from Medina EC. Learn more about purchasing one or properly installing your own generator at MedinaEC.org/Generators.

YOUTH PROGRAMS—YOUTH TOUR AND SCHOLARSHIP

High school sophomores and juniors are eligible to win a free trip to Austin and Washington, D.C. over the summer. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/YouthTour. Graduating high school seniors and adults looking to further their education can apply for \$1,000 scholarships at MedinaEC.org/Scholarships.

Board Election

During the nomination period of the 2023 election, Medina EC's incumbent directors from each voting district ran unopposed.

Per bylaw 4.4.C, the incumbent directors were automatically reelected by the certification committee at the April board meeting.

If you are interested in learning more about the election process or want to run in 2024, visit MedinaEC.com/Nominee.



LARRY HUESSE
VOTING DISTRICT 1



JIMMIE RAINES
VOTING DISTRICT 2



R.H. RODRIGUEZ
VOTING DISTRICT 3

Voting District 2 Vacancy Filled

At the February board meeting, Jim Gates resigned from Medina EC's board of directors, opening a seat to represent Voting District 2. Voting District 2 represents Atascosa, Edwards, Frio, Kinney, Real, Uvalde and Zavala counties. Members with meters in Voting District 2 were solicited by postcard and email to apply for the open seat. Applications were accepted through May.

Qualified members were interviewed in June by a selection committee comprising three board members, one from each voting district. Based on the qualifications and interview, Joe Foley of Uvalde was selected to fill the vacancy. He will fill the seat until it's up for election in 2025.

Joe Foley Voting District 2 Director



Medina EC Member (# of Years): 33

Occupation (Former if retired): Former Loan Officer

Work Experience: 2013 to Present - Retired

2006 to 2013 - Capital Farm Credit, Uvalde Credit Office Services, Stephenville, TX

1997 to 2006 - Southwest Texas, ACA, Uvalde Credit Office, Uvalde, TX

1990 to 1996 - Federal Land Bank Association, Uvalde, TX

1984 to 1989 - Uvalde Production Credit Association, Uvalde, TX

1983 to 1984 - Farmers Home Administration, Uvalde, TX

1981 to 1983 - Halliburton

I would be a good director because: I spent basically my entire working career in member-owned cooperative lending institutions and therefore have a firm understanding of how cooperatives operate and a thorough appreciation of the value of cooperatives to rural America. As a 33-year member of Medina EC, I am thankful for all of the benefits associated with that membership and I would like to "pay it forward" by helping to provide good stewardship of Medina EC for current and future members.

I have lived in Uvalde for 40 years and for a large portion of that time I worked with youth programs in Uvalde County by serving as a multi-year President of the Uvalde County Jr. Livestock, coaching 4-H livestock judging teams, serving as an adult leader and coach of the 4-H shotgun shooting sports program, working with the Uvalde County Youth Rodeo and serving on the Uvalde County Crop Committee for the Extension Service.

Please contact me at: 830-261-1304

Email: JFoley@MedinaEC.org

CANDIDATE PROFILES FOR UNOPPOSED RACES CAN BE FOUND AT MEDINAEC.ORG/BOARDELECTION

Seven Cooperative Principles

As an electric distribution cooperative, Medina EC operates under the Seven Cooperative Principles. These principles guide all decisions made at the co-op.

VOLUNTARY & OPEN MEMBERSHIP

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE

EDUCATION, TRAINING & INFORMATION

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

During the 84th Annual Membership Meeting, one item on the business meeting agenda will include a vote on approval of minutes from the 83rd Annual Membership Meeting, held in 2022. Below are minutes from that meeting for members to review.

Annual Membership Meeting: September 24, 2022

The Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc. 83rd Annual Membership Meeting was held at the Texas A&M International University beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 24, 2022.

The welcome and opening comments were delivered by Board Vice-President Larry Huesser who noted that this Annual Meeting celebrates 83 years of serving electricity to South Texas.

1. The invocation was given by CEO Grebe followed by the presentation of the colors by the Texas A&M International University ROTC Color Guard, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the National Anthem.
2. CEO Grebe then recognized veterans, current service members, first responders, and teachers in attendance. Further, he introduced special guests in attendance at the meeting. CEO Grebe then introduced the Board of Directors and the Medina Electric employees who have reached service milestones, asking them to stand and be recognized. Finally, CEO Grebe recognized those in attendance who have been a member of Medina the longest and those attending their first annual meeting.
3. Board Vice-President Larry Huesser called the meeting to order, asking Board Secretary Annette Sorrells to address the next order of business including:
 - a. The notice of the meeting: Secretary Sorrells reported this notice was provided in the September *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.
 - b. Registrar's Report: Secretary Sorrells read the following Registrar's Report: As of Friday, September 16, 2022, when voting closed, Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS), who handles all election business, reported that 2,001 ballots were ruled valid. Based on cooperative bylaws, a quorum was met, and the meeting could proceed.
 - c. Reading of the Membership Roll and 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes: Secretary Sorrells stated that she could hold the roll call of the members and read the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes, noting that the minutes were included in the September *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

At this time, Vice-President Huesser stated he would entertain one motion to: 1) Accept the Registrar's Report, 2) Dispense of the Reading of the Membership Roll, and 3) Approve the 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes as presented in the September issue of the *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

Motion was made and seconded to 1) Accept the Registrar's Report, 2) Dispense of the Reading of the Membership Roll, and 3) Approve the 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes as presented in the September issue of the *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. Motion carried.

4. Vice-President Huesser then made a presentation followed by CEO Grebe who introduced a year-in-review video which included employees discussing some of the projects Medina has been undergoing, projects coming up, and how Medina has been involved in its communities.
5. CEO Grebe read the names of the 2022 director nominees as well as the dates and places of the Voting District Nominating Meetings. He noted that there was only one contested race and that was in Voting District 2. The nominees were asked to stand and were thanked for their support and for taking an active interest in their cooperative.
6. The results of the 2022 director election were announced. It was noted that Medina utilized Survey and Ballot Systems to coordinate the election. This third-party company collects and tallies all votes made by members online and through mail-in ballot, ensuring that the election is secure and confidential. CEO Grebe called upon Leo Rodriguez, Senior Vice-President Relationship Manager for the Laredo Credit Office of Capital Farm Credit, who reported the following results:

Director Election		
District 2: Jim L. Gates		1,007
Chris C. Surles		994
7. Vice-President Huesser asked whether there remained any new or unfinished business. None was indicated by the membership. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Don't Forget To RSVP for the

84th

Annual Membership Meeting

Scan me to RSVP!



RSVP for the in-person meeting or Zoom option at MedinaEC.org/RSVP.
Learn more about the meeting at MedinaEC.org/AnnualMeeting2023.

Thank you for

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¹Subject to availability, on a total purchase of 3 or more. 25% discount valid during first appointment only. Cannot be combined with other offers. To qualify for discount offer, initial contact for an appointment must be made and documented on or before 9/30/23 with the purchase then occurring on or before 10/10/23. ²No payments and deferred interest for 12 months available from third-party lenders to well qualified buyers on approved credit only. No Finance Charges will be assessed if promo balance is paid in full in 12 months. Products are marketed, sold and installed (but not manufactured) by Renewal by Andersen retailers, which are independently owned and operated under Central Texas Windows & Doors LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Austin and San Antonio. North Texas Windows & Doors LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Dallas/Fort Worth and West Texas. See complete information and entity identification at www.rbaguidelines.com. ©2023 Andersen Corporation. ©2023 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved.



Billie Jean King enters the Battle of the Sexes on a throne. She soon assumed a broader reign in the sports world.

King dominated Riggs, 55 years old and out of shape. When she won the first set, the women in the Astrodome gave her a standing ovation. In short order, she won the next two sets. After the final point, King tossed her racket into the air, and Riggs hopped the net and whispered into her ear, “I underestimated you.”

That was hardly news to King.

It took an act of Congress to start leveling the playing field for women. Title IX, signed into law in June 1972, heralded a promise of more opportunities for women in sports.

And yet, in September 1972, after King captured the U.S. Open title, she denounced her most unequal prize money in a press conference. She won \$10,000, while the men’s champion, Ilie Năstase, got \$25,000.

“This was ridiculous, so I said, ‘I don’t think the women are going to be back next year. We’re not going to be back in 1973 unless we get equal prize money,’” King recalled years later.

Her firm stand paid off. A year later, just weeks before the Battle of the Sexes at the Astrodome, the U.S. Open started paying women the same as men.

In the 50 years since shutting down—and shutting up—Riggs, King has become a leading advocate for women and LGBTQ+ people. She became the first female athlete awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in 2009.

Through a 2023 lens, the spectacle at the Astrodome might seem more tiresome than outrageous. To King, being at the forefront of a social uprising in 1972 and 1973 was simply tiring.

“It was a huge year, a pivotal year for tennis and for women in general,” King told *USA Today* columnist Christine Brennan. “I just remember being exhausted all the time. As I’ve said before, when I sleep in now, I’m still catching up from the 1970s.” ■

When Pigs Fly

Billie Jean King did the unthinkable, crushing Bobby Riggs—and notching a win for gender equality—at the Astrodome

BY TOM WIDLowski

YOU HAVE TO PEEL back an almost insufferable layer of hype—garishness, really—to reach the essence of Billie Jean King’s victory in the so-called Battle of the Sexes 50 years ago this month in Houston. In truth, you have to peel back the calendar by 12 months—to King’s bold shot across the bow, when she decried the disparity in prize money between men and women.

First the hype. Bobby Riggs, a tennis star in the 1940s who later became a shameless promoter, declared no woman could beat him. Not even King, who by the summer of 1973 had already won 31 of her 39 career grand slam titles. King, 29, accepted the challenge, even agreeing to

play by men’s rules—best of five sets, as opposed to women’s best of three.

So on September 20, 1973, four shirtless members of the Rice University men’s track team carried King on a litter, à la Cleopatra, onto a tennis court set up inside the 8-year-old Astrodome. Riggs, a self-proclaimed chauvinist wearing a warmup jacket that said Sugar Daddy, entered in a rickshaw pulled by models.

King, as if to state the obvious, presented Riggs with a gift of a baby pig.

When the bluster subsided, the 30,472 in attendance, joined by some 90 million TV viewers worldwide—a tennis record that still stands—settled in for a sports contest. Except it was no contest.

No-Bake Desserts

Skip the oven but not the indulgence with these grand finales

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Who says cheesecake must be complicated? This no-bake apple cheesecake is creamy and delicious and combines two favorite desserts—apple pie and cheesecake—into one outstanding treat.

Mini Apple Cheesecakes

3 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 large apples, peeled, cored and diced
¼ cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 package cream cheese (8 ounces), room temperature
1 can sweetened condensed milk (14 ounces)
¼ cup lemon juice
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 pre-made mini graham cracker pie crusts

1. Melt butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the diced apples and brown sugar. Sauté until apples begin to soften. Add cinnamon and cornstarch and stir and simmer until apples are tender. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely.
2. Beat cream cheese until smooth. Add sweetened condensed milk and continue beating, scraping down sides of the bowl until well-mixed. Stir in lemon juice and vanilla.
3. Spoon cheesecake filling into graham cracker crusts. Chill in fridge until firm, about an hour, and serve topped with apple mixture.

SERVES 6

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez while she cooks in *Cocina Gris* at sweetlifelife.com, where she features a recipe for No-Bake Concha Truffles.





Ambrosia

DEBORAH ANDERSON
COSERV

Anderson shares her version of the classic Southern dessert, ambrosia, a tropical fruit salad that can be whipped up in 10 minutes.

- 1 container frozen whipped topping (8 ounces), thawed**
- 3 cans tropical fruit (15 ounces each), drained**
- 2 cups mini multicolored marshmallows**
- 1½ cups shredded sweetened coconut**

1. Combine all ingredients. Mix well. Chill until ready to serve.

SERVES 6

Frozen Peanut Butter Banana Pie

JAN BOX
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Frozen peanut butter banana pie is an easy-to-make dessert—no oven required. Layers of hot fudge, peanut butter, whipped topping, bananas and chocolate atop a sugar cookie crust make for the perfect ending to any meal.

- 2 cups crushed sugar cookies**
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter, melted**
- 1 jar hot fudge topping (11.75 ounces), warmed**

CONTINUED >

\$500 WINNER

Chocolate Éclair Dessert

BRENDA HEINRICH
MIDSOUTH EC



All the deliciousness of an éclair with no baking. Luxurious layers of pudding, graham crackers and whipped topping finished with a chocolate glaze make for one amazing dessert.

SERVES 8-12



- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter, room temperature, for the pan**
- 1 box graham crackers (14.4 ounces)**
- 2 packages instant French vanilla pudding mix (3.25 ounces each)**
- 3½ cups milk, divided use**
- 1 container frozen whipped topping (8 ounces), thawed**
- 2 cups sugar**
- ⅔ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**

1. Coat the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch pan with butter.
2. Line the bottom of the pan with ⅓ of the graham crackers.
3. In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to combine the pudding mix with 3 cups milk. Beat at medium speed for 2 minutes.
4. Gently fold in whipped topping. Pour half the pudding mixture over the graham crackers.
5. Layer another ⅓ of the graham crackers and the remaining pudding mixture, then top with the remaining graham crackers.
6. In a saucepan, combine sugar, cocoa and remaining ½ cup milk. Bring to a boil. Boil 1 minute.
7. Remove cocoa mixture from heat and add butter and vanilla. Mix well and allow to cool. Pour the chocolate sauce over the graham cracker layer.
8. Refrigerate overnight until set.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

CHOCOLATE DUE SEPTEMBER 10

We're looking for your choicest chocolate recipe—cake, brownie, whatever. Submit your best online by September 10 for a chance to win \$500.



RECIPES CONTINUED

- 1 package cream cheese (8 ounces), room temperature
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1¼ cups powdered sugar
- 1 container frozen whipped topping (16 ounces), thawed, divided use
- 3 bananas, sliced ¼-inch thick
- 1 cup chocolate syrup

1. Mix together sugar cookies and butter and press into the bottom of a greased 9-inch springform pan.
2. Pour warmed fudge topping over the crust.
3. Blend cream cheese and peanut butter until smooth. Mix in powdered sugar until combined then fold in ¾ of the whipped topping.
4. Spoon mixture over fudge topping, spreading evenly.
5. Top with sliced bananas
6. Top with remaining whipped topping, spreading evenly.
7. Freeze 8 hours.



8. Allow pie to sit at room temperature 15 minutes before slicing. Run a knife around edge of pan and remove the outer ring.
9. Serve drizzled with chocolate syrup.

SERVES 12

TCP We have more than 1,000 recipes in our online archive, including desserts galore. Check out our website to find other options for delicious desserts.

Trust the Crust

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

My favorite part of a no-bake dessert is the crust. Think beyond the OG—graham crackers. Here are five tasty options that make a perfect base for any no-bake dessert:

Shortbread: For an extra buttery base, crumble up shortbread cookies and top with whipped cream.

Chocolate chip cookies: Kids and adults will love this chocolate-studded crust.

Gingersnap cookies: Gingersnaps add a touch of spice to a sweet treat.

Pretzels: Salty and sweet pretzels make any citrus dessert sing—and zing.

Cereal: Your favorite childhood bowl of cereal transformed into a crust pleases palates of all ages.



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Mysterious Markings

Native drawings in aptly named Paint Rock offer intriguing clues

BY CHET GARNER

I WAS EXCITED. It was a crisp spring day, and I was about to see the famous painted rocks of Paint Rock. I watched my phone GPS like a hawk as it led me to the town and then past it. “Hmm, that’s strange,” I thought but kept my eyes on the lookout for a visitors center or giant sign marking the largest collection of pictographs in North America.

“You’ve passed your destination,” taunted my GPS. What? I didn’t see a thing. I turned around and realized I missed a small gate sign marking the entrance to Campbell Ranch. This hidden gem was especially hidden.

I entered the property and met Kay Campbell, who at 96 still greets visitors and shares the story of the ancient markings on her family’s land. Campbell’s grandfather was an archaeologist and visited Texas in the 1870s in search of Native American artifacts. Near the Concho River, he found 1,500 pictographs on a rocky bluff overlooking the river valley. He purchased the land and began his research.

The drawings range in size from single figures to full shields. They depict people, animals and battles in multiple colors, but most are burnt red, created on rocks hauled in from miles away. In the 1990s observers realized that on certain days, like the summer solstice, shadows created by the rocky overhangs added additional shapes on top of the paintings. I was fascinated.

Many scientists believe this area served as an annual meeting ground for Apache, Comanche, Jumano and Tonkawa tribes. Over hundreds of years, they would meet, paint and celebrate the year. Much about their traditions is unknown, but I loved the thought of standing on perhaps the oldest family reunion grounds in Texas. ■

ABOVE Bill Campbell shows Chet around the pictographs at Paint Rock.

TCP Join Chet as he visits the tribal meeting ground in the video on our website. And see all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

Call ahead or check an event’s website for scheduling details, and check our website for many more upcoming events.

SEPTEMBER

08

Wimberley [8–9] Wings Over Wimberley, (269) 290-5001, wingsoverwimberley.com

09

Rosenberg Ride to Rosenberg Car Show, (713) 502-3168, rosenbergartsalliance.com

10

Yorktown Holy Cross Festival, (361) 564-2893, holycrossyorktown.net

Gainesville [10–17] Gainesville Area Visual Arts Fall Art Exhibition, (940) 613-6939, gainesvilleareavisualarts.org

16

Seguin [16–17] St. James Catholic Church Classic Car Show and Festival, (830) 379-1796, saintjamescc.org

18

Kerrville [18–23] Paint Kerrville! Outdoor Painters Event, (830) 895-2911, kackkerrville.com

22

Glen Rose [22–23] Wine and Art Festival, (817) 291-8367, glenrosewineandartfestival.org

Sulphur Springs [22–23] Lone Star Heritage Quilt Guild Show, (209) 509-9522, sulphurspringstxquilts.com

23

Lakehills Medina Lake Cajun Festival, (830) 460-0600, cajunfestival-medinalake.com

Ingram [23–24] Texas Arts and Crafts Fair, (830) 367-5121, txartsandcraftsfair.com

24

Lakeway Arts in the Afternoon: Balcones Community Orchestra, (512) 261-1010, lakewayartsdistrict.com

Meyersville Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church Barbecue and Raffle, (361) 275-3868, catholiccommunityofcuero.org

Serbin Wendish Fest, (979) 366-2441, texaswendish.org

29

Fairfield [29-30] Big T Memorial State Championship BBQ Cookoff, (469) 383-8355, bigtmemorial.com

Giddings [29-30] Texas Word Wrangler Book Festival, (979) 542-2716, www.giddingspubliclibrary.org

30

Winnboro Cowboy Music and Poetry Gathering, (903) 342-0686, winnboro.centerforthearts.com

OCTOBER

06

Los Fresnos [6-7] Narciso Martinez Conjunto Festival, (956) 367-0335, narciso.martinezculturalartscenter.org

Corpus Christi [6-28] Dimension L, (361) 884-6406, artcentercc.org

07

Bowie Chicken and Bread Days Heritage Festival, (940) 872-6246, cityofbowietx.com

Jonestown Night Sky Advocacy Star Party, (512) 267-2011, jtownnightsky.com

Marble Falls Main Street Car Show, (830) 220-4489, highlandlakeskiwanis.org

TCP *Submit Your Event*

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

Enjoy a grand TEXAS time!

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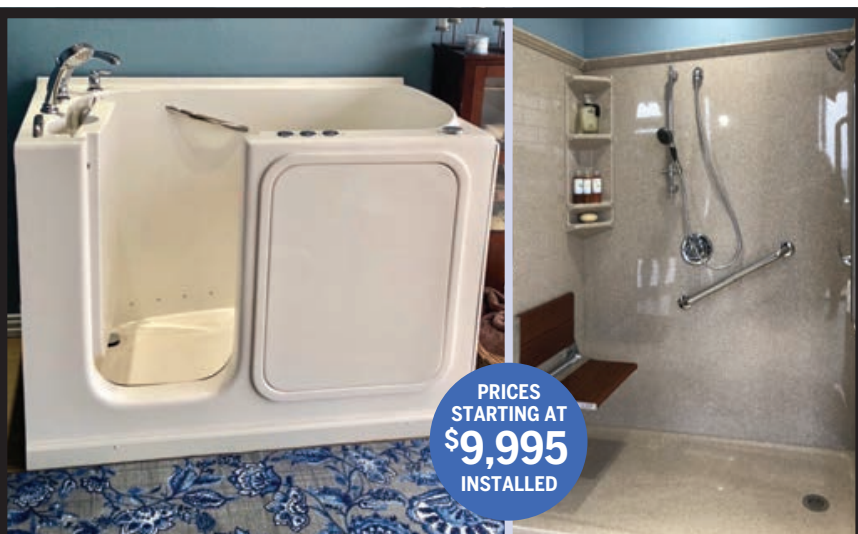
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Actual size
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New for 2023—the Morgan Silver Dollar Is BACK! **99.9% Silver, Legal Tender, Extremely Limited Availability!**

The Morgan Silver Dollar—originally minted from 1878 to 1904, then again in 1921—is the most popular vintage Silver Dollar in the world. Coin experts estimate that as few as 15% of all vintage Morgans still exist, due to the ravages of time, along with mass-meltings by the U.S. Government.

The entire market was thrilled when the U.S. Mint brought the Morgan Silver Dollar back in 2021, in honor of the popular, vintage coin's 100th anniversary.

Legal Tender, Struck in 99.9% Fine Silver

The program was a huge success, and the relatively small mintage instantly sold out at the mint. Buyers loved the fact that these new coins were the first legal-tender Morgans in 100 years, and that they were struck in 99.9% fine silver—instead of the 90% silver/10% copper alloy of the originals.

But with only 175,000 coins struck, many buyers were left empty-handed, and frustrated by the instant sell-out. If you were able to acquire a 2021 for the 100th anniversary—congratulations!

Then—An Unplanned One-Year Hiatus

Then last year, the *entire market* was left empty-handed because—although these modern Morgans were intended to be an annual release—the U.S. Mint was caught off-guard by the global shortage of the silver blanks required to strike the coins, and cancelled the 2022 release! No silver? No Morgans!

NOW for 2023—Legal-Tender Morgan Silver Dollars Are Back. But Mintages Are Low!

Now this year, 99.9% silver, legal-tender Morgan Silver Dollars are once again available to silver buyers, Morgan enthusiasts and collectors—while they last! Though somewhat larger than last year, this year's 275,000 authorized mintage is still a crazy low number—especially when you consider all the pent-up anticipation and demand caused by the quick sell-out of the 2021 Morgans, and the fact the program was cancelled last year.

Very Limited. Don't Miss Out!

Add these bright, shiny, new legal-tender 2023 Morgan Silver Dollars, struck in 99.9% Silver, to your collection now! To secure yours, call 1-888-395-3219 right now, or scan the QR code below to order online, because these—WILL NOT LAST!

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Night Sky

Turn your eyes to the skies and behold the heavenly wonders. They say the stars at night are big and bright in Texas. Let's space out a while and see for ourselves.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 MARK BONAME
JACKSON EC

If you look closely at the Milky Way, you'll see a horse formation called the Dark Horse Nebula.

2 MIKE PRESTIGIACOMO
BARTLETT EC

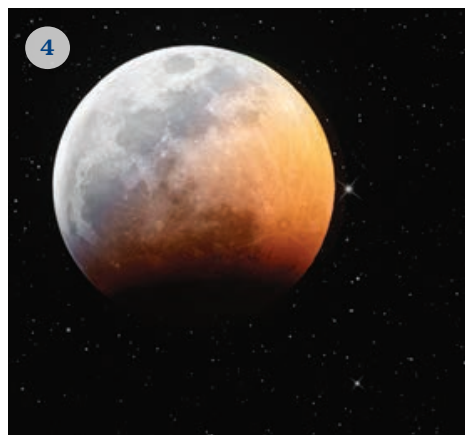
"A sudden display of colors, like fireworks on the Fourth of July, burst overhead near the Big Dipper asterism, which can still be seen."

3 JAY HOBBS
PEDERNALES EC

"A barn light is a welcoming sight for livestock in Johnson City."

4 MARK HOLLY
BANDERA EC

"It was a cold night, but I just couldn't miss photographing this rare event, the super blood wolf moon eclipse."



Upcoming Contests

DUE SEP 10 Local Landmarks

DUE OCT 10 Vibrant Color

DUE NOV 10 Architecture



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for more Night Sky photos from readers.



Pam LeBlanc leaps for joy when she finds a natural body of water.

I like living my life a little out of bounds, so I count all these things as positives. They make swimming feel a little less civilized and more like a daring adventure.

For years, when I worked as a staff writer at the *Austin-American Statesman*, I crisscrossed Barton Springs Pool in Austin at noon once a week. Sometimes I'd watch cormorants dive deep into the blue-green depths, hunting for lunch. I'd see crawfish prowl the mucky bottom and thumb-sized silvery fish swirl beneath limestone ledges.

What's the appeal? No chlorine, for one. My eyes don't turn red and sting after too much time in a natural swimming hole. I don't mind getting dirty, and I like to observe the native life. In a secluded setting, I also can't resist skinny-dipping, a pastime generally frowned upon at public pools but perfectly acceptable during backpacking trips into the wilderness.

For me, wilder is better.

I've leaped into the gin-clear waters of the Devils and Pecos rivers in West Texas, swam in all seven of the Highland Lakes, and soaked in a fern-lined stretch of the Blanco River that reminds me of Shangri-La. I've swum alongside dolphins in Hawaii, whale sharks in Mexico and humpback whales in the Dominican Republic.

During a relay swim race across Lake Tahoe, I got distracted watching shafts of light flicker into the 1,644-foot depths. Once I swam, as one-half of a two-woman team, a combined 28.5 miles around Manhattan Island—up the East River, through the Harlem River and down the Hudson River. (Each one had its own distinctive flavor, as my partner says.)

I don't care if I can't see the bottom. I don't mind if a minnow nips my toes. Some days, I almost expect a mermaid to rise from the blue, and that would be OK, too. To me, swimming is like getting a full-body hug from Mother Nature. And I love hugs. ■

Wild Blue Yonder

Swimming in cement?
Give me seaweed and sand

BY PAM LEBLANC

FOUR OR FIVE mornings each week, I glide back and forth across what Jethro Bodine of the 1960s sitcom *The Beverly Hillbillies* would describe as a cement pond.

As much as I appreciate these swim practices, led by a coach who stands on deck and hollers instructions that keep me healthy and fit, I prefer a wild swim over a dip in a blue rectangle of chlorinated water any day.

Wild swims—in rivers, lakes and oceans—come with undulating aquatic plants, squishy mud and rogue waves. Sometimes they include appearances by aquatic creatures like fish and turtles or even snakes and sharks. There are no formal black stripes or lines of buoys to ensure straight swimming, and flip turns are all but impossible.

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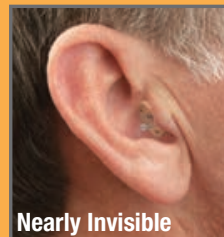
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