

TEXAS CITY DISASTER'S  
SCARS ENDURE

TWO-FISTED WEST TEXAS  
LAW AND ORDER

WEEDS GET THE  
LAST LAUGH

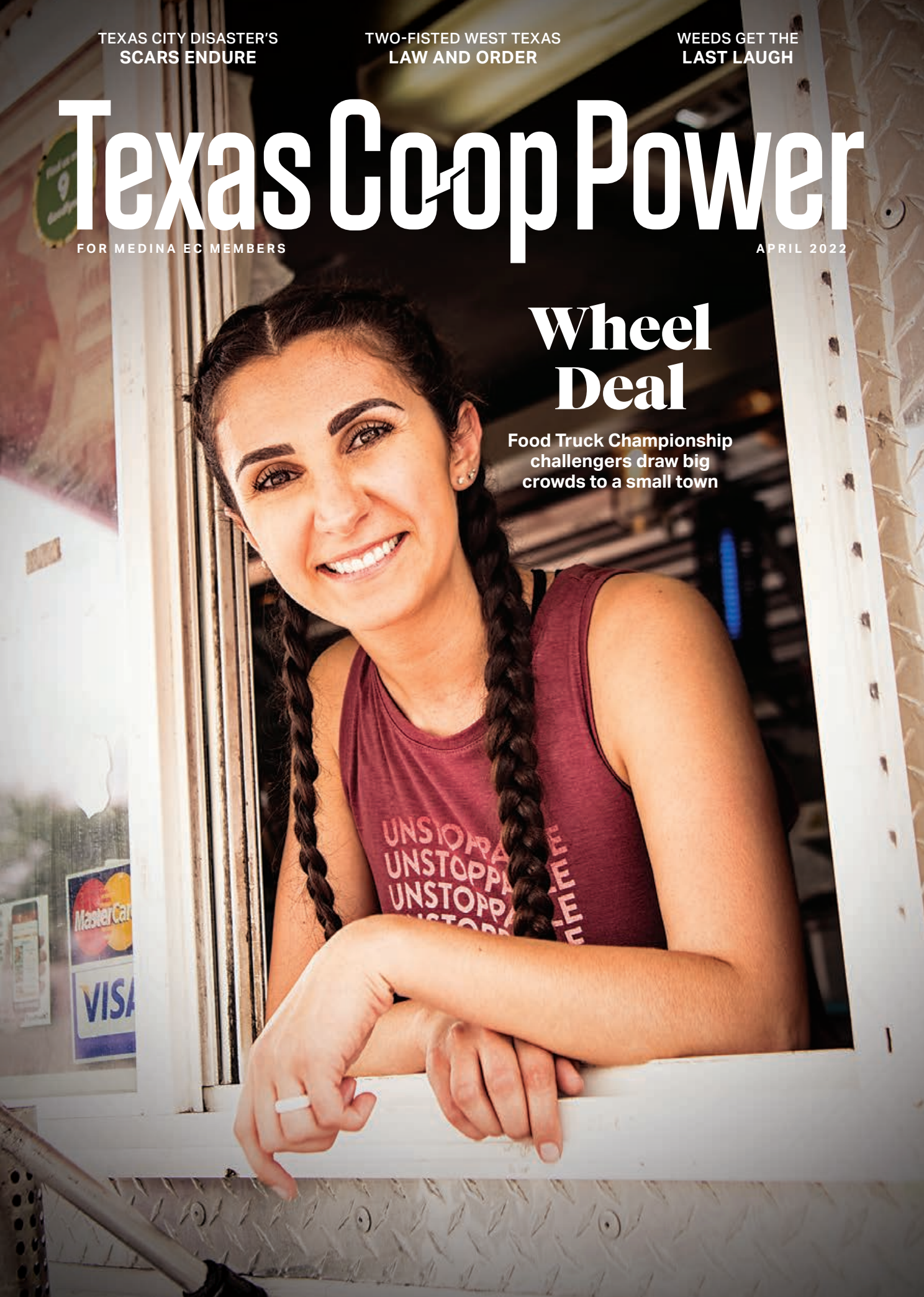
# Texas Coop Power

FOR MEDINA EC MEMBERS

APRIL 2022

## Wheel Deal

Food Truck Championship  
challengers draw big  
crowds to a small town







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# April 2022



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Seventy-five years after the Texas City disaster, those who rushed in haven't been forgotten.

*By Bill Minutaglio*

## Best in Tow

Chefs bring big-time flavor to small-town Graham for the Food Truck Championship of Texas.

*By Amanda Ogle  
Photos by Tom Hussey*

### ON THE COVER

Lyn Sharp awaits the next order in Danibelle's Lebanese Cuisine food truck.

### ABOVE

The crew from Rack Attack Barbecue celebrates winning the grand champion belt.  
*Photos by Tom Hussey*

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*By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers*



# Count on Lineworkers

**ELECTRIC CO-OPS** proudly celebrate their lineworkers, even proclaiming the second Monday in April—April 11 this year—as National Lineworker Appreciation Day.

Co-op members, too, are quick to look up to lineworkers.

When we asked readers to finish this sentence—“The hardest job in the world has to be ...”—Pablo Sanchez, a Magic Valley Electric Cooperative member, was the first to respond:

“Being a lineman during cold weather. Knowing someone is counting on Magic Valley to keep us warm.”



“Genius is 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration.”

—THOMAS EDISON

## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I REMEMBER  
WHEN A DOLLAR  
COULD BUY ...

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

Below are some of the responses to our February prompt: **The baby of the family always ...**

Remembers things differently.

STEVE AND LISA BOSTON  
VIA FACEBOOK

Gets his way and mom's attention.

SANDRA GONZALEZ  
SAN PATRICIO EC  
BAYSIDE

Had a stomachache when it was time to help with dishes and cleanup after dinner.

MARY ANN CULEY  
TRINITY VALLEY EC  
FRANKSTON

Gets the hand-me-downs.

LORA GRAHAM  
COLEMAN COUNTY EC  
GOLDBUSK

Stays the baby even when he's 6 feet, 2 inches tall; 31 years old; and has his own baby.

SHERRI LENOIR  
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC  
GROESBECK

To see more responses, read Currents online.



## **TCP** Contests and More

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### **\$500 RECIPE CONTEST**

Pizza Night

### **FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS**

Motorsports

### **RECOMMENDED READING**

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11. *Line of Duty* from October 2016 tells about the challenges and rewards for these co-op first responders.



*April 7*

## **National Beer Day**

Celebrating is easy: *Texas Feels a Draft* from January 2020 includes a map of 96 craft breweries in mostly rural and suburban Texas.

## **GUARD AGAINST SURGES**

Your electric cooperative reminds you of two ways you can protect electronics in your home from power surges: using power strips that include surge protection and installing a whole-home surge protector.

## **Have You Heard?**

Before the Industrial Revolution, roughly 1760–1840, the principal sources of loud noise were thunder, church bells and cannon fire.



## **Emergency Tax Break**

**TEXAS MERCHANTS** will participate in a sales tax holiday for emergency preparation supplies this month, allowing tax-free purchases of items that can alleviate hardships after natural disasters like hurricanes, flash floods and wildfires.

More than a dozen products, such as portable generators, hurricane shutters, batteries and fire extinguishers, can be purchased without incurring sales tax April 23–25. Details are available at [comptroller.texas.gov](https://comptroller.texas.gov).



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### Not Fade Away

I grew up on an Iowa farm about 20 miles south of where Buddy Holly and the others met their end [*A Glimpse of Buddy Holly*, February 2022]. I was 11 then. We didn't learn of the crash until we got to school. All the girls were crying, dashing in and out of the restroom to wash their tears away, only to cry even more as others came through the doors and were told of the crash. Some were so upset they even went home.

Doug Siskow  
Pedernales EC  
New Braunfels

That's when they  
made barbed com-  
ments [*Joined by  
a Fence*, January  
2022].

CHUCK BURGESS  
VIA FACEBOOK



COURTESY CHET GARNER

### Aggie Standouts

“The lore of the 12th Man is always inspirational. Big kudos to the editors who made sure the story started on Page 12. How perfect.”

JULIA TRIGG CRAWFORD  
LAMAR ELECTRIC  
DIRECT

### Royal Recollection

Our Stephenville neighbor June Shannon was personally invited by Queen Elizabeth II to visit her in Austin in 1991 [*Her Majesty's Visit*, February 2022]. What do you take the queen to welcome her to Texas? A pecan pie, of course. June baked a pie and enjoyed it with her majesty over tea.

June, our Stephenville High School English teacher, was selected to read her poem *Happiness Is* at the queen's silver jubilee in London in 1977. There they became friends, sharing a love for country life.

Suzan Garner  
CECA  
Mullin

### Telling Good Stories

We subscribe to several state and national, globally recognized magazines, many of which get quickly scanned and recycled. *Texas Co-op Power* is one that I read cover to cover and look forward to.

Thank you, Texas Electric Cooperatives, for your support of journalism and for understanding the importance of a good story.

Abbie and Charles Cotrell  
Bandera EC  
Waring

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

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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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# Finally . . . a better mobility solution than Scooters or Power Chairs.

The **Zoomer's** versatile design and 1-touch joystick operation brings mobility and independence to those who need it most.

If you have mobility issues, or know someone who does, then you've experienced the difficulties faced by millions of Americans. Simple tasks like getting from the bedroom to the kitchen can become a time-consuming and potentially dangerous ordeal. You may have tried to solve the problem with a power chair or a scooter but neither is ideal. Power chairs are bulky and look like a medical device. Scooters are either unstable or hard to maneuver. Now, there's a better alternative . . . the Zoomer.

***My Zoomer is a delight to ride! It has increased my mobility in my apartment, my opportunities to enjoy the-out-of-doors, and enabled me to visit the homes of my children for longer periods of time. The various speeds of it match my need for safety, it is easy to turn, and I am most pleased with the freedom of movement it gives me.***

Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

After just one trip around your home in the Zoomer, you'll marvel at how easy it is to navigate. It is designed to maneuver in tight spaces like doorways, between furniture, and around corners. It can go over thresholds and works great on any kind of floor or carpet. It's not bulky or cumbersome, so it can roll



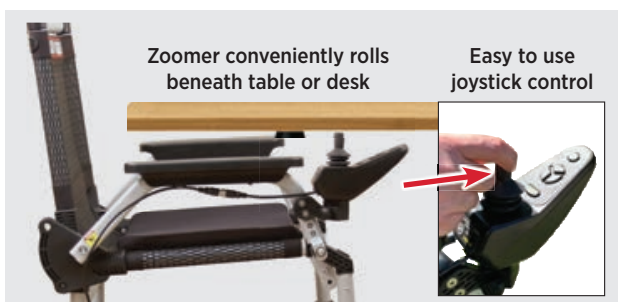
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to a chair. Its sturdy yet lightweight aluminum frame makes it durable and comfortable. Its dual motors power it at up to 3.7 miles per hour and its automatic electromagnetic brakes stop on a dime. The rechargeable battery powers it for up to 8 miles on a single charge. Plus, its exclusive foldable design enables you to transport it easily and even store it in a closet or under a bed when it's not in use.

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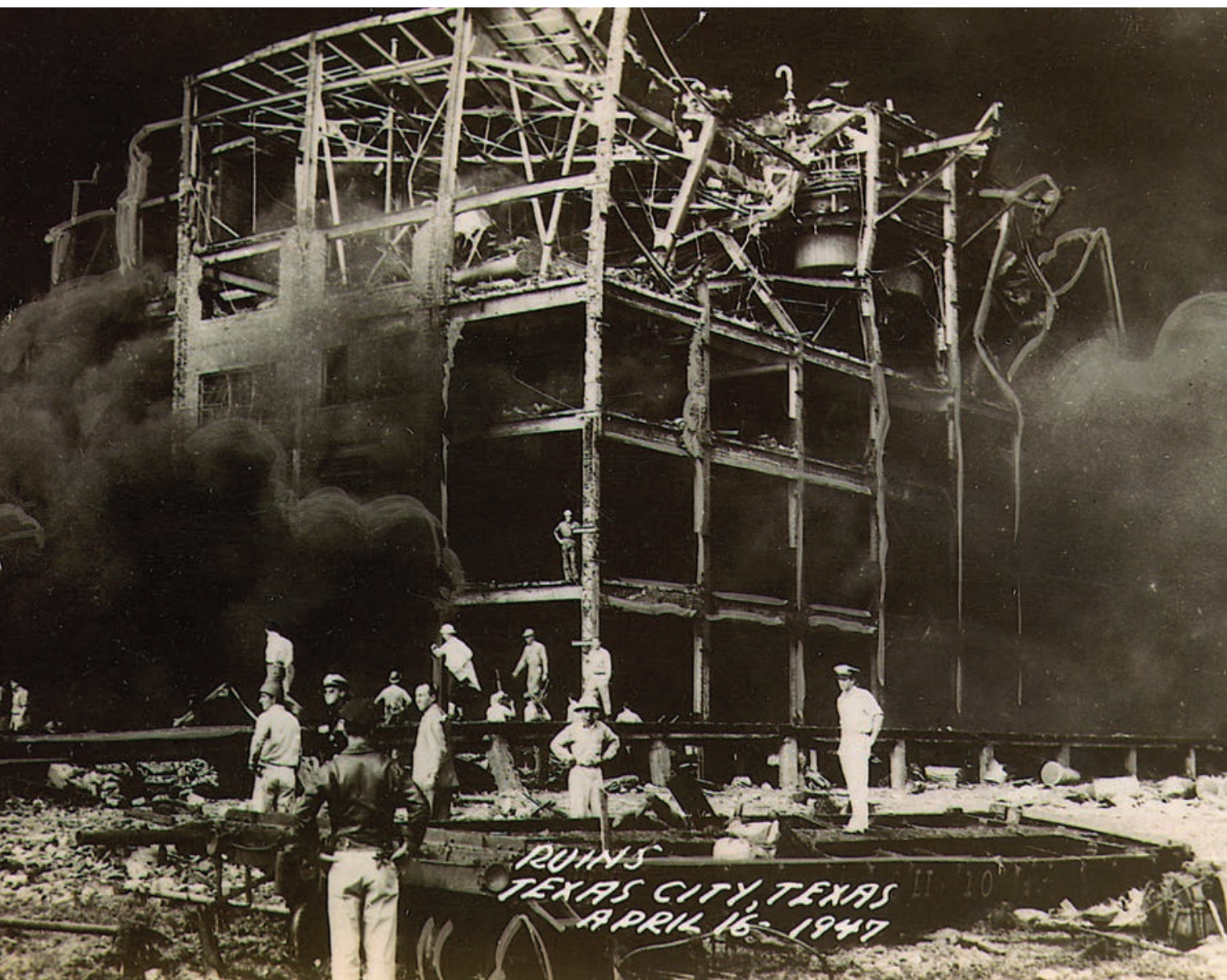
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Please mention code 116683 when ordering.



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# Heroes Next Door

Seventy-five years after the Texas City disaster, those who rushed in haven't been forgotten

BY BILL MINUTAGLIO

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I received a message that just didn't seem right: An indomitable and indestructible Texan, someone so brave it felt like he could live forever, had passed away.

He was a former soldier who had fought in some of the deadliest moments of World War II. And then, after surviving the ravages of battle, he and others had stared down what some have called the greatest human-made tragedy of 20th-century America—an event that came to be called the Texas City disaster.

COURTESY WOODSON RESEARCH CENTER, FONDREN LIBRARY, RICE UNIVERSITY



Curtis Trahan had lived through so many things that it wasn't all that unusual to assume he could march on and on. But his family let me know that he had indeed succumbed. They wondered if I would speak at his memorial service.

Of course, I agreed—while knowing it would be virtually impossible to give proper tribute to him and all the other ordinary folks in Texas City who displayed unyielding courage, empathy and humanity during the most profound tragedy imaginable.

Tall and soft-spoken, Trahan was mayor of the small port town near Houston on April 16, 1947. That morning, as kids and families gathered to watch firefighters tackle what seemed like a small fire on a dock, there was suddenly a massive explosion.

It was what some imagined an atomic bomb blast to be like. Others simply thought that Judgment Day had abruptly arrived.

The earth rumbled and shuddered, oceangoing ships were heaved out of the water, buildings collapsed, airplanes were sucked from the sky—and hundreds of men, women and children instantly perished. Almost every member of the Texas City Fire Department was killed in the blink of an eye. Dozens and dozens of people were never seen again.

The final numbers were debated, but it appears that the Texas City disaster killed as many as 500. It's possible that more died but were never accounted for, and another 5,000 were injured. Dozens of human remains went unidentified.

Despite unrelenting fires, carnage and chaos, hundreds of people, including Trahan, raced to the scene. They organized rescue efforts, comforted the wounded and asked for help from lawmakers in Austin and Washington. They refused to sleep, marshaled volunteers and demanded answers for the pained community. So many Texans and more than a few souls from out of state stayed for weeks and months on end to treat the victims, donate blood, clear the rubble and help families search for loved ones.

The FBI arrived to investigate whether it had been some sort of attack. Soldiers were sent to restore order. Frank Sinatra agreed to do a fundraiser. Hundreds of cars, homes and buildings needed repairs. The financial toll, in today's dollars, would reach into the billions. Scientists were in awe at how the detonations were felt dozens of miles away

**It was what some imagined an atomic bomb blast to be like. Others simply thought that Judgment Day had abruptly arrived.**

in Houston and even registered on measuring devices in other states.

The blast was ultimately deemed an

accident. One theory held that a carelessly tossed cigarette had set fire to tons of ammonium nitrate fertilizer sitting in the hold of a ship. It was, ironically, fertilizer that the United States was sending to Europe to nourish war-ravaged farms and speed the healing of a decimated continent.

Investigations and court cases would stretch on for years, circling around whether or not more could have been done to warn the good people in Texas City that the bags and bags of fertilizer were not just lifesaving—they were also deadly.

Ammonium nitrate was already well-recognized by then to be both a powerful fertilizer and explosive. Bombmakers used it in World War I, and later, terrorists also sought it out. The compound was used by Timothy McVeigh to blow up a federal building in Oklahoma, and in 2013, there was an explosion at a fertilizer facility in West, Texas, that led to 15 deaths.

Now, as another aching anniversary for the Texas City disaster approaches, I think of the last conversation I had with Trahan. For many long years, he had watched as the stricken city rebuilt bit by bit. Businesses eventually reopened, the freighters came back, and school classes and church services resumed.

But for Trahan and others, the wounds from the Texas City disaster never went entirely away. He and many more had seen too much, endured so much, for the mental and even physical scars to truly vanish.

We sat in his little home, and he talked about how he had first moved to Texas City because he thought it would be a quiet place to raise a family. That he had run for mayor so that anyone from any race or background would be treated the same.

He said that when hell on earth came to his little town, he simply did what he had to do. What he believed most people would do: You race to rescue your neighbors. You pull them from the rubble. You give them balm, hope and resolve.

And then Trahan waved his hand and suggested quietly that he hadn't done anything that merited remembering.

Later, when I spoke at his memorial service, I tried to convey the essence of that final visit with Trahan. How a disaster can reveal both courage and humility—and how you often don't have to look very far to find everyday angels.

Some reside right next door. ■

The Texas City explosion, so powerful it blew two planes out of the sky, killed as many as 500 people in April 1947.





# BEST IN TOW

## Chefs bring big-time flavor to small-town Graham for the **Food Truck Championship of Texas**

After parking my car across from a feed store, I make my way up Fourth Street in Graham toward the downtown square. It's a little after noon, and the area is buzzing with activity. Live music rattles through the streets up ahead, and I pass a group of people heading back to their vehicles, toothpicks in hand. "Scrumdiddlyumptious!" one of them says, patting his stomach in satisfaction. I get excited.

Forty-two food trucks are competing today in the Food Truck Championship of Texas, an annual contest that has been held in Graham since 2015. Admission is free for all guests, who can also enjoy live music, an artisan showcase, children's activities and a late-night concert at the Young County Arena after the food.

Up for grabs are numerous awards, bragging rights and the coveted \$10,000 grand championship prize for the best food truck—crowned by a panel of expert judges. The stakes are high for competitors who arrive from hundreds of miles away—rigs in tow—in a test to be the best. This year's event is June 4.

For folks like me, choosing what to eat is the real food truck challenge. And we can't lose.

As I approach the competition, my mouth waters and my nostrils are filled with the scent of fried seafood—no doubt coming from the combination of Mac's Cajun Shack, Catch Me If You Can Southern Creole and Blazin Cajun—all positioned near Fourth and Oak streets and serving dishes such as seafood pot pie, gumbo, shrimp and grits, boudin egg rolls, crawfish, and smoked alligator.

In a nearby building, judges Debbie Workman, a chef and restaurateur; Ched Pagtakhan, a chef, culinary arts teacher and food truck owner; and Dante Ramirez, a restaurateur and catering consultant, sample fare from all 42 trucks.

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Folks in line ponder the menu at one of the 42 food trucks. Brandon Anderson of Rack Attack Barbecue displays his team's grand champion prize. Attendees dig in. An entry labeled with a number for anonymous judging.





FROM LEFT Merle takes in the sights and scents. Corn dogs proved hard to pass up. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP Shaved ice makes a hot ride nice. Event volunteer Jayne Beale shows off the grand champion belt.



Picked-at plates litter tables across the room, each dish assigned a number to make the entries anonymous.

"I really like that egg roll," Pagtakhan says.

Workman agrees. "The texture was good and flaky. And that pizza, No. 37, was so delicious and unique."

## No Small Wonder

One mile around, it's no wonder that Graham calls its business district "America's largest downtown square." About an hour south of Wichita Falls and home to the Young County Courthouse and about 9,000 residents, Graham comes alive each June, when the chefs pull into town.

The smell of beef cooking on a flattop makes my stomach rumble as I approach Big Kat Burgers, but I press on, wanting to see all my options before diving in. A long line for Happy Dogs Corn Dogs tempts me, as does the mega line for Cousins Maine Lobster's fresh lobster rolls.

Maya Justice, who is at the event with friends, recom-

Up for grabs are numerous awards, bragging rights and the coveted **\$10,000 grand championship prize** for the best food truck—crowned by a panel of expert judges.

mends Bada Bing Wood Fired Pizza, and several people are buzzing about the fried alligator from Crawldaddys Cajun Kitchen.

"To be able to have pad thai and a Maine lobster roll at the same time here in Graham, America, is incredible," says Grant Ingram, executive director of economic development with the city of Graham. "It's so hard to pinpoint a favorite because the variety of trucks we're able to attract in north central Hill Country is amazing."

I decide the best approach here is sampling smaller items from multiple trucks, and I hop in line at Treviños Craft Smokehouse truck and wait.

"That Dr Pepper pulled pork taco from the Gypsy Kit truck is oh-em-gee," says Jenny French, who's behind me in line at Treviño's. She and her husband, Ken, came to support their neighbors, the Treviños, at the championship and are getting their fill like everyone else. "I wanted that





Maine lobster, but the line is so long,” Ken says. “I’ll never know how it tastes.”

I grab a pulled pork taco on a homemade tortilla and head for a table on the courthouse lawn for my first bite of the day. The tender pulled pork and soft tortilla hit the spot on this hot day, and after perusing a few craft booths, I hit the streets again to walk it off and make room for more samples.

The growing line at Addie Cakes & Lily Pies gets my attention, and dessert sounds like just the thing after walking three laps around the square. Toe-tappin’ tunes fill the air, making my wait for a white chocolate Key lime cheesecake more enjoyable. The tart yet sweet treat is perfect for summertime and makes waiting in line feel like a no-brainer.

While visiting with more foodies, I hear lots of chatter about a chicken sandwich on a biscuit. I have to have it, so I make my way to the Bite My Biscuit truck—the 2016 grand champion—for the Nashville hot fried chicken sandwich on a buttermilk biscuit with honey coleslaw and pickles. The \$5 dish is the perfect size (and price) for an event like this, and upon trying the spicy, buttery, delicious concoction, I see why everyone is talking about it.



The Big Kat Burgers crew.

## The Trucks in This Story

- Addie Cakes & Lily Pies, Paradise
- Bada Bing Wood Fired Pizza, San Angelo
- Big Kat Burgers, Fort Worth
- Bite My Biscuit, Fort Worth
- Blazin Cajun, Graham
- Catch Me If You Can, Tyler
- Cousins Maine Lobster, Houston
- Crawdaddys Cajun Kitchen, Bridgeport
- Gypsy Kit, Wichita Falls
- Happy Dogs Corn Dogs, Gainesville
- Mac’s Cajun Shack, Fort Worth
- Rack Attack Barbecue, Burleson
- Sakura Southern Seoul, Wichita Falls
- Treviños Craft Smokehouse, Jacksboro
- Yatai Food Kart, Fort Worth

## 2021 Winners

- Grand Champion** Rack Attack Barbecue
- Best Signature Dish** Pokey O’s
- People’s Choice** Daddy Bob’s Smokewagon
- Best Food Truck Spirit** Blake’s Snow Shack
- Best Food Truck Design** Sakura Southern Seoul
- Best Menu** Cousins Maine Lobster
- Best Dessert Dish** Addie Cakes & Lily Pies
- Best Barbecue Dish** Smokin 3 C’s
- Best International Dish** Yatai Food Kart
- Best American Dish** Bite My Biscuit





Judges, from left, Ched Pagtakhan, Debbie Workman and Dante Ramirez experienced a day of tasting and hearty discussions.

## There's the Beef

**F**ull and satisfied, I grab a chair and wait for the awards ceremony.

"To go through 40-plus plates and taste them all and go through each one on uniqueness, presentation and flavors, it's tough," Ramirez announces. "This was difficult for us."

The audience cheers and whoops for each winner, including Bite My Biscuit for that tasty Nashville hot fried chicken biscuit, Yatai Food Kart for their signature ramen dish, Addie Cakes & Lily Pies for their pecan praline cheesecake, Cousins Maine Lobster for the best menu award, and Sakura Southern Seoul for best food truck design.

As the emcee inches closer to announcing the grand champion, the crowd grows quiet. "The 2021 Food Truck Championship grand champion: Rack Attack Barbecue with their dino beef rib and taking home a check for \$10,000." The crowd erupts in applause as the Rack Attack team roars with excitement, hugging each other as they claim their prize and a professional wrestling-style belt emblazoned with "2021 Grand Champion."

It was Rack Attack Barbecue's first time competing in the event, so a championship win makes owner Brandon Anderson, who opened the business in March 2018, ecstatic.

"This is the first time I've ever presented food that I've made to real chefs and real food critics, so it's a big deal for us," he says. "I'm really happy."

Anderson knew they'd won something when they were dispatched to the awards ceremony, and as the ceremony progressed, they knew through the process of elimination that grand champion was a possibility—as astonishing

**"To be able to have pad thai and a Maine lobster roll at the same time here in Graham, America, is incredible."**

as that seemed. "I still can't believe it," he says after the ceremony. "We've worked so hard."

Anderson says he thought the winning dish might relate to Texas, which inspired him to serve a beef rib—what he calls "king in Texas."

"I figured everyone would want to try it, so we smoked them, pulled the meat off the bones and served it on top of smoked mashed potatoes," he says.

It worked. "Their dish was very unique," Pagtakhan says. "The doneness on the smoked beef rib was perfect, the flavor was balanced, and the smoked mashed potatoes was a perfect pairing."

Unfortunately, Rack Attack Barbecue ceased operations a few months after the 2021 Food Truck Championship, so this year's showdown will have a new grand champion in addition to plenty of friendly competition and delectable grub up for grabs.

Gina LeGrand, owner of Addie Cakes & Lily Pies, which won the best dessert category last year, will be ready. "I hope we continue our winning streak—or maybe win overall," she says. "Winning the grand prize with a dessert is challenging, but how incredible would that be?" ■



# April is **FREE** **WINDOWS MONTH** at Renewal by Andersen.<sup>1</sup>

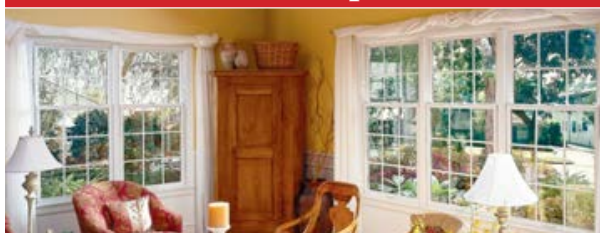


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14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# Helping Hand Project

Mueller strongly believes in giving back to organizations that always give to others. For the 14th year in a row, we are extending a helping hand to a Texas non-profit in need of a new facility. One deserving organization will receive a FREE Mueller steel building through our Helping Hand Project.

We will be accepting applications April 9 - May 16, 2022, at [www.muellerinc.com/about-us/helping-hand](http://www.muellerinc.com/about-us/helping-hand)

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

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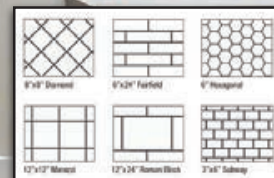




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CEO  
**HERBERT "TREY"  
GREBE III**

## Thank a Lineman

**I'VE BEEN IN THE** industry a while now—35 years to be exact. Throughout this time, it never ceases to amaze me to see the hard work linemen and the team behind your power do to keep your lights on. Our team wants the same thing that you want—to know that when you flip that light switch, there is, in fact, light.

At Medina Electric Cooperative, we have 127 employees who work together to provide reliable and safe electricity. Among the most visible employees are the lineworkers who work tirelessly to ensure our members receive uninterrupted power 24/7. This month we want to highlight the team that puts their lives on the lines to power our lives.

Line work is one of the most dangerous professions in the U.S., requiring detailed tasks while in close contact with high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, in stormy weather or other challenging conditions, linemen must perform work 40 feet in the air, often carrying heavy equipment, to get the job done.

And yet line work isn't glamorous. The job requires years of specialized training, ongoing education and dedication. Equally important for linemen at co-ops—and what sets them apart—is a deeply held sense of service to our members and commitment to the community. That's why co-ops set aside the second Monday in April each year to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

The linemen may be the most visible employees at Medina EC, but equally critical is the team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes.

Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and questions. Our information technology experts continually monitor our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our linemen wouldn't be able to light up our community.

Our dedicated and beloved linemen are proud to represent Medina EC, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineman Appreciation Day.

On April 11, and any time you see a lineman, I hope you'll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service. I also hope you'll remember that you have a dedicated team of professionals working at the co-op whose commitment to service runs just as deep. We are all committed to exceed member expectations in everything we do.

Until next time,  
Trey Grebe

### BY THE NUMBERS

With their combined 615 years of experience, here is what our linemen manage to ensure members have the power they need.

Miles driven in 2021:  
1,064,322

Meters: 33,613 total, or 646 per lineman in the field

Hours worked in 2021:  
121,791

Over 9,600 miles of power lines

Weight of climbing gear and tools: 44 pounds

Square miles of service area: 10,750 total, or 206 per lineman in the field

### Management Team

These former linemen now oversee crews in all offices.

Oscar Chapa, 33 years

Norby Salazar, 29 years

Leonard Geyer, 27 years

### Former Linemen

These are former linemen who now use their experience in other areas within the cooperative.

Allen Boehme

Chris Groff

Chris Muennink

Derly Carrizales

Eduardo Chapa

Fernando Rangel

Fidel Aranda

Isaac Solis

Israel Bazan

Joel Gonzales

Michael Harkins

Ricky Cerna

Ruben Ybarra



# Meet Medina EC's Linemen!



**Ace Gaucin**  
Hondo - 37 years



**Seb Suarez**  
Uvalde - 30 years



**Scott Schulte**  
Hondo - 29 years



**Joe Flores**  
Uvalde - 29 years



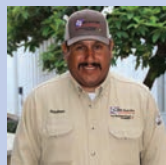
**Edward Varnador**  
Dilley - 27 years



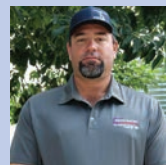
**Jack Hagan**  
Hondo - 27 years



**Jason Cunningham**  
Hondo - 24 years



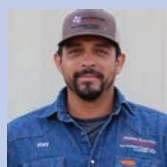
**Reuben Ayala**  
Dilley - 21 years



**Raymond Schawe**  
Hondo - 20 years



**Pat Garza**  
RGC - 19 years



**Raymond Sendejo**  
Uvalde - 18 years



**Albert Vela**  
Bruni - 18 years



**Armando Castillo**  
Bruni - 18 years



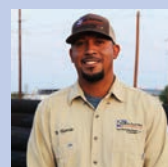
**Jorge Zapata**  
RGC - 15 years



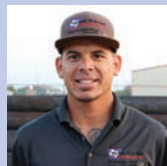
**Mario Lopez**  
Bruni - 14 years



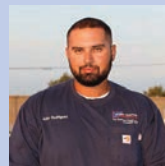
**Jason Gomez**  
Uvalde - 14 years



**Ben Garcia**  
Uvalde - 11 years



**Serapio Guzman**  
Uvalde - 11 years



**John Rodriguez**  
RGC - 11 years



**Elias Tobias**  
Laredo - 10 years



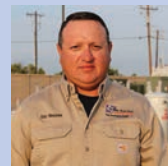
**Mario Molina**  
Dilley - 10 years



**Josh Perez**  
Bruni - 9 years



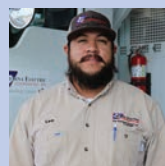
**Taylor Stacy**  
Hondo - 8 years



**Eric Hinojosa**  
RGC - 8 years



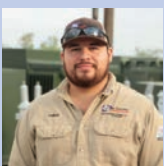
**Tony Banda Jr.**  
Dilley - 8 years



**Leo Lira**  
Hondo - 7 years



**Martin Gonzales**  
Dilley - 7 years



**Felipe Moreno**  
Laredo - 7 years



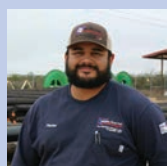
**Marcus Cortez**  
Dilley - 5 years



**David Hernandez**  
Dilley - 5 years



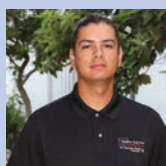
**Ben Falcon**  
RGC - 5 years



**Mario Factor**  
Laredo - 4 years



**Joselito Morales**  
Dilley - 4 years



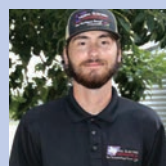
**Joe Stone**  
Dilley - 4 years



**Justin Cortez**  
Bruni - 3 years



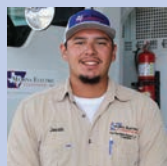
**Gabriel Guerra**  
Bruni - 3 years



**Lee Applewhite**  
Hondo - 3 years



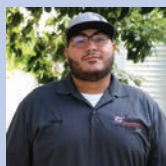
**Reynold Munoz**  
Hondo - 3 years



**Jacob Sendejo**  
Hondo - 3 years



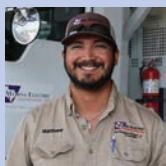
**Juan Rosa**  
RGC - 3 years



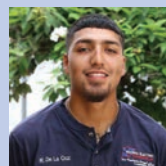
**Johnny Garza**  
Uvalde - 3 years



**Benjamin Soto**  
Bruni - 1 year



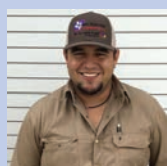
**Matthew Hernandez**  
Hondo - 1 year



**Marcus De La Cruz**  
Uvalde - 1 year



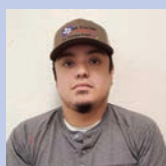
**Jason Samarripa**  
Uvalde - 1 year



**Luis Gutierrez**  
RGC - <1 year



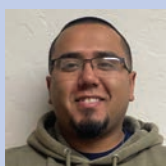
**Jose Olivarez**  
RGC - <1 year



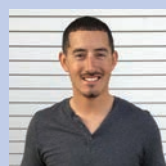
**Marcus Tellez**  
Dilley - <1 year



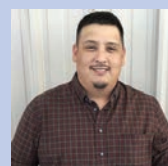
**Lucas Mora**  
Hondo - <1 year



**Felipe Negrete**  
Hondo - <1 year



**Jose Garcia**  
RGC - <1 year



**Gerardo Lopez**  
Hondo - <1 year



# Drive With Care Through Work Zones

**UTILITY CREWS PERFORM DANGEROUS** work to keep the lights on, often during hazardous weather. The obvious safety concern linemen face is electrical contact, which can be avoided with the proper personal protection equipment and tools. Our crew members take many safety measures to protect themselves and their team when working on power lines. We ask that you take necessary steps to protect them too, specifically when driving.

Work Zone Awareness Week is April 26-30. Medina EC encourages members to be especially mindful when driving through work zones—avoid distractions, slow down and give workers space.

We all know our focus should be on the road when we are driving—there should be no phones, no stereo adjustments and no substances that could impair our judgment. Unfortunately, distractions often enter the picture. These distractions endanger not only the lives of drivers and their passengers but also the lives of other drivers and any crews who may be working in the area.

Follow the “move over, slow down” law when you see something or someone on the side of the road. Originally passed in 2003, it requires motorists to move over a lane, or slow down, when certain vehicles—including police, fire, Texas Department of Transportation and tow trucks—are stopped on the side of the road with emergency lights activated. As of 2019, utility crews are also covered under this law.

Together we can all make our communities safer. ■

## Medina Electric Cooperative



### 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

Chris Surles, (830) 965-5538

Kenneth White, (830) 232-6541

#### 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

## Outage? 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 Highway 173 N., Hondo 78861

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

**Uvalde** 2604 Highway 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.





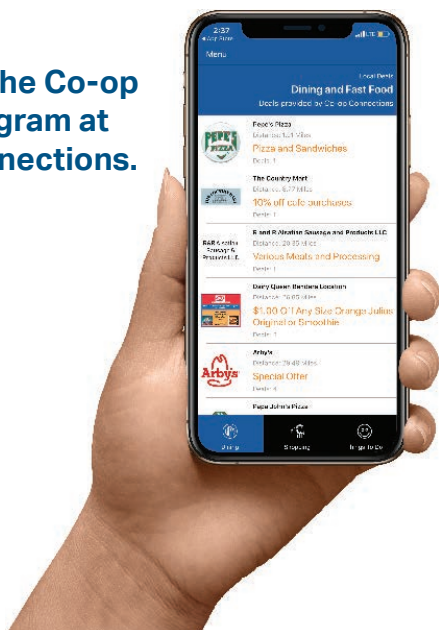
## Own a Small Business? Want FREE Promotion?

**MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** realizes how hard it can be to own and operate a small business, and we want to help! Small business owners can get free promotion by joining our Co-op Connections program.

Join the program for free and receive marketing in the form of being featured annually in *Texas Co-op Power* magazine, listed on our website, featured on our social media pages and more.

Just email [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org) to let us know you want an application and choose the discount you want to offer. It really is that simple!

**Learn more about the Co-op Connections program at [MedinaEC.org/Connections](https://MedinaEC.org/Connections).**



## Take one and show it to your pharmacist.

WITH YOUR CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD, SAVE UP TO 85% ON PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND REFILLS AT PARTICIPATING RETAILERS.

THE BEST PART? IT'S FREE TO MEMBERS OF MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE JUST LIKE YOU.



DISCOVER ALL THE WAYS  
YOU CAN SAVE AT  
**[MedinaEC.org/Connections](https://MedinaEC.org/Connections)**

This program is not insurance; it is a discount benefit that offers immediate savings.



# Conserve With Your Co-op

## *Earth Day conservation tips*

**EARTH DAY IS CONSIDERED** one of the world's largest civic events, and on April 22 we can all be part of this global movement to help the environment. A portion of the energy that Medina Electric Cooperative distributes to our members comes from renewable energy sources, and conservation is important to us. There are many ways we as individuals can help the environment, and some are easier than you'd think. Here are a few simple actions you can take now to reduce your energy use.

**Audit your lightbulbs.** Swapping out any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs can make a big difference in your home's efficiency, and it's one of the easiest ways to reduce your energy bill.

**Maintain your heating and air conditioning system.** Regularly replace your air filters to allow your system to run more efficiently. Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging the system, and changing the filters makes the unit run more efficiently—keeping your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

**Examine your smart or programmable thermostat.** Make sure it's programmed for the current season and family schedule. This is one of the best tools at your fingertips, but it can only do its job correctly if it's programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

**Seal windows and doors.** Seal leaks with weatherstripping and caulk to keep cool air indoors during warm months and prevent cold air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the building's envelope and increase energy efficiency.

Although these suggestions may not be glamorous or worthy of a news story, they do make a difference. And Medina EC is always here to help if you want more information on how you can save energy. For more energy-saving tips, visit [MedinaEC.org/EnergySavings](https://MedinaEC.org/EnergySavings).

As we celebrate Earth Day this April, let's continue to work together and make a positive impact on our local community—and our beautiful planet. ■

KANOKWALEE | ADOBE STOCK



# Pollinate Texas

**Free pollinator seeds at your local office.**

In honor of Earth Day, Medina Electric Cooperative is giving away free seed packets to co-op members. The seed mix is especially created for pollinators like butterflies and bees, which play a huge role in sustaining our ecosystem and producing natural resources to help plants reproduce.

Get your free pack of seeds from any Medina EC office while supplies last.

PHOTOGRUNS | ADOBE STOCK



# Nesting Season

Medina Electric Cooperative's large service area is home to many bird species. Nesting season for many birds can start as early as March and typically extends through August. If you're a fan of bird watching, you can promote safe nesting in your area by installing a nest box. Installing a nest box on your property may also deter birds from building nests on unnatural perches such as utility equipment.

Birds that make utility equipment—like crossarms—home for perching or nests can cause power outages. Medina EC is committed to providing reliable power to members and takes the protection of wildlife seriously. Medina EC uses an avian protection plan to mitigate the risk of wildlife dangers and reduce the potential for avian hazards while improving long-term reliability of the power system that would otherwise be impacted by outages. The APP is managed by Medina EC's certified wildlife biologist.





## Generator Installation Requirements

[MedinaEC.org/Generators](https://MedinaEC.org/Generators)

Medina Electric Cooperative understands that sometimes you may need to use a generator to keep power on during an outage. If the proper steps aren't taken to ensure a generator is connected correctly, it could become hazardous and even deadly for our line crews and members.

Members interested in having a standby generator installed at their property need to follow the necessary steps to connect to Medina EC's distribution system. This is for the safety of the member and our crews. The requirements for noncommercial emergency and standby generation is available at [MedinaEC.org/Generators](https://MedinaEC.org/Generators).

Members with a 200-ampere or smaller service that want the convenience of operating a standby generator without installing transfer switches, subpanels and rewiring work may want to have a GenerLink device. GenerLink is installed behind your meter by Medina EC crews and is billed monthly on your electric bill.

If you have any questions, please call 1-866-632-3532 or email [Info@MedinaEC.org](mailto:Info@MedinaEC.org).



### GENERAC GENERATOR SALES & INSTALLATION

Medina Electric Cooperative is offering members 22-kilowatt propane generators with installation. These Generac generators are available for \$10,000; additional costs may apply for unique installations. If you're interested in more information or to be put on the waiting list as units are available for installation, email [MyCoop@MedinaEC.org](mailto:MyCoop@MedinaEC.org).



DAN ROSS | ADOBE STOCK

# Spring Storm Safety

**BEWARE: SPRING CAN USHER IN** more than April showers. From now through the summer months, thunderstorms can quickly roll in and tornadoes can touch down, most often during the afternoon and evening hours, according to researchers at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s severe storms laboratory.

Follow these tips to keep you and your home safe when tornadoes and severe thunderstorms come your way.

- Remove diseased and damaged tree limbs before storm season begins.
- Listen to local news or National Weather Service broadcasts to stay informed about tornado watches and warnings.

If you are in a mobile home, immediately head to a sturdy shelter. Mobile homes, especially hallways and bathrooms, are not safe places to take shelter during tornadoes or other severe winds.

Designate a family meeting place for shelter during and after a storm. If possible, go to your home’s basement, a small interior room or under stairs on the lowest level. Have a battery-operated weather radio handy along with emergency supplies.

Unplug electronics. Avoid using electrical equipment and corded telephones while lightning is in the area.

Remember that there is no safe place outside during a severe storm. If you are caught in a storm while driving, switch on your headlights, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle with your seat belt on, and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. If thunder and lightning are occurring, avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.

As a storm moves in, move or secure lawn furniture, trash cans, hanging plants and anything else that the wind can turn into a projectile.

Stay safe after a storm. Remain indoors at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder. Stay well away from downed power lines and avoid flooded areas. Power lines could be submerged and still live with electricity. ■

## Upcoming Petition Deadlines

*If you are interested in running for the board in the fall, you can be placed on the ballot through the petition process.*

### Petition Deadlines

Voting District 1: April 8

*Medina County*

Voting District 2: April 7

*Edwards, Real, Kinney, Uvalde, Zavala, Frio and Atascosa counties*

Voting District 3: April 11

*Dimmit, La Salle, McMullen, Webb, Duval, Zapata, Jim Hogg, Brooks and Starr counties*

*Learn more at*

**MedinaEC.org/Nominee.**



### OPERATION ROUND UP

If you or someone you know needs financial assistance, apply for an ORU donation. Applicants must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC.

Applications Due May 6  
MedinaEC.org/ORU



# VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS: **WE HAVE A TRUCK FOR YOU!**

MEDINA EC IS DONATING A RETIRED  
SERVICE TRUCK TO AN AREA VFD.



**DEADLINE: FRIDAY, JULY 1**  
**ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION:**

**MEDINAEC.ORG/VEHDONATION**

*Photo of 2018 recipient Sabinal VFD, after completing their  
modifications to the donated truck.*

## Call 811 Before You Dig

If you're getting ready to knock out spring projects, be sure you are prepared to do so safely. If your outdoor projects require any digging, be cautious of underground utility lines, including electric, oil and gas, telecom, water, and sewer lines. Unsafe digging can be dangerous and cause damage.



**Know what's below.**  
**Call before you dig.**

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Lineman Appreciation Day**  
Monday, April 11

**Good Friday**  
Friday, April 15  
*Our offices will be closed in  
observance of the holiday.*

**Easter**  
Sunday, April 17

**Earth Day**  
Friday, April 22

"In recent years, a group of international designers and artists has rediscovered the innate modernity of Italian blown glass, turning to Murano as inspiration..." — New York Times, 2020

Matching  
Bracelet  
**FREE**

The brightly-painted fisherman houses on Burano Island in Venice are the inspiration behind The Murano Rainbow Necklace



Genuine Murano Necklace  
**only \$39!**

**PLUS FREE Bracelet!**  
a \$99 value!

*Raffinato™*  
—Italy

## Send Her Over The Rainbow

700-year old legendary art form for the price of your dreams.

**N**ow I know how that little farm girl from Kansas felt when she went over the rainbow and awoke in a land of spectacular color. Look what I found in the land of ahhs!

Approaching Burano Island off of northern Venice was like being swept away in a dream. Known for its brightly-painted fisherman houses that line the canals, I was greeted with every color of the rainbow. Since before the Venetian Republic, Burano was home to fishermen and legend says that the houses were painted in bright hues so they could see their way home when fog blanketed the lagoon.

Inspiration struck. I wanted to capture this historical beauty in the centuries old art form of Murano. Still regarded as being the finest form craftsmanship in the world, Murano has evolved into modern day fashion statements.

So I hopped on a vaporetto for a forty minute ride to Venice and sought out the impeccable talents of one of Venice's finest Murano artisans. They've captured the vibrant colors of the iconic fisherman houses in the perfect hand-formed beads of *The Rainbow Murano Necklace*. To own a piece of authentic Murano is to own a piece of fine art steeped in history. Each and every piece is a one-of-a-kind masterpiece.

I want to make it easy for you to send her over the rainbow. That's why for a limited time you can treat her to

*The Murano Rainbow Necklace* for only \$39. And, to help you double down on romance, I'll throw in the matching bracelet absolutely **FREE!** As one of the largest importers of handcrafted Italian jewelry, we have a way of making dreams that you dare to dream come true.

**Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back.** Enjoy the *Murano Rainbow Necklace* for 30 days. If it doesn't pass with flying colors, send it back for a full refund of the item price. You can even keep the bracelet for your trouble.

**Limited Reserves.** You could easily pay \$300 or more for a Murano glass bead necklace, but at \$39 PLUS a **FREE bracelet**, these authentic handcrafted pieces won't last. For a remarkable deal, there's no place like Raffinato.

### Jewelry Specifications:

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From that moment on, the tennis bracelet has been on the lips and on the wrists of women in the know. Once called eternity bracelets, these bands of diamonds were known from then on as tennis bracelets, and remain *the* hot ticket item with jewelers.

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We've captured this timeless classic with over 10 total carats of DiamondAura®, our signature diamond alternative stone. This sparkling marvel rivals even the finest diamonds (D Flawless) with its transparent color and clarity, and both are so hard they can cut glass. Don't believe me? The book *"Jewelry and Gems – The Buying Guide,"* praised the technique used in our diamond alternative DiamondAura®: "The best diamond simulation to date, and even some jewelers have mistaken these stones for mined diamonds," it raved. For comparison, we found a similarly designed 10 carat tennis bracelet



with D Flawless diamonds from another company that costs \$57,000!

Want to look like a million bucks without stressing over losing or damaging something that cost you a fortune? The Love Wins Tennis Bracelet is a simple strand of glittering gems in precious sterling that epitomizes elegance.

**FREE**

earrings with your purchase of the Love Wins Bracelet.



**The first time we offered this bracelet, we sold out literally in minutes. It was our fastest selling product of 2021.** It took six months to get it back in stock — Get yours before we run out! And there's more... we will also include our Ultimate Diamond Alternative™ DiamondAura® stud earrings for FREE!

### Jewelry Specifications:

- 10  $\frac{3}{4}$  ctw of the Ultimate Diamond Alternative®, DiamondAura®
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**TCP** Listen as W.F. Strong narrates this story on our website.



# Two-Fisted Law and Order

Judge Roy Bean made the rules and found fame in his remote corner of West Texas

BY W.F. STRONG

**IN THE BIG BEND TOWN** of Langtry, Judge Roy Bean opened a saloon on the railroad right-of-way. It was 1882, and even though he was squatting, the railroad allowed him to stay. Bean named his bar the Jersey Lilly after actress Lillie Langtry.

When trains stopped for water, the passengers could order a drink at the Jersey Lilly. But Bean never had change, so if a customer paid a dollar for a 25-cent beer, he wouldn't get the other 75 cents. If he complained, Bean fined him 75 cents for disturbing the peace.

Bean had proclaimed himself the "law west of the Pecos" and preferred his own interpretation of the law. When he re-

ceived new state statutes every two years, he burned them. Once he sentenced a young man to hang but left the jail unlocked the night before the hanging so the condemned could escape.

In Bean's early years, he lived in San Antonio, where he found success with a saloon but sold the business to pursue opportunities in the railroad camps of West Texas. He gained notoriety when he took the law into his own hands.

When Bean held court in the Jersey Lilly, he would assemble a jury and swear the members in. The case would be presented, the verdict determined and sentencing pronounced quickly. Often the

sentence for misdemeanors was a round of drinks for the jury. He was very patriotic about Texas, too. He often preceded sentencing with words like: "You have offended the great state of Texas by committing this crime on her sacred soil."

One of his most famous cases had to do with a man who fell to his death off a bridge in Langtry. Bean found \$40 and a pistol on the man's body and fined him \$40 for carrying a concealed weapon. That was enough to get him buried.

Bean rose to international prominence when he organized a world heavyweight boxing championship between Bob Fitzsimmons and Peter Maher in 1896. Prizefighting was then illegal in Texas.

At first, the fight looked like it might be held on the sly in El Paso, but the governor sent 25 Texas Rangers over there to make sure it didn't happen. Then it seemed like it might be held in Juarez, but the governor of Chihuahua sent troops to prevent a fight there. Finally Bean sent a telegram to the promoter saying they could have it in Langtry—actually, right across the river on a Rio Grande sandbar, miles from any authority that would stop it.

So a menagerie of unlikely associates, boxers, gamblers, Texas Rangers, high rollers and spectators of all stripes boarded a train bound for parts unknown. The destination was kept a secret. Bean met them at his railside saloon, sold them beer at the exorbitant price of a dollar apiece and then escorted them across a pontoon bridge to the Mexican side of the river.

Fitzsimmons knocked out Maher after 95 seconds, so the fight was over before the spectators could settle in. But the big winner—as ever—was Bean. He became known worldwide as the man who made the fight possible. ■



# Brunch

Crowd-pleasing additions for this much-anticipated meal

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Hosting brunch is one of my favorite things to do for friends. Whether for a group of four or 30, embracing the sweet and savory sides of brunch always gets my creativity in the kitchen going. This month I've taken a spin on the classic bagel breakfast and turned it into a scrumptious smoked salmon turnover. Pre-made puff pastry keeps it incredibly easy so you can put the dish together in a snap.

## Smoked Salmon Turnovers

**1 sheet prepared puff pastry, thawed if frozen**  
**3 ounces smoked salmon**  
**4 ounces cream cheese, softened**  
**2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives**  
**1 egg**  
**1 tablespoon water**  
**1 tablespoon everything bagel seasoning**

**COOK'S TIP** Everything bagel seasoning can be found in most grocery stores, or make your own blend with sesame seeds, poppy seeds, salt, dried minced garlic and dried onion flakes.

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment. Place puff pastry on a lightly floured surface and gently roll out to a rectangle, approximately 9 by 14 inches.
2. Roughly chop salmon and place in a bowl. Add cream cheese and chives and stir until evenly mixed, breaking up the salmon more as you stir.
3. Cut the puff pastry into 8 equal pieces. Add about 2 tablespoons filling to each piece, then fold pastry over to form a triangle. Press edges to seal and crimp with the tines of a fork. Repeat with remaining pastry and filling. Place filled turnovers on prepared baking sheet.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and water, then brush over the tops of the turnovers. Sprinkle bagel seasoning evenly over the turnovers. Bake 15–18 minutes, until puffed and golden brown. Let cool slightly before serving.

**SERVES 8**

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





## Whole-Grain Cinnamon Rolls

MOLLY BRET  
COSERV

Overnight cinnamon rolls are perfect for a make-ahead brunch, and this recipe uses wheat flour to help balance the sweetness. Don't worry if any filling falls out as you shape the rolls; you can sprinkle it on top in the pan.

### ROLLS

- 1 cup milk, warmed to about 100 degrees**
- 1 packet instant yeast**
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup sugar or honey**
- 2 cups whole-wheat flour**
- 2–2½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more as needed, divided use**
- 2 eggs**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (1 stick) butter, softened and cut into chunks**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt**
- 1–2 cups prepared cream cheese frosting**

### FILLING

- 6 tablespoons ( $\frac{3}{4}$  stick) butter, softened**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon**

**1. ROLLS** In a large bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer, combine warmed milk, yeast and sugar. Let rest 5 minutes, then gradually mix in wheat flour, 2 cups all-purpose flour, eggs (one at a time) and butter. If using a stand mixer, start speed at low and then turn to medium, mixing until a soft dough is formed. Add additional flour as needed to prevent sticking. Sprinkle in salt and

\$500 WINNER

## BLT Strata

BARBARA REISS  
PEDERNALES EC



Perfect for using up leftover bread, this strata has all the flavors of a classic BLT sandwich. Make sure to chill it for at least an hour, or overnight, to ensure the bread soaks up the custard.

**SERVES 6**



- 6 ounces thick-cut bacon, cut into small pieces**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped onion**
- 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes**
- 2 cups baby spinach or arugula**
- 6 ounces day-old bread, such as sourdough or challah, cut into cubes**
- 6 eggs**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup milk**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon pepper**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup packed shredded Gruyère or white cheddar**

- 1.** Grease a 2-quart baking dish and set aside.
- 2.** In a large skillet over medium heat, cook bacon until crisp. Drain bacon on a paper towel-lined plate and pour off all but 1 tablespoon of fat.
- 3.** Sauté onions in the same skillet over medium heat until they begin to soften and become translucent, 3–5 minutes. Add halved tomatoes and increase heat to medium-high. Cook, scraping up any browned bits in the pan, until onions have started to caramelize and tomatoes have softened. Stir in the spinach until wilted, then remove the pan from heat. Stir the bacon into the onion mixture.
- 4.** Add half the bread cubes to prepared baking dish, then top with half of the onion mixture. Repeat with remaining bread and onion mixture.
- 5.** In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper, then pour evenly into the baking dish. Sprinkle cheese over the top, then cover with foil and refrigerate at least 1 hour and up to overnight.
- 6.** When ready to bake, remove strata from the refrigerator and preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Bake uncovered 40–45 minutes, until lightly browned on top.

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

**PIZZA NIGHT** DUE APRIL 10

What makes your pizza irresistible? Submit your recipes on our website by April 10 for a chance to win \$500.



CONTINUED >

## RECIPES CONTINUED

mix a few minutes more. Gently knead dough into a ball and place in a large greased bowl. Cover and let rise 1–2 hours or until doubled in size.

**2.** Once dough has risen, place it on a lightly floured surface. Roll dough into a 12-by-18-inch rectangle.

**3. FILLING** Spread softened butter over the surface of the dough. In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon, then sprinkle over the dough evenly.

**4.** Roll up dough on the long end, then cut into 12 rolls. Lightly grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and place rolls cut-side up in the pan. Sprinkle any excess filling over rolls, then cover dish tightly and chill overnight.

**5.** When ready to bake, remove rolls and let rise 1–2 hours or until puffy. Preheat oven to 375 degrees and bake rolls 20–25 minutes. Let cool slightly and then top with prepared frosting.

**SERVES 12**



### Tex-Mex Bacon and Egg Squares

MARILYN BURGESS  
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Easy to make and crowd-pleasers, these squares are ideal for those who love the combination of chiles and cheese. Serve as is or with guacamole, sour cream or additional hot sauce.

**2 cans (10 ounces) whole green chiles, drained**  
**8 ounces grated sharp cheddar cheese**

**6 slices thick-cut bacon, cooked and cut into bite-size pieces**  
**6 eggs**  
**Dash of hot sauce**  
**Salt and pepper**

**1.** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Arrange chiles evenly in the dish, then sprinkle on cheese and bacon.

**2.** In a bowl, beat together eggs, hot sauce, and salt and pepper, then pour evenly into the dish. Bake until eggs are firm and cheese has melted, 25–30 minutes. Cool 5 minutes, then cut into squares to serve.

**SERVES 9**

**TCP** Find more recipes to punch up your brunch at [TexasCoopPower.com/food](https://www.texascooppower.com/food), where you can search through nearly 1,000 recipes.

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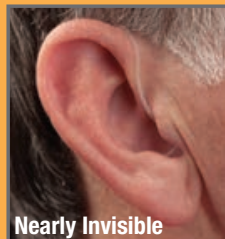
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Swinging Through Time

The Regency Bridge is the state's last drivable suspension bridge

BY CHET GARNER

I COULD FEEL MY ENTIRE vehicle swaying as I cruised, ever so carefully, across the last drivable suspension bridge in Texas. I felt like a squirrel on a power line, but instead of being 30 feet above the ground, I was 75 feet above the Colorado River. To make matters even more tense, I could hear the wooden boards flexing and creaking beneath my tires.

I was deep in the northern Hill Country for this adventure of driving across the Regency Bridge, part road and part roller coaster. The bridge is truly the last of its kind and may only still exist because it connects two quiet gravel roads with very little traffic.

The Regency Bridge was built in 1939 to link the rural communities of San Saba and Mills counties and spans more than 400 feet from bank to bank. The drivable surface consists of planks suspended by metal cables, earning it the nickname Swinging Bridge.

Yes, it really swings. And in its 83 years of existence, it's seen everything from buggies to cattle drives to electric cars.

I was about halfway across when I realized the bridge is so narrow that I could only see the road in front of me and the metal cables out each of my side windows. It left me with a really beautiful view of the expansive Colorado River basin marked by high limestone bluffs. I had to constantly remind myself to keep my eyes on the road or else my trip was going to meet a very abrupt end.

Those who might be nervous to cross should know that the Texas Department of Transportation has done multiple inspections and overhauls—the most recent in 2021. I survived my trip and had so much fun, I immediately turned around and did it all over again. ■

ABOVE Chet braves the Regency Bridge high above the Colorado River.

**TCP** See Chet's crossing of the Regency on our website. Watch all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



## Know Before You Go

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

## APRIL

### 08

**Brenham The Isaacs,**  
(979) 337-7240,  
thebarnhillcenter.com

**Kerrville Montopolis:**  
**The Living Coast,**  
(830) 315-5483,  
thearcadialive.org

**Canton [8-9] Antique Tractor/**  
**Truck Show and Swap Meet,**  
(214) 837-8861

**Corsicana [8-9] Texas**  
**State Camping Squares,**  
(832) 877-6534,  
texasstatecampingsquares.com

**Kerrville [8-10, 15-16,**  
**22-24] For Such a Time**  
**as This,** (830) 896-9393,  
caillouxperformingarts.com

### 09

**Grand Saline Main Street**  
**Festival,** (903) 962-3122,  
grandsalinemainstreet.com

**Newcastle Crawfish and**  
**Cannons,** (940) 549-0401,  
goodnightlovingrun.com

**New Braunfels [9-10]**  
**Folkfest,** (830) 629-6504,  
texashandmadefurniture.com

**Stanton [9-10] Old Sorehead**  
**Trade Days,** (432) 756-2006,  
stantontex.com

**Quintana [9-May 8] Spring**  
**Fling,** (979) 480-0999,  
gcbo.org

### 12

**Paris [12-14] Lamar County**  
**Junior Livestock Show**  
**& Sale,** (903) 784-7984

### 15

**Alpine [15-17] Big Bend**  
**Gem and Mineral Show,**  
(432) 244-9503



16

**Grandview [15-17] Antique Alley Texas**, (817) 666-5024, facebook.com/antiquealleytexas

**Lufkin The Queen's Cartoonists**, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

**San Marcos Easter Egg Hunt & Festival**, (214) 641-5841, heritagesanmarcos.org

20

**Corpus Christi [20-24] The Birdiest Festival in America**, (361) 852-2100, birdiestfestival.org

21

**Lake Jackson [21-24] [title of show]**, (979) 230-3000, onstage@brazosport.edu

22

**Brenham Billy Joel Tribute by Brett Cline**, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

**Henderson [22-23] East Texas Antique Tractor & Engine Club Show and Pull**, (903) 646-3769, north-texas-antique-tractor-and-engine-club.org

**Coleman [22-24] Great Western Trail Days**, (325) 669-2292, greatwesterntraildays.com

**New Braunfels [22-24] Car Club Swap Meet**, (830) 708-1372, newbraunfelsareacarclub.com

23

**Burton Cotton Gin Festival**, (979) 289-3378, texascottonginmuseum.org

**Fredericksburg Luckenbach Bluegrass Festival**, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

MORE EVENTS >

## TCP Submit Your Event

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



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## Pick of the Month

**An Evening With Renée  
Elise Goldsberry**

Lufkin, April 30  
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angelinaarts.org

Goldsberry, who won Tony and Grammy awards for her inspired performance in *Hamilton*, brings a four-piece band and a complement of backup singers to the Temple Theater.

## APRIL EVENTS CONTINUED

23

**Karnack Earth Day  
Paddling Flotilla**,  
(903) 736-3063,  
tinyurl.com/2022flotilla

**Lake Jackson Kids  
Reel Big Fish Event**,  
(979) 297-4533,  
visitbrazosport.com

**La Porte San Jacinto Cele-  
bration**, (281) 479-2431,  
thc.texas.gov

**Wimberley Pie Social**,  
(512) 965-2662,  
wimwic.org/pie-social

**Bryan [23-24] Bryan-  
College Station Friends  
of the Library Spring Book  
Sale**, (979) 209-5600,  
friendsbcs.org

**Granbury [23-24] Wine  
Walk**, (817) 573-5548,  
granburywinewalk.com

24

**Marble Falls [24-30] Paint  
the Town**, (830) 693-4449,  
hlcart.com/ptt-2022-event

28

**Kerrville Symphony  
of the Hills: Primitive  
Echoes**, (830) 792-7469,  
symphonyofthehills.org

**Freeport [28-30] River-  
fest**, (979) 233-6061,  
brazosport.org

**Turkey [28-30] Bob Wills  
Day**, (806) 336-1471,  
bobwillsday.com

29

**Fort Davis [29-30] Dark  
Skies Festival**,  
(512) 475-6763,  
mcdonaldobservatory.org

**Gun Barrel City [29-30]  
Gun Barrel Quilters Guild  
Annual Quilt Show**,  
(903) 391-3241,  
gunbarrelquiltersguild.org

**Fredericksburg [29-May 1,  
6-8, 13-15] Lend Me a  
Tenor**, (830) 997-3588,  
fredericksburgtheater.org

30

**Surfside Beach Old  
Guys Surf Reunion**,  
(979) 233-1531,  
surfsidetx.org

**Waxahachie Bling Bang  
Bash Designer Bag Bingo &  
Gun Raffle**, (972) 937-1455,  
casaofelliscounty.org

**Nacogdoches [30-May 1]  
Multicultural Festival**,  
(936) 564-7807,  
sacredheartnac.org/mcf

MAY

01

**Surfside Beach Market in  
the Park**, (979) 233-1531,  
visitbrazosport.com

05

**Fredericksburg [5-8] 175th  
Anniversary Grand Finale  
Weekend**, (830) 997-6523,  
175th.org



# All Wet

Splish, splash, Texans love a good rain. And come hell or high water, someone's sure to take a dip. Take the plunge and see for yourself if these hold water.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



**1** KYLE HARGROVE  
FARMERS EC

"Kicking up some waves on a fun summer day."

**2** MARK HOLLY  
BANDERA EC

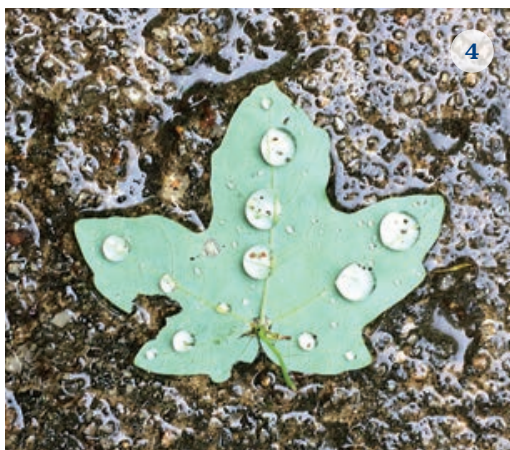
Horses enjoy a pond in a field of bluebonnets.

**3** PAUL LAUDER  
FARMERS EC

"Cruising in a vintage 1960s automobile-boat."

**4** ERIKA ORDOG  
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

Raindrops.



## Upcoming Contests

- DUE APR 10** Motorsports
- DUE MAY 10** Light and Shadow
- DUE JUN 10** Hometown Pride



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

**TCP** See Focus on Texas on our website for more All Wet photos from readers.





## No Hedging

Waging a battle—but losing the war—against vengeful hedge parsley

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS  
ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREA COBB

I NEVER SUSPECTED a thing. As I pulled and yanked, I had no clue that the weeds I sought to eliminate planned a revenge I'd never forget.

"You better stop," my husband warned as I worked that spring evening in what we call the meadow, our adjoining lot turned nature preserve. "You're going to overdo it."

"I'll be fine," I retorted, bending down to pull another and another and another.

James rolled his eyes and left me knee-high in firewheel, prairie verbena, Engelmann's daisies, Texas stars and—horror!—common hedge parsley. The introduced species did not belong among our native beauties. So I was determined to get rid of them.

Honeybees flitted among the wildflowers as I used my right arm to tug out

another slim stem of hedge parsley. Their tiny flowers and fernlike leaves reminded me of their carrot cousin, Queen Anne's lace. Their bright white umbels also made them easy to target in my execution march across the meadow.

Occasionally I surveyed my progress, which was not impressive. I sighed. Hundreds more of the intruders swayed in the breeze, taunting my efforts. I knew it would take hours more to pull them all. But I kept going.

At least I'm making a dent, I convinced myself. There won't be as many next year.

But I knew the truth. Next year, *beaucoup* of their sticky seeds (that latch onto fur and socks) would germinate by the thousands. No matter what, hedge parsleys would flourish as they always have. The only difference, I would soon learn, was I'd never declare war against them again.

Just a few days later, on the road for a trip, my right shoulder began to ache. Gingerly, I rotated my upper arm and brushed off the pain. Yeah, it'd go away. I'd be OK.

But I wasn't. The week after we got home, James drove me to our medical clinic.

"I did the same thing," said the nurse practitioner as she checked my shoulder and arm. "I scrubbed floors by hand one afternoon. Then I stirred hot chocolate at the football stadium's concession stand. Took six months for my shoulder to heal."

"Six months," I echoed.

"Sure did," she said. "Don't worry." She patted my shoulder. "You'll get better. Just give it some time."

I did. Six months later, though, my right shoulder still reminded me of how I sinned in the meadow. Would it ever truly heal?

In the meantime, I dreaded the next spring. I could already envision the hedge parsleys waving their leaves in victory, sense their roots snaking deep into the soil.

Somehow I *had* to ignore them. Because, trust me, revenge of the hedge parsleys is for real. Just ask me and my right shoulder. ■





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