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July 2022



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Prized Fibers

Cotton gins still turn sweat and tears into a treasured commodity.

Story and photos by Julia Robinson

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Because Kreuz Market has perfected the once-scorned barbecued bird.

*By Joe Nick Patoski
Photos by Wyatt McSpadden*

ON THE COVER

Chicken that pitmaster Roy Perez describes this way: "Simple. With love."
Photo by Wyatt McSpadden

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Photo by Julia Robinson

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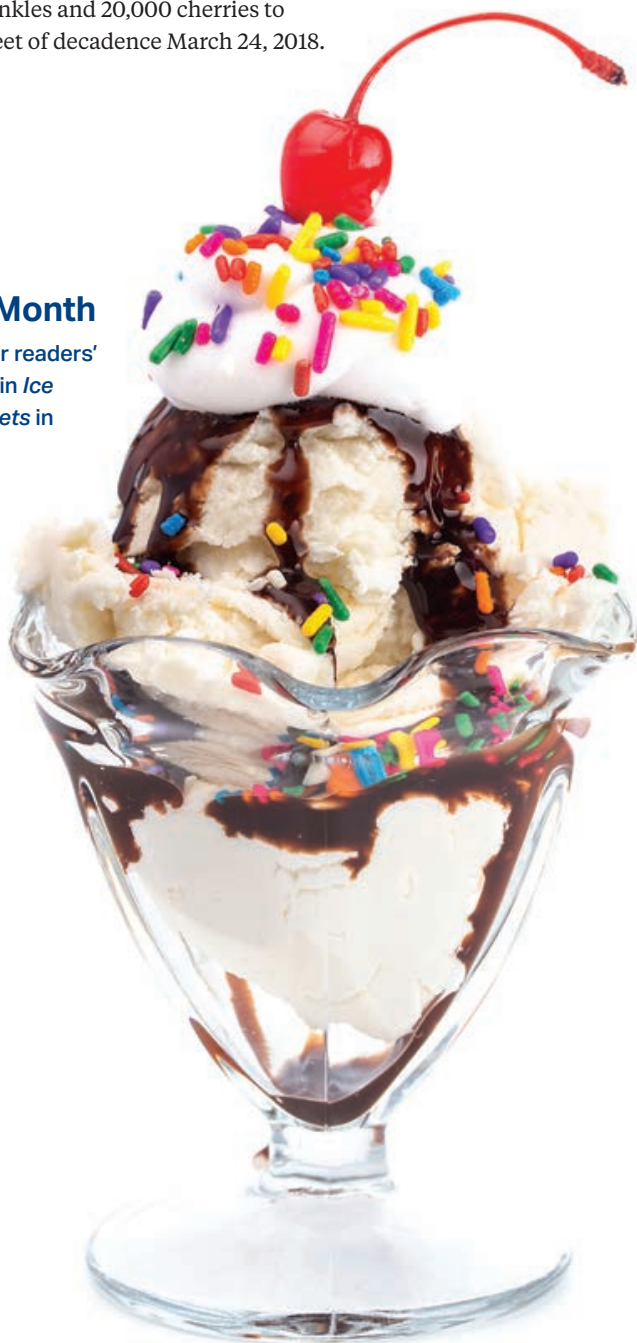
THE WORLD'S LONGEST ice cream sundae—more than 15 football fields long—was concocted four years ago in College Station.

The creators at the Spirit of Texas Festival used 500 gallons of H-E-B Texans Tackle Crackle ice cream, 2,000 cans of whipped cream, 300 gallons of chocolate and strawberry syrup, 25 pounds of sprinkles and 20,000 cherries to assemble 4,549 feet of decadence March 24, 2018.

July

National Ice Cream Month

Celebrate with our readers' recipes, featured in *Ice Creams and Sorbets* in July 2021.



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Dig This

Texas Co-op Power readers ... well, they rock.

One reader, inspired by an October 2021 story, donated \$20,000 to a research program in South Texas.

Learning Rocks featured a Shumla Archaeological Research and Education Center program, above, involving high school students in Comstock. The donation will help Shumla purchase a camera with accessories, scaffolding to help students photograph rock art and tablets for data entry.



TCP Contests and More

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News Flash

LIGHTNING OVER TEXAS reached a long way, though not to the ground.

A storm April 29, 2020, produced a bolt that stretched a record 477 miles, from Southeast Texas to Mississippi. Scientists used satellite technology to confirm the record in February.

Also this year, Flatonia, a small town about halfway between Houston and San Antonio, was announced as the lightning capital of the U.S. Vaisala, a weather measurement and analysis company, determined that Flatonia received 1,043 lightning events per square mile in 2021—more than any other city in the country.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I FEEL
PATRIOTIC
WHEN ...

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 May prompt: **Three words that brighten my day are ...**

I love you.

SANDRA BOWEN
BIG COUNTRY EC
HAWLEY

Ice cold beer.

STEPHEN SEWELL
PEDERNALES EC
KEMPNER

I've got this. (A nice young man ahead of me in line at 7-Eleven this morning decided to pay for my juice and coffee.)

LINDA RIDEOUT
VIA FACEBOOK

To see more responses, read Currents online.



A Deep Dive

“What a fascinating story about a fascinating aspect of our state. I was amazed to learn such a unique place exists in the Lone Star State.”

DONALD HAHN
HAMILTON COUNTY EC
HICO

Hope Lives On

To find that the photo of the Wantland family was taken inside what was the old Hope Lutheran Church of Buckholts really took my breath away [*A Little Source of Joy*, May 2022].

Our family were members of Hope Lutheran, and our daughter's wedding was the last one before the old church was hauled off to the pasture of the man who purchased it to use as a barn. The building was later cut into several pieces and moved to Round Top to be restored and used as a children's library.

Lamerle Zajicek
Lucas

I love Ms. Dolly, not only for her music [*A Little Source of Joy*, May 2022]. She has done so much for the community she grew up in.

SHERRI CONSTABLE
VIA FACEBOOK



ERICH SCHLEGEL

It Takes the Cake

The Texas Praline Sheet Cake featured in March was one of the most amazing cakes I've ever made. It was a big hit on our Easter table.

I've made several of the recipes featured in the magazine over the years and really liked them all, but this cake takes the cake.

Cindi Boyd
Medina EC
Freer

A Great Mix

I love your magazine. I am always surprised at how much you get into so few pages. And it's a great mix of heartfelt stories, usable information, wonderful recipes and beautiful pictures. You represent our state well.

Anita Askew
Pedernales EC
Wimberley

Along Those Lines

As a child in the 1940s and '50s, we would travel between Vernon and Amarillo. There were always hundreds of scissor-tailed flycatchers on the electric lines [*Scissortail Signals*, April 2022]. My favorite bird. I love them.

Penny Haulman
Via Facebook

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.

Texas Co-op Power

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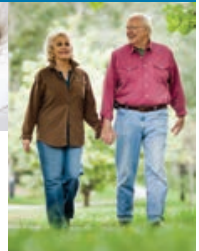
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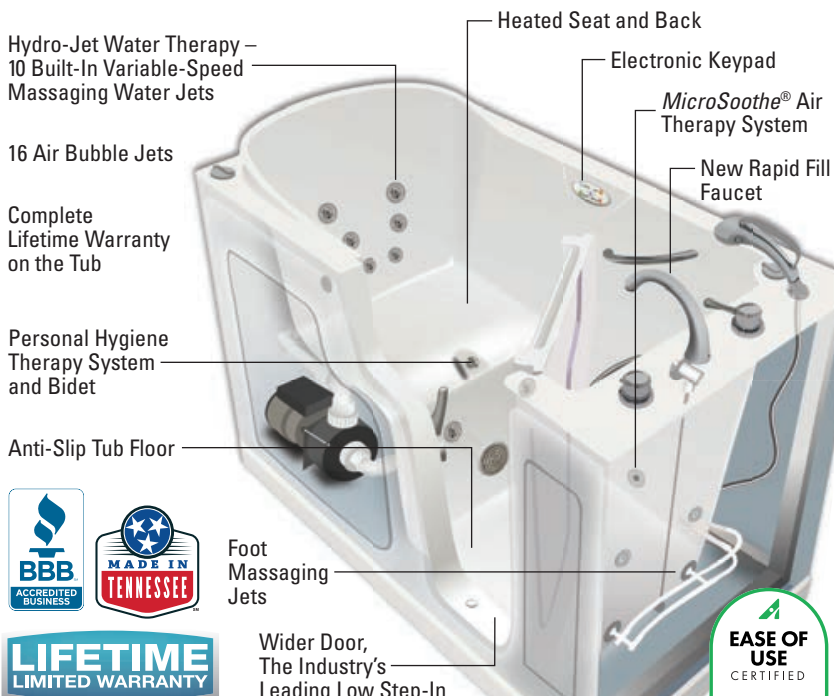
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Texas' cotton gins have turned more sweat and tears into lint than

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JULIA ROBINSON

At times the fabric of Texas' economy has been 100% cotton. The availability of cotton products, though, belies a complicated transformation.

"Blood, sweat and tears," says Kirk Tidwell, a cotton farmer in Lamesa, about halfway between Lubbock and Midland. "There's a lot of tears sometimes."

"There's just so much risk; we don't know from the day we plant it if it's ever going to make it to harvest or not," says Tidwell, who also serves on the board of directors at Lyntegar Electric Cooperative. "We may lose it to a hail-storm or a sandstorm or an early freeze. We're always just hopeful."

That cotton-hope blend—formed by a lot of hard work and a little luck—has not frayed much over two centuries. Times are still tough for cotton farmers, but cotton gins are still going. Texas had 4,300 gins in 1900; 185 operate today,

according to the Texas Cotton Ginners' Association.

"I would guess half of those are on the way out," says Jerry Harris, general manager of King Mesa Gin in Lamesa.

"As the number of gins go down, the number of bales ginned stays the same or goes up," Harris says as 18-wheelers pull onto scales with round bales bound in colorful plastic. "There used to be a gin every 6 miles because that's as far as people wanted to carry their crop, but now people will come hundreds of miles with a crop."

Spanish missionaries were the first to raise cotton in Texas. By 1821, Anglo colonists turned to the crop in earnest, reaping profits and building an industry by relying on the labor of enslaved people. Cotton drove the state's economy until the 20th century. Today it thrives in several areas of the state, and the South Plains region around Lubbock, where Tidwell farms, devotes more land to growing cotton than any other part of the world—as much as 3 million acres some years. Irrigation and easy weed control make

F I B E R S =



any other state for 150 years—and they're still innovating

growing cotton there more productive than in other parts of the state.

Starting at Odessa and going north up the Panhandle, the soil turns reddish brown as fields of cotton spread beneath the pump jacks and wind turbines that dominate the horizon. It's a geography of vast spaces—"so flat that your dog can run away, and you'll still see him a week later," a Texas congressman once said—and the white bolls in tidy rows are set off dramatically against unblemished blue skies.

Since 1850, Texas has led the nation in cotton production, tallying 8 million bales in 2021, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Every one of those bales is processed at a cotton gin, where bolls move through machines that separate the embedded seeds, which are about the size of a grain of rice, from the prized fiber, which is called lint. Cotton production at this scale is possible only because of the gins that dot the state.



TOP The South Plains region around Lubbock devotes more land to growing cotton than any other part of the world. **ABOVE** A handful of cotton seed left over after the ginning process.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Kirk Tidwell raises cotton on 6,500 acres in Lamesa. An 1833 hand-operated cotton gin. Jerry Harris runs King Mesa Gin in Lamesa. Curtis Stewart, manager at Spade Co-op Gin northwest of Lubbock, catches cotton seeds as they fall through a gin's spinning blades.

The largest gin in the world, Adobe Walls Gin in Spearman, about 35 miles from the Oklahoma border, produces 300,000 bales per year. Operations were much smaller during fall and winter harvests generations ago, when cotton gins became gathering places where farmers socialized and shared news while waiting their turn to have their crops baled. Those days could be stressful.

"There was a lot riding on the processing and selling of your cotton," says Andrew Torget, a University of North Texas professor and author of *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands, 1800–1850*. "This is an industry where you basically have one payday. The emotional tenor of that was tremendous. How much profit you had, what you could buy your kids or couldn't for the coming year—all these things got concentrated in this one location and this one experience for farmers.

"Today we like to look back with a sort of bucolic romanticism about things that are unfamiliar to us, but I think we forget the terrors and the fears and the helplessness that sometimes accompany those experiences."

Still, gins greatly eased much of the anxiety of cotton farming, which in the early days of our state was only possible because of labor by enslaved people. It takes 10 hours for one person to remove enough seeds by hand to get 1 pound of lint. "Cotton has this problem that the seeds are stuck inside this prison of fibers," Torget says. "How you get those out is a real bottleneck because doing it by hand means you can't do it at scale."

Early gins used hand-cranked stone or iron rollers to separate the seeds from the fiber and could process 5 pounds of lint per day. In 1794, Eli Whitney designed a machine, a cylinder with spikes that pulled lint clean from the seed as it was cranked, that increased production to 50 pounds per day.

Two years later, Henry Ogden Holmes patented a design that increased the output to thousands of pounds per day with a set of spinning saw teeth on a circular steel blade that pulled lint from seeds in a continuous motion. This design



Since 1850, Texas has led the nation in cotton production, tallying 8 million bales in 2021.

year. In 1915 it pressed nearly 1,000 bales.

“We would have been serving 60 farmers in a really good day,” says Tynan Shadle, the museum’s programs coordinator and a member of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative. Teams and wagons full of cotton would wait their turn—first come, first served—in the yard. Some farmers camped out the night before; some would unload in the morning and return in the afternoon with another load.

The gin featured pneumatic tubes that inhaled the raw cotton and blew it through the entire ginning process, an innovation that came from Robert Munger of nearby Ruttersville. The system is still used today in gins around the world.

Nothing from cotton was wasted in those days. Seed was separated from the lint and delivered back into the farmer’s wagon to plant for the next year. Sometimes the gin bought it to use as livestock feed or to press into oil.

The Burton gin continued operations until 1974, when it closed its doors after producing only seven bales that year. Lint cleaning, feed milling and other services had kept the facility going longer than most, but its time had come.

“We’ve seen boll weevil infestations lead to crop failures, two world wars taking men off the farms, and then the GI Bill, which gave those returning men better opportunities,” Shadle says. “We saw a mass exodus from farms.

“Cotton was just not able to make enough money, and so it was more profitable to switch back to cattle. Not too long after that, they began finding natural gas in the area, too.”

A community group formed a nonprofit and began restoring the Burton Farmers Gin in 1990. It’s the oldest operating cotton gin in the U.S. and is a Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Out in Lamesa, King Mesa Gin, which operates around the clock at times to keep up with the 7 tons of raw cotton delivered several times a day by truck, is the only gin in the U.S. to offer DNA tracing to its producers, ensuring the same cotton that’s sent overseas for manufacturing is the same cotton in the finished product on store shelves.

In 2019, Texas growers were responsible for three-quarters of all American organic cotton, which is grown using more sustainable practices. “Where you’re sitting right now is in a hundred-mile circle of the most organic cotton grown in the U.S.,” says Harris, a member of Lyntegar EC.

For Tidwell, becoming part owner of King Mesa just made sense for ensuring his livelihood.

“We went in together as a community to keep the gin in the community, under our control and to do it the way we’ve always done it,” he explains from his knee-high cotton field. “I only get paid once a year, and this is my payday right here.” ■

is still used in modern cotton ginning. Gin designs and innovations proliferated across the South, and daisy chains of gins began to be operated by animal and water power.

Visitors to the Texas Cotton Gin Museum in Burton, halfway between Austin and Houston, can see some of this history up close, including an open stand that reveals 80 saw blades that spin vertically through metal ribs. A group of local German farmers sold \$50 shares, raising \$10,000 to build the Burton Farmers Gin in 1913. The gin fired up for the first time August 3, 1914, and produced 82 bales that



Roy Perez, general manager and head pitmaster at Kreuz Market in Lockhart.

WHY'D THE CHICKEN CROSS THE PIT?

Because Kreuz Market has perfected the once-scorned barbecued bird

THE **poor barbecued chicken.**

The holy trinity of Texas barbecue consists of beef brisket, pork ribs and sausage. Other meats pulled from pits around these parts include prime rib, pork chops and giant beef.

Barbecued yardbird? Not so much. Even the generic turkey breast gets more 'cue love.

Traditionally, slow-smoked chicken has been regarded as too tricky to cook consistently, the end product either undercooked with too much red visible or overcooked to a dryness rivaling jerky.

Chicken, it would seem, is meant to be fried, roasted on a rotisserie or grilled in the Mexican style of the El Pollo Loco and Pollo Regio franchises.

For the past 10 years, however, the best barbecued chicken in Texas has been turned out quietly, as something of an afterthought—an almost under-the-counter thing—in one of the most obvious places on Earth: Kreuz Market in Lockhart, one of the temples of Texas barbecue.

Moist and tender, every morsel packs savory-sweet smoked flavor, enveloped by deep-bronzed skin that's crispy, not greasy.

Full disclosure: "Best barbecue" is a loaded phrase, I know. But that's how my friend Wyatt McSpadden described the whole chicken wrapped in butcher paper he brought me when I was bedridden following a hospital stay last year. I didn't open the sack until about three hours after he left. When I did, bells rang and the lights started flashing.

Chicken!

I was part of the original *Texas Monthly* barbecue team for the magazine's top-50 barbecue joints ranking in 1997 and 2003. Barbecued chicken was never part of the discussion on either top-50 quest.

McSpadden photographed some of the top-50 locations, and today he's known as one of the foremost photographers

of Texas barbecue, capturing pitmasters including Austin's Aaron Franklin and Lexington's Tootsie Tomanetz and sampling their esteemed meats.

I met him at Kreuz Market to gauge his assessment, and now I'm willing to stick my neck out and declare it's the best.

Roy Perez chuckles when he hears that.

He says he started tinkering with yardbirds 10 years ago, after noting a number of customers—typically first-timers—asking about chicken. "It wasn't on the menu for years," he says. "We got tired of people asking, 'You got chicken?' and 'You ain't got chicken?' In my head, I went, 'You want chicken? We got Golden Chick, Chicken Express, all these chicken places.'"

But those are fried, not slow-smoked.

"There's something about barbecued chicken that's different," he says. "It just came to me: 'Can I do chicken?' I thought: Let's throw it on there and mess with it, see how it turns out."

As general manager and head pitmaster at Kreuz and with 35 years' experience, the mutton-chopped Perez is renowned for turning out top-shelf brisket as well as exceptional pork ribs, dino beef ribs and sausage.

But a hands-on approach to minding the pit and trial and error led him to consistently turn out slow-smoked birds that are moist and flavorful throughout. His favorite part? "I've always liked the thigh," he says. "We're old-school. As you can see, I'm sitting here keeping my eyes on this fire instead of sitting in an office somewhere."

Perez says he learned the pitmaster trade from Rick Schmidt, one of the owners at Kreuz Market when he started, back in 1987. Chicken takes as much skill as any of the cuts that Kreuz is known for.

"You've got to stay on it, take care of it," Perez says. "Keep an eye on it, twist on the leg to see if it's still tender and still needs more cooking. It's all visual. We don't use thermometers."

Still, most barbecue pit bosses don't share his respect for the craft.

"These guys laugh when we're cooking the chicken," Perez



CHOICE CHICKEN

We asked electric cooperative employees where they get their barbecued bird. Here are a few of their favorite spots.

Mimsy's Craft Barbecue, Crockett
Lockhart Smokehouse, Dallas
Iceman's BBQ, Edgewood
Stiky Ribz, Forney
Bar-B-Que To-Go, Ganado
Heavy's Bar-B-Que, Hondo
Back Porch BBQ & Grill, La Grange
Cooper's Old Time Pit Bar-B-Que, Llano
The Smoking Oak, Mercedes
Mack's Split Rail BBQ, Mineola
Judge Hunt's BBQ, Quitman
Hickory Roots BBQ, Terrell

Slow-smoked chicken
at Kreuz Market.

Roy Perez's method emphasizes simplicity: about two hours of cooking time at about 300 degrees.

says. "I'll say, 'Those are ready.' 'No, they're not!' I'll say 'OK, get a thermometer so we can check the internal temperature.' Sure enough, they'll poke it and say, 'How did you do that?'"

"With my years of experience, I don't need nothing to tell me this is done or this is not done. You got to make sure how it all comes out because people travel from all over. Even the locals—you don't want to let them down."

His method emphasizes simplicity: about two hours of cooking time at about 300 degrees.

"Put it in the back, let it cook slowly. When you know it's ready, take it off, put it in a container with the lid to keep the moisture in," Perez says. "It's such a little piece of meat; you have to keep an eye on it. You can't walk away like you can with a brisket."

The wood that provides the heat in Perez's pit is post oak. The seasoning, he says, "is no secret: just salt and pepper, a little cayenne, chili powder—same way we do our brisket." But timing is everything. "You can't sell it too early. If it's got blood in there, people might get sick. You can't sell it too late."

Kreuz was famous for not providing barbecue sauce as a condiment; the establishment has never used sauce in the cooking process, no matter the meat.

"It's cheating," Perez says. "It's a quick way out. Here we've

always been, 'Don't put nothing on it. Eat it, try it before you start covering it up with sauce.' Simple. With love. Everything else will take care of itself."

This is barbecue I can eat almost every day.

Hipster barbecue fetishists in search of the exotic tend to bypass the bird. Perez says it's because most young folks don't have the time or patience to slow-smoke chicken.

"They don't want to cook something that you have to babysit," he says. "They want to throw on a big brisket, a big clod, big rack of ribs, ring of sausage, pork chops. Then you get a little chicken—'Man, I don't want to sit here all day—it's hot!'"

Only one of Kreuz Market's eight pits accommodates chicken. The other pits, where briskets are cooking at 700 degrees, are too hot. Chicken sales have steadily increased, Perez says, despite a determined lack of emphasis on the product.

"We don't cook much of it," he says. "We're not known for chicken. The old people who have been coming for years don't order chicken. They don't want something new or different. They're set in their ways."

For the rest of us though, there's a whole other reason for making a barbecue pilgrimage to Lockhart: Roy Perez's barbecued chicken. ■

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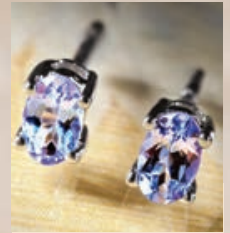


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with your purchase of the Sunburst Tanzanite Ring

African Gem Cutter Makes \$2,689,000 Mistake... Will You?

This story breaks my heart every time. Allegedly, just two years after the discovery of tanzanite in 1967, a Maasai tribesman knocked on the door of a gem cutter's office in Nairobi. The Maasai had brought along an enormous chunk of tanzanite and he was looking to sell. His asking price? Fifty dollars. But the gem cutter was suspicious and assumed that a stone so large could only be glass. The cutter told the tribesman, no thanks, and sent him on his way. Huge mistake. It turns out that the gem was genuine and would have easily dwarfed the world's largest cut tanzanite at the time. Based on common pricing, that "chunk" could have been worth close to \$3,000,000! The tanzanite gem cutter missed his chance to hit the jeweler's jackpot ... and make history. Would you have made the same mistake then? Will you make it today?

In the decades since its discovery, tanzanite has become one of the world's most coveted gemstones. Found in only one remote place on Earth (in Tanzania's Merelani Hills, in the shadow of Mount Kilimanjaro), the precious purple stone is 1,000 times rarer than diamonds. Luxury retailers have been quick to sound the alarm, warning that supplies of tanzanite will not last forever. And in this case, they're right. Once the last purple gem is pulled from the Earth, that's it. No more tanzanite. Most believe that we only have a twenty year supply left, which is why it's so amazing for us to offer this incredible price break. Some retailers along Fifth Avenue are more than happy to charge you outrageous prices for this rarity.

Not Stauer. Staying true to our contrarian nature, we've decided to lower the price of one of the world's rarest and most popular gemstones.

This stunning two-total carat Sunburst Tanzanite Ring features marquise-cut gems set dramatically in gorgeous sterling silver. Each facet sparkles with the distinct violet-blue hue of the precious stones. But we don't stop there. While supplies last, we'll include these tanzanite studs **FREE** with your purchase of the ring — a \$99 value!

Limited Availability. We only have ~~1200~~, 954 left for this ad only. Of course, your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you are not completely aglow with the Sunburst Tanzanite Ring, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price. But, please don't wait, our supply is dropping rapidly.

Jewelry Specifications:

- 2 ctw genuine tanzanite set in .925 sterling silver setting; whole sizes 5–10

Sunburst Tanzanite Ring (2 ctw) ~~\$349~~ \$79* + S&P **Save \$270**
Plus FREE Tanzanite Studs (½ ctw) with your purchase of the Sunburst Tanzanite Ring — **a \$99 value!**

**Special price only for customers using the offer code.*

1-800-333-2045

Your Offer Code: TZR664-12

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The Invention of the Year

The world's lightest and most portable mobility device

Once in a lifetime, a product comes along that truly moves people. Introducing the future of battery-powered personal transportation . . . **The Zinger.**

Throughout the ages, there have been many important advances in mobility. Canes, walkers, rollators, and scooters were created to help people with mobility issues get around and retain their independence. Lately, however, there haven't been any new improvements to these existing products or developments in this field. Until now. Recently, an innovative design engineer who's developed one of the world's most popular products created a completely new breakthrough . . . a personal electric vehicle. It's called the **Zinger**, and there is nothing out there quite like it.

"What my wife especially loves is it gives her back feelings of safety and independence which has given a real boost to her confidence and happiness! Thank You!"

—Kent C., California

The first thing you'll notice about the **Zinger** is its unique look. It doesn't look like a scooter. Its sleek, lightweight yet durable frame is made with aircraft grade aluminum so it weighs only 47.2 lbs. It features one-touch folding and unfolding – when folded it can be wheeled around like a suitcase and fits easily into a backseat or trunk. Then, there are the steering levers. They enable the **Zinger** to move



Available in Green, Black and Blue (shown)

forward, backward, turn on a dime and even pull right up to



The Zinger folds to a mere 10 inches.

a table or desk. With its compact yet powerful motor it can go up to 6 miles an hour and its rechargeable battery can go up to 8 miles on a single charge. With its low center of gravity and inflatable tires it can handle rugged terrain and is virtually tip-proof. Think about it, you can take your **Zinger** almost anywhere, so you don't have to let mobility issues rule your life.



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(Zoomer Chair)



Joystick can be mounted on the right or left side for rider's comfort

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zinger

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The Zinger and Zoomer Chairs are personal electric vehicles and are not medical devices nor wheelchairs. They are not intended for medical purposes to provide mobility to persons restricted to a sitting position. They are not covered by Medicare nor Medicaid. © 2022 Journey Health and Lifestyle



85246



CEO

**HERBERT "TREY"
GREBE III**

We Are Uvalde Strong

ON MAY 24, 2022, THE UNTHINKABLE happened. An active shooter entered Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, taking a classroom hostage and ultimately killing 21 innocent people, injuring many others, and stealing the innocence of countless children. By the time you read this issue, more than a month will have passed since the incident. Maybe the news cycle has slowed, and the flowers have wilted, but as I sit down to write my July article, only a week has passed, and the event is still raw. I speak on behalf of the Medina Electric Cooperative team when I say we are praying and mourning with Uvalde during this unimaginable time.

Medina EC has an office in Uvalde on Highway 90 approximately 3.1 miles from Robb Elementary. Uvalde is home to many of our employees and members and is a community we are proud to be active in. We have employees whose children and family members were at the school and employees who are grieving the loss of loved ones. As a co-op family, this grief is felt across our entire team.

In the week that this event has taken place, I'm reminded of the goodness that is still in the world, and at Medina EC. I witnessed employees at Medina EC reaching out and comforting

co-workers, praying, and stepping up in their communities to serve in a time of need. It is refreshing to see that when evil strikes, goodness will prevail, and light will outshine the darkness.

I would like to thank the other cooperatives, our vendors and business partners who have reached out to our team to offer words and acts of support. We are thankful to work alongside such caring groups of people.

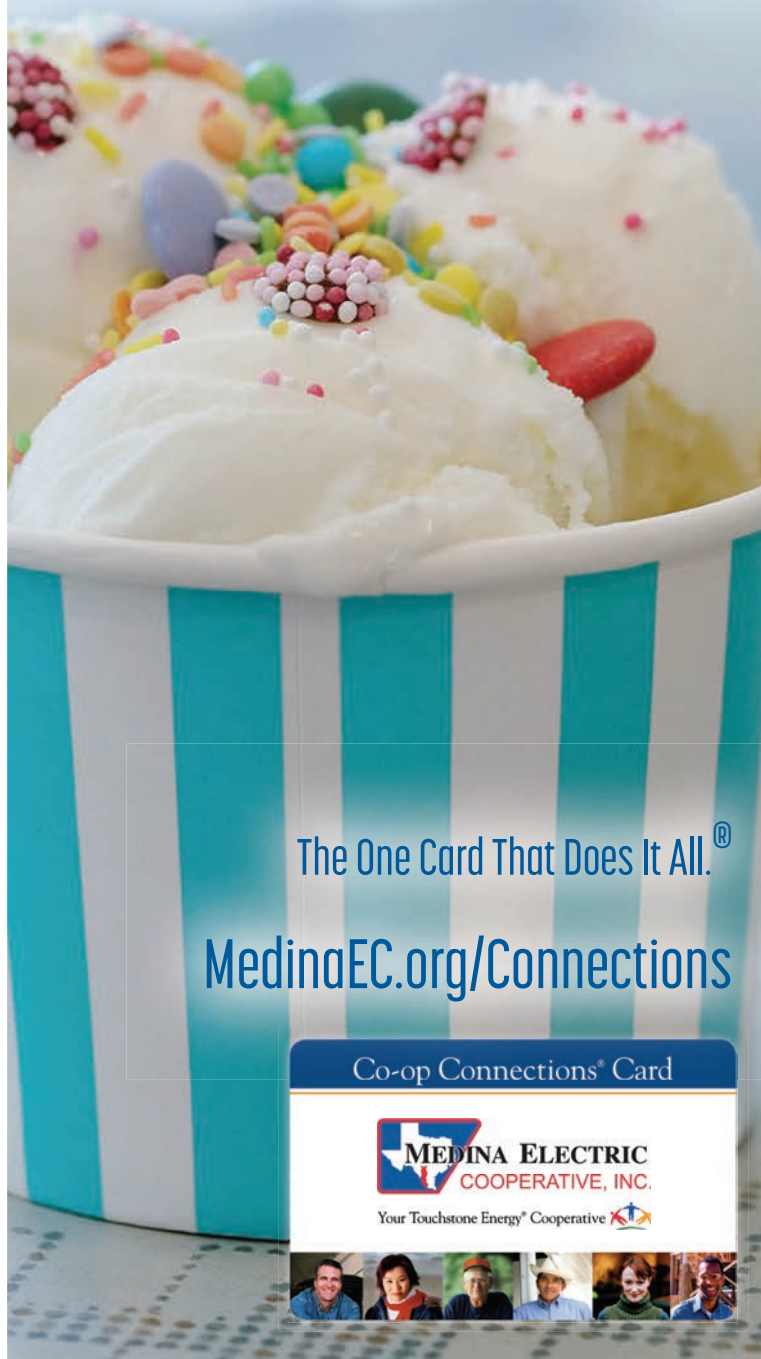
I know grief and healing is a long-term process. Medina EC has committed to supporting our tight-knit communities since 1938, and we will continue to support Uvalde through these trying times—now and long into the future.

We are Uvalde Strong.

Until next time,
Trey Grebe



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Medina Electric Cooperative



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Web MedinaEC.org - Chat Feature Available

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Outage? Call us.

TOLL-FREE

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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.

HARD WORK NEVER QUILTS



JUSTIN CORTEZ, BRUNI OFFICE

YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.

Day or night, rain or shine, we're here for you. We're not your typical energy company—we're a local, not-for-profit electric cooperative. We live in the communities we serve and work hard to improve quality of life for all.

To learn more about the cooperative difference, visit MedinaEC.org.



Assign a Voter Designee for Your Organization

IF YOUR MEDINA ELECTRIC

Cooperative membership is in the name of an entity instead of an individual, you should have a voter designee on file. The voter designee is the person who is authorized to vote on behalf of the entity, per Section 3.10 of Medina EC's bylaws. The entity must have a completed Voter Designation Form on file, and it must be signed by the owner of the entity. Voter designees will need to be on file by the record date approved by the board of directors when an election takes place.

If you have made any changes to your entity, or you just want to update/change the person chosen as voter designee on your account, complete the form at MedinaEC.org/Designee or contact us to get a form.

Contact us at:

1-866-632-3532

OR

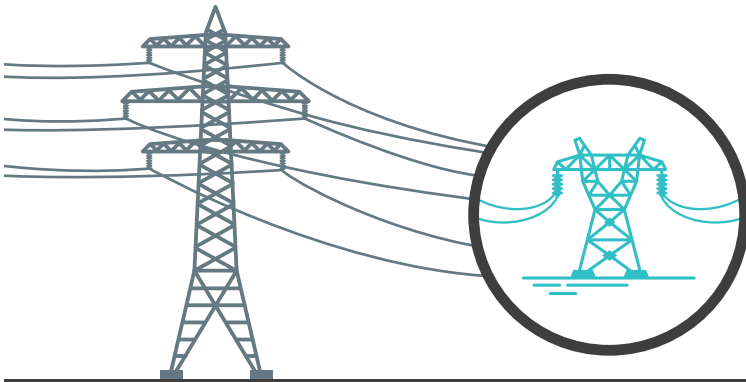
Info@MedinaEC.org



TINYAKOV | ADOBE STOCK

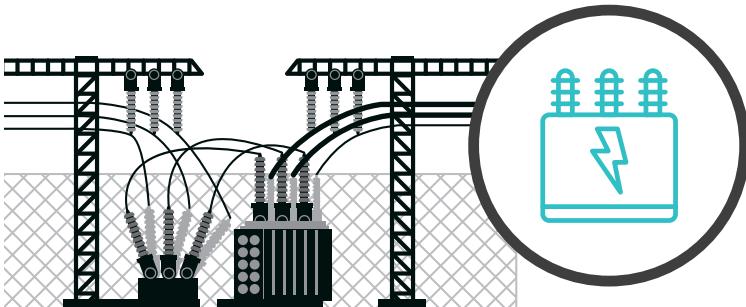
The Steps to Restoring Power

When a major outage occurs, our crews restore service to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible—until everyone has power.



1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines

These lines carry large amounts of electricity. They rarely fail but must be repaired first.



2. Distribution Substations

Crews inspect substations, which can serve hundreds or thousands of people.



3. Main Distribution Lines

Main lines serve essential facilities like hospitals and larger communities.



4. Individual Homes and Businesses

After main line repairs are complete, we repair lines that serve individual homes and businesses.



Don't Make the AC Work Too Hard

SUMMERTIME SEEMS TO BE GETTING HOTTER EVERY YEAR, and this summer is no exception.

Here are some tips to give your AC a break when temperatures rise:

Call an air conditioning tech. A professional can examine your system and let you know what needs repairing or replacing, which can prevent an untimely breakdown.

Change or clean air filters. When filters do their job properly, they trap and prevent dirt, pet hair and anything else that's floating in the air from recirculating into your home when the air conditioner is blowing. But dirty filters can prevent air from flowing, too, which makes the AC have to work extra hard to cool your house. The solution: Change or clean your filters once a month during the summer.

Make sure the area surrounding an outdoor unit is clear. Debris, plants, tall grasses and weeds can all block airflow, preventing your unit from working properly or most efficiently. Keep the surrounding area neatly maintained to ensure nothing interferes with the system's ability to function.

Run ceiling fans. When the AC is running at the same time as a ceiling fan, the room where the fan is located will feel cool enough that you can raise the thermostat by about 4 degrees. A fan doesn't cool the air, but it creates a breeze that makes anyone in the room feel cooler. Don't have ceiling fans? A box or stand fan can do the same job.

Install a dehumidifier. Another great partner for the AC is an energy-efficient dehumidifier. Lowering the humidity in your home helps the air conditioner work more efficiently because it doesn't have to waste energy removing moisture from the air and can concentrate on simply cooling it.

Don't create heat. On days when it's warm enough to turn on the air conditioner, turn off your oven, clothes dryer, lamps and other appliances that generate heat. Wait until after dark, when the day cools off a bit, before running heat-producing machines. It's also helpful to close blinds and drapes during the heat of the day to help minimize heat gain from the sun. ■



DID YOU KNOW?

With inexpensive smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more with a smart phone app.

ALLIANCE | ADOBE STOCK



POWER TIP

Avoid running electrical appliances during peak times, usually 3–7 p.m., or anytime conservation is requested.

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Team Members Reach Important Milestones

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CELEBRATED several special work anniversaries for employees between January and June of this year.

Medina EC celebrates work anniversaries in five-year increments and honors each employee with an award for their years of service. For each service award, the cooperative donates \$100 to an organization of the employee's choosing. In 2022, Medina EC employees are on track to donate \$1,900 to various local organizations.

Please join us in celebrating these Medina EC employees!



BRYCE THAYER
IT Technician
Corporate office
15 years

DONATION TO
Intrepid Fallen Heroes



SEB SUAREZ JR.
Journeyman
Uvalde office
30 years

DONATION TO
St. Jude Children's
Research Hospital



ELIAS TOBIAS
Journeyman
Laredo office
10 years

DONATION TO
Habitat for Humanity
of Laredo



MARCUS CORTEZ
Journeyman
Dilley office
5 years

DONATION TO
South Texas Brush
Puppies



JORGE ZAPATA
Journeyman
Rio Grande City office
15 years

DONATION TO
St. Jude Children's
Research Hospital



OLIVER STONE
IT Technician
Corporate office
10 years

DONATION TO
The Children's Hospital
of San Antonio



ANISA BROWNING
Accounting Clerk
Corporate office
5 years

DONATION TO
Bluebonnet Children's
Advocacy Center



GABRIEL PEREZ
Office Supervisor
Rio Grande City office
15 years

DONATION TO
MD Anderson Cancer
Center



DERLY CARRIZALES
Safety Manager
Bruni office
40 years

DONATION TO
Bruni Lions Club



We hope to see you at our

83rd

Annual Membership Meeting

Morning of Saturday, September 24 | Texas A&M International University | Laredo

MedinaEC.org/AnnualMeeting2022



FELIPE MORENO, A JOURNEYMAN IN THE LAREDO OFFICE, USES THE LIVE LINE DEMONSTRATION TO DISPLAY AN ELECTRICAL ARC.

MATTHEW HERNANDEZ, A LINEMAN IN THE HONDO OFFICE, IMPRESSES STUDENTS FROM LACOSTE ELEMENTARY DURING A CAREER DAY PRESENTATION.

Medina EC Presentations Keeping Our Communities Safe

MEDINA EC KNOWS ELECTRICITY is both dangerous and fascinating and wants to help keep people safe. To do this, we offer safety presentations for schools, chambers of commerce, civic organizations, members and first responders in our service area.

Our most popular presentation is our high-voltage live line demonstration, in which Medina EC linemen use a smaller version of working power lines and transformers to show the results of various situations. It demonstrates what happens if someone touches a power line with their finger or a mylar balloon gets caught on a power line, teaches what to do if you are in a car accident near a power line and much more.

We also have a high-tech safety tabletop display that uses a 3D model to show how to safely use electricity. It gives examples of real-life scenarios including vehicle accidents with power lines, ladders coming into contact with power lines, dangers of playing near substations and so much more.

We offer presentations on energy efficiency, for career days and customized for specific audiences as well as materials to help in the classroom.

Learn more about the presentations Medina EC offers at MedinaEC.org/Presentations, and email MyCoop@MedinaEC.org if you are interested in scheduling a presentation. Shortened video versions of the presentations are also available if you would like something to show in your classroom.



Learn more at
**[MedinaEC.org/
Presentations](https://MedinaEC.org/Presentations)**

Operation Round Up

If you or someone you know needs financial help, apply for a donation from ORU.* The remaining 2022 deadlines are August 5 and November 4. Apply at MedinaEC.org/ORU.



**Applicants must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC. ORU funds cannot be used for electric bills, solar panels, or anything related to the purchase of power.*

We Love to be Social!

Make sure you follow Medina EC on our social media channels! Find, share and comment on stories about employees, community events, contests and more!



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@Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

VFD Truck Giveaway
Applications Due
Friday, July 1

Independence Day
Monday, July 4
Our offices will be closed in observance of the holiday.

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For the Man Who Gives Everything and Expects Nothing



If you're anything like my dad, you give your family everything. Your name, your time, your values — the people in your life know they can depend on you for practically anything. In exchange for imparting all of this energy and experience, you expect nothing in return.

The point? You deserve to treat yourself once in a while. You do so much for the people you care about. Now it's time to focus on you for just a few minutes. That's where the Men's Due Volta Watch comes in. This astonishing innovation provides a digital readout that's powered by a precise quartz engine, combining both analog and digital timekeeping.

Outfitted with a stopwatch, alarm, a.m./p.m. settings, and day, date and month complications, this timepiece stands out from the crowd. With its large face and handsome, masculine design, this watch is perfect for the back nine and the happy hour afterwards. Water-resistant up to 3 ATM, this timepiece won't wimp out if you have a run-in with a water hazard.

Other hybrid watches can sell for thousands of dollars, but because we've built more than 1 million watches, we know how to create real value. That's why we can offer this timepiece for just \$79! If you're not completely satisfied with this watch, return it for a full refund.

Act quickly! This one-of-a-kind watch has been one of our fastest sellers this year. Of our original run of 2,872, we only have 389 left for this ad! In the last couple of years there's been a watch shortage, but Stauer has got you covered. If you're the kind of man who gives everything and expects nothing in return, it's time to treat yourself.

Watch Specifications:

- Complications: stopwatch, alarm, a.m./p.m. settings, and day, date and month
- Precision movement chronograph
- Stainless steel caseback and crown
- Water-resistant to 3 ATM

Men's Due Volta Watch ~~\$399~~ **\$79*** + S&P **Save \$320**

**Special price only for customers using the offer code.*

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: DVW141-01

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I 'Bearly' Made It Out Alive

A 12-inch stainless steel knife for only \$79



What Stauer Clients Are Saying About Our Knives



"The feel of this knife is unbelievable... this is an incredibly fine instrument." — H., Arvada, CO



"This knife is beautiful!" — J., La Crescent, MN



It was a perfect late autumn day in the northern Rockies. Not a cloud in the sky, and just enough cool in the air to stir up nostalgic memories of my trip into the backwoods. This year, though, was different. I was going it solo. My two buddies, pleading work responsibilities, backed out at the last minute. So, armed with my trusty knife, I set out for adventure.

Well, what I found was a whole lot of trouble. As in 8 feet and 800-pounds of trouble in the form of a grizzly bear. Seems this grumpy fella was out looking for some adventure too. Mr. Grizzly saw me, stood up to his entire 8 feet of ferocity and let out a roar that made my blood turn to ice and my hair stand up. Unsnapping my leather sheath, I felt for my hefty, trusty knife and felt emboldened. I then showed the massive grizzly over 6 inches of 420 surgical grade stainless steel, raised my hands and yelled, "Whoa bear! Whoa bear!" I must have made my point, as he gave me an almost admiring grunt before turning tail and heading back into the woods.

JOIN MORE THAN 322,000 SHARP
PEOPLE WHO COLLECT STAUER KNIVES

I was pretty shaken, but otherwise fine. Once the adrenaline high subsided, I decided I had some work to do back home too. That was more than enough adventure for one day.

Our Grizzly Hunting Knife pays tribute to the call of the wild. Featuring stick-tang construction, you can feel confident in the strength and durability of this knife. And the hand carved, natural bone handle ensures you won't lose your grip even in the most dire of circumstances. I also made certain to give it a great price. After all, you should be able to get your point across without

getting stuck with a high price.

But we don't stop there. While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99 8x21 power compact binoculars **FREE** when you purchase the Grizzly Hunting Knife.

Make sure to act quickly. The Grizzly Hunting Knife has been such a hit that we're having trouble keeping it in stock. Our first release of more than 1,200 SOLD OUT in TWO DAYS! After months of waiting on our artisans, we've finally gotten some knives back in stock. Only 1,337 are available at this price, and half of them have already sold!

Knife Specifications:

- Stick tang 420 surgical stainless steel blade; 7 1/4" blade; 12" overall
- Hand carved natural brown and yellow bone handle
- Brass hand guard, spacers and end cap
- FREE genuine tooled leather sheath included (a \$49 value!)

The Grizzly Hunting Knife ~~\$249~~ \$79* + S&P
Save \$170

California residents please call 1-800-333-2045 regarding Proposition 65 regulations before purchasing this product.

**Special price only for customers using the offer code.*

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: GHK148-02



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Colorado's Texas Bridge

The Royal Gorge Bridge, highest in America, was built and owned by Texans

BY W.F. STRONG

BRIDGES ARE MEASURED in three ways: longest, tallest and highest. In Texas, the Fred Hartman Bridge across the Houston Ship Channel boasts the longest span at 1,250 feet and is the tallest at 440 feet. But it's not the highest. That honor goes to the aptly named Pecos High Bridge, where the deck is an astounding 273 feet above the Pecos River—nearly a football field straight up.

The highest bridge in America is the Royal Gorge Bridge—just shy of 1,000 feet high. It's in Colorado. But without Texas, it might not exist at all.

The Royal Gorge Bridge was the dream of Lon P. Piper of San Antonio. They say he stood on the edge of the gorge in 1928

and imagined laying a bridge across it. He had already built a bridge across the Rio Grande into Mexico.

The Royal Gorge would be different though. It would be a bridge to nowhere, one that would exist purely to give tourists heart-stopping views they couldn't get anywhere else in the world.

Within two years it was done—at a cost of \$350,000, or more than \$6.2 million today. When it was finished, Piper owned the highest bridge in the world, and it would remain so for 72 years.

Piper hired bridge engineer George Cole of Houston to design the Royal Gorge Bridge and to serve as the general contractor. With 80 workers, they com-

pleted the project in seven months without a fatality or any serious injuries.

As I learned about the bridge's history, I couldn't help but notice its national character. It was a bridge built by Texans in Colorado spanning the Arkansas River with Oregon timber for the deck. Cole went on to design and build a railroad that would take brave riders to the bottom of the gorge at a 45-degree angle. Now there are gondolas far above the gorge for those who want to go higher still and zip lines for those who can't get enough tachycardia in their lives.

In 1947, Piper sold the bridge to another Texan, Clint Murchison Sr., who bought it sight unseen as an investment and strangely never traveled there to walk across his magnificent possession. Instead, Murchison set up the Royal Gorge Bridge Co. and managed the Colorado property from Dallas. When he died, the bridge was passed on to his sons, Clint Murchison Jr. (you remember him—he founded and owned the Dallas Cowboys for 25 years) and John Murchison. When John died, his wife, Lucille, inherited the bridge, and they say she just loved it, traveling often to see it.

For the past 21 years, Texan Mike Bandera has served as the Royal Gorge Bridge's general manager of operations. But today, the bridge—after nearly 100 years—has Colorado ownership. After Lucille Murchison passed it on to her grandchildren, they sold it a few years ago to nearby Cañon City.

So I'd like to say this to Colorado, about the world-class bridge we envisioned, financed, built and managed for you all those years: You're welcome. ■

TCP Listen as W.F. Strong narrates this story on our website.



Stone Fruits

This season of abundance offers a variety of delectable options

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

When summer hits, I know I'm not the only one looking forward to that first bite of a juicy peach. My family loads up on stone fruits, making sure to have enough to cover our snack cravings and to enjoy in sweet and savory recipes. In this curry, fresh nectarines take the place of the dried fruits more commonly used. You can peel the nectarines if you like; I keep the skins intact to let them bubble away into the sauce.



Chicken Nectarine Curry

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs
2 teaspoons salt, divided use
½ teaspoon pepper, divided use
1 onion, halved and thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
2 teaspoons cumin
1 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
1 cup chicken broth
4 nectarines, pitted and sliced
½ cup chopped fresh parsley, divided use
2 cups cooked couscous
¼ cup roughly chopped pistachios (optional)

1. In a large straight-sided skillet with a lid, add oil and heat over medium-high. Season the chicken on both sides with half of the salt and pepper, then add to the hot skillet. Cook until browned on both sides, about 12 minutes total. Remove from pan and set aside on a plate.

2. Reduce heat to medium and add onion. Sauté until slightly softened, about 3 minutes. Add garlic and ginger and cook another 30 seconds. Stir in remaining salt, pepper and spices, and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.

3. Add a small amount of chicken broth to deglaze the pan, scraping the bottom, then pour in remaining broth. Return chicken to the pan with any accumulated juices. Scatter nectarine slices over the top.

4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer for about 25 minutes. Remove lid and stir occasionally. Once chicken is tender, simmer uncovered for 5 minutes to thicken sauce. Stir in half the parsley and serve over couscous, with remaining parsley and pistachios for garnish.

SERVES 4

TCP Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Peach Barbecue Sauce.



Apricot Scones

JANET EAKINS
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

These tender scones, a perfect way to feature dried apricots, are wonderful straight out of the oven but also keep well, so you can enjoy them multiple days in a row.

2½ cups flour
½ cup plus 2 teaspoons sugar, divided use
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cold and cut into pieces
1 cup finely chopped dried apricots
1 cup plus 1½ tablespoons heavy cream, divided use, plus more as needed

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour, ½ cup sugar, baking powder and salt. Using a pastry blender or two knives, cut butter into flour mixture until crumbly and butter is evenly blended. Add apricots, stirring to mix well. Add 1 cup cream, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. If mixture looks too dry, stir in more cream, 1 tablespoon at a time, until dough is equally moistened and coming together.
3. On a lightly floured surface, scoop out dough and knead gently just to bring it together. Pat dough into an 8- to 9-inch circle and cut into 8 equal wedges. Place on baking sheet slightly separated, brush with remaining 1½ tablespoons cream and sprinkle with remaining sugar. Bake 20 minutes or until browned.

SERVES 8

MORE RECIPES >

\$500 WINNER

Peach Cream Cheese Danish

MARY MITCHELL
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC



Easy to make and bursting with peaches, this braided danish makes for an elegant presentation on the brunch or dessert table. Swap in your favorite fresh or canned fruits and serve as is or with ice cream on the side.

SERVES 6



FILLING

6 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
¼ cup sugar
1 egg yolk, at room temperature
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon lemon juice
Pinch of salt

PASTRY

Flour, for dusting
1 sheet puff pastry, thawed
1 can (15 ounces) sliced peaches, drained and sliced into bite-size pieces
1 egg
1 tablespoon water
1–2 tablespoons coarse sugar

GLAZE

⅓ cup powdered sugar
1½ teaspoons milk

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. **FILLING** In a bowl, beat together cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add egg yolk, vanilla, lemon juice and salt and beat together until well blended.
3. **PASTRY** Lightly dust a sheet of parchment with flour and roll out puff pastry, flattening creases if needed. Set onto a rimmed baking sheet. Spread cream cheese mixture down the middle of the pastry lengthwise, leaving a 1-inch border at the top and bottom. Spoon diced peaches onto the cream cheese mixture.
4. Use kitchen shears or a paring knife to cut an equal number of 1-inch strips diagonally down both sides of the pastry, leaving ½ inch between the filling and the start of each cut. Braid the pastry strips by folding them into the middle, alternating from side to side.
5. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and water and brush over pastry. Sprinkle with coarse sugar. Bake 25–30 minutes or until pastry is golden brown. Let cool to room temperature.
6. **GLAZE** In a small bowl, whisk together powdered sugar and milk until smooth, then drizzle glaze over the pastry and let set or serve immediately.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

FINGER FOODS DUE JULY 10

Bite-size foods are perfect for holiday gatherings, tailgating or just hanging out. Submit your recipes on our website by July 10 for a chance to win \$500.





Easy Cherry Pie

POLLY BELT
COSERV

Instead of a bottom crust, this pie features a buttery crumble topping that bakes into the filling. Make sure to keep the syrup separate from the pie until ready to serve so the topping stays delightfully crisp.

1 can (14.5 ounces) sour or tart pitted cherries
1 cup plus 1 tablespoon flour, divided

use
1½ cups sugar, divided use
½ cup chopped pecans
1 teaspoon baking powder
¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
1 egg
¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, melted

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and set a rimmed baking sheet on the lower rack to catch any spilled juices.

2. Drain the juice from the cherries into a small saucepan and reserve. Pour the cherries into the bottom of an ungreased 9-inch pie dish.

3. In a medium bowl, combine 1 cup flour, 1 cup sugar, pecans, baking powder, cinnamon and salt. Using a fork, mix in egg until mixture is evenly moist and crumbly. Spread evenly over the cherries. Pour the melted butter over the crumble topping, coating it completely.

4. Bake 40 minutes, until browned. Let pie cool while you make the sauce.

5. To make the sauce, whisk together

remaining flour and sugar. Place reserved saucepan of juice over medium heat, whisking in sugar mixture. Cook until slightly thickened, then remove from heat (sauce will thicken more as it cools).

6. Serve slices of pie with spoonfuls of warm sauce over the top.

SERVES 6-8

TCP You'll find hundreds more recipes featuring these and other stone fruits on our website. Most of them are from the kitchens of *Texas Co-op Power* readers just like you.



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Creeping Along

I was brave enough to visit the eerie Ghost Road. How about you?

BY CHET GARNER

I VIVIDLY REMEMBER the first time I set out to see the Saratoga lights. My mom loaded up the family van with as many people as it could carry so we could experience a bona fide unsolved mystery.

Generations of locals say the lights are a periodic presence of unexplainable orbs and lights dancing up and down an old Big Thicket dirt road under a dark canopy of piney woods. My mom killed the headlights, and we crept along, holding our breath. My only comfort was that I was inside a locked car.

Bragg Road (aka Ghost Road) is a rite of passage in East Texas, between Beaumont and Livingston. It's only about 8 miles long, originally a railroad spur used during the East Texas oil boom. Legend holds this run through swampy land was full of danger, and crews suffered numerous casualties from accidents, malaria and other perils. Some say those killed never left the work site.

The tracks and ties were removed in the 1930s, leaving a very straight road that anyone with a healthy dose of Lone Star courage can drive to see if the ghostly orbs appear. Some say they change colors. Others say they dart back and forth, even coming toward vehicles at light speed.

Naysayers believe they're simply distant headlights, and scientists explain them as swamp gas. But nobody can explain everything that happens out there in the dark.

It took Mom over an hour to drive the entire length of Bragg Road. Every couple minutes she would yell, "Did you see that?" or "Whoa, that was beautiful." As soon as I looked, the light (or whatever it was) would be gone.

By the end, I didn't see a thing. But I did settle the fact that I was brave enough to travel the infamous Ghost Road. ■

ABOVE Chet discovers that what you don't see can be as frightening as what you do see on the Ghost Road.

TCP A dark lane with a chance of ghosts. What could go wrong? See Chet's video on our website to find out. Watch all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

JULY

08

Canton [8-9] Balloon Fest,
balloonfestcanton.com,
(903) 567-1849

**Lewisville [8-10] Texas
Art and Literary Festival,**
texasartandlitfest.com

09

**Galveston Bill Engvall
Farewell Tour,** thegrand.com,
(409) 765-1894

**Grapevine 1920s Ice
Cream Social at Nash
Farm,** 1-800-457-6338,
nashfarm.org

**Lampasas Toughest 10K
in Texas,** runsignup.com,
toughest10klampasas@
gmail.com

La Porte Cycling Saturday,
(281) 479-2431, thc.texas.gov

**Mason Roundup Festival
and Parade,** (325) 347-5758,
masontxcoc.com

**McDade Watermelon
Festival,** (512) 736-4302,
mcdadetexas.com

**Meridian Chisholm Trail
Roundup,** (254) 435-2381,
facebook.com/meridiantx

Palacios Poker in Palacios,
(361) 972-2615,
palacioschamber.com

**Palestine East Texas
Southern Soul Zydeco
and Blues Festival,**
(832) 892-1407, eventbrite.com

**Weatherford Parker
County Peach Festival,**
(817) 596-3801,
parkercountypeachfestival.org

**Kerrville [9-10] Summer
Market,** 1-888-225-3427,
kerrvilletexascvb.com

Palestine [9, 16, 23, 30, Aug. 6] Farm & Flower Market, (903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

14

San Angelo [14–Sept. 11] Banjara Textiles From a Private Collection, (325) 653-3333, samfa.org

15

Ennis [15–16] Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County Quilt Show, (972) 878-4748, elliscountyquilters.com

Bastrop [15–17] Corvette Invasion, (512) 303-0558, corvetteinvasion.com

Laredo [15–17] International Sister Cities Festival, (956) 795-2200, visitalaredo.com

16

Paris Tour de Paris, (903) 784-2501, tourdeparis.org

Round Rock Colombian Fest ATX, (512) 903-8929, colombianfestatx.com

Fredericksburg [16–17] Night in Old Fredericksburg, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

Waco [16–17] Duel on the Brazos, (830) 385-3106, sdbaracing.com/schedule

19

Lubbock [19–23, 25–30] **Hamilton**, (806) 792-8339, visitolubbock.org

21

Waco [21–24] Deep in the Heart Film Festival, deepintheheartff.com

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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



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Pick of the Month

Salt Lime & a Good Time

Comanche, July 23
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comanchechamber.org

Celebrate National Tequila Day at the courthouse square with the spirited beverage and other treats.

JULY EVENTS CONTINUED

22

Kyle Dive-in Movie: Lilo & Stitch, (512) 262-3939,
cityofkyle.com

Lubbock Dwight Yoakam, (806) 792-8339,
visitlubbock.org

Waxahachie [22-23] Metroplex Archaeological Society Indian Artifact Show, (469) 309-4040,
waxahachie.com

Palestine [22-24, 29-31] The Little Mermaid, (903) 724-4385,
visitpalestine.com

Victoria [22-24, 28-31] The Wizard of Oz, (361) 570-8587,
theatrevictoria.org

Lockhart [22-24, 29-31, Aug. 5-6] Annie Get Your Gun, (512) 376-5653,
mygbt.org

23

Bandera National Day of the American Cowboy, (830) 796-3045,
banderacowboycapital.com

San Angelo National Cowboy Day, (325) 657-4444,
fortconcho.com

28

Buffalo Gap [23-24] Tour de Gap, (325) 829-0617,
tourdegap.com

Gonzales [23-24] Float Fest, floatfest.net

Salado [23, 30, Aug. 6], Salado Legends, (254) 308-2200,
tablerock.org

Clute [28-30] Great Texas Mosquito Festival, (979) 265-8392,
mosquitofestival.com

29

Fredericksburg [29-31] Hill Country Auto Swap Meet, (254) 751-7958,
visitfredericksburgtx.com

Junction [29-31] Sizzler Disc Golf Tournament, (361) 549-5507,
junctiontexas.com/disc-golf

San Angelo [29-Aug. 5] Wild West Fest, facebook.com/wildwestfestsanangelo

Stafford [29-31, Aug. 5-7, 12-14] The SpongeBob Musical, (713) 302-5329,
inspirationstage.com

30

Bowie July Jam, (940) 872-6246,
cityofbowietx.com

Lubbock An Evening With Journey, (806) 742-7362,
visitlubbock.org

AUGUST

02

Bandera Cowboy Capital Opry, (830) 796-4969,
banderatex.com

06

Camp Wood Nueces Canyon Old Settlers Reunion, (830) 597-6241,
nuecescanyonchamber.org

Frankston Neches River Wilderness Race, (903) 245-9490,
necheswildernessrace.com

Morning Glory

A new day is dawning in Co-op Country, and members have captured the magnificence, from dewy haze to warm sunshine. So fetch yourself a cup of coffee, and let's greet the sunup.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 DANNY VIVIAN
NUECES EC
"The sun rises over the breakers near Port Aransas."

2 BRIAN FOX
PEDERNALES EC
Sunrise over Caprock Canyons State Park.

3 CASSIE DE LEON
TRI-COUNTY EC
"Breakfast. Need I say more?"

4 MICHAEL HRISCHUK
TRINITY VALLEY EC
"Our backyard on a cool fall morning."



Upcoming Contests

DUE JUL 10 Aerials
DUE AUG 10 Winter Wildlife
DUE SEP 10 Nature's Colors



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for more Morning Glory photos from readers.





Can't Top This

Finding more than just a sense of accomplishment on Guadalupe Peak

BY ANDY RHODES
PHOTO BY E. DAN KLEPPER

"HOW FAR AWAY is the peak?"

"Once you get to the really hard part, you're nearly there."

"Wait ... *this* isn't the really hard part?"

I was approaching the summit of Guadalupe Peak—or at least I thought I was—and glad to catch my breath while giving my rubbery legs a break. After encountering the descending hiker, I was momentarily discouraged but not daunted. My three-hour trek in far West Texas had so far been challenging but not overwhelming, and I wanted to carry my momentum all 8,751 feet up to the tallest natural point in the state.

The last eighth of a mile was indeed tricky—a couple sheer rock faces (I didn't look down) and large boulders to ascend—but it never felt dangerous. Finally, I took one giant step and came face to face

with a metal pyramid atop the peak.

But I also encountered something I hadn't expected: Surrounding the sculpture was a spontaneous community. About a dozen of us smiling hikers shared the rewarding accomplishment of having just summited Guadalupe Peak. Cheers of "You did it!" and "Welcome to the top of Texas!" erupted. We beamed with adrenaline and pride, knowing how much planning, commitment, resolve and stamina it took to conquer such a formidable foe.

I was also rewarded by the most spectacular 360-degree views I've ever seen in Texas. It was a perfect fall day—65 and sunny—so visibility was pristine. The sky was pure blue, a cheerful overstretched canvas. I took in multicolored ridges of mountains stretching for miles and miles beyond Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

I had started the day with a hearty breakfast and hit the trail in the cool shade. The first hour was tough, with tight switchbacks and steep ascents. I reminded myself I wasn't in a race and listened to my body's cues; when I felt weary, I'd stop for water or take a few bites of a protein bar. My trusty trekking poles helped me navigate the rocky trail and pivot up tough spots.

The second hour was easier—a large section of trees provided welcome shade, and I noticed more flora, including jade-colored desert scrub and small waxy succulents. The trail was well maintained and easy to navigate, which helped guide me through the final stretch.

By the end, my legs were fatigued, but that seemed a small price. I was excited about completing the quest. When the shiny obelisk entered my view, the smile on my face reflected the joy I felt in joining my new community.

At that moment, it felt like the top of the world. It just so happened that it actually was. ■



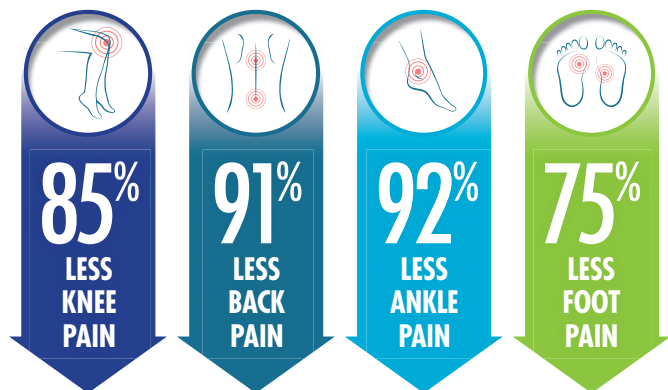
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