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NOVEMBER 2021

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November 2021



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Sky-high pies embody the delights of meringue.

*By Paula Disbrowe
Photos by Wyatt McSpadden*

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A slice of Rebecca Rather's lemon meringue pie from Emma + Ollie in Fredericksburg.

Photo by Wyatt McSpadden

ABOVE

Bison at Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway.

Photo by Earl Nottingham | TPWD

Future Foodies

TONI TIPTON-MARTIN is a food and nutrition journalist and author whose latest book, *Jubilee: Recipes From Two Centuries of African American Cooking*, features a recipe for Baked (Barbecued) Beans that we spotlighted in May. She adds to her long list of accolades this month when she receives the Julia Child Award, which honors those who have made a significant difference in the way Americans cook, eat and drink.

Tipton-Martin plans to use her award, a \$50,000 grant, to mentor the next generation of food writers.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

A TEXAN WOULD NEVER ...

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. Below are some of the responses to our September prompt: **The sweetest sound in the world is ...**

The distant whistle of a passing train at night as I drift off to sleep.

RICK SULIK
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC
SHINER

Horses munching hay in the quiet evening.

ROBIN GRAY
SAN BERNARD EC
HOCKLEY

Silence. Nature is a close second.

ALLEN JONES
VIA FACEBOOK

Ocean waves gently hitting the shore.

KATHY O'NEAL PRIKRYL
VIA FACEBOOK

A baby's giggle.

MONA TUCKER
RUSK COUNTY EC
CARTHAGE

Rain falling on my tin roof porch.

SUE NASH
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC
ETOILE

To see more responses, read Currents online.

FARMING GOES ELECTRIC

Monarch Tractor plans to begin shipping its first-of-its-kind fully electric, driver-optional tractor this fall.

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The Monarch will start at \$58,000.

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First Lady's Milestone

Laura Bush, former first lady of Texas and the U.S., turns 75 on November 4. Before marrying George W. Bush, she taught in public schools in Dallas, Houston and Austin and worked as a school librarian. Laura Bush was born in 1946 in Midland.



November 3 National Sandwich Day

Don't let the day catch you empty-handed. You'll find dozens of sandwich recipes at [TexasCoopPower.com](https://www.texascooppower.com).



A Broadcasting Victory

THE FIRST LIVE PLAY-BY-PLAY broadcast of a college football game in Texas occurred 100 years ago in College Station, a scoreless tie between Texas A&M University and the University of Texas.

To pull it off November 24, 1921, radio station 5XB—later WTAW (Watch The Aggies Win)—ran lines from the Kyle Field press box to a transmitter at Bolton Hall and borrowed equipment from the Corps of Cadets Signal Corps.



TCP Contests and More

[ON TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM](https://www.texascooppower.com)

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RECOMMENDED READING

We're up to our eyes in pies this month. Visit our website to find dozens more pies to try.



Second to None

"I was happy to read that Texas Tech opened a veterinary school. We need more country boys and girls who don't mind getting manure on their jeans."

MINNIE PESL
BARTLETT EC
ROCKDALE

Aviation Fame

The Lone Star Flight Museum at Ellington Airport in Houston hosts the Texas Aviation Hall of Fame, which includes Bessie Coleman as one of 70 or so who have made remarkable contributions to flight [*Queen Bess Soared*, June 2021].

Gary Watt
Bluebonnet EC
Washington, Texas



My granny had a small stock tank [*Pools in the Pasture*, August 2021]. She called it the goose tank. We had fun in it. Seined it for crawfish. Used them for fish bait.

MARY RUTH LARGENT
VIA FACEBOOK

A Toxic Topic?

Sheryl Smith-Rodgers' words did bug me [*Do Words Bug You?*, June 2021].

In addition to ingestion, poisons can affect life by contact or radiation—think poison ivy or certain cancer treatments. Poison is best defined as a substance with inherent properties that tends to destroy or impair life. Toxins are a subgroup of poisons produced by an organism. Venom specifically is a toxin introduced into victims by injection.

Robert Humphrey
Heart of Texas EC
Waco

Fleeing Thought

I never realized that while the armies of Texians and Mexicans fought, many civilians found it necessary to abandon everything they owned and relocate in a hurry [*The Runaway Scrape*, April 2021]. This makes me wonder what I would do if that situation arose in my lifetime.

B. Jason Epps
Trinity Valley EC
Heartland



TCP WRITE TO US
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Austin, TX 78701

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

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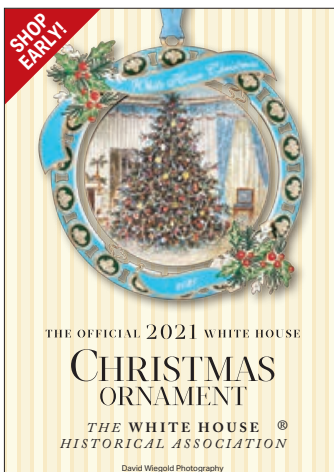
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holiday GIFT GUIDE

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The Alchemy of Egg Whites

IT WAS MOSTLY ABOUT the reward of pie, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

For several years I joined my daughter, Flannery, and her Girl Scout troop on their annual trip to Camp Champions in Marble Falls. The outing, which usually landed in early May, was much anticipated by the girls, even though each year seemed to be cursed by dramatic Texas weather. There were frigid nights in drafty cabins and torrential thunderstorms, and one terrifying year, a tornado chased us out of town.

Mother Nature, plus a hysteria fueled by s'mores and the energy of several hundred girls, made our departure each Sunday morning feel like a small victory, akin to making it through an episode of *Survivor*.

The treat at the end of those epic weekends was breakfast at the Blue Bonnet Cafe, the beloved institution known for its pies and recognizable by its awesome neon signage. One year we gave Flannery's bestie, Clara, a ride to the restaurant. As we waited in line for a table, we all became mesmerized by the cooler displaying whopping wedges of fruit pies, cream pies and custard-based show stealers crowned with implausibly high clouds of meringue.

Clara, eyes wide and mother conveniently en route, asked if she might order pie for breakfast. Naturally, I acquiesced. When the massive wedge of lemon meringue pie was placed in front of her, her reaction—a mixture of disbelief, wonder and pure joy—made us all burst out laughing. Years later we all vividly remember Clara's meringue pie moment, which speaks to another attribute of pies: They can create cherished memories.



ABOVE Making meringue starts with separating egg whites from yolks.
RIGHT Adela Rangel has been the pie chef at Koffee Kup Family Restaurant in Hico for 24 years.



↑

*Sky-high pies
embody
the delights
of meringue*



TOP Rebecca Rather, chef at Emma + Ollie in Fredericksburg, with a lemon meringue pie.
ABOVE A slice of coconut meringue pie from Koffee Kup.

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT Servers Ellie Fonseca at Blue Bonnet Cafe in Marble Falls and Emma Roach at Koffee Kup show off the towering meringues at their diners. Maura Dominguez has been mounding meringue at Blue Bonnet for 33 years.



FOR MANY PEOPLE, myself included, certain pies are steeped in memories or connected to memorable occasions. Coconut cream pie? The time I was lucky enough to interview Lyle Lovett over a couple slices in Old Town Spring. Late June means Stonewall peaches and galettes (rustic French tarts) several nights a week. Billowy meringue pies always make me think of my friend Rebecca Rather (more on her later).

“Pie, in general, makes people happy,” concurs Dave Plante, owner of Blue Bonnet Cafe. “If you come through our line between the hours of 10 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon, chances are you’re gonna see our huge mixers full of a fluffy white mixture bubbling up and out of the side,” Plante says. “It’s mesmerizing to watch.”

The fascination with sky-high meringue is evident in the surprise of customers at Hico’s Koffee Kup Family Restaurant, where the motto is “Pie fixes everything.”

“When they see the meringue in the pie case, their jaw drops open,” says manager and co-owner Irene Leach, whose first job at the Koffee Kup in 1987 was baking pies. Now, Adela Rangel starts baking five flavors, plus two sugar-free options, at 6:30 each morning, as she has for 24 years.

Blue Bonnet’s Plante tells me that customers often inquire how they pile the meringue so high—a trick he attributes to seasoned bakers who have been whipping egg whites and sugar for years.



SO WHAT IS MERINGUE, actually? In its simplest form, it's a mixture of stiffly beaten egg whites and granulated sugar. To achieve a perfectly smooth texture, the sugar is typically added slowly—a tablespoon at a time.

For further insight I called a noted meringue whisperer—Rebecca Rather, chef at Emma + Ollie in Fredericksburg and the creative mind behind her wildly popular “big-hair meringue tarts” (featuring spiky meringue tops reminiscent of retro hairstyles). “Once I went to a Weight Watchers meeting, and some of the women there yelled at me and said I was responsible for their extra pounds,” she recalls with a laugh. “You know I love meringue but only when it's done right; it needs to be stiff and strong and hold up. I don't like it when it's sloppy, watery and nasty.”

Rather perfected her meringue game years ago when she was the pastry chef at Tony's in Houston. “I used to decorate huge ice cream bombs with meringue, and I had to do it in the freezer,” she recalls. For all her desserts, including the banana pudding served at Emma + Ollie, she still relies on the meringue recipe in her first book, *The Pastry Queen*.

For Rather's method, the sugar is whisked with egg whites over a pan of simmering water until it dissolves and then whipped with an electric mixer until it's stiff and shiny. The key, she tells me, is to beat the whites slowly in the beginning, until they're light and foamy, and then beat them at high speed until stiff peaks form.

I knew Cathy Barrow, author of *Pie Squared* (a cookbook devoted to rectangular “slab pies”), would have opinions on the subject. “I think we all need more meringue in our life,” she tells me. “It tastes so much like campfire marshmallows and makes the kitchen smell great as it toasts under the broiler. If you have a blowtorch, bronzing meringue is a badass move as a party trick.”

Preparing meringue is also a smart way to make the most of leftover ingredients. “If you make ice cream or flan or many cakes or enriched doughs, you'll end up with egg whites, and they keep a long time,” Barrow says. She keeps hers in a covered jar in the fridge. “Sometimes I make Pavlovas and then turn those into fruit fools,” she adds. (Named after the Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, the dessert consists of a crisp meringue base topped with whipped cream and fresh fruit.) “But whenever I can,” Barrow continues, “I cover the surface or pipe or plop a pretty meringue edge on a pie. Don't limit this action to lemon or lime pies. A meringue topping on a bumbleberry pie is amazing.”

Pie recipes handed down from one generation to the next are particularly transporting. “My grandma's chocolate meringue pie is my favorite thing to eat in the entire world,” says Lisa Fain, author of *The Homesick Texan* cookbooks and food blog. “Whether it makes an appearance after a good day or a bad one, it never fails to lift my spirits. It's always a declaration of love.”

This particular pie, Fain adds, is more than the sum of its parts. “It's a simple recipe, and her meringues are more of an accent rather than a statement since they're never all that tall. The combination of fluffy topping, rich custard and salty crust may appear humble, but it's the finest dessert that I know.” ■



Rebecca Rather's Meringue

Rather uses a kitchen torch to brown her meringue-topped pies and tarts, but the process can also be done quickly under a broiler.

**10 extra-large egg whites,
at room temperature
3 cups sugar**

1. Place a large, perfectly clean metal bowl over a pot of simmering water. Pour in the egg whites and sugar. (If there is a trace of fat in the bowl, the eggs won't reach their proper volume.)
2. Heat the egg whites and sugar while whisking constantly until the sugar melts and there are no visible grains in the meringue. Take a little meringue mixture and rub it between your fingers to make sure all the sugar grains have melted.
3. Remove the bowl from the pot and whip it with a mixer fitted with a whisk attachment on low speed for 5 minutes; increase the speed to high and beat 5 minutes longer, until the meringue is stiff and shiny.

MAKES MERINGUE FOR 1 PIE

Reprinted with permission from *The Pastry Queen* (Ten Speed Press, 2004).

TCP WEB EXTRA Learn more about meringue online, including Paula Disbrowe's tips for success.

BY RHONDA REINHART

LAST OF THEIR KIND

The Texas State Bison Herd, a legacy of Charles Goodnight, helps a species crawl back from the brink of extinction

After long days listening to shots ring out across the Texas Panhandle plains, Mary Ann Goodnight would lie awake, tormented by the cries of orphaned bison calves. It was the late 1870s, and professional hide hunters were obliterating the country's bison population.

Known as the “great slaughter,” hunting from 1874 to 1878 left the iconic animals nearly extinct, with estimates from 1888 suggesting that fewer than 1,000 bison remained in North America—down from the 30 million–60 million that once roamed the continent.

But it was the wails of those abandoned calves bawling for their mothers night after night—heartbreaking sounds that Goodnight described in diary entries from the time—that spurred her to act in 1878. The wife of cattleman Charles Goodnight, the famed Texas Panhandle rancher, pleaded with her husband to rescue what he could of the surviving bison.

The couple had settled in Palo Duro Canyon in 1876, and within two years, hunters had nearly wiped out the animals. That's when Mary Ann Goodnight persuaded her husband to capture some of the orphaned calves and start a herd on their JA Ranch. The Goodnight bison herd prospered and grew to more than 200 animals by the 1920s. After the Goodnights' deaths (Mary Ann in 1926, Charles in 1929), the bison continued to roam the vast and rugged landscape of the JA Ranch. Though Charles Goodnight sold his interest



in the JA operation in the late 1880s and started a new ranch on nearby land, the bison ultimately migrated back to their original home.

Left on its own, the herd dwindled, and by 1994, only about 50 animals remained. When the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department learned about the declining herd in the mid-1990s from an unlikely source—Wolfgang Frey, a German wildlife conservationist with a particular interest in American bison—the agency conducted DNA testing on the bovines, revealing genetic markers not found in any other bison. Because Goodnight never brought in any bison from other areas and kept detailed records to prove it, all the animals in his herd were native Texas Panhandle bison. These animals, direct descendants of the herd started by Goodnight, were the last surviving examples of southern Plains bison.

Convinced that the historic herd was worth saving, the owners of the JA Ranch donated the bison to TPWD, and in 1997 they were relocated to Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway in Briscoe County, about 100 miles southeast of



Amarillo, on land that is part of the bison's native home range.

After two decades of TPWD management, what has become known as the Texas State Bison Herd has grown to almost 300 animals, thanks to selective breeding, annual health checks, vegetation studies and progressive habitat management practices. The donation of three bison bulls in 2003 by media tycoon and rancher Ted Turner helped broaden the herd's genetic diversity.

The bison's road to recovery was a long one. "When the park got them, there were 32," says Donald Beard, park superintendent at Caprock Canyons. "And then when I took over, there were probably around 60 or so, and that was in 2009. Then we released them into the park in 2011, and that's when they really started to flourish."

Before the 2011 release, the bison were enclosed in a 300-acre section of the park, far from view of Caprock Canyons' 100,000 yearly visitors. In September 2011 the bison were moved into more than 700 acres of restored native grass prairie but still were fenced off from the park's campsites and day-use areas.

Part of the Texas State Bison Herd at Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway.

Now the bison roam 80% of the park. "The park total is almost 15,000 acres, and they have almost 12,000 acres of it to roam," Beard says. "There is one section, which is on the opposite side of a county road, that they don't have access to, but other than that, they've got free run of this park. That means through the campsites, through the trails, on Lake Theo—everywhere. This is their historic range."

Today's visitors to Caprock Canyons State Park, which is served by Lighthouse Electric Cooperative, might be greeted at park headquarters by dozens of the massive, shaggy creatures. From a distance, they appear like black specks on the wide-open prairie, but when they approach the parking lot to graze and explore, an up-close view emphasizes their sheer magnificence: the broad hump between their shoulder blades; their thick, dark brown fur;

**Driving through
the park, it's clear
who's the boss.
If the bison feel
like lounging on
the roadway, well,
so be it.**



and their awe-inspiring size. The bison is the largest mammal native to North America, and the bulls at Caprock Canyons can reach up to 2,000 pounds, with cows averaging 750–900 pounds. And even though some refer to the animals as buffalo because of their similar appearance, the only true buffaloes reside in Africa and Asia.

Driving through the park, it's clear who's the boss. If the bison feel like lounging on the roadway, well, so be it—traffic stops and drivers watch and wait. Hikers might also encounter them on the trails that weave through the park's striking red rock canyons, and campers might wake up to a crew of bison ambling outside their tents. Visitors to the park enjoyed a special treat in spring 2021, when about 80 bison calves joined the herd. "It's pretty neat when you get a bunch of calves out, running around and playing," Beard says. "It's a really good time to be here, come April or May."

Now that the herd is growing at a rate the park can sustain (to keep from degrading the grounds' natural resources, the current herd of about 300 is close to the park's max), Beard and his team are working on phase two of Caprock Canyons' bison conservation program. "To me, that second phase is satellite herds," he says. "So we would have another herd of 200 here, another herd of 300 there, but a herd of just Goodnight animals. And they would all be managed as one big herd—a metapopulation basically."

Though there's a herd of bison at San Angelo State Park in West Texas, those animals aren't related to Goodnight's. In fact, Beard notes, anytime an animal leaves the grounds of Caprock Canyons, it's no longer considered part of the Texas State Bison Herd.

Beard—who sits on several boards for bison conservation, including the Bison Specialist Group, a species survival commission of the International Union for Conservation of

The state herd of about 300 descends from bison raised by Charles Goodnight in the 1800s.

Nature—is in talks with the InterTribal Buffalo Council to start herds on tribal lands with Goodnight animals. He's also looking at how partnerships could work with the Nature Conservancy, other nongovernmental organizations and even private ranchers. "There's a big-picture vision in place," he says. "The plan hasn't been completely put together yet, but the vision is there."

So what has the plight of the Goodnight herd taught wildlife conservation experts? The way Beard sees it, it's been a lesson in survival. Around the same time Goodnight was forming his bison herd, four other conservation-minded individuals across the American West and in parts of Canada were doing the same. The five foundation herds helped save bison from extinction by providing the foundation stock for today's herds. Though Goodnight's herd was small, it was one of the best known of the five foundation herds.

"[The Goodnight herd] has taught us that we can come back with a relatively small number of animals to a healthy, viable population," Beard says. "To be a success story in conservation, the IUCN and some of the other conservation organizations have said that you need a couple of thousand head of bison, which means that if we were to walk away and not touch this herd ever again, they would survive. We're not there yet, but we're well on our way." ■

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Limited Availability. These are handcrafted artisan pieces, and we only have so many. There's no time like the present. Call today!

Abalone Butterfly Effect Collection

- A. Butterfly Pendant ~~\$199†~~ **\$49** Save \$150
- B. 18" sterling silver chain \$59
- Butterfly Pendant & Chain ~~\$258†~~ **\$59** Save \$199
- C. Butterfly Earrings ~~\$199†~~ **\$59** Save \$140

Butterfly Pendant, Chain & Earrings ~~\$457~~ **\$99 Best Value!**

- Shimmering abalone in .925 sterling silver
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MESSAGE
FROM CEO

MARK
ROLLANS

Getting Into the Holiday Spirit

IT IS TOUGH TO BELIEVE but Christmas is just around the corner. As you begin shopping for and preparing your Thanksgiving meal, Christmas is next on the list.

To celebrate this holiday season, we have two contests: our Deck the Halls contest and the Thankful Giving contest. We had great participation in both of these last year and look forward to more great entries this year.

This year has flown by, just like many of the others. It has been filled with ups and downs, but I have found focusing on the good makes the bad not seem as bad. The Thankful Giving contest is a good reminder of that: When you look around your community, what organizations do you see making a difference and being part of the change? Show them

some appreciation by nominating them, and let us thank them with a \$500 donation.

Deck the Halls is another contest that will move us all into the Christmas spirit, even if we are having trouble getting there this year. Maybe you are the type of person that decorates for Christmas before Thanksgiving, maybe you wait until the day after your Thanksgiving meal, or maybe you believe in not putting up a single thing until the first of December. Maybe you choose not to decorate at all and to use your holiday time for other projects. Whatever you choose to do, I hope this season finds you in a joyful spirit.

For both holiday contests, watch our social media pages—Facebook, Twitter and Instagram—to see who wins. ■



Deck the Halls - \$250 Prize

For a chance at a \$250 first-place prize or a \$150 second-place prize, Medina EC members should submit a photo of their properties decorated in lights, garland, candy canes, wreaths or any other festive decorations.

- ▶ Only Medina EC members are eligible to enter. One entry per membership.
- ▶ Decorations must be done at the property where your Medina EC account is located.
- ▶ Lights may be on your home, Christmas tree, fence line, business, water well or any other creative display on your property.
- ▶ Medina EC encourages energy efficiency—use LED lights and timers to schedule limited lighting use.
- ▶ Entries must include member/account number, account address and mailing address.
- ▶ All photos become property of Medina EC and can be reprinted without payment.

Entries accepted November 25–December 17. Submit your entry at MedinaEC.org/Christmas-Lights or send it through email at MyCoop@MedinaEC.org.

Thankful Giving - \$500 Donation

Is there an organization in your area that is doing great work and making a difference? Nominate them for the Thankful Giving donation of \$500.

- ▶ Organizations must offer services or perform work in one of the 17 counties served by the cooperative.
- ▶ Nominations can be submitted by anyone who lives in Medina EC's service area.
- ▶ One nomination per person.
- ▶ Nonprofits are eligible, as are schools, hospitals and other community service organizations.
- ▶ Nominations will require a short write-up telling us about the organization and why they could use the donation.

Entries will be accepted November 1–December 1. Submit your nomination using the form at MedinaEC.org/Thankful-Giving. The donation will be made in December.



TOUCHSTONE ENERGY

Keep Your Winter Bills Low

IT SEEMS INTUITIVE that electricity use increases during winter, when sunlight is limited, days are shorter and temperatures are much lower. You're surely aware of the battle to keep your home a decent temperature during those colder months.

How can you also keep money in your wallet while being comfortable? Use the tips below to conserve energy and save money.

Reduce wasted heat by installing a programmable thermostat. Most importantly, be sure to program it after it is installed so that you won't waste energy and money heating your home when you aren't there. Setting the thermostat to 68 degrees when home—and lower when away—saves money. Be sure to change your filters to keep your heating unit running smoothly.

Turn off lights when not in use. Replace incandescent lightbulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75 percent less energy.

Lower the temperature on your water heater. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends using the warm setting (120 degrees) during fall and winter months.

Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep cold, drafty air out.

Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible. Turn off and unplug unused lights and appliances.

Be sure your home is sealed to keep the heated air you are paying for inside. Weatherstrip or caulk doors and windows, check the insulation levels in your attic and be sure, if your home has skirting, that it is intact and well insulated.

Get additional tips to help you save money this winter at MedinaEC.org/Cold, or if you have questions on your bill, call our member service representatives at 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532). ■

**Get tips on how to avoid high bills
during cold weather
at MedinaEC.org/Cold.**

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

Mark Rollans, 1-866-MEC-ELEC, ext. 1045

*EDITOR'S NOTE:

In the October issue of the magazine, we inadvertently removed the incorrect board member in Voting District 1 and ran the name of the incumbent board member who had not been re-elected at the time. We apologize for the error and any confusion it caused.

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 Hwy. 173 N., Hondo 78861

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

Uvalde 2604 Hwy. 90 E., Uvalde 78801

Corporate Office 2308 18th St., Hondo 78861

VISIT US ONLINE

MedinaEC.org



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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

COLOR YOUR CO-OP

A COLORING CONTEST FOR KIDS: THEY COULD HAVE THEIR ARTWORK
FEATURED ON MEDINA EC'S WATER BOTTLES!

CONTEST OVERVIEW: Children who live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC are encouraged to participate in Medina EC's Color Your Co-op contest to design the 2022 water bottle labels.

Two entry categories:

1. **Freestyle:** Use the freestyle format to design your own label. Artwork must not contain any copyright material.
2. **Lightbulb Style:** Use the predesigned lightbulb label to creatively color.

Children may only enter one category. A winner for each category will be chosen. Each winner will win a \$50 gift card. The contest begins on September 25, 2021, and ends November 30, 2021. Contest rules and dates may be changed at Medina EC's discretion. For every entry, Medina EC will make a \$1 donation to a local charity.

ELIGIBILITY: Children who live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC and are 4 to 17 years of age by November 30, 2021, are eligible. Employees and their immediate families are not eligible to participate.

CONTEST RULES: Artwork must be submitted or postmarked by Sunday, November 30, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. Late entries will not be accepted. Freestyle submission must be original work created by applicants. Each child may only submit one design total. Artwork must include the submission form.

All submitted artwork is owned by Medina EC and may be shared throughout MEC communication channels including but not limited to website, social media and magazine. Winners and their parents or guardians agree to the use of the winner's name, age, school and/or city to promote the Color Your Co-op program.

DESIGN RULES:

- Artwork must be flat (two-dimensional) and may use crayon, markers, paint, pencil, ink, and/or pastels. Artwork may also be digitally designed using digital art software.
- Designs must not include copyrighted material,

- including but not limited to company logos, product brands, store names, characters, etc.
- Designs must not be folded or damaged.
- Do not include the artist's name on the front of the artwork.

SUBMISSIONS: For Category 1: Freestyle: Artwork must be submitted using the template in the October or November issue of *Texas Co-op Power* or from MedinaEC.org/ColorYourCoop.

Category 2: Lightbulb Style: Artwork must use the template included in the October or November issue of *Texas Co-op Power* or from MedinaEC.org/ColorYourCoop.

JUDGING: Entries will be judged by Medina EC staff based on creativity, uniqueness, overall visual appeal, composition and age appropriateness.

PRIZES: Two winners will be chosen; one for each category. Each winner will receive a \$50 gift card. Winners will be announced in December and their work will be featured on future Medina EC water bottles and in other Medina EC communication channels as needed. For every entry submitted, Medina EC will make a \$1 donation to a local charity. The charity is TBD.

SUBMISSION: Include the submission form with entry.

In Person - Drop off your entry at any Medina EC office during normal business hours.

Mail - Mail your entry to:

Medina EC
ATTN Color Your Co-op
PO Box 370
Hondo, TX 78861

****Do not bend your entry!**** Entries will not be returned.

Digital

Upload a high-resolution version of your artwork at MedinaEC.org/ColorYourCoop or email MyCoop@MedinaEC.org. Please do not use your phone to take a picture of your entry to submit. If you want to submit digitally, please use a high-quality scanner to send a copy of the entry.

CHILD’S FIRST & LAST NAME

PARENT OR GUARDIAN’S NAME

CHILD’S AGE & BIRTHDAY

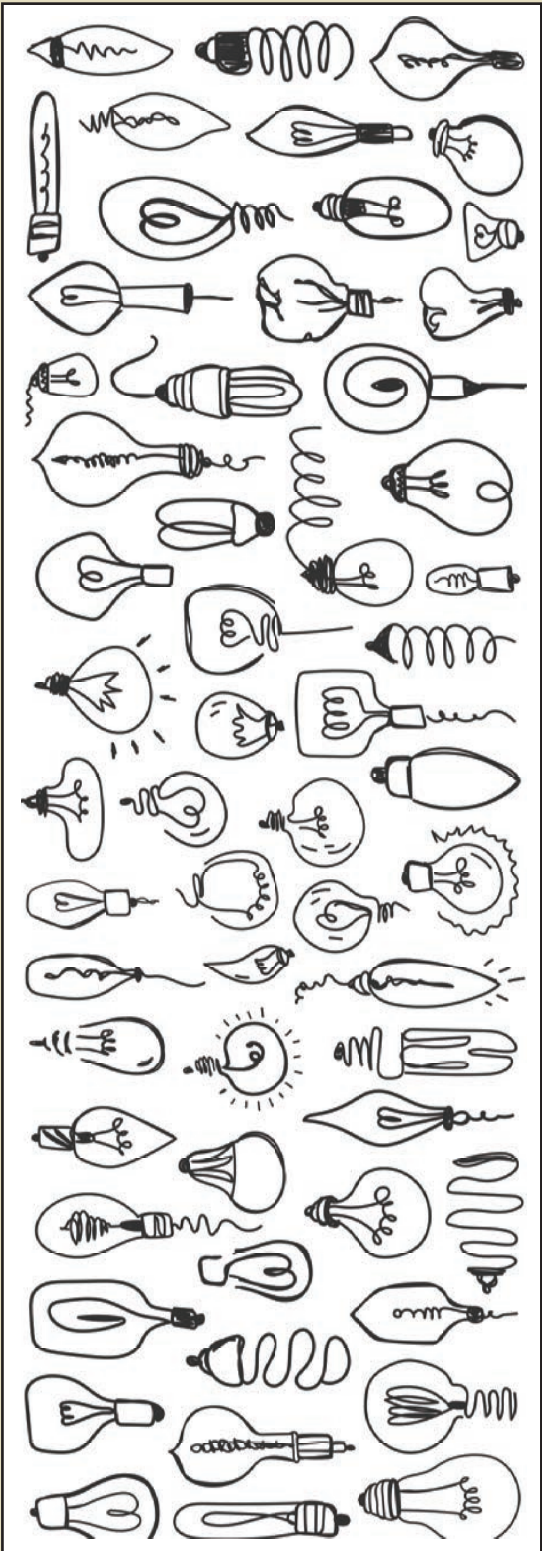
EMAIL ADDRESS

CHILD’S SCHOOL & GRADE

MAILING ADDRESS

CATEGORY 1: FREESTYLE

CATEGORY 2: LIGHTBULBS



Summer 2022 Plans:

- ✓ Have unforgettable experiences
- ✓ See national treasures
- ✓ Make new friends
- ✓ Go on the trip of a lifetime

Would your teen enjoy a **FREE** trip to Austin and Washington, D.C., in June 2022? The Government-in-Action Youth Tour may be for them.

Apply Now!
Deadline is January 7.
Application and eligibility
information can be found at
MedinaEC.org/YouthTour.

BONUS: Winners will receive a
\$500 college scholarship!



Operation Round Up Recipients

Medina Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up committee met in September and awarded the following applicants' donations.

- **Abraham Garcia** - \$500 - for home damage caused by storms.
- **Norma and Juan Medina** - \$500 - for home damage caused by storms.
- **Ruben and Jasmine Sanchez** - \$150 H-E-B Gift Card - to help provide food for their household.

Operation Round Up is founded by Medina EC members who choose to round up their monthly electric bills to the next dollar.

If you or someone you know needs financial help, apply for a donation from ORU. Applicants do not need to be Medina EC members but must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC. The 2022 deadlines are Feb. 4, May 6, Aug. 5 and Nov. 4.

Learn more and apply at
MedinaEC.org/ORU.





Co-op Connections Corner: Pet Care

MEDINA EC KNOWS that many of our members have pets that are considered an important part of their families. We also know that taking care of our furry friends can be expensive. These Co-op Connections business partners have discounts that can help!

Happy Tails Kennel—Hondo

(210) 385-4752
10% off stays of three days or more; dog grooming and day care also available

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RV Chiangus—Rio Grande City

(830) 426-2535
10% off posted rates; must ask for discount before check-in

National Discount: Healthy Paws Pet Insurance & Foundation

Receive 10% off regular rates. Get more information at Connections.coop > National Discounts.



Learn more about all the benefits of Medina EC's Co-op Connections program at MedinaEC.org/Connections or on the app.

**WE WANT YOUR
FEEDBACK -**

During November, 350 members will be randomly selected to answer Medina Electric survey questions by phone (calls will come from an 844 or 507 area code) or email. The surveys are being done by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. If you do not get a phone call or email but would like to share feedback or an idea with the cooperative, email us at MyCoop@MedinaEC.org.



**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING**

Our offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 25-26, for the holiday. As always, crews will be on call.



Medina EC Meets Members Online and in Person for Annual Meeting

Medina Electric Cooperative held its annual membership meeting Saturday, September 25. The meeting, held at the Willie de Leon Civic Center in Uvalde and livestreamed on Zoom, was the co-op’s first official gathering, other than nominating meetings, since the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2020 annual meeting. In-person attendees partook in a breakfast served by Bill Miller Bar-B-Q and safely enjoyed fellowship with old friends and new acquaintances, and several lucky members won \$50 bill credits and gift cards. The employees and board members of Medina EC extend their thanks to all who attended in person and watched online. Below is a brief recap of the meeting.

Election Results

District 1: Wayne Scholtz, 1,352 votes
 Levi McKenzie, 566 votes
 District 2: Kenneth White, uncontested
 District 3: J.L. Gonzalez, uncontested

Eligible Voters
 19,878
 Participating Voters
 1,918
 Participation Rate
 9.6%

In-Person Attendance
 188
 Zoom Viewership
 19
 Total Memberships Represented
 144



Emilie Meyer celebrates winning the \$1,000 grand prize.



A 76-year member of the co-op represented the longest membership at the meeting.



Members had the option to watch a livestream of the annual meeting online.



A young attendee works on an activity that came with the goody bag he received for coming to the annual meeting.



Safety coordinator Derly Carrizales teaches members about the hazards of working around electricity.



Members of all ages enjoyed striking a pose at the photo booth.

Members in attendance each got a sunflower sticker to take home, and Zoom attendees were mailed a sticker following the meeting.

Business Meeting Highlights

CEO Mark Rollans provided an update on the business and financial condition of the cooperative. He explained how Medina EC rapidly adapted its business practices to the new reality forced by the coronavirus pandemic and how the co-op responded to extreme weather events, including the February winter storm.

Despite lower energy sales compared to the previous year, Medina EC met all the financial goals set by its board. The cooperative remains financially stable and continues to grow.

Medina EC plans to complete an update to its metering system in 2022 that will allow the co-op to expand the services it offers to members.

Employees were recognized for reaching service milestones in 2020 and 2021. As employees reach those milestones, marked in five-year increments, Medina EC donates \$100 in their name to a charity that they choose. To date, the cooperative has donated \$2,600 to charitable causes on behalf of employees, and the co-op will donate another \$300 before the year ends.

Rollans announced that he will retire December 31 after 30 years of service to the cooperative, having spent nearly 15 of those years as CEO. On behalf of Medina EC’s board of directors and membership, board President Kenneth White presented Rollans with a plaque commemorating his decades of hard work and unselfish dedication to the cooperative. “Although I won’t be here as the cooperative faces the challenges and changes that lie ahead,” Rollans said, “I believe that the cooperative is in a perfect position to meet the challenges, implement changes and continue to be successful in the future.”



Members partake in a breakfast served by Bill Miller Bar-B-Q.



CEO Mark Rollans announces that after 30 years of service to the cooperative, he will retire at the end of the year.

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIORITY PROCESSING (optional) Add An Additional \$2.95 (Receive within 3-6 days of receipt of order)	\$ 2.95
*Add applicable State & Local SALES TAX	\$
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TCP WEB EXTRA

Listen to W.F. Strong read this story.

Biography of a Word

The label derived from the life of Samuel Maverick has Texas origins

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY TRACI DABERKO

THIS IS A BIOGRAPHY of a word that was essentially born in Texas, where it grew up to achieve worldwide fame, ultimately transforming itself from modest noun into grand metaphor.

The word is maverick, and it got its start in San Antonio more than 150 years ago. Today, a maverick blazes a trail, goes against the crowd and is an independent thinker. But originally, any unbranded cow was a maverick, and the first herd of unbranded cattle was owned by Samuel Maverick. Ironically, Maverick's failure (some said refusal) to brand his cattle branded his name in perpetuity.

Maverick was more interested in acquiring land than ranching it, and he ranked with Richard King and Charles Goodnight as a Texas land baron.

Maverick, born in South Carolina, first

demonstrated his nonconformist nature shortly after he arrived in San Antonio in 1835. Even though most Texans were not buying land because they feared they would not be able to hold it during uncertain times, Maverick bought huge tracts around San Antonio and farther east, along the Brazos River.

He joined the Alamo militia and would have died at the Alamo had he not been selected to sign the Texas Declaration of Independence. He was a maverick on March 2, 1836, when he risked his life, along with 59 others, by signing what Antonio López de Santa Anna declared a treasonous document. Maverick later served as mayor of San Antonio, gaining further notoriety as a leading citizen of a rebellious city.

Six years after Texas won its inde-

pendence, Santa Anna dispatched Gen. Adrián Woll to retake control of San Antonio and to imprison all those who took up arms against Mexico. Maverick organized 53 men on the roof of a building he owned, to resist the invasion. After they killed 14 and wounded 27, they were surrounded by 900 Mexican troops and forced to surrender.

Woll did not carry out orders to execute the prisoners—instead marching them 1,000 brutal miles to Perote Prison, near Puebla, Mexico. The men were chained together in dark cells and subjected to forced labor. As the group representative, Maverick asked for better conditions and was put into solitary confinement just for asking.

After a few months, Santa Anna offered Maverick his freedom in exchange for signing a document saying that Texas had been illegally seized and should be returned to Mexico. Instead of signing, Maverick wrote, "I cannot bring myself to think that it would be to the interest of Texas to reunite with Mexico. This being my settled opinion I cannot sacrifice the interest of my country even to obtain my liberty, for I regard it as a lie and a crime which I cannot commit. I must, therefore, make up my mind to wear my chains, galling as they are."

While Maverick was in the dungeon, San Antonians elected him to the Republic of Texas House of Representatives. When he was released, Maverick refused to leave without as many of his friends from San Antonio as possible. He waited a few days for most of them to be freed, and they all traveled to San Antonio together.

When Maverick left prison, he took the chains that had bound him as a reminder of the incalculable value of freedom. ■

Pies

A perfect showcase for favorite fruits and other fillings

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Although pie is often associated with certain times of the year, I'll take pie over cake any day. With so many flavor possibilities, the only problem is choosing one! This pie is one of my favorites to make, no matter the season. You can substitute blueberries or blackberries or use thawed frozen fruit if fresh isn't available. Be sure to dry the berries as much as possible to preserve the texture of the custard and keep the fruit juices from seeping too much.

Raspberries and Cream Pie

PIE

1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust
2½ cups raspberries, washed and patted dry
1 cup sugar
⅓ cup flour
2 eggs
½ cup sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

TOPPING

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
2 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ cup (½ stick) butter, melted

- 1. PIE** Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Roll out pie crust and arrange in a 9-inch pie dish. Arrange raspberries evenly in crust.
- In a small bowl, mix together sugar and flour. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, sour cream and vanilla until blended, then stir in sugar-flour mixture and whisk until smooth. Pour over raspberries.
- 4. TOPPING** In a small bowl, mix together flour, sugars, cinnamon and nutmeg, then add butter and mix with a fork until the topping is blended and crumbly. Scatter topping evenly over custard.
- Bake about 50 minutes, until top is golden. Let cool before serving.

SERVES 8

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Maple Pecan Pie.





Chocolate Chip Cookie Pie

DIANE LYERLY
PEDERNALES EC

This decadent pie tastes just like a warm, gooey cookie. It's been a Lyerly family favorite for nearly 40 years, and it's easy to understand why. If you use a premade frozen pie shell, this pie can be ready in under an hour.

- 1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust**
- 6 tablespoons butter (¾ stick), softened**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 eggs**
- ½ cup flour**
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- ¾ cup chopped pecans**
- ½ cup shredded coconut**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Roll out pie crust and arrange in a 9-inch pie dish. Set aside or chill while you prepare the filling.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, cream butter, sugar and vanilla. Beat in eggs until smooth, then stir in flour and mix until no dry bits remain. Stir in chocolate chips, pecans and coconut and pour mixture into prepared pie crust.
- 3.** Bake 35–40 minutes, until top is lightly browned and set. Let cool before serving.

SERVES 8

\$500 WINNER

Grandmama's Apple-Cranberry Pie

MARGARET UMSTATTD
PEDERNALES EC



A perfect balance of tart and sweet, this pie has been a part of Umstattd's family holiday since she was a child. A food processor can make quick work of chopping the cranberries.

SERVES 8



PIE

- 1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust**
- ¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar**
- ¼ cup sugar**
- ⅓ cup (¼ stick) butter, cubed**
- ½ cup flour**
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- 4 cups peeled and diced Granny Smith apples (3–4 apples)**
- 2 cups chopped fresh or frozen and thawed cranberries**

TOPPING

- ½ cup flour**
- ¼ cup loosely packed brown sugar**
- ¼ cup (½ stick) cold butter, cubed**

- 1. PIE** Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Roll out pie crust and arrange in a 9-inch pie dish. Set aside or chill while you prepare the filling.
- 2.** In a large saucepan over medium-low heat, combine the sugars and butter, stirring to melt. Add flour, cinnamon, apples and cranberries and stir to coat fruit. Cook, stirring often to prevent burning, until mixture is somewhat syrupy, about 10 minutes. Pour filling into prepared pie crust.
- 3. TOPPING** Combine flour and brown sugar in a small bowl. Cut in the butter with a pastry cutter or two knives until the mixture forms coarse crumbs. Sprinkle evenly over the pie filling.
- 4.** Place a rimmed baking sheet on the lower oven rack to catch juices. Bake pie on the middle rack for 15 minutes. Lower temperature to 350 degrees and bake another 50 minutes. Let cool before serving.

MORE RECIPES >

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

BRUNCH DUE NOVEMBER 10

Do you go sweet or savory—or both? Enter your best brunch recipe at TexasCoopPower.com/contests by November 10 for a chance to win \$500.



Savory Butternut Squash Pie

LISA LAMB
PEDERNALES EC

Pie doesn't have to be just for dessert. Lamb's take on the classic pumpkin pie makes for a light main course. It's equally at home on the table for dinner or a holiday brunch.

CRUST

¾ cup whole-wheat flour

½ cup oat, spelt or all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons cold butter

6 tablespoons cold water, plus more as needed

FILLING

2 eggs

2 cups butternut squash purée

1 cup milk

¼ cup grated Parmesan

1 tablespoon finely chopped sage,

savory or fennel

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon onion powder

¼ teaspoon pepper

1. CRUST Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

2. In a medium bowl, mix together flours and salt. Cut in butter until coarse crumbs are formed. Stir in water 1 tablespoon at a time, until a cohesive dough is formed. (The amount will vary depending on humidity levels and flours used.) Move dough onto a floured surface, form into a ball and fold a few times to fully incorporate ingredients. Roll out and place into a 9-inch pie dish. Set aside or chill while you prepare filling.

3. FILLING In a large bowl, whisk together all the filling ingredients until well blended. Pour into prepared pie crust.

4. Bake 15 minutes, then reduce temperature to 350 degrees and bake an additional 45 minutes. Let cool before serving.

SERVES 8

TCP WEB EXTRA There's always enough pie to go around when you use TexasCoopPower.com. Visit the Food page, search "pie" and discover hundreds of recipes previously featured in Texas Co-op Power.

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A West Texas Gem

Downtown San Angelo features glimpses of frontier living

BY CHET GARNER

IT'S ONE OF THE largest towns in America not on an interstate. It's the wool and mohair capital of the world. And it's one of the few places where the main street still offers a glimpse of genuine frontier days.

On a searing summer afternoon, I found myself strolling down Concho Avenue in the heart of San Angelo's historic district. Named after the Concho River that flows through town a block south, this street is lined with boutique businesses and restaurants in century-old buildings.

I needed a sweet treat to get my mind off the heat, so I popped into Eggemeyer's General Store for a block of homemade fudge. The term "general" truly describes this place, as it seemed packed with everything, including children's souvenirs and kitchen tools, in displays stretching across multiple cavernous rooms.

I wandered a little farther and found myself contemplating a new pair of custom boots from the iconic M.L. Leddy's, then enjoying scenes of local history captured in colorful murals downtown. Inside Legend Jewelers, I marveled at the iridescent beauty of Concho pearls harvested from the river.

Outside the jewelry shop, I noticed a narrow stairway leading up to Miss Hattie's Bordello Museum. I had seen Miss Hattie's Restaurant and Cathouse Lounge down the street and decided to investigate.

Mark Priest, owner of both the jewelry shop and the museum, led me upstairs, where I encountered a setting that transported me to the 19th century—when this infamous business was managed by Miss Hattie. The parlor was furnished in red and purple velvets, and the long hallway passed through rows of small bedrooms. It was a glimpse into a small part of a big town's storied frontier past. ■

ABOVE Chet visits Miss Hattie's Bordello Museum.

TCP WEB EXTRA Stroll with Chet down the streets of this West Texas town and watch all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.

Know Before You Go

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

NOVEMBER

09

Concan Fall Festival on the Frio, (830) 232-4310, visitualdecounty.com

10

Grand Prairie A Conversation With Stacey Abrams, (972) 854-5050, texastrustcutheatre.com/events

12

Nacogdoches Swingin' Axes and Aces, (936) 468-2801, music.sfasu.edu

Fredericksburg [12–14] Die Künstler Fine Art Show and Sale, (830) 995-5771, dkfredericksburg.org

13

Bastrop Red, White & Blue Veterans Appreciation Banquet, (512) 629-6590, rwbveterans.com

Corpus Christi Holiday Cooking With Herbs Workshop, (361) 852-2100, stxbot.org

Fort McKavett Cooking the Army Ration, (325) 396-2358, facebook.com/visitfortmckavett

George West Dion Pride, (361) 436-1098, dobie-westtheatre.com

Henderson Syrup Festival, 1-866-650-5529, depotmuseum.com/syrupfestival.html

Kingsbury Wings & Wheels Fly-In, (830) 639-4162, pioneerflightmuseum.org

Kyle Veterans Day Parade, (512) 262-3939, cityofkyle.com

Bryan [13-14] Friends of the Library Book Sale,
(979) 209-5600,
friendsbcs.org

Mesquite [13, 18] Wreath-Making Class,
(972) 216-6468,
visitmesquitetx.com/events

Boerne [13, 27] Bluegrass Jam at the AgriCultural,
(210) 445-1080,
theagricultural.org/
bluegrass-jams

Brazoria Henry Smith Day, (979) 824-0455,
brazoriahf.org

Dallas Visionary Women,
(214) 827-0813,
fowlercommunities.org

Alpine [19-20] Artwalk,
(432) 294-1071,
artwalkalpine.com

Boerne [19-20] Master Artwork Show,
(830) 816-5606,
masterartworkshow.com

Katy [19-21] Home for the Holidays Gift Market,
(281) 788-4297,
homefortheholidays
giftmarket.com

Ingram [19-20, 26-28, Dec. 3-5, 10-12] A Christmas Carol, (830) 367-5121,
hcaf.com

Corsicana Independent Order of Odd Fellows Trade Days,
(903) 872-7438, iooftx.org

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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

Retreat. Relax in Kerrville

Capital of The Texas Hill Country



Texas Furniture Makers Show
Kerr Arts
& Cultural Center
Nov 1-Dec 17



Rumours - A Tribute to Rock Legends Fleetwood Mac
The Cailloux Theater
Nov 20

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Fredericksburg

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NOVEMBER EVENTS CONTINUED

20

**Crockett Christmas in
Crockett on the Square,**
(936) 544-2359,

**Freeport Christmas
Market,** (979) 233-3526,
freeport.tx.us

**Henderson A Very Merry
Market,** (903) 521-3992,
facebook.com/
churchatlakecherokee

**Irving Mozart con
Amore,** (972) 252-4800,
lascolinassymphony.org

**Kerrville Holiday Lighted
Parade,** (830) 257-7200,
kerrvilletx.gov

**Fredericksburg Albert
and Gage,** (830) 990-2886,
fredericksburgmusicclub.com

Lufkin Straight No Chaser,
(936) 633-5454,
angelinaarts.org/
performing-arts-series

**Grapevine Carol of
Lights,** (817) 410-3185,
grapevinetexasusa.com

**Bellville [26-27] Big
Top Vintage Market,**
(936) 900-1900,
bigtopvintage.com

**Corpus Christi [26-27,
Dec. 3-4, 10-11, 17-18]
Holly Days at the Gardens,**
(361) 852-2100, stxbot.org

**Abilene [26-28, Dec. 3-5,
10-12, 17-19, 20-23, 26]
Winter Lightfest,**
(325) 677-1841,
unitedwayabilene.org/
winterlightfest

**Frisco [26-Jan. 2] Christ-
mas in the Square,**
(469) 633-1721,
visitfrisco.com

27

**Comfort Christmas in
Comfort,** (830) 995-3131,
comfort-texas.com

28

**Bandera Frontier Times
Jamboree,** (830) 796-3864,
frontiertimesmuseum.org

DECEMBER

02

**Cameron Christmas
Parade,** (254) 697-4979,
cameron-tx.com

**Columbus Ladies Night
Out,** (979) 732-8385,
facebook.com/
ladiesnightoutcolumbus-texas

**Grapevine Parade of
Lights,** 1-800-457-7572,
grapevinetexasusa.com

**Jacksonville Chamber
Christmas Parade,**
(903) 586-2217,
jacksonvilletexas.com

Kerrville Holiday Hopes,
(830) 792-7469,
symphonyofthehills.org

**Brenham Gary Morris
Christmas,** (979) 337-7240,
thebarnhillcenter.com

**Fredericksburg Light
the Night Christmas
Parade,** (830) 997-5000,
fredericksburg-texas.com

**Grapevine Nash Farm
Christmas Decorating,**
1-800-457-6338,
grapevinetexasusa.com/
nash-farm

**Fredericksburg Kinder-
fest,** (830) 990-8441,
pioneer-museum.net

04

Funny Signs

As the song goes, "Sign, sign, everywhere a sign." As we see here, Texans and humor are as close as two coats of paint. Before we pull up stakes and mosey on, let's take a moment to read the writing on the wall.

BY GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

BRAD MOLGAARD
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Spotted on FM 314 entering the town of Edom.

LEORIA MOORE
PEDERNALES EC

Pointing drivers to this town in northeast Texas.

CASEY FANNIN
RUSK COUNTY EC

"A funny sign I saw at Caddo Lake while on a boat tour."

MARK KUNNEMANN
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

Rosie begs for treats or affection at the gate entering the goat pen.



Upcoming Contests

DUE NOV 10 The Texas Experience

DUE DEC 10 All Wet

DUE JAN 10 Feathered Friends

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP WEB EXTRA See Focus on Texas on our website for more Funny Signs photos from readers.



Dad's Service Station

Giving credit where credit is due

BY DALE ROBERSON
ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID MOORE

IN 1949, MY FATHER left the Odessa oil patch and moved our family to Breckenridge, between Fort Worth and Abilene, where he bought a service station. He started with two customers a day and became one of the busiest stations in town.

The previous owner apparently was known to spend more time drinking whiskey and picking guitars than selling gasoline. We decided the three bullet holes in the ceiling were an indication of his priorities and his station's environment.

We called the business Red's Service Station and Garage—not a filling station because in addition to selling gasoline, we offered under-the-hood service and to clean windshields, sweep floorboards with a whisk broom and check tire pressure. From the age of 12 until I went off to the University of Texas at Austin in

1959, I made spending money by greasing cars, changing oil and fixing flats the old way, with tire tools, a rubber hammer and hot patches.

Because my father followed politics closely and was a huge football fan who gambled on sports, we were frequently visited by a collection of dignitaries and colorful characters from the worlds of politics, sports and newspaper publishing as well as a few bookies.

Probably the most famous customer we had was a wildcatter named Jack Grimm.

Grimm came into the service station one morning, introduced himself and said to my father, "Red, I graduated from Oklahoma University with a degree in geology. I'm going to produce oil here, but I need some credit." He suggested that if Dad carried him on the books for gasoline, he would pay his bill when he made a well.

Grimm was good for his word. Many days he was our first customer, and he would fill his Ford with gas before heading out to the oil fields. He usually burned that tank in a day and was our first customer the next morning. He reportedly hit 25 dry holes before making a good one. He always paid his bill. Before long, he graduated from Fords to Lincolns and moved his business to Abilene.

After striking it rich, he financed searches for sasquatch, the Abominable Snowman, Loch Ness monster, Titanic and, most famously, Noah's Ark.

Grimm was not the only one my father gave credit to. As long as customers paid their bills now and then, Dad would carry them. The only thing that made him mad was when a customer skipped paying a bill and he saw them buying their gas with cash at another station.

In addition to a strong work ethic, I learned at Red's Service Station and Garage never to judge people. My father would give credit to anyone, rich or poor. ■

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Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and 24-month commitment. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 11/15/21. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$64.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$79.99 for AT120+, \$89.99 for AT200, \$99.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D. Reg. No. – 19-08615. ©2021 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly mean that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.