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JULY 2025

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2. ENERGY STAR rated units qualify for 30% through 2032,
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July 2025



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The Renaissance man who pulled strings and gave new life to old grains.

*By Claire Stevens
Photos by Wyatt McSpadden*

A Century of the Simon

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By Addie Broyles

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James Brown, owner of Barton Springs Mill in Dripping Springs.

Photo by Wyatt McSpadden

ABOVE

The Simon Theatre in downtown Brenham.

Natalie Lacy Lange | Courtesy the Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre



Anchored in History

THE OLDEST AMERICAN port west of New Orleans celebrates its bicentennial this year.

The Congress of Mexico established the Port of Galveston on October 17, 1825.

It was home to the Texas Navy during the Republic of Texas' war for independence. Before Ellis Island in New York opened in 1892, it was one of the main gateways into the country for immigrants. At the end of the 19th century, it was the world's foremost cotton port.

But after the hurricane of 1900 destroyed Galveston, Houston emerged as the safer long-term shipping option on the Gulf. Today, Galveston is the fourth-busiest cruise port in the U.S.

Two events in Galveston will celebrate the port's 200th anniversary: a party on the pier October 17 and bicentennial gala October 18.

Special Delivery

For most of America's history, that meant a delivery via the post office using a process that originated 250 years ago this month.

The postal system was established July 26, 1775. Benjamin Franklin was the first postmaster general.

Did you know? The first U.S. stamps, featuring images of Franklin and George Washington, were issued July 1, 1847.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

My favorite Fourth of July was ...

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: **I blush whenever ...**

I think of some of the things I did in school!

STEVE BAILEY
PENTEX ENERGY
GAINESVILLE

My wife catches me staring at how beautiful she still is after more than 40 years of marriage.

ROGER ELSEY
PEDERNALES EC
WIMBERLEY

My phone goes off in a public place.

COLLEEN PROVASEK
SAM HOUSTON EC
LIVINGSTON

I tell the story about accidentally walking into the men's restroom at a restaurant in Houston.

CAROL HILTON
BANDERA EC
PIPE CREEK

Visit our website to see more responses.

TCP Contests and More

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FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Abstract

RECOMMENDED READING

In December 2016 we told of Galveston's history as the "Ellis Island of Texas." Read the story at TexasCoopPower.com.

MAY 2025 Bavaria, By Way of Texas

"I met Ronny Tippelt in 1984. In '85 and '86 he played my backyard. He was and still is the best yodeler in Texas."

DENNIS PEAK
PEDERNALES EC
LAMPASAS



ERICH SCHLEGEL

Destination: Walburg

We often visit Walburg for German food, drinks and, of course, the oompah music [*Bavaria, By Way of Texas*; May 2025]. From now on I imagine our trips must include reservations made well in advance as many of our fellow Texans will be venturing there to enjoy a bit of Germany come to Texas.

Martha Everman Jones
Victoria EC
Victoria

Hail Chaser

My father, Bob Rinker, was a hail chaser for the Colorado State University meteorology department in "hail alley" in the early 1960s [*Twisted Approach*, May 2025]. Hail alley starts at the eastern front of the Rockies in Colorado and Wyoming and covers all territory east to the Great Lakes.

One time he chased a hailstorm from the Colorado-Nebraska border



JENNY BROWN

all the way to Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Susan Frensley
Wise EC
Richardson

Beeline for Sea Center

I recently retired and didn't even know that Sea Center Texas existed, so my wife and I made a beeline for Lake Jackson [*Fish School*, April 2025]. What a great visit that was at the hatchery with the guide who had done it for many, many years.

Chris Gloger
Pedernales EC
Canyon Lake

Pilot Connection

In 1980 I worked in Yugoslavia for six weeks with Dennis Dalrymple, the son of Millie Dalrymple [*The WASPs Who Flew Out of Sweetwater*, April 2025]. We traveled to the mountain town of Danilovgrad, where America-friendly locals had sheltered his father after bailing out of his damaged bomber.

A couple of great pilot stories in that family.

Russell Honerkamp
Bluebonnet EC
Brenham

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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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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Living the GOOD LOAF

BY CLAIRE STEVENS • PHOTOS BY WYATT MCSPADDEN

The Renaissance man who pulled strings and gave new life to old grains

James Brown has a fascination with history.

For 23 years, the Texas native played the viola da gamba, a bowed instrument that resembles a cello but fell out of favor nearly 300 years ago.

“The whole thing was to put the listener in a time and a place,” Brown says. “When you’re hearing this music, if you closed your eyes, it’d be the same as being in Germany in 1735 hearing Bach conducting the chapel choir and orchestra on the same instruments.”

Brown specialized in music of that era, performed and conducted around the country, and was director of worship and arts for a church. But in 2016, he was looking into a second career.

Brown had been baking bread and pizza as a hobby (though he does have a culinary degree picked up among various music degrees). In pursuit of a better loaf, he happened upon a blogger in New Mexico who was touting the wonders of baking with locally grown grains from a co-op in Albuquerque.

To his surprise, he couldn’t find a similar operation in Texas.

So Brown, who was living in Austin at the time, looked into establishing a small-scale mill that could process grains from local farmers. And, just as in his music career, he turned to the wisdom of the past, bringing those around him on a journey through time—this time by way of wheat.

Armed with historical documents detailing the grain varieties grown in Texas in the early 20th century and some hazy information about mills powered by Austin’s Barton Springs in the 19th century, Brown set out “to take people to a time and place” that no longer exists.

“What was growing in Texas? What were people eating? What was being milled in your hometown?” he wondered.

Brown got to work in 2017, and eight years in, Barton Springs Mill in Dripping Springs, about 20 miles west of Austin, provides freshly milled grains to a growing audience of restaurants, distilleries, bakeries and home bakers. It’s showing folks why they should care whether their flour is local and organic or an ancient, heritage or landrace variety.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
Wheat sheaves from
several heirloom varieties.
James Brown in front of
one of his three mills,
each fitted with a pair of
2,500-pound stones.
Freshly milled grains are
available for purchase
on-site and online.





The grains are selected with a focus on ancient varieties—those largely unchanged over time and still closely resembling how they looked and tasted before human intervention—and landrace and heritage grains—those developed in the 19th and 20th centuries, before more intensive hybridizing. Landrace grains are specifically adapted over time to the local climate where they are developed.

In addition to churning out flour, BSM offers tours of its 17,000-square-foot facility, which houses all the equipment to store, clean, mill and ship grains.

In a classroom opposite the mills, staff and guest instructors teach visitors to make breads, pastas and other baked goods. Through large windows in the classroom, visitors can watch the three stone mills.

The 7-foot-tall pine structures are fitted with a pair of 2,500-pound, flat composite stones. A pattern etched into the stones crushes the grain. The miller can control the result by adjusting the stones' closeness, the speed at which grain is added and the speed at which the upper stone rotates. Power would have been provided by the water of a nearby creek a century ago, but today the mills get their energy from Pedernales Electric Cooperative.

The rumbling stone mills look like relics of the past. In some ways, they are. These days, most commercial milling is done with roller mills, which can produce flour much quicker.

Brown's goal is to show that flour can have its own incredible flavor and aroma. He wants the loaves of bread to transport them back in time, much like his music. Stone-milling preserves the germ and the bran, flavorful parts of the wheat kernel that are typically removed when milling white flour (though included in whole wheat).

"You pick up the aroma and the flavor and the characters of these wheats, and they become an equal player in anything that you make," he says. "It becomes an ingredient that contributes those things, rather than just being neutral."

TAM 105, a variety of hard, red wheat developed by Texas A&M University in 1976 and one of the mill's more modern grains, smells to Brown like a wet dog while it's being milled. Fortunately, that doesn't translate when the finished flour is used for baking, and Brown recommends it for breads, pastas and pizza dough.

On the other hand, rouge de Bordeaux, a 19th-century wheat, naturally smells and tastes of cinnamon, baking spices and molasses. "People will swear that's in the bread," Brown says. "No, that's just the wheat—wheat, yeast, water and salt."

Brown has gone to great lengths to track down seeds for wheat varieties he desires. He found farmers still growing marquis, which was popular in the U.S. in the beginning of the 20th century, in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. Other seeds he could get only from the Department of Agriculture's National Plant Germplasm System, a bank of plant material that conserves plant genetics.

When BSM was just an idea, Brown convinced 10 organic farmers across the state to meet with him. Over coffee or a meal, he presented his pitch: He'd provide the seeds and buy the wheat they produced. To his surprise, all 10 were



RIGHT Brown shows unmilled Sonora soft white wheat kernels.

OPPOSITE Barton Springs Mill's warehouse. To keep the grain fresh in the Texas heat, oxygen is removed from each bag of wheat. Last year, the mill processed 650 tons of grain.



interested, which meant he had to turn some down due to a lack of capacity.

Henry Martens has been growing wheat for Brown, in rotation with peanuts and cotton, at his farm in Tokio, about 40 miles southwest of Lubbock, since 2017.

A fifth-generation farmer, Martens always knew he wanted to farm. In 2015, when a piece of land became available that hadn't yet been treated with chemicals, he couldn't pass it up. He began organic peanut farming, which he rotated with cotton.

Today, Martens farms roughly 2,000 acres but likens his experience farming organic to tending a garden. The work is especially labor intensive—keeping up with weeds and caring for crops without the use of chemicals—but he says organic farming is worth it for him.

"It takes dedication and love," he says.

When he met Brown, Martens had been looking to add another crop to his rotation. Crop rotation is particularly important for organic farmers, who rely on it to manage pests and diseases and keep soil healthy. Peanuts reintroduce nitrogen, a key nutrient, into the soil. Plant only cotton too many years in a row, and pests become a problem.

Starring Rolls

A Michelin star is considered by many to be the highest award a restaurant can receive. The Michelin Guide has been bestowing stars since 1926, but it took until 2024 for the guide's secret reviewers to finally make it to Texas.

In November, 15 Texas restaurants were awarded Michelin stars, including awards for barbecue, sushi, and Mexican and Southern fares. Among the stars, five of the awarded restaurants use grain from Barton Springs Mill.

Wheat is a good rotation crop for Martens because it can be planted in winter, when weeds are less of a concern, and the tall grass provides cover to the ground, protecting it from high winds. As another plus, Brown pays his farmers significantly more for their crops than the market rate.

An additional benefit for Martens is getting to try the flour from his wheat.

"When you see it, it's not what you're used to seeing—the flour, where it's so fine and perfect and white," Martens says. "But I guess that's never mattered to me and my wife. We care about it being organic and it being directly from the farm that we know, and it tastes amazing."

The best way to test a grain's flavor, Brown says, is to make a pancake with it. They're simple, quick and allow the flavor of the grain to come through.

And since "nobody wants to eat a spoonful of flour," Brown sends visitors next door to Abby Jane Bakeshop, which sells a variety of baked goods that use only BSM grains.

Brown is proud to help farmers, supporting what he calls the local grain economy. He works with four to five farmers each year (groups rotate in and out with their crops). Most are in Texas, but he has also worked with farmers in Oklahoma, Colorado and Arizona.

Brown says he gets a call from a farmer wanting to grow for him about once a week, but he's at capacity. Last year, the mill processed 650 tons of grain. This year, it may take in a record 800 tons.

"I got into all this because I wanted a better loaf of bread," Brown says. "That's really the long and short of it."

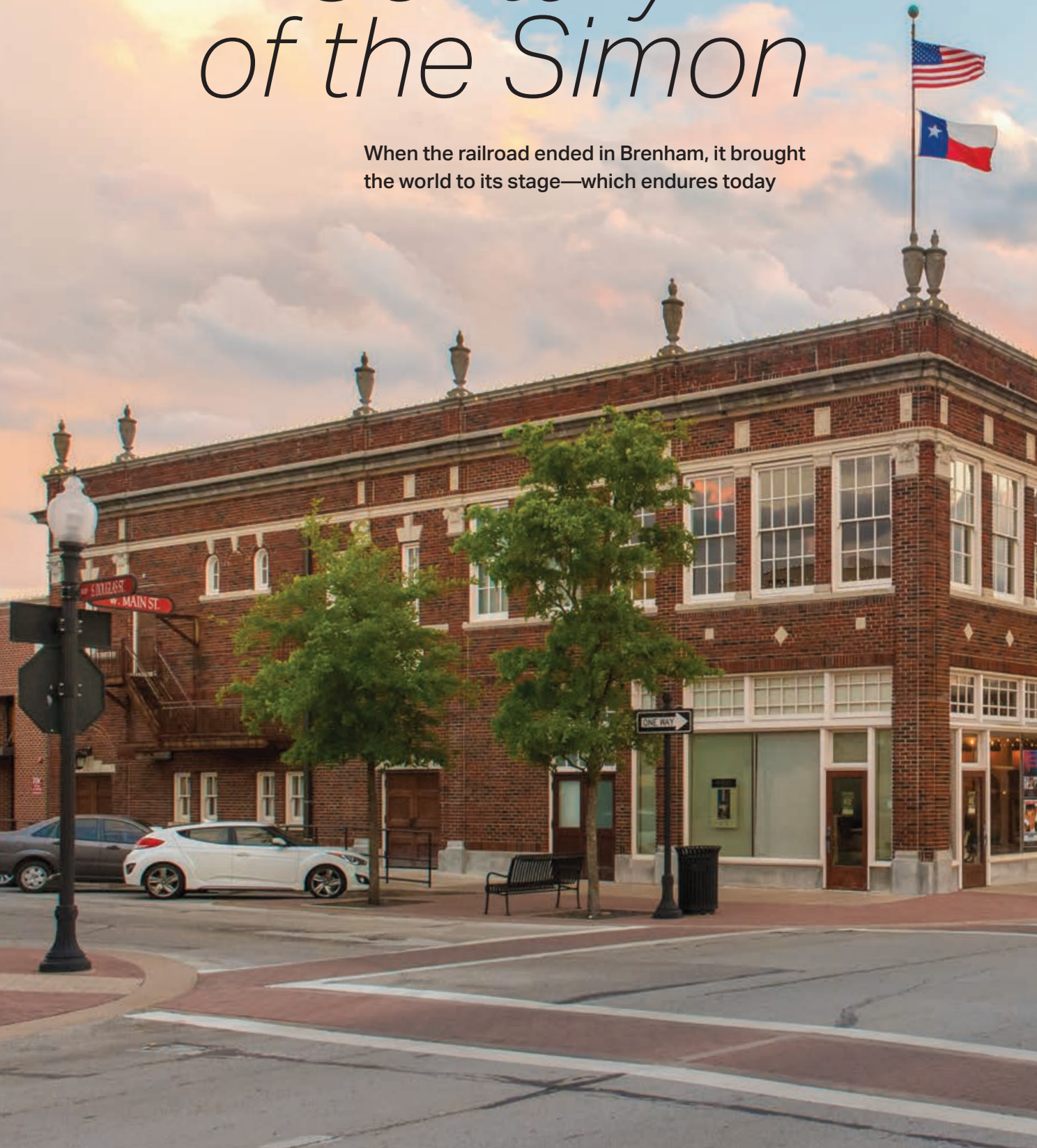
"But along the way, I became more intimately acquainted with what's going on with American farms and with American farmers and became quite passionate about how we treat farmers, regard farmers and our farmland." ■

TCP Watch the video on our website to tour Barton Springs Mill.



A Century of the Simon

When the railroad ended in Brenham, it brought
the world to its stage—which endures today





NATALIE LACY LANGE | COURTESY THE BARNHILL CENTER AT HISTORIC SIMON THEATRE

BY ADDIE BROYLES



The man whose name is on Brenham’s famed Simon Theatre never saw it completed, but the renovated theater still reflects his vision a century later.

The historic venue on Main Street in Brenham, midway between Austin and Houston, turns 100 this year. It’s thriving today because of a multimillion-dollar restoration that saved it from the brink of crumbling, and its story tells the story of Brenham, a town that has found a way to mine its past to preserve its future.



In the 1920s, the theater, originally with more than 700 seats and a balcony and separate entry for Black theatergoers, emerged from the imagination of James H. Simon, son of a Polish immigrant, who grew up in Brenham in the entertainment industry and died three months before the first performers took the stage.

Simon was a boy when his family moved to Brenham, arriving with some of the first Jewish settlers in the region and staying because that’s where the railroad ended, according to Sharon Brass, a local researcher who created the *A Century of Simon* exhibit, on display at the historic theater earlier this year.

The Simon family arrived in the mid-1860s, and James’ father, Alex Simon, opened a mercantile store. He eventually bought the Grand Opera House in town and turned it into a family-friendly venue for musical performances, receptions, recitals, political meetings and vaudeville, which was quickly becoming the most popular form of entertainment at the time.

The Simon Theatre stands as an anchor in downtown Brenham, though in the late 20th century, it came close to being demolished to make way for a parking lot.



As the terminus of the Washington County Rail Road, constructed in 1860, the county seat's population doubled every decade until 1900—and with it grew Brenham's reputation as an entertainment hub, along with the opera house.

When Alex Simon died in 1906, his sons took over. They opened the stage for an even wider variety of local performers, including Black singers from the nearby Brenham Normal and Industrial College, a postsecondary school for African Americans, according to Tina Henderson, who grew up in Brenham. She's president of the Texas Ten Historical Explorers, a research organization focused on the freedmen's communities around Washington County.

James H. Simon sold the opera house in 1918 and started making plans to build his own theater. He teamed up with Houston architect Alfred C. Finn to make plans for a majestic performance space with an upstairs section for Black theatergoers so they could watch the shows too.

"They built the theater with [integration] in mind," Henderson says. Although Simon didn't live to see the completion of his theater, he was ahead of his time in terms of wanting to make art available to more people, Henderson says.

"Segregation was very harsh, but there were some people

who understood it was unkind," she says. "They had to abide by the laws, but I think they were trying to accommodate and do what they could" to make the performances accessible to all.

Variety acts had been around for a long time, but it wasn't until the late 1800s that "vaudeville," a word borrowed from French, became a household term to describe a kind of show performed by artists, comedians, magicians—anyone who had something amazing, interesting or entertaining to show off.

At the height of vaudeville, as many as 50,000 performers traveled in troupes to perform in thousands of American cities, including Brenham. This lasted from the end of the Civil War into the 1930s, when in-person variety shows gave way to those broadcast on radios and, later, television.

The earliest vaudeville shows took place in saloons and beer halls, but their popularity soared, thanks in part to the growing popularity of circuses during this time. Venues like the Grand Opera House in Brenham opened in places served by the railroad to make it easy for the performers to get there and for visitors to come to the shows, according to Brass.

Many of the vaudeville performers who came through



COURTESY THE BARNHILL CENTER AT HISTORIC SIMON THEATRE



CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE The 1954 Western film *Arrow in the Dust* drew a crowd to the Simon. The theater's stage and auditorium during its extensive reconstruction. The Malpass Brothers brought their traditional country and bluegrass music to the Simon in September 2024.

Brenham would have been well-known to people who lived there, thanks to telegraphs and the newspapers that came in on the railroads daily from the East Coast.

Vaudeville shows were on the decline in the 1920s due to the rising popularity of silent films, but they were a crucial part of the early days of the Simon Theatre because the shows brought in big names, like Adelaide Prince, who was born in London but grew up near Brenham.

After Simon's death in 1925, the theater was sold to the Stuckert family, who ran it for almost 50 years before selling it. The venue continued to host movies and events into the 1980s, when competition from drive-in theaters, shopping malls and home video ultimately caused the theater to shutter. After a showing of *Night of the Living Dead* on October 31, 1985, the theater went dark.

Jennifer H. Eckermann, former tourism and marketing director for the city, is a Brenham native who remembers when all those historic buildings were an afterthought.

"The Simon wasn't in great shape," she recalls. "There was a lot of talk about it being demolished to build a parking lot. For so many downtowns, that was the answer."

In 1999, after a career at Blue Bell Creameries, Eckermann started working with the nonprofit Main Street Brenham.

From Downtown to Camptown

The Texas Ten Historical Explorers tells the stories of the freedmen's communities that formed after the Civil War, when as much as half of Washington County was Black. Many of those families lived in freedmen's communities spread throughout the region, and one of the oldest, called Camptown, has a seven-part immersive audio tour, available online. It starts at Brenham's Jerry Wilson Park and explores the story of a consequential fire in 1866 and the evolution of the neighborhood as a center for Black life.

By that time, the Simon Theatre had become a Chinese restaurant and then sat vacant, waiting for demolition or the kind of restoration that takes a miracle to pull off.

She joined a handful of people who had a vision for what the brick building could be. Thanks to that community spirit that led James H. Simon to build the theater so many years ago, local boosters raised more than \$1 million for the restoration project. The Simon Theatre reopened in 2004 with 321 seats.

The group eventually raised another \$1 million to renovate the ballroom and retail space that was part of the original design. The facility now operates as the Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre, with shows throughout the year from performers such as Grammy Award-winners Ricky Skaggs and Marty Stuart to tribute bands celebrating the Carpenters, the Eagles and the Andrews Sisters.

Eckermann says the project sparked a downtown revival that continues to this day and that the success story of the renovation reflects changing attitudes toward preservation.

"People are always coming and going," she says. "You might own this building now, but one day, you won't." The current keepers of the keys—and the stories—are trying to tell new stories while also keeping the old ones alive.

The Simon Theatre could last another century, but Eckermann says that depends on always finding new ways to bring in people. They've had success in recent years with themed movie nights and school performances.

"You have to be thinking about the next generation and what would be appealing about this theater to them," she says. "What can it continue to offer to the community?"

For its 100th year, the Simon Theatre team kicked off the celebration with performances that included juggling, dancing and comedy. "It was fun to have something for everybody," Eckermann says. "It's still vaudeville." ■



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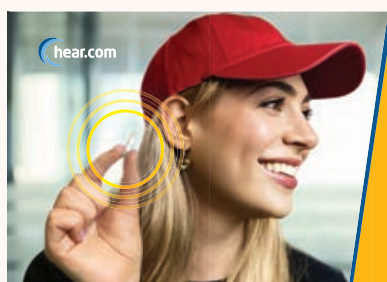
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CEO

HERBERT "TREY"
GREBE III

How Extreme Summer Heat Impacts Reliability

WHEN TEMPERATURES in Texas soar, electricity use increases. That's because our air conditioners run longer and more often to counteract the sweltering heat outside. Factor in the fact that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evening—and that adds up to a lot of demand on our electric grid.

At Medina Electric Cooperative, we work closely with our wholesale power supplier on resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than you may think.

In the summer, when more electricity is being used simultaneously across the state, electricity demand can come close to exceeding supply, especially if a prolonged heat wave occurs.

If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region may call on consumers to actively reduce their energy use. If that's not enough to relieve demand, then the grid operator may mandate forced rotating power outages as an option of last resort.



GIULIANO BENZIN | ISTOCK.COM

Medina EC will do everything we can to keep you informed about situations like this.

We work proactively with our power supplier to create a resilient portion of the grid to ensure electric reliability in extreme weather. Regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and disaster response planning are all steps we take, but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the AC running smoothly for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid during extreme summer heat.

Select the highest comfortable thermostat setting, and turn it up several degrees whenever possible. Your cooling system must work harder to make up the difference between the thermostat and the outdoor temperature.

Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your cooling system to work harder than necessary.

Run major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers during off-peak hours when the demand for electricity is lower. For example, start the dishwasher before you go to bed.

Use ceiling fans to make yourself feel a few degrees cooler. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off in unoccupied spaces. During summer months, set ceiling fan blades to rotate counterclockwise, which pushes cool air down for a windchill effect.

Close blinds, curtains and shades during the hottest part of the day to block unwanted heat gain from sunlight. Consider blackout curtains with thermal backing or reflective lining to block heat and light.

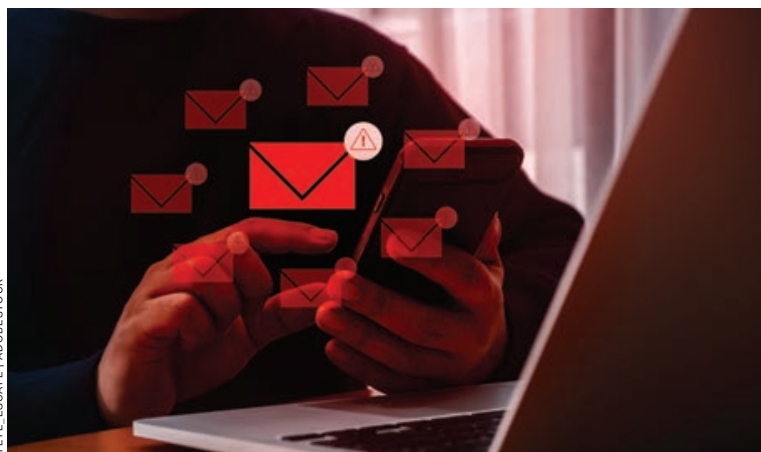
Use smaller appliances, such as slow cookers, air fryers and toaster ovens to cook meals. Studies have shown that air fryers use about half the electricity of a full-sized oven. They're smaller and use focused heat, which results in faster cooking times, less wasted heat and lower energy use.

If we face challenges posed by soaring summer temperatures, understanding the impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. I encourage you to monitor your electricity using consumer analytics

through SmartHub and gain a deeper understanding of energy usage, specifically pinpointing which appliances are driving up energy use and by approximately how much. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/ConsumerAnalytics.

By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme heat, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you also can contribute to the resilience of the grid, keeping our local community cool and connected.

Until next time,
Trey



Energy Scams Unmasked

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or leak of personal information. Here are a few of the latest utility scams Medina EC members are seeing as well as tips to help you avoid getting ripped off.

Recent Ripoffs

Scammers typically disguise themselves—either physically or digitally—as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately.

Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, emails and even in-person visits. Most recently, members have received calls from fake salespeople attempting to get them to choose another utility provider with "free" electricity.

Spoofing can make the phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source, making it difficult to immediately verify the call.

Posing as a contact who claims you overpaid your bill and that you'll receive a cash or banking refund is another approach. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is—it's likely a scam aimed to steal your personal information.

Spotting a Scam

Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately.

Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. If someone is pushing for such a payment method, it's likely a scam.

What We Won't Do

Medina EC will never demand an instant, immediate payment or threaten to disconnect your service without prior notices or warnings. We strive to resolve challenging situations and work with our members to avoid disconnects.

Medina EC will never ask for your full Social Security number or banking details over the phone or through email. We offer several secure payment options, including in-person, autopay, SmartHub and by calling 1-866-632-3532.

Avoiding Scams

Whether in person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of anyone claiming to be a Medina EC employee requesting banking or other personal information. If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, just give us a quick call at 1-866-632-3532. We want to help protect you from utility scams, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. Then we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

Medina Electric Cooperative



CONTACT US

Toll-Free 1-866-632-3532

Email Info@MedinaEC.org

Web MedinaEC.org - Chat Feature Available

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Voting District 1

Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

Larry Huesser, (830) 363-7651

Mickey Holzhaus, (210) 422-3310

Voting District 2

Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437

Joe Foley, (830) 261-1304

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

Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

CEO

Trey Grebe, 1-866-632-3532, ext. 1046

Call us.

TOLL-FREE

1-866-632-3532

Option 2: Report an outage

Option 3: Pay bill, get account balance

Option 5: Speak to a representative

OFFICE LOCATIONS

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 1-866-632-3532 o visitando una de nuestras oficinas.



**MEDINA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

We take pride in serving our members and going the extra mile in everything we do. Get closer to **MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** for ways we support you and strengthen our community.

MEDINAEC.ORG | 1.866.632.3532

Team Members Reach Important Milestones

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CELEBRATED two special work anniversaries for employees between April and June.

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 also donates \$100 to an organization of the employee's choosing. In 2025, Medina EC employees are on track to donate \$1,100 to various local organizations.

Please join us in celebrating these Medina EC employees!



FELIPE MORENO
Journeyman
Laredo office
May | 10 years

DONATION TO
Volunteers Serving the Need



EDWARD VARNADOR
Journeyman
Dilley office
June | 30 years

DONATION TO
Camp Hope

VOTING DISTRICT 3 VACANCY

Medina Electric Cooperative is seeking applications for an upcoming board vacancy representing Voting District 3. If you're interested in being considered for this board seat, please learn more and complete the application by July 11 at MedinaEC.org/Vacancy.

TINYAKOV | ADOBESTOCK

What To Consider Before Installing Solar

"FREE ENERGY FROM THE SUN AND LOWER ELECTRIC BILLS ... Where do I sign up?"

The benefits of installing solar panels may seem like a no-brainer, but the reality is, not every home (and homeowner's situation) is always right for solar.

There are several things you need to know before pulling the trigger on a solar system, like how Medina Electric Cooperative purchases unused power, the interconnection process and what avoided cost actually is.

Investing in solar for your home is a major decision. If you're considering solar, here is what you need to know first.

Connecting Your Distributed Generation System to Medina EC

Looking to connect your solar panels or other distributed generation system to Medina EC's grid? Here's the process to get you started:

1. **Consult an expert:** First, chat with a qualified DG developer, installer or electrical consultant. They'll help you understand the technical side and costs.
2. **Contact us:** No matter your installer, give us a call or send an email to let us know you're interested. We can help you determine what size system is best for your energy needs and explain how we apply credits for extra power you may generate.
3. **Review requirements:** We'll guide you through our DG tariff, specifically the \$300,000 liability insurance requirement. This can usually be covered by your homeowner's insurance or an umbrella policy.
4. **Submit application:** Complete and submit your DG application, along with the fee and your system's design.
5. **Site review:** A Medina EC representative will review your current energy usage and system design.
6. **Sign agreement and provide insurance:** You'll then complete the DG interconnection agreement and provide proof of your insurance.
7. **System testing:** We'll need to witness or verify the testing of your DG system.

Once everything is approved and all conditions are met, your DG system is ready to operate alongside Medina EC's electric system.

What is distributed generation? Distributed generation refers to technologies, like solar panels, that generate electricity at or near where it will be used. Often, you'll use this electricity to meet your own needs. If you produce more than you need, you can sell the excess back to Medina EC at our avoided cost rate.

What if I already bought a solar system? If you have a solar system connected to Medina EC's power grid, please inform us. It's crucial for the safety of our team and to ensure your service continues without interruption. Notifying us also allows us to update your metering and billing so you get proper credit for the energy your system generates.

My system generated more energy than I consumed. Will Medina EC pay me for it? When your system makes more electricity than you use, we'll credit you for that extra power you send back to our grid. This credit is based on what we call our "avoided cost"—what we would have paid to buy that power from a wholesale supplier. You'll see this credit clearly labeled Distributed Generation Credit on your monthly bill.

Don't Blow Off Hurricanes



The time for hurricane planning should begin well before hurricane season arrives. Follow these tips:

Develop a plan for installing covers for windows.

Don't waste time taping windows. When a 100 mph wind blows an object at your window, tape won't stop it.

Remove weak and dead trees and tree limbs.

Know whether your home is in a zone that could be flooded.

Have a "grab and run" bag ready with important papers (like your homeowner's insurance policy) and prescription medicines in the event you have to evacuate.

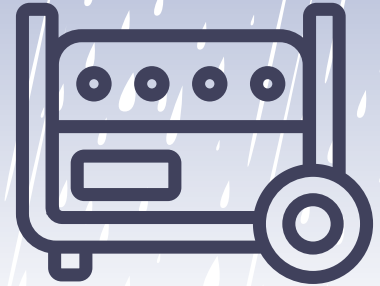
Have a plan for where you will go if you evacuate, the route you will take and how others can contact you.

Have a survival kit ready with nonperishable food, water, a first-aid kit, a battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

Medina EC encourages you to always practice safety.

A QUICK GUIDE TO GENERATORS

With proper use and maintenance, generators provide great convenience during a power outage. Before you purchase a generator, determine your backup power needs to select the right size. Make a list of essential appliances and devices you'll want to power during an outage, then total the required wattage.



RECOMMENDED IF YOU...

... **rarely** lose power.

Recreational Inverter

Up to 2,000 watts

- Lightweight, about 60 pounds
- Quiet, easy to store
- Power: fridge and a few smaller items (i.e. lamp, phone charger and home security system)

Midsized Inverter

Up to 3,500 watts

- Weighs up to 150 pounds
- Power: fridge, laptop, five to 10 lights, phone charger, home security system and 10K BTU air conditioner

... **occasionally** lose power.
Transfer switch required.

Portable Generators and Large Inverters

Up to 7,500 watts

- Weighs about 300 pounds
- Power: fridge, gas furnace, 10K BTU air conditioner, dishwasher, multiple lights, TV, laptop and more
- Ability to connect to home's breaker panel

... **frequently** lose power.
Transfer switch required.

Home Standby

Up to 20,000 watts

- Must be permanently installed; starts automatically during outage
- Power: nearly all home appliances and electronics (simultaneously)
- Can run indefinitely on natural gas or propane
- Recommended if you frequently lose power.
- Medina EC offers its members 22 kW propane generators with installation. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/Generators.

SAFETY FIRST!

- Let us know if you purchase a generator that you plan to connect to an electric panel. Learn more about the proper steps to install your generator at MedinaEC.org/Generators.
- Improperly installed generators can create back feed, which is dangerous to our crews and the community. **Before using the generator, disconnect the normal source of power coming into your home or business.**
- Never operate a generator indoors or in an enclosed space.

Disclaimer: Please note safety requirements may differ based on the type of generator you purchase. Thoroughly read the operator's manual and know how to shut off the generator quickly.

Source: Consumer Reports



In Loving Memory of Javier Carrizales

February 6, 1936–May 11, 2025

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE mourns the loss of one of our own—Javier Carrizales—who passed away on May 11.

For 39 years, Javier was dedicated to serving the members of Medina EC, beginning his journey as a serviceman in Zapata in 1959. His commitment soon led him to Bruni, where he climbed from lineman to foreman, and finally served as the district office manager until his well-earned retirement in 1998.

Javier’s legacy isn’t just etched in the history of Medina EC; it lives on through his family. His son Derly Carrizales proudly serves as our safety manager, his granddaughter Liandra Lopez as a business development coordinator, and his grandson DJ Carrizales carries the lineman tradition at another Texas electric cooperative.

Please keep the Carrizales family, friends and co-op family in your thoughts and prayers as we remember the incredible legacy he leaves behind.



TOP: JAVIER AS A MEDINA EC LINEMAN IN 1959; BOTTOM: THE CARRIZALES CO-OP FAMILY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DJ CARRIZALES, DERLY CARRIZALES, LIANDRA LOPEZ, JAVIER CARRIZALES)



Meet Medina EC’s Intern

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL INTERN DAY on July 31, Medina Electric Cooperative would like to feature our 2025 summer intern so members can learn more about him and his internship goals for the summer.

Medina EC’s internship program started in 2022 in an effort to expose students to electric cooperatives, the utility industry and the benefits of working in smaller, rural communities.

RAMIRO RAMIREZ ENGINEERING INTERN

“I want to get a grasp on what it feels like to be part of a real-world engineering environment. School can teach me all of the concepts regarding engineering, but it can never teach me what I can experience in the real world. I want to know these practices so I can apply them in any future engineering careers.”



Hometown: Uvalde, TX
University: University of Texas at San Antonio

Visit our careers page at MedinaEC.org/Careers to join our team and learn about future internships.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Independence Day

Friday, July 4

Our offices will be closed in observance of the holiday. As always, crews will be on call.

National Intern Day

Thursday, July 31

Operation Round Up Applications Due

Friday, August 1

Learn more about ORU and apply at MedinaEC.org/ORU.

Keep Cool for Less

IF THE SUMMER HEAT is taking a toll on your pocketbook because of the electricity you're using to stay cool, here are some tips that can help.

If you have central air conditioning or a heat pump, make sure your filter has been recently changed or cleaned. The next step is to call an HVAC contractor for a tuneup and to complete an assessment of the system. A tuneup can improve the efficiency and extend the life of the unit and should include cleaning the condenser coil, checking the refrigerant levels, and taking a good look at the pump and electrical contacts.

If your AC system is older, talk to the contractor about its efficiency. It may be cost-effective to replace it with a newer, higher efficiency model, even if it's still functional.

Medina Electric Cooperative offers our members a rebate for HVAC tune-ups and replacements. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/Rebates.

Ductwork is as important as the AC unit, so make sure the contractor you choose is capable and willing to provide an expert assessment. A real pro will know how to measure the airflow at each supply and return register. If you're not getting cool air to the rooms that need it, the contractor may be able to make modifications to the ductwork.

Leaky ductwork could be your problem. If the ducts are in unconditioned areas like a crawl space or attic, it's especially important to make sure they're sealed and insulated. It will also help to seal ducts that are in conditioned spaces.

Some HVAC contractors can do a duct-blast test to measure duct leakage. Discuss whether you should ever close any supply registers. Most experts recommend that supply registers stay open.

If you cool your home with window AC units, there are a few things you can do to maximize your cooling while keeping costs as low as possible.



STEVE DEERPORT | ISTOCK.COM

Use window AC units in rooms that can be closed off with a door, to make the cooling as effective as possible.

Make sure you have the right-sized unit for the size of the room. A unit that's too big will cool the room before the humidity has been lowered, which will make it feel less cool, while a unit that's too small will have to work harder, causing a shorter life span—and it may not do the job.

Use a fan to help distribute the cold air throughout the area you're cooling.

Turn off the AC unit when no one is in the room.

If your window AC unit isn't cooling properly, it may need to be replaced. Look for an Energy Star-certified unit to make the most of your cooling dollars.

Medina EC's residential members can monitor their electricity using consumer analytics through SmartHub and gain a deeper understanding of energy usage, specifically pinpointing which appliances, like your AC, are driving up electric bills and by approximately how much. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/ConsumerAnalytics.



SAVE THE DATE

86th Annual Membership Meeting

Morning of Saturday, October 4

Medina EC's Rio Grande City Office

Visit MedinaEC.org/AnnualMeeting2025
or scan this QR code.



INTROVERTIA | ADOBESTOCK



STEFANIKOLIC | ISTOCK.COM

Take Time To Tackle Hidden Energy Wasters

WE ALL WASTE ENERGY in ways we may not even realize. Leaving lights or fans on in empty rooms or electronics plugged in when not in use consume relatively small amounts of electricity (but should still be avoided). Does your home have some bigger energy hogs that are out of sight, out of mind?

Here are some unconventional energy users that could be adding more to your energy bill than they should.

Swimming Pools and Spas

They're nice amenities, but pools and hot tubs can contribute significantly to your energy bill.

Your pool pump keeps the water circulating through its filtering system and could be the most energy-intensive part of your pool. Older pool pumps run continuously on a single, high-speed setting, but this circulation is more than the typical residential pool needs.

An Energy Star-certified pool pump can be programmed to run at various speeds depending on your pool's needs—and can pay for itself in as little as two years.

If you heat your pool, make sure you're doing so efficiently. In Texas, a little sun goes a long way. Pool heaters that run on natural gas or propane are most common, but an electric heat pump or a solar water heater could be more cost-effective options. Remember to put a cover on the pool when it's not in

use to keep your heater from working as hard.

If you have a hot tub or spa you occasionally use, consider turning it off when it's not in use. If you use your spa frequently, use a well-insulated cover to keep the water warm and your electric bill low.

Pump Systems

Water pumps often run on electricity and can be found in many areas of your property.

Irrigation: If you have a larger property, you may have an irrigation system. Leaks in the system can greatly increase your pump's electricity use.

Wells: If your home uses well water, you have a well pump to bring the water from the well to your home. A malfunctioning well pump may run continuously to try to maintain proper water pressure—this can cause a significant increase in your electricity bill.

Garden fountains: Fountains make a charming addition to any garden, but the pumps that run them use about as much energy as a small lamp. If you have multiple fountains in your garden, look into installing a timer so that the fountains only run part of the day.

Garages and Outbuildings

You may have some energy hogs in your other structures.

For example:

Do you have a second working, but inefficient, refrigerator or freezer plugged in? Is it in use, or can you consolidate its contents into your kitchen?

Do you have a recreational space in an uninsulated part of your home, like the garage? Using space heaters or portable air conditioners in uninsulated spaces can definitely lead to higher bills.

Home Business

If you run a business or work out of your home, there could be a large energy user contributing to your electric bill. For example, regularly using welding equipment, ceramic kilns or power tools can contribute significantly to your electric bill, as can equipment that supports home farming operations.

GRAB YOUR PIECE OF AMERICA'S SILVER LEGACY



99.9%
Fine Silver
Bars

Actual size is
30.6 x 50.4 mm

FILL YOUR VAULT WITH MORGAN SILVER BARS

Not only are these hefty bars one full Troy ounce of real, .999 precious silver, they're also beautiful, featuring the crisp image of a Morgan Silver Dollar struck onto the surface. That collectible image adds interest and makes these Silver Bars even more desirable. Minted in the U.S.A. from shimmering American silver, these one-ounce 99.9% fine silver bars are a great alternative to one-ounce silver coins or rounds. Plus, they offer great savings compared to other bullion options like one-ounce sovereign silver coins. Take advantage of our special offer for new customers only and save \$10.00 off our regular prices.

Morgan Silver Dollars Are Among the Most Iconic Coins in U.S. History

What makes them iconic? The Morgan Silver Dollar is the legendary coin that built the Wild West. It exemplifies the American spirit like few other coins, and was created using silver mined from the famous Comstock Lode in Nevada. In fact, when travelers approached the mountains around the boomtown of Virginia City, Nevada in the 1850s, they were startled to see the hills shining in the sunlight like a mirror. A mirage

caused by weary eyes? No, rather the effect came from tiny flecks of silver glinting in the sun.

A Special Way For You to Stock Up On Precious Silver

While no one can predict the future value of silver in an uncertain economy, many Americans are rushing to get their hands on as much silver as possible, putting it away for themselves and their loved ones. You'll enjoy owning these Silver Bars. They're tangible. They feel good when you hold them, You'll relish the design and thinking about all it represents. These Morgan Design One-Ounce Bars make appreciated gifts for birthdays, anniversaries and graduations, creating a legacy sure to be cherished for a lifetime.

Order More and SAVE

You can save \$10.00 off our regular price when you buy now. There is a limit of 25 Bars per customer, which means with this special offer, you can save up to \$250.

Hurry—Secure Yours Now

Call right now to secure your .999 fine silver Morgan Design One-Ounce Silver Bars. You'll be glad you did.



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\$49.95 ea.

Special offer - \$39.95 ea. +s/h **BUY MORE
SAVE MORE!**
SAVE \$10 - \$250

Limit of 25 bars per customer

Free 1-oz Silver Bullet -
.45 Caliber Pistol Round Replica
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The Fast Track

The Father of Country Music yodeled his way into hearts, proclaiming a special love for Texas

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

IT'S HARD FOR people today to understand just how popular singer and songwriter Jimmie Rodgers was during the 1920s and '30s. Think Elvis in the '50s, the Beatles in the '60s or Taylor Swift today. Southerners joked that the typical Depression-era shopping list was a pound of butter, slab of bacon, sack of flour and the new Rodgers record.

Rodgers was born in Mississippi in 1897, but he declared in song that Texas was "a state I dearly love." He proved it by moving here in 1929.

He grew up the son of a railroad gang foreman but showed a fondness and knack for show business from an early age. Convinced he was well on his way to fame and fortune after winning a talent

contest when he was 14, he ran away from home with a traveling medicine show before his father put him to work on the railroad.

In 1924, when he was 27 years old, doctors diagnosed Rodgers with tuberculosis. Sensing that his time was short, he quit the railroad and devoted himself to playing music. Over the years, he had compiled a repertoire that included traditional folk songs, jazz, blues, vaudeville tunes and yodels—the sounds of America.

Rodgers played on street corners and at tent shows—anywhere he could. He performed at an Asheville, North Carolina, radio station in 1927 with the Tenneva Ramblers. And when the band

learned that the Victor Talking Machine Co. (later RCA Records) was holding recording sessions in Bristol, Tennessee, they decided to go. Until the Bristol sessions, radio stations didn't play country records because they had precious few to play.

The two songs Rodgers recorded in Bristol didn't do much, but a second session, in Camden, New Jersey, included *Blue Yodel No. 1*, which sold a half-million copies and is better known as *T for Texas*.

Rodgers recorded more than 100 songs over the next few years, including classics like *In the Jailhouse Now*, *Frankie and Johnny*, and *Waiting for a Train*. He reportedly sold more than 10 million records in his lifetime—more than any other RCA Victor artist pre-Elvis.

As his health worsened, Rodgers limited his touring to the Southwest. Nearly every Texas town, regardless of size, has a Rodgers sighting in its history. Once, after a performance in Temple in 1929, he returned to his motel and started singing from the window of his room, drawing such a crowd that cops had to be called to break up the ensuing traffic jam.

Rodgers moved to Kerrville in 1929 in hopes that the Hill Country air might give him some relief from the tuberculosis that was slowly killing him. He built a house at the intersection of West Main Street and Jackson Road and called it Blue Yodeler's Paradise.

In 1933, a gaunt and ailing Rodgers traveled to New York to make 12 new records. He recorded his last song May 24 and died two days later. He was 35.

Though his time was brief, his legacy looms large. Country performers including Merle Haggard, Ernest Tubb and Johnny Cash cited Rodgers as a major influence, but so did blues singers Mance Lipscomb, Howlin' Wolf and Mississippi John Hurt and rockers like Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Rodgers is the only artist to be inducted into the country music, rock 'n' roll and blues halls of fame, and that says it all. ■

Make It Spicy

Peppers put on quite a show as the lead act

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

I am a salsa girl—hit me with all the spicy goodness! But why are tomatoes always the star? Frankly, I'm a little tired of it. It's high time we gave fruit the kick it deserves. Bring on the pineapple and mango, and say hello to this exciting salsa!

Pineapple Salsa

4 cups diced pineapple (about 1 medium pineapple)
2 cups diced mango (about 2 large mangoes)
½ cup minced red onion
1 small jalapeño pepper, finely diced
½ cup diced red bell pepper
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
Juice of 1 large lime
1 teaspoon salt
Tortilla chips, for serving

COOK'S TIP To serve your salsa in the pineapple, slice the pineapple in half lengthwise. Cut around the edges of the pineapple, being careful not to pierce through the rind, to remove the inside of the fruit before dicing. After Step 1 below, spoon salsa into pineapple shell, place on serving platter and continue to Step 2.

1. In a large bowl, combine pineapple, mango, onion, jalapeño, bell pepper, cilantro, lime juice and salt. Gently stir together to incorporate.
2. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes.
3. Serve chilled with tortilla chips.

SERVES 8

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Watermelon Salsa.





Sautéed Spicy Corn

RICK GUTIERREZ
GVEC

If you love the flavor of grilled corn but not eating it off the cob, sautéed spicy corn is the summer side for you. Sautéing fresh corn kernels with a bit of butter and jalapeños enhances the corn flavor while producing tender kernels with a bite.

- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter**
- 6 ears corn, kernels removed from cob, or 3 cans golden sweet whole kernel corn (15 ounces each), drained**
- 1 fresh jalapeño pepper, minced**
- ½ cup chicken broth**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**

- 1.** In a large skillet over medium heat, melt butter.
- 2.** Add corn, jalapeño, chicken broth, salt and pepper.
- 3.** Cook, stirring frequently, until corn is tender, about 12–15 minutes.

SERVES 6

\$500 WINNER

Zesty Spaghetti Salad

NANCY HORTON
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC



Get ready to sharpen those dicing skills because this salad is a total game changer! We're talking about a colorful medley of diced veggies that comes together in the most delightful way and makes every moment spent chopping absolutely worth it. This zesty salad dazzled my taste buds.



- 16 ounces uncooked spaghetti, broken in half**
- 2½ cups halved grape tomatoes**
- 2 small zucchinis, diced**
- 1 English cucumber, diced**
- 1 yellow bell pepper, seeds removed, diced**
- 1 red bell pepper, seeds removed, diced**
- ½ cup sliced banana peppers, drained**
- 1 cup thinly sliced hard salami**
- ½ cup diced pepperoni**
- 1½ cups zesty Italian dressing**
- 2½ tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2 tablespoons black sesame seeds**
- 1 teaspoon poppy seeds (optional)**
- ½ teaspoon paprika**
- ½ teaspoon celery seed**
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- Dried chives or fresh garlic chives, for garnish**

- 1.** Cook spaghetti according to package directions, rinse with cold water, drain and place in a large bowl.
- 2.** Add tomatoes, zucchini, cucumber, yellow and red bell peppers, banana peppers, salami, and pepperoni to spaghetti and gently mix to combine.
- 3.** In another bowl, whisk together Italian dressing, Parmesan, sesame seeds, poppy seeds (if using), paprika, celery seed, garlic powder, black pepper, red pepper flakes and salt. Pour over pasta salad and mix until well coated.
- 4.** Refrigerate at least 2 hours to blend flavors. Garnish with chives and serve chilled.

SERVES 8

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

HOLIDAY BREAKFAST DUE JULY 10

Christmas dinner gets all the attention, but what about that morning? Share your best holiday breakfast recipe that can feed a crowd, and you could win \$500. Enter by July 10.

UPCOMING: OODLES OF NOODLES DUE AUGUST 10



CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 >

Pecan-Stuffed Jalapeños

GARY CRANE
VICTORIA EC

Holy jalapeños, these are good. I'm not lying—I devoured four during recipe testing. (That's right, four.) No need to worry about too much spice when baking these up. The seeds are removed, and the peppers are stuffed with a cheesy pecan mixture that softens the heat.

10 large jalapeño peppers

1 package cream cheese (8 ounces), softened

½ cup chopped pecans

2 green onions, minced

¼ cup medium-heat red salsa

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon garlic powder

or 2 cloves garlic, diced

¼ teaspoon orange or lemon zest

½ cup shredded cheddar cheese



1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or foil.
2. Slice the top off each jalapeño and slice in half lengthwise. Remove seeds and place jalapeños on prepared baking sheet.
3. Bake jalapeños 30 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool 10 minutes.
4. In a bowl, stir together cream cheese, pecans, green onions, salsa, salt, cumin, garlic and zest until combined.
5. Fill each jalapeño half with cream cheese filling and return to baking sheet.

Beat the Heat

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Wear kitchen gloves when handling chiles to protect skin from capsaicin, the element that makes chiles hot. In a pinch, use sandwich bags.

Protect skin if not wearing gloves by running a knife under the ribs of seeds to remove.

Avoid touching eyes and face when working with chiles—wash hands with dish soap first.

To minimize burning on skin, apply a little oil—olive, canola or vegetable—as capsaicin dissolves in oil.

6. Sprinkle jalapeños with cheddar, return to oven and bake 10 minutes. Serve warm.

MAKES 20 HALVES

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- J.P. Morgan*



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Lodged in Time

Visit 1840s Castroville at the Landmark Inn State Historic Site

BY CHET GARNER

I WAS LYING in bed but felt like I was in a creepy movie. I imagined all the travelers who had slept in my room since the 1800s and wondered if any of them had met a sudden and unexpected ending. I eventually fell asleep and when I woke up (alive), I found myself in one of the most peaceful and historic places in Texas.

Castroville, 25 miles west of San Antonio, was settled in the 1840s by immigrants from the Alsace region of France. The inn, which emerged from a house built in 1849, is among a cluster of buildings that today is part of the Landmark Inn State Historic Site. The inn originally served as a hub for this immigrant community.

But this site is more than the stark-white, two-story building where I stayed overnight. It's an entire block of buildings that tell the story of grit and industry in the Hill Country.

Over the years, the property passed from one owner to another. While some of the buildings have fallen into disrepair, many are still standing.

There's a wash house, where bygone travelers could take a much-needed bath, and the home of Rowena Vance, a schoolteacher from Vermont and one of the original matriarchs of the property. There's a gristmill, where two giant stones worked 12 hours a day providing grains to the townsfolk and which decades later was converted to a hydroelectric power plant to electrify Castroville. The property was gifted to the state in 1974 and transferred to the Texas Historical Commission in 2008.

Every story I heard added a ripple to the complex tale of life in Texas over the past 175 years. I counted myself fortunate to have stayed in one of the eight historic rooms the inn offers modern guests. ■

ABOVE Chet spent the night in one of the eight historic rooms in the Landmark Inn.

TCP Watch the video on our website and see all Chet's Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

JULY

10

Claude [10–12] Caprock Roundup, (806) 310-9044, claudetexas.com

Mason [10–12] Mason County Roundup Weekend, (325) 347-5758, masontx.org

11

Corsicana Food Truck Friday, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

McDade [11–12] Watermelon Festival, (512) 980-4456, mcdadetexas.com

Laredo [11–13] International Sister Cities Festival, (956) 795-2200, visitalaredo.com

Hico [11–12, 15–19] Old Settler's Reunion, (254) 434-1249, hicotxchamber.org

12

Corsicana Mimosas at the Market, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

Galveston Old Smokey Throwdown, (409) 765-5778, albatrossgalveston.net

Grapevine Ice Cream Social, (817) 410-3185, grapevinetexasusa.com

Weatherford Parker County Peach Festival, (817) 596-3801, peachfestivaltx.com

Winnsboro Adam and Chris Carroll, (903) 342-0686, winnsborocenterforthearts.com

Lewisville [12–Aug. 9] All Natural, visualartleague.org

15

Fort Worth [15–20] The Wiz, (817) 212-4280, basshall.com



Pick of the Month

Fuzzy Peach Festival

Fairfield, July 18-19

(903) 389-5792

fairfieldtexaschamber.com

Cool off during this two-day festival east of Waco. Enjoy music, vendors, cornhole, food and lots of water activities.



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GrapevineTexasUSA.com



18

Brenham The Great DuBois:

Masters of Variety,

(979) 337-7240,

thebarnhillcenter.com

Huntsville [18-19] Texas

Thimble Trail, (936) 329-1376,

texashtimbletrail.com

Fredericksburg [18-20]

Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,

fbgtradedays.com

Palestine [18-20, 25-27]

Alice in Wonderland,

(903) 394-2173,

thetexas theater.com



19

Friona Cheeseburger

Festival & Cook-Off,

(806) 250-3491,

friona-chamber.com

Lewisville [19-Aug. 16]

Nouveau West,

visualartleague.org

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.



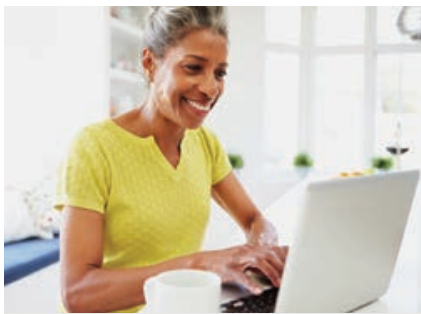
Hit the Road

Event Calendar

With hundreds of events across Texas listed every month, TexasCoopPower.com has something for you.

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JULY EVENTS CONTINUED

23

Winnsboro [23–Sept. 20]
Women in the Arts,
 (903) 342-0686, winnsboro
centerforthearts.com

26

Buffalo Gap Tour De Gap,
 (325) 829-0617,
tourdegap.com

24

Clute [24–26] Great Texas Mosquito Festival,
 (979) 265-8392,
mosquitofestival.com

Sargent [24–26] Hooked on Sargent Fishing Rodeo,
 (985) 258-8233,
hookedonsargent.org

25

Fredericksburg [25–27] Hill Country Swap Meet,
 (254) 751-7958,
earhartproductions.com

Grapevine Disco Wine Train, (817) 410-3185,
grapevinetexasusa.com

AUGUST

1

Anna Kenny Chesney Covered by Barefoot Nation, (972) 560-4101,
barnhillvineyards.com

El Campo [1–3] Lagoon Fest, (979) 275-1600,
eclostlagoon.com

2

Granbury Blazin' Saddle 75,
blazinsaddle75.com

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Catch of the Day

This nautical haul leaves us reeling with excitement! Fishing out the best ones was easy as shooting fish in a barrel. There may be bigger fish to fry, but these folks seem pretty pleased with what's on the line.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 JENNIFER MATULA
VICTORIA EC

"Her first big redfish that she brought in on her own."

2 RAYMOND TESTA
FARMERS EC

"I caught the moment that a bass struck at this lure in Royse City."

3 TOM HERRIN
PEDERNALES EC

"A mature bald eagle catches lunch in the Mississippi River during the dead of winter."

4 RAY BEDNAR
BLUEBONNET EC

"A kingfisher about to have a large lunch."



Upcoming Contests

DUE JUL 10 Abstract

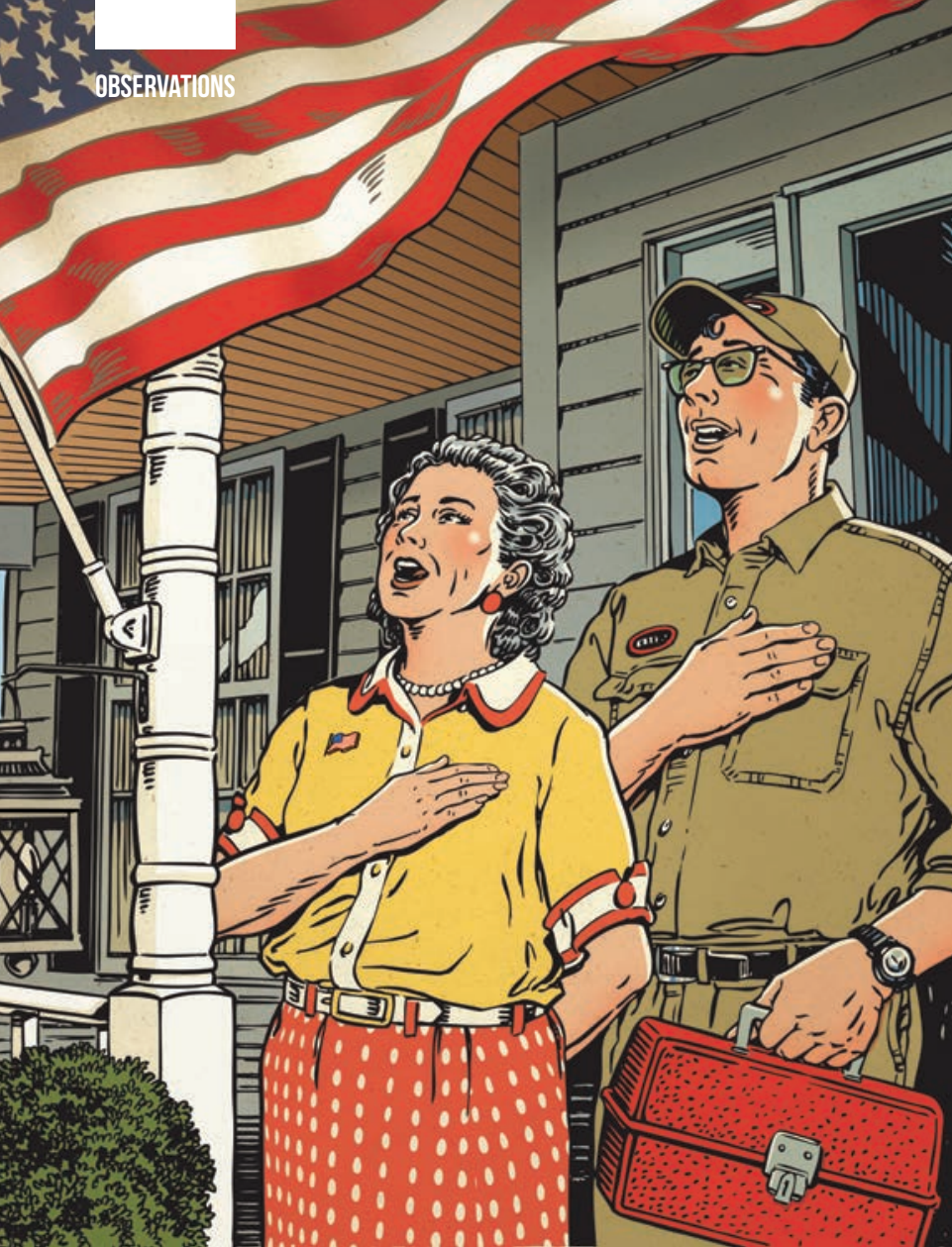
DUE AUG 10 Country Life

DUE SEP 10 Snakes Alive!



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for many more Catch of the Day photos from readers.



Liberty Belle

One grandmother's unmatched poetic love for the red, white and blue

BY CAROL GENE GRAVES
ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN KACHIK

MY GRANDMOTHER LOVED America and felt every citizen should share her patriotism. She instilled her fervent patriotism in me—and everyone around her.

Her love of country was not reserved just for holidays like the Fourth of July but was a belief she carried out daily.

When I visited her in the summer, we would put out the American flag on her front porch on Main Street in the small Central Texas town of Gatesville. When the flag was in place, she would stand erect and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

If any unsuspecting soul was walking down the street, Grandmother would throw out a strong invitation to join us: "Come on up and say the pledge with us!" I don't think anyone dared to turn down Mrs. McCoy's strong invitation.

In Grandmother's bedroom was a

patriotic shrine: a framed copy of the preamble to the Constitution draped with a small American flag. Stuck to the side of the frame was a picture postcard my family had sent her from Philadelphia when we vacationed there. She was so thrilled that I had personally seen the Liberty Bell.

The bell had great significance for Grandmother because her favorite poem was *Independence Bell*. It's a dramatic poem, possibly written by American author Charles Brockden Brown, that recounts the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Would the 56 delegates to the second Continental Congress declare the colonies free in July 1776?

The poem's setting is a hot, jittery Philadelphia as citizens stand before the Pennsylvania State House waiting for news. I can still see Grandmother the last time she recited this poem by memory for our family.

"Will they do it?" "Dare they do it?"

"Who is speaking?" "What's the news?"

"What of Adams?" "What of Sherman?"

"Oh, God grant they won't refuse!"

We could only be expectant as Grandmother described the old bellman, who was waiting "with one hand ready on the clapper of the bell." Then the old man's grandson brings him the news. He shouts, "Ring, Grandpapa, ring!"

Grandmother swelled with pride as she proclaimed this and concluded the poem:

*We will ne'er forget the bellman
Who, betwixt the earth and sky,
Rung out loudly, "Independence";
Which, please God, shall never die!*

Grandmother died January 19, 1981, and the next day was one of high national drama. Not only did we say goodbye to her, but we also watched Ronald Reagan be sworn in as America's 40th president and were thrilled at the return of 52 American hostages from captivity in Iran.

We flew Grandmother's flag that day to celebrate the hostages' return, but it was more our family's way of remembering Grandmother and how much she loved America. ■

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At the age of 56, a back operation left me dependent on a cane, significantly impacting my daily life. Simple tasks like going to the store or meeting friends became challenging, and I even had to cancel a long-awaited anniversary trip to Italy.

My husband purchased a scooter for me, but it was cumbersome and uncomfortable for everyday use, leaving me feeling more constrained than liberated. However, everything changed when I came across the ATTO SPORT. This remarkable scooter proved to be a game changer. Not only is it robust and reliable, but it also conveniently splits into two pieces, allowing me to effortlessly lift it into my car trunk on my own. I was even able to stow it in the overhead compartment on the plane, enabling us to finally take that trip to Italy! I am now independent once more, able to go wherever I please and do so with a striking sense of style. In fact, I now find that my husband struggles to keep up with me!



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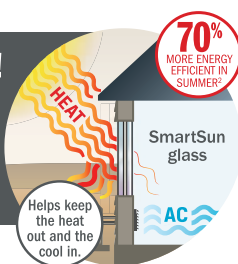
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