



INTROVERTIA | ADOBESTOCK

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 86TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Medina EC's Rio Grande City Office
601 N. FM 3167, Rio Grande City, TX 78582

Registration and breakfast begin at 8 a.m. • Meeting begins at 9 a.m.
\$1,000 Grand Prize Drawing • Must be present to win

See back cover for the agenda and your registration card for this year's annual meeting.



MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE BOARD ELECTIONS

During the nomination period for the 2025 election, Medina EC’s incumbent directors from Voting District 1 and 2, Kenneth Weynand and Joe Foley respectively, ran unopposed. Per bylaw 4.4.C. the incumbent directors were automatically reelected by the certification committee at the April board meeting.

Medina EC’s director from Voting District 3—Annette Sorrells—chose to not run for reelection, creating a vacancy on the board. Members with meters in Voting District 3 were solicited by postcard and email to apply for the open seat. Applications were accepted through July 11.

Qualified members are interviewed by a selection committee comprising three board members, one from each voting district. A candidate will be selected to fill the vacancy and chosen based on the qualifications and interview. The selected candidate will be announced at the 86th Annual Membership Meeting.

If you are interested in learning more about the election process or want to run in 2026, put the election dates below on your calendar and visit MedinaEC.org/Nominee.



VOTING DISTRICT 1
Kenneth Weynand



VOTING DISTRICT 2
Joe Foley

85TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

During the 86th Annual Membership Meeting, one item on the business meeting agenda will include a vote for approval of the minutes from the 85th Annual Membership Meeting, held in 2024.

Find the meeting minutes by scanning the QR code or visiting MedinaEC.org/AnnualMeeting2025.



PROJECTED 2026 ELECTION TIMELINE*

- January 2026**
Online Petitions Open
Find petition link and paperwork at MedinaEC.org/Nominee.
- March 2026**
Online Petitions Close
Nomination materials are due by 5 p.m.
- April 2026**
Certification Committee Meets to certify nominees who meet the criteria and will appear on the ballot.
- May 2026**
Certified Nominee Paperwork Due

*This is a projected timeline. Exact dates will be posted in December at MedinaEC.org/Nominee.

AT HOME
IN A MISSILE SILO

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September 2025



10

06 Mounts in the Hills

Equestrian trails maintained by volunteers offer a stunning way to take in Texas.

By Anna Mazurek
Photo by Dave Shafer

Counting Down

Missile silo owners are fighting rust and ruin to preserve and repurpose subterranean Cold War relics.

By Samantha Bryant
Photos by Eric W. Pohl

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ON THE COVER
Mary Apple-Williams leads the way on a trail ride at soon-to-open Palo Pinto Mountains State Park.
Photo by Dave Shafer

ABOVE
Bruce Townsley at the launch control panel of his 1960s missile silo south of Abilene.
Photo by Eric W. Pohl



Pluck the Perfect Book

DO YOU LOVE being cooped up with a good book?

Central Texas author A.A. Davenport's *A Chicken Was There* collection aims to entertain while imparting history along the way—a perfect escape for National Read a Book Day on September 6.

Through the eyes of chickens, Davenport, a Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative member, takes readers to colonial America, the Civil War, Wild West and more.

"I was watching a movie with my husband. He really likes Westerns, and I noticed that there were chickens everywhere—in town, out on the homestead, at the stagecoach station," says Davenport, a former English teacher at Smithville Junior High School. "That's when I thought that the chickens have been eyewitnesses to a lot of historical events."

Her sixth book in the series came out in July.



A Pioneer in Academia

June Brewer made history in 1950 when she became one of the first African American women to apply and be admitted to graduate school at the University of Texas.

Brewer, born 100 years ago this month in Austin, got her bachelor's degree at the college now known as Huston-Tillotson University. After getting her doctorate from UT, she taught English for 35 years at what was then Huston-Tillotson College.

TCP Contests and More

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Snakes Alive!

RECOMMENDED READING

Revisit our September 2005 issue to see how our Best of Co-op Country picks stand up to the test of time. Read it at TexasCoopPower.com.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

My favorite football team is ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our July prompt: **My favorite Fourth of July was ...**

The bicentennial celebration in 1976, with the huge regatta of tall ships in New York Harbor and the massive fireworks show over Lady Liberty.

STUART BERKOWITZ
PEDERNALES EC
MANCHACA

When my city relatives visited our farm, and for the first time I tasted soda pop and saw fireworks.

LORETTA BEDFORD
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC
SAN AUGUSTINE

When I came back from Vietnam in 1970.

LIONEL ROACH
CENTRAL TEXAS EC
BLUFFTON

When my husband and I had our first date and first kiss.

ELLEN HOLDCROFT
WOOD COUNTY EC
QUITMAN

Visit our website to see more responses.



Dressed for the Theater

When I was a student at Blinn Junior College in Brenham in 1977, I attended my first viewing of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* at the Simon Theatre [A Century of the Simon, July 2025].

A friend and I were driving by one night and saw a long line of people dressed in what is now common garb for the RHPS experience. Back then it was quite a shock to see some of my dormmates in that line wearing fishnet stockings and bustiers.

William Culver III
Farmers EC
Murphy

Rodgers' Influence

Jimmie Rodgers did not sell more records—10 million—than any other RCA Victor artist before Elvis Presley [The Fast Track, July 2025].

In a 10-year period before Presley's first release, Perry Como sold more



than 30 million records for RCA Victor.

Coy Prather
Trinity Valley EC
Montalba

EDITOR'S NOTE You're correct, and we'll regret this mistake "till the end of time." We have fixed the story online.

I wonder if the author is familiar with Bill Monroe, the Father of Bluegrass Music. Monroe played, sang and recorded many of Jimmie Rodgers' songs back in the mid-to-late 1920s, 1930s and very possibly into the 1940s.

Rodgers very likely influenced Monroe into occasionally adding yodeling to his own music.

Mike Adams
San Bernard EC
Magnolia

Family Love

Stepping Up [May 2025] brought tears to my eyes. As a stepparent, I related to this story. DNA isn't what matters in a blended family—it's the love.

Rosie Strode
Tri-County EC
Parker County

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.

Texas Co-op Power

JULY 2025 A Century of the Simon

"I grew up in the late 1950s, early '60s spending Saturday afternoons at the Simon Theatre. Kids got money for the show and maybe popcorn and a soda."

TED KEMPER
SAN BERNARD EC
BELLVILLE

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Mounts in the Hills

Equestrian trails maintained by volunteers offer a stunning way to take in Texas

BY ANNA MAZUREK
PHOTO BY DAVE SHAFER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RYAN O'ROURKE

Mary Apple-Williams was riding her retired ranch horse, Slick, on the equestrian trails at Benbrook Lake south of Fort Worth in April 2016 when she noticed sections of two trails were closed due to storm damage.

After talking with a park ranger, she discovered the nonprofit Texas Equestrian Trail Riders Association helped maintain the trails. She immediately joined the organization, reached out to her region's manager and led efforts to reopen the trails, which are now maintained by TETRA continually.

For her and many others who find great joy in trail riding, this is important work.



From right, Mary Apple-Williams on Cutter, Brenda Laing on Sunshine, Staci Barnes on Shadow and Matt Barnes on Lily depart the equine campground at Palo Pinto Mountains State Park in North Texas. The park is expected to open in 2026.

Panhandle, TETRA helped prevent a section of the trail built along a former railroad from being shut down in May 2022. That's despite the group's aging and dwindling membership, declining from 2,000 members when it was founded in 1997 to fewer than 300 statewide today.

"We were out there replacing boards off of the railroad trestle, and that was hard work," Apple-Williams says. "When you look at our volunteers, the average volunteer age of our organization—we're not spring chickens anymore."

Many state parks and other natural areas are supported by nonprofit organizations founded by volunteers, including TETRA members, who enjoy using and maintaining the outdoor spaces. "We support those groups with labor, expenses [and] grants," Apple-Williams says. "We'll do a benefit ride out there where any funds we collect ... we turn back into that group to help maintain that park."

Since equestrian trails are often multiuse trails, TETRA's restoration efforts also benefit hikers and mountain bikers at state parks, where attendance has topped 9 million each year since 2021, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Apple-Williams is now a manager for TETRA's Region 4, which encompasses a section of North Texas that includes the soon-to-open Palo Pinto Mountains State Park. To assist construction

efforts, TETRA held trail rides at the site in 2017 and 2018 and donated proceeds to the park's nonprofit, Palo Pinto Mountains State Park Partners, which advocated for trail riders during the park design process.

In November 2024, she volunteered at an on-site workday.

"To me, that day wasn't a workday but a preview of what riders would experience for years to come—beautiful streams, winding trails through large boulders [and] high plateaus where you can see for miles," she says.

If you ask Apple-Williams about her favorite place to ride in Texas, she can't pick one because there are too many amazing and diverse trails.

"I think the best place to ride in Texas," she says. ■



Ready to ride?
Turn the page to explore five state parks that are top picks among trail riders.

"For equestrians, riding is more than a hobby; it's a profound connection with nature," Apple-Williams says. "From the fragrance of spring blooms to the thrill of mountain trails, every ride is a celebration of the natural world."

Apple-Williams, who went on to serve as TETRA president from 2022 to 2024, says the nonprofit's goal is to develop and maintain riding trails across the state.

"We're a voice for equestrians in the state of Texas, and that is needed so much more today than it has been in the past," Apple-Williams says.

TETRA members and volunteers maintain more than three dozen trails, including some at Army Corps of Engineers lakes and many at state parks, through fundraising rides and scheduled workdays during the spring and fall. Volunteers put in a combined 800–1,000 hours a year doing trail maintenance, Apple-Williams says.

At Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway in the

Across the Lone Star State, there are 19 equestrian trails in state parks (all of which require proof of a current Coggins test, which screens for potentially fatal equine infectious anemia). These are some of trail riders' favorites.



Palo Pinto Mountains State Park

Tucked halfway between Abilene and Fort Worth,

Palo Pinto Mountains State Park will be Texas' first new state park in 17 years when it opens. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has not set an opening date. The park will comprise nearly 5,000 acres of former ranchland with a rugged landscape of scenic plateaus, sheltered canyons and crisscrossing waterways, including Palo Pinto Creek near the northern boundary. The 90-acre Tucker Lake will be the park's star attraction for fishing, boating, swimming and birding, and there will be several multiuse trails, including 11 miles of equestrian trails with substantial trailhead parking for trail riders. Each of the 10 equestrian campsites will be equipped with a two-horse corral, water and electrical hookups.



Caprock Canyon State Park and Trailway

Home to the Texas State Bison Herd, this 15,000-acre park has 90 miles of trails, including the equestrian-friendly 64-mile-long multiuse trailway built on a former freight and passenger railway that operated from the early 1920s until 1989. The trailway has a variety of access points and passes through Clarity Tunnel, home to a half-million Mexican free-tailed bats. The Panhandle park also has a dozen primitive equestrian campsites with two corrals each.



Cooper State Park

Located on Jim Chapman Lake in northeast Texas, this park is an angler's paradise with an abundance of water activities and trails to explore. The park consists of two areas—the northern Doctor's Creek Unit and the equestrian-friendly South Sulphur Unit on the southern shore. The challenging Buggy Whip Equestrian Trail is a 10-mile adventure through dense forests and creek ravines. A dozen equestrian campsites have electricity but no stables.

Davis Mountains State Park

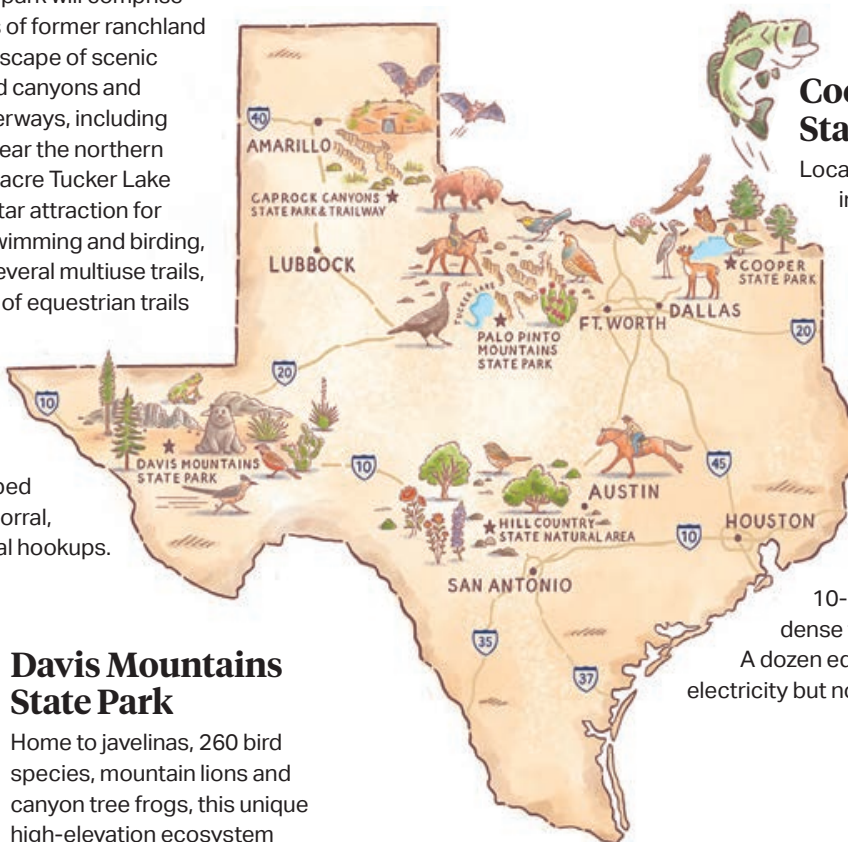
Home to javelinas, 260 bird species, mountain lions and canyon tree frogs, this unique high-elevation ecosystem at the base of the Davis Mountains was formed 25

million–30 million years ago by volcanic eruptions. This volcanic activity is responsible for the West Texas park's most unique formations, Frazier's Canyon, Sleeping Lion and Barrel Springs. Trail riders can explore the stunning landscape on 11 miles of trails that meander from 4,900 to 5,700 feet with scenic overlooks in the Limpia Canyon area. There are six primitive equestrian campsites.



Hill Country State Natural Area

At this former ranch northwest of San Antonio, 40 miles of shared-use equestrian trails cover terrain that includes flat, broad prairies and steep, rocky canyons. The park's extensive equestrian facilities include a day-use area near the headquarters with a water trough, hitching posts and a flush toilet. Overnight equestrian accommodations include six primitive campsites with pens, a group camp that has a barn with stalls for nine horses, and a 1930s ranch house that sleeps 12 humans and has stalls for five horses.





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COUNTING DOWN

Missile silo owners are fighting rust and ruin to preserve and repurpose subterranean Cold War relics

BRUCE TOWNSLEY'S FAVORITE place to visit in Japan is Ryoanji Temple Rock Garden in Kyoto. The enigmatic garden has 15 stones, but only 14 are visible to the viewer, no matter where they stand. One side of the garden is arid and stark, but walk around a corner and there's lush greenery.

It's the unexpected that gets him.

So it's little wonder that Townsley's home in Oplin, south of Abilene, is an illusion all its own. Drive onto his property, and you'll see a few small buildings and a Quonset hut. But that's the tip of the iceberg—one that descends 18 stories into the ground.

For the past 25 years, Townsley has lived underground in the two-story launch control center of a decommissioned missile silo. A relic of the Cold War, the 185-foot silo is one of 12 near Dyess Air Force Base that once housed nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles meant to deter the Soviet Union from using their own.

The Atlas F missile sites roughly encircle Abilene like points on a clock face, a silently ticking time bomb that thankfully never had to be ignited—despite veering dangerously close during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

In 1965, the government salvaged much of the metal, removed the 82-foot missiles and sold the silos to private owners and municipalities. Townsley bought his in 1997, and he's one of several missile silo owners bent on preserving the structures so future generations can learn about and honor this pivotal moment in the Cold War.

Townsley, formerly a real estate broker in Colorado, initially was interested in the site as a renovation project. He still remembers his first visit to West Texas, crawling into the silo by way of an air vent shaft and shining his flashlight deep inside the cavernous concrete and steel structure.

"It felt like it was—this is going to sound strange—alive," he says. "It was just like something was sleeping. It wasn't a frightening feeling; it was just an unusual feeling."

OPPOSITE Bruce Townsley in his missile silo in Oplin. The crib, the silo's steel framework, held an Atlas F intercontinental missile in the early 1960s.

RIGHT, FROM TOP A close-up of Townsley's Cold War-era missile launch control panel. He converted the control center into a living space.



"IF WE DON'T
KNOW OUR PAST,
WE CAN'T LIVE
OUR FUTURE
THE WAY LIFE
IS INTENDED
TO BE LIVED."

As with many of the 72 Atlas F silos built across six states, water had seeped into the vast void over the years, and the walls were graffitied with the names of local students who had sneaked onto the property decades ago.

Townsley, a Taylor Electric Cooperative member, purchased the property for \$99,000 and set about making the control center into a personal residence. Connected to the silo by a 40-foot tunnel, it once housed a five-man missile crew on its upper floor and equipment and offices on another floor.

After about 18 months of renovations, Townsley began his subterranean existence that has lasted more than a quarter century. He says he enjoys the quiet. The living spaces are white and open, with plenty of lighting and high ceilings.

"You don't have that sense of claustrophobia," Townsley says. "Now, some people really react to there being no windows, but cameras and monitors provide a pretty good substitute."

After renovating the control center, Townsley, with the help of others, turned his efforts to the silo itself, draining the water and removing debris (the only bones he found belonged to a coyote and an armadillo). He was also able to get one of the 75-ton, 3-foot-thick silo doors operable so that it once again opens to the sky with the press of a button.

As Townsley renovated the property, he became friends with people who had helped construct the facilities and missileers who served when the sites were active, 1962–65.

"You can't help but get involved in the history of it," Townsley says. "It's just part of it."

One of the people he met was Roger Jensen, who enlisted in the Air Force in 1961 at age 19 and worked on the Abilene silo sites as an electrical technician with the 578th Strategic Missile Squadron.



Now in his 80s, Jensen still remembers some of the passwords he spoke at the door to gain access to the control center, words like "bicycle" and "wheelbarrow."

"We spent 24 hours in and out of the silo," Jensen says. "We had to go out into the silo at least once every hour to take specific readings on various pieces of equipment."

Tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union were high during those years, especially during the 13-day Cuban Missile Crisis, when the Soviets deployed nuclear missiles to Cuba. The Air Force's Strategic Air Command was at DEFCON 2, one step away from the highest level of readiness for nuclear war.

With a wife and baby in Abilene, Jensen says the possibility of nuclear war became undeniable for the crew. "It was a big dose of reality and what was reality at that time," he says.

The crisis was averted through diplomatic agreements, and Jensen says the crew was “elated when it was over.”

In homage to that history, Townsley had long thought his silo should be turned into a museum, an idea planted by the broker who showed it to him. And in January 2024, he started the Atlas Missile Museum of Texas, a nonprofit organization with a five-member board.

Visitors must make an appointment through his website, www.atlasmissilemuseumoftexas.org, to tour the silo and control center and learn about the site’s role in the Cold War. They can walk into the silo and see the steel crib once equipped with an elevator capable of raising the Atlas F missile to the surface and launching it in about 10 minutes. Townsley has a model elevator to show how it works and a refurbished control console that simulates a missile launch.

A short drive down the road in Lawn, Larry Sanders is also preserving the history at his missile silo, which he acquired in 1999. Sanders spearheaded a movement in 2001 to get the roadway it sits along renamed to the Atlas ICBM Highway.

He spent years saving the complex from its more recent No. 1 enemy: rust.

“My immediate concern was stabilization,” Sanders says. “You have to keep in mind that water was everywhere. Wood rot, decomposing Sheetrock, metals being compromised totally to rust. So we did nothing for the first five years but demolition.”

Now that the site is stable and clean, Sanders plans to add back infrastructure. Through the Atlas Missile Base Cold War Center, a nonprofit he founded, he holds on-site events and

gives presentations to groups about the Cold War, a time that can sometimes get forgotten.

“No one received the recognition and the honor that they deserved in winning the Cold War, unlike World War II,” Sanders says.

In addition to veterans, Sanders says the heroes of the time include civilian contractors and city administrators. “Texas had a significant role in America’s Cold War victory, and Texans need to celebrate Texas’ role in that victory,” he says.

Like a lot of American schoolchildren in the early Cold War era, Sanders grew up doing “duck and cover” air raid drills in elementary school and watching the political tension unfold on TV.

Mark Hannifin, who owns a missile silo in Shep, also remembers this tense time and tells younger generations that for them, “the Cold War might as well have been in black and white. It’s kind of like us looking at the second World War or our predecessors looking at the first World War and Civil War. No, it was in color. It was a real thing.”

Hannifin and his wife, Linda, bought their silo in 1982 and were “armchair survivalists” at the time, he says. To avoid detection, they used a code word whenever they referred to the facility in public.

An avid scuba diver, Hannifin eventually decided to open the silo for diving and began cleaning out the debris. Their business, Dive Valhalla, hosts scuba dive clubs in the 120 feet of water.

“It’s nice, crystal-clear well water,” Hannifin says. “We have been letting people dive in there for about 30 years now.”

Hannifin’s control center is equipped with beds for over-night stays, and he shows a short Cold War documentary and slideshow so visitors are aware of the silo’s original mission.

The Hannifins no longer feel the need to keep it under wraps, and Mark says he’s seen other missile silo owners move from concealing their purchase to being more open about it.

The silos were part of a top-secret mission (although folks in Abilene couldn’t have missed the construction crews that arrived in 1960 to build them). When that secret mission faded, the silos “had fallen out of use,” Hannifin says. “Fallen out of memory.”

But these dutiful owners are ensuring this important history isn’t buried by time.

Jensen, who spent many hours in the silo as a young man during the beginning of his military service, certainly won’t forget.

“If we don’t know our past,” Jensen says, “we can’t live our future the way life is intended to be lived.” ■

OPPOSITE Mark Hannifin turned his silo in Shep into Dive Valhalla for scuba divers. A staircase and gangplank connect to a floating platform.

BELOW The entry to Larry Sanders’ silo in Lawn.



TCP Watch the video on our website to get a window into this underground world.



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★★★★★

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unbelievable...
this an incredibly
fine instrument."*

— H., Arvada, CO



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Name

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MESSAGE
FROM BOARD
PRESIDENT

**KENNETH
WEYNAND**

A Message From Your Board President and CEO: Powering Now and the Future

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE is your cooperative, and we're excited to share with you how we work to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity. This year has brought a dynamic legislative landscape, improved system reliability, enhanced member services and a strong commitment to our community. We're proud to report on a year of progress and proactive planning for the cooperative's future.

Navigating the Legislative Landscape

Legislation and policy profoundly impact our operations, from power sourcing to your electric bill. This past year saw significant wins, and we will continue to navigate ongoing challenges.

One critical issue was Texas House Bill 3448. This bill, had it passed, would have forced members to subsidize telecommunications companies' access to our infrastructure, leading to higher electric bills, jeopardizing lineman safety, and hindering rural development rather than promoting a partnership with these companies that access our infrastructure for their equipment.

Thanks to your strong commitment and vocal participation through Voices for Cooperative Power, we successfully advocated for the bill's withdrawal. This victory demonstrates the vital role of our political action plan and your collective voice in safeguarding affordability and reliability.

On the federal side, the Empowering Rural America Program, or "New Era," marks a monumental shift. Instrumental to our long-term strategy, this program offers transformative opportunities for the San Miguel Power Plant—a 400 megawatt lignite facility that generates power for rural South Texas, including Medina EC.

San Miguel EC recently secured \$1.4 billion in financing through the New Era program. This funding will provide opportunities to transition the plant into a solar generation and battery storage facility, ensuring its prolonged operational life. This transition is projected to save Medina EC approximately \$170 million in energy costs over the project's lifetime. Through our membership with South Texas Electric Cooperative, our power supplier, we remain committed to delivering reliable power and a resilient energy future.

Proactive advocacy is now more crucial than ever. As part of our political action plan, our staff and board members actively attend legislative sessions at state and national levels, ensuring the cooperative voice reaches policymakers. These grassroots

efforts protect your interests, from affordable rates to reliable power.

Enhancing Reliability and Service

Our team constantly works to improve your service and enhance our community. Ensuring reliable, efficient power is core to our mission.

We track performance using the System Average Interruption Duration Index or SAIDI. From 2023 to 2024, we achieved significant reliability gains:

- 1,220 fewer outages occurred.
- On average, each member experienced 56 fewer minutes without power.

This positive trend results from the teamwork between our crews and operators, who restore power safer and faster. Our supervisory control and data acquisition—SCADA—system allows us to remotely monitor and control our grid, identify issues proactively and prevent outages. We plan to further integrate this technology and modernize infrastructure for an even more resilient and efficient system.

We're also continuously working to improve your experience with how you interact with your account and understand your bill. This past year we've modified the bills printed to feature a new 13-month usage graph with a temperature trend, showing how weather impacts your energy use. For quicker bill pay access, QR codes on your bill link directly to the SmartHub payment system. For members with multiple accounts, we've introduced a new summary page, simplifying the billing overview.

SmartHub is now enhanced with analytics for residential accounts to help you understand your electricity consumption, pinpointing which appliances affect your bill and by how much. These improvements empower you with better tools and clearer information, ensuring a seamless, user-friendly member experience.

Technology and cybersecurity are more critical than ever. We prioritize protecting cooperative systems and data. We're proud to announce Medina EC achieved Level 1 Cyber Status from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. This top-tier designation signifies our robust security commitment, protecting your data and electricity reliability.

Living the Cooperative Principles

Our commitment to you extends beyond local lines, incorporating core cooperative principles: Education, Training and Information, Cooperation Among Cooperatives, and Concern for Community. These principles shape everything we do.



MESSAGE
FROM CEO

**HERBERT
"TREY" GREBE**

Our commitment stretches across the cooperative network. Cooperation is the foundation of our collective strength. We saw this after Hurricane Beryl, when our crews provided mutual aid to Jackson Electric Cooperative in Edna. Globally, we're proud to plan another impactful trip with NRECA International, bringing electricity to communities worldwide in 2025.

Our deepest commitment is to our members and local communities. Last holiday season, we started Christmas with the Co-op, welcoming members to celebrate the Christmas holiday and take pictures with Santa and we look forward to celebrating with members again this year. Throughout the year, Medina EC also provided significant donations and sponsorships to numerous organizations, youth programs, schools and events across our 17-county service area. Our employees embody this community commitment through our Volunteer Time Off program. In 2024, our team dedicated 1,097 hours to local charities, making a tangible difference where they live and work.

Looking Ahead

As your not-for-profit cooperative, we're always focused on efficient service and planning for the future. This year we will complete a cost-of-service study to ensure rates are fairly allocated and cover operational expenses, maintenance, and vital capital improvements. Learn more about the cooperative's financial health in the Operating Statistics found on page 19 of the annual report.

We continue to monitor significant growth across our service area, from large commercial loads to residential subdivisions. To meet the growing needs in Medina County, we're expanding our Hondo service office, including a new warehouse and vehicle storage facility, with additional updates planned for the member service office.

Our staff is critical for the cooperative's success in serving you and we monitor staffing needs and prioritize employee development, equipping our team for what's next. As we invest in our team's growth, safety remains our absolute top priority. Wired into every decision, we are guided by our slogan: "Work Safe, Home Safe." To recognize linemen living this pledge daily, we held Lineman Nights Out at each office—an appreciation event for our linemen, their families and all employees for ensuring everyone goes home safe, every single day.

At Medina EC, our focus remains on you, our members as we strive to *Exceed Member Expectations in Everything We Do*. Thank you for being a valued part of Medina EC. We look forward to seeing you at the 86th Annual Membership Meeting at our Rio Grande City office.

Until next time,
Kenneth Weynand and Trey Grebe

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

Larry Neal, (210) 218-2367

Voting District 3

Annette Sorrells, (361) 231-0173

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

Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

CEO

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

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

OUR SERVICE AREA

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE may be our name, but we serve more than just Medina County. Medina EC provides service in 17 counties across South Texas.

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

Medina EC’s service area is divided into three voting districts and represented by three directors per district.



JOE FOLEY

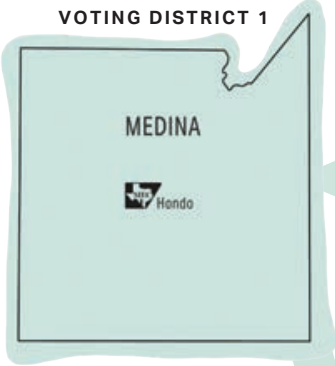
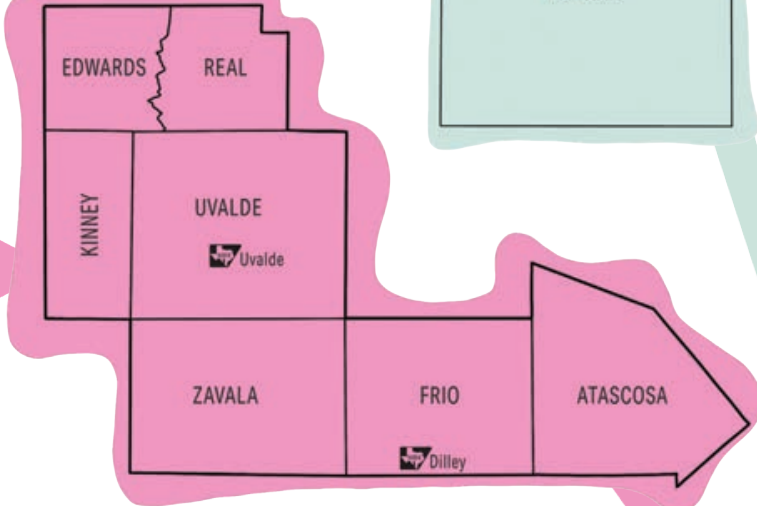


LARRY NEAL



JIMMIE RAINES

VOTING DISTRICT 2



VOTING DISTRICT 1



ANNETTE SORRELLS
(SECRETARY/TREASURER)

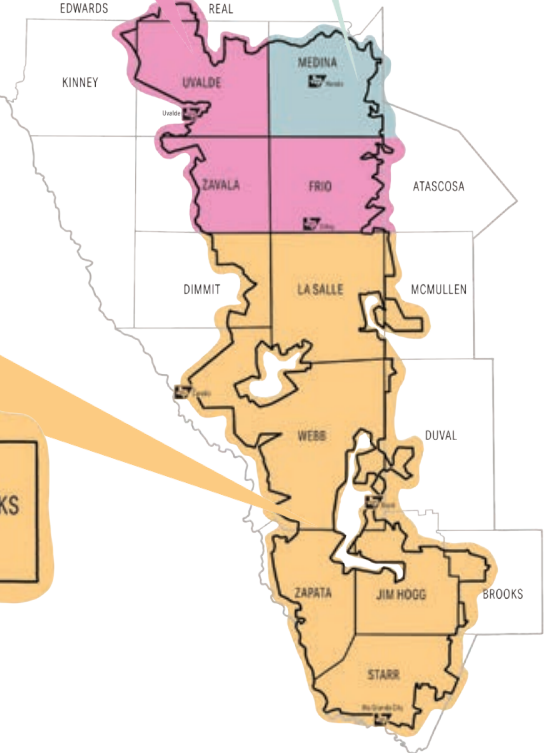
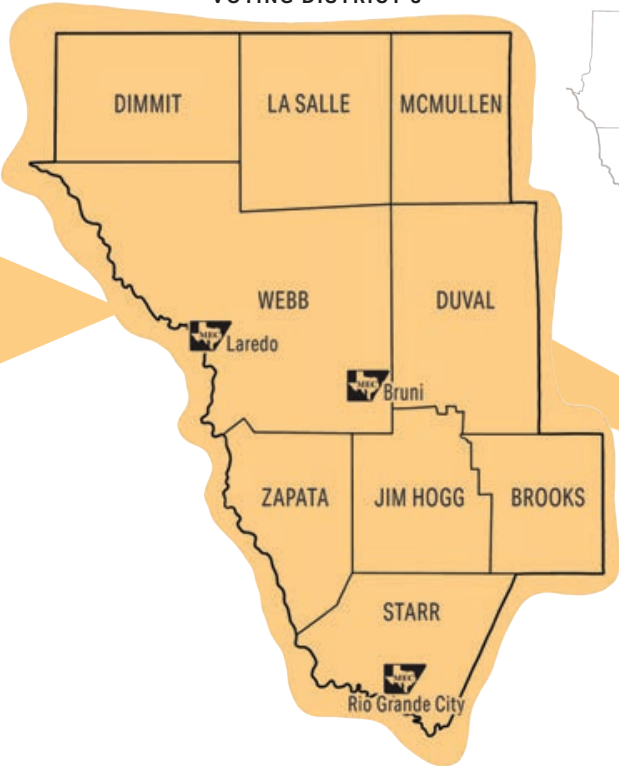


J.L. GONZALEZ



R.H. RODRIGUEZ

VOTING DISTRICT 3





KENNETH WEYNAND
(PRESIDENT)



LARRY HUESSER
(VICE PRESIDENT)



MICKEY HOLZHAUS

OPERATING STATISTICS

ASSETS	2024	2023
Total Utility Plant	\$296,557,760	\$274,275,630
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(41,892,308)	(37,768,428)
Net Utility Plant	254,665,452	236,507,202
Cash and Temporary Investments	5,043,675	1,755,733
Investments in Associated Organizations	88,011,413	79,615,883
Accounts Receivable	10,686,994	10,282,066
Materials	38,808	77,786
Deferred Charges & Other Assets	203,842	110,641
Total Assets	\$358,650,184	\$328,349,311

EQUITIES AND MARGINS	2024	2023
Memberships	\$107,220	\$105,030
Patronage Capital	133,814,788	121,825,493
Other Equities and Income	16,375,986	18,413,330
Total Equities and Margins	\$150,297,994	\$140,343,853

LIABILITIES	2024	2023
Long-Term Debt	\$129,421,134	\$121,574,488
Accumulated Provision for Pensions and Benefits	3,149,096	3,341,397
Accounts Payable	14,453,863	18,554,487
Consumer Deposits	3,173,568	2,816,148
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	2,856,121	3,134,424
Deferred Credits	55,298,408	38,584,514
Total Liabilities	\$208,352,190	\$188,005,458
Total Equities and Liabilities	\$358,650,184	\$328,349,311

REVENUE	2024	2023
Sales of Electric Power	\$145,969,162	\$147,051,504
Miscellaneous Electric Revenue	2,149,082	629,784
Total Revenue	\$148,118,244	\$147,681,289

EXPENSES	2024	2023
Purchased Power	\$101,560,924	\$104,079,272
Maintenance and Operations	19,519,964	17,927,226
Consumer Accounts and Member Services	3,458,073	3,835,124
Administration / General	7,347,109	7,518,096
Depreciation	8,124,658	7,691,308
Interest and Other Deductions	5,621,531	5,306,194
Total Expenses	\$145,632,259	\$146,357,220

MARGINS	2024	2023
Operating Margins	\$2,485,985	\$1,324,069
Generation and Transmission / Other Capital Credits	9,047,499	12,506,611
Nonoperating Margins	379,598	408,504
Total Margins	\$11,913,082	\$14,239,184

DOLLAR BREAKDOWN

Medina EC is a not-for-profit business, so each dollar you send the cooperative covers business costs. Here is how your dollar was spent in 2024.

POWER COST
69.74%

MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS
13.40%

DEPRECIATION
5.58%

ADMINISTRATION
5.05%

INTEREST
3.86%

CONSUMER ACCOUNTS & MEMBER SERVICES
2.37%

ANNUAL AUDIT

Medina EC is audited annually. The audit of the 2024 financials was performed by Certified Public Accountants Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss, L.L.P. of Lubbock.

The audit covered the period from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

Per the auditor's March 10, 2025, report, "In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc. as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

2024 IMPACT STATEMENT

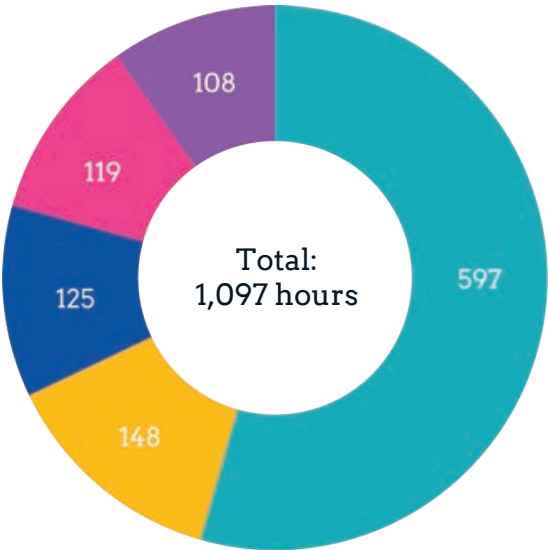
By Service Area Office

● Hondo/Corporate Office ● Dilley ● Rio Grande City ● Uvalde ● Bruni

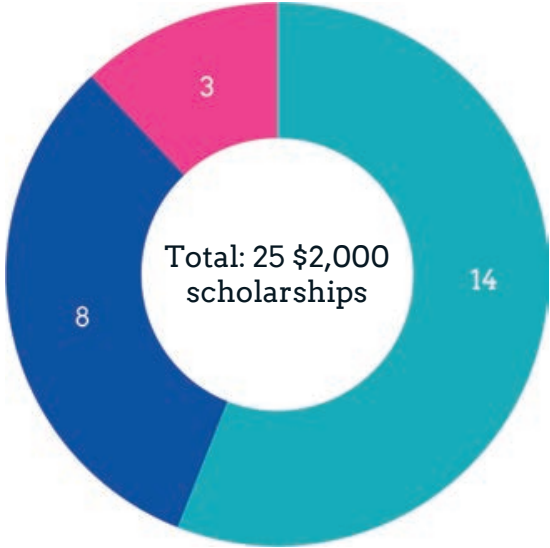
Medina Electric Cooperative knows how important the communities in our service area are. Cooperative Principle No. 7 is Concern for Community, highlighting the importance to stay involved in the communities we are a part of. In an ongoing effort to help our communities grow and our members to be successful, Medina EC gives back with donations of employee time, financial contributions and donations of goods. Additionally, Cooperative Principle No. 5 is Education, Training and Information. Medina EC supports this mission by helping high school graduates and adults pursuing higher education with educational scholarships.

Learn more about Medina EC’s donations and sponsorships at MedinaEC.org/Donation and learn more about Medina EC’s scholarship program and eligibility at MedinaEC.org/Scholarships.

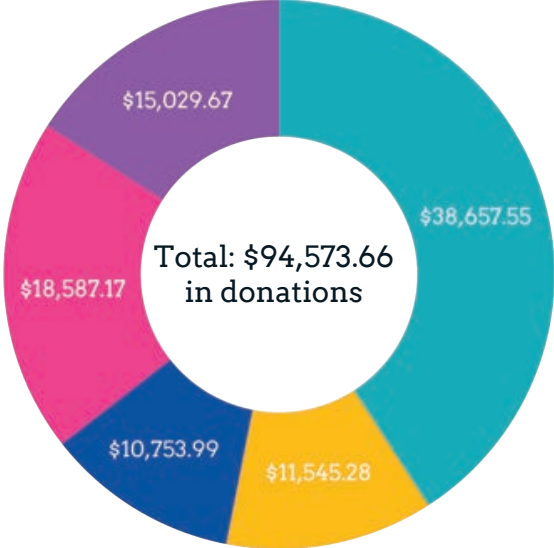
VOLUNTEER TIME OFF (IN HOURS)



SCHOLARSHIPS

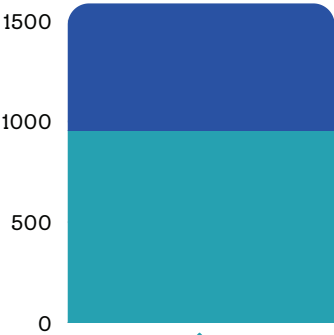


DONATIONS



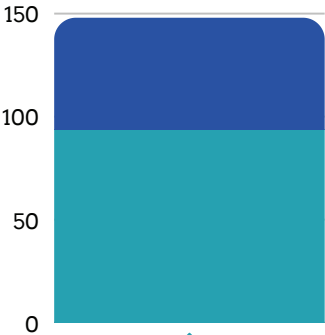
2024 SERVICE STATEMENT

KWH SOLD (IN MILLIONS)



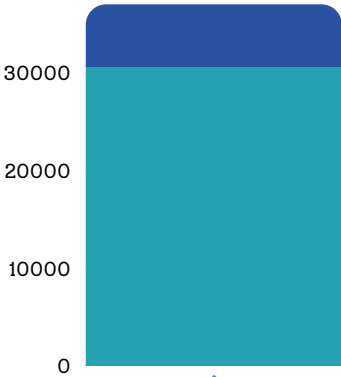
↑
66.23%
GROWTH RATE

REVENUE (IN MILLIONS)



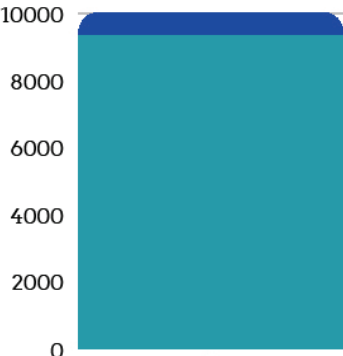
↑
57.76%
GROWTH RATE

ACTIVE SERVICES (METERS & SECURITY LIGHTS)



↑
20.25%
GROWTH RATE

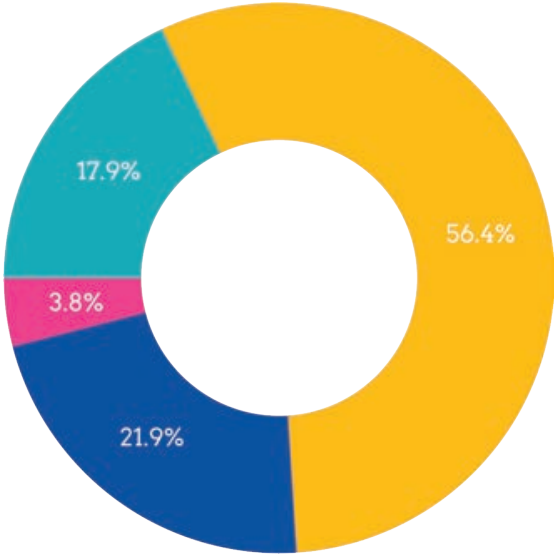
MILES OF LINE



↑
7.06%
GROWTH RATE

FUEL MIX

- Teal circle: Texas lignite
- Yellow circle: Natural gas
- Blue circle: Renewables
- Pink circle: Nuclear



Medina EC Celebrates IT Professionals Day

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL IT PROFESSIONALS DAY, recognized September 16, Medina Electric Cooperative is recognizing our information and technology department. The IT team works hard to protect Medina EC's data and systems by keeping all of the cooperative's technology up to date, scanning countless emails and implementing needed updates and firewalls. They also do a great job answering computer and technology questions and helping employees and members whenever needed. Medina EC's information technology team is always busy, helpful and doing everything to keep us at the forefront of technological advancements. We would like to give our IT department a shoutout for all the work they do—in front of us and behind the screens.

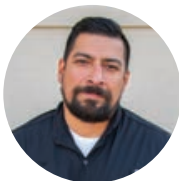
LEADERSHIP



Doug Kindred

Chief Information Technology Officer

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS



Jose Montalvo



Ariel Valverde

IT TECHNICIANS



Richard Green



Oliver Stone

Medina EC Celebrates Garza's Retirement

PAT GARZA SERVED Medina Electric Cooperative for 22 years and retired from his role as a journeyman at our Rio Grande City office.

Garza said his favorite part of the job was that he "loved working for members and restoring members' power as quickly as possible."

Thank you for 22 years, Pat, and congratulations on your retirement!



PHOTO DESCRIPTIONS:
1. GARZA AS A LINEMAN IN 2008. 2. GARZA PREPARING A POLE FOR NEW SERVICE. 3. GARZA TEACHING STUDENTS IN RIO GRANDE CITY ABOUT INSULATORS. 4. GARZA'S FAMILY AT MEDINA EC'S LINEMAN NIGHT OUT IN APRIL 2025.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Labor Day

Monday, September 1

Our offices will be closed in observance of the holiday.

As always, crews will be on call.

World Gratitude Day

Sunday, September 21

86th Annual Membership Meeting at 9 a.m.

Saturday, October 4

Learn more about Medina EC's 86th Annual Membership Meeting and RSVP at MedinaEC.org/AnnualMeeting2025.

Member Benefits Bingo!

You have FIVE lucky chances to win a \$100 credit on your electric bill.

Chance 1: Register your account on SmartHub.

Sign up at MedinaEC.SmartHub.coop or download the app and register your account there. SmartHub allows you to report outages with one click, view past electricity use and see your use before you get your monthly bill.

Chance 2: Build your Home Profile.

Residential members can enhance their analytics by completing the Build Your Home Profile section in SmartHub. You can find this under the Usage tab. Learn more at MedinaEC.org/ConsumerAnalytics.

Chance 3: Sign up for automated payments.

Have your bill automatically charged to your credit or debit card or bank account each month. Set it up online through SmartHub or by calling 1-866-632-3532.

Chance 4: Choose paperless billing.

Opt out of receiving a paper bill every month and have your bill emailed to you instead. Change your account settings in SmartHub or call us at 1-866-632-3532 and staff will change it for you.

Chance 5: BONUS drawing for all four programs!

If you are enrolled in all four programs, you will be entered into an additional drawing for a \$100 bill credit.

Members enrolled for each of these programs as of 5 p.m. November 1 will be entered. This includes members who have already signed up for these options and any new sign-ups between now and November 1.

There will be five separate drawings, and five \$100 bill credits will be awarded and automatically issued.

Winners in each category will be randomly selected and announced in the December issue of *Texas Co-op Power*.

Medina EC Celebrates National Tradesperson Day

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL TRADESPERSON DAY on Friday, September 19, it's time to shine a spotlight on the unsung heroes within Medina Electric Cooperative: the dedicated tradespeople who keep the lights on and our community powered. From monitoring the co-op's system and dispatching linemen in system operations to the precise art of line design and managing our electric meters, these individuals embody the skill, dedication and resilience that define the trades.

System Operators: These are the individuals working behind the scenes at Medina EC's in-house control center monitoring the flow of electricity across the co-op's grid. They are quick thinkers who coordinate outage responses and reroute power to restore service as quickly and safely as possible. Their expertise in managing complex electrical networks, utilizing SCADA technology and making critical decisions under pressure is important to ensuring reliable power for every member.

Engineering Equipment and Meter Technicians: At the interface between Medina EC and its members are the technicians who are responsible for deploying and maintaining the engineering equipment that delivers and measures electricity consumption. These experts go beyond simple installation; they're adept at configuring, calibrating and troubleshooting a range of devices, from traditional meters to advanced smart meters. Using specialized instruments and software, they diagnose issues, perform maintenance and ensure compliance with industry standards. Their work creates a reliable infrastructure for the co-op.

Line Designers: Before a single pole is set or a wire strung, there's the thorough work of Medina EC's line design team. These tradespeople are the architects of the co-op's electrical infrastructure—surveying terrain, calculating precise measurements and designing the most efficient routes for new lines and equipment. Their knowledge of engineering principles, regulatory codes and environmental considerations ensures that every new extension or upgrade to our system is planned with the utmost care and foresight. Designing is not just about drawing lines on a map; it's about laying the groundwork for reliable power delivery for decades to come.

This National Tradesperson Day, we would like to thank the cooperative's skilled tradespeople for their hard work, problem-solving, and dedication to our members, ensuring the power keeps flowing reliably every single day.

SYSTEM OPERATORS



Zachary
Lyle



Dylan
Carroll



Deborah
DeLeon



Ory Garner



Matthew
Gregor



Monte
Tschirhart



Susie Zerr

ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT TECHNICIANS



Joel
Gonzales



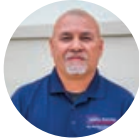
Ricky
Cerna



Eduardo
Chapa



Marcos
Munoz

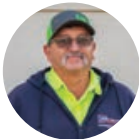


Fernando
Rangel

METER AND COMMUNICATION TECHNICIANS



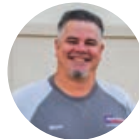
Philip Crow



Marty
DeLeon



Matthew
Stinson



Bryce
Thayer

LINE DESIGNERS



Fidel
Aranda



Reuben
Ayala



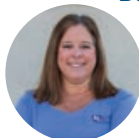
Roger
Besares



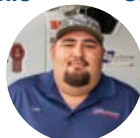
Derek
Boehle



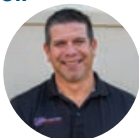
Joe
Carroll



Janet
French



Leonel
Garcia



Isaac
Solis

Color Your Co-op

A coloring contest for kids: They could have their artwork featured on Medina EC's water bottles!

CHILD'S FIRST & LAST NAME

CHILD'S AGE & BIRTHDAY

CHILD'S SCHOOL & GRADE

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

CONTEST OVERVIEW:

Children who live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina Electric Cooperative are encouraged to participate in Medina EC's Color Your Co-op contest to design our next 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. Lightbulbs: Use the predesigned lightbulb label to creatively color.

A child may only enter/submit one category. A winner for each category will be chosen. Each winner will win a \$50 gift card and a case of waters with their designed label. The contest begins August 1 and ends October 31. 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 October 31, are eligible. Employees and their immediate families are not eligible to participate.

CONTEST RULES:

Artwork must be submitted or post-marked by Friday, October 31, at 11:59 p.m. Freestyle submissions must be original work created by applicants. Each child may only submit one entry. 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.

- 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:

Artwork must be submitted using the template in *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:

Winners will be chosen 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 to be determined.

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!****

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.

CATEGORY 1: FREESTYLE

CHILD'S FIRST & LAST NAME

CHILD'S AGE & BIRTHDAY

CHILD'S SCHOOL & GRADE

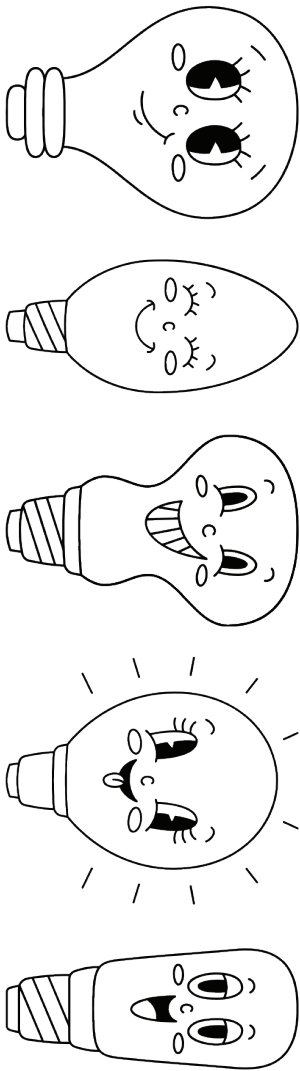
PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

CATEGORY 2: LIGHTBULBS

Medina Electric Cooperative



Know What To Do in an Electrical Emergency

YOU KNOW THE electrical safety basics such as: Don't use appliances near water. But safety isn't just about prevention. It requires knowing what to do if you or someone nearby comes into contact with electricity. **Review this list now, before your next emergency:**

If someone nearby comes into contact with electricity, do not touch that person or anything the person is touching. Instead, call 911. If the source of electricity is an appliance, grab the plug—not the cord—and pull it out of the outlet. If you cannot safely remove the plug, turn off the power at the fuse or circuit breaker.

If an electrical wire falls on your car, do not get out of the car. You're generally safer inside your vehicle. Your tires protect you because electricity seeks the quickest path to the ground—through the outside of the car, through the tires and into the ground. Call 911 and Medina Electric Cooperative and stay in your car until help arrives and the electricity is shut off.

Most power lines are not insulated, so they're never safe to touch. When a wire falls to the ground, it may still be live, even if you don't see sparks. Call 911 and the local utility provider if you see a downed wire. Warn others to keep their distance.

Wood is a poor conductor of electricity, but it's still a conductor, especially when wet. Don't use a wooden ladder near a power line. If a ladder begins to fall into a power line, don't grab it. Let it fall and call your electric provider so we can safely address the problem.

Only pure rubber is an insulator, and most household products don't contain pure rubber. Don't try to handle electrical emergencies at home, even if you're wearing rubber gloves or shoes.



Don't Shoot Overhead Lines During Dove Season

WITH THE EXCITEMENT of dove season's arrival, many are looking to fill their hunting bags and freezers. Medina Electric Cooperative wants to keep its members informed regarding the dangers of hunting near overhead lines.

Doves often perch on high lines to take a break from flying, scout fields for food and congregate in preparation for migration. Although these feathered line dwellers make for enticing targets, the risk of damaging electric and fiber-optic equipment, as well as causing harm to the environment, is far greater than the reward of bagging one more bird.

Electricity and internet access are cornerstones of our fast-paced world. Every year, homes and businesses are cut off from these essential services when shotgun pellets hit electric and fiber cables. The interference halts communications, causes food to spoil and interrupts essential medical devices, and the damage has the potential to contaminate water.

When lines are severed or weakened from a shot, they may sag or break, becoming a hazard to people and animals. Line damage can also discharge electricity and ignite fires, potentially devastating the environment and nearby infrastructure.

Lineworkers report some hunters attempt to use high lines to set bird decoys. This is an extremely dangerous tactic as contact with power lines can cause serious or even fatal injury.

Although electric wires may appear harmless when birds safely sit on them, humans can't reach those same lines without a connection to the ground. It's that connection to the ground—by ladder, tree or truck bed—that makes the human body a path to the ground for the voltage coursing through electric lines.

Medina EC encourages you to be considerate of neighbors and mindful of your own safety before hunting near overhead lines and leaving the area without power or internet. Do your due diligence: Scout the area and direction in which you plan to aim your gun. The risks to property and life are far greater than the reward of fowl targets.

Medina EC Celebrates HR Professionals

MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S Human Resources team works tirelessly to ensure we have the best employees to serve our members, managing everything from employee onboarding and retention to benefits, resources, and records retention.

Their responsibilities extend far beyond these tasks, including policy development, supporting board projects, handling legal matters, managing workers' compensation, paid family and medical leave, employee development, and more.

The HR team is essential in shaping a positive work culture and ensuring that our employees and the cooperative are set up for success.

National HR Professional Day is September 26, and we would like to recognize our HR team for the work they do for all Medina EC employees.

THE HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM



Patti Taylor

Chief Administrative Officer



Melissa Nietenhoefer

Records and Human Resources Supervisor



Theresa Rivera

HR Specialist

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☐ Single unit - \$19.99 per unit	\$19.99	
Shipping & Handling		+ \$7.95
TOTAL		



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Southlake, TX 76092



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

PAYMENT METHOD

- ☐ Check/Money Order enclosed payable to: **MagniLife**
☐ Charge my credit card



Acct. #: _____

REQUIRED	Signature: _____
Exp. Date: CVV #: _____	

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☐ Buy 2 Get 1 FREE - (Equals \$13.33 per unit)	\$59.97	\$39.98
☐ Single unit - \$19.99 per unit	\$19.99	
Shipping & Handling		+ \$7.95
TOTAL		



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



It's in the Bag

How did Frito Pie make its way to Hank Hill and football fans across Texas?

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY GISELA GOPPEL

FRITOS PIE OR Fritos chili pie or simply Frito pie—whatever *you* call it—is a much-loved delight often spooned up under Friday night lights.

I've heard many baby boomers claim their mother invented the dish out of necessity to feed incessantly hungry kids back in the 1950s. I've heard claims that their grandmothers had been making something like Frito pie since the '20s, which would have been a neat trick since Fritos weren't invented until 1932.

A version of Frito pie was served at a gathering of the Dallas Dietetic Association in 1949. The recipe came from the Frito Co. itself and originally called for putting a layer of Fritos in a casserole dish, covering it with chili and then cov-

ering everything with liberal amounts of cheese and onions. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

You can see how this got MacGyvered into just pouring chili into bags of Fritos for efficiency and transportability. Today, you'll also find it with the added ingredient of a mound of jalapeños on top.

Whatever the case, Fritos and the pies are Texas originals.

Charles Doolin of San Antonio created the chips, putting his own spin on a recipe he bought for \$100 from a Mexican restaurant in 1932. He fried strips of corn dough, and Fritos were born. It's interesting that most Texans now associate the chip with piles of meat, as Doolin was a vegetarian.

He called them *fritos*, Spanish for “fried.” Doolin also invented Cheetos, around 1948, by the way.

In the 1960s, my mother made something she called “creamed tacos,” which was a cheesy chili con carne poured over a plate of Fritos. Exceptionally filling, the recipe no doubt came from Frito-Lay itself. Though the company, now based in Plano, had its own brand of chili by then, my mother, like Hank Hill, preferred Wolf Brand Chili (“Neighbor, how long has it been?”), another Texas original.

This type of mixing and matching was encouraged in the early days of Fritos—as they were not marketed as a stand-alone snack. They were sold as an ingredient for casseroles. The inventor's wife, Mary Kathryn “Kitty” Doolin, even experimented with pouring chocolate over Fritos and baking them on a cookie sheet.

Kitty also is credited with coming up with the original chili pie recipe. We know this because her daughter, Kaleta Doolin, wrote the most thorough history on the subject you can find, her 2011 book *Fritos Pie: Stories, Recipes, and More*. It's an incredibly detailed history that provides all manner of Fritos recipes you have never imagined. Maybe there's another classic in there, waiting to be popularized in today's world of spicy snack foods.

Along with her mother, Kaleta gives credit to another woman for popularizing the dish. She writes with admiration that Teresa Hernandez sold thousands of Fritos chili pies at the Woolworth's counter in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the 1960s, reportedly selling 56,000 bags in one year.

And at the same time, it was all the rage in San Antonio and across Texas at football games as fundraisers for civic and student groups. Who knows how many kids were sent to college on profits from Frito pies. ■

One-Skillet Dinners

Where convenience and flavors unite for a delicious cause

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Growing up in Aransas Pass, home of the Shrimptree Festival, we enjoyed the freshest harvest delivered by the shrimp boats daily from the Gulf Coast. We grilled, fried and sautéed shrimp in countless marinades and spices, and we always served them with plenty of fresh lime juice. This one-pan dinner is a family favorite.

Spicy Shrimp and Rice

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 small onion, diced
1 yellow bell pepper, seeds removed, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup uncooked white rice
2 cups chicken or vegetable broth
½ cup salsa verde
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground oregano
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
Juice of 1 lime
Cilantro leaves, for serving
Lime slices, for serving

1. In a skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, bell pepper and garlic. Cook until onion is light and translucent, stirring often, about 5 minutes.
2. Add rice, stir and continue to cook 2 minutes. Stir in broth, salsa verde, cumin, oregano, salt and black pepper.
3. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer, cover and cook 15 minutes.
4. Remove lid, place shrimp over rice, cover and cook until shrimp are opaque, about 5–7 minutes.
5. Add lime juice and fluff the rice mixture. Serve with cilantro and lime slices.

SERVES 6

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Skillet Chicken Fajita Rice.



Cider Stew

THERESA SHELDON
CHEROKEE COUNTY EC

Stews are good for the soul and the belly. This one-skillet wonder starts with chunks of beef that are seared then simmered with vegetables and herbs in a rich and savory broth that tastes complex in flavor but is actually simple to make. The whole family will love it.

- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- 2 pounds beef chuck stew meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¼ cup flour
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup apple cider
- ½ cup steak sauce
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 package frozen cut green beans (10 ounces)

1. Heat butter over medium-high heat in a large skillet. Add beef and brown on all sides, 2–3 minutes per side.
2. Stir in flour. Gradually stir in water, apple cider and steak sauce. Bring to a boil.
3. Stir in thyme, pepper and bay leaf. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer 2 hours.
4. Add potatoes, carrots, onion and green beans. Cover and cook an additional 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Discard bay leaf before serving.

SERVES 8

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 >



\$500 WINNER

Egg Roll Stuffing Stir Fry

JENNIFER CURTIS
PEDERNALES EC



This might just be my new favorite dinner. It takes everything delicious in classic egg rolls and turns it into one ridiculously easy, healthy and flavor-packed meal with no rolling required. Spoon the stuffing into lettuce cups or over rice. The leftovers are a great lunch the next day.

- 2 tablespoons avocado oil or other neutral cooking oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 2 pounds ground pork or ground chicken
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons white sesame seeds
- 2 teaspoons black sesame seeds
- 1 cup shredded carrot
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 4 tablespoons honey
- ½ cup coconut aminos or soy sauce
- 2 cups shredded purple cabbage
- 2 cups shredded green cabbage
- Lettuce leaves or rice, for serving

1. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook until light and translucent.
2. Add pork or chicken and cook, breaking meat up into small pieces with a spoon, until cooked through, about 6 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, red pepper flakes and ginger.
3. Reduce heat to medium and stir in garlic, sesame seeds and shredded carrot and cook 3 minutes.
4. Make a well in the center of the skillet and add the rice vinegar, honey, and coconut aminos or soy sauce. Stir to combine.
5. Stir in cabbage and cook 3 minutes to slightly soften cabbage.
6. Serve warm, spooned into lettuce cups or over rice.

SERVES 6

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

CHEESECAKE DUE SEPTEMBER 10

Did you know they served cheesecake at the first Olympics 2,800 years ago? We want to serve yours while we watch the 2026 Games. The best recipe will score \$500. Enter by September 10.

UPCOMING: BARBECUE SIDES DUE OCTOBER 10





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Southwest Chicken With Toasted Orzo

GAIL PATTERSON
PENTEX ENERGY

One of the main reasons I enjoy cooking with orzo is its quick and easy preparation. I usually add a splash of lemon juice and a touch of grated Parm, but once I spotted Patterson's Southwestern spin, I knew I had to give it a try. Brothy orzo and blistered tomatoes combine with perfectly seasoned chicken.



½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon granulated garlic
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon kosher salt
4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
5 teaspoons olive oil, plus more as needed, divided use
1 cup cherry tomatoes
1 tablespoon (⅛ stick) butter
1 cup uncooked orzo
1 tablespoon chicken base
3 cups water, plus more as needed
1 cup corn kernels
1 can black beans (15 ounces), drained and rinsed
½ cup chopped cilantro, for serving
Tortilla chips, crushed, for serving

1. In a small bowl, mix together cayenne, cumin, granulated garlic, black pepper and salt.
2. Season chicken with half the spice mixture, reserving remaining half.
3. In a skillet, heat 3 teaspoons oil over medium-high heat. Sear chicken in 2 batches until lightly browned on both

sides, adding more oil if needed. Set cooked chicken aside in a bowl.

4. Add 1 teaspoon oil to skillet and add cherry tomatoes, stirring to coat in oil. Cover and cook, shaking pan occasionally, 5 minutes or until tomatoes slightly blister. Add tomatoes to bowl with chicken.

5. Add butter and remaining 1 teaspoon oil to skillet. Reduce heat to medium and stir in orzo. Cook, stirring occasionally, until orzo is golden and glistening, about 5–7 minutes.

6. Stir in chicken base and 3 cups water, bring to a simmer. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, 6 minutes or until almost all liquid is absorbed.

7. Stir in corn, black beans, prepared chicken and tomatoes, and remaining spice mixture. Add water if orzo becomes dry. Cover and cook an additional 3 minutes. Serve warm, with cilantro and tortilla chips.

SERVES 4

Why I Love One-Skillet Meals

I tell myself I cook for a living, but in reality I wash dishes for a living. Not when it comes to one-skillet meals.

Less cleanup: Forget about the mess of juggling several pans on the stovetop.

More flavor: Mixing all the ingredients together in one skillet brings out richer flavors.

Budget friendly: Beans, rice, pasta and vegetables help make these recipes easy on the pocketbook.

—Vianney Rodriguez



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Saga on the San Saba

The remains of Menard's Spanish fortification predate the U.S.

BY CHET GARNER

THE SMALL TOWN of Menard (population 1,300) sits along the blurry line where the Hill Country turns into West Texas. It's more than an hour from any major city, but if the Spanish had had their way, it might have become our largest metropolis.

As I stood in the middle of a dusty field, staring at the crumbling walls of the Presidio de San Sabá, I couldn't help but feel the dramatic story of conquest, bloodshed and what-could-have-been. Today, what remains of the abandoned Spanish fort covers a few acres on the north bank of the San Saba River.

The fort was constructed in 1757 to protect the Mission Santa Cruz de San Sabá, 4 miles to the east. Spain brought in a caravan of 300 soldiers and civilians to push their presence and control deeper into the heart of Texas.

Native Americans (and the French) didn't want the missionaries there. And in March 1758, 2,000 Comanche and other natives (likely armed with French weapons) attacked the mission and massacred its residents. A decade of fighting between the Spanish citizens inside the fort and the surrounding tribes followed, until the Spanish gave up and left in 1772.

Over the centuries, the ruins became a sort of roadside attraction. Famous Texan Jim Bowie even carved his name in the stone gate after supposedly hiding his silver cache, but that's another story. Sadly, the presidio's history began to fade as its stones were scavenged to construct Menard's growing downtown, and the grounds became an attraction on the city golf course. Seriously!

Luckily, it's now a protected site that's been extensively studied and cataloged.

If you're a lover of Texas history and want a glimpse into the past—but without the constant threat of death—it doesn't get much better than walking the grounds of the old presidio and pondering life on the Texas frontier. ■

ABOVE Chet in front of the ruins of Presidio de San Sabá in Menard.

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.

SEPTEMBER

7

Gainesville [7–14] Fall Art Exhibition, (940) 613-6939, gainesvilleareavisualarts.org

11

Grapevine [11–14] GrapeFest, (817) 410-3185, grapevinetexasusa.com

12

Bryan [12–13] Brazos Bluebonnet Quilt Guild Quilt Show, (979) 776-8338, bbquiltguild.org

13

Chappell Hill Airing of the Quilts, (979) 337-9910, chappellhilltx.com

Luling Luling Foundation Youth Grill-Off, (830) 875-2438, lulingfoundation.org

Stephenville Local Art & Wine Walk, (254) 965-6190, downtownstephenvilletx.com

14

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

19

Giddings [19–20] Happy Stitchers Quilt Show, (979) 540-8043

25

Grand Saline [25–27] Salt Festival, gssaltfestival@gmail.com, facebook.com/gssaltfest

26

Commerce [26–27] Bois D'Arc Bash, (903) 886-3950, commerce-chamber.com

27

Winnsboro [26-27] Cowboy Music and Poetry Gathering, (903) 342-0686, winnsboro.centerforthearts.com

Hallettsville Kolache Fest, (361) 798-2662, hallettsville.com

Lake Dallas 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Lake Dallas Library, (940) 497-3566, friendsoflakedallaslibrary.com

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

Woodville Ghosts and Legends of Texas Past, (409) 403-2025, heritage-village.org



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Meyersville Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church Fall Festival, (361) 275-3868, stspeterpaulalloysius.org

OCTOBER

3

Granbury [3-5] Oktoberfest, (682) 936-4550, granburysquare.com

4

Burnet Texas State Button Society Fall Workshop and Sale, texasstatebutton.society.com

Huntington Catfish Festival, shophuntingtontx.com

Johnson City Blanco County Wild Game Dinner, (830) 833-4138, facebook.com/wildgamedinner

Taylor Bluebonnet Horse Expo & Training Challenge, 1-888-542-5163, bluebonnethorseexpo.com

TCP Submit Your Event

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



Western Swing Festival

September 6-7, 2025
Stephenville City Park
Free Entry | Food Trucks

For more information go to
visitstephenville.com



September 13, 2025
Downtown Stephenville
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Great Food • Live Music
Wine Tastings

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visitstephenville.com

September 6
7AM-10AM



Cars & Coffee @ the Courthouse

Downtown Stephenville
POWERED BY MAIN STREET

Stephenville Farmer & Artisan Market
9AM-12PM



Celebrate Rodeo Heritage in the Cowboy Capital

Ranch Rodeo
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PRCA Rodeo
September 26-28, 2025



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1 SABINE BREDOW
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2 REAGAN FERGUSON
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

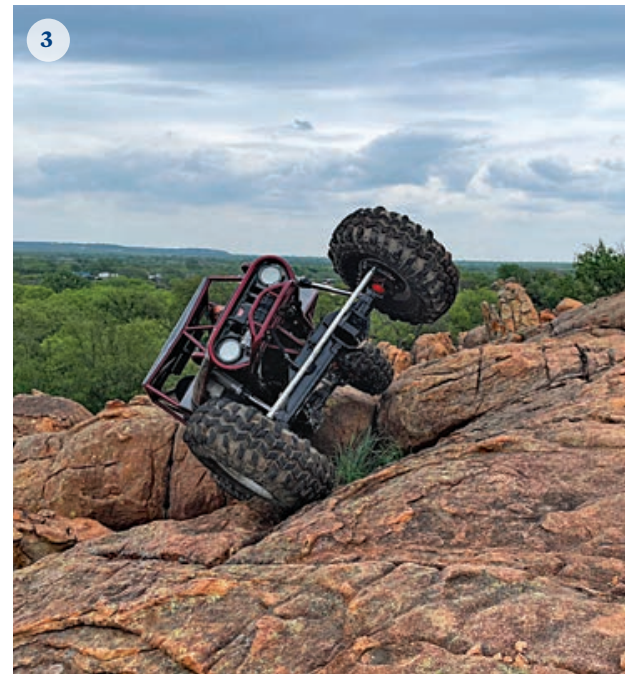
Navigating Engineer Pass in Colorado, with a 1,000-foot drop on the right.

3 STEVEN MOORE
BLUEBONNET EC

"Rock crawling Texas style at Wolf Caves off-road park in Mason."

4 LESLI SAN JOSE
PEDERNALES EC

At the end of a trail called Top of the World in Moab, Utah.



Upcoming Contests

DUE SEP 10 Snakes Alive!

DUE OCT 10 From the Oil Fields

DUE NOV 10 Still Life



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for many more Off-Road Adventures photos from readers.



Ebb and Flow

People come and people go,
and when they do, nature reclaims

BY MARTHA DEERING
ILLUSTRATION BY
JONATHAN RICE

A SPRING BURBLES in a peaceful Central Texas valley. Hidden beneath the tall weeds and grasses around the spring are the foundation stones of old buildings.

They are all that is left of a small Texas town—a town that was once as alive as the mockingbirds that bicker in the live oak trees.

Two hundred years ago, someone dug a well near the spring where the unmistakable aroma of wild onions filled the air. A windmill built above the well pumped water into a trough for horses and cattle.

The well never went dry, and during the hottest, driest weather, settlers drove their wagons for miles to get its water. The families who came to live there built a small Baptist church out of logs.

Eagles made their nests in the oak trees

near the spring. And so the people who built their homes in the area called it Eagle Springs.

Before long, a post office and a general store were added. Since farmers near the spring grew lots of cotton, a cotton gin was built. Blacksmiths set up shop and fixed wheels, sharpened plows and put shoes on horses. A woodworking and harness shop opened, and a doctor set up his practice in town. Court was held, and a jail was needed when horse thieves arrived.

Eagle Springs had become a noisy, bustling town of more than 200 by 1884.

The well always had plenty of water, so ranchers drove great herds of cattle through the town on their way north along a branch of the Chisholm Trail. Parents worked together to build a school for the children, and one little boy named Pat Neff grew up to become the governor of Texas.

One day the railroad announced that they were building a track in the area, but it would not go through Eagle Springs. The railroad brought business to other towns, and Eagle Springs began to decline.

The stores and blacksmith shops moved closer to the railroad. The farmers took their cotton there, and the gin closed.

The children were sent to a bigger school. The cattle went north in railroad cars. Little by little, the old, abandoned buildings at Eagle Springs fell into ruin.

After nearly two centuries, little is left but the spring and the church, rebuilt in 1876 after the log church burned.

Bit by bit, nature has erased Eagle Springs, relegated to Texas' long list of more than 500 ghost towns.

The water still burbles cheerfully over stones, and wild onions grow all about. The evening breeze shivers the leaves of the live oak trees, making a sound like the soft whispering of voices from long ago. ■

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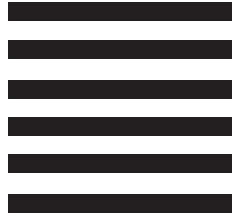
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86TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

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If you are attending, bring this portion of the card with you to the meeting for registration and to be entered in the grand prize drawing. You must be present at the meeting to win prizes. If you mail this card to the cooperative, you will not be eligible for the drawing.

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO ALL MEMBERS:

The Annual Membership Meeting of Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc., will be held at the office of Medina Electric Cooperative in Rio Grande City on Saturday, October 4, at 9 a.m. to take action upon the following matters:

1. Introduce and hear reports of officers and directors.
2. Election results of directors.
3. All other matters that may come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof.

AVISO OFICIAL DE LA JUNTA ANUAL DE LA MEMBRESIA PARA TODOS LOS MIEMBROS:

La Junta Anual de la Membresia de la Cooperativa Medina Electric, Inc., se llevara acabo en la oficina de Medina Electric Cooperative en Rio Grande City el sábado 4 de Octubre a las 9 a.m. para tomar accion sobre los siguientes asuntos:

1. Introducir y oír los informes de oficiales y directores.
2. Elección de directores.
3. Todas otros asuntos que se presenten antes o despues de la junta.

TRANSLATION SERVICES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Let Medina EC know if you need an American Sign Language or Spanish translator during the 86th Annual Membership Meeting on October 4. Call 1-866-632-3532 (ext. 1008) before Friday, September 12, to request the service.

Por favor, informe a Medina EC si necesita un intérprete de lenguaje de señas o un traductor de español durante nuestra 86^a Reunión Anual de Membresía en Octubre. Llame al 1-866-632-3532 (ext. 1008) antes del Viernes 12 de Septiembre para solicitar este servicio.

Bring this card with you to the meeting. See instructions on other side.

RSVP CARD

You can also RSVP at MedinaEC.org/RSVP.

MAIL THIS PORTION in or scan the QR code by September 12 so we have enough food and gifts for you and other guests!

☐ Count me in for food and fun on Saturday, October 4, in Rio Grande City. There will be _____ adults from my household at the meeting and _____ children.
Number Number

QUESTIONS FOR THE CO-OP

Do you have a question for the cooperative or something you would like to know more about? _____
Send your questions in and we will have someone reach out to you. Popular questions may be answered at the Annual Membership Meeting!

Your Question or Topic: _____

Full Name: _____
How do you prefer to be contacted?: **Email** or **Phone**
Email Address or Phone Number: _____



SCAN ME TO RSVP!

Join us for the
86TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Saturday, October 4, 2025
Medina EC's Rio Grande City Office
601 N. FM 3167, Rio Grande City, TX 78582

MEETING SCHEDULE

- **8 a.m.—Registration and Breakfast**
Visit informational booths and visit with Medina EC board members and employees before grabbing your breakfast.
- **9 a.m.—Business Meeting and Election Results**
- **9:30 a.m.—Must Be Registered for Prizes**
\$1,000 Grand Prize and prizes will be drawn and announced following the business meeting. You must be present to win.
- **After Meeting—Live Line Safety Demonstration**



**RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 12 BY
MAILING IN THE CARD ABOVE OR
BY SCANNING THE QR CODE.**