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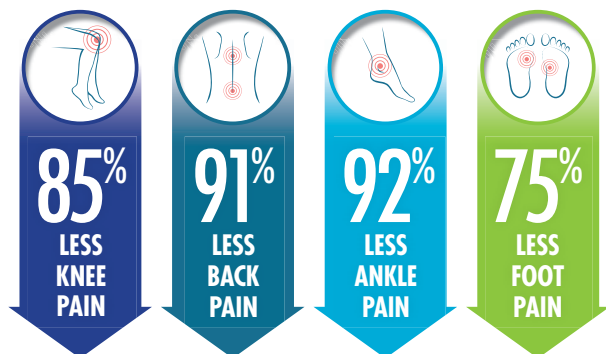
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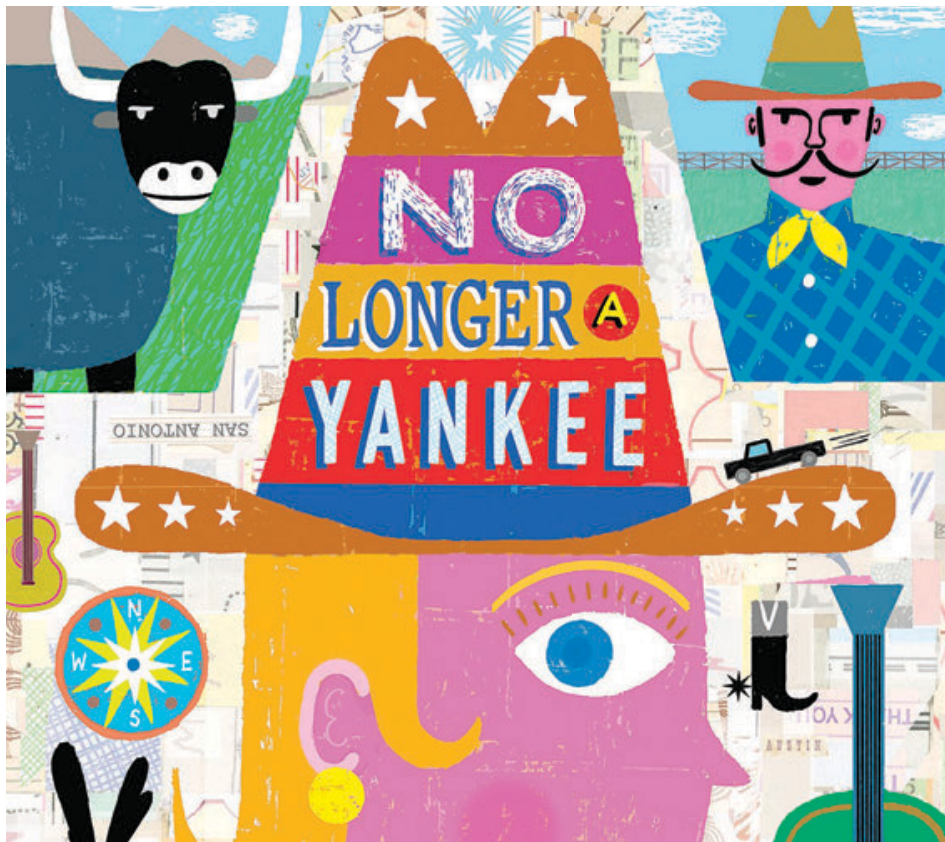
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NEXT MONTH

MYTX What does it mean to be Texan? We asked a variety of folks who have special connections to the state.



ILLUSTRATION: NOAH WOODS. HAT: OLIVIER LE QUEINEC | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



ON THE COVER A photo of Georgia O'Keeffe in Canyon—and Palo Duro Canyon, her muse in Texas. Canyon photo by Rob Greebon | ImagesfromTexas.com

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JANUARY ISSUE

Vegetarian

Deadline: August 10

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Stark Memories

My family lived in Orange during the mid-1950s [*Firmly Rooted*, May 2020]. I recall a classmate was the grandson of the Stark-Lutcher marriage. I recall being invited out to a huge plantation house by his parents to spend the day with him playing and exploring the land.

BILL WHEELLESS JR. | EVANT
HAMILTON COUNTY EC

One thing the article did not mention is the church that Frances Ann Lutcher built. Known as the Lutcher Memorial Building, it was built for the First Presbyterian Church of Orange. It was built around three stained-glass windows, made by Lamb Studios, which Lutcher purchased at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. The granite was quarried in Llano.

DAVID AND PATTY MOUTON | MEADOWLAKES
PEDERNALES EC

Horse Sense

I enjoyed Martha Deeringer's history of the Spanish mustang in Texas [*Horses' Roundabout Trail*, May 2020]. This history is alive and well in East Texas. Vicki Ives of Karma Farms in Marshall has dedicated her life to the preservation, promotion and love of America's first horse.

CHUCK WATERS | MARSHALL
RUSK COUNTY EC



My Old Friend

Every day is scary with this virus spreading like wildfire. New rules to live by: sheltering in, masks, 6 feet apart, empty grocery store shelves.

I shut all that out for a moment when I opened my mailbox and there was my old friend, *Texas Co-op Power*—arriving on the same date, entertaining, always comforting.

I don't know why, but tears filled my eyes. I was so happy to see something that had not gone by the wayside.

JANE PATTERSON | TEXARKANA | BOWIE-CASS EC



Ripple Effect

In response to *Splash Across Texas* [Currents, May 2020], there is also a Texas-shaped pool in Hilltop Lakes. My grandmother lived there, and the best memories were made at that pool.

ASHLEY PHILLIPS | BROADDUS
SAM HOUSTON EC

Here's my Texas-shaped pool [below] in western rural Fayette County near West Point.

JOE W. ARNOLD | WEST POINT
FAYETTE EC

We've had fun through the years teaching our kids and now grandkids Texas geography by swimming around the pool at Hilltop Lakes.

A favorite memory was a big family celebration of the Texas sesquicentennial in 1986. My sister was living in Wyoming, and we joked about our wonderful Texas-shaped swimming pool and the baby pool being in the shape of Wyoming—boring rectangle.

JANA VICK | DESOTO
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

Name That Snake

Thanks to the article [*Common Snakes of Texas*, April 2020], I was able to correctly identify a snake that my dogs attacked. I was afraid it was a water moccasin, but it was a nonvenomous diamondback water snake.

CINDY LUTKENHAUS | GAINESVILLE
PENTEX ENERGY

Snakes are friends, never foes. The snakes are simply trying to survive in a home that was taken from them, in a world that is constantly changing at the hands of human beings.

RICHARD CLAY CROWELL | VIA FACEBOOK

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



Texas Co-op Power

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LIFESTYLE

Social Distance at the Drive-In

AS MOVIE THEATERS across the country were forced to close to help slow the spread of the coronavirus, many drive-in theaters found themselves in a unique position to remain open, offering an increasingly rare opportunity for public entertainment while allowing patrons to maintain distance from one another.

For some drive-ins, like the Showboat Drive-In Theater in Hockley, outside Houston, it led to a momentary uptick in business. As Showboat owner Andrew Thomas told The Associated Press, ticket sales increased by about 40% one March weekend when the theater otherwise would have expected a 40% loss. “Obviously this isn’t the way you’d want it to occur, but I’m excited for the idea that there may be a new generation of people that will get to experience going to a drive-in theater,” he said.

To find a drive-in near you, check out our story *Drive In, Chill Out* at TexasCoopPower.com.



NATURE

FEATHER IN THEIR CAPS

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Audubon Texas have selected Bastrop, Dallas, Houston and Port Aransas for the Bird City Texas distinction. They are recognized for community engagement, habitat management and threat reduction for birds in the inaugural year of the campaign. Their Bird City designations last through 2022.

Fort Worth's Coyote Drive-In



JULY 1
IS NATIONAL
POSTAL WORKER DAY

1.6
million

That's how many copies of Texas Co-op Power magazine are mailed to subscribers—mostly electric cooperative members—every month.

CO-OP PEOPLE

Brave Faces

WHEN NICOLE CRABTREE HANEY read that her local hospital was facing a mask shortage due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Wise Electric Cooperative customer service representative got to sewing.

The rest of Decatur, in North Texas, did, too—fulfilling the hospital's need right away. But Haney, who has a sister and two daughters who work in the medical field, was undeterred. She realized that her co-workers at the co-op, who are

critical to keeping the lights on, could use the protection.

"I was able to get all the specs and qualifications of the masks that our hospital had asked to be made, and I dusted off my sewing machine and got to work," Haney said.

By mid-April, she had sewn nearly 250 masks, donating more than 100 to her co-workers and other essential workers.

"Honestly, this has turned into a bigger project than I anticipated," she said.

"It feels good to be able to help in some small way during these uncertain times that we are in."



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

It's not really summer until . . .

▶ **Tell us how** you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Please include your city and co-op.

Below are some of the responses to our May prompt: **The best part about being a mom is ...**

Hugs—real heartwarming hugs, not virtual hugs.

CAROLYN GOLAN | BELLVILLE
SAN BERNARD EC

Weed flowers and sticky kisses.

DEBORAH JENNINGS | HAWKINS
WOOD COUNTY EC

Getting to say, "Ask your dad."
MARK BROWNING | GOODRICH
SAM HOUSTON EC

Mothers turn into grandmothers, and you can send the kids back home.

MARIE MELGOZA | GRANBURY
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Having your kids grow up into adults you're very proud of who bear no resemblance to themselves as teenagers.

ELLEN PATTERSON | FATE
FARMERS EC

Knowing there is no way to be a perfect mom but a million ways to be a great mom.

JO LESTER | WIMBERLEY
PEDERNALES EC

Feeling the love you gave to your children come back to you 10 times greater.

GAIL VERNER | JUSTIN
COSERV

To see more responses, read Currents on our website.

THE ARTS

Culinary Canvas

Palo Duro Love Letters on Page 8 looks at Georgia O'Keeffe's creative legacy—her paintings and writing—from her time in Texas 100 years ago.

When the artist died in 1986, she left behind a collection of some 300 recipes, which Sotheby's auctioned in March, along with artistic works, books, clothes and other personal effects from the estates of O'Keeffe and her husband, noted photographer Alfred Stieglitz. Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library paid \$17.2 million for the whole lot.

The recipes, many handwritten on notecards, slips of paper and hotel stationery, reflect O'Keeffe's culinary passions. She was as exacting in her kitchen as she was on her canvases, growing vegetables at her New Mexico home, obtaining eggs from a local woman and weekly making yogurt from goat's milk.

O'Keeffe and her guests enjoyed a variety of dishes, including pecan butterball cookies, tomato aspic, vegetable soup, applesauce and chicken flautas.



ALMANAC

WAVING OLD GLORY

The U.S. flag is said to have been raised on San José Island, a sand barrier between Matagorda Island and Mustang Island in the Gulf, on July 26, 1845—the first time it was flown in Texas.



“There is something wonderful about the bigness and the loneliness
and the windiness of it all,” O’Keeffe wrote to a friend.

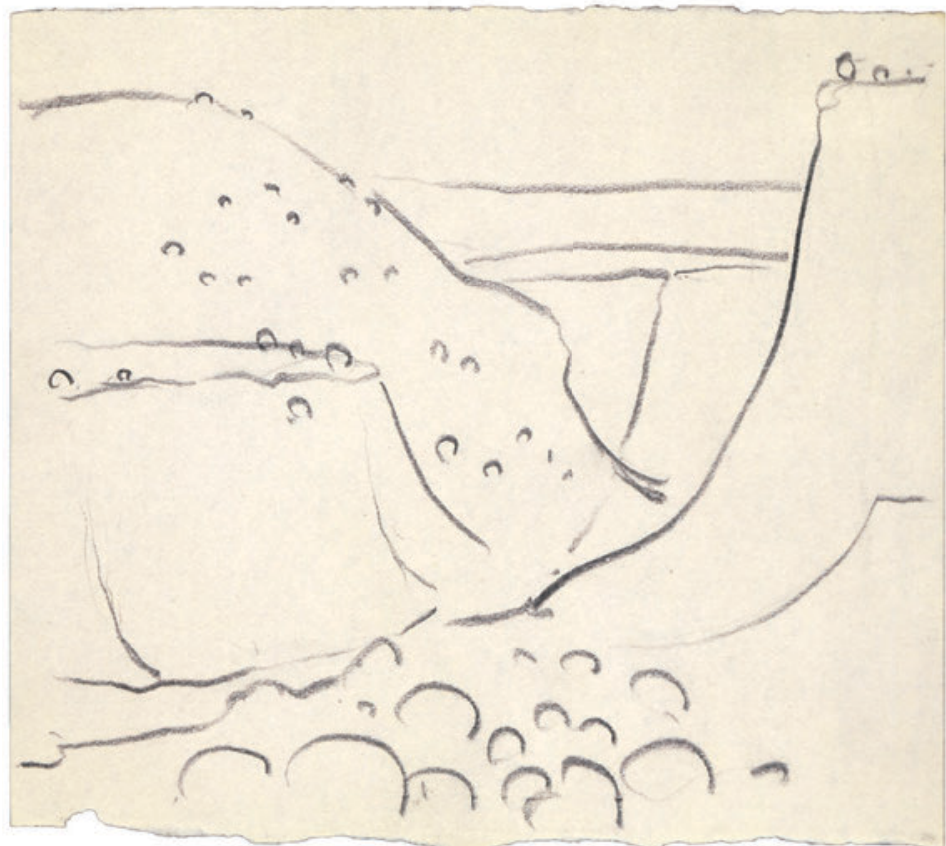


PALO DURO LOVE LETTERS



Georgia O'Keeffe's
paintings captured
the Panhandle;
her wistful writings
brought it to life

BY CHRIS BURROWS



Amy Von Lintel's art history students need little guidance when she shows them *Light Coming on the Plains No. III*. The abstract painting consists only of an elliptical shape formed by darkening cool hues and bisected by a horizontal line of paper.

The West Texas A&M University students aren't fine arts majors, but they recognize that image.

"I'm like 'What is this? You guys know what this is,'" Von Lintel says of the 1917 watercolor by Georgia O'Keeffe. "The students know what a sunset and a sunrise look like here, and you put up an O'Keeffe that's totally abstract. They're like, 'Oh yeah, she got it, and I get it.'"

O'Keeffe got it—the stunning way the sun breaks the horizon

on the Staked Plains of the Texas Panhandle—because she lived it.

One hundred years ago, O'Keeffe taught art on the same campus—years before her oil paintings would earn her the title Mother of American Modernism. O'Keeffe's Texas landscapes hang in galleries nationwide, but only recently has her dazzling prose—preserved in dozens of letters and studied by scholars—allowed the artist herself to convey the feelings that colored the paintings and painter. Her words show a stunning well of creativity within a young woman who was figuring out life—and how to stay upright in the craggy paths of Palo Duro Canyon.

O'Keeffe spent only a few years in Texas, but it had a hold on her.

"There is something wonderful about the bigness and the loneliness and the windiness of it all," O'Keeffe wrote to a friend. "I like it so much that I wonder if it's true—The country is almost all sky—and such wonderful sky—and the wind blows—blows hard—and the sun is hot—the glare almost blinding—but I don't care—I like it," she wrote another.

Clockwise from opposite: Georgia O'Keeffe's *Light Coming on the Plains No. III*. O'Keeffe, center, among friends in Texas; she crisscrossed the Panhandle by car, wagon, foot and train. One of her drawings of Palo Duro Canyon.

DRAWING: GEORGIA O'KEEFFE. UNTITLED (PALO DURO CANYON). 1916-1917. GRAPHITE ON PAPER, 3 7/8 X 5 INCHES. GEORGIA O'KEEFFE FOUNDATION. © GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM. [2006.5.5]



‘Kick Your Heels in the Air’

Many decades before she would be hailed as “the undisputed doyenne of American painting” by *The New York Times*, O’Keeffe needed a job. That’s what brought her to Texas from Virginia in 1912, when the 24-year-old artist took a job teaching art in the Amarillo public school system. She had never been to Texas, knew no one when she arrived alone and had never taught.

She took to the place and the work. “Pretty soon, I got so interested in teaching I wondered why I should be paid for it,” O’Keeffe said in a 1974 interview.

In 1914, she relocated to New York City and expressed jubilation in 1916 when she was offered the job as head of the art department at what was then West Texas State Normal College, in Canyon, south of Amarillo. The Wisconsin native who had studied in Chicago and Virginia and taught in South Carolina was headed back to the Panhandle.

“Kick your heels in the air!” she wrote to a friend. “I’ve elected to go to Texas.”



Above: Friends in New York City supplied O’Keeffe with books and prints of textiles and pottery for her Canyon classroom. Left: Her 1917 yearbook photo.

Texas Panhandle and had never studied O’Keeffe.

“I think the thing that also led me to study her is this strange connection of being in the department that is hers,” Von

Lintel says. “It takes some bravery to move into the middle of nowhere and fall in love with it, and I think she did.”

O’Keeffe is still present in the Panhandle. The Amarillo Museum of Art and the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum display her works.

“Canyon is very aware of its history with Georgia O’Keeffe,” says Carol Lovelady, PPHM director. “It’s a tremendous point of pride for the museum and for Canyon.”

The Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico, near where the artist spent her later years, houses many of her works, but her letters are kept at Yale University.

The trove is mostly correspondence between O’Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz, the New York City photographer whom she married in 1924. The letters were unsealed in 2006. In them, “She talks about abstraction, about how her mind works and about how she makes a piece,” Von Lintel says. “We learn about her technique, we learn about her thought process, her frustrations of like, ‘I’m seeing this form, but I can’t get it right.’”

The dozens of letters recorded life among the vestiges of the Old West: Texans coming to terms with a world

Red Landscape is on display at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

‘Big Quiet Moonlight’

A decade ago, Von Lintel needed a job. When West Texas A&M University offered her a position in O’Keeffe’s former department, the Kansas City native, who studied in California, moved her family to Amarillo. She had never lived in the

“What she liked here were people that she felt like had a lot of red in their blood,” Von Lintel says.
“Red-blooded, vibrant people who go outside, who stand in the light and live their lives.”



O'Keeffe explored the canyon with fervor, writing of it in many letters.



at war and life as a 20-something who spent her free time not just painting on front porches but also shooting rifles, riding in cars with boys and walking for miles on end.

"It's a wonderful night—still and warm and moonlight—big quiet moonlight—As I walked home alone in it—I was tired," she wrote Stieglitz. "... I think the best way I can tell it to you is—that last night I loved the starlight—the dark—the wind and the miles and miles of the thin strip of dark that is land."

'So Big and Impossible'

Von Lintel began studying the letters in 2011, using them to assemble a timeline of O'Keeffe's time in Texas. That work culminated in her book, *Georgia O'Keeffe's Wartime Texas Letters*, published in March. The professor sought to empower the artist to tell her own story.

"I wanted her to just kind of stand on her own because when she was out here, she was on her own," Von Lintel says.

The letters trace the feelings that shaped O'Keeffe's early paintings, some of which feature 800-foot-deep Palo Duro Canyon—what she called "a curious slit in the plains."

WEB EXTRAS

► Read online how a co-op spread Palo Duro Canyon's beauty.

O'Keeffe explored the canyon with fervor, writing of it in many letters: "Yesterday was sunny and fine and I went to the Canyon again—about twenty miles east—climbed and scrambled about till I was ... out of breath many times over—

Hikers in Palo Duro in the 1910s.

and felt very little—such a tiny little part of what I could see had worn me out—Yes—I was very small and very puny and helpless—and all around was so big and impossible."

Those "big and impossible" feelings are apparent in O'Keeffe's 32 canyon works—many of which include imposing forms and dark colors, including deep reds. And while the iron-rich walls of the place do bear a reddish tinge, O'Keeffe's feelings bore the rest.

"What she liked here were people that she felt like had a lot of red in their blood," Von Lintel says. "Red-blooded, vibrant people who go outside, who stand in the light and live their lives."

'Terrifically Alive'

In April 1917, O'Keeffe opened her first solo show, in New York. She also sold her first piece, a charcoal drawing of a Panhandle train, which she described in a letter: "A train was coming way off—just a light with a trail of smoke—white—I walked toward it—The sun and the train got to me at the same time—It's great to see that terrifically alive black thing coming at you in the big frosty stillness."

Von Lintel hopes her students, through O'Keeffe, can see the beauty right in front of them.

"One of the things I always do is connect whatever I'm teaching to the local area because students should learn to look around themselves and see art and beauty here," she says. "It's not like we're in the middle of nowhere."

Chris Burrows is a TEC senior communications specialist.

The Calm BEFORE the Storm

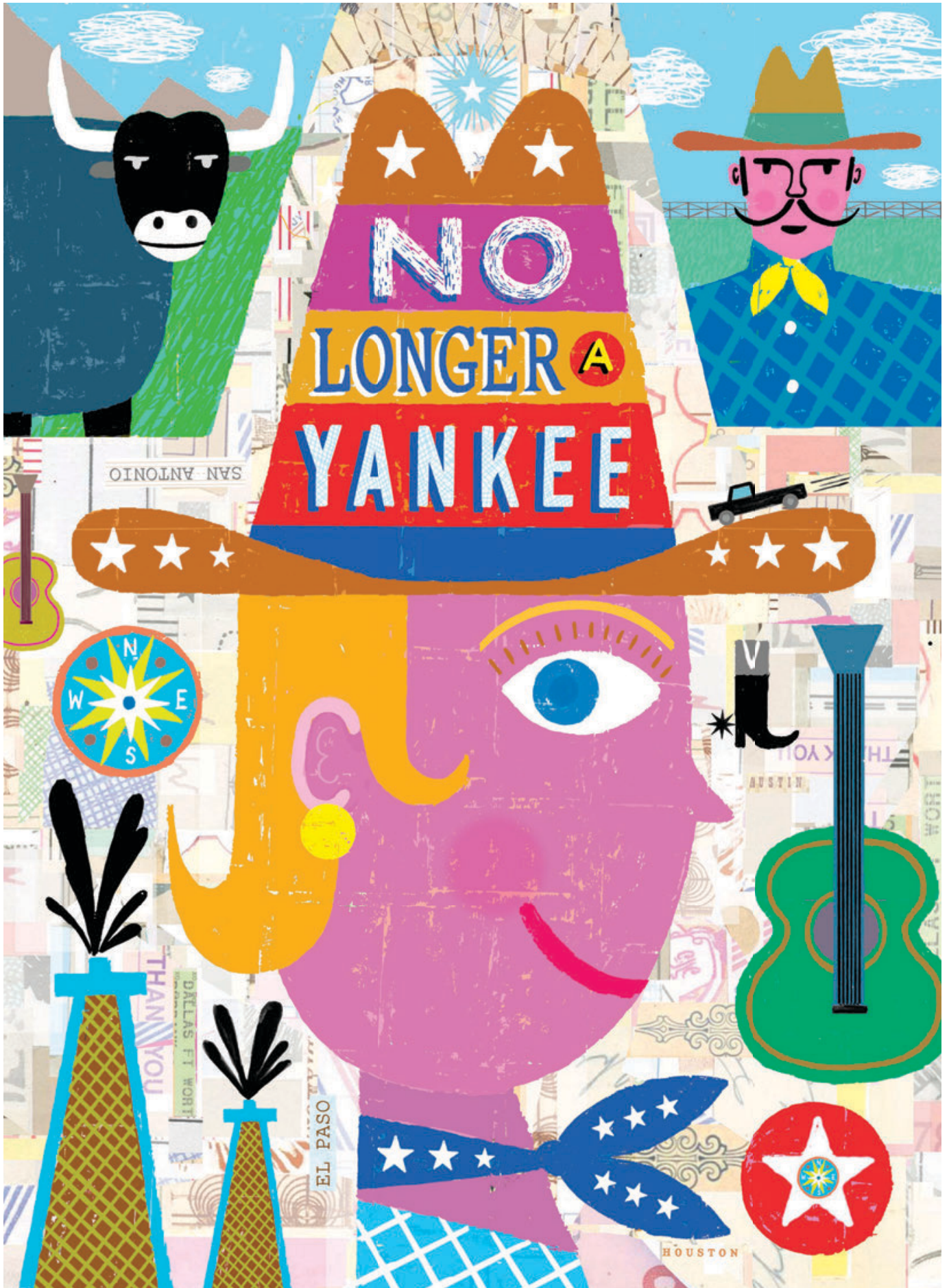
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I WAS BORN IN MICHIGAN but moved to Texas 50 years ago. I'm 56 now, which means I've spent 90% of my life as a resident of the Lone Star State. Until recently, I have not thought of myself as a Texan. I came from "up north."

In Ann Arbor, my family ate dinner, not supper. We sipped pop, not soda. We nibbled PEE-cons instead of pe-CONS—and never baked them into pies. And we never, ever blessed anybody's heart.

We moved to Texas in 1969, when my dad, an aeronautical engineer, transferred to Austin. In my 5-year-old mind's eye, I was moving to the land of tumbleweeds where people rode horses, wore cowboy hats and lived in a forest of prickly cactus. All that sounded exciting, but when I moved into a tract house in an Austin neighborhood, I still had to walk to school, and not once did I see a tumbleweed.

I've spent most of the past five decades thinking of myself as a misplaced Midwesterner. Texans are big, bold and, I used to think, a tad obnoxious when it came to state pride. Now I've changed my mind.

Texans are a proud lot, always noting how many generations of their family have lived on Texas soil. A few years back, a blog from *The New York Times* published a report noting population trends across the United States. The article said 61% of the people who lived in Texas in 2014 were born here, the highest retention rate of any state. That percentage had dropped just six points since 1900, when 67% of the state's residents were born within its borders.

I asked some of my most Texan friends their opinions about my Texanness, noting that I'd been living on Texas soil for half a century. Steven Fulton, a 39-year-old native and ranch manager of Selah Bamberger Ranch Preserve near Johnson City, was skeptical. "I don't know. There's a lot of development that happens in those first five years," he said. "Are you driving a truck yet?"

My personal vehicle is a bicycle, with a Fiat Spyder convertible as backup, but my husband drives a Ford F-150. And while out adventuring in his truck, I've taken a baseball-sized rock through the windshield and collided with a white-tailed deer, which all seem pretty Texan.

Next I phoned West Hansen, a 57-year-old fourth-generation Texan born in Pasadena. One of his great-grandfathers is buried in the Texas State Cemetery; another was the Dutch consul to Texas. Hansen stops for ribs on his weekly commute from Austin to Port Arthur and paddles rivers with a group of guys called the Cowboys.

When I asked him if I had to be born on Texas soil to qualify as Texan, he pointed out that if that was true, Stephen F. Austin, the Father of Texas, couldn't claim Texas heritage. Austin was born in Virginia, spent just 15 years in Texas before dying of pneumonia

in 1836 and still has a city named for him plus a 76-foot statue of himself outside Angleton.

"It's kind of like what it takes to be an Australian," Hansen went on, fleshing out his only-a-true-Texan-would-think-of-it reasoning. "There's a certain attitude that has to do with being the ultimate C student. We're probably not welcome in most polite atmospheres, and we have no qualms about that. We tend to make our own way where it's needed."

So, I'm not native, but I've been here longer than someone half my age who was born over Texas caliche. I'm more Texan than them, aren't I?

Hansen, probably wiping a dollop of cream gravy off a chicken-fried steak from the other end of the phone line, hesitated. "You don't sound like one—you have a distinct accent," he said, in a slow drawl. But Texans are brash, bold, independent and paradoxically,

he said, rely upon one another. They aren't concerned with the opinions of people outside their state but do care about their parents' opinions.

"I'd say you are," he finally conceded.

Another native Texan, Jason Jones, who lives part-time in Terlingua, assured me I qualify.

"I think it's more of a state of mind. If you've been here for a while and you feel Texan, then you're Texan," he said. "It's kind of a mindset of vastness and diversity."

I know that March 2 is Texas Independence Day. I like country music—especially James Hand. I've attended chicken poop bingo night at a local bar and even buy jars of pickled okra. I've petted a longhorn, sat in a field of bluebonnets, held a horned toad, watched the raging power of a flash flood and two-stepped across a creaky, wooden floor in a genuine Hill Country dance hall. I've paddled the Pecos and Devils rivers, gone teal hunting with the former head of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and own not just one but two cowboy hats, which I actually wear with regularity. I know how to ride a horse, can load a powerboat onto a trailer and make a mean margarita.

My best friend lives in the country with 15 horses and three dogs (bless her heart). Her boyfriend, a horse trainer with a handlebar mustache, makes chili (no beans) and frijoles a la charra from a 1949 cookbook called *A Taste of Texas*.

No, I wasn't born in Texas. I'll never be a native Texan. But after half a century in this amazing state, I'm officially claiming it as my own.

Pam LeBlanc is a former staff writer at the *Austin American-Statesman*. She has finally embraced what she calls her "Texanity" and admits a soft spot for chicken-fried steak, cowboy hats and horses.

AFTER HALF A CENTURY HERE, I'M CALLING MYSELF A TEXAN

TRIPLE PLAY

Limited Collector's
Edition

Three knives. ONE amazing price!
Originally \$249. Limited time
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Looking for a knife that's a cut above? We can do you two better. The **Triple Play Knife Collection** gives you three different styles of hunting blades for one unbelievably amazing price of just \$69. Because serious hunters know that sometimes one knife isn't enough, and so do serious collectors.

All three blades in the **Triple Play Knife Collection** are made with genuine 440A stainless steel and measure an impressive 52-58 on the Rockwell scale for hardness. There's the reliable lockback blade, designed to open up and never let you down. The two-blade trapper knife, engineered for those who trap small game, and a solid, simple, fine fixed blade measuring 9" in overall length, and the antler-textured handles on every knife complete the expert hunter look.

With all three blades along with a decorative display box priced at just \$69, this is some big collectible prey worth hunting down. This deal truly is a cut above.

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Your Money Back. Try out the **Triple Play Knife Collection** or 30 days. If it doesn't make the cut, send it back for a full refund of the item price.

Limited Reserves. We only have 850 available for this ad only at this incredible price. Call today!

What customers are saying
about Stauer knives...

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*"First off, the shipping was fast
and the quality is beyond what
I paid for the knife. Overall
I am a satisfied customer!"*

— D., Houston, Texas

Triple Play Knife Collection ~~\$249*~~

Offer Code Price Only \$69 + S&P **Save \$180**

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Your Insider Offer Code: TPK180-01

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.

Stauer® 14101 Southcross Drive W., Dept. TPK180-01
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

*Discount is only for customers who use the offer
code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.



Rating of A+

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

• 3-piece set: 9" overall fixed knife with 5" blade; 4 1/8" trapper knife with two 3 3/8" blades; 4" overall lockback knife with 3" blade • Stainless steel blades with antler patterned resin handle • Comes in decorative display box

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*Offer not available in all areas and ends 7/31/2020 and appointment must occur within 10 days of the initial contact. Discount applies to minimum required purchase. Deferred interest for 18 months available to well qualified buyers on approved credit only with minimum monthly payment required. Financing is provided by federally insured, federal and state chartered financial institutions without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or familial status. Any finance terms advertised are estimates only, and all financing is provided by third-party lenders unaffiliated with Renewal by Andersen retailers, under terms and conditions arranged directly between the customer and such lender, all subject to credit requirements. "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are marks of Andersen Corporation. ©2020 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved.

May: Lightning Shows and Rain

Storms kept crews busy over Memorial Day weekend



MESSAGE FROM
CEO MARK ROLLANS

FOR WHATEVER REASON, May always seems to bring storms.

It is unspoken but as the month comes to a close, many of us who have been around a few years silently wonder when the radar will start acting up if it hasn't already.

This May was no different. The storms that spanned Memorial Day weekend into Tuesday of that week, May 24-26, brought with them high winds, extreme lightning and even some unconfirmed tornadoes. The worst damage and outages impacted the areas around Hondo, Uvalde and Dilley, but we also saw large storms hit the Bruni, Laredo and Rio Grande City areas.

Needless to say, members were glad to see storms end and have the lights come on—and stay on once the lightning subsided. Our crews were also relieved when they got the last member restored and were finally able to take off their muddy boots and get some rest. Many of our linemen worked long hours from Saturday to Tuesday night, with minimal rest.

Here are some quick outage stats from that weekend:

Total Meters Without Power by Area				
Hondo: 5,985	Dilley: 587	Uvalde: 1,795	Bruni: 469	RGC: 978

Meters Out over 18 hours			
Hondo: 37	Dilley, Uvalde & RGC: 2 in each area	Bruni: 0	

Those numbers are not pretty, but that is the reality of the storm damage that our members and crews dealt with. While I know it is not easy to be without power for 18-plus hours as some members were, please know that our crews are always working as quickly as safely possible to restore power. The number of individual locations that must be visited to restore power in storms like these add up. To mitigate those issues and continue restoration work around the clock, we brought in contract crews, and linemen from our Bruni and Rio Grande City offices drove up to help Hondo area crews as they reached work-hour limits.

Safety is a priority, and my biggest concern during large storms is the alertness of our employees working out on the lines.

One bright spot in storms is watching people come together and pitch in. Linemen that weren't scheduled to be on-call or work asked how they could help. Office staff opened computers and got to work, sorting through outage tickets and help-

ing dispatch crews, a job that is generally handled by someone else on weekends. They also began taking member calls and keeping the public informed on our Facebook page. All on a holiday weekend.

What may have been an even brighter spot is our members. I have said it before, but these outages confirmed it for me: We have some of the best members around. No one likes it when power goes out. We've come to depend on electricity so much that we don't even think about it until it isn't there—and then it is hard for us to get anything done.

But we had members send us thank-you notes after being without power for more than 24 hours on Memorial Day weekend. Without power for 24 hours, and they were sending us words of thanks! I never cease to be amazed when I see people show that level of kindness and patience. It means so much to our staff taking calls and to the crews working the outages.

The good news is that we have projects in the works that will make future power restoration easier after storms.

This year, part of our business plan involves setting up a dispatch center and adding staff for that center, which would allow us to handle outage calls in-house 24/7, instead of having to use an outside service after-hours and on weekends. Once we evaluate the financial implications of COVID-19 and determine if our budget still allows it, that is something we are pursuing.

In addition, we are one year into a three-year project to replace equipment and meters throughout our system. Currently, meters don't tell us if you have lost power; it has to be reported. The updated equipment will allow meters to immediately signal to us that they lost power, which will be extremely helpful in outages that are this widespread and equally helpful during restoration work.

There are good things ahead and we can't thank members enough for their kindness and patience during these events.

Sincerely,

Mark Rollans

Updates for Members: Disconnects Begin July 1, Penalties Begin August 1

MEDINA EC SUSPENDED DISCONNECTS IN MARCH, amid the early uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. With Gov. Abbott's announcement that Texas could begin opening for business in May, Medina EC is phasing back in standard procedures. As part of that, beginning July 1, we will begin disconnecting accounts for nonpayment.

Each member with a past due amount on their account will be mailed a letter, sent an email and receive a personal phone call prior to disconnection. Those notifications started going out the first week in June and will continue into the month of July, depending on which billing group your account is in.

If you are unable to pay the amount due on your account, our member service representatives will work with you on a payment plan that fits your needs. We understand that many may still be feeling the financial effects of March, April and May.


Members who have contacted the cooperative to make payment arrangements will not be disconnected. Please let us know if you are unable to pay the full amount due so we can work with you.

There are various community agencies that assist members with financial hardships in paying their electric bill. You can find a complete list at MedinaEC.org/AssistancePrograms.

In March, late payment penalties were also suspended. Those penalties will begin again on August 1. They will only apply to unpaid balances that do not have payment arrangements in place.

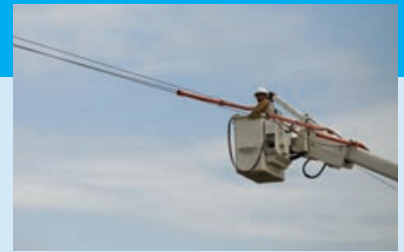
At the time the magazine went to press, drive-thrus at all offices are open but lobbies remain closed. Staff is working on plans to open lobbies and continue to keep all our members healthy. At this time, we can't provide a date those will be open. For the latest updates on lobbies reopening, follow Medina EC on Facebook or go to MedinaEC.org/COVID19.

Medina EC will continue to do what we have done for the last 82 years—power South Texas through our not-for-profit, cooperative way of business. If you have any questions, please reach out to us at 1-866-MEC-ELEC or Info@MedinaEC.org.



**Our 82nd Annual Meeting is
UNDER CONSTRUCTION!**

Due to COVID-19, Medina EC is working to plan the safest annual meeting for our members. This means that our 82nd Annual Meeting may look different than it has in the past. Visit us on Facebook and Twitter to learn more, and check the August issue of Texas Co-op Power for more information.



Medina Electric Cooperative

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VOTING DISTRICT 1

Larry Huesser, (830) 363-7651
Wayne W. Scholtz, (830) 426-1328
Ken Weynand, (830) 426-0762

VOTING DISTRICT 2

Jimmie Raines, (830) 591-8437
Chris Surlis, (830) 965-5538
Kenneth White, (830) 232-6541

VOTING DISTRICT 3

Annette Sorrells, (361) 231-0173
J. L. Gonzalez, (956) 286-1863
Rodolfo H. Rodriguez, (210) 846-1092

CEO

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

COOPERATIVE OFFICES

Headquarters

2308 18th St., Hondo 78861

Area Offices

Hondo Office
237 Hwy. 173 N., Hondo 78861

Dilley Office
1718 W. FM 117, Dilley 78017

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

Uvalde Office
2604 Hwy. 90 E., Uvalde 78801

Bruni Office
1300 FM 2050 N., Bruni 78344

CONTACT US

CALL US

1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532)

Option 2: Report an outage

Option 3: Pay bill, get account balance

Option 5: Speak to a representative

EMAIL

Info@MedinaEC.org

FIND US ONLINE AT

MedinaEC.org

Facebook.com/MedinaEC

Twitter.com/MedinaECTalks

Instagram: @OurMEC

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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



Operation Round Up: Apply by Aug. 1

OPERATION ROUND UP has awarded over \$149,000 to various causes since it began making donations in 2006.

Applications are being accepted for the next round of donations. The funds can be used to help individuals pay for medical bills, better their lives, recover after home fires and more.

If you know of someone who could use assistance, consider submitting an application on their behalf. Applicants do not need to be a member of Medina EC, but they must live in one of the 17 counties served by Medina EC.

**LEARN MORE AND APPLY
AT [MEDINAEC.ORG/ORU](https://medinaec.org/oru).**

Showing Appreciation to Nurses

DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC it is easy to see how important health care workers are, especially nurses. Medina EC wanted to show our appreciation during Nurse Appreciation Week, May 6–12. We asked members to nominate nurses in our service area and were truly surprised by the amount of nominations we received!

We received 40 nominations on Facebook and through email. Each of those nominated nurses received an appreciation gift. Listed below are the names of the nominated nurses.

Amanda Diaz	Jeanette Edna Zavala	Meaghan Koch Timberlake
Amanda Gonzales	Kimberly DeLeon Howard	Michelle Berban Borrego
Amy Phillippe	Kimberly Lopez	Oneida Annette
Andrea Oefinger Dehart	Krista Rodriguez	Rachel Cortez
Audrey Adami Garza	Kriszelda Ramos	Sue Ellen Alvarez
Auri Michelle Wisdom	Krystal Moreno	Sylvia Gonzales
Billie Bell	Lauren Aelvoet Rothe	Sylvia Robles
Breanna Salinas	Lori Ann Ruiz	Tania Montemayor
Camelia Rodriguez	Lori Keck	Tania Powell
Cassandra Watson	Lynssi Martinez	Teresa Elizondo
Connie Ray Garza	Magali Briones Davila	Tiffany Forbes
Edna Calame	Mari Garza Quiroz	Vanessa Canales
Maria Ramirez	Marie Hepline	Yvonne Stein
	Mary Vivanco	



PHOTO CREDIT: iCOMP | FREEPIK.COM

Medina EC Celebrates Employees

MEDINA ELECTRIC CELEBRATES THE WORK ANNIVERSARIES of its employees in five-year increments, also known as Service Awards. The cooperative donates \$100 for each employee to an organization of their choice, giving a total of \$2,000 last year to various community organizations.

Please join us in celebrating these Medina EC employees, who received service awards between January and June 2020.



Dilan Santillan
Journeyman
Bruni office
5 years

Donation to
Quad City VFD



Fernando Rangel Jr.
Engineering Equip. Tech.
Hondo & Uvalde offices
10 years

Donation to
Uvalde Food Pantry



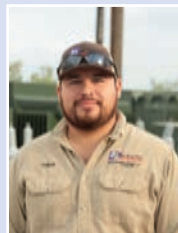
Martin Gonzales
Journeyman
Dilley office
5 years

Donation to
Operation Round Up



Jennifer Berger
Member Services
Representative
Hondo office
20 years

Donation to
Mico VFD



Felipe Moreno
Journeyman
Bruni & Laredo offices
5 years

Donation to
Laredo Crime Stoppers



Linda Tate-Speed
Member Services
Representative
Dilley office
20 years

Donation to
South Texas Brush Puppies



Edward Varnador
Journeyman
Dilley office
25 years

Donation to
Disabled Veterans
Association



PHOTO CREDIT: ISTOCK

Own a Small Business? Want FREE Promotion?

MEDINA EC REALIZES COVID-19 has hit our communities, and especially the small businesses, hard. We want to offer those who own a small business help in the form of free promotion by inviting them to join our Co-op Connections program.

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

Just email **MyCoop@MedinaEC.org** to let us know you want an application and choose the discount you want to offer. It really is that simple!

Visit MedinaEC.org/Connections to learn more about the Co-op Connections program.





MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

HARD WORK NEVER QUILS




YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.

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

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



**MEDINA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Medina EC Presentations

Keeping Our Communities Safe

MEDINA EC KNOWS ELECTRICITY IS BOTH DANGEROUS AND FASCINATING and wants to help keep people safe. To do this, we offer safety presentations for schools, chambers of commerce, civic organizations, members and first responders in our service area.

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

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

We also offer a presentation on energy efficiency, career days, materials to help in the classroom and custom presentations depending on the audience. Learn more about the presentations Medina EC offers at MedinaEC.org/Presentations, and I email MyCoop@MedinaEC.org if you are interested in scheduling a presentation. Shortened video versions of the presentations are also available.

Medina EC employees giving various presentations. 1 & 2: A live line demonstration at Medina Valley Middle School; 3: Career day at La Grulla Middle School; 4: A presentation at Devine Middle School; 5: A high-tech safety demo for Uvalde Boy Scouts.



NEW LOOK for your Electric Bill!

Front of Bill

The bill that arrives in your mail this month will have a new look but all the same helpful information.

1

COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

If you need to contact the cooperative, you can find our information on the top of the front and back of the bill.

2

MEMBER INFORMATION

This is where you can find information on the account: the member's name, the date the bill was sent, and the member and account numbers. You will need these if you pay over the phone or online.

3

BILL INFORMATION


You can find a summary of your bill here. If you have more than one meter, the total charges for all meters will show up in this section. You will also be able to see a breakdown of all extra charges that may apply, like taxes or franchise fees, and any credits that may be applied to the bill. You can also easily see the total and due date in the large blue circle to the right.

4

MESSAGE CENTER

Under News To Know, you will find new information monthly. This is where the cooperative will give you updates you need to know, like when capital credits are being retired and credited on your bill, and updates you may want to know, like rebates and easy options to pay your bill using SmartHub. That information and the graphic under it will change every month so be sure to take a look each time so you don't miss anything!

Page 1 of 2



MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Not-for-profit • Local energy partner • MedinaEC.org

Contact Us: 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532) • Info@MedinaEC.org
24/7 Outage Reporting and Bill Pay

Office Hours: Mon-Fri, 8 am to 5 pm, Excluding holidays

MEMBER NAME: IMA MEMBER

Bill Date: 05/28/2020

Member Number: 0123

Account Number: 0123001

TOTAL DUE

\$165.85

Payment Due By:
06/14/2020

Billing Summary

Prior Billing	179.77
Payments	-179.77
Prior Balance	0.00
Current Electric Charges	165.85
Current Balance	165.85
Other Charges	0.00
Franchise Fee	0.00
State and/or Local Taxes	0.00
Total Balance	165.85

See Reverse Side for Bill Details

News To Know


Disconnections for past due amounts began July 1. Any accounts with payment arrangements in place will not be subject to disconnection. Late payment penalties will not be assessed until August 1, and they will only apply to unpaid balances that do not have payment arrangements in place. Drive throughs are open at this time. Lobbies remain closed. For the latest, visit MedinaEC.org/COVID19.

Replacing or installing energy-efficient appliances? We may have a rebate for you.

MedinaEC.org/Rebates

▲ KEEP

▼ SEND



2308 18th St
PO Box 370
Hondo TX 78861-0379

☐ Check here to change account information and complete on back.

☐ Check here and sign on back to enroll in Operation Round Up.

Home phone: (123) 456-7890 Mobile phone: None on file
Work phone: (123) 456-7890 Email: MyCoop@MedinaEC.org

IMA MEMBER
123 MEDINA RD
SOUTH TEXAS TX 12345

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Bill Date 05/28/2020

Member Number 0123

Account Number 0123001


Balance Due by 06/14/2020 **\$165.85**

After 06/14/2020 pay **165.85**

Cycle 4
Return stub with payment. Allow 7 days for delivery.
Do not staple or paper clip.


MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PO BOX 33850
SAN ANTONIO TX 78265-3850

4 12



Back of Bill

Page 2 of 2



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Contact Us: 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532) • info@MedinaEC.org
Office Hours: 24/7 Outage Reporting and Bill Pay
Current Rates: MedinaEC.org/Rates

Service Description: **RESIDENCE AT 123 MEDINA ROAD** Account: **0123001**

Meter #	Rate Code	From	To	Readings Previous	Readings Present	Meter Multiplier	kWh Usage	Demand Read	HP
12345	110	04/20/2020	05/20/2020	28448	29914	1	1466	0	0.0

This Month's Usage

1466 kWh

Daily Avg Use: **49 kWh**
Range: 34 - 64

Average High: **86°**

Previous Use

Last Month: **1533 kWh**

This Month Last Year: **1665 kWh**

Current Charges & Adjustments

Prior Balance	0.00
Customer Charge	29.00
Energy Charge	158.84
PCRF (-0.01500 per kWh)	-21.99
Total Due	165.85

6

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

Other Ways to Pay Your Bill

Online
Pay your bill at MedinaEC.smarthub.coop

Phone
Call 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532) to pay by phone

Mobile App
Download the SmartHub app on iTunes or Google Play Store

In Person
Hondo 237 Hwy 173 N
Dilley 1718 W. FM 117
Bruni 1300 FM 2050
Uvalde 2604 E. Main
Rio Grande City 601 N. FM 3167

Enter any changes and/or corrections below and return this stub with your payment.

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

7 ☐ Please sign my Account(s) up for Operation Round Up. Details: MedinaEC.org/ORU

Signature _____

5

PAYMENT STUB

This is the payment stub, which you will return with your payment if you still mail-in your payment. The stub also shows the current contact information on your account, so you can always be sure it is up to date. It has all your account information, the total and the date it is due.

6

METER USE SUMMARY

Here is where you can find all the data that was used to determine your bill. In the table, you will find your meter information and the amount of electricity you used. You can also see how your use on this bill compares to use the prior month and for the same month last year, and you can look at the average temperature to help you determine if that may have caused any differences. If you have more than one meter with us, additional meters will be shown in this exact format in the white space below, and on additional pages if needed.

7

BACK OF PAYMENT STUB

If you need to make changes to the contact information on your account, this is where you will write those and return it. You can also see other ways to pay here, if you prefer not to mail your payment to us. You can sign your account up for Operation Round Up by making that selection on the front of the stub, signing the back where indicated and then returning it to the cooperative.

You can always see current rates at Medinaec.org/rates. We hope you like the new look. If you have any feedback, additional changes you would like to see or ideas, please let us know at MyCoop@MedinaEC.org.



FREE SHIPPING!
on orders over \$149

Actual size
is 30.61 mm
90% Pure Silver

Before they were carved in stone, they were struck in SILVER.

JUST RELEASED: One of America's FIRST Civil War Silver Half Dollars.

Civil War collectibles are among today's most popular and sought after artifacts. But no Civil War collection can be complete without including one of the very FIRST-EVER Civil War commemorative coins struck by the United States Mint: The 1925 Stone Mountain Silver Half Dollar.

Both the coin and the Stone Mountain Memorial near Atlanta, Georgia feature Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson on horseback. The Stone Mountain Memorial was designed by famed sculptor Gutzon Borglum, whose next masterpiece would be the magnificent Mount Rushmore.

Etched in History, Carved in Stone, Struck in Silver!

These 90% silver half dollars were minted in 1925 to raise money for the memorial. Over the years since they were minted, many were spent during the Great Depression, or melted down to obtain their precious silver. Today, they can be difficult to find.

Thanks to a remarkable recent discovery, however, GovMint.com has obtained a limited supply of these desirable Stone Mountain Silver Half Dollars. The detail and relief on these stunning coins make each one a work of art. It's no wonder they're in such high demand!

Historic Public Release

We are now releasing our entire supply of these historic and valuable coins to the public. Each is in lightly circulated condition and comes with an informative story card and a certificate of authenticity.

Order Now Risk Free!

Genuine Civil War items like this don't appear every day. We expect our small supply of these historic silver coins to disappear quickly. We urge you to call immediately to avoid disappointment.

1925 Stone Mountain Silver Half Dollar- \$69.95 +s/h

FREE SHIPPING on any order over \$149!

Limited time only. Product total over \$149 before taxes (if any). Standard domestic shipping only. Not valid on previous purchases.

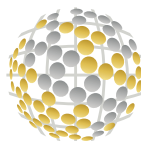
Call today toll-free for fastest service

1-800-517-6468

Offer Code SMS395-05
Please mention this code when you call.

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Serving Customers All Over Texas

All C.D.'s are insured to \$250,000 per institution by the F.D.I.C. All C.D.'s are subject to availability. Securities offered thru Signal Securities, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC 700 Throckmorton, Ft. Worth, TX 76102. (817) 877-4256.

BRUSH SHARK



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A Town Tormented

The 1927 Rocksprings tornado ranks among the state's deadliest

BY MELISSA GASKILL

ON APRIL 12, 1927, A TORNADO TORE through the Edwards County town of Rocksprings, killing 74 people and injuring more than 200. Among Texas tornadoes, it ranks as the third deadliest, behind one that struck Waco on May 11, 1953, killing 114 and injuring 597, and one that hit Goliad on May 18, 1902, also killing 114 and injuring 250.

The damage scale for twisters goes from EF0 to EF5, with EF5s inflicting the most damage. Since 1950, when official record keeping began, the National Weather Service has determined that 59 tornadoes qualify as EF5, six of them in Texas: Jarrell, May 27, 1997; Brownwood, April 19, 1976; Valley Mills, May 6, 1973; Lubbock, May 11, 1970; Wichita Falls, April 3, 1964; and the 1953 Waco twister.

Rocksprings, 100 miles west of San Antonio, became the seat of Edwards County in 1891, complete with a courthouse. Townspeople built a public school in 1893, and by 1914, the town had 500 residents, a hotel, saloons, a general store and bank. A high school opened in 1916.

On that afternoon in 1927, enormous black clouds gathered, producing large hail and winds that took out the power. The tornado touched down 3 miles to the northwest and moved southeast, growing to almost a mile wide as it crossed Rocksprings. It continued southeastward for at least 35 miles and may have traveled as far as 65 miles.

The second floor of the high school, where a music recital had been planned



Only eight buildings remained after the milewide tornado ripped through Rocksprings.

town would have been in the school auditorium,” says Andrew Barnebey, president of the Devil’s Sinkhole Society in Rocksprings. Its visitor center has a small display on the tornado. “Only eight buildings in town were not damaged.” The twister destroyed all the town’s churches, damaged the courthouse (but not the jail) and toppled the water tower. The town of Junction, 47 miles northeast, gave Rocksprings a new one, Barnebey adds.

“The telephone operator had to go out of town to find a live telephone line to tell the rest of the world about it,” he says. “People came from throughout the surrounding countryside and even Mexico to help. The first rescuers were soldiers on horseback from Fort Clark.”

The town held a commemorative ceremony on the event’s 90th anniversary, in 2017. Edwards County Historical Commission chair Kari Cloudt says research for the event turned up many heartbreaking stories, including entire families lost. Others show the goodness in people, she

for that evening, was gone.

“If it had happened an hour earlier, the whole

adds, such as the 1,000 doses of tetanus vaccine sent by what is now Bristol-Myers Squibb to San Antonio’s Kelly Field, whose pilots airdropped them into town.

The twister damaged the original, wooden circa-1916 Rocksprings Hotel, but a concrete wing added in 1926 served as a temporary hospital for those not seriously injured, says Debra Wolcott, current owner. Those with serious injuries were taken to hospitals in San Antonio via train.

The town quickly replaced the school with a larger one and rebuilt churches and the hotel. The 2010 census counted 1,182 residents. Visitors know Rocksprings as the Angora goat capital of the world and for the nearby Devil’s Sinkhole State Natural Area, famous for a seasonal population of 3 million Mexican free-tailed bats.

But locals can’t escape memories of 1927.

“A 14-year-old girl taking a bath when the tornado hit flew about 2 miles in the bathtub and landed in a debris field. There is still debris there,” Cloudt says. “A lot of people who are still here lost family members. It must have been just a hideous storm.”

Read more about **Melissa Gaskill’s** work at melissagaskill.blogspot.com.

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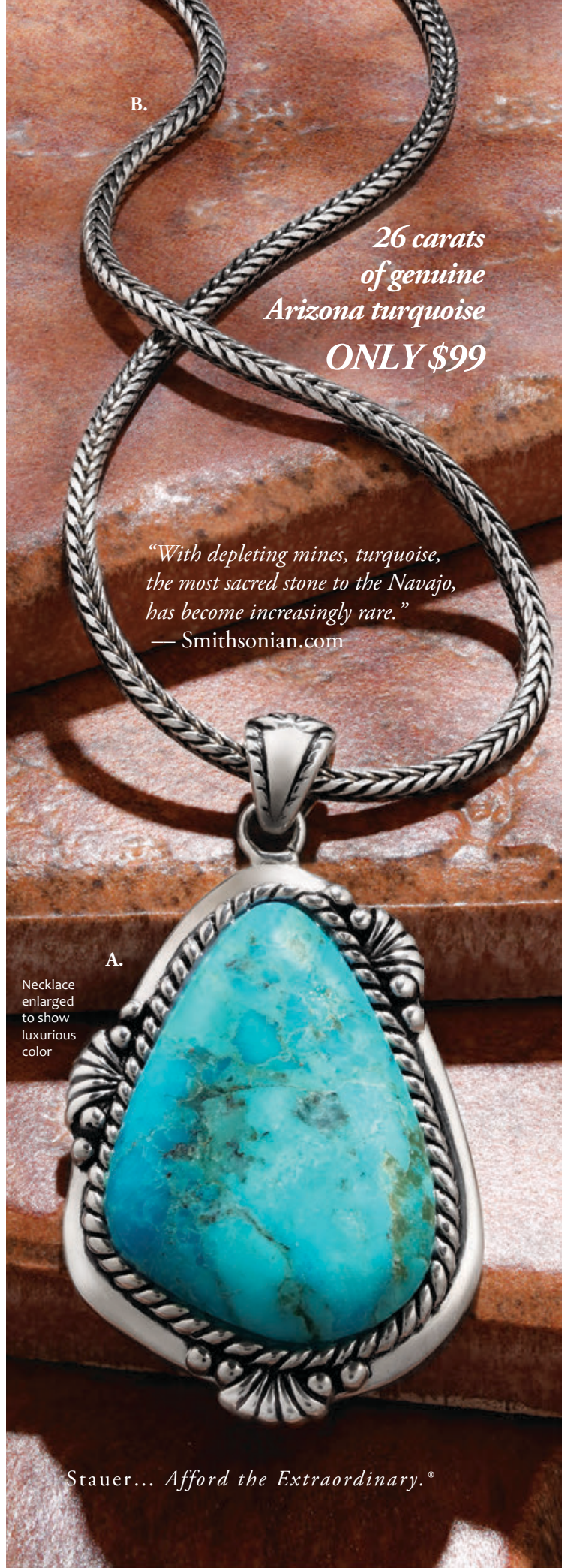
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Hot Off the Grill

WE'RE LUCKY IN TEXAS THAT GRILLING season often lasts all year long. I take advantage by branching out from hamburgers and hot dogs to experiment with other flavors on the grill, which resulted in this recipe.

For a moist burger, you'll need chicken breast and fattier chicken thigh meat. Take care not to press the patties onto the grill, which will make the juices run out.

Make the optional slaw in advance to let the flavors meld while you prepare the burgers. Brown rice vinegar and sesame oil can be found in the Asian section of your grocery store. If you can't find Thai basil, regular basil will do.

MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Thai Peanut Chicken Burgers

SLAW

- ½ cup shredded red cabbage
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- ¼ cup radish matchsticks
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1-2 teaspoons chopped fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons brown rice vinegar

BURGERS

- ½ pound ground chicken breast
- ½ pound ground chicken thigh
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh Thai basil
- 2 whole wheat hamburger buns

SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1½ teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon brown rice vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil

Crushed red chile flakes, to taste

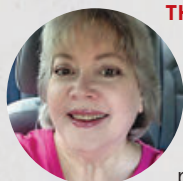
Chopped peanuts

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



Recipes

Hot Off the Grill



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

STEPHANIE BALDOCK | WOOD COUNTY EC

Moist and flavorful, this dish is a hit for those who love jalapeño poppers. The marinade ensures the chicken stays juicy on the grill, and its sweet tang provides a nice contrast to the bacon and heat of the pepper. When grilling, make sure to start with the side that has the loose bacon ends, as it will help adhere the bacon to the chicken.

Devil Chicken

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup teriyaki sauce

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup Italian salad dressing

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed brown sugar

12-14 boneless, skinless chicken tenders

12-14 slices jalapeño pepper

12-14 slices bacon

1. Whisk together teriyaki sauce, salad dressing and brown sugar until sugar is dissolved.

2. Place chicken tenders in a bowl or 1-quart baking dish. Pour marinade over the chicken and turn chicken to coat

thoroughly. Cover and let marinate in a refrigerator at least 2 hours or overnight.

3. When ready to cook, prepare grill for cooking over a medium flame. Place one slice of jalapeño on top of each tender, then wrap a slice of bacon around the length of the tender.

4. Grill bacon-wrapped chicken tenders 6-7 minutes on each side, until they reach a temperature of 160 degrees and juices run clear when cut into. ▶ Serves 4.



\$500 Recipe Contest

Does your family favor turkey, ham, beef or another main dish for the holiday table? Tell us what you serve for **The Main Event**. Enter our December contest by **July 10**. Featured recipes will receive a special *Texas Co-op Power* apron.

ENTER ONLINE at TexasCoopPower.com/contests; MAIL to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; FAX to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

1. **SLAW:** In a bowl, mix together all ingredients. Set aside.

2. **BURGERS:** In a large bowl, mix together all ingredients. Form mixture into two patties and set aside.

3. Prepare a grill or stovetop grill pan.

4. Cook patties 5-6 minutes on each side over medium heat, until completely cooked through.

5. **SAUCE:** In another bowl, whisk together peanut butter, soy sauce, honey, rice vinegar, garlic, sesame oil and crushed red chile flakes.

6. Assemble chicken patties, slaw and peanut sauce on buns. Sprinkle on chopped peanuts, add top bun and serve.

▶ Serves 2.

Follow along with **Megan Myers** and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Lemon Grilled Potato Salad.

Butter Lover's Steak

JESSICA DEEMER | PEDERNALES EC

This rib-eye recipe gets a boost from a butter rub and a simple finishing sauce. "This is the creation of my 8-year-old son, Mason, who is a huge butter lover," Deemer says. The sauce will thicken as it stands, so make it just before serving. Whisk in additional milk for a thinner sauce.

4 rib-eye steaks

1 stick ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) butter, softened, divided use

Salt and pepper, to taste

4 ounces cream cheese, cut into small pieces

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon olive oil

1. Preheat grill to high heat.

2. Using a sharp grilling fork, poke 4-8 holes in each steak to allow butter to be absorbed. Rub both sides of the steaks generously with about half of the butter. Season steaks with salt and pepper on both sides.

3. Slice remaining butter into 4 pieces and set aside.

4. Sear steaks 1 minute on each side, then move to indirect heat and place a piece of butter on each steak. Grill 3-4 minutes per side, then remove from heat and tent steaks with foil to keep warm.

5. To make the sauce, place the cream cheese and milk in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir until cream cheese is almost completely melted, then remove from heat and continue to stir until the sauce is smooth and lump-free. Stir in garlic powder, olive oil and salt to taste.
6. Transfer steaks to a plate and pour the sauce on top, or serve it on the side.
- Serves 4.

Kielbasa Kebabs

PEGGI TEBBEN | TRI-COUNTY EC

If using wooden skewers, be sure to soak them in water before assembling kebabs to prevent them from catching fire while grilling.

- 4 packages (12 ounces each) kielbasa, cut into bite-size chunks
- 2 cans (20 ounces each) pineapple chunks, ½ cup juice reserved
- 16 ounces whole button mushrooms, cut in half from top through stem
- 3 bell peppers, cut into bite-size chunks
- 2 onions, cut into bite-size chunks

- 1 cup soy sauce
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon California-style garlic seasoning with parsley
- 1 teaspoon Montreal steak seasoning

1. Assemble the kebabs by layering sausage, pineapple, mushroom, bell pepper and onion onto barbecue skewers. Repeat, pushing layers tightly together, until skewers are completely full, beginning and ending with sausage.
2. Place kebabs into a large casserole or other dish that allows them to lie flat.
3. Whisk together reserved pineapple juice, soy sauce and brown sugar until sugar is dissolved. Pour over the kebabs and then turn kebabs to coat.
4. Cover and place in the refrigerator overnight, turning kebabs every so often.
5. When ready to cook, prepare grill for cooking over a medium flame. Brush kebabs with excess marinade from the pan, then sprinkle seasonings on both sides.
6. Grill kebabs over indirect heat 10 minutes per side. ► Makes 30 kebabs.



Marinade Tips

Marinades are one of the easiest ways to liven up your grilled foods. A few tips:

INGREDIENTS CAN VARY, but don't forget salt, which helps the meat absorb even more of the marinade's flavor.

POKING SMALL HOLES into your meat before marinating will help it absorb the sauce.

COMPLETELY COVER MEAT with the marinade, and let it rest in the refrigerator to prevent food-borne illnesses.

MEGAN MYERS

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—T.S. Eliot, poet and literary critic

GRACE FULTZ

WEB EXTRAS ▶ See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.



▲ **LORY VON STADEN**, Heart of Texas EC: “Exploring murals and downtown Brenham.”

▼ **J. REAGAN FERGUSON**, Central Texas EC: “Exploring the Longhorn Caverns State Park in the summertime is a great way to cool off.”



▲ **DENISA MCBEE**, Southwest Texas EC: “While on a visit to our farm, our grandson, Max Dawson, was exploring his granddad’s tractor. He found the perfect spot for a rest.”



▲ **STEVE COYLE**, Pedernales EC: “I captured this image of my friend Paul midway through our five-day kayak trip down the Devils River in West Texas. It was definitely one of the more adventure-filled journeys of my life.”

AROUND TEXAS ▶ TCP's monthly list of local events has been suspended due to COVID-19 cancellations. Always call or check an event's website for scheduling details.



◀ **LENORA ISENHOUR**, Pedernales EC: “Cousins Ava Isenhour and Nora Lynn frolic on the beach at Port Aransas.”



▲ **JOHNATHAN KANA**, Bluebonnet EC: “The kids were fascinated with the flourishing ecosystem in a pool of water atop Enchanted Rock.”



UPCOMING CONTESTS

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DECEMBER ON WHEELS	DUE AUGUST 10
JANUARY DINERS	DUE SEPTEMBER 10

Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/Contests.

▲ **KIM LEATHERWOOD**, United Cooperative Services: Santa Elena Canyon, Big Bend National Park.

▲ **MARVIN MILLER**, Pedernales EC: “Christin Miller has helped her dad explore and survey Texas caves for years.”

SEASHELLS of TEXAS

Fig. 1. BAYVIEW TULLIP (Hemulites ulmi) Fig. 2. BROWN-LINE WING (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 3. NORTHERN LIP (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 4. HARD-COLORED SPUR (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 5. BAYVIEW TULLIP (Hemulites ulmi) Fig. 6. BROWN-LINE WING (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 7. NORTHERN LIP (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 8. HARD-COLORED SPUR (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 9. BAYVIEW TULLIP (Hemulites ulmi) Fig. 10. BROWN-LINE WING (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 11. NORTHERN LIP (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 12. HARD-COLORED SPUR (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 13. BAYVIEW TULLIP (Hemulites ulmi) Fig. 14. BROWN-LINE WING (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 15. NORTHERN LIP (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 16. HARD-COLORED SPUR (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 17. BAYVIEW TULLIP (Hemulites ulmi) Fig. 18. BROWN-LINE WING (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 19. NORTHERN LIP (Stellaria ulmi) Fig. 20. HARD-COLORED SPUR (Stellaria ulmi)

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Something's Fishy Here

Catfish Plantation in Waxahachie takes you deep-fried to the other side

FOR GENERATIONS, FRIED CATFISH, WITH its faithful sidekicks french fries and hush puppies, has served family reunions and Southern potlucks. Waxahachie's Catfish Plantation provides this country classic but requires visitors to go beyond the normal.

Waxahachie, the Crape Myrtle Capital of Texas, is also known for its dozens of ornate historic homes. I discovered that one of these 19th-century gingerbread houses delivers some of the best catfish in Texas from one of the state's strangest dining rooms.

I knew something was different about the Catfish Plantation when I noticed two cartoon ghosts dancing on the restaurant's logo. Once I stepped inside, I realized the ghost theme continues throughout the building, appearing in framed pictures, salt and pepper shakers, and even the peppermint dish. This would have made sense at Halloween, but my visit was in April. The hostess confirmed my suspicions that by all accounts, the house is haunted. I asked if she believed in ghosts, and she said, "After working here, absolutely."

I took a seat in the parlor to wait for my table and noticed two binders filled with handwritten customer stories about experiences of the paranormal kind. I couldn't resist reading spooky stories ranging from disappearing silverware to unexpected taps on the shoulder. There were even a number of customer photos that, if tilted just right, captured a face in the window.

The house was built in 1895, and since



Chet was expecting a frying catfish, not a flying catfish.

it was converted to a restaurant in 1984, otherworldly occurrences have become as common as the catfish. The Landis family purchased this institution more than a decade ago. Shawn Landis, the executive chef and family matriarch, provides background to support customer and staff ghost stories. She recounts tales of the antique crank-style doorbell ringing on its own and the light switches that sit inside a glass case flipping off without warning. Even so, she was quick to assure me that nothing sinister ever happens. "Customers may come for the ghosts, but they come back for the catfish," Landis said.

Before I could dine, I felt obligated to brave the most haunted room in the house: the men's restroom. That room is notorious for shadowy figures appearing in the mirror and for the latch unlocking without help from human hands. I took a deep breath and tried not to look in the mirror as I washed my hands.

The hostess seated me in the front room, where I looked over a menu filled with options including steak and grilled quail. I couldn't pass up the house special Cajun catfish, which features a layer of spice beneath the golden cornmeal crust. It was some of the best catfish I've eaten on the road, which made me wonder why they needed to embrace a gimmick like ghosts in order to fill seats. The food could speak for itself.

These thoughts left me with the uneasy conclusion that the ghost stories were not a marketing ploy but actually were true. I was not going to believe the stories until I had a ghostly experience for myself. With that in mind, I had no choice but to order a piece of homemade bread pudding topped with white chocolate sauce, just to give the ghosts a little longer to haunt me.

Chet Garner shares his Texplorations as the host of *The Daytripper* on PBS.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of the ghostly Catfish Plantation in Waxahachie.

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