

OUTLANDISH CHARACTERS
OF BYGONE RODEOS

WHEN THE QUEEN
CAME TO TEXAS

CHET LOOKS AT
BUDDY HOLLY'S LEGACY

Texas Coop Power

FOR TRI-COUNTY EC MEMBERS

FEBRUARY 2022

Esports Enters the Arena

Students play their way
to scholarships and careers
in video gaming

TRI-COUNTY
EC NEWS

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February 2022



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The booming business of esports finds eager participants in rural schools.

By Chris Burrows

Stretching the Blanket

Outlandish characters and hard-to-believe yarns defined the early days of Texas rodeo.

By Gene Fowler
Illustration by Douglas Jones

ON THE COVER

At 100,000 square feet, Esports Stadium Arlington is the largest dedicated gaming facility in North America.

Photo courtesy Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau

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'Dillo Day

THE FOLKS IN BEE CAVE, just west of Austin, don't pay much attention to Punxsutawney Phil on Groundhog Day. Instead, they rely on an armadillo named Bee Cave Bob on February 2 to prognosticate the arrival of spring. Bob has served the role since 2012.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

THE BABY OF THE FAMILY ALWAYS ...

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

Below are some of the responses to our December prompt: **The hardest job in the world has to be ...**

A single mom.

TISH CORTINAS
COSERV
MCKINNEY

That's easy. Utility lineman.

GINA SCHULTE HALLE
VIA FACEBOOK

Still being a rancher in Central Texas when you are 88 years old.

SCOTT SINGLETON
PEDERNALES EC
MARBLE FALLS

Taking care of your aging, ailing parents.

MARY DIAZ
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC
SHERMAN

The caretaker of a spouse with dementia.

SHARON MARTIN
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES
GRANBURY

To see more responses, read Currents online.

TWOSDAY

February flaunts a special Tuesday this year with a rare numerical alignment: 2/22/22. And twice that day, at 2:22, deuces are really wild.

(If you insist on using the 24-hour clock, the second instance of twos aligning that day will be 22:22.)

Best Dressed

The nation's
electric co-ops
have deployed
enough wind
and solar power
capacity to
serve nearly

2.7
million
homes.

A **TEXAS A&M** University professor has developed water-based nanocoatings that, when added to military uniforms, protect against fire and UV light and change color in the presence of certain chemicals.

The softness of cotton and the strength of nylon are typically compromised when a protective property is added, but Jaime Grunlan has come up with a nontoxic solution that can add protection without changing the structure of the fabric. He hopes this technology can also benefit nonmilitary protective clothing.



50 Years of Easy Joe

Mr. Coffee, the first automatic drip machine for home use, started making it a little easier to get going in the morning in 1972.



TCP *Contests and More*

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FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Industrial

RECOMMENDED READING
Chet Garner visited another West Texas spot with keepsakes from a musical legend, Roy Orbison, in *Wink's Spectacle* from September 2019.



A Wonderful Flick

"It is nice that this old black-and-white movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, is still a treasure. I bet it will be for another 75 years."

STEPHANIE RIGGIN
BLUEBONNET EC
LOCKHART

Looking Out for Bison

I was born in the Ozarks at Evening Shade, Arkansas, but I got here as quickly as I could. I married a native Texas girl 20 years ago.

I am a true Texas history buff and love your monthly stories. I had never heard of the Texas State Bison Herd [*Last of Their Kind*, November 2021]. Please keep the stories coming.

J.D. Perkins III
Bluebonnet EC
Red Rock

What one animal said to another [*Safe Passage*, November 2021]: "Oh, let's don't cross here. Let's go down to the land bridge, which is 5 miles south of here. It's much safer."

JOHN PERRIN
VIA FACEBOOK

Snowbird Love

My husband and I are winter Texans. Your magazine teaches us about our winter home state and provides us with travel ideas while we are there.

Merlene S. DeZur
NEC Co-op Energy
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

True to Her Word

I live in the Maverick community [*Biography of a Word*, November 2021]. My house is near the old Maverick School, which I love to photograph. A roadside marker dedicated to Maverick is nearby. And, yes, I am a maverick.

Sherry York
Via Facebook

Reaching Readers

Carpe Diem, Mom [December 2021] so aptly expressed Babs Rodriguez's feelings in a clear and fun way. It also demonstrated her love of her parents and family, which is always nice to hear.

Greg Sethness
Central Texas EC
Sunrise Beach



ANNA GODEASSI

WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power
1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

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

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If you have mobility issues, or know someone who does, then you've experienced the difficulties faced by millions of Americans. Simple tasks like getting from the bedroom to the kitchen can become a time-consuming and potentially dangerous ordeal. You may have tried to solve the problem with a power chair or a scooter but neither is ideal. Power chairs are bulky and look like a medical device. Scooters are either unstable or hard to maneuver. Now, there's a better alternative . . . the Zoomer.

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Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

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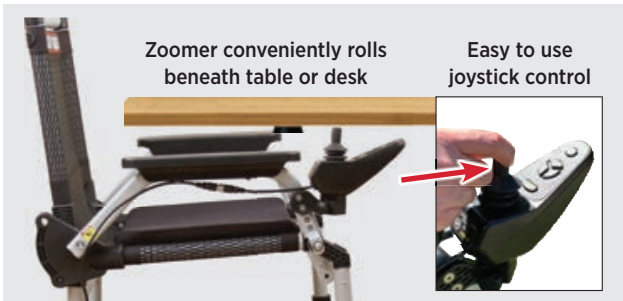
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A person is seen from behind, wearing large, black over-ear headphones. They are looking at a screen that displays a blurred, colorful bokeh pattern, likely from a video game or a digital display. The text is overlaid on the person's head and the screen.

A Whole New Ballgame

**The booming business
of esports finds eager
participants in rural schools**

BY CHRIS BURROWS

Ryan Conger thought his athletics career was over.

Rounding third base in a baseball game in 2017, the LeTourneau University sophomore hit an uneven spot in the field. He heard a pop in his knee and knew right away it was his ACL. He was gutted.

"I was like, man, if I don't have baseball, I really don't know what I'm going to do," he said. "I make good grades, but it was only because I wanted to play baseball."

Sidelined with what can be a career-ending injury, Conger channeled his competitive energy into a video game called NBA 2K. The native of Palmer, south of Dallas, worked his way up the basketball game's rankings, playing against others from around the world, and was drafted in 2018 by a professional competitive gaming affiliate of the Dallas Mavericks NBA team.

In September, Conger and his team won their second straight championship on a virtual basketball court, marking Conger as one of the best NBA 2K players in the world and earning him a cut of a half-million-dollar prize. His competitive career wasn't over; it just looks a whole lot different now.

Conger and his teammates occupy one of the many big and bright stages of competitive video gaming—known as esports—and their work and winnings are made possible by the booming new industry that attracts 26.6 million monthly viewers who watch gamers compete in a vast array of virtual venues. Beyond sports games, the online universe extends to strategy and battle arena games and even traditional board games, like chess.

Esports brought in more than \$1 billion in revenue for the first time in 2021 and has given rise to a whole host of career paths for professionals in marketing, information



technology, game design, broadcasting and many other fields—in addition to the game-playing pros on arena stages and online. Now educators at schools are preparing students to take advantage.

"Esports is not the five professionals sitting on the stage," said Matt Tarpley, a member of the Texas Scholastic Esports Federation board. "There's 10 times more people behind the scenes doing all sorts of other work."

In 2018, Tarpley approached the principal at the high school in Merkel, west of Abilene, where he worked in IT. He pitched a gaming team that would be managed by an esports-centered marketing class.

"I said, 'Man, I don't necessarily understand this, but I do understand that our kids are going to be into it, so let's try it,'" Principal James Stevens said. Tarpley taught the class and coached the team, and more than two-thirds of the school's students expressed interest in the class.

"We used to get in trouble for playing video games, but now it's really cool because we see that video games help us develop our problem-solving skills, our critical-thinking skills," said Jansen Wilhite, who took over for Tarpley in 2021. "These are all great skills to have for when we enter the job force."

Wilhite grew up with video games, playing Donkey Kong as a child and World of Warcraft with her husband as an adult. Her degree is in microbiology, but she teaches physics and now Merkel's gaming course, where her students learn all about the types of video games, how they're developed and how to foster positive gameplay environments.

"I never anticipated a career in video games, but here we are," Wilhite said. "It's really cool for me to get to use both halves of myself at work."

ABOVE Ryan Conger competes in the 2021 NBA 2K league playoffs four years after an ACL tear ended his college baseball career. Conger said he planned to use his winnings to help his father open a food truck.



Wilhite also runs Merkel's after-school esports team, which competes in online chess and other video games against teams across Texas. Like the team at Sabine High School, in Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative's territory in Northeast Texas, where technology director Randy Cox was surprised by the buy-in he received from the superintendent.

"When you tell someone you want to start a program where we do competitive video games, I expected to get a little bit of a laugh, but he was very supportive," Cox said. "It's one more thing that students can get involved in with our school."

Merkel, Sabine and more than 400 other high schools across Texas now field esports teams, and even some middle schools are beginning to form clubs—part of a pipeline forming to feed some 250 colleges across the country that offer nearly \$15 million in scholarships to esports competitors and to feed the array of fields that support all of it.

Dallas public schools boast 60 esports clubs, but rural districts like Merkel and Sabine are making sure their students don't get left behind. They're working cooperatively to learn what's working and what isn't, how to get buy-in from administrators, where to get resources for

computers and equipment, and how to form leagues while the University Interscholastic League ponders official esports inclusion. Not every school has gamers on staff, fast internet or money for high-powered computers.

"Our rural schools in our area have always said, 'Hey, we understand that we can't do this by ourselves, but if we come together, we can get things done,'" said Shawn Schlueter, a

Esports brought in more than \$1 billion in revenue for the first time in 2021.

Now educators at schools are preparing students to take advantage.

technology consultant who works with educators in 13 counties. "We're starting to see that where administrators and even interested teachers are calling us and saying, 'You know, I see that [esports] could be valuable. How do I get going with it?'"

That value extends beyond the classroom. Esports can have profound benefits for students who aren't interested in traditional sports, extending to them the positive effects of team building, communication and community support that have long been available to athletes.

"I always say that esports programs are primed for the kids who slip through the cracks of schools," Schlueter said. "Even in a rural school where everybody has to do something, there are groups of

OPPOSITE PAGE The Mavs Gaming Hub in Dallas, site of last year's NBA 2K playoffs. THIS PAGE, FROM TOP The Merkel High School esports marketing class hosts a tournament. University of North Texas students celebrate at a national tournament. Texas Wesleyan University students compete.



kids that do nothing, and this helps engage those kids.”

Principal Stevens has seen it firsthand at Merkel.

“It’s attracted a lot of the kids who showed up at 8 and left at 4,” he said. “I’ve seen better participation, better grades, better attendance out of all those students, and it gave them something to be proud of involved with the school.”

Some of those students followed Tarpley to McMurry University in Abilene, where he now coaches the esports program.

“They’re on track to get a degree all because of esports,” Stevens said.



In Texas, dozens of smaller and lower-profile colleges like McMurry are cashing in by enticing competitors with scholarship money. The University of North Texas and the University of Texas at Dallas field some of the most competitive esports programs in the nation, part of a burgeoning esports hotbed in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, where the \$10 million Esports Stadium Arlington—the largest such venue in North America—has space for 2,500 spectators.

But there are opportunities everywhere for esports professionals like Kyle Murto.

He was preparing for a college soccer career when a string of injuries put him in the hospital, where he cracked open his laptop and climbed the ranks. Pro teams didn’t come calling, but Blinn College did. Now Murto helps coach the Brenham-based school’s esports team, which competes against Division I giants—and wins.

“Smaller schools don’t have that name recognition, so we have to go out and make a name for ourselves before the universities really get into the game,” Murto said.

At McMurry, Tarpley is focused on education and personal growth, not wins and losses. He holds workshops for content creation, personal branding and livestreaming and finds graphic design, statistics, broadcasting and other work for students to master.

“Everybody wants to be in this space,” he said. “It’s going to be everywhere eventually. It’s just a matter of time.”

Tarpley’s team meets regularly with a mental health coach—esports’ version of an athletic trainer—and he strives to make sure women are included in an activity that’s been dominated by men. He’s not forming the next Ryan Conger but the next Jansen Wilhite—multiskilled gamers and leaders who can cultivate programs like Merkel’s.

“I had several local schools call me, several local principals that know me. They’re like, ‘Hey, we hear y’all are doing esports. Can you tell me about it?’” Stevens said. “Of course, my first thing is, to be really successful you have to have a Matt Tarpley.” ■

TCP Go online to watch the University of North Texas take down LSU in a national playoff game.



★ "HACKBERRY SLIM" ★
★ "FOGHORN" ★



★ "BUCK" ★ "MR RODEO" ★



STRETCHING THE BLANKET

Outlandish characters
and hard-to-believe
yarns defined the early
days of Texas rodeo

RODEO COWBOY Hackberry Slim Johnson came clean in 1956 when he described the 1906 train-jumping accident near Dalhart that cost him half a leg. “I’ve told so many damned lies about losing that leg,” he told an interviewer. But soon after this brief walk on the straight and narrow path of truth, Johnson reverted to his usual yarn about losing the appendage in a “wreck with a wild horse.”

Even though lies might be too harsh a term for the tall tales whipped up by early rodeo cowboys, Johnson was simply following the Texas tradition of stretching the blanket. Even when characters like him, Buck Steiner, Milt Hinkle and Foghorn Clancy told the truth, the stories still sounded like whoppers.

In its beginnings in the late 19th century, mirroring the recently shuttered American frontier, rodeo presented a vast stage for self-invention. “For decades, rodeo was busy defining itself,” says W.K. Stratton, author of *Chasing the Rodeo* and other books. “The sport was based on the Mexican charreada tradition, which subsequently inspired ‘cowboy contests’ on ranches and in small cattle towns in the West. The advent of Wild West shows and their showbiz elements influenced rodeo as well.

“There was no national sanctioning organization, no set rule-book, so rodeos varied from town to town. People expected to be entertained, and cantankerous old-timers were always a big draw. While elements of showbiz remain, today rodeo is made up of sanctioned athletic contests with standardized events and judging.”

But in its wild and woolly days of old, characters ran the show.

MR. RODEO

MILT HINKLE, aka Mr. Rodeo, first glimpsed daylight in 1881 on the patch of Texas Panhandle that became the town of Bovina, which grew from a camp that was part of the XIT Ranch. In 1904, he claimed, Hinkle became the second man to accomplish the act of bulldogging, first performed by the Black cowboy Bill Pickett and known today as steer wrestling. In another boast, Hinkle bragged that he was the first to apply the term “rodeo” to a roundup event.

In 1919 a *Saturday Evening Post* correspondent wrote about having seen Hinkle suffer a hip injury at a rodeo in Bovina. Three months later, having escaped from the hospital, Hinkle was spotted in Cheyenne, Wyoming, by the same reporter, who described him as “a howling, squawking maniac,” hobbling on crutches as he got ready to bulldog.

The Laredo Times credited Hinkle with the world record for bulldogging from an automobile traveling at 68 mph in 1931. That same year, he agreed to stand in for an “aerial bulldogger” in Nuevo Laredo during the annual Washington’s Birthday Celebration. As Mr. Rodeo prepared to leap onto the running bull, however, *el toro* turned and charged the aircraft, wrecking it. The border paper reported that Hinkle was not seriously injured.

Decades later, however, Hinkle repeatedly told scribes that he landed successfully on the bull, breaking its neck, and that he himself suffered a crippling hip displacement. Mr. Rodeo had become a promoter, and before his death at 91, he relived the wild old days, lugging his scrapbooks around to reporters and writing for *True West* and *Frontier Times Magazine*.

FOGHORN

ONE YEAR YOUNGER than Hinkle, famed rodeo announcer Frederick Melton “Foghorn” Clancy tried his hand at bronc riding in an 1898 cowboy tournament in San Angelo. The contest was won by the great Samuel Thomas “Booger Red” Privett, the Erath County native whose legend says he was never thrown, no matter how “outlaw” a horse he drew. And while Foghorn didn’t fare so well in the saddle, the experience opened another career door.

Clancy was working as a hand on the Hittson Ranch in Palo Pinto County when the Spanish-American War broke out. He quit to join the Army but was turned down for being underweight, so he began selling newspapers in the health resort town of Mineral Wells, bellowing headlines to drive sales. Local press observed that he “sounded like a foghorn at sea,” which provided a nickname and a second job as town crier. “I would ride horseback through the little resort,” he wrote in his 1952 autobiography, *My 50 Years in Rodeo*, “singing out about the attractions at the summer opera house or pavilion.”

Clancy’s stentorian reputation had preceded him in San Angelo, and after his unceremonious buck-off, the folks hosting the ropin’ and ridin’ contest offered him a job as announcer. This was a time before public address systems, but Foghorn lived up to his name, announcing rodeos from one-horse Western towns to Madison Square Garden.

Shortly after he died in 1957, the *Hereford Brand* reported on a quest by Fort Worth’s Pioneer Days celebration, held at the historic stockyards, to find the loudest Texan. Clancy would have been a shoo-in, and organizers recalled how, in “the old days of the rodeo, the mighty voice of the late Foghorn Clancy rattled the windows.”

“I would ride horseback through the little resort singing out about the attractions at the summer opera house or pavilion.”

“When I die, I want to go in style. With my boots on. Dancing, maybe, or maybe while riding a buffalo.”

Dancing, maybe, or maybe while riding a buffalo.”

In 1979, shortly after appearing in the Willie Nelson film *Honeysuckle Rose*, the 91-year-old white-whiskered cowboy danced to Nelson’s band playing *Milk Cow Blues*, then sat back down and slipped into the sunset. ■

BUCK

BORN IN BASTROP in 1899, T.C. “Buck” Steiner lived to see two centuries turn. But long before he died in 2001, the crusty cowpoke had packed several lifetimes into one.

He started early, leaving grade school to pursue the cowboy life. After driving cattle through the streets of Austin, he left home at age 12 to perform in rodeos and Wild West shows, sharing bills with the likes of Annie Oakley and Tom Mix. Steiner demonstrated proficiency at roping, wrestling and riding spirited stock, but he developed a specialty of riding bulls facing backward. As he recalled in endless press features, riding backward was far more lucrative than riding frontward.

Around age 16 he worked for a time at the San Antonio Stockyards. Then at some point, according to the biography of Buck in the Handbook of Texas, a law enforcement career was cut short when he shot at a carload of politicians while working traffic management during a parade. While trailing cattle from Mexico to San Antonio, Steiner reportedly downed a few drinks with Pancho Villa. Later, it’s said, he bent elbows with Al Capone.

Back home in Austin, where a German immigrant ancestor had owned the town’s first harness and saddlery shop, Steiner bought and sold land, operated his own touring rodeos, rented his stock to other rodeos, and opened Capitol Saddlery in 1930. News reports say that he had as many as 96 saddle makers working for him and supplied Montgomery Ward and Sears, Roebuck and Company. In a 1950s rodeo tour of Cuba with Gene Autry, Autry and Steiner got caught up amid Fidel Castro’s revolution. An emergency call to Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson saved their bacon.

The Steiners have been called the royal family of rodeo. Son Tommy Steiner ran the rodeo business until closing it in 1984, and grandson Bobby Steiner won the bull riding world championship in 1973. Buck’s great-grandson, Sid Steiner, won the steer wrestling world championship in 2002.

HACKBERRY SLIM

TOWARD THE END of his long life, Hugh “Hackberry Slim” Johnson II carried his scrapbooks around to newspaper offices in towns where he’d rodeoed in days gone by. Time and again the “only one-legged bronc buster, bulldogger, steer rider and calf roper” in rodeo told the story

of his first prosthetic leg, made from a hackberry tree. He talked about working on the XIT and rodeoing with Hoot Gibson and Will Rogers, about the time he drove a bull through a Georgetown furniture store and about winning all-around cowboy in Harlingen in 1933.

He often talked about bison. Hackberry bought his first bison, named Chihuahua, in 1923 and was still producing his “buffalo rodeos” in his 80s. “When I die, I want to go in style,” he often said. “With my boots on.

FEBRUARY 2022 **TEXAS CO-OP POWER** 15

THE FIFTH C?

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Monday, February 28th

Buy 1 window or door,
get 1 window or door
40% OFF¹

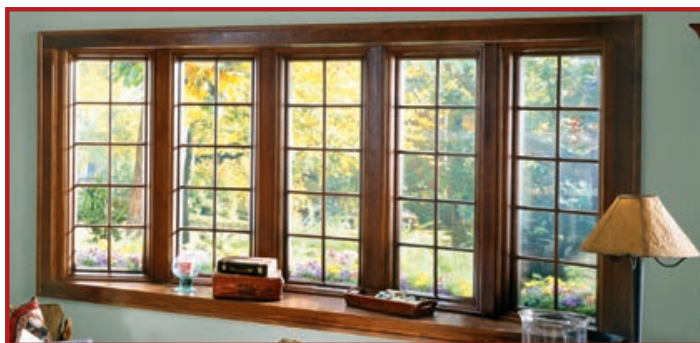
PLUS

★ Take an additional ★
★ **\$200 OFF** ★
★ your project¹ ★

PLUS

NO NO NO
Money Down Payments Interest
FOR 1 YEAR²

- **Renewal by Andersen is the full-service replacement window division of Andersen**, and every window that we custom-build has to live up to their strict quality standards
- Our window helps make homes more comfortable because our Fibrex[®] material is **two times stronger than vinyl**
- To lock in this Presidents' Day Special, call on or before **Monday, February 28th** and schedule your free Window and Door Diagnosis



Call to schedule your appointment. Limited appointments are available.



**RENEWAL
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FULL-SERVICE WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENT

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¹Subject to availability, on a total purchase of 4 or more. Buy 2 windows or doors and get the second 2 windows or doors, of equal or lesser value, 40% off – applied to lowest priced window and/or door products in purchase. Special Presidents' Day \$200 discount valid during first appointment only. Initial contact for a free Window and Door Diagnosis must be made and documented on or before 2/28/22, with the appointment then occurring no more than 10 days after the initial contact. ²No payments and deferred interest for 12 months available from third-party lenders to well qualified buyers on approved credit only. No Finance Charges will be assessed if promo balance is paid in full in 12 months. Products are marketed, sold and installed (but not manufactured) by Renewal by Andersen retailers, which are independently owned and operated under Central Texas Windows & Doors LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Austin and San Antonio. North Texas Windows & Doors LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Dallas/Fort Worth and West Texas. See complete information and entity identification at www.rbaguidelines.com. ©2022 Andersen Corporation. ©2022 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved.



**DARRYL
SCHRIVER**

PRESIDENT/
CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

Politics Matter

WITH THE POLITICAL SEASON upon us, it will be hard to leave the house without exposure to the upcoming primary elections. The roadways are lined with candidate signs for various political seats. Social media is flooded with debates and candidate support.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative is owned by you, the members and electric consumers. As a Tri-County Electric Co-op member-owner, you need to know who goes out of their way to protect the co-op from outside forces trying to take away co-op ownership or trying to use your co-op for their own gain. We work hard to keep others from using our lines or forcing us to move our lines at the co-op's expense, to protect our right of ways, and defend our co-op when so many are trying to take it away from you, the members.

Tri-County Electric Co-op does not follow party lines but follows and supports leaders who truly respect and understand the power of the cooperative business model and appreciate our conservative operating practices that place you, the member-owners, at the center of every decision. We pay attention to what our legislators are doing in Austin and Washington, D.C. With the help of our statewide and national associations, we monitor laws and rules that may change how we operate or cause financial burden for the co-op and the membership. 800649332

We heavily rely on elected officials who represent our members in our service area and understand the importance of electric cooperatives. Tri-County Electric Co-op called on the following elected officials for assistance and they championed your cause as a Tri-County Electric Co-op member-owner:

U.S. Senator John Cornyn
U.S. Congressman Michael Burgess
U.S. Congresswoman Beth Van Dyne
State Senator Kelly Hancock
State Senator Beverly Wooley
State Rep. Charlie Geren
State Rep. Phil King
State Rep. Glenn Rogers

U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
U.S. Congresswoman Kay Granger
U.S. Congressman Roger Williams
State Senator Drew Springer
State Rep. Giovanni Capriglione
State Rep. Craig Goldman
State Rep. Tan Parker

Additionally, I want to show my appreciation for Parker County Sheriff Russ Authier. During the last part of 2021, our material yards were hit hard by thieves. Sheriff Authier provided deputies and additional surveillance leading to an arrest. These criminals not only stole from us, but other utilities in the area. Sheriff Authier always answers the call in times of need and helps to protect the businesses and citizens of Parker County, which includes many of our members.

I believe it is important to remind our members to vote and let their opinions be known to all our elected officials at every level of government. The early voting period is February 14-25, and election day is Tuesday, March 1. The polls send a message to them that we are here, and we expect them to work tirelessly to preserve the lives each of us have carved out. We also need our elected officials to remember that the cooperative utility model is the best operating model for keeping costs low and keeping the lights on - and our conservative financial stance, allowing us to return profits to the members while watching the bottom line, is second to none. ■





**MAX
WADDELL**

CHAIRMAN

DISTRICT 9

A Seat at the Board Table

IN DECEMBER I WROTE to you, the members, on behalf of the entire Tri-County Electric Cooperative Board of Directors. Our goal with this column is to increase transparency between the board and the membership. Since the first article was published, we would like to shed light on some topics of interest we hope you find valuable as member-owners.

Brazos Bankruptcy. On Tuesday, December 14, the board and cooperative leadership participated in the Brazos bankruptcy hearing that would determine the fate of Brazos’s restructuring plan to emerge from bankruptcy. Tri-County Electric Co-op and CoServ, Brazos’s two largest member-cooperatives, filed against Brazos’s plan stating we believe it is bad for our members as end-consumers.

One of Brazos’s exit strategies is securitization, which would pass millions of dollars to you over a period of 15-30 years. Tri-County Electric Co-op and CoServ believe Brazos should also consider the sale of generation assets to reduce the \$2.1 billion in power bills Brazos accrued during Winter Storm Uri nearly one year ago. 800849299

Judge David Jones’s ruling gave Brazos more time and full control over its restructuring plan, despite our opposition. The Wall Street Journal’s bankruptcy division tracks and reports notable bankruptcy cases across the nation and world. We linked the article on our website at tcectexas.com/brazos.

Fuel Costs. We continue to monitor the cost of natural gas prices and how it impacts the cost to generate the electricity that powers your homes and business. Every year, we go through an extensive budgeting process that includes power cost and maintenance projects to increase reliability, all while watching the bottom line.

Strategic Planning. In late October, the board took the weekend to evaluate the past year and develop a strategic direction for 2022. The board used notes and input from across the co-op to understand what was working and where improvements were needed. We reviewed our director nomination and election process and made improvements based on 2021. Additionally, we heard staff presentations on initiatives that will impact our co-op’s future, including distributed energy resources (like residential batteries and generators) and energy audits that will put your power in your hands.

As the co-op’s governing and regulating body, we will continue to keep the membership at the forefront of every decision. On behalf of the Tri-County Electric Co-op Board of Directors, we work for you. ■



PHOTO: The board of directors and senior staff participating in the December 14 Brazos bankruptcy hearing.

2022 Director Nomination Applications

Director Districts 5, 7 and 9 are up for election this year

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE is governed and regulated by a board of directors comprised of cooperative member-owners. Each year, one-third of the board seats are up for election. In 2022, director districts 5, 7 and 9 will be on the ballot. Members who reside in these districts, are interested in serving, and meet the director qualifications outlined in article four of the cooperative's bylaws may submit a director nomination application packet. Packets are due by 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 10.

- DISTRICT 5**, suburban district
- DISTRICT 7**, rural district
- DISTRICT 9**, urban district

Members may seek nomination and a place on the ballot through the Committee on Nominations and Qualifications or through petition. The committee will accept and review all applications, determine member eligibility and recommend a slate of candidates to the board of directors to set the ballot. You can visit tcctexas.com/bylaws to view the digital copy of the bylaws, or you can call our offices at 817-444-3201 for a hard copy. 800660845

Members are encouraged to review the following documents to understand the cooperative's director nomination process:

- ▶ The director election webpage, tcctexas.com/director-elections
- ▶ Tri-County Electric Cooperative's Bylaws, specifically article 4
- ▶ Tri-County Electric Cooperative's Election Policy & Procedures

Nomination through the Committee on Nominations and Qualifications

Members seeking nomination through the committee must submit the following by 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2022, for a complete application:

- ▶ Complete Director Nomination Application Packet - The checklist outlines all requirements to assist applicants.
- ▶ Conflict of Interest Certification and Disclosure Form
- ▶ Background Check Consent Form
- ▶ Petition, with at least 25 signatures from members within your district - We highly encourage candidates to collect additional signatures in the event a membership cannot be verified.
- ▶ \$50.00 application fee
- ▶ Candidate Biography - Requirements are listed in the Election Policy and Procedures under Section 6.2.1.

Nomination through Petition

Members seeking nomination through member petition must submit the following by 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2022, for a complete application:

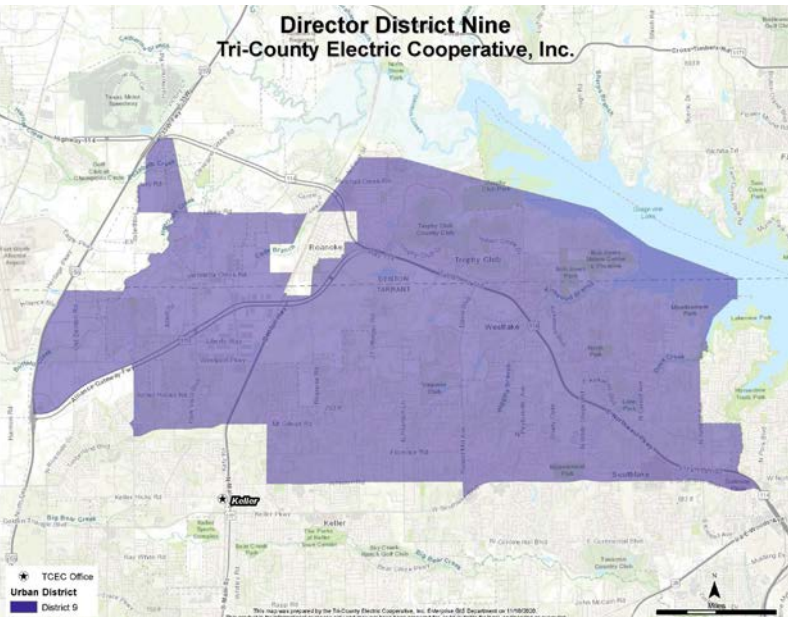
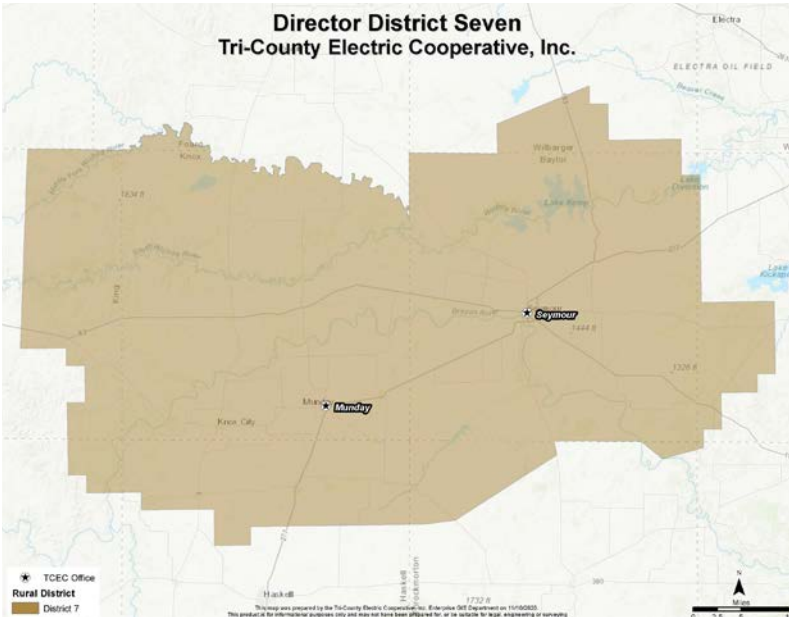
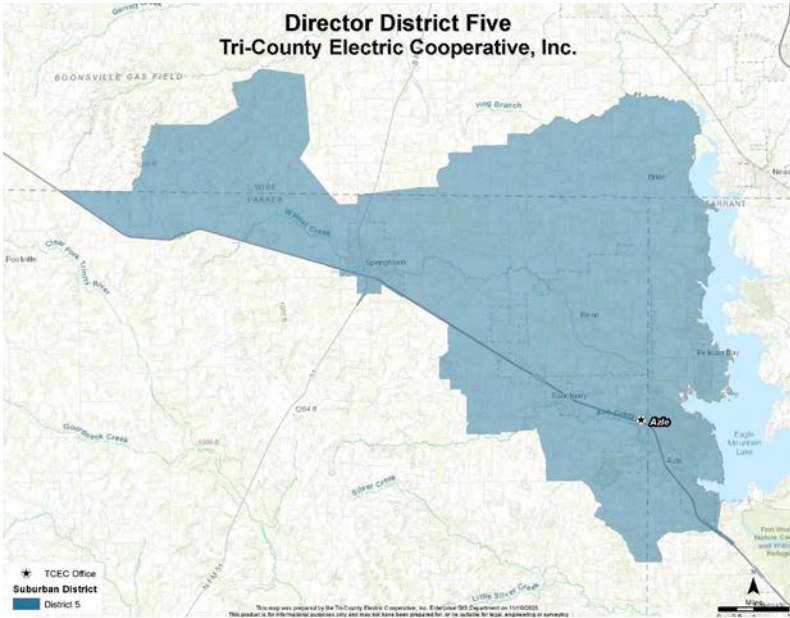
- ▶ Complete Director Nomination Application Packet - The checklist outlines all requirements to assist applicants.
- ▶ Conflict of Interest Certification and Disclosure Form
- ▶ Background Check Consent Form
- ▶ Petition, with at least 50 signatures from members within your district - We highly encourage candidates to collect additional signatures in the event a membership cannot be verified.
- ▶ \$100.00 application fee
- ▶ Candidate Biography - Requirements are listed in the Election Policy and Procedures under Section 6.2.1.

Full director nomination and election details, including the director nomination application packets, the Election Policy and Procedures and co-op bylaws, can be found at tcctexas.com/director-elections. ■

Committee on Nominations and Qualifications

Meeting Notice | Monday, March 14 | 5:00 pm

The Committee on Nominations and Qualifications will meet at 5:00 pm on Monday, March 14, 2022, at the co-op's Aledo office to accept and review applications from candidates seeking nomination through the committee and by petition for districts 5, 7 and 9. The committee will report back to the membership with a slate of nominees by director district published in the June *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. 800928396



Director Districts

Each member-owner on our system is assigned a director district based on the location within the service area. Our districts are allocated to provide equal representation, similar to how our state and national governments create representative districts.

Finding your District

Members can locate their director district by looking a recent billing statement. In the top, right-hand corner the gray box will state your district.

If you are signed up for paperless billing, you can view your billing statement by logging into your account on our website, tcectexas.com. 800783446

Members will only have one director district, regardless of the number of meters you may have. This reflects the one member, one vote principle in the cooperative business model.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative has more than 99,800 member-owners, and each vote weighs the same, regardless of meter count or kilowatt-hours purchased. That is the power of the cooperative difference!



POWER TIP

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting and cleaning or replacing air filters once a month to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Director Qualifications

ARTICLE 4, SECTION 4.3 - A DIRECTOR OR DIRECTOR CANDIDATE MUST COMPLY WITH THIS BYLAW

General Director Qualifications. To become a Director, a person must comply with the following general qualifications:

1. be an individual; be a member of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Inc. receiving service at his/her primary residential abode, and reside within the district to which such director is elected to represent for a period of (3) years;
2. have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts.
3. not have been previously removed or disqualified as a Director.
4. while a Director, and before becoming a Director, not be convicted of, or plead guilty to, a felony or two (2) misdemeanors; or found guilty of any offense involving moral turpitude.
5. before becoming a Director, graduate from high school or earn an equivalent degree or certification.
6. not be in any way employed by or financially interested in any competition enterprise, business or partnership selling electrical energy or any service provided by the Cooperative or its affiliates. 1236001
7. no person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who is a close relative of an incumbent director or of an employee of the Cooperative provided, however, this provision shall not prohibit the eligibility of a close relative of an incumbent director from seeking such position if the conflict is eliminated by the election;
8. comply with any other reasonable qualifications determined by the Board.
9. not be an employee, or spouse of an employee of the Cooperative, or former employee, or spouse of a former employee, who was employed by the Cooperative at any time within 10 years preceding the date set for election of directors; and
10. no person shall take or hold any elected position of national, state, county or city public office nor shall any person be a School Board Member and/or County Commissioner.
11. no person shall have held an elected position as referenced in subsection 10 above within the preceding 3 years immediately prior to the Director Election.
12. while a director, and during the three (3) years immediately before becoming a director, not hold a public or quasi-public position which, in the determination of the Committee on Nominations and Qualifications, would unduly interfere with the director's independence or create an unfairly electoral advantage in the director election. Any determination of ineligibility under this subsection shall be made only by secret ballot with a super majority three-fourths vote of the full Committee. Examples of such potential public or quasi-public positions would include, but not limited to, the following: appointed public offices, political offices, or an officer or substantial participant in major civic, charitable, religious, or corporate organizations. Being an incumbent director of the cooperative is not, in and itself, a disqualification under this section.

Membership Director Qualifications. To become and remain a Director, an individual must comply with the following membership qualifications:

1. while a Director and during the three (3) years immediately before becoming a Director.
 - a. be an unsuspended Member.
 - b. permanently reside or use electric energy provided by the Cooperative, at the individuals principal residence as defined under federal tax law within the service area, or the Director District from which the Director is nominated or elected.
 - c. comply with application, petition and election standards set forth for election to the Board of Directors.
 - d. comply with membership list procedures if a membership list is utilized for election.
 - e. except as otherwise provided by the Board for good cause, shall receive a credentialed Cooperative Director designation, Directors certificate, or similar designation or certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association within thirty-six (36) months of becoming a Director.
 - f. except as otherwise provided by the Board for good cause, attend at least two-thirds (2/3) of all Board Meetings during each twelve (12) month period; and
 - g. maintain the confidentiality of Cooperative business discussed by the Board. Confidential Cooperative business includes: all undisclosed matters covered or discussed in executive session of the Board; as well as all confidential information and business plans and trade secrets; private directors, employee or member information; potential or pending acquisition of real or personal property of the Cooperative; operational plans and business promotions; power supply and generation interests; and all power distribution plans; until the Board has collectively agreed to the terms and timing for public disclosure of such information.

Independent Director Qualifications. To become and remain a Director, an individual must comply with the following independence qualifications:

1. annually complete and sign an independence certification and disclosure form approved by the Board.
2. while a Director, not be employed by another Director, or be employed by, or receive more than ten percent (10%) of Annual gross income from, an entity for which another Director controls, owns more than ten percent (10%), or is a Director or Officer; and
3. while a Director and during the five (5) years immediately before becoming a Director, not be employed by, control, own more than ten percent (10%) of, serve as a Director or Officer of, or receive more than ten percent (10%) of Annual gross income from an entity that:
 - a. advances the entity's pecuniary interest by competing with the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary or

Cooperative affiliate, providing a good or service similar to a good or service provided by the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary or a Cooperative affiliate providing electric energy or a good or service related to providing electric energy. 800885519

4. while a Director, not engage in any behavior, actions or activities that (i) subject either the Director or the Cooperative to ridicule or embarrassment; (ii) adversely affect the Directors or the Cooperatives reputation; (iii) interfere with or diminish the Directors standing as a Cooperative ambassador and representative; or (iv) are contrary to the best interests of the Cooperative and its employees.

Director Disqualification. After being elected, designated, or appointed to the TCEC Board of Directors and if a director does not comply with all general director qualifications, membership director qualifications, and independent director qualifications, then for good cause as determined by the Board, the Board shall disqualify the director and the individual is no longer a director if:

1. the Board notifies the director in writing of the basis for, and provided the director an opportunity to comment regarding the Board's proposed disqualification; and
2. within twenty (20) days after the Board notifies the director of the proposed disqualification, the director neither complies with nor meets the director qualification. ■

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

• DEADLINE MARCH 4, 2022
• AVAILABLE FOR COLLEGE AND TRADE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

\$4,000

\$2,000

TCECTEXAS.COM/SCHOLARSHIP

I Work for You



BOB BUCKEL

Communications & Media Representative

In almost 40 years as a newspaperman, Bob Buckel's favorite thing was "getting to poke my nose into everyone's business." His job at Tri-County Electric Cooperative offers the same benefit.

Just over two years ago, Buckel was hired to write the co-op's history. That involved reading board minutes, chasing names and storylines through old newspapers, and interviewing dozens of Tri-County Electric Co-op employees and retirees.

The book (working title, *Connections: The People of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, 1938-2021*) is ready to go to press – but Buckel's work will continue. In addition to documenting history, he writes feature articles for *Texas Co-op Power* highlighting members who are making an impact in their communities. His newspaper experience allows him to bring strong writing and editing skills to the communications team for use in various platforms.

"Working at Tri-County Electric Co-op has been a wonderful experience," he said. "I've gotten to know some great people I would probably never have met if the co-op hadn't let me in the door. It's been a privilege and a real joy."

Bob grew up in Lamesa and graduated from Lubbock Christian University. He started as a sportswriter in El Campo, then worked at newspapers in Lamesa, Andrews, Muenster and Gainesville before taking a job as publisher of the Azle and Springtown papers. 800912755

Leaving after nearly 25 years, he went back to his roots as a writer during a three-year stint in Decatur. He worked in education, published a novel, and subbed at the Aledo newspaper before joining the co-op in November 2019.

He and his wife Krisan, a retired teacher, have three children and two foster children, who have given them four grandkids. They're active members of Oak Ridge Church of Christ in Willow Park.

In his spare time, Bob enjoys composting and gardening, tinkering in his shop – and he's also working on another novel. The Tri-County Electric Co-op job, he notes, has contributed greatly to his cast of characters. ■



Black Tie Boxing for a Cause
February 11

Scholarship Applications Due
March 4

Your Co-op's Community Calendar

February

11

Black Tie Boxing for a Cause
parkercountyhealthfoundation.org

15

President's Day

25

Black and White Party
mesquaredcancerfoundation.org

26

TCA Legacy Dinner
tcaeagles.org

March

4

Scholarship Application Deadline
tcectexas.com/scholarship

10

**Director Nomination Application
Deadline**
tcectexas.com/director-elections

24

Little Black Dress Fashion Show
unitedwayofparkercounty.org

25

16th Annual Clay Shoot
azlechamber.com

NOTE: Events are subject to postponement or cancellation due to COVID-19 guidance. Please check the event resource for updates.

Interested in promoting your event in the next issue of *Texas Co-op Power*?
Email pr@tcectexas.com with the event name, date and where readers can find more information.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative

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CONTACT US

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Aledo, TX 76008

Phone 817-444-3201

Email customer_service@tcectexas.com

Web tcectexas.com

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Darryl Schriver

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John Killough, District 6 - Vice Chairman

Margaret Koprek, District 2 - Secretary/Treasurer

Kevin Ingle, District 1

Jorden Wood, District 3

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Larry Miller, District 7

Michael Sivertsen, District 8

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to report outages, please
contact us.

Online: oms.tcectexas.com

App: TCEC Connect

Phone: 817-444-3201

ABOUT TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

Tri-County Electric Co-op owns and maintains more than 9,600 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 99,800 members in Archer, Baylor, Denton, Foard, Haskell, Hood, Jack, King, Knox, Palo Pinto, Parker, Stonewall, Tarrant, Throckmorton, Wilbarger, and Wise counties.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Aledo

200 Bailey Ranch Road, Aledo 76008

Azle

600 NW Parkway, Azle 76020

Granbury

1623 Weatherford Highway, Granbury 76048

Keller

4900 Keller-Hicks Road, Fort Worth 76244

Seymour

419 N. Main, Seymour 76380

IT PAYS TO STAY INFORMED

Find your account number in pages 18-25 of *Texas Co-op Power*, and you will receive a \$20 credit on your electric bill. Simply contact one of the offices listed above and make them aware of your discovery!

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Pepperoncini Pot Roast

BY MARSHA DICKENS
GRANBURY

- 4 lb pot roast
- ½ stick butter
- 5 pepperoncini peppers
- 1 oz. packet ranch dressing mix
- 1 oz. packet brown gravy mix
- Potatoes and carrots, optional

1. Place roast in a slow cooker.
 2. Place butter and pepperoncini peppers on top of roast.
 3. Sprinkle the ranch dressing mix and brown gravy mix over the roast.
 4. Cook on low for 8 hours. Add potatoes and carrots during the last two hours.
- Enjoy!

COOK'S TIP: If you have a larger cut of meat, use two packs of dressing and two packets of gravy and a whole stick of butter.



Did you know you can sign up for text and email notifications?

Members can sign up to receive text and emails to stay up-to-date on your account or to receive special alerts.

Signing up is as easy as 1 - 2 - 3!

1. Log in to your online member portal or TCEC Connect
2. Go to "Notifications"
3. Set up your preferences for text and emails



Notification options:

- ▶ Daily Usage
- ▶ Bill Creation Notification
- ▶ Payment Receipt
- ▶ Due Date Reminder
- ▶ Special Alerts
- ▶ And More!

Never miss an update on your account with this member benefit.

Tri-County Electric Co-op Member Recipe Submission Form

MEMBER _____

CITY _____

EMAIL or PHONE NUMBER _____

RECIPE NAME _____

SUBMITTING YOUR RECIPE:

EMAIL: Please include the above information with your recipe and send to pr@tcectexas.com
ONLINE: tcectexas.com/recipe-submission
MAIL: Please detach and submit this form with your recipe and mail to:
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Attn: Recipe Submission
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Each year, millions of collectors and silver stackers around the world secure freshly struck American Eagle Silver Dollars. Minted in one Troy ounce of 99.9% pure U.S. silver, these legal-tender coins are hugely popular now, but may soon become even more popular! Keep reading to find out why.

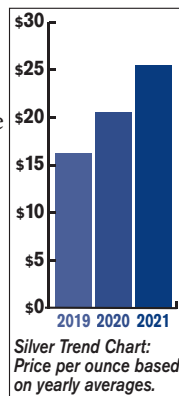
Higher Values + Slowed Production = DEMAND!

Over the last three years, average monthly values of silver bullion have increased nearly 57%! At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the U.S. Mint slowing production of freshly struck Silver Eagles and using branch mints to help increase supply, but only in limited quantities.

What This Means for You

Silver values are up, and silver is in high demand in the marketplace. In addition, many experts believe that the price of silver could continue to increase in the next 12 to 24 months. And while no one can accurately predict the future, there are two questions you should be asking yourself right now:

- 1) Do I own enough physical silver?
- 2) Which silver coins are right for me?



Guaranteed By the U.S. Government

These 2022 Silver Eagles have just been released by the U.S. Mint. They are guaranteed for weight and fineness by the U.S. government. They're the world's most liquid and secure one-ounce silver coins. They're also recognized around the world, making them easier to sell when the time is right if you make that decision in the future. Silver Eagles are the safest way to buy silver—period!

Don't Wait —

NOW Is the Time to Buy!

Last year, when the new design first became available, demand was high, and many paid a premium for Silver Eagles. Call now to lock in our low prices, and your 2022 U.S. Silver Dollars will ship directly to your door. Don't pay more for the 99.9% fine silver you want for you and your family. The more you buy, the more you save, plus receive a FREE U.S. Mint Tube when you buy 20 or more.



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4-9 Coins-	\$37.50 ea. + FREE SHIPPING
10-19 Coins-	\$37.25 ea. + FREE SHIPPING
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*Building prices are before freight and taxes.



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Queen Elizabeth II walks with Gov. Ann Richards.

TCP Listen to W.F. Strong read this story on our website.



Houston. She even took a ride on the San Antonio River on a beautifully decorated barge.

When Elizabeth arrived at Dallas' Love Field, she was greeted with strains of *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. The words to *God Save the Queen*, the British national anthem, were recited before the playing of the song so that the mostly Texan audience wouldn't sing *My Country 'Tis of Thee* to the familiar tune.

While in Dallas, she knighted Cecil Howard Green, an honorary title for the British-born founder of Texas Instruments and co-founder of the University of Texas campus there.

Prince Philip, the duke of Edinburgh, accompanied Elizabeth on the visit, part of their 13-day trip to the United States. Sitting next to him at the dinner commemorating the 150th anniversary of Dallas' founding was Louise Caldwell, president of the Dallas Historical Society. She remarked, "It was very hard to find anything that he didn't know more about than me, including Texas history."

The queen recounted the story in which a man tells his son: "Never ask a man where he's from. If he's from Texas, he'll tell you. Otherwise no use embarrassing him by asking."

At the Capitol, Gov. Ann Richards hosted the queen, and 8,000 people gathered to catch a glimpse. The queen declared, "No state commands such fierce pride and loyalty. Lesser mortals are pitied for their misfortune in not being born Texans." And she, the most traveled monarch in the world, knows what she's talking about. ■

Her Majesty's Visit

Queen Elizabeth II's 1991 trip to Texas was a momentous occasion

BY W.F. STRONG AND LUPITA STRONG

DURING HER 70-YEAR reign, Queen Elizabeth II has witnessed many of the world's pivotal events, and one honorable mention where she became the event is her 1991 two-day visit to the Lone Star State.

Elizabeth was the first British monarch to visit Texas, and Texans gave her an impressive tip of the Stetson. She loved it. She asked her U.S. chief of protocol, "Why didn't I come here sooner?"

Texas has long had a special relationship with Great Britain, one of the first nations to recognize the Republic of Texas. Texans even flirted with the notion of becoming part of the British Empire in the 1840s, but the U.S. had other plans.

Five years before the queen was here, her majesty's son, Charles, the Prince of Wales, came to Texas to help celebrate

the Texas sesquicentennial. He cut into the 45-ton world's largest birthday cake with a 3-foot sword. I mean, it was Texas; what else was he supposed to use?

At the Capitol, the prince was given a giant gavel. He laughed and said that it was the biggest he had ever had and "extremely appropriate coming from Texas." While touring San Jacinto later that week—it was February but warm—he remarked, "If it's this hot in the winter, I'd like to see what it's like in the summer."

Texas has had 14 kings, but it was a queen who was most celebrated by Texans. In May 1991, Elizabeth visited Austin, San Antonio, Dallas and Houston with an itinerary that included visits to the River Walk, the Alamo, NASA and Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in

Pasta

This most flexible staple anchors a variety of dishes and flavors

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Pasta has been a staple in our home for as long as I can remember. And why not? It's economical, filling and can be made into so many different dishes. Whether you have hungry kids in the house or just need something hearty on a cold night, there are plenty of options. This Pesto-Baked Penne is perfect for transforming leftover chicken and pesto into something new. You can easily make this recipe vegetarian by swapping in mushrooms or roasted winter squash for the chicken.

Pesto-Baked Penne

16 ounces penne pasta

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 cup ricotta cheese

⅓ cup pesto

2 tablespoons heavy cream or half-and-half

¼ cup chopped oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes

2 cups diced chicken

½ cup shredded mozzarella

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and coat a 9-by-13-inch casserole dish with cooking spray. Cook penne just to al dente, according to package directions. Reserve ¼ cup pasta water, drain and transfer to a large bowl. Toss pasta with olive oil and set aside.

2. In another bowl, stir together ricotta, pesto and cream until blended. Add reserved pasta water to thin, if desired. Pour sauce over pasta and stir well to coat. Stir in the tomatoes and chicken, then transfer to prepared dish. Sprinkle mozzarella on evenly.

3. Cover with foil and bake 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake another 5–10 minutes, until cheese on top is melted, if preferred.

SERVES 8

TCP Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Roasted Butternut Squash Lasagna.





Gleason Family Goulash

SAMANTHA GLEASON
BANDERA EC

This recipe is a great option for a make-ahead meal, as the flavors are even better the next day. In a clever trick, Gleason adds baking soda to help reduce the acidity from the tomatoes.

- 2 cups uncooked pasta (rotini, elbow or bow tie)**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic**
- 1 pound ground beef or turkey**
- 1 pound yellow squash or zucchini, diced**
- ½ sweet onion, chopped**
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano**
- 1 teaspoon dried sweet basil**
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning**
- ¾ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- 2 cans (14.5 ounces each) fire-roasted diced tomatoes, undrained**
- ¾ cup ketchup**
- 1 tablespoon sun-dried tomato paste**
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce**
- ½ cup water or beef broth**
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar**

1. Cook pasta in lightly salted water according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan or deep-sided skillet over medium heat, add olive oil and garlic and cook 2 minutes, stirring to prevent burning. Add ground beef and cook 5 minutes, then add squash and onion. Continue to cook until beef is browned, stirring as needed.

\$500 WINNER

Seafood Manicotti Alfredo

ANECIA HERO
COSERV



This seafood manicotti feels fancy but is easy enough to put together on a weeknight. It's important to not overcook the pasta and handle it gently so it doesn't tear, so consider cooking a few extra shells just in case.

SERVES 4



PASTA

- 8 manicotti shells**
- 8 ounces cooked shrimp, tails removed, diced**
- 4 ounces cooked crabmeat, flaked**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten**
- 1 cup ricotta cheese**
- ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese**
- ¼ cup shredded mozzarella cheese**
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- 1 teaspoon Creole seasoning**
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder**

SAUCE

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter**
- 1 cup heavy cream**
- 1¼ cups shredded Parmesan cheese**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**

1. **PASTA** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a 2-quart baking dish with cooking spray and set aside. Cook pasta in lightly salted boiling water for 7 minutes. Drain and transfer to a lightly greased baking sheet to cool.
2. In a large bowl, combine shrimp, crab, egg, ricotta, Parmesan, mozzarella, lemon juice, Creole seasoning and garlic powder. Stir until uniformly combined, then transfer to a piping bag or large zip-close bag. Cut off the bag tip and carefully pipe filling into cooked shells; fill one end of the shell, then the other. Transfer shells to prepared baking dish.
3. **SAUCE** In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, melt butter. Add heavy cream and Parmesan and cook, whisking often, until cheese is melted and sauce is thickened and smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Pour half of the sauce over the pasta, reserving the remaining sauce for serving. Cover dish with foil and bake 20 minutes. Serve with additional warmed sauce on top.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

STONE FRUITS DUE FEBRUARY 10

How do you turn peaches, plums, cherries and apricots into the stars of your kitchen? Submit your recipes online by February 10 for a chance to win \$500.



CONTINUED >

RECIPES CONTINUED

3. Stir in oregano, basil, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt and pepper, then stir in diced tomatoes with their juices, ketchup and tomato paste.

4. In a small bowl, whisk together tomato sauce, water, Worcestershire sauce and baking soda. Slowly add the mixture to the pan, stirring until foaming stops. Cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

5. Add cooked pasta and balsamic vinegar and stir well. Cover again and simmer another 10–15 minutes.

SERVES 8

Meaty Mexican Mac and Cheese

CHUCK BURGESS
HEART OF TEXAS EC

Perfect for those who love their mac and cheese fully loaded, Burgess' "3MC" gets its kick from a medley of favorite taco flavors. Make it as mild or as spicy as you like, with hot sauce and tortilla chips served on the side.



2 tablespoons vegetable or olive oil
1½ pounds lean ground beef
1 pound ground pork sausage
1 large onion, chopped
2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 can (10 ounces) Ro-Tel tomatoes, mild (or to taste)
½ cup salsa, mild (or to taste)
1 can (4 ounces) diced green chiles, mild (or to taste)
1 pound uncooked macaroni pasta
1 pound Queso Blanco Velveeta
10 ounces queso fresco, crumbled

1 cup Mexican crema or heavy cream
Pepper jack cheese, shredded

1. In a large pot with a lid over medium-high heat, heat oil, then add meats and onion. Cover and cook until meat is browned, stirring occasionally. Add salt, chili powder, tomatoes, salsa and chiles. Stir well and cook 10–15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2. Meanwhile, cook pasta to al dente according to package directions. Drain and return to original cooking pot; set aside.

3. In a microwave-safe bowl, add Velveeta, queso fresco and cream and microwave 3 minutes. Stir well and continue to cook in the microwave in 30-second increments, stirring after each time, until melted and smooth. (Or combine ingredients in a saucepan and melt over medium heat.)

4. Stir cheese sauce into macaroni to coat, then pour pasta into the meat mixture. Heat on low 5 minutes or until heated through, stirring to blend well. Serve with pepper jack cheese on top.

SERVES 8–10



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

A Glimpse of Buddy Holly

Lubbock museum honors native son's enduring musical legacy

BY CHET GARNER

I REMEMBER THE first time I heard Buddy Holly. My older brother bought the soundtrack from the film *Stand by Me*, and for weeks the song *Everyday* was stuck in my head. Soon I discovered *Peggy Sue*, *Rave On* and other classic hits. My feet have been tapping ever since.

It wasn't until decades later that I learned Holly was born and raised in Lubbock and that the world's best Buddy Holly museum sits in the heart of the Hub City.

The first thing I noticed as I turned off Crickets Avenue was a larger-than-life set of Holly's signature black-rimmed glasses. Holly once considered wearing contact lenses to help his rock star image, but contacts hurt his eyes and he needed glasses to see the crowd. That's a good thing, as the glasses became as much a part of his timeless look as the electric guitar in his hands. This is just one of many facts I learned inside Lubbock's Buddy Holly Center.

The museum is full of artifacts and a complete timeline of how a kid from Lubbock forged a new rock 'n' roll sound that changed the world. One display shows mementos from Holly's high school days, including his baseball mitt and Converse high-tops. Another display holds items from Buddy's rise to fame, including a tweed sports coat he wore on tour and a pair of super-hip suede shoes.

It's hard to believe that Holly's career lasted only a few years, cut short by a plane crash in Iowa. His black-rimmed glasses recovered from the wreckage now sit silently in a case at the end of the museum's timeline.

The center gives every generation a connection to the man and his music. As the title of one of his hit songs says, his legacy will *Not Fade Away*. ■

ABOVE Chet visits the Buddy Holly Center in Lubbock.

TCP Check out the Buddy Holly Center through Chet's eyes on our website. You'll want to see all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

FEBRUARY

10

Lufkin My Funny Valentine, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

Port Aransas Chocolate Crawl, (361) 749-5919, portaransas.org

Round Rock [10-13] Texas Basket Weavers Association Annual Conference, (512) 925-3596, texasbasketweavers.com

11

Fredericksburg [11-12] Luckenbach Hug-In & Valentine Ball, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

Port Lavaca [11-12] South Texas Square and Round Dance Association February Frenzy, (361) 575-2665, stsrda.org

Fredericksburg [11-13, 18-20, 25-27] Clue: The Musical, (830) 997-3588, fredericksburgtheater.org

12

Jefferson Queen Mab Ball, (903) 742-1405, mardigrasupriver.com

New Braunfels Love the Run You're With 5K, (830) 626-8786, athleteguild.com

Dallas [12, 19, 26] The Dinner Detective Murder Mystery Dinner Show, 1-866-496-0535, thedinnerdetective.com

15

Gladewater [15-March 15] Helen Lee Estate Daffodil Gardens, (903) 845-5180

17

West Tawakoni [17-19]
Catmasters Classic on Lake
Tawakoni, (325) 998-2191,
 thecatmasters.com

18

Brenham The Funniest
Night of Your Life With
Todd Oliver, (979) 337-7240,
 thebarnhillcenter.com

Brenham [18-19] Hearth
and Home Quilt Show,
 (979) 661-4761,
 friendshipquiltguild.weebly.com

Kerrville [18-19] Hill Country
Quilt Guild Winter Quilt
Show, (281) 974-6220,
 hillcountryquiltguild.com

Ozona [18-19] Ozona
Land Stewardship Blowout,
 (325) 392-3737

Fredericksburg [18-20]
Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,
 fbgradedays.com

Galveston [18-20, 25-27,
March 1] Mardi Gras!
Galveston, (409) 763-8676,
 galveston.com

Victoria [18-20, 24-27]
Ring of Fire, (361) 570-8587,
 theatrevictoria.org

19

Lake Jackson Bird Banding,
 (979) 480-0999, gcbo.org

Mesquite Daddy-Daughter
Dance, (972) 204-4925,
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Palacios African American
Heritage Day, (310) 650-9352,
 citybytheseamuseum.org

West Columbia Market
Day, (979) 345-4656,
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Nocona [19-26] Mardi
Gras Nocona Style,
 (940) 825-3526, nocona.org

MORE EVENTS >

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Pick of the Month

Texas Independence Day Celebration

Huntsville, March 2
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March 2 is Texas Independence Day and Sam Houston's birthday. Huntsville, where the Texas statesman is buried, and Sam Houston State University hold annual celebrations for the occasions, including a graveside ceremony.

25

La Grange [25-26] Best Little Quilt Show in Texas, (979) 242-3514, coloradovalleyqg.com

Lubbock [25-26] Friends of the Lubbock Library Last Friday BookStore, (806) 775-2852, lubbockfol.org

26

Granbury JazzFest, (650) 265-1193, granburyjazzfest.com

Henderson Mardi Gras Gumbo Cook-Off, (903) 392-0691, visithendersontx.com

Irving Irving Symphony Orchestra: Musical Treasures From the World, (972) 831-8818, irvingsymphony.org

27

Lufkin Croce Plays Croce, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

MARCH

FEBRUARY EVENTS CONTINUED

20

Fredericksburg Lone Star Brass, (830) 997-6523, fredericksburgmusicclub.com

23

Lufkin [23-24] Rob Schneider, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

24

Corsicana The Magic of Bill Blagg, (903) 874-7792, corsicanapalace.com

Kerrville Symphony of the Hills: Heart of the Strings, (830) 792-7469, symphonyofthehills.org

Port Aransas [24-27] Whooping Crane Festival, (361) 749-5919, portaransas.org/whooping-crane-festival

04

Fredericksburg Texas A&M Singing Cadets, (830) 997-3588, fredericksburgtheater.org

Lubbock [4-5] Lubbock Area Square and Round Dance Federation Conclave Dance, (806) 786-8589, squaredancelubbocktx.com

05

Kerrville Looking Back with John Moore, (830) 896-8976, lookingbackjm22@gmail.com

06

Lufkin Bella Gaia, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

Orange Fiddler on the Roof, (409) 886-5535, lutch.org

Public Art

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—Charles Schulz, creator of the *Peanuts* comic strip

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1 STEPHANIE EHLERT
GREENBELT EC

"I found this beauty driving through Brady."

2 GLENN TIMMONS
SOUTH PLAINS EC

Parking meter art east of Lubbock.

3 DEBRA CZERNY
BLUEBONNET EC

Tom Besson painted this mural in downtown Elgin.

4 CARMEN GALLO
PEDERNALES EC

A recycled bicycle at Yellow Bike Project in Austin.



Upcoming Contests

DUE FEB 10 Industrial
DUE MAR 10 Morning Glory
DUE APR 10 Motorsports



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TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for more Public Art photos from readers.



The Muse in Museum

Artistic inspiration abounds in the comfort of the Kimbell Café

BY BABS RODRIGUEZ
ILLUSTRATION BY LAURA LIEDO

WHEN I TRAVEL, I seek out museums. As a writer always in search of a quiet place where my laptop is welcome, museum cafés help me meet deadlines and recharge in ways coffeehouse clatter never could.

The atmosphere of a good museum café pulls me out of time and settles me in a world—my chair, stool or booth—literally surrounded by artistic inspiration. Masterpieces a glance away, these settling-in spots are elevated musing favorites for any number of reasons: They are sure to be more subdued than the average coffee shop; the people-watching is stellar; and there's a hum in the atmosphere that inspires some of my best thinking.

Why it took me decades of courting the creativity muse in distant cafés only to discover I could have coffee with her

in my hometown of Fort Worth, I do not know. I do remember the moment it occurred to me that I had too long overlooked such a prime location for contemplation. Just before Christmas one year, I stopped at the Kimbell Art Museum for a gift shop run. I plodded up the broad limestone steps to the gallery level, overwhelmed by obligations, my head full of deadlines.

Drawn into the light that fills Louis I. Kahn's vaulted masterpiece, I headed straight for the Kimbell Café. From my seat I could see Aristide Maillol's *L'Air*, a bronze female figure, floating in a courtyard. European masterworks beckoned from across the corridor. Immediately I was transported. That's the other bonus that comes from stopping into a hometown museum: There is a sense of excitement that I associate with travel. Without planes or trains, I can step out of the workaday world and feel I am on a journey—even when I'm less than a mile from home.

Seated beneath fragments of a sixth-century mosaic, cupping my warm coffee mug, I realized I was steps away from Michelangelo's first known painting. And just like that, I lay my burdens down.

Now I return regularly to the Kimbell's café for creative therapy. I can energize myself in 10 minutes or 20, view one painting or a dozen, before or after my coffee. Or I can simply sit quietly. No entrance fee and no passport required.

And while the soup-and-sandwich lunch options are dependably tasty, a post-pandemic offering of an afternoon tea service takes me to happy memories served up abroad. It also offers up my favorite sort of nibbling—scones with housemade jam, finger sandwiches, cookies—and because it's served as “tea for two,” I'm sometimes inspired to share with a friend.

That is, of course, when I'm not meeting my muse. ■



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