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FEBRUARY 2023

Sly Catchers

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carnivorous plants
trap and feast
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**TRI-COUNTY
EC NEWS**

SEE PAGE 18

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February 2023



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Four of the five species of carnivorous plants in the U.S. are found in the Big Thicket.

*By Pam LeBlanc
Photos by Dave Shafer*

Breaking Up

Sailors offer bon voyage and watch the USS Kitty Hawk's final journey—to a South Texas recycling yard.

*By Eileen Mattei
Photos by John Faulk*

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ON THE COVER

A pitcher plant awaits its next meal.

Photo by Dave Shafer

ABOVE

Bob Hope entertains aboard the USS Kitty Hawk in the Philippines in 1962.

Photo by Corbis | Getty Images

Walk This Way

HOW'S THIS for a carbon footprint?

The state's severe drought last summer mostly dried up the Paluxy River that runs through Dinosaur Valley State Park, exposing dinosaur tracks from around 113 million years ago.

Scientists say 15-foot-tall *Acrocanthosaurus* left tracks in sediment that hardened into what is now limestone in the park, about 60 miles southwest of Fort Worth.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE RAINY DAYS MAKE ME ...

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: **I can't believe I used to wear ...**

Bib overalls, no shirt, a straw hat and I went barefoot.

OTIS LINAM
VICTORIA EC
VICTORIA

Blue suede cowboy boots.

LEON CASTANEDA JR.
PANOLA-HARRISON EC
MARSHALL

White lipstick in the '60s—and we thought we looked good.

GWEN SPIESS
BLUEBONNET EC
BRENNHAM

Underwear with no slot in front—made by my mom from flour sacks.

JACK HOWARD
WOOD COUNTY EC
WINNSBORO

Parachute pants.

GLENN QUESENBERRY
HAMILTON COUNTY EC
HICO

Leisure suits and platform shoes.

JOHN MONK
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES
GODLEY

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what he can do
until he tries.”

—CARTER G. WOODSON

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988 Saves Lives

PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP or counseling in a crisis can now call or text 988 to reach the national suicide prevention lifeline from anywhere in the U.S. The hope is that the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline becomes synonymous with mental health care, just as 911 is with public safety.

Suicide rates in rural America were 18.9 per 100,000 people compared to 13.2 in urban areas in 2021, according to the National Institutes of Health. And the difference in suicide rates between rural and urban areas widened between 1999 and 2019.

Stress and anxiety from raising crops or livestock, depression from being in a remote setting, and the stigmatization of mental illness are factors that sometimes lead to suicidal thoughts, according to Rural Health Information.



A Raw Deal

“My mom would make meatloaf, and once all the seasoning was mixed in, she and I would eat a tiny bite before she cooked it.”

BROOKE ZUCHA
VIA FACEBOOK

Fish Fanfare

Nowadays the accepted way to display a bass is to grip it by the lower jaw and allow it to hang perfectly vertical [*Lakes' Allure*, November 2022]. Alternatively, you can grip the lower jaw and support it under the belly if you want to display it horizontally.

In either case, you *do not* want to twist the fish's jaw to force it open, as the two anglers on Page 14 [below] seem to be doing.

Alan Buckner
CoServ
The Colony

These events have exploded in popularity in the past 8–10 years and offer a great experience for many kids who don't play traditional sports. You mentioned a few of the organizations but left out the Southeast Texas High School Fishing Association.

Randy Hanna
Houston County EC
Zavalla

I like a rare steak, but I'm not sure I could try this [*A Raw Deal*, December 2022].

JANELLE
OVERHOUSE
VIA FACEBOOK



COURTESY JULIAN CLEPPER

The Wonder of Waylon

The Arable Twos [November 2022] was happy, positive, beautifully written and, for me, quite uplifting. I could picture Waylon doing all those things Martha Deeringer so perfectly described. It had me smiling the entire time.

Art Farias
Pedernales EC
Lampasas

We raised our two boys this way (in Ohio, not Texas), and I know this is how children become accomplished and confident men and women. Adults, no matter what job they hold, have the roots that built them strong from childhood.

The story is worded so profoundly that it brought tears to my eyes.

Jody Brown
Tri-County EC
Perrin

Under His Guidance

In 1980, Bill Steele took our coed Scout Explorer post and a few of us sponsors on a winter trip to Bustamante, Nuevo León, Mexico, to explore the caves there [*Uncharted Territory*, October 2022]. We learned so much and have many great memories of that trip.

Ed Palmer
Pedernales EC
Dripping Springs

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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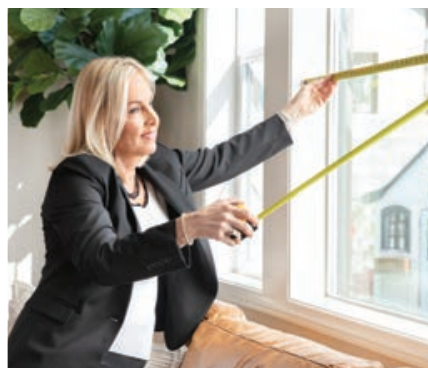
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Caught Cuisine

The Big Thicket's four species of carnivorous plants entice then consume unwary insects

Hundreds of slender, funnel-shaped plants line a boardwalk at Big Thicket National Preserve, where I'm trailing biologist Andrew Bennett on a warm April morning.

They look hungry.

The lime green, red-veined throats of the foot-tall plants gape, like baby birds awaiting a worm delivery from a parent. But these unusual plants have other plans for dinner: unsuspecting insects.

Four of the five types of carnivorous plants that grow in North America—the pitcher plants we're now admiring, along with sundews, bladderworts and butterworts—are found here and elsewhere in East Texas. (Venus' flytraps, whose eating parts resemble a hinged lima bean with teeth, don't grow in Texas; they're endemic to the Carolinas.)

I'm on a quest to find all four Texas natives, and Bennett, acting chief of resource management at Big Thicket, has offered his help.

We're off to a good start. We have no trouble finding these trumpet-shaped pitcher plants, which grow by the thousands along the mile-long, aptly named Pitcher Plant Trail in the Turkey Creek Unit of the 113,000-acre preserve.

Carnivorous plants, Bennett says, thrive in soils that are low in nutrients. They're not endangered, but they do require a very specific habitat, and these East Texas bogs provide it.

First, pitcher plants need wetlands. The groundwater in this part of the preserve is close to the surface, so the ground tends to stay wet. They also need periodic fire, to create a more open understory and to recycle nutrients into the soil. Rangers at the Big Thicket use prescribed burns to do that. And finally, they need insects, which provide nutrients in soils without much nitrogen. The Big Thicket has no shortage of those.

For some people, carnivorous plants call to mind the off-Broadway show *Little Shop of Horrors*, based on a 1960 film about a ravenous bit of vegetation. Audrey Jr., as it was called in the original film (it was remade in the 1980s), was a



cross between a Venus' flytrap and a butterwort, and it needed human blood—not just a few insects—to survive.

Unlike Audrey Jr., pitcher plants don't feed on humans. They don't use quick movements to hunt their food, either. And they're a lot smaller than the theatrical version of the plant.

Insects are attracted to pitcher plants because of their color, nectar and scent. When a bug lands on the waxy lip of the plant's funnel, it slides down into the tube, where downward-pointing hairs keep it from climbing out and

OPPOSITE Pitcher plants grow by the thousands in Big Thicket National Preserve in East Texas. ABOVE The entrance to the preserve's Pitcher Plant Trail is outside the town of Warren.





escaping. Eventually, it winds up in a tiny pool of fluid at the bottom of the funnel. Enzymes in that fluid slowly eat away at the wasps, ants and other foraging insects that land there, and the plant absorbs nutrients from the “bug soup.” Cut one open and you might find several disintegrating insects stacked up inside it.

During our walk, the sun lights up the pitcher plants like rows of bright green candles. Bennett and I admire them for a while, strolling up and down the boardwalk. Then he leans over, pointing out something low to the ground. I follow his finger and see it: a small, roundish plant hugging the ground. It’s made up of small arms, each one tipped with a fingernail-sized fleshy paddle flocked in glistening red hairs. Those hairs secrete a sticky substance—and beware any insect that sets foot in it. The sundew, like the pitcher plant, uses enzymes to slowly absorb any prey that gets caught.

The best time to see both plants is late April and May.

“It seems like people always expect them to be a lot bigger, especially sundews, or to trap more actively, like Venus’ flytraps do,” Bennett says. “These are more passive. They wait for bugs to fall in or get stuck.”

Still, they’re charismatic plants, and this concentration of them is among the largest in the U.S.

“I don’t know of a bigger stand in Texas,” Bennett says.

With pitcher plants and sundews checked off our list, Bennett and I head back to our trucks to continue our hunt.

It’s a 20-minute drive to our next stop down a quiet, narrow road inside the preserve, where we pull off and squirt a little bug spray on our ankles to fend off the mosquitoes before striking out into the forest.

The going is slow. There’s no trail to follow here, so we slog our way through thick underbrush and around tall trees. Everything looks the same to me, and it’s hard to maintain a straight line, so Bennett consults his GPS. He knows the exact coordinates of where we’ll find the bladderwort.

At one point a flash of movement catches my eye, and I spring back just in time to avoid a copperhead, a venomous pit viper with beautiful gray and rust-colored markings. The snake blends into the ground cover so well that it disappears from sight a moment later.

Soon we reach a swamp the size of a baseball diamond. The ground squishes underfoot at its edges, and the place smells organic and earthy. Emerald-colored moss covers logs like velvet, and tannins have turned the shallow water the color of tea. A barred owl hoots in the distance. The whole place feels primordial. I wouldn’t be surprised to see a dinosaur emerge from the gloom.

A shaft or two of light filters through the leaves into the bog in front of us, where tupelo trees stand knee-deep in the water. Bennett, who is wearing boots, sloshes in. A moment later, he’s found what he’s looking for.

Bladderwort, which looks like delicate strands of dill fringed with clusters of pinhead-sized balls, floats on the surface of the brown water. Those tiny balls are the plant’s namesake bladders, and they not only keep the plant afloat; they trap the tiny aquatic bugs that it needs to survive.

Biologist Andrew Bennett scoops bladderwort from a swamp.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Tiny, colorful sundews use enzymes to absorb insects that get trapped in their glistening hairs. Delicate strands of bladderwort. The elusive butterwort escaped the author's eye, but our photographer spotted one.

And unlike the pitcher plants, which passively trap their food, the bladderwort moves using a reflexive process called thigmotropism. As insects are lured into openings on the tiny bladders, they close, trapping the prey inside.

That leaves just one plant on my checklist: The wily and elusive butterwort.

This time, we're out of luck. We can't find any of the plants, with their taco-shaped leaves dotted with droplets of

TAKE A HIKE

If you want to examine East Texas' flesh-eating flora, hit these trails.

The Pitcher Plant Trail in the Big Thicket National Preserve's Turkey Creek Unit is a 1-mile loop about 40 miles north of Beaumont that's free to the public.

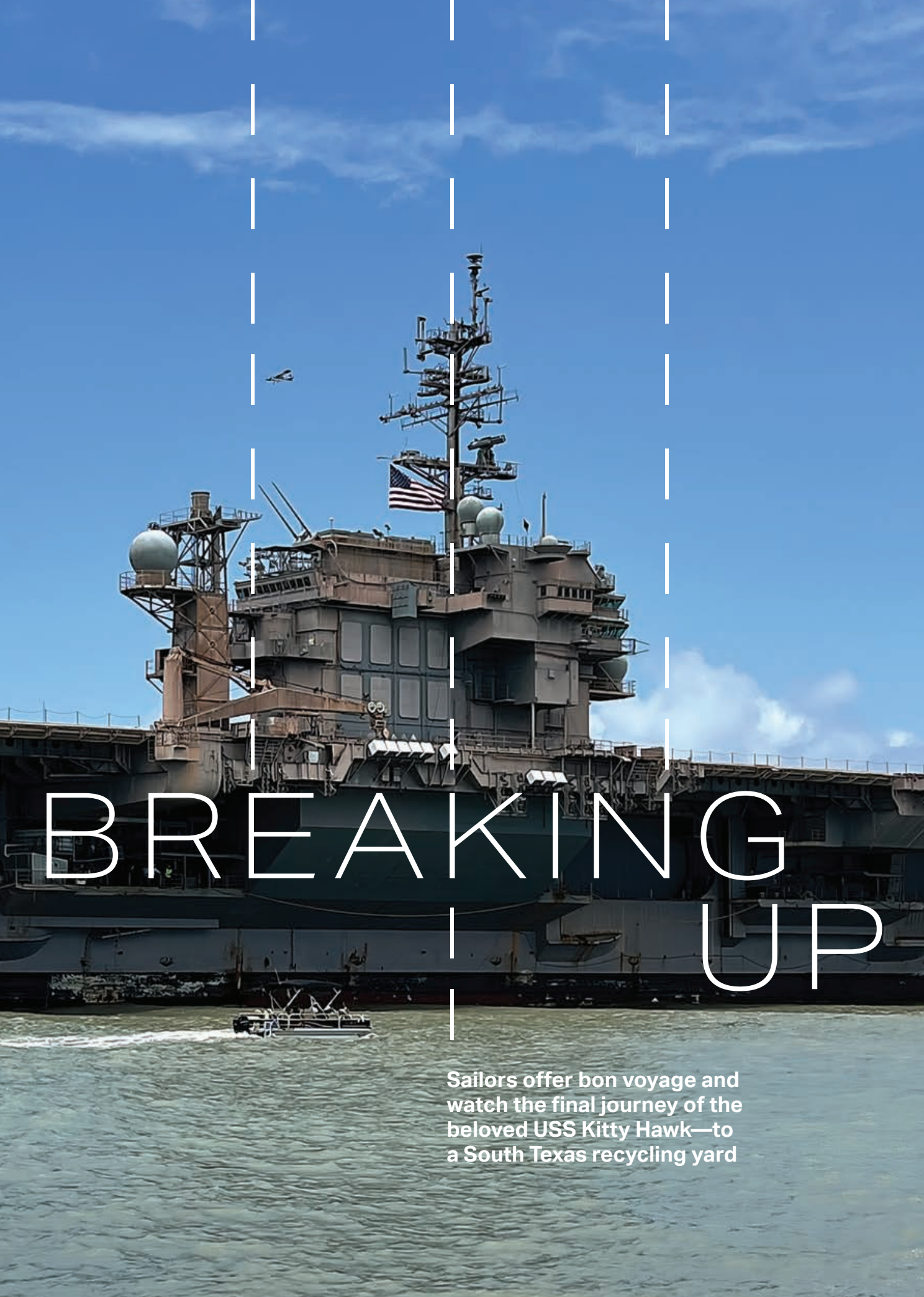
The Nature Conservancy's Roy E. Larsen Sandyland Sanctuary is just down the road. The 6 miles of trails there are also free to access.



sticky ooze. Bugs looking for water get stuck in the butterwort's secretions, triggering enzymes that break down their soft body parts.

That's OK. Now I have another reason to return to East Texas: to continue my search for these unusual little plants.

I glance at the vegetation around me. Until now, I've thought of all these flowers, bushes, trees and vines as a sort of soft green wallpaper to the outdoors. Now, the carnivorous ways of some of these plants have given me a new jolt of respect. ■



BREAKING UP

Sailors offer bon voyage and watch the final journey of the beloved USS Kitty Hawk—to a South Texas recycling yard

David Gross stands among about 5,000 men and women who served on the USS Kitty Hawk between 1961 and 2009 as the towering super-carrier is towed through Brazos Santiago Pass.

They're crowded onto South Padre Island's south shore to pay their respects and reminisce about the extraordinary aircraft carrier that had been their home away from home.

That home moved around: Vietnam and Afghanistan, in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea, but mostly in the western Pacific, until it was retired 14 years ago as the last conventionally powered American carrier. But today, after 48 years of active service, the decommissioned ship arrived at the Port of Brownsville, never to sail again.

Watching the Kitty Hawk head to the recycling yard is "kind of like having the house you grew up in torn down," says Gross, who came from San Diego to see the carrier one last time. He served as a roof rat—part of the flight deck crew—40 years ago.

Veterans—from the Silent Generation, baby boomers, Gen Xers and millennials—roar in pride and appreciation as Gross raps out a long, proud tribute: "We are the Kitty, and we ride the back of a Hawk. We were young. We were strong, working day and night long—12 on and 12 off, jet exhaust we did cough. Yeah, we're the crew of the Kitty, and we walk the walk."

OCEANFRONT HOME

The Kitty Hawk, a small floating city (population 5,280) with a major airport, housed the ship's company, deployed air wing and the admiral's staff. Essential duties of those onboard ranged from air traffic controller, jet mechanic, roof rat and parachute rigger to pilot, electrician and cook working in 12-hour shifts. Many sailors were teenagers when they first came aboard and formed enduring bonds with their ship and shipmates.

"The Kitty was by far my favorite ship. Everyone had a can-do attitude," says Gordon Wilcox, a 21-year veteran who served two tours on the carrier. The Alvarado resident and United Cooperative Services member initially photographed shipboard events for news releases. Later he worked with reconnaissance cameras used by pilots.

Aviation electrician A.J. Reynolds served two tours on the carrier. "I was 18 or 19 when I first went on the Kitty Hawk," says the Bandera Electric Cooperative member. "It was special. I'll never forget it."

OPPOSITE The USS Kitty Hawk, home to 130,000 sailors in its history, sails in Texas waters for its final journey. ABOVE Sailors wave American flags as the supercarrier returned to a Japanese port in 2003 after operations in the Persian Gulf.



His sentiment was echoed by Joseph Houck of Somerset, who was aboard 1989–93. He came to South Padre to see the first ship on which he had served and recalled watching dolphins racing alongside as the carrier reached 30 knots. "For fun, we had roller chair derbies during sea trials," he says.

Jet engines once roared as catapults launched Phantoms, A-6s and Hawkeyes from the carrier's short deck. Coupled with the shrill whines of fighters and reconnaissance planes landing and coming to abrupt stops as their tail hooks caught a cable on the deck, sailors' attempts at sleeping could get complicated.

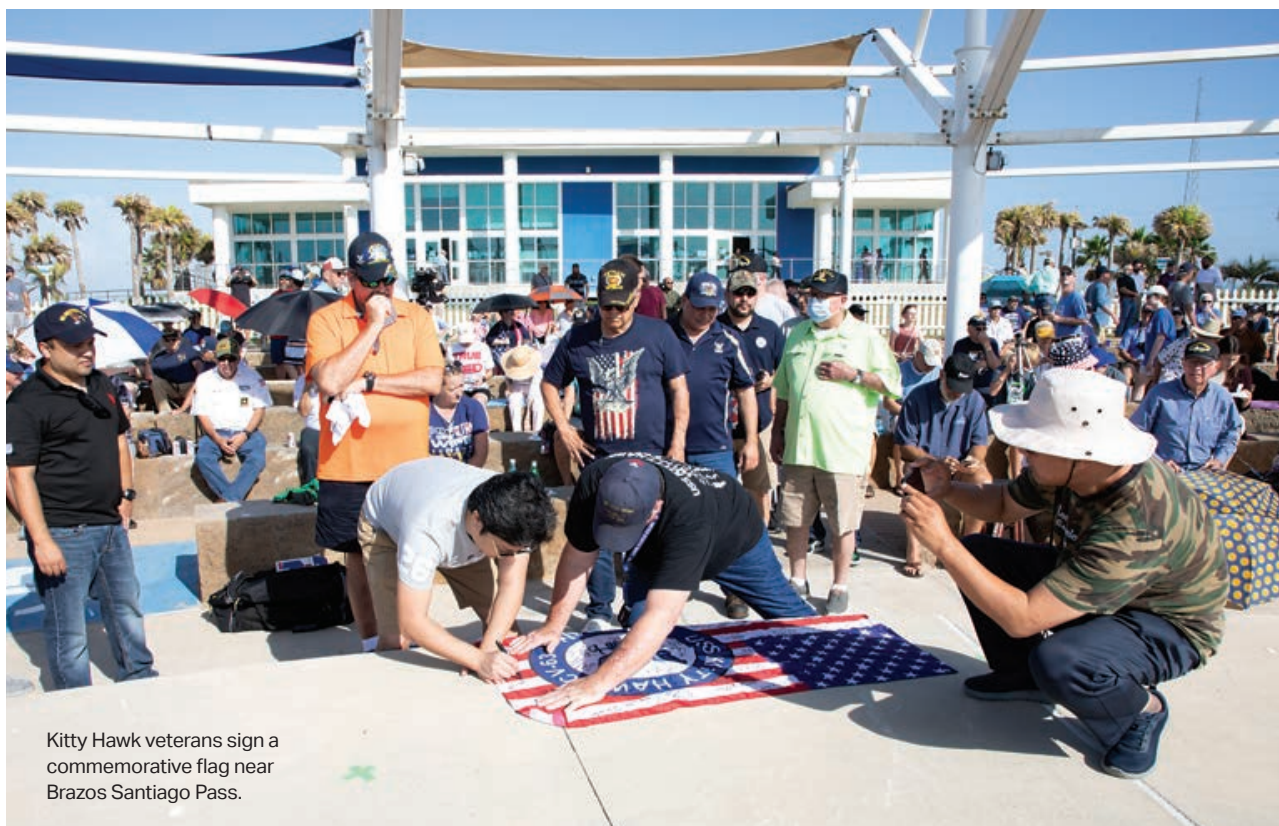
Another complication occurred in March 1984, when a nosy Soviet sub passed directly in front of the Kitty Hawk in the Sea of Japan. The carrier plowed over the nuclear vessel, which rolled underneath it. The sub remained mostly intact but left behind a propeller in the carrier's bow, a Cold War triumph still celebrated by the Kitty's crew. Sailors fondly remembered, too, the superb seamanship of the captain who heeled over the Kitty Hawk to pass under the Golden Gate Bridge without taking off the antennas.

Rich Orth was onboard for the Kitty Hawk's first voyage around the Horn of Africa in 1961, and he was among the 68 civilians invited on board for its last powered cruise, from San Diego to a reserve fleet at Bremerton, Washington. "It was a different Navy back then," he says. "Nothing compared to the Hawk."

GONE FROM SIGHT

Looming 140 feet above the water, taller than most island condo buildings, the Kitty Hawk slid past its devotees May 31, 2022, en route to the Brownsville Ship Channel while tour boats and fishing boats flitted around it like tiny remoras nibbling on a whale.

The Kitty Hawk came to rest at International Shipbreaking Limited after being towed almost 17,000 miles from Bremerton. ISL is one of three companies in the U.S., all in Brownsville, that meet the strict environmental, safety and health standards required to dismantle Navy and U.S.-flagged ships. ISL counts the aircraft carriers Independence, Ranger and Constellation among more than 80 U.S. Navy and Maritime



Kitty Hawk veterans sign a commemorative flag near Brazos Santiago Pass.

Administration vessels it has recycled since 1995.

ISL has a service contract with the Navy for each ship, secured by a penny payment, says Bob Berry, the company's co-founder and vice president. "We don't own the ship." But once pieces are cut up and set on the ground, they do own the salvaged metal. "Salvage material goes out by barge, rail and truck all over the world, depending on the best prices on the steel scrap market," he says. Armored steel plating, made with special alloys, is destined for a Pennsylvania mill that will remake it for use in other Navy ships.

By May 2024, 60,000 tons of metal (a remarkable 95% of the ship) will have been recycled from the Kitty Hawk, according to Berry. "We've done enough ships that we know exactly how much metal comes out," he says. With all their stainless and structural steel, aluminum, brass, and copper, ships are among the most recyclable manufactured products. (Cars are 65% recyclable.)

A monitor over Berry's desk shows views of the busy, noisy 80-acre recycling yard. He explained the Kitty Hawk first underwent environmental and safety inspections before a contractor removed asbestos and flammable materials. Then rectangles, 8 feet by 10 feet, were cut into the hull superstructure and folded outward like a sardine can lid to provide work crews with natural light and ventilation. After removing wiring and pipes for recycling, ISL employees use cutting torches to break up the 1,047-foot-long ship into sections.

Gawky cranes with giant magnets and grapples remove modular sections of the ship in the reverse order of their assembly 60-plus years ago at a New Jersey shipyard. The

towering structure known as the island, or mast, was the first section cut loose and lowered to the ground. The sections swung from the ship to shore weigh up to 10 tons each. Hydraulic shears and torches reduce the metals to manageable chunks. The carrier's four main steam-driven engines, which supplied up to 100,000 horsepower each, must be cut into segments before removal. Armaments are demilitarized and then cut into unidentifiable pieces.

Watching the Kitty Hawk head to the recycling yard is "kind of like having the house you grew up in torn down."

ISL donated switches and gauges from the Kitty Hawk to the USS Lexington Museum in Corpus Christi.

While former Kitty Hawk sailors and aviators had hoped the carrier would become a museum, they can console themselves with challenge coins cut from its brass and available from ISL. Hefty chunks of the flight deck have been cut into brick-sized mementos as well.

The public can see the dismantling progress only during the winter months, when South Padre tour companies offer ship channel cruises. The Kitty Hawk and the USS John F. Kennedy are among the eight ships ISL is breaking up in 2023.

"With the remaking of her earthly frame, her spirit will live on," says Chris Green, ISL president.

After the carrier reached its final mooring, one former sailor remarked on Facebook, "She got to go out with her kids all around her showing their love." ■



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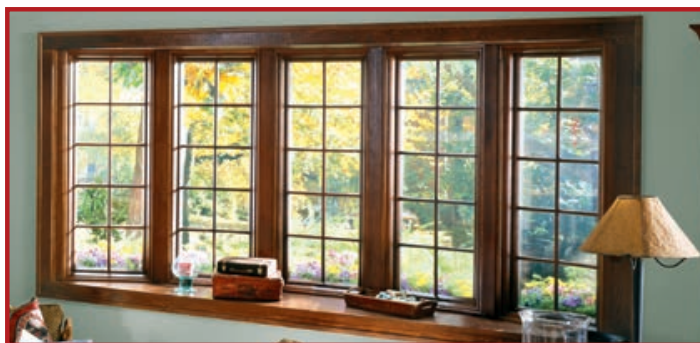
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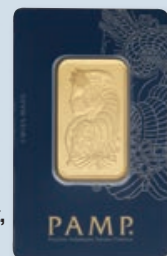
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**DARRYL
SCHRIVER**

PRESIDENT/
CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

THE WAY FORWARD

FOR SEVERAL MONTHS I HAVE written about power costs. Natural gas is the predominant fuel source in Texas to generate electricity, resulting in a direct correlation between increased natural gas prices and the cost of electricity. Texans, including you as a Tri-County Electric Co-op member, have felt the impacts of the natural gas prices on your electric bill. Since Winter Storm Uri, natural gas prices have increased to levels we have not seen in nearly eight years. From June 2021 to June 2022, natural gas prices increased from \$3 per MMBtu to over \$8.50 per MMBtu. Many of you have stated your bill doubled or tripled in 2022, and this drastic increase shows why. 80058907

This impact goes beyond Tri-County Electric Co-op and other electric cooperatives and providers in Texas. High prices impact the entire nation. Various factors contributed to the national increase, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Winter Storm Uri, and supply chain issues. All these factors impact the cost of power we purchase from Brazos Electric Power Cooperative. Unfortunately, natural gas prices and cost of electricity are not really going down.

As a distribution cooperative, we do not generate power. Your power is purchased through the all-requirements contract with Brazos and is passed on to you at our cost, without any markup. Over the past few months, we have purchased wholesale power at more than 11 cents per kWh. In December, our wholesale purchased power was at more than 12 cents per kWh, meaning more than 84% of the electric bill for the average member using 1,500 kWh went to power costs. To put that in perspective, the average electric provider spends 60-65% of the bill on power supply.

WHAT WE ARE DOING TO HELP

The unexpected and significant increases in natural gas stimulated volatility in power costs causing swings in PCRf on billing statements. You asked for rate stabilization and in October 2022 the kWh rate was adjusted to reflect market conditions allowing us to rely less on PCRf.

Tri-County Electric Co-op is your co-op. The member service team at your co-op is here to help you understand your bill and find ways to help lower your use. We also have energy-saving tips on our website at tcectexas.com/energy-efficiency and post regular tips on our Facebook page. Additionally, we are doing what we can to cut operational costs while still maintaining the level of service you deserve and expect.

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

The board of directors and leadership team continuously monitors natural gas prices, electricity costs and the impact on you as a member. We had little control over power costs due to our all-requirements contract with Brazos. Starting March 1, 2023, we have power supply freedom, meaning we can go to the ERCOT market and procure our own power. The board and leadership team have been working with consultants to find solutions that are best for you, the member. We are hopeful that the work we are doing will help power costs decrease over the coming months as we make our own power supply decisions. As always, I will do my best to keep you updated through the process. We are in this together.



Left: At a recent board meeting, the board and I had an in-depth conversation on the future of power supply for our co-op.

2023 DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

THE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MODEL IS strong thanks to the seven cooperative principles and the ties to the local communities we serve. Your co-op is not run and operated by executives who seek to make the biggest profit for their far-off investors. Tri-County Electric Cooperative is owned and governed by local members of the co-op. The nine-member board of directors serves as the governing and regulatory body and is composed of members from throughout the service territory. The nine director seats represent each area of our diverse membership, including four urban districts, four suburban districts and one rural district.

Each year, one-third of the board seats are elected by the entire membership, nearly 104,000 members strong. This year, director districts 1, 2 and 4 will be on the ballot in September. District maps are available at tcectexas.com/director-elections.

- District 1, urban district
- District 2, urban district
- District 4, suburban district

Members who reside in these districts, are interested in serving their co-op, and meet the director qualifications outlined in the cooperative's bylaws may submit a director nomination application packet. Tri-County Electric Co-op offers two paths to the ballot: through the Committee on Nominations & Qualifications or through member petition. Members are encouraged to review the following documents to understand the cooperative's director nomination process, director election process, and director qualifications:

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

NOMINATION BY COMMITTEE

Members interested in seeking nomination through the Committee on Nominations & Qualifications must submit a complete nomination application packet by 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 9, 2023. A complete director nomination application packet must include all items listed on the application checklist. The Committee on Nominations & Qualifications will accept and review all applications for nomination by committee and recommend a slate of candidates to the board of directors. 800637705

NOMINATION BY PETITION

Members interested in seeking nomination through member petition must submit a complete nomination application packet by 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 13, 2023. A complete director nomination application packet must include all items listed on the application checklist. The co-op's attorney will accept and review all applications for nomination by petition and recommend a slate of candidates to the board of directors. Members can find all director nomination and election details, the director nomination application packets, the co-op's bylaws, and the co-op's Election Policy & Procedures online at, tcectexas.com/director-elections

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Meeting Notice
Monday, March 13
5 p.m.

The Committee on Nominations and Qualifications will meet at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 13, 2023, at the co-op's Aledo office to accept and review applications from director candidates seeking nomination through the committee for districts 1, 2 and 4. The committee will recommend a slate of candidates to the board of directors and report the recommendation to the membership in the June *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.



IRON SHARPENS IRON

Coach Malaki teaches much more than boxing

BY BOB BUCKEL, COMMUNICATIONS
CONTENT SPECIALIST

Brooklyn native Malaki Abdul-Malik is many things: husband, father, entrepreneur, citizen of the Keller community, role model. He's a former police officer and a certified USA Boxing instructor. And by nature, by profession and by choice, he's a coach.

You don't have to hang around him long to learn that.

Malaki and Britny, his wife and partner, are members of Tri-County Electric Co-op at work and at home. They own and operate Keller Boxing Club, a clean, well-equipped gym in an industrial building at 12057 Katy Road. There's no sign, but it's easy to find – just look for the big truck tires out front.

Yeah. His students flip those over as part of their workout.

"In boxing we don't use a lot of weights," he said. "We do more calisthenic stuff, body-weight exercises, pullups, pushups, resistance bands. Lots of cardio. Tons of squats. 800714537

"It's essential training. It's great discipline for your life."

The gym started in their garage. They wanted to work out, and they wanted their kids – ages 21, 20, 10, 9, 8 and 1 – to be with them, not in a daycare. Boxing training offered them participation. It worked so well, they decided to go public.

Keller Boxing Club has members from a wide range of ages: seniors, parents and kids, teens to toddlers. All are welcome, but this is not a cuddly place.

"I don't encourage anyone who thinks that this is something you could do quick," Malaki said. "There's no trophies given out here. We don't have belts or stuff like that. This is work."

Nevertheless, the family aspect makes Keller Boxing Club unique.

"It's good for the kids to see their parents work out," Malaki said. "We are the only boxing club where the parents and the kids work out simultaneously."

As Britny notes, it goes beyond that.

"Our kids inspire me to keep going, because they're watching," she said. "They love us so much and they look up to us – we wanted to give them something more than just being good parents. We want to show them what it looks like to step out on your own."



FAMILY, FITNESS & JABS

“Training a boxer wasn’t a challenge for me,” Malaki said. “Taking somebody who did not know how to box, did not know anything about fitness, that’s what I like. That’s how Keller Boxing Club happened.”

They opened in 2019 and were building momentum when the COVID pandemic shut almost everything down. It was tough, but they survived. And as restrictions started lifting, folks began looking for a place to work out – and work out their frustrations.

Turns out, a few rounds with the speed bag does wonders.

“We see a lot of business professionals,” Malaki said. “It’s a great way to get those mental blocks out before they go into a meeting or something.”



In addition to classes for all ages, the club offers private training, with a client list that includes corporate officers and professional athletes.

As we talked, kids began to filter in for the next class. Each one was greeted by name and encouraged to grab a jump rope and get warm.

“We start at five years old and introduce the mechanics of movement, how does your body work, how to do a proper pushup, how to do a proper jumping jack, how you jump rope,” Malaki said. “If jump rope is the hardest thing for you, well, we’re going to get that. That’s my job – to make you better.”

“Everybody comes here not knowing something.”

Although he has coached a Golden Gloves champion, Malaki

doesn’t push his students to compete. He coaches fitness and teaches boxing – how to punch, how to slip punches, how to move and dance around the ring. The ring is a laboratory where they can see what they’ve learned – but the real victory comes when students find strength and stamina within themselves that they didn’t know they had.

Like a jab, a hook or an uppercut, Malaki’s coaching is a deft combination of knowing when to push people and when to back off.

BULLIES WELCOME

Keller Boxing Club gets kids who’ve been bullied, whose parents want them to learn a skill that will help them stand up for themselves. They also get some bullies – and those kids are in for a surprise.

“We turn that around,” Malaki said. “If we see kids getting bullied in here, the bully holds the bag. We put that kid in a teaching role. This is responsibility, right here. Anybody can pick on somebody who’s small. That’s easy. This is hard.”

Sparring gives students an opportunity to put their fitness and training to the test.

“Moving off the bag is a whole different training,” he said. “The bag is not punching back. Now it’s about who’s been listening.”

Anyone familiar with boxing knows that “boxing shape” is several levels above what many people consider being “in shape.” The running, the workouts, the agility drills and nutrition are designed to help students achieve a high level of fitness. 7000011201

“Boxing is old-school,” he said. “It’s not flashy.”

Ultimately, Keller Boxing Club helps people become a better version of themselves.

“This is why we’re here,” Malaki said. “This is iron sharpening iron. In here, you’re going to learn and you’re going to teach – you’re going to be in a role that’s going to help somebody else. We’re all peers in here.”



Previous page: Malaki Abdul-Malik loves training and teaching people the fitness techniques that come with the rigorous sport of boxing.

Top left: Coach Malaki works with young students on push-up technique.

Above: All ages benefit from the training regimen at Keller Boxing Club.

RECOGNIZING BLACK RESISTANCE

BY KENNEDY L. MOORE, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

For the past 46 years, every President of the United States has deemed February as Black History Month and provided a theme. For 2023, the theme is Black Resistance. This theme delves into how Blacks have overcome and persist in fighting against historic and continuing oppression.


Examples of resistance include using music as an outlet to expound on the experiences of Black artists and racial oppression in general. Additionally, visual and performance art, such as dance, photographs, or paintings, provided a space for Black people to express their feelings and emotions. 1652900002

Examples of Black resistance date back to the 19th century and are still prominent today. From the Underground Railroad to the Black Lives Matter movement, African Americans have made significant strides in promoting their culture, heritage, and voicing the need for racial equality through demonstrations nationwide.

Influential people such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, Kobe Bryant, Zora Neale Hurston, and Serena Williams have helped to promote Black liberation, oppose institutional racism, and advocate for human rights.

Embedded in our communities are passionate people who yearn for equality. Living in the 21st century, we should have outgrown the oppressive mindset by now. It is up to all of us to continue battling for justice. We should resist institutional prejudices and advocate for change.

Advocacy and resistance are all around us. They circle our environment until they come to fruition. Writing about first-hand experiences, speaking on behalf of those who are afraid to voice their passions, performing dances, and lyrics that symbolically resist the oppression which continues to exist in our nation – all these things serve to remind us that even the simplest messages have the biggest impacts.



CHANGE
WILL NOT
COME IF WE
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OR
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WE ARE
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ARE THE
CHANGE
THAT WE
SEEK.

– President Barack Obama



BEAT THE PEAK

BY KENNEDY L. MOORE, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

If you look around your home, you likely have more devices and equipment that require electricity than ever before. Our connected lives are increasingly dependent on electricity to function. At the same time, as demand for electricity rises, Tri-County Electric Co-op must deliver an uninterrupted 24/7 power supply—regardless of market conditions or other circumstances.

As you would expect based on your family's habits, electricity use fluctuates throughout the day based on consumer demand. Tri-County Electric Co-op must be able to provide enough electricity to meet the energy needs of all members during times of highest energy use or "peak hours." These peak times are typically in the morning as people start their day and in the evening as people return to their homes.

What you may not know is electric utilities including Tri-County Electric Cooperative typically pay more for electricity—either from a power plant or from another utility with excess power—during those morning and evening

"energy rush hours." In addition, the demand for electricity is even higher when it's especially cold outside, when heating systems must run longer to warm our homes.

If the "peak times" concept is a bit puzzling, here's an easy way to think about it, and it's similar to a major concert. We know costs go up when there is strong demand for tickets (or electricity), and both are subject to the basic economic laws of supply and demand. When a lot of people want the same thing, it's more expensive. When they don't, it's cheaper—like a bargain matinee or an "early bird" special at a restaurant. 19583001

In Texas, the peak hours for energy use are from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm. To shave the peak and use energy during the least demanding times of the day, try to conserve energy and use large appliances between 10:00 pm and 5:00 am.

During peak periods when the cost to produce and purchase power is higher, we encourage you to take simple steps to save energy, such as turning your

thermostat down a few notches, turning off unnecessary lights and waiting to use large appliances during off-peak times.

You can also save energy by plugging electronics and equipment such as computers, printers and TVs into a power strip, then turning it off at the switch during peak hours. If you have a programmable thermostat, adjust the settings to sync up with off-peak periods.

Another benefit of this time-of-use approach to electricity use is that it allows greater control over your bill. Reducing the peak impacts the power-supply cost to every co-op member. This is particularly noticeable as energy costs have risen across the U.S. Collectively, everyone conserving energy and making small changes can truly make a difference. 8001117401

Remember, taking simple steps to save energy throughout the day and shifting energy intensive chores to off-peak hours is a smart choice for you and our community.



Ron Smith: I work for you

WHEN HE JOINED Tri-County Electric Cooperative in January 2022, Ron Smith brought a lot to the table.

A native of Louisiana, a U.S. Army veteran and a graduate of Southern University, most of Smith's experience came in the banking and utility industries. Here, he started in community relations, but in October he earned his certification as a Key Accounts Executive – the first to fill that role at the co-op.

"I'm responsible for all key accounts throughout our territory – the members that are large, mostly industrial accounts," he said. "I enjoy it. It gets me out of the office, and I can interact with members and make a difference for them."

After 21 years at an investor-owned utility, Tri-County Electric Co-op was a welcome change.

"I've found the co-op world very friendly, very family-oriented," he said. "I like that. We really care about our members."

A single dad, Smith has three grown children. His oldest son lives in Portland, Maine; his daughter lives in Alexandria, Louisiana and his youngest son, 20, is a student at Grambling State University. Ron is still active with his fraternity – Alpha Phi Alpha –and his church in Alexandria.

He places a high value on having earned his degree at a Historically Black University.

"Coming out of the military to a small college, with smaller classes, what I found is that the professors, the instructors, really cared about whether we made it, whether or not we learned," he said. "They wanted to make sure we thrived. They gave us lessons beyond the books."

"I probably could have gotten that somewhere else, but that felt like home. It makes a difference."

These days, he's happy to be making a difference with Tri-County Electric Co-op.

"I look at everything as purpose-driven," he said. "If I can find that there's a noble cause in what I do, it doesn't seem like work." 8004294501

Tri-County Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

CONTACT US

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Aledo, TX 76008

Phone 817-444-3201

Email customer_service@tcectexas.com

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App: TCEC Connect

Phone: 817-444-3201

Text: OUTAGE to 25069

ABOUT TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

Tri-County Electric Co-op owns and maintains more than 9,700 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 103,500 members in Archer, Baylor, Denton, Foard, Haskell, Hood, Jack, King, Knox, Palo Pinto, Parker, Stonewall, Tarrant, Throckmorton, Wilbarger, and Wise counties.

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IT PAYS TO STAY INFORMED

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NO BAKE COOKIES

BY JANA CRABTREE
KELLER

- 2 cups sugar
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- ½ cup milk
- 2 Tbsp. Peanut butter
- 2 Tbsp. Cocoa
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 cups quick-cooking oats

1. Combine sugar, margarine, milk, and peanut butter in a pot.
2. Bring to a boil and cook for 1 minute.
3. Remove from heat. Add cocoa, vanilla and oats.
4. Mix quickly and drop by spoonfuls onto wax paper.
5. Let cool for 1 hour.
6. Store any leftovers in the refrigerator

ENJOY!



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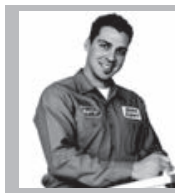
MAIL: Please detach and submit this form with your recipe and mail to:

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Attn: Recipe Submission
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Aledo, Texas 76008



Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.



Dear
Darryl

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option.

I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly – Lewisville, TX

DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY: As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unclog the drain field as well. **SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs** deliver your system the fast active bacteria and enzymes needed to liquefy solid waste and free the clogs causing your back-up.

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SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "TXS18", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.



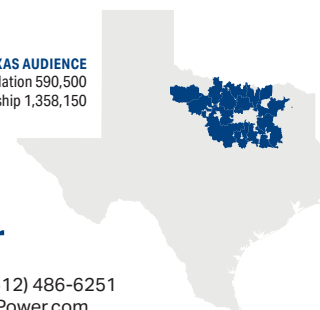
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This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

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A squad leader of the highly decorated 442nd patrols the front lines in France.

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



Rescue of the Lost Battalion

How Japanese American units saved Texans in World War II

BY W.F. STRONG

THERE'S A LONG LIST of honorary Texans. John Wayne is one. No surprise there. Chuck Norris, born in Oklahoma, was made an honorary Texan in 2017, and Gov. Allan Shivers extended the honor to Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

But one case that stands out is when Gov. John Connally awarded honorary Texan status to hundreds of men simultaneously in 1962. He made the entire 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion of the U.S. Army honorary Texans after World War II.

The story begins with the Alamo Regiment, a Texas National Guard unit that

in October 1944 found itself cut off and surrounded behind enemy lines in the mountains of southern France.

The Texans were on top of a mountain and had the advantage of high ground, but they were still pounded by German artillery. It was foggy, rainy and very cold. They quickly dug fighting positions in the wet, muddy soil and covered themselves with tree limbs, rocks and dirt. The Lost Battalion, as it was known, was also running out of food and water.

The U.S. Army redirected its push toward the Rhine River to focus on saving the battalion from the Germans. Ameri-

can forces tried pounding the German lines with their artillery, but the forest was so thick they weren't having much effect. Two infantry battalions tried to break through the German lines, but each was repelled by hailstorms of bullets.

This is when the 442nd, which had joined with the 100th, was called in. Battle-hardened, they had a reputation for succeeding in just these situations. It took them five days of brutal, close-quarters combat on muddy terrain in bone-chilling weather to reach the Texans. The 442nd suffered hundreds of casualties to save 211 soldiers of the Lost Battalion's original 275.

After almost a week, they were freed from the German onslaught.

What makes this story especially significant: The 442nd was a Nisei regiment, composed of second-generation Japanese Americans. Most of them, along with their families, had been detained in camps operated by the War Relocation Authority at the beginning of the war. These men, however, asked if they could fight rather than sit out the war.

And they were extraordinary fighters. The 442nd was called the Purple Heart Battalion because they received more Purple Hearts than any other unit their size in World War II.

When the 442nd returned from Europe, President Harry Truman said, "You have fought not only the enemy, but you have fought prejudice—and you have won."

For Connally, making them all honorary Texans was his way of demonstrating to these soldiers, and their descendants, the solemn gratitude of Texas. ■

Cupcakes

One might not be enough when serving these delightful treats

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Cupcakes are riding waves of trendiness, but for us they're classic. There's just something about a plate of cupcakes that brings a smile to your face, whether you're celebrating a birthday, graduation or holiday. These cupcakes, inspired by the classic confection, are my favorite Valentine's Day treat, but they're great for any special day.



Chocolate-Covered Strawberry Cupcakes

CUPCAKES

8 ounces strawberries, divided use
2½ cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) butter
1½ cups sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
⅔ cup milk

ICING

¾ cup heavy cream
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

- 1. CUPCAKES** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line muffin pans with 18 paper liners.
- Stem, halve and purée half the strawberries to yield about ½ cup of strawberry purée. Set aside.
- In a bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.
- In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time, then mix in vanilla and strawberry purée until blended and smooth.
- Alternately add the flour mixture and milk, beginning and ending with the flour mixture. Scrape down the sides of the bowl between additions and make sure everything is incorporated before the next addition. Beat batter until smooth.
- Divide batter among prepared cups. Bake 20–25 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool completely on a wire rack.
- 1. ICING** Heat heavy cream in a small saucepan over medium-high. Add the chocolate chips to a bowl. Once cream is lightly bubbling, remove from heat and pour over the chocolate. Whisk to melt until completely smooth. Let cool until slightly thickened.
- Holding a cupcake upside down, lower it into the chocolate, twisting to evenly coat. Lift and let excess drip back into the bowl, then flip and place on rack to set. Repeat with remaining cupcakes.
- Slice remaining strawberries into halves and place one half on top of each cupcake. Let cupcakes rest until chocolate is firm.

MAKES 18 CUPCAKES

TCP Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Hummingbird Cupcakes.



Cookie Butter Spice Cupcakes

AUTUMN PRINCE
WISE EC

COOK'S TIP Cookie butter spread can be found in the peanut butter aisle. It's also available online.

CUPCAKES

- ½ cup sugar**
- ¼ cup crunchy cookie butter**
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter, softened**
- 1 egg**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves**
- ¾ cup flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons milk**

ICING

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened**
- 2 tablespoons crunchy cookie butter**
- ¾ cup powdered sugar**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- Biscoff cookies (optional)**

- 1. CUPCAKES** Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line a muffin pan with 6–8 paper liners.
- 2.** In a bowl, cream together sugar, cookie butter and butter until fluffy. Beat in egg, vanilla, nutmeg and cloves until smooth.
- 3.** Add flour, baking powder and salt until just combined. Scrape down sides, then beat in milk until batter is smooth.
- 4.** Divide batter among prepared liners. Bake 20–22 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean and tops are firm. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

CONTINUED >



\$500 WINNER

OJCs (Orange Juice Cupcakes)

CHUCK BURGESS
HEART OF TEXAS EC



These delightful cupcakes are full of orange flavor, especially from the orange-flecked icing. Take the time to grate fresh orange zest—it's worth it.

MAKES 24 CUPCAKES

CUPCAKES

- 1½ cups sugar**
- ¼ cup brown sugar**
- 2½ cups flour**
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 eggs**
- ⅔ cup milk**
- ⅔ cup orange juice**
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, melted and cooled, divided use**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

ICING

- 3 cups powdered sugar**
- 2 large oranges**

- 1. CUPCAKES** Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line muffin pans with 24 paper liners.
- 2.** In a large bowl, mix together sugar, brown sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Beat in eggs, milk, orange juice, ½ cup melted butter and vanilla until smooth.
- 3.** Divide batter among prepared liners, filling about halfway. Bake 25–30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in the pan 10 minutes, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4. ICING** Place the powdered sugar in a bowl. Zest the oranges and add to the sugar. Halve the oranges and juice to get ¼ to ⅓ cup juice, removing seeds. Add juice and remaining ¼ cup melted butter to the sugar and whisk ingredients until completely blended and smooth. Dip cupcakes in icing and return to wire rack until set.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

GARDEN BOUNTY DUE FEBRUARY 10

What grows in your garden? Share your favorite recipes for making the most of summer produce. Submit them on our website by February 10 for a chance to win \$500.



RECIPES CONTINUED

5. ICING Cream together butter and cookie butter. Add powdered sugar $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time until completely blended. Add vanilla and salt and beat until light and fluffy. Ice cupcakes and decorate with half a Biscoff cookie or cookie crumbs, if desired.

MAKES 6-8 CUPCAKES

Mint Chocolate Cupcakes

SUSAN PRAUSE
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

CUPCAKES

1 cup flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil
3 eggs
3 tablespoons sour cream or plain yogurt
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup buttermilk



FROSTING

$1\frac{1}{4}$ cups ($2\frac{1}{2}$ sticks) unsalted butter
4-5 cups powdered sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup heavy cream
1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons mint extract
Green food coloring (optional)
Mini mint or chocolate chips (optional)

1. CUPCAKES Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line muffin pans with 18-24 paper liners. In a bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

2. In a large bowl, beat together sugar, vegetable oil, eggs, sour cream and vanilla until smooth. Slowly beat in half the flour mixture, then half the buttermilk, completely mixing in before adding the remaining flour mixture and buttermilk. Scrape down sides and beat until smooth.

3. Divide batter among prepared cups. Bake 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

4. FROSTING Beat butter with a stand mixer or hand mixer until fluffy. Turn to low speed and add powdered sugar $\frac{1}{2}$ cup at a time until desired sweetness is reached.

5. Once the sugar is fully incorporated, turn the mixer to high and beat 5-10 seconds. Beat in heavy cream 1 tablespoon at a time until desired consistency. Beat in mint extract a little at a time, tasting until desired flavor is achieved, then add food coloring (if using). Frost cooled cupcakes and decorate with mint or chocolate chips, if desired.

MAKES 18-24 CUPCAKES



Based on an 1818 painting that depicts John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin presenting a draft of the Declaration of Independence

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SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



Centuries ago, Persians, Tibetans and Mayans considered turquoise a gemstone of the heavens, believing the striking blue stones were sacred pieces of sky. Today, the rarest and most valuable turquoise is found in the American Southwest—but the future of the blue beauty is unclear.

On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and purchased it for our **Sedona Turquoise Collection**. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique, one-of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for **just \$99**.

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Important Entry

After hurricanes, little remains of the once-bustling city of Indianola

BY CHET GARNER

ASK SOMEONE to name the largest cities in Texas, and you'll probably get the correct answers. But rewind the clock to the mid-1800s and you'll find that some of Texas' biggest cities were much lesser-known locales, including one that was practically wiped off the map. With my history books in hand, I drove south to explore the disappearance of Indianola.

I started at the Calhoun County Museum in Port Lavaca, a great place to get some perspective with numerous exhibits, paintings and models of the once-bustling city, which had been a camping site for Karankawa natives. It's likely Germans were the first Europeans to arrive, in 1844, and two years later, Indianola was on its way to becoming one of the new state's major ports of entry.

The town grew to more than 5,000 residents as European families immigrated through Indianola to begin their new lives. Indianola grew in influence until 1875, when a terrible hurricane decimated the town and killed hundreds. The city rebuilt on a smaller scale, only to be leveled by a second hurricane in 1886. Within a year the townsite was abandoned.

I followed the edge of Matagorda Bay about 12 miles south, where very little evidence remains of Indianola's former glory. The smattering of residents there are Victoria Electric Cooperative members. I read the historic markers and found remnants of old foundations, including the original courthouse, which sits submerged in the bay as erosion has moved the waterfront.

In the old cemetery, home to more than 2,000 graves, only a few dozen tombstones remain. It is fascinating and sobering to think that a town so vibrant could be almost completely lost. But as long as we keep telling the story of Indianola, it will never truly disappear. ■

ABOVE Chet stands on all that remains of a statue of French explorer René-Robert Cavelier de La Salle.

TCP Chet visits the sparse remains of Indianola. Check out the video on our website and see all his Explorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

FEBRUARY

09

Bellville Chocolate Walk,
discoverbellville.com

**Bandera [9–11] Cowboy
Mardi Gras**, (830) 796-4849,
facebook.com/
11thstreetcowboybar

10

**Fredericksburg [10–11]
Hug-In**, (830) 997-3224,
luckenbachtexas.com

**Clute [10–12, 17–19] Agatha
Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express***, (979) 265-7661,
bcfas.org

**Victoria [10–12, 16–19]
Always ... Patsy Cline**,
(361) 576-6277,
theatrevictoria.org

**Galveston [10–12, 17–19, 21]
Mardi Gras! Galveston**,
info@yagasevents.com,
mardigrasgalveston.com

**Fredericksburg [10–12,
17–19, 24–26] *Dirty Rotten
Scoundrels***, (830) 997-3588,
fredericksburgtheater.org

**Matagorda [10–11, 17–19,
25–March 4] County
Fair**, (979) 245-2454,
matagordacountyfair.com

11

**Amarillo Los Tigres del
Norte**, (806) 378-3096,
amarillociviccenter.com

**Brenham Sweet Valen-
tine With Sweet Baby
James**, (979) 337-7240,
visitbrenhamtexas.com

La Grange Uncorked,
(979) 968-3017,
visitlagrangetx.com

Nocona [11-18] Mardi Gras Nocona Style,
(940) 825-3526, nocona.org

16

Tyler Joel McHale,
(903) 566-7424,
cowancenter.org

Beaumont [16-19] Mardi Gras of Southeast Texas,
(409) 721-8717,
mardigrastx.com

17

Laredo [17-18] Washington's Birthday Celebration Association Jalapeño Festival, (956) 722-0589,
wbcalaredo.org

Fredericksburg [17-19] Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,
fbgtradedays.com

Los Fresnos [17-19] Rodeo,
(855) 537-6336, lfrodeo.com

18

Buda The Steeldrivers,
(512) 312-9456,
bucksbackyard.com

Stephenville Cowgirl Crop, (254) 434-1512,
scrapbookcowgirl.com

Belton [18-19] Mother Earth News Fair, 1-800-234-3368,
motherearthnewsfair.com

19

Fredericksburg Emily Jumes Oskins,
fredericksburgmusicclub.com

Huntsville Shake Rattle & Roll, (936) 293-8681,
oldtowntheatre-huntsville.org

Texarkana Run the Line Half Marathon, runsignup.com/runthelinehalfmarathon

20

Brenham [20-25] Fort-nightly Club Used Book Sale, (979) 525-7414,
booksalefinder.com

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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






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EARL NOTTINGHAM | TPWD

Pick of the Month

Black History Month Hike

Karnack, February 11
(903) 679-3351
tpwd.texas.gov

In honor of the historic contributions
of Black Americans, Caddo Lake State
Park hosts a history hike that teaches
about the Buffalo Soldiers and Black
conservationists, scientists and envi-
ronmentalists.

FEBRUARY EVENTS CONTINUED

21

**Abilene [21–22] Texas
Farm, Ranch and Wildlife
Expo,** (325) 677-7241,
abilenechamber.com

22

**Huntsville [22–25]
Prison City Film Festival,**
info@prisoncityfilmfestival.com,
prisoncityfilmfestival.com

23

**Big Spring Tate's Place
Western Night Benefit,**
tatesplaceservingothers@gmail.com,
tatesplace.com

**Junction Astronomy With
Buddy,** (325) 446-3994,
tpwd.texas.gov

**Port Aransas [23–26]
Whooping Crane Festival,**
(361) 749-5919,
portaransas.org

**San Antonio [23–March 6],
Remember the Battle of
the Alamo,** (210) 225-1391,
thealamo.org

24

**Boerne Royal National
Dance Company: Fire of
Georgia,** (830) 331-9079,
boerneperformingarts.com

25

**Amarillo [24–25] Star Wars
and Beyond: An Evening
of John Williams,**
(806) 376-8782,
amarillosymphony.org

**La Grange [24–25] The
Best Little Quilt Show
in Texas,** (979) 236-4298,
coloradovalleyqq.com

**Brenham The Jersey
Tenors,** (979) 337-7240,
thebarnhillcenter.com

**Granbury Paluxy River
Children's Advocacy
Center Gala,** (817) 573-0292,
paluxyrivercac.org

Greenville The Everly Set,
greenvilleentertainmentseries.com

**Washington [25–26] Texas
Independence Day Cele-
bration,** (936) 878-2214,
wheretexasbecametexas.org

28

**Midland The Power of
One: Luncheon and
Children's Style Show,**
(512) 635-4152,
casawtx.org

**Houston [28–March 19]
Livestock Show and
Rodeo,** (832) 667-1000,
rodeohouston.com

MARCH

02

**Bastrop The Farm Street
Opry,** (512) 332-8981,
farmstreetopry.com

**Tyler Trinity Irish Dance
Company,** (903) 566-7424,
cowancenter.org

03

**Lufkin Dragons and
Mythical Beasts,**
(936) 633-5454,
angelinaarts.org

04

**Kerrville Classical Music
Festival,** (830) 321-0303,
hillcountrychorale.org

First Responders

They have specialized training and are among the first to arrive and provide assistance at the scene of an emergency. To all our firefighters, law enforcement, medical personnel and lineworkers who risk their own lives to serve others, we salute you.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1

1 DEBRA CHANDLER
LIGHTHOUSE EC

Plainview firefighters search through rubble after a downtown building fire.

2 JACK GOUGE
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Trinity Valley EC lineworkers make repairs after a large oak tree toppled onto power lines and a garage in Eustace. "They were our heroes on a hot Texas July night."

3 KELLY KOENIG
PEDERNALES EC

A Killeen Fire Department training exercise.

4 WENDY ALLEY MLADENKA
SAN BERNARD EC

Mladenka, a captain with the Columbus Police Department, captures game wardens launching a rescue boat after Hurricane Harvey in 2017.



2



3

Upcoming Contests

DUE FEB 10 Dad
DUE MAR 10 Waterfalls
DUE APR 10 Hoof and Horn



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for more First Responders photos from readers.



4



T-Shirt Weather

Commemorating those days that leave a lasting impression on a kid

BY LORI GROSSMAN
ILLUSTRATION BY MITCH BLUNT

THE WEATHER was the last thing on my mind when I got home from school on January 11, 1985. Mom was waiting for me at the door, and she seemed agitated about something. We have to get groceries, she said. Right away.

Snowfall was predicted—light at first, then heavy. It could be heavy enough to prevent us from going anywhere.

Snow? I'm a native San Antonian, and here, snowfall—any amount—is rare. When my brother and I were growing up, snow flurries were cause for celebration. Several inches almost brought life to a screeching halt.

Mom and I were lucky to beat the rush to the stores that day. Texans know to stock up on the essentials—milk, bread, eggs, toilet paper and beer. By the time we got home, I was excited. Bring it on!

Mother Nature did just that. A band of heavy snow started south of Del Rio and gradually moved north and east toward Bexar County. The frozen precipitation didn't stop until two days later. I couldn't believe my eyes. The views from our windows reminded me of vintage Christmas card scenes (without ice skaters, unfortunately). Dad found a yardstick, and I went out to measure the depth. Thirteen inches!

San Antonio closed down. The city had no snowplows, of course. Kids and a few hardy adults went out to play, but most citizens were stuck indoors until it melted. The official total of 13.5 inches dwarfed the previous record of 6.4 inches in January 1926. I doubt that the new record will ever be broken. It was such a big deal that someone made and sold T-shirts that boasted, "I Survived Winter '85 San Antonio, TX."

A few years later, my family moved to Dallas, where I looked forward to seeing snow more often. The thought of possible bone-chilling cold never crossed my mind. The coldest temperature I remembered in San Antonio was in the low teens.

That personal record was shattered December 23, 1989, when the thermometer plunged to minus 1 degree.

I had to experience it to believe it. Leaving my coat inside, I walked out on our front porch. No snow this time—just cold. I didn't know what to expect. Would I freeze solid?

I don't remember any wind. I actually felt comfortable for a few minutes. Truthfully, I wasn't that impressed.

Still, it made me think somebody should print up T-shirts.

No, better make it sweatshirts. ■

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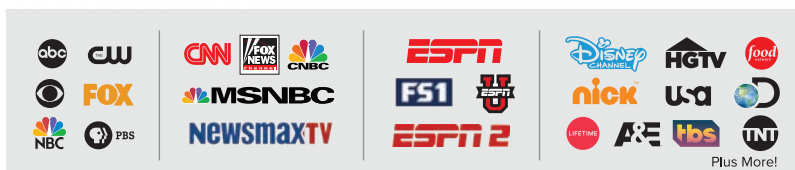
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