



2024 District 3 & District 6 **Runoff Election**

**RUNOFF ELECTION
BALLOT LOCATED ON BACK**

Districts 3 and 6 Runoff Election

A special meeting for Tri-County Electric Cooperative members will be held at 6 p.m., Tuesday, November 26, 2024, to announce the results of the runoff election for districts 3 and 6.

The meeting will be broadcast virtually and will be streamed on the Cooperative's website.

The runoff election ballot includes director candidates for districts 3 and 6. Full voting details and ballot instructions are located on the inside back cover of this magazine. All members who vote prior to the election deadline will be entered to win a bill credit announced during the virtual runoff election meeting.

Sincerely,



Margaret Koprek
Board Secretary/Treasurer

STREAM ONLINE
tcectexas.com/annual-meeting

LISTEN BY PHONE
855-710-6229

WHO CAN VOTE?

All Tri-County Electric Co-op members – not just district 3 and 6 members – are able to vote in this runoff election.

WHEN TO VOTE

The runoff election for Districts 3 and 6 opens at 8 a.m., Friday, November 1 and closes at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 22.

LOSING HIS SIGHT
AND FINDING HIS WAY

HOLIDAY BITES
THAT CAN'T MISS

CHET FINDS HIS
OWN DEN OF SNAKES

Texas Coop Power

FOR TRI-COUNTY EC MEMBERS

NOVEMBER 2024

See No Evil

A snake expert who
serves Texans and
the reptiles he loves

**TRI-COUNTY
EC NEWS**

SEE PAGE 16





– MAKES A –
GREAT GIFT

PERFECTLY AGED, TENDER STEAKS

ACHIEVE GIFTING GREATNESS

Eliminate guesswork by sending a mouthwatering assortment of gourmet Omaha Steaks to everyone on your gift list. The best part: every bite is guaranteed perfect!



THE BEST STEAKS
OF YOUR LIFE OR
YOUR MONEY BACK



The Ideal Gift

- 2 Bacon-Wrapped Filet Mignons (5 oz.)
 - 2 Butcher's Cut Top Sirloins (5 oz.)
 - 4 Air-Chilled Chicken Breasts (4 oz.)
 - 4 Gourmet Jumbo Franks (3 oz.)
 - 4 Individual Scalloped Potatoes (3.8 oz.)
 - 4 Caramel Apple Tartlets (4 oz.)
- 8 FREE Omaha Steaks Burgers** (4 oz.)

77205WGE separately \$201.95

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE

\$89.99

Limited Time
**8 FREE
BURGERS**



\$23 VALUE!

**ORDER
NOW!**

OmahaSteaks.com/IdealGift7253 | 1.800.811.7832

Ask for your FREE burgers with offer 77205WGE

Savings shown over aggregated single item base price. 8 free 4 oz. burgers will be sent to each shipping address that includes SKU 77205. Limit 2 on select items at these exclusive prices. While supplies last. Items may be substituted due to inventory limitations. Standard shipping rates will be applied and are subject to change. Minimum purchase and other restrictions may apply. Some products may not be available for sale in your area. Sales are subject to OmahaSteaks.com/terms-of-useOSI. Expires 01/31/25. | SRC0715

Scan Now



OmahaSteaks.com/IdealGift7253

November 2024



10

06 A Good Snake

Before you hack that serpent to pieces, call someone who can safely take it far away instead.

By Tom Widlowski
Photos by Russell A. Graves

Tricks for Enduring

How Mike Harrell reenvisioned hope and happiness through the subtle touch of dominoes.

By Mark Wangrin
Photos by Eric W. Pohl

04	Currents The latest buzz
05	TCP Talk Readers respond
16	Co-op News Information plus energy and safety tips from your cooperative
25	Footnotes in Texas History Found in Translation By W.F. Strong
26	TCP Kitchen Holiday Bites By Vianney Rodriguez
30	Hit the Road A Den, and Then Some By Chet Garner
33	Focus on Texas Photo Contest: Mascots
34	Observations The Lease of Our Concerns By Mark Troth

ON THE COVER
Nathan Hawkins with a rattler recovered from a crawl space outside San Angelo.
Photo by Russell A. Graves

ABOVE
Mike Harrell lost his sight at 28 and then found his way around a dominoes table.
Photo by Eric W. Pohl

Making a Splash

FOR THE FIRST time in nearly 30 years, Texas has a new major lake. Bois d'Arc Lake near Bonham, northeast of Dallas, opened for recreation in April after decades of planning and construction.

The reservoir has a surface area of about 26 square miles and offers boating, hunting, picnicking and fishing. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department stocked it with largemouth bass and catfish.

The lake's main purpose is to supply water to a burgeoning North Texas population. To the same end, Lake Ralph Hall is under construction just to the south and is expected to deliver water in 2026.



Are You a Pepper?

Texas doesn't have an official soft drink. But if it did, we all know what it would be.

Now the rest of the country is catching on. Dr Pepper has edged out Pepsi to become the No. 2 soda in America, behind Coke, which has 19.2% of the market. The pride of Waco now has 8.3%.



TCP Contests and More

ENTER CONTESTS AT
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM



\$500 RECIPE CONTEST
Eggs

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Small Spaces

RECOMMENDED READING

Snakes also slithered across these pages in April 2020. Read *A Snake to Love* to become even more s-s-savvy about rattlesnakes.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Snakes are ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our September prompt: **My first job was ...**

Learning not to be afraid to gather the eggs by running my hand under the sitting hen. I was 4 years old, and my grandmother was teaching me.

PAM HICKS
SOUTH PLAINS EC
LUBBOCK

Setting pins by hand in a bowling alley in 1945 at age 14.

HAROLD CLARK
NUECES EC
KINGSVILLE

Cashier at my father's drugstore. I used to refer to it as the drudge store.

CATHY BLAY
SAM HOUSTON EC
POINT BLANK

Tearing out the beaver dam every evening so the water wouldn't flood our field.

BENNY CALVIT
BOWIE-CASS EC
DE KALB

Visit our website to see more responses.



SCOTT VAN OSDOL

Great School Spirit

I worked at TSD in the 1990s, when Andy Bonheyo became the coach. There is a great school spirit there, and I loved reading about the state championship in 2020. I'm not surprised that TSD would respond to a pandemic by being creative and then win state in six-man football.

Dianne Wheeler
Pedernales EC
Wimberley

Long-Serving Tractor

Like John Terry Wende, I purchased 16 acres 37 years ago, in 1987, near the town of Blue Ridge [*The Farmer's Regret*, September 2024]. A year later I bought a used 1954 Ferguson 30 tractor and rotary cutter for \$1,000.

With lots of TLC and new tires, it still serves me well. I can usually get spare parts at Tractor Supply Co. or from the New Parts for Old Tractors catalog.

Glenn Snyder
Fannin EC
Blue Ridge



DAVID MOORE

SEPTEMBER 2024 Calling an Audible

"I was fascinated with your story about Texas School for the Deaf football and the inspiring coaches who work to support the sport."

MARY HELEN THOMAS DAVENPORT
CENTRAL TEXAS EC
BUCHANAN DAM

Breathtaking Beauty

Wyatt McSpadden's cover photo was truly breathtaking [*Open Roads, Open Eyes*; August 2024]. He captured the atmospheric phenomenon known as the Belt of Venus.

It's visible opposite the sun at sunrise or sunset. The belt is the pink band above the horizon at the end of the rusty red dirt road. The dark blue band below the belt and touching the horizon is actually Earth's shadow.

Ed LaBelle
Pedernales EC
Johnson City

Elevating a Community

When I finished reading Katie Phillips' retelling of her father's quest to start an electric co-op in 1937, I had tears in my eyes [*In the Beginning*, August 2024]. This is the story of an unsung hero who greatly advanced his community's standard of living. We are all still thankful for reliable co-op electricity.

Barbara Barnes
Pedernales EC
Junction

TCP 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.

     Texas Co-op Power

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair Avan Irani, Robstown
Vice Chair Bryan Wood, San Augustine
Secretary-Treasurer Cameron Smallwood, Burleson
Board Members Dale Ancell, Lubbock
Matt Bentke, Bastrop • Kerry Kelton, Navasota • Mark McClain, Roby

PRESIDENT/CEO Mike Williams, Austin

COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Mike Ables, Bellville • Kathi Calvert, Crockett
Marty Haught, Burleson • Tachi Hinojosa, Fredericksburg • Gary Miller, Bryan
Zac Perkins, Hooker, Oklahoma • Bryan Story, Blossom • Buff Whitten, Eldorado

MAGAZINE STAFF

Vice President, Communications & Member Services Martin Bevins
Editor Chris Burrows
Associate Editor Tom Widlowski
Production Manager Karen Nejtek
Creative Manager Andy Doughty
Advertising Manager Elaine Sproull
Communications Specialist Samantha Bryant
Digital Media Specialist Caytlyn Calhoun
Senior Designer Stacy Coale
Assistant Production Manager Alex Dal Santo
Print Production Specialist Grace Fultz
Food Editor Vianney Rodriguez
Communications Specialist Erin Sinclair
Communications Specialist Claire Stevens
Proofreader Louie Bond

TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 81, Number 5 (USPS 540-560). Texas Co-op Power is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives. Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 76 electric cooperatives. Texas Co-op Power's website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Subscription price is \$4.44 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50.

Co-op members: Please notify your co-op of address changes or other subscription requests.

POSTMASTER Send address changes to Texas Co-op Power (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of Texas Co-op Power showing old address and key numbers.

ADVERTISING Contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251 or espru@texas-coop.org for information about purchasing display ad space in Texas Co-op Power and/or in our 26 sister publications in other states. Advertisements in Texas Co-op Power are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication.

COPYRIGHT All content © 2024 Texas Electric Cooperatives Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of it is expressly prohibited without written permission. Willie Wirehand © 2024 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



A Good



Snake

**Before you hack that serpent to pieces,
call someone who can safely take it far away**

BY TOM WIDLOWSKI
PHOTOS BY RUSSELL A. GRAVES

S*nakes never stood much of a chance.*

Even in the early pages of the Bible, the serpent was cursed above all other animals and dealt a troublesome fate: “You will crawl on your belly, and you will eat dust all the days of your life.”

If that lowly lot wasn’t bad enough, from then on they have found themselves on the wrong end of gardening tools and weaponry.

And still they thrive, especially in Texas—home to more than 100 species and subspecies of snakes, including 15 that are venomous.

Their greatest allies, it turns out, are men like Nathan Hawkins and Brett Parker, who themselves crawl on their bellies to remove and safely relocate snakes that encroach on humans’ domain, particularly from crawl spaces under homes.

“There are a lot of rattlesnakes here,” Hawkins says. “A lot more than people realize are here.”

Hawkins and Parker own snake removal businesses, both with an ethos of keeping the snakes, usually rattlers, alive and relocating them to remote habitats. They believe keeping the ecosystem intact and educating people about

Nathan Hawkins, owner of Big Country Snake Removal, with one of the six rattlesnakes he and a co-worker pulled out from under an abandoned house outside San Angelo. He releases most in a remote pasture, but he also has a collection of some 200, including mambas, king cobras, bush-masters and almost every venomous species in North America.

snakes’ role in nature are best for all involved.

The education part can be a challenge.

“A good snake is a dead snake.” Hawkins and Parker hear that almost every day.

“Completely false,” says Hawkins, who owns Big Country Snake Removal outside Abilene. “They’re very important to a healthy ecosystem. And they all deserve life.”

Hawkins, a member of Taylor Electric Cooperative, knows that isn’t what folks want to hear. Most people hate snakes and want them as far away as possible. But Hawkins’ method serves snakes well, helps put food on the table for his wife and young son, and has kept him in business for eight years.

He removed 45 rattlesnakes from under a house in 2019. A story about that ran in *The Washington Post* and elsewhere, and his video from that job went viral, making him somewhat famous. His biggest job to date is 127 rattlers, collected under a house in Seymour, southwest of Wichita Falls.

He removed 80-plus copperheads from a property between Cisco and Cross Plains in 2023. That was a nighttime job, when the snakes became, for Hawkins, easy pickings as they feasted on cicadas emerging from the ground.

Hawkins is a self-taught herpetologist whose love of snakes started when he was a kid in the Abilene area. He loved finding and collecting them, and that passion never waned. Today his collection has grown to include about 200 snakes—90% of them venomous.

He spends much of his free time looking for snakes. For vacation, he travels the Southwest in search of varieties of rattlesnakes (there are 23 subspecies in North America). His hobby is not without hazards. He has been bitten by venomous snakes seven times—twice by copperheads, once by a southwestern speckled rattlesnake in Arizona and the rest by western diamondbacks.





For some people, Texas' snake population feels like it's of biblical proportions.

"If you're a carpenter, you're going to hit your thumb with a hammer at some point, and when you mess with snakes as often as I do, it's bound to happen sooner or later," says Hawkins, who is quick to point out he has never been bitten on the job.

He conducts workplace training for folks in the oil and energy industries who spend a lot of time in rugged terrain. He meets annually with Texas Department of Transportation employees to teach them about handling run-ins with snakes. He trains dogs to help them avoid snake encounters.



He'll also visit schools, youth camps and birthday parties.

Winter is the busiest time for Hawkins and Parker, who owns Hill Country Snake Removal outside Austin. That's when snakes become sluggish and enter a state of brumation,

similar to hibernation. They gather into dens, including crawl spaces under homes, where they are protected from the weather and where the stagnant air keeps their body temperature regulated.

Though their businesses are about 240 miles apart, Hawkins and Parker sometimes team up for jobs. That was the case in January, when Hawkins was hired to remove rattlesnakes from under an abandoned house outside San Angelo.

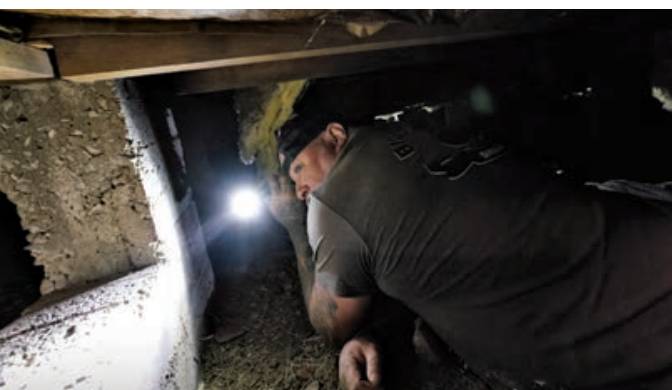
Hawkins, who played a season of football at McMurry University, stayed above ground, and the more slightly built Parker put on his headlamp, grabbed his snake tongs and wiggled into the darkness through a small hole in a closet floor.

First came the offensive odor, likely from the raccoons and skunks also living underground. After a bit of cautiously crawling around, Parker found snakes—six of them—resting under a piece of plywood.

Using tongs, Parker handed them one by one up through the floor to Hawkins. They ended up in a covered 5-gallon bucket in the back of Hawkins' pickup.

After lunch, they headed up to Anson, just north of Abilene, for a job at the home of Kevin and Jolee Karle, members of Big Country Electric Cooperative.

The Karles knew they had snakes. Before hiring Hawkins, Kevin had killed 10 of them with a shotgun. With two horses



and a dog, dispatching snakes around his house was a guilt-free decision. “Oh, no,” Kevin says. “I wanted to protect the family.”

The snakes, one or two at a time, were placed into a sealable piece of 4-inch PVC pipe that Parker handed to Hawkins. “There’s still more in here,” came Parker’s muffled voice from deep in the void.

Eventually, the snakes were coming out three or four at a time. It was near dusk when Parker finally emerged, behind snake No. 29.

“We couldn’t believe there were that many under there,” Jolee says. “The way I look at it, I grew up in the country, so the fact that we’re going to have snakes in the country doesn’t bother me.”

But 29 rattlers? Just a foot or two below your bed? “That’s just a part of country life,” she says.

That part of country life doesn’t sit well with some people. Sarah McLen leads member services at Big Country EC. She lives about 25 miles southwest of Anson.

She and her husband keep a hoe or shovel at each of their exterior doors and by the door to a workshop. The McLens are not, she notes, big-time gardeners.

“We use the tools for their normal purposes,” McLen says. “We’ve killed multiple snakes in a variety of sizes in just about every area of our yard. We kill the rattlesnakes because they multiply, and we have dogs to protect.

“My husband picks on me because I whack them to pieces! But as far as I’m concerned, the more dead they are, the better!” Because a good snake is a dead snake.

“It’s very, very common here,” Hawkins acknowledges. “Very common.

OPPOSITE Brett Parker, who helps Hawkins on occasion, owns Hill Country Snake Removal. He’s also a captain with Canyon Lake Fire and EMS. ABOVE In winter, when snakes enter a state of brumation, which is similar to hibernation, Hawkins gets called out to many jobs. “You just never know where a snake’s going to be,” he says. “You never do.”

“I have absolutely no right to tell somebody how to protect their house, how to protect their pets. If you feel that’s the right thing to do, then go for it. And I’ll give you a high-five.”

Hawkins just wants people to be aware of the bigger picture, and that’s where his mission to educate kicks in. As part of a stable ecosystem, snakes keep rodent populations in check, and they also are a food source for raptors, large mammals and even other snakes. “At least be a little bit open-minded,” he says.

For some people, though, Texas’ snake population feels like it’s of biblical proportions.

“I feel like I probably walk the yard with my ‘weapon’ held high, like Moses did with his staff when he parted the Red Sea,” McLen says.

Meanwhile, Hawkins carries on with the staff of his choosing, snake tongs that he wields with a light touch.

“The only good snake is a live snake,” he says. ■

TCP Watch the video on our website and crawl around with our experts—and the snakes.



How Mike Harrell reenvisioned hope and happiness
through the subtle touch of dominoes

TRICKS FOR ENDURING

STORY BY MARK WANGRIN • PHOTOS BY ERIC W. POHL



EDITOR'S NOTE *This story includes discussion of suicide. If you or someone you know needs help, the national suicide and crisis lifeline in the U.S. is available by calling or texting 988. There is also an online chat at 988lifeline.org.*

MIKE HARRELL GREW up like many in rural Texas in the 1960s, with a passion for sports and the outdoors but most of all hunting and the solace it provided. Particularly the solace.

As a boy, he'd ramble through the Central Texas flatlands north of Austin, stalking whatever was in season. Alone time. Just him, the quarry and his thoughts.

After Harrell graduated in 1974 from Florence High School, where he was a standout in track, baseball and football, he needed to find a vocation to match his avocation. His father, Milton, owned an electric shop, so he went to work for him.

Harrell didn't mind the work. "What I didn't like was dealing with people, especially service calls," he recalls five decades later. "It got to the point I told him I wasn't going on any more service calls."

So like any good electrician, Milton completed the circuit by removing the barrier. Harrell would only work on wiring new houses and rewiring uninhabited ones.

The hardest job was yet to come. By 28, Mike Harrell would be completely blind. Now he had to rewire himself.

SOMETIMES PEOPLE MEET the sturdy 68-year-old retiree—whether it's at a Texas 42 dominoes tournament or



LEFT Mike Harrell of Florence has been blind since he was 28. Soon after, he rediscovered his love of the dominoes game Texas 42. He's become an expert at reading the pips—indentations—on his pieces by touch. **RIGHT** Salado Creek Saloon is one of his regular stops for friendly games.



CITY LIMIT
POP. 1136

Maximum
Occupancy
225



representing Florence as a volunteer city council member or anyplace outdoors, really—and before long, they’ll drop words like “amazing” and “impressive.” But Harrell isn’t impressed.

“I’ve been told that before,” he says. “But I’m just like everybody else.”

Except Harrell lost the sight in his left eye in a hunting accident when he was 16. Walking in the darkness, a branch whacked his face. “It hurt,” he says, “but it really didn’t bother me a lot.”

Monday came and the pain was worse, and his sight was blurry. It kept worsening, and doctors couldn’t stop it. Pretty soon the eye stopped seeing, the result of inflammation of the optic nerve.

Harrell adapted. He could still excel as a one-eyed tight end and defensive end in football, and he stayed formidable in track, running the hurdles. He did it by studying his motions between steps, memorizing every nuance, until he ran them by rote.

He began working as a roughneck locally and then on an offshore rig reachable only by helicopter. He settled down, got married and started a family.

One day, while welding a broken trailer latch, he thought he’d gotten something in his right eye. He looked at it in the rearview mirror, and it was bloodshot.

An ophthalmologist prescribed corticosteroids to fight the inflammation. “All I could see is if you look at the sun and it looks like a damn light bulb,” Harrell says.

So he had his first operation. “I could tell what color hair people had or what color their clothes were,” he says. “I got excited.”

Neither the excitement nor rudimentary vision lasted. His retina wouldn’t attach correctly, not with a second or third operation. Then came the dreaded words: “There’s nothing else we can do.”

“I WAS DEVASTATED,” Harrell says. “I didn’t depend on nobody for nothing. I did everything myself. Now I can’t even drive. Can’t see my family. I can’t see my kids.

“It was pretty rough.”

Friends wanted him to go to the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center, a state facility in Austin that trains people with limited vision to have productive lives, but the only facility he was interested in served equal parts alcohol and self-pity.

For a year and a half, he drank and couldn’t find work. One night he took out a shotgun and sat on the bed, when he heard the voice of his toddler son.

“I didn’t know my son was in the bed,” Harrell recalls solemnly. “He grabbed me around the neck said, ‘Dad, don’t do it.’”

Harrell pauses in reflection.

“I didn’t know whether I would have pulled the trigger if he hadn’t been there,” says Harrell, who’s estranged from his first family. “I never told anybody about that and don’t know if he’s old enough to remember or not. I don’t know.”



THIS PAGE Harrell, a Florence City Council member, memorizes his pieces as he feels the pips.

OPPOSITE Harrell and partner Keith Kyle with their second-place trophy won at the 2023 Texas State Championship Domino Tournament. “I think I’m a dagburn good player,” Harrell says.





A BIT BEFORE Harrell turned 30, he gave himself a present: self-awareness.

“That’s the time where I said, ‘You know, I’m gonna have to do something about this,’” he recalls. “I remembered sitting with my grandma, and she was telling me, ‘I know it’s a terrible thing you lost. But you know, if you just look around, there’s always somebody in worse condition than you are, and most of the time, you don’t have to look very far.’”

He found it at the CCRC. Harrell couldn’t master Braille because his fingertips were too calloused from oil field work, but he learned woodworking and other manual skills, though he could never figure out why he was required to wear safety goggles.

He patched up his relationship with his higher power, discovering hidden blessings in his experience. Ultimately, he also found a career. He decided on transmission building and repair, tactile but challenging, applying the same memory skills he learned while running hurdles in high school.

Gradually he learned to make money from it, started his own shop, got remarried, started a second family, got divorced again and finally retired five years ago. At 4:30 a.m. every weekday he hitches a ride to the local gym to work out.

“Some people with disabilities feel stuck,” says Jessica Kovarna, one of his two daughters from his second marriage. “He’s the opposite. It’s like he doesn’t have one, just a minor inconvenience.”

Former Mayor Mary Condon, who remembers meeting Harrell when she first moved to Florence in 1978, says he has evolved into a man steeped in faith and self-acceptance.

“Because he’s blind, people tend to tiptoe around him,”

she says. “Mike just replies by making fun of himself.”

One day at church, a well-intentioned guy offered to help him find his way. “No, I don’t need help,” Harrell said brusquely.

The pastor overheard Harrell and cornered him. “If you won’t let that person help you,” the pastor said, “you are taking a blessing from someone.”

Harrell accepted that help.

WHEN HARRELL WAS a child, he watched his mom and her siblings play Texas 42. He studied the game, joined in when he was in high school and kept playing until he lost his sight.

At CCRC, he discovered a set of dominoes. Excited at something familiar in his hands, he resumed playing and even bought a set with the dots raised instead of indented.

Decades later, his dominoes schedule is full. A typical week has Sunday games at his aunt’s house, Monday at Salado Creek Saloon, Tuesday in Liberty Hill, Wednesday at his church, Friday warmup for a Saturday tournament and tournament play on Saturday at spots around Texas.

“I like competition,” Harrell says. “One reason I chose automatic transmissions to rebuild was because of the challenge doing that and being blind. That’s the same reason I play dominoes. The competition and the challenge.”

Harrell gets a couple of accommodations for 42. He’s allowed to feel the dominoes to identify the numbers they carry. And he can also ask what tiles have been played. “He keeps what’s been played in his head,” frequent partner Keith Kyle marvels. “His memory is amazing.”

In 2023, he and Kyle took second place at the state 42 dominoes tournament in Hallettsville, winning \$115, matching trophies and some admiration. They expect to try again for the state title next spring.

YOU MIGHT NOT think a city of 1,170 people requires a city council meeting lasting almost three hours, but the folks entrusted to shepherd the interests of Florence are nothing if not thorough.

During the July meeting, Harrell sits in the overstuffed chair at the dais and mutters a whole lot of “seconds” and “yesses” and not much else.

“And you thought I talked a lot,” he says to the only public spectator who stayed for the duration.

Condon finishes up a conversation with the current mayor and finds Harrell.

“You ready to go?” she asks.

Harrell puts his hand on her shoulder, and they set out for her pickup truck. “I was ready 2½ hours ago,” he cracks.

Just people. People helping people. ■

★ STILL THE TRACTOR PACKAGE LEADER ★



Pkg. includes 4' Box Blade and Cutter

New MF 1723E & 1725M Sub Compact Tractor Packages

23HP and 25HP Diesel, 4x4, ROPS, Hydro Auto Transmission, Cruise, R4 Tires, Quick Attach Loaders & Buckets

Option: Backhoe Package

AS LOW AS
\$239 Per Month

0 Down, 0% Interest for 84 Months WAC



Pkg. includes 5' Box Blade and Cutter

New MF 1835E Tractor Package

35HP Diesel, 4x4, Shuttle Transmission, ROPS, Quick Attach Front End Loader & Bucket
Options: 25 HP and 40 HP Models, Hydro Transmission

AS LOW AS
\$339 Per Month

0 Down, 0% Interest for 84 Months WAC



Pkg. includes 6' Box Blade and Cutter

New MF 2850E & 2860E Tractor Packages

50HP & 60HP Diesel, 4x4, Shuttle Transmissions, R4 Tires, ROPS, Quick Attach Front End Loaders & Buckets, Rear Hydraulic Remotes
Option: Hydro Transmission

AS LOW AS
\$539 Per Month

0 Down, 0% Interest for 72 Months WAC



Pkg. includes 6' Box Blade and Cutter

New MF 2860M Deluxe Cab Tractor Package

60HP Diesel, 4x4, Hydraulic Power Shuttle Transmission, 1 Set of Hydraulic Remotes, R4 Tires, Quick Attach Front End Loader & Bucket, Front Fenders, AC, Heat & Stereo Ready Cab

AS LOW AS
\$815 Per Month

0 Down, 0% Interest for 72 Months WAC

DELIVERY AVAILABLE



FOSTER'S WORK & PLAY

936-967-0011 • Text 713-899-7976 After Hours • fostersworknplay.com

3601 US Hwy 190 W • Livingston, Texas 77351 • sales@fostersworknplay.com

All horsepower ratings are approximate engine horsepower ratings from manufacturer. Prices and payments approximate with approved credit by AGCO Finance.

0% Interest Rates may be blended slightly because of implements other than MF Brand. All prices and payments may not include freight, set up, insurance or delivery if applicable



MASSEY FERGUSON

'Sweetest Festival in Texas' returns to Henderson



Nov. 9, 2024

Folk art demonstrations

Syrup making

Live music

Shopping

Food

Vaudeville performances

**Depot Museum &
Downtown Henderson**

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

POLE BARN

CALL
FOR BEST
PRICES



Free Estimates • Colored Metal Available
Variety of Sizes and Options
Fully Insured with Workers Comp



D.T. Construction

ZACH TINCHER — IN BUSINESS FOR OVER 40 YEARS

(918) 527-0117
DTConstruction.com

Steel Mobile Home Roofing

Leaks? High energy bill? Roof rumble?

PERMA-ROOF
from Southern Builders



800.633.8969 • roofover.com



TCP E-news

TCP Sign up now

TexasCoopPower.com/join

TCP Marketplace

Advertise in Texas Co-op Power.

ELAINE SPROULL (512) 486-6251

advertising@TexasCoopPower.com

FREE! \$2 Bill in Uncirculated Condition



- ★ Seldom-Seen, \$2 Bills Make up Less Than 1% of All Paper Currency
- ★ Face Depicts Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of Independence
- ★ Back Features a Rendition of John Trumbull's Masterpiece *Declaration of Independence*
- ★ **FREE Shipping!**

You'll also receive a handpicked trial selection of fascinating coins from our No-Obligation **Coins-on-Approval Service**, from which you may purchase any or none of the coins – return balance within 15 days – with option to cancel at any time.

**Mail Coupon Today!
For Faster Service Visit:
LittletonCoin.com/Respond**



 **Littleton**
Coin Company®
Serving Collectors Since 1945

Offer Code: SYD549

©2024 LCC, Inc.



Special Offer for New Customers Only Ages 18+
REQUEST MUST BE RECEIVED WITHIN 30 DAYS

☒ **YES!** Please send me the following:

QTY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
1	\$2 Note (limit 1)	FREE!
	Shipping	FREE!
	TOTAL	FREE!

Name _____ Please print clearly

Address _____ Apt# _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Mail to:  **Littleton** Coin Company® **Offer Code: SYD549**
Serving Collectors Since 1945 Littleton NH 03561-3737

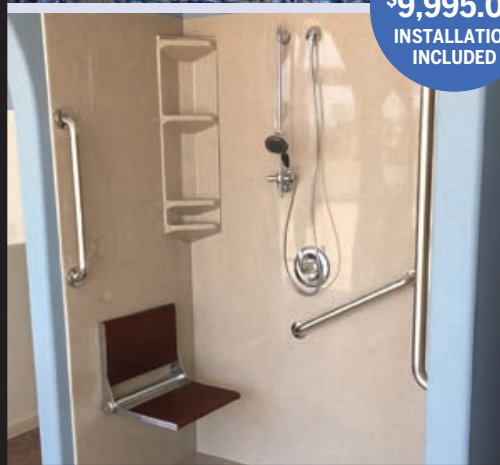


TCP Gift Shop
Find Texas Treasures

Texas food, music, housewares, gifts and more—find it all on our website, along with great deals for TCP readers.

Just pick and click—it's easy to shop for friends and family without leaving home.

TCP Shop now
TexasCoopPower.com/shop



**TUB OR
SHOWER FROM
\$9,995.00
INSTALLATION
INCLUDED**

**SPECIAL
SAVINGS!**

**YOUR CHOICE OF A
WALK-IN SHOWER
OR WALK-IN TUB**

Lifetime Warranty
Custom Sizes Available
100% Financing Available
A+ BBB Rating
Good Contractors List



BEST BUY WALK-IN TUBS
FEATURING "SEALTITE" TECHNOLOGY

 **Trusted by Texans for 19 Years**
Tubs and Showers
Made in America
 **Visit Our Texas Showroom**

Call for More Info
682-205-3532 • 888-825-2362
bestbuywalkintubs.com

THE SPIRIT OF GRATITUDE



**SCOTT
SPENCE**

PRESIDENT/
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

In today's hectic world, sometimes it makes sense to hit the pause button and appreciate life's blessings. Thanksgiving provides that opportunity.

It is not the aroma of turkey and pumpkin pie in the air, the football games on TV, or local parades that make this holiday so special. At its heart, it is the spirit of gratitude that people feel as they gather together.

It is easy to overlook life's blessings. But life's adversities have a way of highlighting the importance of gratitude.

It was only a few years ago that the world struggled to deal with the uncertainty and hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people lost loved ones, faced financial stress, and experienced isolation. Amid these challenges, people were compassionate and selfless toward others.

This year, families in states affected by hurricanes face incredible hardships. Their resilience in the face of such challenges is truly inspiring. Once again, the American spirit is shining through as people across the country lend a helping hand to those in need. Linemen from Tri-County Electric Cooperative joined in that effort.

Tri-County Electric employees helped bring light to hundreds of people in times of darkness. Working tirelessly for several weeks, TCEC linemen and other responders' selfless efforts are a reminder that even in the worst of times, there is always something to be thankful for.

So, as we gather around the Thanksgiving table this year, let's take a moment to reflect, count our blessings, and give thanks for our family, friends, first responders, volunteers, and neighbors.

Scott Spence
President & CEO



TCEC LINEMEN HELPED RESTORE POWER TO LOCAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES IN GEORGIA IMPACTED BY HURRICANE HELENE IN SEPTEMBER.
PHOTO COURTESY: MIDDLE GEORGIA EMC

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP HOLDS 85TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

Tri-County Electric Cooperative (TCEC) held its 85th Annual Meeting virtually on Thursday, October 3. Members cast a total of 9,777 ballots for three board seats.

As announced by Survey and Ballot Systems, the results were:

DISTRICT 3

- Nomination candidate David Manning received 35.5% of the votes.
- Nomination candidate Curtis Nager received 27.8% of the votes.
- Nomination candidate J. Steven Bartley received 24.6% of the votes.
- Petitioning candidate Ryan Miller received 12.1% of the votes.

DISTRICT 6

- Nomination candidate Timmy Yearly received 43.7% of the votes.
- Incumbent John Killough received 32.1% of the votes.
- Nomination candidate Brenda Wilde received 24.2% of the votes.

DISTRICT 8

- Nomination candidate Jarrett Armstrong received 59.5% of the votes.
- Incumbent Mike Sivertsen received 40.5% of the votes.

As no candidate in Districts 3 or 6 received a majority vote, a runoff election will be held. Ballots open Friday, November 1,

and close Friday, November 22, and will be mailed to members in the November edition of *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. Results will be announced during a member meeting on Tuesday, November 26, at 6 p.m.

During the meeting, TCEC members also had the opportunity to hear from the cooperative's new auditor, Moss Adams, an independent auditing firm specializing in accounting services for energy companies, including electric cooperatives. The firm announced an unmodified, or clean, opinion of Tri-County Electric's 2024 financial statements. This means that the consolidated financial statements present a fair view of TCEC's financial position as of March 31, 2024.

The meeting closed with 25 members who voted in this year's election being randomly selected to win a \$100 credit to their account. These credits were funded by donations from TCEC vendors and industry partners. A complete list of winners and sponsors can be found at tcectexas.com/annual-meeting.

This marked the fifth consecutive year that TCEC's Annual Meeting was held online. Members had the option to watch the live stream or participate via phone. TCEC President and CEO Scott Spence explained the decision to continue holding the meeting virtually. Among the key reasons, he noted, was the cost of bringing TCEC's large membership together, the vast size of the service area – including some members having to travel more than two hours to attend – and the convenience of the meeting being available on demand. The virtual format ensures that all members receive the same information at their convenience.

DISTRICTS 3 & 6 RUNOFF ELECTION

Tri-County Electric Cooperative's 2024 Election results were announced at the 85th Annual Meeting of the Members on Thursday, October 3. None of the candidates for Districts 3 and 6 received a majority of votes. A runoff election has been called, which will be conducted in accordance with the Cooperative's bylaws. In District 3, David Manning and Curtis Nager, both nomination candidates, will compete. In District 6, John Killough, the incumbent, will face Timmy Yearly, a nomination candidate.

The runoff election will be conducted in a similar manner as the 2024 Official Election held in September. Your member-specific official 2024 Districts 3 and 6 Runoff Election Ballot is located on the back of this November *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. Additionally, members with active emails on file will receive an email on November 1, with their member-specific link to vote online. Voting will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, November 22.

Join us at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, for a virtual member meeting to announce the results of the Districts 3 and 6 runoff election.

Stream Online: tcectexas.com/annual-meeting

Listen by Phone: 855.710.6229

Thank you

TO OUR DOOR PRIZE SPONSORS

Aflac
Amp Utility Company, LLC
Double C Service Center
Larry's Overhead Door, Inc.
Vita Auto Parts
McCord Engineering, Inc.
Network Consulting Services, Inc.
Texas State Utilities, Inc.
J.L. Matthews Company, Inc.
FX5 Utility Construction, LLC
M&S Engineering, LLC
REI Utility Services, LLC

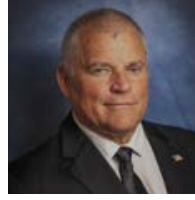
2024 RUNOFF ELECTION: CANDIDATES



DISTRICT DAVID MANNING NOMINATION CANDIDATE

3

Retired Fort Worth Police Officer and former President of Fort Worth Police Officers Association. My wife, Terrie, and I attend Christ Chapel Bible Church; have a daughter and a son; and have been Tri-County Electric Cooperative homeowner members for the past 30 years. My goals for serving on the Tri-County Electric Coop Board of Directors are straightforward. To ensure reliability and affordability of our electricity. To remove the Winter Storm Uri surcharge on homeowner electric bills. And to have our Electric Coop staff be responsive and timely with member service. I also serve as a Captain the Texas State Guard (2007-present); and have earned certification as a FEMA Military Emergency Management Specialist. My community service includes serving as an appointee of Governor George W Bush on a statewide Commission; former Chairman of the City of Fort Worth's Employee Retirement Fund; and former President of the Fort Worth Police Benevolent Association. Finally, I pledge to be respectful and accessible to my fellow Electric Coop members; and will strive to promptly return all phone calls and emails. In short, I believe in results, not rhetoric.



DISTRICT CURTIS NAGER NOMINATION CANDIDATE

3

Personal Info

- Resident of North Texas for 38 years, including residing in Parker County the past 20 years.
- Married to my beautiful wife, Katrina Nager, 34 years and counting
- Two adult children, and three grand children
- I enjoy spending time with my family, in a variety of adventures. As well as engaged with our church family, Lighthouse Fellowship Church.

Education

- After graduating High School (Avon, Indiana) I attended DeVry Institute of Technology (Lombard/Chicago, IL) in Electrical Engineering
- Youth Ministry, 20+ years of continuing education courses and seminars
- Ministry Safe Sexual Abuse Awareness Training, through an approved Texas Department of State Health Services training facility.
- OSHA 10 Safety Certified
- Construction Industry continuing education

Work Experience

- 7+ Years (Current) Owner/Managing Member of Custom Fabrication company in the commercial/retail construction industry
 - Management and daily operations of the company -
 - Sales/Design of all projects
 - Materials acquisition
 - Accounting
 - Payroll
- 8 Years (2014-2022) Owner of Food Distribution company
- Y Years (2006-2013) Sales and Production Manager of Custom Fabrication company in the commercial/retail construction industry
- 20+ Years (1983-2004) Management positions in the Retail and Food Distribution Industries

Civic Experience

- Trustee for Coutts Memorial UMC (Weatherford)
- Assorted Church Council-Administrative roles for Coutts Memorial UMC (Weatherford)
- Youth Ministry- salaried staff position - Coutts Memorial UMC (Weatherford) and St. Paul UMC (Hurst)
- Served in numerous roles with Tarrant Area Food Bank

Each biography is published as written and submitted by the candidate. Each candidate adhered to a 500 word limit.

2024 RUNOFF ELECTION: CANDIDATES



DISTRICT 6

**JOHN
KILLOUGH**
INCUMBENT

Being a generational resident in Hood County has kept me grounded and made me value serving our community through civic organizations as well as my active participation in the Triple Cross Cowboy Church. My wife Dana and I are both graduates of Granbury High school and have chosen to call Granbury home.

I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology from Tarleton State University, and for more than 30 years have been a small business owner in Hood County which has included being owner and operator of Killough's Dirt Service, working and maintaining agricultural operations providing quality hay to fellow farmers and ranchers across most of our service territory, while running my own cow/calf operation. This has allowed me to foster relationships and better serve others in the community.

I have invested time and energy reading and studying National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) courses obtaining national recognition as a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) and am working toward a Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). This effort has provided me the knowledge necessary to understand the electric cooperative business model where I proudly serve as the board vice chairman and am dedicated to the continuous improvement for the members of Tri-County Electric Cooperative.



DISTRICT 6

**TIMMY
YEARY**
NOMINATION
CANDIDATE

To all involved with the Tri-County Electric Co-op board election process, my name is Timmy Yeary and I am honored to submit my candidacy for the board seat in District 6. My family has been in Parker and Hood Counties for four generations, mostly focused in the agriculture and transportation sectors. I completed high school in Weatherford, and my wife graduated from Brock ISD. We later married in 1995 and kept this area our home while raising two kids, like the generations before us. We love to travel, but there is something special about always coming back to this area we call home. From the early years of our marriage we have been committed to serving in our local church as well as with local and international ministries.

After graduating high school in 1991, I began working as a framing contractor during the early years of the Parker County growth. This later evolved into becoming a design builder of custom homes throughout our area. After the housing crisis of 2008, I spent the next 12 years working in the trucking industry. I began working in logistics and later moved on to the nation's largest commercial insurance brokerage. This opportunity presented immeasurable lessons working as an intermediary between actuaries and clients on large commercial risk. This knowledge and experience has been beneficial as I have re-entered the residential development sector.

Having been both an individual customer, as well as a builder member of TCEC for many years, I appreciate the model of the membership cooperative. I am in alignment with the goals of autonomy through democratic representations, and I feel this is the root of all healthy organizations. I am eager to contribute my skillset and experiences to furthering the organization's impact in our communities.

I believe that a self-driven, entrepreneurial minded individual, possesses natural gifting's that is rooted in something deeper than themselves. The humility to know that I am standing on someone else's shoulders, while hoping my highest accolades are the next generations floor in which to build from. We are all small links in a very long chain. My greatest challenge is asking what kind of steward will I be with the link I am given.

The speed in which technology and innovation are evolving will require great insight from a multitude of counselors. I eagerly look forward to the opportunity of partnering with the board and leadership at TCEC in planning for the future that awaits the membership.

Change brings challenges, but with a healthy balance of strategy and implementation I feel confident that TCEC can continue being a valued asset to its cooperative members.

In conclusion, I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to join the TCEC team as a board member. I am confident that my background, work ethic, and integrity will serve the organization well. Thank you for considering my candidacy, and I look forward to the opportunity of serving the TCEC members in District 6.

Each biography is published as written and submitted by the candidate. Each candidate adhered to a 500 word limit.

DO IT RIGHT WITH DR[®] POWER EQUIPMENT

Conquer Seasonal Chores with DR[®]

DR[®] is the Leader in Leaf Vacs

- #1 in vacuum power and capacity
- NEW PRO MAX model holds up to 450 gals.
- All tow-behind models newly redesigned with up to 20% more capacity



DR[®] Walk-Behind Leaf and Lawn Vacuum

- NEW PILOT XT fills paper leaf bags for curbside pickup
- Collects and mulches up to 50 lbs. per bag
- Includes onboard caddy for extra bags



**DR[®] POWER
EQUIPMENT**

Put Your Garden to Bed with a DR® Rototiller!

- Easily bust sod and churn through compacted soil
- Prepare seedbeds or till garden waste back into your soil
- Full line of walk or tow-behind models and nimble cultivators

SAVE UP TO \$200



PRO XLDT

★ **USA**
ENGINEERED AND BUILT
Assembled in the USA
using domestic and
foreign parts.

Discover the Power and Precision of a DR® Trimmer Mower

- 5X the power of a handheld trimmer
- Trim precisely without arm fatigue
- Mow where a bladed mower can't
- Toughest trimmer cord available
- Walk and Tow-behind models available

PRO XLT



PRO XL

Scan the code to visit [DRPower.com](https://www.drpowers.com) to shop the sale or request a free catalog!

Toll-free: 800-717-6278 | FREE SHIPPING options available



First-Name Basis

A wolf spider misidentified for 120 years gets its due, thanks to an observant amateur naturalist

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS • ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE DALTON COWAN

FOR MORE THAN a century, a rather large wolf spider in Texas attracted little, if any, scientific attention. Then in 2019, Eric Neubauer—an amateur naturalist and recent transplant from Pennsylvania—began to document and photograph the fauna on his rural 12 acres south of Davilla, between Austin and Waco.

With time, he noted enough differences among some of his abundant burrowing wolf spiders that he suspected he'd discovered a new species.

Neubauer, a Bartlett Electric Cooperative member, was right. Five years later, he and a Texas biology professor have nearly finished the lengthy process of naming an undescribed species, *Hogna incognita*.

For an amateur like Neubauer, that's a major accomplishment. On his own dime, he sleuthed to solve a wildlife mystery. "I've always had an interest in nature," says Neubauer, a member of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. "Out here in the middle of nowhere, there's not much to do. So taking pictures is free entertainment. Plus it gets me outside."

Though he holds a biology degree, Neubauer never worked in the field professionally. Instead, he taught figure skating, worked as an engineer for a manufacturing company, and wrote articles and books on railroad car history. After the sudden loss of his wife, he moved to Texas in 2018 to be near family.

At home on his piece of blackland prairie, Neubauer resumed photographing insects. To nail down identifications, he uploaded pictures to iNaturalist, a nature app that enables users to record observations of what they find, keep species lists and compile data. The global network connects online members who share information and help one another with identifications.

However, users often get stumped. In Neubauer's case, some of his wolf spiders kept getting ID'd as *Hogna antelucana*, a commonly seen species (with no common name) in Texas. Upon closer examination, he began to notice that leg bands and other body markings didn't always match among his *Hogna antelucana* observations. Maybe they weren't the same species, he proposed. A few iNaturalist users tentatively agreed.

Determined to find out himself, Neubauer learned all he could about wolf spiders, a harmless group of ground spiders that hunt mainly at night and pounce on their prey. Their dark mottled colors help them

blend into their surroundings. Some dig burrows while others hide under rocks or nowhere at all.

From miniscule spiderlings to more than 2-inch-long adults, Neubauer improved his photography skills so he could take sharp pictures in all their life phases. To broaden his research, he traveled across Texas to photograph wolf spiders.

"By the end of 2021, I was sure I had two separate species," Neubauer says. He concluded that his new species had been confused with *Hogna antelucana* since 1904, when Thomas Montgomery first described the species from specimens collected in Austin. Neubauer hopes to dub his overlooked species *Hogna incognita*.

"I'm not in favor of naming species after people," he explains. "I wanted a species name that sounded good and wasn't used elsewhere. I also thought 'incognita' was appropriate for a wolf spider that had been confused with another spider for 120 years."

Meanwhile, Russell Pfau, a professor in the biological sciences department at Tarleton State University, noticed Neubauer's observations on iNaturalist. He also reviewed Neubauer's research posted online.

"After looking at spider observations from my property, I could see the differences that Eric was pointing out," Pfau says. "So he and I began to correspond. We've also met several times. Eric's knowledgeable about spiders and scientific terminology. He's very sharp-eyed too."

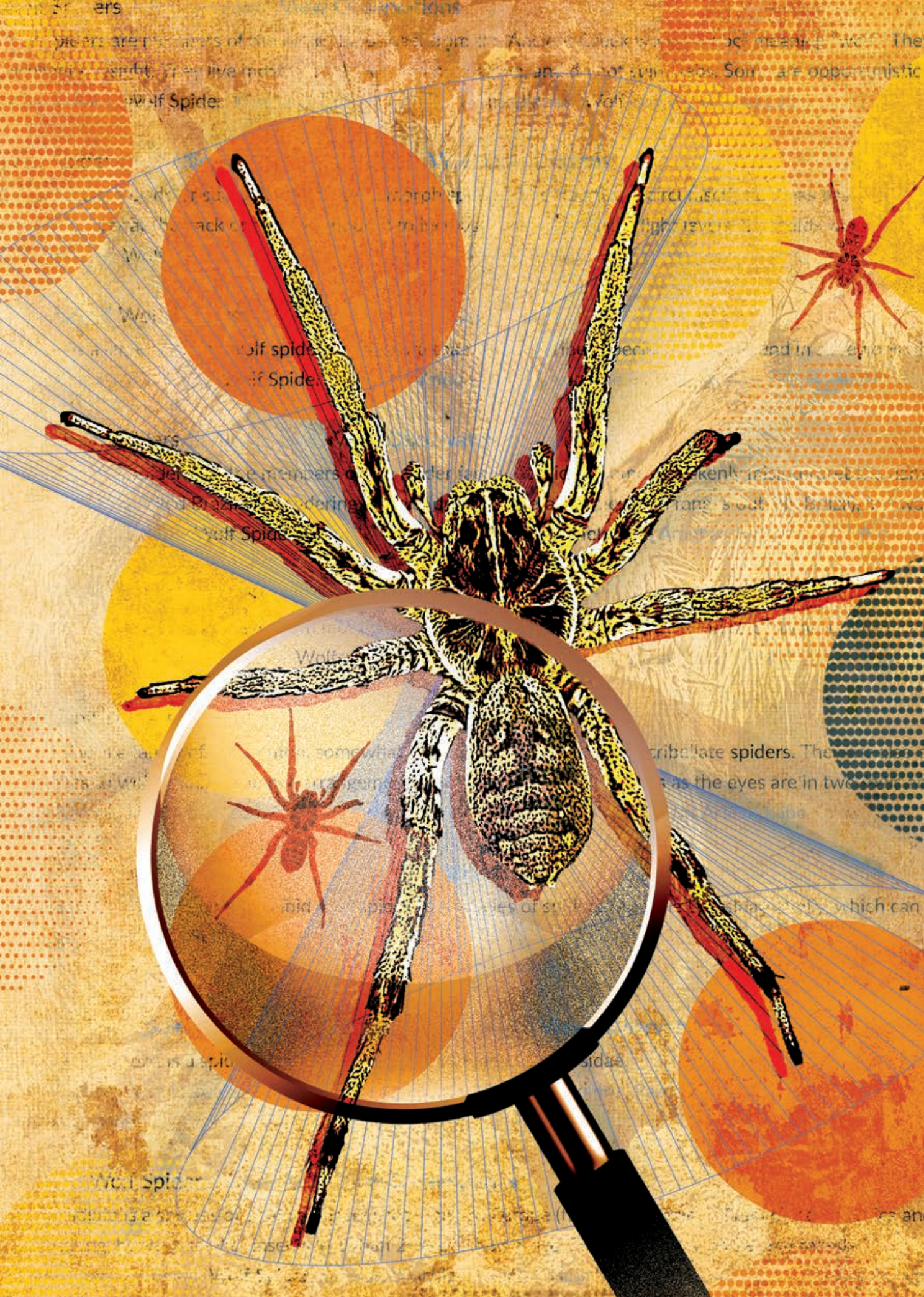
In 2023, Pfau offered to help Neubauer prepare a scientific paper for publication—a major step in the complicated process of naming a new species.

For his part, the professor conducted genetic testing on both species. Though they look similar, the DNA results confirmed that the two spiders are different. In vials on his desk, Pfau reared spiderlings from the two species and documented their developmental stages, which also differ.

Sometime next year, the pair hope to have their paper published in a scientific journal. If other biologists agree with their findings, then *Hogna incognita* will be officially recognized as a new wolf spider species.

While he waits, Neubauer continues his research.

"Right now I'm taking photos of other species in Milam and Burleson counties," he says. "That's enough to keep me busy for a while." ■



State of Texas

MONTHLY AVERAGE¹

\$53

for Geothermal Heating & Cooling



Symphony[®] Insight

**With WaterFurnace, the average Texan pays \$53/mo.
to provide heating, cooling and hot water for their home.**

WaterFurnace homeowners across the country are reaping the benefits of geothermal heat pumps by utilizing the unlimited reservoir of stored solar energy underground. A WaterFurnace geothermal system taps into this free and renewable resource to provide savings of up to 70% on heating, cooling, and hot water—with a comfort you have to experience to believe. Right now you can save thousands on installation thanks to a 30% federal tax credit². Contact our WaterFurnace Concierges Team to learn more today!



visit waterfurnace.com/TexasPower

WaterFurnace is a registered trademark of WaterFurnace International, Inc. ©2024 WaterFurnace International Inc.

1. 14.5¢ kWh – June 2024 Texa's Monthly Electricity Rate Average | Actual data powered by Symphony

2. ENERGY STAR rated units qualify for 30% through 2032, 26% through 2033 and 22% through 2034



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



shade for travelers and cattle. In fact, range cattle gathered beneath it so much that they created a large depression in the ground there. Thus, it was more properly known then as El Encino del Pozo, the oak in the hole. Encino became a stage-coach stop, but sadly, the namesake tree died long ago.

Palacios, the enchanting town on the Gulf of Mexico, means palaces. There are some lovely homes there but no palaces. The town's original name was Trespalacios, for the first governor of the Mexican state of Texas, José Félix Trespalacios.

Refugio means refuge in Spanish, and the name indeed tells of the town's historical—and even present—significance. Well over 200 years ago, it was a refuge for travelers, a safe haven for those traveling across the frontier to San Antonio or Austin's colonies or south to Corpus or Matamoros.

Today it still functions as a refuge as the halfway point between the Rio Grande Valley and Houston. For its size, it has an unexpectedly large number of restaurants, gas stations and hotels, all teeming with travelers.

The Nueces River, meaning the river of nuts, was so named because of the plentiful pecan trees that grew along its banks.

Agua Dulce of South Texas has a sister city in West Texas—Sweetwater. Both were named for what was a highly prized type of water: Sweet water, as distinguished from brackish or salty water, was, naturally, greatly preferred. It was the sort of attribute chambers of commerce could use to market a town, or name it.

Here's some homework for you. See if you can figure out what Pecos means. It's a hard translation to pin down, with more twists and turns than the river itself has. *Buena suerte, amigos.* ■

Found in Translation

Spanish influence can be traced across Texas as you follow a map

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY NICK LU

FOR THOSE WHO have at least a rudimentary knowledge of Spanish, traveling Texas becomes quite interesting because the Spanish names of places reveal, or hint at, their histories.

For instance, Alamo means cottonwood, as in cottonwood trees. The mission was named after the hometown of the Mexican soldiers who served there in the early 1800s—Alamo de Parras.

San Antonio is named for St. Anthony. The Spanish explorers who came upon the river and springs there in 1691 arrived on the Feast of St. Anthony, June 13, and used the occasion to honor him.

Corpus Christi has a similar naming story. Latin for body of Christ, the city was named for the Feast of Corpus Christi, which is 60 days after Easter. Legend has

it that's the day that explorer Alonso Álvarez de Pineda first laid eyes on the sparkling tropical bay.

San Jacinto, in English, would be St. Hyacinth. The battle of that name was fought near the San Jacinto River, which was named either for the hyacinths that grew there so bountifully and bloomed so beautifully, or for St. Hyacinth, the patron saint of those in danger of drowning. Perhaps it was named for both.

Many merely wide places along the trail became small towns and were named for the original attractions that put them on the map.

Encino, 46 miles north of Edinburg, is such a case. *Encino* means oak. In the 1800s it had an ancient, sprawling oak tree that provided much-appreciated

Holiday Bites

Share these flavorful snacks with friends—and be prepared to share the recipes

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

I don't think I've ever made a more tried-and-true appetizer than these cranberry meatballs. All the flavors of Thanksgiving in a bite-size appetizer without spending hours in the kitchen. They are always a part of my holiday spread and definitely hold their own alongside other festive bites.

Cranberry Turkey Meatballs

MEATBALLS

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup finely diced onion
- 2 tablespoons minced parsley
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- ½ cup breadcrumbs

CRANBERRY SAUCE

- 3 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- ¾ cup orange juice
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 1 teaspoon crushed dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1. MEATBALLS Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a large bowl, combine meatball ingredients and mix until well combined. With damp hands, shape into 1-inch meatballs and place on prepared baking sheet. Bake 20 minutes.

3. CRANBERRY SAUCE In a large skillet over medium-high heat, combine sauce ingredients. Cook 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally until sugar has dissolved, cranberries have burst and sauce has slightly thickened.

4. Serve meatballs warm with cranberry sauce.

SERVES 14

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in *Cocina Gris* at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Pickled Jalapeño Shrimp Ceviche.



Olive Cheese Balls

BETSY STRIEGLER
BLUEBONNET EC

Cheese-wrapped olives, baked to perfection, are a wonderful pick-up appetizer. Striegler learned this recipe in a college food and nutrition class where the students prepared thousands for the dean's reception. It's a family favorite to this day.

- 2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1¼ cups sifted flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 48 pimiento-stuffed green olives, drained

COOK'S TIP Once the prepared olives have been frozen one hour, they can be placed in a zip-close bag and stored. When you're ready, simply place olives on a baking sheet and bake according to directions.

1. In a food processor, blend cheese with butter until smooth. Add flour, salt and cayenne and process into cheese mixture until well blended.
2. Pat dry the olives with a paper towel.
3. Wrap 1 teaspoon dough around each olive. Place each olive approximately 1 inch apart on a baking sheet. Freeze at least 1 hour.
4. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Remove olives from freezer and bake 15 minutes.

MAKES 48



\$500 WINNER

Feta and Dill Stuffed Shrimp

ANN CYCHOSZ
WISE EC



Meet your new favorite appetizer! Go beyond the typical shrimp cocktail with this creamy, delicious snack. The feta dill filling comes together in minutes, and you can assemble these succulent bites the night before. I love the contrasting tastes and textures of these delightful shrimp, which add a festive touch to your holiday parties.

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 4 ounces crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh dill or 2 teaspoons dried dill
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅓ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ⅓ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1½ pounds large raw shrimp
- Fresh dill sprigs, for garnish (optional)
- Cocktail sauce (optional)

1. In a bowl, mix cream cheese and feta cheese until well blended. Stir in the lemon juice, dill, salt, cayenne and black pepper. Chill mixture 1 hour.
2. Remove shrimp shells, leaving the tails on. Cut a slit down the length of the outside curve of each shrimp and devein.
3. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add shrimp and cook 90 seconds or until they turn pink and are fully cooked inside. Drain shrimp, rinse under cold water and pat dry.
4. Transfer the cheese mixture to a pastry bag or a plastic sandwich bag with a corner of the bag snipped off. Pipe the cream cheese and feta cheese mixture into the slit of each shrimp.
5. Arrange on a platter and chill 1 hour. Garnish with fresh dill and serve with cocktail sauce, if desired.

SERVES 6

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

EGGS DUE NOVEMBER 10

Scrambled, poached, deviled, fried or boiled, we'll eat eggs for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Tell us how you like your eggs, and your recipe could win you egg-zactly \$500. Enter by November 10.

UPCOMING: THE WHOLE ENCHILADA DUE DECEMBER 10



MORE RECIPES >

Pork and Cream Cheese Stuffed Mushrooms

SUSAN RODGERS
PEDERNALES EC

The savory richness of ground pork, tanginess of cream cheese and earthy depth of mushrooms come together in this bite-sized delight.

- 1 pound cremini mushrooms
- 12 slices bacon
- 1 pound pork breakfast sausage
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons steak seasoning
- 1 package cream cheese (8 ounces), softened

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Remove stems from mushrooms and discard. With a paper towel, gently wipe off the caps and place on baking sheet with the cavity side up.



3. In a skillet over medium heat, cook bacon a few slices at a time until crispy and drain on a paper towel.
4. Reserve 2 tablespoons of bacon grease in skillet and add pork sausage and onion. Cook, breaking up sausage with a spoon until well done. Stir in garlic and steak seasoning. Reduce heat to low and cook 2 minutes, then remove skillet from heat.
5. Dice bacon, reserving 2 slices, and add to a bowl along with cream cheese and sausage mixture. Mix until well combined.
6. Fill each mushroom cap with filling and

App-ropos Tips

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Here are a few ideas to make serving appetizers more fun:

Lettuce leaves have a natural cup shape and can be used instead of a plate.

Dips, meatballs, ceviche and soups can be served in **martini glasses** instead of bowls.

Crackers add crunch and are sturdy enough to hold salads and dips.

Easily create a beautiful display using **skewers**, which can hold meats, cheeses and veggies.

return to baking sheet. Bake 20 minutes, then allow to cool 10 minutes.

7. Crumble reserved bacon slices. Garnish mushrooms with bacon before serving.

SERVES 8



Cast-Iron Skillet Giveaway Contest

To celebrate 80 years of *Texas Co-op Power*, we're giving away 80 handcrafted, heirloom-quality No. 12 skillets from Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co.

TCP Enter Today
TexasCoopPower.com/contests



LAST
CHANCE
ENTER
NOW!



Emporium Brand Chili Kit

For a Texas good time.

Enjoy this gluten-free, convenient and easy to prepare Emporium Chili. Our signature Chili Mix is available individually or by the case. Gift our Tasty Texas Chili with handy shipping options.

254-774-9098 | emporiumspice.com



Texas Red Grapefruit and Avocados

Always a gift in good taste!

Orchard-fresh grapefruit and other Texas products are all hand-selected, carefully packed and shipped to be delivered just in time for the holidays.

1-800-580-1900 | crockettfarms.com



Crockett Farms
Always a Gift in Good Taste. Since 1961



HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

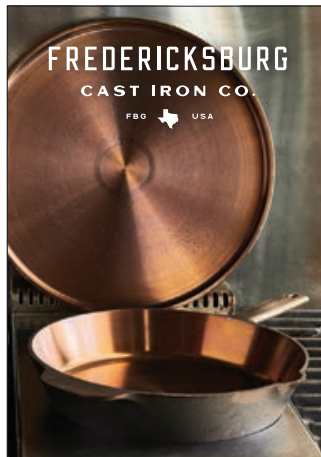
In the magazine and on TexasCoopPower.com, we make it easy to shop for friends and family.



Fudge and Divinity for the Holidays

**The Best Fudge in Texas.
The Best Divinity in the World.**
Bring back those childhood memories of Christmas with the sweet gift of fudge and divinity from Holiday Farms.

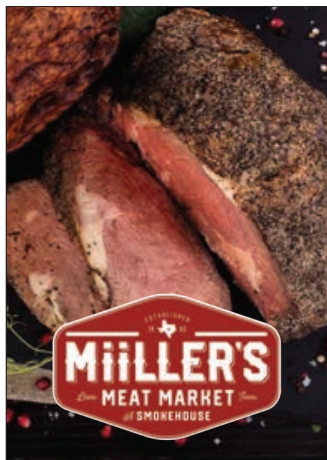
holidayfarmscandy.com
divinitybydave.etsy.com



Made in Texas, Y'all

Cast-iron cookware with a smooth cooking surface.
Our durable, heirloom-quality cast-iron cookware made in Fredericksburg, Texas, is a great gift that can be shared with family and friends for generations.

fbgcastiron.com
instagram.com/fbg_castiron



"Meat" You at Miiller's

Find friendly faces, local fresh and smoked meats and more.
Miiller's uses time-honored techniques and stands by doing right by our customers. Let us take stress off your plate with meats and groceries, meal delivery, gifts and more.

325-247-4450
miillers.com



Homegrown Texas Pecans and Pecan Treats

Berdoll's has been family-owned for 45 years.
We make delicious pecan pies, chocolate pecans, honey-glazed pecans and more. Shop our retail store or let us ship the perfect gift for you!

800-518-3870
berdoll.com



Ideal Arm Protection for Any Activity

Helps Prevent Bruising and Protects Those With Thin Skin!
Soft leather protective sleeves help protect you from 100's of injury-prone chores you do at work, home, farm, or ranch. Even has adjustable airflow!

(651) 492-4830
armchaps.com

COMES IN 4 COLORS AND 7 SIZES



Texas Bluebonnet Calendar

Large 20-by-15-inch calendar with 12 watercolor scenes.
Enjoy nature's beauty year-round with this 2025 calendar by Texas State Artist George Boutwell. \$17.50 plus tax and \$4.50 shipping. See website for quantity pricing.

1-800-243-4316
gboutwell.com



COURTESY CHET GARNER

A Den, and Then Some

Animal World & Snake Farm Zoo boasts more than 500 tame and terrifying species

BY CHET GARNER

THERE'S ALMOST NO better way to break up a road trip than popping into a strange, offbeat roadside attraction. But this famous destination on Interstate 35 north of San Antonio is the king cobra of them all. I don't suffer from ophidiophobia (the fear of snakes), but even I was nervous stepping into a building full of the world's most venomous vipers.

Since it opened in 1967, the legend of the Snake Farm has grown far and wide, helped along by the well-known Ray Wylie Hubbard song that it inspired in 2006. Based on the lyrics, I was expecting a "nasty" and dimly lit den of danger.

What I discovered was a full-blown zoo with more than 500 species of animals ranging from mambas to mammals. It turns out that the owners who took over in 2007 had a new vision and a new name: Animal World & Snake Farm Zoo.

I started inside the front building, staring down the likes of death adders, rattlers and one of the world's deadliest snakes: the inland taipan. If you come for slithering serpents, you won't be disappointed as this zoo boasts hundreds.

The real surprises came when I wandered outside and past habitats with some of the world's most curious creatures. I said "howdy" to a pair of white lions and even got to feed the resident bison. There were otters and jaguars right next to monkeys and hyenas.

But nothing entertained the crowds more than when a staff member jumped into the gator pit with more than a dozen hungry alligators chomping for the raw chicken in his hand. I'm not sure if that was bravery, negligence or just good old-fashioned showmanship.

The best roadside stops provide visitors with a dose of the unexpected, and this one certainly delivered. ■

ABOVE Chet with Jarrod Forthman and an enormous albino Burmese python at the Snake Farm.

TCP Watch the video on our website to explore the place that inspired a song. And find all Chet's Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

NOVEMBER

7

Lake Jackson [7-8] Mums & Mistletoe Market, (979) 297-3041, smlj.org

8

Bastrop [8-9] Heroes & Hot Rods, bastropareacruisers.com

Buda [8-9] Buda Bee Club Quilt Show, (512) 295-3413, ocsbuda.org

Fredericksburg [8-10] Die Künstler von Fredericksburg Art Show and Sale, (830) 739-2875, dkfredericksburg.org

9

Blanco Gem of the Hills 40th Birthday Bash, (830) 833-2713, gemofthehills.org

Corsicana Texas Veterans Parade, (214) 537-9311, texasveteransparade.com

Mason Wild Game Dinner, (325) 347-5758, masontx.org

Smithville Tour of Homes, facebook.com/smithvillegardenclub

Surfside Beach Kites and Castles, (979) 233-1531, visitsurfsidebeachtx.org

16

Brenham Winter Dance Party, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Smithville Reel Film Expo, (512) 237-2313, smithvilletx.org

23

Luling Winter Wonderland Arts & Crafts Show, (830) 875-0123, lulingcc.org

24

Giddings Sip & Shop Christmas Market, (979) 542-3455, giddingstx.com

25

Grapevine Carol of Lights, (817) 410-3450, gograpevine.com

26

Jasper Pioneer Day, (409) 384-5231, tpwd.texas.gov

29

Granbury Night of Lights Christmas Parade, (682) 936-4550, granburysquare.com

30

Liberty Hill Holiday Around the Hill, facebook.com/holidayaroundthehill

DECEMBER

6

Fredericksburg Light the Night Christmas Parade, (830) 997-5000, fredericksburg-texas.com

Castroville [6-7] Old Fashion Christmas, (830) 538-3142, castroville.com

McKinney [6-7] Holidays at the Heard, (972) 562-5566, heardmuseum.org

7

Palestine Christmas on Main, (903) 723-3014, facebook.com/palestinemainstreet

Woodville Christmas Twilight Tour, (409) 283-2272, heritage-village.org

TCP Submit Your Event

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

Heirloom Seed Kits

100% NON-GMO • 100% NON-HYBRID



125 VARIETY SEED VAULT

(With Ammo Storage Box)

Includes 22,000+ seeds / 125 varieties of vegetables and herbs.

\$119

SEE MORE SEED KITS ONLINE!

Tomato 10-Pack	\$25	25 Variety Kit	\$27 ⁵⁰
Herb 12-Pack	\$25	50 Variety Kit	\$49
Wildflower Mix	\$20	125 Variety Kit	\$119



HeartsgoodFarms.com

(866) 861-7111

Order Online Or By Phone.



Family-Owned & Operated.
Cave Springs, Arkansas

WE BUY MINERALS

We pay cash for producing or non-producing mineral interests.

CALL US TODAY! 1-888-735-5337



TCP Gift Shop

TCP Shop now
TexasCoopPower.com/shop

Bank C.D.'s Due? CALL US NOW

1-800-359-4940 TEXAS TOLL-FREE
www.mattsonfinancialservices.com

BLAKE MATTSON, CFP™
Signal Securities, Inc., 5400 Bosque, 4th Floor, Waco, TX 76710
Serving Customers All Over Texas

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

1. Publication Title
Texas Co-op Power

2. Publication Number
0540-560

3. Filing Date
October 1, 2024

4. Issue Frequency
Monthly

5. Number of Issues Published Annually
Twelve

6. Annual Subscription Price
\$7.50

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Street, city, county, state and ZIP+4)
1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, Travis, Texas 78701-2167

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher
1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, Travis, Texas 78701-2167

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor
Publisher
Texas Electric Cooperatives, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl,
Austin, Texas 78701-2167
Editor
Chris Burrows, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, TX 78701
Managing Editor
Karen Nejtek, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Fl, Austin, TX 78701

10. Owner
Full Name
Complete Mailing Address
Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., is a nonprofit association of rural
ECs organized as a cooperative membership corporation under Article
1528b, Texas Civil Statutes. Its members are: Bailey County ECA,
Muleshoe; Bandera EC, Bandera; Bartlett EC, Bartlett; Big Country EC,
Roby; Bluebonnet EC, Giddings; Bowie-Cass EC, Douglassville; Brazos
EC, Waco; Bryan Texas Utilities, Bryan; Central Texas EC,
Fredericksburg; Cherokee County ECA, Rusk; Coleman County EC,
Coleman; Comanche County ECA, Comanche; Concho Valley EC, San
Angelo; CoSover EC, Corinth; Deaf Smith EC, Hereford; Deep East
Texas EC, San Augustine; East Texas EC, Nacogdoches; Fannin
County EC, Bonham; Farmers EC, Greenville; Fayette EC, LaGrange;
Fort Belknap EC, Olney; Golden Spread EC, Amarillo; Grayson-Collin
EC, Van Alstyne; Greenbelt EC, Wellington; Guadalupe Valley EC,
Gonzales; Hamilton County ECA, Hamilton; Harmon EA, Hollis,
Oklahoma; Heart of Texas EC, McGregor; HILCO EC, Itasca; Houston
County EC, Crockett; J-A-C EC, Bluegrove; Jackson EC, Edina; Jasper-
Newton EC, Kirbyville; Karnes EC, Karnes City; Lamar County ECA,
Paris; Lamb County EC, Littlefield; Lea County EC, Lovington, New
Mexico; Lighthouse EC, Floydada; Lower Colorado River Authority,
Austin; Lyntegar EC, Tahoka; Magic Valley EC, Mercedes; Medina EC,
Hondo; MidSouth EC, Navasota; Navarro County EC, Corsicana;
Navasota Valley EC, Franklin; North Plains EC, Perryton; Northeast
Texas EC, Longview; Nueces EC, Robstown; Panola-Harrison EC,
Marshall; Pedernales EC, Johnson City; PenTex Energy, Muenster;
Rayburn Country EC, Rockwall; Rio Grande EC, Brackettville; Rita
Blanca EC, Dalhart; Rusk County EC, Henderson; Sam Houston EC,
Livingston; San Bernard EC, Bellville; San Miguel EC, Jourdanton; San
Patricio EC, Sinton; South Plains EC, Lubbock; South Texas EC,
Victoria; Southwest Rural EA, Tipton, Oklahoma; Southwest Texas EC,
Eldorado; Swisher EC, Tulla; Taylor EC, Merkel; Tex-La EC of Texas,
Nacogdoches; Tri-County EC, Azle; Trinity Valley EC, Kaufman; United
Cooperative Services, Cleburne; Upshur-Rural EC, Gilmer; Victoria EC,
Victoria; Wharton County EC, El Campo; Wise EC, Decatur; Wood
County EC, Quitman.

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders ☒ None

12. Tax Status ☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months

13. Publication Title
Texas Co-op Power

14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below
October 1, 2024

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies	1,962,973	1,975,868
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	(1) Mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS 3541 (2-4) In County, Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Other Classes of Mail through USPS	1,952,224
c. Total Paid Distribution	1,952,224	1,964,879
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	(1) Free Outside-County included on PS 3541 (2-3) Free In-County/Other Classes (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	5,028
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	5,028	5,018
f. Total Distribution	1,962,420	1,975,104
g. Copies not Distributed	553	764
h. Total	1,962,973	1,975,868
i. Percent Paid	99.48%	99.48%
16. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	none	none
b. Total Paid Print and Electronic Copies	1,952,224	1,964,879
c. Total Print and Electronic Distribution	1,962,973	1,975,868
d. Percentage Paid	99.48%	99.48%

I certify that 50% of all my distribution copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership
☒ Publication required. Will be printed in the November 2024 issue of this publication.

Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner Date
Karen Nejtek, Production Manager October 1, 2024

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

“Elegant and beautiful and the type of rich elegance that any-one would be thrilled to own, with never a disappointment!”
— E. B., Stone Mountain, GA

Stauer®
Impossible Price
Starting as low as
\$39

Jewelry that says more than words ever could

When Two Hearts Join

Discover the enchanting allure of our Two Heart Necklace, where love's symphony unfolds in timeless elegance. Inspired by that moment, when it all clicks and you realize you have found the one... and where two become one, this exquisite piece captures the essence of two hearts entwined in a dance of destiny. Crafted with precision and passion and encased in 14k gold, it embodies the essence of your enduring love, echoing the sentiments of Shakespeare's sonnets and the romances of Jane Austen. Our client's favorite, it is now priced at its lowest ever even as gold reaches a record high, awarding it a stellar 4.9-star rating in reviews making it the Gift of the Year. Embrace the magic of shared dreams and whispered promises with the Two Heart Necklace, a treasure to cherish for generations to come.

Let this necklace be your own love story, a testament to the beauty of companionship and the joy of finding your perfect match. Embrace the romance and elegance of a bygone era with our Two Heart Necklace, a treasure to cherish for a lifetime.

Falling in love costs nothing but the value is priceless. Showing your love with this two hearts set costs next to nothing and the feeling you will get when wearing it or giving it to your love will certainly be priceless.

Two Hearts Collection

A. #57505 Bracelet (13 ½ ctw) ~~\$299~~ \$39* + S&P **Save \$260**

B. #57507 Necklace (2 ⅞ ctw) ~~\$199~~ \$39* + S&P **Save \$160**

C. #56877 Earrings (4 ¼ ctw) ~~\$229~~ \$39* + S&P **Save \$190**

#57508 Necklace, Bracelet & Earrings
~~\$727~~ \$79* + S&P **Save \$648**

**Special price only for customers using the offer code.*

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: **THC167-01**

Stauer, 14091 Southcross Drive W., Dept. THC167-01
Burnsville, MN 55337 | www.stauer.com

Stauer® | AFFORD THE EXTRAORDINARY®

Mascots

In the blazing Texas heat, mascots wear bulky costumes and dance in a feat of athleticism often overlooked. They represent local teams (and companies), leading the public in rooting for their favorites. So get outta your seat and on your feet; let's hear it for Texas mascots!

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ

1 LINDA CHILDERS
BANDERA EC

"Born with Down syndrome, Mikayla, the mascot for Bandera ISD, has never let it hold her back."

2 VICKY PARR
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

"Great-granddaughter Dax Madison, ready to cheer on the Stanton High School Buffaloes. Dax recently made All-American cheer mascot at Texas Tech University Cheer Camp."

3 LAURA DAVIS
BANDERA EC

A moment at a Medina football game.

4 PATSY MCCLUNG
FARMERS EC

"Johni Catherine McClung loved cheering on Sulphur Springs Middle School as Willy the Wildcat."



Upcoming Contests

DUE NOV 10 Small Spaces

DUE DEC 10 Characters

DUE JAN 10 Patterns



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for many more Mascots photos from readers.



The Lease of Our Concerns

Time together is time well spent—with prized lessons, if not always deer

BY MARK TROTH
ILLUSTRATION BY
HOKYOUNG KIM

WE CALLED IT simply “the lease.”

At 10, I may not have understood the concept of my father’s financial agreement with a property owner that allowed us to enjoy the benefits of his ranch. But it was apparent to me that we could do a lot of cool things on this 1,000-acre piece of Brazos County heaven, including hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, stargazing and exploring.

Our accommodation was an old, one-bedroom wooden shack with a kitchen and fireplace.

I was not the appropriate age to shoot a deer, according to my dad. But I would accompany him on hunts and learn valuable lessons of wildlife conservation and gun safety.

I was with him, and that was all that mattered.

Late one afternoon we decided to hunt a more wooded site. We drove for about 30 minutes along a fence line and then parked our International Scout. We walked through a gate, crossed a pasture and followed a game trail into the woods.

We found the deer blind and settled in. It was cold, and we saw no deer. Then came the rain. At dusk we headed out of the trees with flashlights in hand.

We were working our way through the dense, wet grass and shrubbery when we lost the trail. Although Dad didn’t admit it, he was completely turned around and didn’t know which direction it was to the pasture, the gate, the fence line—or the car.

More surprisingly though, especially knowing my father, he didn’t have a compass with him. We continued our way through the woods, trying to maintain a consistent direction. Time was a mystery to me.

Finally, we came to the pasture. We quickened our steps and reached the fence line. But now—which direction? Without hesitation, Dad made a right turn.

I asked him, “How far, Dad?”

“Not too far, Mark. Are you still good?” he said.

“I’m fine. Just a little tired.”

“And hungry too, I bet.” It was the levity we both needed.

A huge lightning bolt struck, sending countless fingers to the horizon. “There!” Dad exclaimed and pointed. “I just saw the Scout.”

There was no conversation on the ride back. At the shack we changed clothes and ate biscuits with butter and honey. In my eyes, it was a feast to rival no other.

“Were we in trouble?” I inquired.

“No,” he reassured me. “But we may have had to spend the night out there. We would have made out OK. Probably built a fire.”

I contemplated the possibilities. “Thanks, Dad.”

He smiled and put his arm around my shoulder. It was a rare show of physical affection from the man. “Remember though. Always bring your compass.”

Another lesson learned. ■

A TRIBUTE TO
*Untamed
Beauty*



8 Sparkling Crystals



Hand-Crafted with
Platinum and
18K Gold Plating



Exquisitely Sculpted
Horse
with Lifelike Details

Gentle Spirit
HORSE PENDANT

Unbridled Style for Your Free Spirit

Whether they're galloping through open pastures or following your lead at a slow gait, horses are like beautiful poetry come to life. Beautifully hand-crafted with gleaming platinum plating and 18K gold plating, this heart-shaped pendant features an intricately sculpted horse with a flowing mane and lifelike details. A pavé of clear crystals at the top and bottom—a total of 8 crystals—add a shimmering touch. The bail showcases a gleaming twisted rope design, evoking thoughts of taking the reins of a beloved horse. This pendant suspends perfectly from a matching 18" chain, making it a perfect gift for any equine enthusiast.

A REMARKABLE VALUE... NOT AVAILABLE IN STORES

With its exquisite craftsmanship, delicately sculpted design, and dazzling crystals, the "*Gentle Spirit*" Horse Pendant is an outstanding value at just \$79.99*, payable in 3 easy installments of \$26.66. Each pendant arrives in a deluxe velvet jewelry pouch that's perfect for gift-giving or safekeeping, along with a Certificate of Authenticity. To reserve this breathtaking pendant for yourself or for someone in your life, send no money now; just mail the Priority Reservation. Don't miss out; order today!

Order Today at bradfordexchange.com/38462

©2024 The Bradford Exchange
01-38462-001-BIQR



Uniquely Designed. Exclusively Yours.

PRIORITY RESERVATION

SEND NO MONEY NOW

The Bradford Exchange

P.O. Box 806, Morton Grove, IL 60053-0806

YES. Please reserve the "*Gentle Spirit*" Horse Pendant as described in this announcement.

*Plus a total of \$10.98 shipping and service, plus sales tax (see bradfordexchange.com). Please allow 4-6 weeks after initial payment for shipment of your jewelry. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.



**SCAN HERE
TO SHOP**

Signature

Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address

City

State

Zip

Email

01-38462-001-E54801

BUY ONE, GET ONE
40% OFF
Windows & Patio Doors!¹

Minimum purchase of 4

AND

TAKE AN EXTRA
\$45
OFF Each Window
and Door¹

Minimum purchase of 4

AND **NO** Money Down | **NO** Monthly Payments | **NO** Interest for 12 months¹

Minimum purchase of 4 – interest accrues from the date of purchase, but is waived if paid in full within 12 months

TESTED, TRUSTED, AND TOTALLY PROVEN.³

“My overall experience was great. I love the window, and from sales to scheduling, the experience was very good. The installers are highly skilled professionals and I would recommend Renewal by Andersen to all my contacts.”

LYNN F. | RENEWAL BY ANDERSEN CUSTOMER

More 5-Star
Reviews



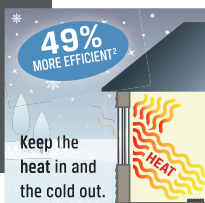
Than Other Leading Full-Service
Window Replacement
Companies²



Nation's Best
Warranty¹

KEEP THE HEAT IN AND THE COLD AIR OUT!

Solving your window problems and having a comfortable home is easy and enjoyable when you choose Renewal by Andersen. Take advantage of this great offer to save money on your window project – and help save on high energy bills for years to come!



RENEWAL
by **ANDERSEN**
FULL-SERVICE WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENT

Offer Ends November 30

Call for your **FREE** consultation.

855-842-8296

FINDYOURWINDOW.COM

¹**DETAILS OF OFFER:** Offer expires 11/30/2024. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Buy one (1) window or entry/patio door, get one (1) window or entry/patio door 40% off, and 12 months no money down, no monthly payments, no interest when you purchase four (4) or more windows or entry/patio doors between 11/1/2024 and 11/30/2024. 40% off windows and entry/patio doors are less than or equal to lowest cost window or entry/patio door in the order. Additional \$45 off each window/door, minimum purchase of 4 required, taken after initial discount(s), when you purchase by 11/30/2024. Subject to credit approval. 12-month Promo Period: while no payments are due, interest accrues but is waived if the loan is paid in full before the Promo Period expires. Any unpaid balance owed after the Promo Period, plus accrued interest, will be paid in installments based on the terms disclosed in the customer's loan agreement. Financing provided by various equal opportunity lenders. Savings comparison based on purchase of a single unit at list price. Available at participating locations and offer applies throughout the service area. See your local Renewal by Andersen location for details. License numbers available at renewalbyandersen.com/license. Some Renewal by Andersen locations are independently owned and operated. ²Values are based on comparison of Renewal by Andersen[®] double-hung window U-Factor to the U-Factor for clear dual-pane glass nonmetal frame default values from the 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018 International Energy Conservation Code "Glazed Fenestration" Default Tables. ³Based on testing of 10 double-hung units per ASTM E2068 20 years after installation. ⁴It is the only warranty among top selling window companies that meets all of the following requirements: easy to understand terms, unrestricted transferability, installation coverage, labor coverage, geographically unrestricted, coverage for exterior color, insect screens and hardware, and no maintenance requirement. Visit renewalbyandersen.com/nationsbest for details. ⁵Review aggregator survey of 5-star reviews among leading full service window replacement companies. December 2022 Reputation. ⁶Renewal by Andersen[®] and all other marks where denoted are trademarks of their respective owners. © 2024 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved. RBA13747 ⁷Using U.S. and imported parts.

Runoff Election Ballot *Instructions*

Your official runoff election ballot is located on the back of this Texas Co-op Power magazine.

Voting Information

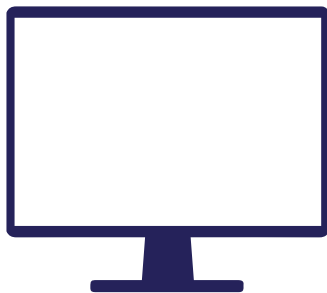
Every member is eligible to vote in the runoff election, regardless of the district in which you reside. Only one ballot may be cast per membership.

All members who vote prior to the deadline below will be entered to win door prizes announced during the virtual member meeting on Tuesday, November 26.

How to Vote

Members may cast one vote either online or by mail-in ballot. Online voting opens November 1. Ballots will not be accepted at local offices.

ONLINE



Go to **directvote.net/TCECTX** and enter your ballot ID and election passcode printed on the back of this *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

OR

MAIL-IN



Complete the ballot located on the back of this magazine and mail to Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS), in the postage-paid envelope provided.

**VOTING CLOSES AT 5 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 22.
ANY VOTES RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE COUNTED.**

Voting will close at 5 p.m. on
Friday, November 22, 2024.

All members are eligible to vote regardless of the director district in which you reside.

Mail your completed ballot to Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS) in the envelope provided, or vote online at directvote.net/TCECTX using your unique ballot ID and passcode listed below. Online voting opens November 1.

Director candidate photos and biographies are located inside the magazine on pages 18-19.

Full voting instructions are located on the reverse side of the ballot.

VOTE ONLINE
SCAN ME!



Please use blue or black ink. Preferred marking method: 

..... Please detach and mail ballot.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative
2024 RUNOFF ELECTION BALLOT

**Ballots will not be accepted at local offices.*

District 3 (choose 1)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	David Manning <i>Nomination Candidate</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Curtis Nager <i>Nomination Candidate</i>

District 6 (choose 1)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	John Killough <i>Incumbent</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Timmy Yeary <i>Nomination Candidate</i>