

WOMEN'S PUSH FOR
CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

SCARIEST BRIDGE
IN TEXAS

READER RECIPES
A HIT IN NEVADA

Texas Coop Power

FOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

JANUARY 2021

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where the wild things are





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January 2021



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Captured!

Take memorable wildlife photos with preparation, research and sleuthing.

Story and photos by Russell A. Graves

14 Literary Fortunes

Women of the early 20th century wrangled Carnegie grants and libraries for their towns.

By Melissa Gaskill

ON THE COVER

A brown bear at Katmai National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

ABOVE

A cottontail near Childress, on the southern edge of the Panhandle.

Photos by Russell A. Graves

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Flying Colors

ONE OF THE BLACK MARKS against wind turbines is the number of birds killed by the rotating blades. Black marks, it turns out, could help resolve the problem.

Scientists in Norway found that painting one of the three blades on a wind turbine black reduces avian deaths by 72%.

The paper produced by the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research explains that painting one blade black is believed to create motion smear patterns that birds perceive as moving objects, enabling birds to take evasive action.

Of the more than 60,000 wind turbines in the U.S., Texas has some 15,000—the most of any state.



Tons of Tomatoes

If you love tomatoes, you have about a week left to enter our recipe contest that celebrates the fruit.

Tomatoes are a big deal in Jacksonville. A *big* deal. The East Texas city has hundreds of huge concrete tomatoes, some weighing 665 pounds, scattered around town as a declaration of its love for the juicy fruit that many people consider a vegetable.



UPLOADS OF CASH

Parents of K–12 students planned to spend a record \$789.49 per family for back-to-school supplies last fall. Purchases of laptops and computer accessories in anticipation of more online schooling because of the COVID-19 pandemic helped break the record set in 2019 by almost \$100.

There are 78 snake species in Texas.



We spotlighted rattlesnakes, one of the most common, in *A Snake To Love*, April 2020.



TCP Contests and More

ON TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

\$500 RECIPE CONTEST

Tomatoes

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS

Historic Texas

WEB EXTRA

Learn more about the 30 cities in Texas selected for Carnegie libraries—some of which still exist.

Power of Our People

A Cupboard Never Bare

CHRISTINA KUPER grew up in Indiana, where she watched a neighbor she called Grandma Hiner, though they weren't related, regularly sharing food from her pantry with others.

"I think that's where giving was implanted into my heart," says Kuper, a member of Taylor Electric Cooperative. "Throughout my life I have always tried to give to others."

Thus began a lifetime of charity that included Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, Girl Scouts food drives and baking for military troops away during the holidays. When a debilitating respiratory disease left Kuper homebound in Hawley, about 10 miles north of Abilene, she refocused her benevolence.

Kuper installed the Hawley Sharing Box, left, at the end of her driveway in 2017. Based on the Little Free Pantry program, itself inspired by the Little Free Library project, Kuper's sharing box makes food, toys, school supplies and toiletries available for anybody—and Kuper stresses *anybody*—driving past 225 12th St., near the edge of town.

Daily updates on Facebook tell what's available and what's needed, and Kuper says the box is stocked almost completely by community donations.

"Kindness is addicting and contagious," she says, "and it should be spread everywhere."

INFO ▶ facebook.com/hawleysharingbox



TCP POWER OF OUR PEOPLE To nominate a co-op member who is making a difference in your community, email details to people@texascooppower.com.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE LIFE WAS BETTER ...

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 November prompt: **I'm most thankful for ...**

The little bitty space where my pets let me sleep in my own bed.

**SUE CALDWELL
BANDERA EC
PIPE CREEK**

My health, friends and warm home tonight.

**MATTIE WOODFIN BORDERS
VIA FACEBOOK**

My beloved brother, Rob, who, 31 years ago in December, donated his bone marrow to me and saved my life.

**ANNE SWEET
PEDERNALES EC
GEORGETOWN**

To see more responses, read Currents online.



ERIC W. POHL

Farrier Finesse

I went to farrier school in 1981, not to become a professional farrier but because I owned nearly 50 head of horses [Why Horses Wear Shoes, October 2020]. Pleased to see more women taking up that profession as brute strength is not as important as understanding the horse you're shoeing.

Ken Wade
Central Texas EC
Fredericksburg



I have made these with vanilla wafers for as long as I can remember [Cookie Swap, Bourbon Balls, November 2020].

SHARON STOLL
VIA FACEBOOK



MEGAN MYERS

Bat Lodging

“What a great endeavor to improve the planet. Thank you, Mr. Bamberger.”

NANCY GREENHAW
CENTRAL TEXAS EC
FREDERICKSBURG

No Small Potatoes

J. David Bamberger is a hero in the Texas conservation world and has shown us all how being a good steward of the land can enable nature to thrive [Bat Lodging, November 2020]. Pam LeBlanc's coverage of his “chiroptorium” showed Bamberger's persistence and determination as well as his warm, down-home nature.

Yes, J. David, I agree: Your potatoes are, indeed, “terribly important!”

Elizabeth Bowerman
Comal County Conservation
Alliance
Pedernales EC
New Braunfels

I saw that cave soon after it was built. Love that beautiful ranch and the man who made this real.

Beverly Barnt
Via Facebook

Matagorda Connection

My great-grandfather was the assistant keeper there in the 1890s, leaving and then returning as keeper in the early 1900s until his death in 1913 [Matagorda Island Lighthouse, October 2020]. His sister, my great-great aunt, perished with her children at Indianola in the 1875 hurricane.

Bill Reeves
Pedernales EC
Georgetown

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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Austin, TX 78701

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

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CAPTURE

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TWO MINUTES AFTER I start blowing a predator call, I see movement to the northeast of the cedar tree in which I am hiding. Out of nowhere a sleek coyote takes a step into a clearing where I'd hoped one might and glares in my direction. Everything I planned to make this moment happen materializes 20 yards away: A predator stands in the burnished orange bluestem in perfect afternoon light and remains motionless long enough for me to focus and squeeze the shutter. I capture two frames of 35 mm slide film, and then the animal disappears. Then I notice my heart is pounding.

In that instant I made my first truly memorable wildlife image. It was exhilarating. Even though the scene is three decades old, I can recall it clearly. It was a defining moment in my eventual career as a photographer.

But here's the truth: Initially I didn't know the image was that good. Those were the days before digital photography, when I still had to expose the entire roll of film, ship it to a distant photo lab and wait for the images to return. A couple of weeks passed before I was finally able to look through the cardboard-mounted slips of film and find the coyote. First I thought someone else's pictures had been mixed in with mine. I quickly realized that the slides were indeed my own. In the Northeast Texas wild, everything I'd learned about how to make an engaging wildlife photo clicked.

Since that day, my photographs have appeared on more than 500 magazine covers, and I now guide photo tours all over the world. Recently I took a group to photograph bears in Katmai National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

A lot has changed since that moment calling up a coyote in Fannin County. A few years after the coyote stepped in front of my lens, digital photography revolutionized how images are made and democratized the medium to the point that even the best equipment made is truly affordable.

Some things have not changed with time and technology. Wildlife is still wild, and the steps required to capture great wildlife images are the same.

LEFT A brown bear atop Brooks Falls in Katmai National Park and Preserve in Alaska anticipates a meal of a spawning salmon. **ABOVE** Camouflage helps photographers get closer to wildlife.



ABOVE A bobcat approaches near Dodd City in North Texas. BELOW A motion-sensor camera can capture shy animals, such as this badger in Montana.

TCP WEB EXTRA

Enter online to win a digital copy of *The Big Book of Wildlife and Nature Photography* by Russell A. Graves.

Here are proven techniques that can help ensure your wildlife images are engaging and dynamic.

◀ FOCUS ON THE EYES

You've heard the saying that the eyes are the windows to the soul. That trite phrase holds true for wildlife, too. When planning a photograph, pay close attention to the eyes. Many cameras now include an eye-tracking feature that can automatically detect an animal's eyes and ensure that the focus locks on accurately.

The reason the eyes are of utmost importance is simple: When you look at another person or an animal, you first notice the eyes. That's where you make a connection with the subject. If the animal's tail is out of focus, that's OK. Blow the focus on the eyes, and the image suffers.

▼ GET CLOSE

There's a popular misconception that wildlife photographers use giant lenses and stand hundreds of yards from their subjects to obtain quality photographs. Nope!

To get really impressive photographs of any animal, you must get close. For larger animals like deer, it is best to be within 50 yards. With smaller creatures like quail, try to get within a few feet.

It is possible to use extreme telephoto lenses to get optically closer, but the more air you shoot through, the less sharp your images will be. Since air is filled with particu-





A bighorn sheep in Montana grazes just a few feet away.

lates, subjects become optically softer as distance increases, so the objects or animals look hazy. It is a good practice in wildlife photography to get as close as you can.

You can achieve the goal of proximity in a number of ways. State and national parks are ideal locations because the animals are accustomed to seeing people and are not as likely to run when they see a photographer. When working in wilder locations, consider including a blind in your setup. Think like a hunter and use the same tools hunters use to get close to wildlife.

▲ LEARN ABOUT YOUR SUBJECT

One essential goal of wildlife photography is to control as many variables as possible. You can't control whether an animal will show up and walk into your line of sight, but you can learn your camera's features, the craft of photography and the basics of composition.

In addition, learn all you can about the species you wish to photograph. By becoming a student of creative photography and a student of wildlife, you'll be more likely to see a particular species.

If you want to photograph mule deer, understand what habitat they prefer and the most likely time to find them. By understanding everything possible about your subject, you will tip the odds in favor of finding your target species.



ABOVE A curious chipmunk in Colorado comes within inches of the camera.
RIGHT A crane wades among feeding ducks in New Mexico.

▲ THINK ABOUT COMPOSITION

Great photographs rely on strong composition. Composition is the arrangement of the elements in a photograph that are visually balanced and pleasing. Typically with wildlife, that means composing them vertically or horizontally and relying on the compositional rule called the rule of thirds. The rule of thirds is a basic guide for where the main interest points in an image should lie inside the frame—a third of the way into the frame vertically and horizontally. This rule discourages centering the subject in the frame.

► LIGHTING IS KEY

Another essential consideration for a good wildlife photograph is how it is lit. Natural light looks best during the earliest and latest hours of the day. When the sun is low on the horizon, shadows fall away from the subject and the colors cast by sunlight take on a warm glow. The sun's light is always harshest during the middle of the day. So it is important to be in the field during the beginning and end of the day. Use the middle of the day to review the pictures you shot in the morning or scout for afternoon opportunities. Not only is the light better in early morning and late afternoon, but that's also when wildlife is most active.

What if the weather is overcast? Overcast days are great because the soft, nondirectional light extends your shooting day. I actually prefer to photograph on overcast days.



DON'T OVERTHINK IT

Don't complicate the process. Photography requires the mastery of a few fundamentals and then doing the same thing over and over so that results become predictable. Today's digital cameras are capable of performing many functions, but the truth is, a thorough understanding of aperture, shutter speed and sensor sensitivity will make more memorable photos.

Wildlife photography is comparable to golf. Golfers play the game knowing they'll never be perfect. Top photographers take the same approach. They pursue the perfect shot, and that addictive pursuit keeps them heading afield. ■

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Rating of A+



LITERARY = FORTUNES

Women of the early 20th century wrangled Carnegie grants and libraries for their towns

BY MELISSA GASKILL

VISITORS TO BRYAN IN 1902 walked unpaved streets and bought drinks at one of a dozen saloons. Many carried guns, and it was possible to witness a public hanging on the courthouse lawn. Local women sought to correct the situation and founded the Mutual Improvement Club.

“The ladies of the club were upset with the saloon-town atmosphere and wanted to bring in some culture and learning,” says Rachael C. Altman, manager of Bryan’s Carnegie History Center, housed in the town’s historic library.

Club member Lillie Wilson’s brother-in-law, Thomas W. Stewart, had been introduced to Andrew Carnegie. The Pennsylvania steel magnate was donating money to build libraries, and club leaders urged Wilson to contact Carnegie through her connection. “They were very persistent,” Altman says. Carnegie gave them a grant, and the Bryan Carnegie Library opened in December 1903.

A total of 2,509 Carnegie libraries were built between

1883 and 1929, including about 1,700 in the United States—32 of them in Texas. Many were funded through the efforts of women. Twenty of the original 32 buildings have been lost to demolition or fire, and eight of those surviving 12 remain in use, though not as libraries. Just four original Carnegie Libraries remain open in Texas—in Stamford, Ballinger, Franklin and Jefferson.

Carnegie sold his steel company to J.P. Morgan in 1901 for almost \$500 million, making him the world’s richest man. But “the man who dies rich dies in disgrace,” he said as he gave away \$350 million. Estimates suggest \$60 million went specifically toward libraries because Carnegie believed a free library was the best gift he could give a community. The keystones of the library program required that the facilities be public and free, and Carnegie required recipient cities to invest at least 10% of the grant annually to fund the libraries.

The northeast Texas town of Pittsburg had fewer than 1,500 inhabitants when it received the first Carnegie grant in the state in 1898, using it to build a small library and reading room. It burned down in 1939.



CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE The 1905 Greek Revival-style Carnegie library in Cleburne is today home to the Layland Museum. Steel magnate Andrew Carnegie. A postcard of the Jefferson Carnegie Library.

TCP WEB EXTRA See a map of Texas' Carnegie libraries and a slideshow of vintage postcards.



The Dallas, Fort Worth and San Antonio public library associations and the Woman's Club of Houston received grants around the turn of the century. The El Paso Public Library Association received one in 1904. And Clarksville, Waco, Belton, Tyler, Gainesville and Sherman received grants, all thanks to applications from local women's clubs.

Cleburne, south of Fort Worth and now home to a United Cooperative Services office, also built a Carnegie Library thanks to persistent women, in 1905. "A determined committee of ladies from the local women's club decided that the young town needed to become civilized and, we are told, traveled to New York to visit Carnegie's office without an appointment," says Stephanie Montero, manager of the Layland Museum now housed in the building. "He offered them \$10,000, but the committee felt that wasn't enough." Carnegie doubled his offer.

The Greek Revival-style building served as Cleburne's library until 1978, when it became part of the museum. The front entrance and main room feature Ionic columns with ornamental necking, and plaster details decorate interior and exterior walls.

In Northeast Texas, the Jefferson Library Association tried several fundraising strategies before applying successfully for a Carnegie grant. The Jefferson Carnegie Library was built in 1907 and was restored a century later.

The Classical Revival brick-and-limestone Carnegie Library in Stamford, north of Abilene, where Big Country EC has an office, features massive Ionic columns and corner pilasters. It hosted high school dances and, during World War II, games and socializing for airmen training nearby.

In Ballinger, south of Abilene, a Carnegie library built in 1911 is on the Texas Forts Trail as well as listed on the National Register of Historic Places and recognized as a State Antiquities Landmark and a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. The building has continuously served as a library but needed extensive renovations by 1976. "It was in such bad shape the city had already bought another place to build a library then decided to save this one," says library director Carolyn Kraatz.

The Franklin Carnegie Library, north of Bryan, completed in 1914, served as a library through 1918 and then housed school classrooms and public activities until 1984. The building was restored and reopened as a library in May 2009. It originally came into being thanks to then-mayor R.M. Cole, who applied to Carnegie for funds in 1913.

Bryan's library building, designed by a professor at Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College (now Texas A&M University), today houses the Carnegie History Center. It served as a library until 1969 and then was used for city offices, says Altman. Matching handcarved pine stairways, tongue-and-groove pine flooring on the first floor and a decorative pressed metal ceiling all are original. Its restoration in 1999 took place with the help of the Women's Club, a modern incarnation of the Mutual Improvement Club.

Upstairs, the Bryan library hosted Red Cross gatherings during both world wars. The second floor now houses a genealogy research collection, which is free to the public along with access to online search services.

With so much of what people do being dependent on technology today, access to that technology is a crucial service provided by libraries, especially in small towns, says Karin Gerstenhaber of the Tocker Foundation, a nonprofit created in 1964 to support rural libraries in Texas.

"Carnegie felt that building libraries gave people opportunities to advance themselves," she adds. "The libraries provided free access to information, and those buildings were used for so many different purposes that brought people together. They filled a real need." ■

Discovered! Unopened Bag of 138-Year-Old Morgan Silver Dollars

Unopened for
138 Years!

Coin experts amazed by “Incredible Opportunity”

The Morgan Silver Dollar is the most popular and iconic vintage U.S. coin. They were the Silver Dollars of the Wild West, going on countless untold adventures in dusty saddlebags across the nation. Finding a secret hoard of Morgans doesn't happen often—and when it does, it's a *big deal*.

How big? Here's numismatist, author and consultant to the Smithsonian® Jeff Garrett:

“It's very rare to find large quantities of Morgan Silver Dollars, especially in bags that have been sealed... to find several thousand Morgan Silver Dollars that are from the U.S. Treasury Hoards, still unopened, is really an incredible opportunity.”

—Jeff Garrett

But where did this unique hoard come from? Read on...

Morgans from the New Orleans Mint

In 1859, Nevada's Comstock Lode was discovered, and soon its rich silver ore made its way across the nation, including to the fabled New Orleans Mint, the only U.S. Mint branch to have served under the U.S. government, the State of Louisiana and the Confederacy. In 1882, some of that silver was struck into Morgan Silver Dollars, each featuring the iconic “O” mint mark of the New Orleans Mint. Employees then placed the freshly struck coins into canvas bags...

The U.S. Treasury Hoard

Fast-forward nearly 80 years. In the 1960s, the U.S. government opened its vaults and revealed a massive store of Morgan Silver Dollars—including *full, unopened bags* of “fresh” 1882-O Morgan Silver Dollars. A number of bags were secured by a child of the Great Depression—a southern gentleman whose upbringing showed him the value of hard assets like silver. He stashed the unopened bags of “fresh” Morgans away, and there they stayed...

The Great Southern Treasury Hoard

That is, until *another* 50 years later, when the man's family finally decided to sell the coins—still in their unopened bags—which we secured, bag and all! We submitted the coins to respected



Actual size is 38.1 mm

- ✓ Historic Morgan Silver Dollars
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- ✓ Struck and bagged in 1882
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- ✓ Certified Brilliant Uncirculated by NGC
- ✓ Certified “Great Southern Treasury Hoard” pedigree
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third-party grading service Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC), and they agreed to honor the southern gentleman by giving the coins the pedigree of the “Great Southern Treasury Hoard.”

These gorgeous 1882-O Morgans are as bright and new as the day they were struck and bagged 138 years ago. Coins are graded on a 70-point scale, with those graded at least Mint State-60 (MS60) often referred to as “Brilliant Uncirculated” or BU. Of all 1882-O Morgans struck, *LESS THAN 1% have earned a Mint State grade*. This makes these unopened bags of 1882-O Morgans extremely rare, certified as being in BU condition—nearly unheard of for coins 138 years old.

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MESSAGE
FROM
PRESIDENT/
CEO

**DARRYL
SCHRIVER**

2021: A New Year

Reflecting on 2020 and looking toward 2021

JANUARY IS OFTEN A TIME of self-reflection and a look at the future. Many take part in new-year resolutions. Others look back at their accomplishments. Even your co-op takes part in the tradition.

2020 had its challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way we operated. Our lobbies closed in mid-March for member and employee safety. Additionally, our hours of operation temporarily changed to 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Thursday. Closing on Friday allows for a deep clean of the offices to ensure employee health and safety. 35078002

Our employees come to work each day to serve you, the members. Our member services team mans the drive-through windows and phones. Our linemen work tirelessly to keep the lights on.

In Late October, an ice storm hit our Seymour/Munday service territory hard. Our linemen worked day-in and day-out to restore power to all our members. Damage included more than 100 fragmented poles and 100 broken crossarms. Crews from each district office pitched in on restoration efforts.

2020 also had its successes.

The past year was the busiest year in the co-op's 81-year history. Our field services personnel broke co-op records on the number of jobs staged per month, which included more than 850 jobs in October. Operations added over 200 miles of line to the system and accounting documented more than 4,500 new services. In August, we surpassed the 100,000 residential meter mark.

In October, we held our 81st Annual Meeting virtually. More than 1,140 of you joined us for the event and hundreds more have watched the recording of the live stream online.

The board of directors also approved a new set of bylaws after months of work. We introduced the new bylaws in the November *Texas Co-op Power* and laid out the board's work to revamp the bylaws last month.

As one of the co-op's governing documents, it is important members understand the bylaws. One of the biggest changes was the number of directors and redistricting the service territory. The board now consists of nine directors, including four urban districts, four suburban districts and one rural district.

The resignation of director Todd Smith in June allowed for the transition to nine directors. Mr. Smith's position was absorbed by the four suburban districts, and the District 1 seat moved to the Keller area to create a third urban district. The fourth urban district was created with the transition from eight to nine director seats. 800883297

Increasing the size of the board and redistricting allows the urban, suburban and rural districts to evenly represent the members. Above, I spoke of the co-op's growth and this change will allow the co-op to adapt in future years of growth.

Currently, the seats for Director District 1 and Director District 2 are vacant. The board has selected a Committee on Nominations and Qualifications tasked with filling the two seats, in accordance with the new bylaws. The committee is currently taking applications and resumes from members interested in the open board seats.

Please see the next page if you are interested in learning more about what a director does, director qualifications, and how to throw your hat in the ring for director districts 1 and 2. I encourage you to review the information and the bylaws located on our website at tcectexas.com/bylaws. Your co-op is here if you have any questions. ■

The new bylaws are available at
tcectexas.com/bylaws

So, You Want to be a Co-op Director?

Here's what you need to know

AS AN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Tri-County Electric Cooperative is guided by an elected board of directors who represent its members' best interest when making important decisions. Being a member of the co-op's board is an incredibly important position in the community. A director's decisions will impact issues such as service rates, Capital Credits allocations and retirements, right-of-way maintenance and work plans.

This position holds great responsibility and requires men and women who understand the needs of our communities and are willing and able to serve.

Any co-op member who meets the qualifications listed under article four, section 4.3 of the cooperative's bylaws, is eligible to run for the board. Tri-County Electric Co-op holds elections in September prior to Annual Meeting.

Director Elections

Our board is a democratically elected body – elected by the members and for the members. According to the new bylaws, members may seek election to the board of directors through the Committee on Nominations and Qualifications or by member petition. Previously, director nominations would take place at District Meetings.

Each year, one-third of the directors will be up for election. In 2021, Director District 3, Director District 6, and Director District 8 are up for election. The committee will accept and review applications, resumes and petitions for each director district scheduled for election.

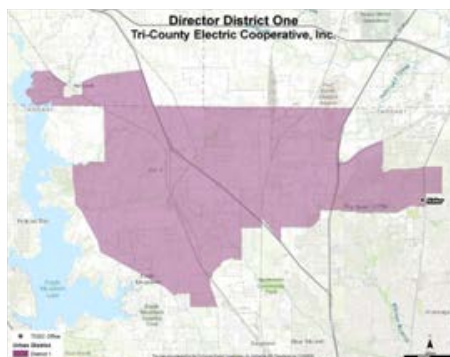
Eligible members may seek nomination through the committee by completing an application and submit a petition with 25 signatures from members within their district. Eligible members may bypass the committee by gathering 50 signatures who reside in their district. 800606989

These new election procedures were designed to allow for an easy and transparent process for members to be elected to the board of directors. The bylaws were redesigned with the members in mind.

Vacancies: Calling for Interested Members

Currently, Director District 1 and Director District 2 are vacant. The Committee on Nominations and Qualifications is actively seeking applications and resumes for members interested in these positions. Interested members need to submit a completed application by Wednesday, January 27. Information, including the application, can be found on our website at tcectexas.com/director-elections

Find the bylaws on our website at tcectexas.com/bylaws. Members may also find their director at tcectexas.com/board-directors. To view a map of the district, click the blue "About" button located under each director. ■



Director Nominations

Eligible members interested in seeking election to the board of directors may be nominated in two ways:

Nominations and Qualifications Committee

► Eligible members seeking nomination as a director shall file their applications by the deadline established in the most recent "Director Election Schedule", pursuant to the application form provided by the Cooperative.

► Each director applicant shall execute, and attach to the application, the necessary and relevant consent forms provided by the Cooperative for reasonable credit and criminal background checks.

► Each director applicant shall attach to the application the signatures of at least Twenty Five (25) Members whose primary residence is located within the director district for which the applicant seeks.

► Each director applicant shall also attach an application fee payment of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) or other fee as determined by the Board to cover the application process.

Nomination by Petition

► Eligible Members seeking nomination by petition may nominate themselves for a position on the ballot, by returning a petition containing the signatures of Fifty (50) Members who reside in the district.

► The Petition must be filed with the Cooperative by the deadline established in the Election Schedule and must be on the form as provided by the Cooperative.

► The Petition must be accompanied by a candidate application and background check consent forms.

► Each petitioning director candidate applicant shall also attach an application fee of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) or a fee determined by the Board to recover a portion of the election costs.

► Petitioning candidates who are determined eligible shall have their names included on the ballot for election for the applicable director district. The label of "Petitioning Candidate" shall accompany the petitioning candidate's name on the ballot.

Director Qualifications

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

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

1. be an individual; be a member of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Inc. receiving service at his/her primary residential abode, and reside within the district to which such director is elected to represent for a period of (3) years;
2. have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts.
3. not have been previously removed or disqualified as a Director.
4. while a Director, and before becoming a Director, not be convicted of, or plead guilty to, a felony or two (2) misdemeanors; or found guilty of any offense involving moral turpitude.
5. before becoming a Director, graduate from high school or earn an equivalent degree or certification.
6. not be in any way employed by or financially interested in any competition enterprise, business or partnership selling electrical energy or any service provided by the Cooperative or its affiliates.
7. no person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who is a close relative of an incumbent director or of an employee of the Cooperative provided, however, this provision shall not prohibit the eligibility of a close relative of an incumbent director from seeking such position if the conflict is eliminated by the election;
8. comply with any other reasonable qualifications determined by the Board.
9. not be an employee, or spouse of an employee of the Cooperative, or former employee, or spouse of a former employee, who was employed by the Cooperative at any time within 10 years preceding the date set for election of directors; and
10. no person shall take or hold any elected position of national, state, county or city public office nor shall any person be a School Board Member and/or County Commissioner.
11. no person shall have held an elected position as referenced in subsection 10 above within the preceding 3 years immediately prior to the Director Election.

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

1. while a Director and during the three (3) years immediately before becoming a Director.
 - a. be an unsuspended Member.
 - b. permanently reside or use electric energy provided by the Cooperative, at the individuals principal residence as defined under federal tax law within the service area, or the Director District from which the Director is nominated or elected. 800643213
 - c. comply with application, petition and election standards set forth for election to the Board of Directors.
 - d. comply with membership list procedures if a membership

list is utilized for election.

- e. except as otherwise provided by the Board for good cause, shall receive a credentialed Cooperative Director designation, Directors certificate, or similar designation or certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association within thirty-six (36) months of becoming a Director.
- f. except as otherwise provided by the Board for good cause, attend at least two-thirds (2/3) of all Board Meetings during each twelve (12) month period; and
- g. maintain the confidentiality of Cooperative business discussed by the Board. Confidential Cooperative business includes: all undisclosed matters covered or discussed in executive session of the Board; as well as all confidential information and business plans and trade secrets; private directors, employee or member information; potential or pending acquisition of real or personal property of the Cooperative; operational plans and business promotions; power supply and generation interests; and all power distribution plans; until the Board has collectively agreed to the terms and timing for public disclosure of such information.

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

1. annually complete and sign an independence certification and disclosure form approved by the Board.
2. while a Director, not be employed by another Director, or be employed by, or receive more than ten percent (10%) of Annual gross income from, an entity for which another Director controls, owns more than ten percent (10%), or is a Director or Officer; and
3. while a Director and during the five (5) years immediately before becoming a Director, not be employed by, control, own more than ten percent (10%) of, serve as a Director or Officer of, or receive more than ten percent (10%) of Annual gross income from an entity that:
 - a. advances the entity's pecuniary interest by competing with the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary or Cooperative affiliate, providing a good or service similar to a good or service provided by the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary or a Cooperative affiliate providing electric energy or a good or service related to providing electric energy.
4. while a Director, not engage in any behavior, actions or activities that (i) subject either the Director or the Cooperative to ridicule or embarrassment; (ii) adversely affect the Directors or the Cooperatives reputation; (iii) interfere with or diminish the Directors standing as a Cooperative ambassador and representative; or (iv) are contrary to the best interests of the Cooperative and its employees. ■

Cancelled Due to COVID-19

2021 TEXAS YOUTH TOUR CANCELLED FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY OF AREA YOUTH

"CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19" seems to be the new normal for our society. Now you can add the 2021 Youth Tour to the list.

The 2021 Texas Youth Tour was cancelled in early December. After careful consideration, the Texas Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors and staff felt cancelling was the best option to protect the health and safety of the more than 200 students and 20 chaperones set to head to Washington, D.C. in June. TEC is the trade organization for the state's 75 electric cooperatives and plans the Youth Tour at the statewide level. 41081001

Tri-County Electric Cooperative was excited to offer the Youth Tour contest to our young members. We are saddened by the cancellation, but want to make sure all our area youth stay safe and healthy. At this time, we do not know when the COVID-19 pandemic will ease, or come to an end.

Please contact Tri-County Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour Coordinator, Annie McGinnis, at amcginnis@tcectexas.com or 817-752-8116 if you have any questions or would like to be on the list to receive information on the 2022 Youth Tour. ■



Scholarship Program

2021 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 5

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S 2021 Scholarship applications are open.

We are awarding eight \$4,000 scholarships and eight \$2,000 scholarships to graduating seniors headed to college or trade school.

Applications are due by 5 pm on Friday, March 5. Find the application, eligibility requirements, guidelines and additional details at tcectexas.com/scholarship.

For questions related to the scholarship program, please contact Annie McGinnis at amcginnis@tcectexas.com or 817-752-8116. ■

APPLICATION DEADLINE
MARCH 5, 2021

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
SCHOLARSHIP

\$2,000
\$4,000
Scholarships Available

Learn More & Apply
tcectexas.com/scholarship

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC
CO-OP INC.
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

I Work for You



Britton Brooks

Senior Utility Designer

Field Services department, Keller

Britton grew up in Howe, north of McKinney, and started his electrical journey as an electrician apprentice. After attending community college for a little while, he went to work as a lineman apprentice for a contractor building power lines in 2011. He worked four years as a staker with Farmers Electric Co-op in Greenville, then took a slight detour to Mount Vernon, Washington, where he worked for Puget Sound Energy as an engineering specialist.

The Pacific Northwest was a big change for someone who'd spent his whole life in the same town, but he said he enjoyed it, sharpened his engineering skills and made some lifelong friends. He came back to Texas in 2018 to work for Tri-County Electric Co-op in the fast-growing Keller area.

Britton and his wife, Britney, have a four-year-old and a two-month-old – both boys. They give to their local food bank and like to hike with their dog, a Belgian Malinois. But lately, Britton's life consists mostly of working, then getting home to give his wife a break from child care.

He also enjoys hunting, fishing, the outdoors and sailing with his dad and nephews during the summers on Lake Texoma. ■

"My favorite part of this job is that the challenges are different each day. It's just taking, basically, a blank slate and putting the puzzle pieces together, figuring out how to make everything work."

Waiting for the Big Reveal

Masks can't hide hope during COVID-19 pandemic

BY BOB BUCKEL, COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE

MASKS USED TO BE SOMETHING doctors and nurses wore in the operating room, and nowhere else. Who could have imagined they would become part of the everyday work ensemble – not just for medical personnel, but for all of us?

That's just one of the COVID-19 pandemic's tolls: It has covered up millions of smiles.

Family nurse practitioner Brenda Reed knows the value of a smile, a touch, a comforting word to someone who is sick. Those are some of the things she teaches students in her role as an assistant professor in the Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences at Texas Christian University.

Medicine and education may be the two areas hit hardest by the pandemic. Reed is involved in both.

Brenda and her husband, Rick, are longtime members of Tri-County Electric Cooperative; in fact, Rick's grandfather, Earl Reed, attended the co-op's first membership meeting in 1940.

Brenda, who sees patients at Texas Health Physicians Group in Azle when she's not teaching, was also elected to the Azle school board in November. Her life is challenging when things are normal. The pandemic cranked it up a few more notches.

Last spring, as the coronavirus began to spread, Fort Worth's JPS Hospital watched its intensive care unit beds fill up with desperately sick patients. In the face of an escalating crisis and under a governor's order, Tarrant County's primary teaching hospital had to tell students – nurses, doctors, x-ray techs and other specialists in training – not to come back. That included Reed and her students, who were meeting there three days a week.

"We had to modify everything we did from being face-to-face, taking care of patients, to doing everything virtually, online, on Zoom," she said. "In the fall, we revamped again because the state board says you can't turn out nurses who've never touched a patient."

With nursing programs still able to go into hospitals all over Fort Worth, Reed asked for and was given clearance to teach at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Azle. She started bringing two groups of students to the 22-bed hospital on Wednesdays and Fridays, which became 13-hour days for her. 8002779201

"I could only bring four at a time, so I would bring four mid-day, then the other group would come in and the morning group would give a report to the afternoon group," she said. "I was still at TCU one day a week teaching simulation."



Brenda Reed in front of Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Azle where she has adapted to teaching future nurses after the COVID-19 pandemic closed JPS Hospital to students and teachers.

"We had to modify everything we did from being face-to-face, taking care of patients, to doing everything virtually online, on Zoom."

Reed said the restrictions that came with the pandemic made hard jobs more difficult. Everyone had to undergo multiple screenings every time they came to the hospital and wear not only face masks but clear face shields anytime they entered a room – treating every patient as if they had COVID.

"I can't tell you how hard it is in the hospital," she said. "Some health-care workers are falling sick to it, and others are worn out because they're working extra shifts. It wears you out."

Mental health is another issue throughout society, and even moreso in the medical profession. 800703741

"There are so many things that go with it," Reed said. "People being isolated or having the disease process and not getting back to their 100 percent, or losing their jobs. There's increased risk of child abuse, increased risk of family disturbances, domestic abuse, suicides, all that."

Reed praised hospitals for the monitoring and care they are providing – including those tight mask restrictions. She noted that so far, the pandemic has not

slowed the influx of students into health care professions. TCU nursing faculty spent their summer revamping paperwork to accommodate every possible situation as they planned for 2021: face -to-face the whole semester, half face-to-face and half virtual, or completely virtual.

But there's hope on the horizon: By mid-2021, many Americans will have received a vaccine against the coronavirus. According to a Nov. 30 *Dallas Morning News* story, more than 3,800 health-care providers and institutions in 226 of Texas's 254 counties had signed up to receive shipments of vaccine and administer the shots.

Reed is cautiously optimistic despite the many unknowns associated with the quickly-developed vaccine. She looks forward to a return to hands-on teaching without worrying about COVID. Still, it may be years before things return to normal.

"I don't know that they'll ever go back to 100 percent of the way they were," she said. "As health care workers, I think it's going to make us smarter and more adaptable. It's changed how we think about educating, it's changed how we think about caring for patients. It's made us more conscientious about how rapidly this can spread, and we don't want to be the vector that's spreading it."

Reed admits she's been frowned upon a few times for bringing students in too close. 248200101

"My fingers do things when I'm starting an IV, and they have to be able to see it," she said. "They can't learn it from six feet away. There are things you learn by doing. You watch it, and then you do one."

She said she's amazed that students are still jumping in, still passionate about learning and helping.

"A few of them are fearful, and I tell them, 'Look, we're doing the best we can do. We have all this protection, but you can't let fear drive your life. If you want to be a nurse, you're going to be around stuff. Use your head and be smart and don't take shortcuts, so that you stay safe and you keep other people safe.'"

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a long, dark tunnel for most of the world. As 2021 dawns, there's a light at the end of that tunnel – and it's reassuring to know that even during the darkest times, learning and caring have not ceased.

They've just been hiding behind a mask. ■

"As health care workers, I think it's going to make us smarter and more adaptable."



Reed addressed the Rotary Club of Azle on March 12, 2020, as the COVID-19 virus was just beginning to impact life in the U.S. and throughout the world.

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RADIANCE! at the Ranch
Nov 11 - Jan 3



A Taste for Education
February 6

Your Co-op's Community Calendar

January 2021

1

New Year's Day,
Our offices will be closed

RADIANCE! At the Ranch,
radiancechristmas.com
*Ends January 3

18

Martin Luther King Day,
Our offices will be closed

February

6

A Taste for Education,
weatherfordisd.com

15

Presidents' Day,
Our offices will be closed

26

TCA Legacy Dinner,
tcaeagles.org

March

5

**2021 Scholarship applications
due by 5 pm,**
tcectexas.com/scholarship

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

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

Tri-County Electric Cooperative

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Online: oms.tcectexas.com

App: TCEC Connect

Phone: (817) 444-3201

ABOUT TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

Tri-County Electric Co-op owns and maintains more than 9,294 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 94,000 members in Archer, Baylor, Denton, Foard, Haskell, Hood, Jack, King, Knox, Palo Pinto, Parker, Stonewall, Tarrant, Throckmorton, Wilbarger, and Wise counties.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Aledo

200 Bailey Ranch Road, Aledo 76008

Azle

600 NW Parkway, Azle 76020

Granbury

1623 Weatherford Highway, Granbury 76048

Keller

4900 Keller-Hicks Road, Fort Worth 76244

Seymour

419 N. Main, Seymour 76380

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

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Nana Ria's Two Cup Soup

BY MARIA WHITE
WHITT

2 cups meat (hamburger, sausage or chorizo)
2 cups frozen corn
2 cups frozen green beans
2 cups diced carrots
2 cups diced potatoes
2 large cartons of beef broth; add 1-2 tablespoons beef broth base for more flavor

1. Season meat, brown, drain and set aside.
2. Bring broth to boil and add corn and green beans. Cook for about 10 minutes.
3. Add carrots and potatoes. Cook another 20 minutes.
4. Add water or additional broth as needed for the amount of broth you desire.
5. Add meat and simmer about 5 more minutes.

Enjoy!

JANUARY IS SLOW COOKER MONTH! Consider using a slower cooker for easy, low-maintenance cooking. Place cooked meat, vegetables, and broth into a slow cooker. Select desired temperature and let the soup cook. If you are home, stir occasionally to combine flavors.

Tri-County Electric Co-op Member Recipe Submission Form

MEMBER _____

CITY _____

EMAIL or PHONE NUMBER _____

RECIPE NAME _____

SUBMITTING YOUR RECIPE:

EMAIL: Please include the above information with your recipe and send to **pr@tcectexas.com**

ONLINE: tcectexas.com/recipe-submission

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

Tri-County Electric Cooperative
 Attn: Recipe Submission
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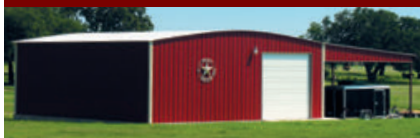


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ITEM 64061, 64722, 64030, 64721, 64031, 64720, 64729 shown
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18299193 LIMIT 1 - Exp. 2/12/21

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ITEM 61330 shown
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18307038 LIMIT 2 - Exp. 2/12/21

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18334482 LIMIT 2 - Exp. 2/12/21

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18337182 LIMIT 4 - Exp. 2/12/21

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18338681 LIMIT 1 - Exp. 2/12/21

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ITEM 56122/64118 shown
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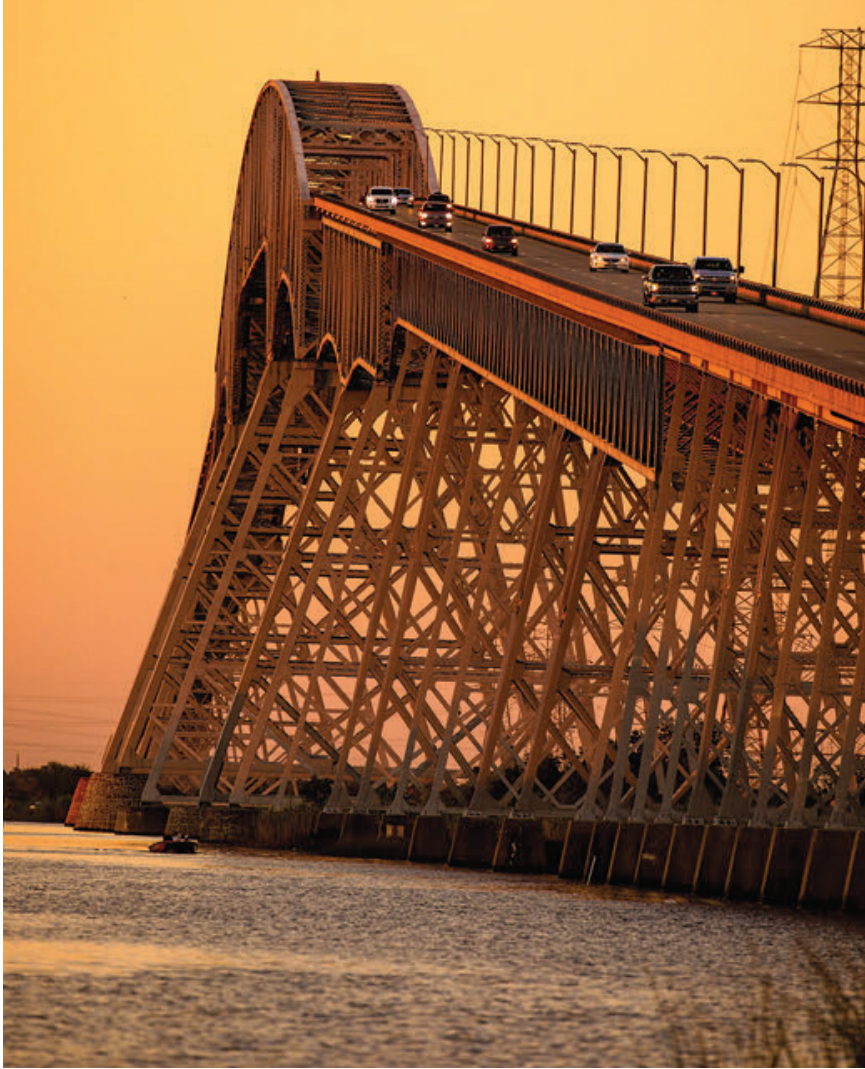
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TCP WEB EXTRA
Listen to W.F. Strong
read this story.



The Scariest Bridge in Texas

The steep Rainbow Bridge connecting Port Arthur and Orange is a nightmare for some

BY W.F. STRONG • PHOTO BY ROBERT SEALE

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE Texas bridge that can be especially troubling for those with gephyrophobia—fear of crossing bridges. The U.S. 90 bridge over the Pecos River can certainly give you the willies. The Corpus Christi Harbor Bridge can give you pause if you're hit with the outer bands of a tropical storm when you're on it. Some of those five-stack interchanges in Dallas and Houston can cause a palpitation or two.

But, in my opinion, the scariest bridge in Texas is the Rainbow Bridge between Port Arthur and Orange, on Texas Highway 73. It offers a triple threat. You can

see it coming from a long way off. It has a steep ascent and descent. And it rises frighteningly high over water. These are the things gephyrophobics most dread.

The Rainbow Bridge is scary enough today, with two lanes for one-way traffic southbound, but it used to be much worse. It is 20 stories tall, and drivers had to put up with two narrow lanes carrying cars and loaded 18-wheelers in two directions. When it was completed in 1938, it was the second-tallest bridge in the U.S., second only to the Golden Gate Bridge. (The Veterans Memorial Bridge, built just yards away and completed in 1990, car-

ries one-way traffic northbound.)

As you arrived near the top of the Rainbow Bridge, all you could see was sky in the daytime and the stars at night. You had to have faith that the pavement would be there when you drove over the hump, and that was enough to make some folks take a 30-mile detour. Local driver's education teachers often made students navigate over that bridge on their first day of class.

Originally it was called the Port Arthur-Orange Bridge. I long believed that the Rainbow Bridge name came from Norse mythology, wherein the rainbow bridge connects heaven and earth. But no. In 1957 the North Port Arthur Lions Club had a naming contest, and 6-year-old Christy McClintock submitted the winning entry—Rainbow Bridge. She said it looked like a mechanical rainbow. You will agree if you are there near sunset and see it illuminated in the shimmering hues of the evening. McClintock earned a \$50 U.S. savings bond as her prize.

Why was the bridge, with 177 feet of vertical clearance, built so tall? It crossed an important ship channel and builders wanted the tallest ship in the Navy at the time, the USS Patoka, to be able to pass easily beneath it, pulling a dirigible.

The Rainbow Bridge was more than an engineering marvel. It was also a magnet for teenagers in the night. The high school kids in the area used to climb up into the catwalks. One of those students was destined for worldwide fame. It is said that she used to sit up there high above the moonlit waters of the Neches River and sing in her passionately raw style. I'm sure you've heard of her. Janis Joplin? Her biographer, Myra Friedman, said Joplin would sing up there under the great Texas sky and "scorch the stars." But that's a whole other story.

The tallest ship in the Navy never did pass beneath the Rainbow Bridge. Seems a shame. Somewhat like a bride having planned a perfect wedding, but the groom never showed. ■

Vegetarian

Creative blends of vegetables and seasonings make for hearty meals

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

My family is always looking for more ways to add vegetables to our meals, especially with two growing kids at the table. One way that works for us is to create make-it-yourself bowls that allow each of us to choose our own vegetable and sauce. My husband and I like this carrot-ginger dressing, which can be enjoyed with roasted veggies, as in this recipe, or with a simple salad.

Roasted Vegetable Farro Bowls With Carrot-Ginger Dressing

1 cup farro
1 head cauliflower, chopped
1½ cups diced butternut squash
1 head broccoli, chopped
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
¾ cup chopped carrot
¼ cup diced onion
¼ cup rice vinegar
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cook farro according to package directions. Drain excess liquid if needed.
2. While the farro is cooking, spread cauliflower and squash onto a rimmed baking sheet and put broccoli into a bowl. Drizzle 2 tablespoons olive oil over the vegetables. Put baking sheet into oven and roast 10 minutes, then add broccoli and give the vegetables a stir. Roast for another 10 minutes, until vegetables are softened and starting to caramelize.
3. While vegetables are cooking, make the dressing. In a food processor or blender, combine ½ cup olive oil, carrot, onion, rice vinegar, ginger, salt and pepper and process until completely smooth. Taste dressing and adjust seasoning if needed.
4. Divide farro and vegetables among 4 bowls with dressing on the side.

SERVES 4

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Roasted Carrot and Fennel Soup.





Instant Pot Greek Spanakorizo With Herbed Cashews

KATHERINE SUAREZ
COSERV

This Greek dish is a great way to get started using an Instant Pot.

COOK'S TIP To make this dish without an Instant Pot: In Step 3 increase the water to 3 cups and add it and the rest of the ingredients into a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer for 18 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes, then fluff with a fork before serving.

2 cups jasmine rice
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon olive oil, divided use
¼ cup cashews
2 teaspoons Greek seasoning, divided use
2 tablespoons fresh dill, divided use
½ medium yellow onion, sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 cups water
1 bag (12 ounces) frozen spinach, thawed and drained
Juice of 1 large lemon
Salt and pepper, to taste
Feta cheese crumbles, for garnish

1. Rinse the rice until water runs clear, drain and set aside. Set a small sauté pan over medium heat. Add 1 teaspoon of olive oil and the cashews to the pan and toast until golden brown, stirring occasionally. Remove the pan from heat and stir in 1 teaspoon Greek seasoning and a pinch of dill. After removing cashews from the pan, give them a rough chop and set aside.

2. Set an Instant Pot to sauté and add 2 tablespoons olive oil and the sliced onion to the cooker's inner pot. Stir to coat onion and cook until softened, stirring

\$500 WINNER

Roasted Vegetable Enchiladas

NANCY DENNIS
BARTLETT EC



Who doesn't love enchiladas? This simple recipe features roasted vegetables for the filling and the sauce. If you have extra filling, use it to make more enchiladas or serve it as a side.

SERVES 4



3 red bell peppers, quartered, seeds and stems removed
2 zucchini, cut into 1-inch chunks
2 yellow squashes, cut into 1-inch chunks
½ yellow onion, cut into 1-inch chunks
1 jalapeño pepper, halved, seeds and stem removed
2 cloves garlic, skin on
Olive oil, for drizzling
8 ounces light sour cream
1 teaspoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, divided use
Salt and pepper, to taste
6–7 corn tortillas, warmed
1 cup queso fresco, crumbled

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spread the vegetables and garlic onto a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Roast vegetables 25–35 minutes, until slightly browned. Stir every 10 minutes, checking on garlic and bell peppers, and removing garlic once soft and bell peppers once skin is browned and beginning to peel.
2. Place the bell peppers in a bowl and cover for 10 minutes. Set aside the rest of the vegetables. Once peppers are cool enough to handle, remove the skins from the peppers and the garlic.
3. Place the bell peppers, jalapeño, garlic, sour cream, cumin and 1 tablespoon cilantro in a food processor or blender and purée until smooth. Add salt and pepper.
4. Spread a large spoonful of the sauce in an 8-by-8-inch baking dish. Roll into each corn tortilla about ¼ cup of the roasted vegetables and a sprinkling of cheese and place carefully in the dish. Spread the remaining sauce over the top.
5. Bake enchiladas 20–25 minutes. Top with remaining cheese and cilantro and serve.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

TOMATOES DUE JAN 10

What's more perfect for summer than tomatoes? No matter how you slice them, we want your best tomato recipe. Enter at TexasCoopPower.com/Contests by January 10.

CONTINUED >

RECIPES CONTINUED

occasionally. Add garlic and sauté for about 1 minute, being careful to not burn it.

3. Add the water, spinach, rice, rest of the dill and 1 teaspoon Greek seasoning into the Instant Pot. Stir, place the lid and set to high pressure for 1 minute, then let rest for 15 minutes to allow the pressure to release naturally. Release excess pressure if needed before removing lid. Stir in lemon juice and salt and pepper. Sprinkle the top of the spanakorizo with cashews and cheese before serving.

SERVES 8

Mujadara

SHANNON SKAALURE
TRI-COUNTY EC

Lentils are a great ingredient for meatless meals, and this staple Middle Eastern dish is an excellent option. Even though cooking the onions down takes time, the results are worth it. Serve topped with



yogurt or labneh—strained yogurt—if you like.

4 tablespoons olive oil
2 large onions, thinly sliced
Salt, to taste
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon ground allspice
Pinch ground cayenne pepper
Large pinch dried thyme, oregano and/or rosemary
5 cups vegetable broth
1 cup green, brown or red lentils
¾ cup rice
1–2 tablespoons lemon juice
Pepper, to taste

Pinch red pepper flakes, for garnish
Chopped fresh herbs, for garnish

1. Heat olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium heat, then add onions. Add a pinch of salt and sauté until the onions turn golden brown, 15–45 minutes, stirring often so they don't burn. Transfer half of the onions to a plate, leaving remaining half in the skillet.

2. Add garlic to skillet and sauté until fragrant, about 1 minute, then add cumin, allspice and cayenne and sauté a few seconds to toast the spices. Stir in herbs and broth, bring to a simmer, and add salt to taste.

3. Add in lentils, cover and simmer with lid cracked until lentils are almost done (25–30 minutes for green and brown lentils, 15–20 minutes for red). Stir rice into the pot and continue to cook until everything is tender, 15–20 minutes. Close lid completely if it looks too thick while cooking.

4. Add lemon juice and salt and pepper to taste. Top with reserved onions and garnishes.

SERVES 8

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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 snatched it up 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,

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Upscale Lodging

The Tarpon Inn embodies the historical vibe of Port A

BY CHET GARNER

TEXANS HAVE ALWAYS been good at telling fish stories, but the Tarpon Inn in Port Aransas can out-exaggerate even the saltiest fisherman. This beachy hotel has been giving Mustang Island visitors a place to rest their heads and share their stories since 1886.

I traveled to the coast to enjoy that golden time when the weather turns colder and “island time” slows to a standstill. After walking the quiet streets of Port Aransas, I found myself standing in front of the long, two-story building with its porch and balcony that run from end to end. Folks sat in red rocking chairs, soaking in the relaxed pace of life in Port A.

I expected the smile I received when I stepped into the small lobby, but I did not expect the lobby’s decor. Covering the walls from the base of the windows to the ceiling are more than 7,000 tarpon scales, each signed and dated by a proud angler. In the early 1900s, these colossal fish were so plentiful that Port Aransas was nicknamed “Tarpon, Texas.” When a guest caught one, they noted the catch’s size and weight on a scale removed from the fish, then signed and pinned the silver-tipped trophy to the lobby wall.

I scanned the walls and found that most of the anglers were from Texas. Some scales recorded fish that were well over 6 feet long, while others bragged that the fish was caught using only “light tackle.” I found one scale safely behind glass and inscribed with the name Franklin D. Roosevelt, who traveled to Port Aransas in 1937 while serving his second term as president. During this trip he reeled in a 5-foot-1-inch, 77-pound tarpon and added its scale to the wall.

I walked out eager to see if there were any tarpons swimming in the nearby Gulf. ■

ABOVE Chet points out the tarpon scale signed by President Roosevelt in 1937.

TCP WEB EXTRA See Chet’s video from the Tarpon Inn and check out his Explorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.

Know Before You Go

Some events may have been affected by COVID-19. Call or check an event’s website for scheduling details.

JANUARY

01

Austin [1-31] Fortlandia, (512) 232-0100, wildflower.org/event/fortlandia

09

Brenham Johnny Cash Tribute by Bennie Wheels, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com/events

12

Seguin Seguin Chamber Virtual Centennial Celebration, (830) 379-6382, seguinchamber.com

14

Amarillo [14-16, 21-24] Little Women, (806) 355-9991, amarillolittletheatre.org/current-season

15

San Angelo [15-16] Texas State Federation of Square & Round Dancers Nominating Meeting and Dance, (432) 685-3226, pbsrda.com

16

Brenham Uptown Swirl in Downtown Brenham, (979) 337-7580, downtownbrenham.com

17

Hallettsville State Championship Domino Tournament, (361) 798-2311, kchall.com

22

Amarillo [22-23] Beethoven’s Fifth & Project Trio, (806) 376-8782, amarillosymphony.org

28

New Braunfels Neal McCoy, (830) 627-0808, brauntex.org

30

Bandera Grace Lutheran
Wild Game Dinner,
(830) 796-3091,
gracebandera.weebly.com/
wild-game-dinner-2021

Brenham Bob Wills' Texas
Playboys Starring Jason
Roberts, (979) 337-7240,
thebarnhillcenter.com/events

Nocona Mardi Gras Ball,
(940) 825-3526,
facebook.com/
mardigrasnoconastyle

FEBRUARY

02

Austin Samin Nosrat,
(512) 474-5664,
thelongcenter.org

03

Bandera [3-6] Cowboy
Mardi Gras, (830) 796-4849,
11thstreetcowboybar.com



Pick of the Month

South Texas International Film Festival

Edinburg, January 22-31
(956) 383-6246
stxiff.com

The festival goes online this year. Visitors to stxiff.com can watch all film selections free and on-demand, access panels for insight from guests and directors, participate in workshops, and meet celebrities virtually. The festival will feature productions from the Rio Grande Valley and more than 20 countries.

TCP Submit Your Event

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your event online for March by January 10, and it just might be featured in this calendar.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

ANNA RUSSELL
CHEROKEE COUNTY EC
"This part of Colorado was once part of Texas."

SABINE BREDOW
PEDERNALES EC
Bald cypress trees covered in Spanish moss in the world's largest cypress forest—around Caddo Lake in deep East Texas.

MIKE PRESTIGIACOMO
BARTLETT EC
The forest *and* the trees.

TREY WATSON
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC
"Drone photo of my forested property in the East Texas summer."

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TCP WEB EXTRA See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.



Cook Like a Texan

Memorable readers' recipes now delight diners in Nevada

BY SUZANNE FEATHERSTON
ILLUSTRATION BY MITCH BLUNT

I MIGHT NOT LIVE IN TEXAS anymore, but sometimes I still cook like a Texan.

Thank you, *Texas Co-op Power* readers, for teaching me about Southern cooking. Through the monthly reader recipe section, I learned about flavors and techniques that will stay with me forever.

When I joined *Texas Co-op Power* in 2011, I was thrilled to find out that the editorial staff participated in recipe testing for the recipe contest.

Every month the food editor would send out selected submitted recipes, and the editorial staff would race to pick out the most appealing ones to prepare for a panel of co-workers. We did not have a professional test kitchen, but we were a realistic representation of Texas home cooks.

Contestants showed their culinary acumen with instructions as simple as melting Velveeta into almost anything to the more meticulous, such as stuffing upright rigatoni noodles for Butternut Squash and Gorgonzola Rigatoni Pasta Pie With Fried Sage (July 2016).

Sometimes if I was late in choosing, I'd wind up preparing a more technical or time-consuming recipe, like the Red Velvet Cupcake in a Jar (November 2012) that took me three hours to make. At other times recipes picked me, like the Blueberry-Lime Jam (June 2012) because I owned a hot-water bath canner.

For the Chili Cook-Off contest of 2013, Jenny Sparks of Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative shared a recipe for Venison Chili that uses ground venison, chipotle peppers and hot chocolate mix. Being the only staff member with venison in my freezer at the time, I lucked out with that one. Not only did it win the contest, but it also became a favorite in my recipe repertoire. I make it mostly for company, often using beef instead of venison and adding beans (controversial, I know) to make it stretch. People love the sweet and smoky flavors, and I love telling them about *Texas Co-op Power*.

Several other Texas recipes and concepts made their way into my cooking routine, thanks to the magazine. Sweet and Savory Sprouts (March 2017) with pancetta or bacon and maple syrup, it turns out, is good hot or cold. Aunt Sharn's Saag (July 2011) is a yummy way to use an overabundance of greens such as spinach from the garden, and it freezes well.

The experience also exposed me to using nontraditional ingredients in pesto, such as beans as in the Cannellini Pesto Pasta Sauce (March 2012) and pecans instead of pine nuts as in Texas Pecan Pesto (March 2012).

These and many other *Texas Co-op Power* recipes are now folded into my binder, so I can continue to cook like a Texan. ■



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