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Painting the Town

Mural artist
Matt Tumlinson
turns Rankin
into his canvas



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July 2021



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Artist Matt Tumlinson interprets the state's culture in murals around a West Texas town.

*By Pam LeBlanc
Photos by Erich Schlegel*

An Unlikely Blueprint

John S. Chase charted a unique course to become Texas' first Black licensed architect.

By Michael Hurd

ON THE COVER

Thanks to Matt Tumlinson, Willie Nelson has a permanent residency in Rankin.

Photo by Erich Schlegel

ABOVE

John S. Chase and his sons in front of his signature Houston home, circa 1959.

Photo courtesy African American Library at the Gregory School | Houston Public Library

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Groundbreaking Cougar

WARREN MCVEA was a high school football phenom—arguably the best running back in the country—at San Antonio’s Brackenridge High School in 1964, when he turned down more than 70 other scholarship offers and elected to play for the University of Houston.

The decision was historic, making McVea, who turns 75 this month, the first Black player to receive a scholarship to play football at any of the major college programs in Texas. He was a two-time All-American for the Cougars and later played six seasons in the NFL.

McVea was born July 30, 1946.



July 5

National Bikini Day

This year’s celebration takes on special meaning as it marks the 75th anniversary of the skimpy swimsuit.

Dancer Micheline Bernardini debuted the bikini, designed by Louis Réard, at a poolside photo shoot July 5, 1946, in Paris. A world just emerging from World War II considered the suit scandalous because it showed a woman’s navel.

Réard named the swimsuit, which used about a napkin’s worth of fabric, after the Bikini Atoll, the Pacific Ocean coral island where the U.S. tested nuclear weapons for more than a decade starting in 1946.



That’s
roughly
the number
of times
a person
breathes
in a day.



FERTILE FELINE

No cat on record has given birth more than a tabby born in 1935 in Bonham, in North Texas. Dusty produced 420 kittens during her life, according to Guinness World Records, giving birth to her last litter, a single kitten, in 1952.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I SHOULD HAVE PAID MORE ATTENTION ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town. Below are some of the responses to our May prompt:

This Memorial Day I remember ...

All the fallen. War is hell, and we better remember too few come back from it.

SALLY WOLFE
VIA FACEBOOK

Not only those who fought and died in battle for this country but also those front-line heroes who fought and died in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

W. GRANT BRALY
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC
CUERO

Maj. Marie T. Rossi, the first female aviation combat commander to fly into battle. She was killed in action March 1, 1991.

TAMMY DUPLECHIN
TRINITY VALLEY EC
NEW YORK, TEXAS

Too many to list.

STEVE AND LISA BOSTON
VIA FACEBOOK

To see more responses, read Currents online.



Best Foot Forward

SOME PEOPLE in this country have two feet, and it's causing all kinds of problems. That's about to change, however.

Wait. What?

One foot is the old U.S. survey measuring foot from 1893, according to *The New York Times*, that takes Earth's curvature into account. The other is the shorter and slightly more exact international foot from 1959, used by nearly everybody in the U.S. except surveyors in some states. The two feet differ by about one-hundredth of a foot per mile, or 2 feet for every 1 million feet.

But come January 1, 2023, the old foot gets the boot when the National Institute of Standards and Technology adopts the international foot as the official standard in the U.S.



TCP Contests and More

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The Hero of Cinco de Mayo

“You have made me feel very proud of being a Tejano. Thank you for your great story on Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín.”

ANTHONY BARRON
TRINITY VALLEY EC
TERRELL

San Jacinto Stands Alone

While I enjoyed the article about the Battle of Puebla and admire Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín's part in it, I take exception to calling it “Mexico's San Jacinto moment” [*The Hero of Cinco de Mayo*, May 2021].

San Jacinto was a victory that ended the war with Mexico and gave Texas independence, whereas the Battle of Puebla was just a lone victory in a war Mexico eventually lost to France the next year. Cinco de Mayo is not nearly as important as San Jacinto Day.

Steve Yates
Pedernales EC
Wimberley



I love any and all yarns [*Serendipity Spinners*, May 2021].

WENDY L. VERA
VIA FACEBOOK

Dear Texas

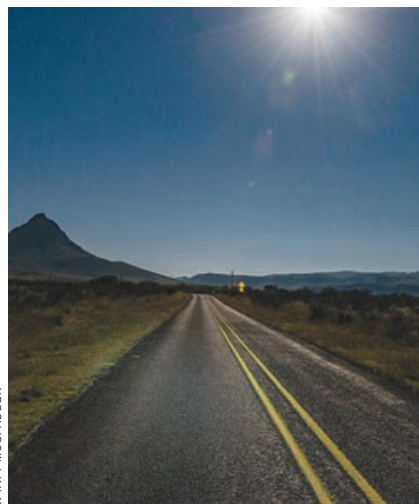
The writing and great photo of Eli Winter's piece [*Few and Far*, March 2021] were so beautiful. It was a poignant, personal and perfect love letter to the entire state of Texas.

Suzanne Howalt
Pedernales EC
Austin

Falfurrias Beef

At one time the Lasater ranch encompassed 350,000 South Texas acres, and in 1912, somewhere on that huge spread, my mother was born [*A Name That Sticks*, February 2021]. The Lasaters were not only famous for their butter, but they were also known for developing the Beefmaster cattle breed in 1931.

Jerry Klumpp
Central Texas EC
Kingsland



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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TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 78, Number 1 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power's* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.

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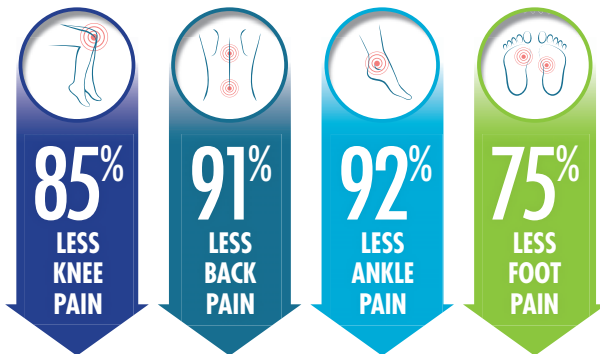


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Rankin as a Canvas

Artist Matt Tumlinson interprets the state's culture in murals around a West Texas town

ABOVE Life imitates art as Matt Tumlinson grabs a selfie in front of his modern take on a *Lonesome Dove* scene. RIGHT A palette of spray paint.

BY PAM LEBLANC • PHOTOS BY ERICH SCHLEGEL



Matt Tumlinson wanted to create a painting that stretched across an entire building, so when the opportunity arose to splash one on the side of a restaurant in tiny Rankin, he headed west, paintbrushes in tow.

"I was thinking if it turns out bad, very few people will see it in Rankin," the San Antonio-based artist said.

The 8-foot letters that spell out the town's name, in a style reminiscent of what you'd find on a cowboy's belt buckle, turned out pretty good, in fact. And since that 60-foot mural went up in 2015, Tumlinson has painted seven more in the West Texas oil town, population about 850.

"With murals, it's really tough to get permission or access to a wall and even tougher to get access without stipulations on it," Tumlinson said. "I only wanted to do one if I could paint something I wanted to paint, and Rankin's been really good about 'I've got a wall you can paint.'"

Tumlinson grew up in Early. After graduating from Texas Tech University, he worked briefly as a history teacher

but disliked it. When he and his wife, Allison, moved to Nantucket, Massachusetts, he sold his first painting—a watercolor map. In 2013 they moved back to Texas, where he worked as a guide on the San Antonio Riverwalk while trying to kickstart his art career.

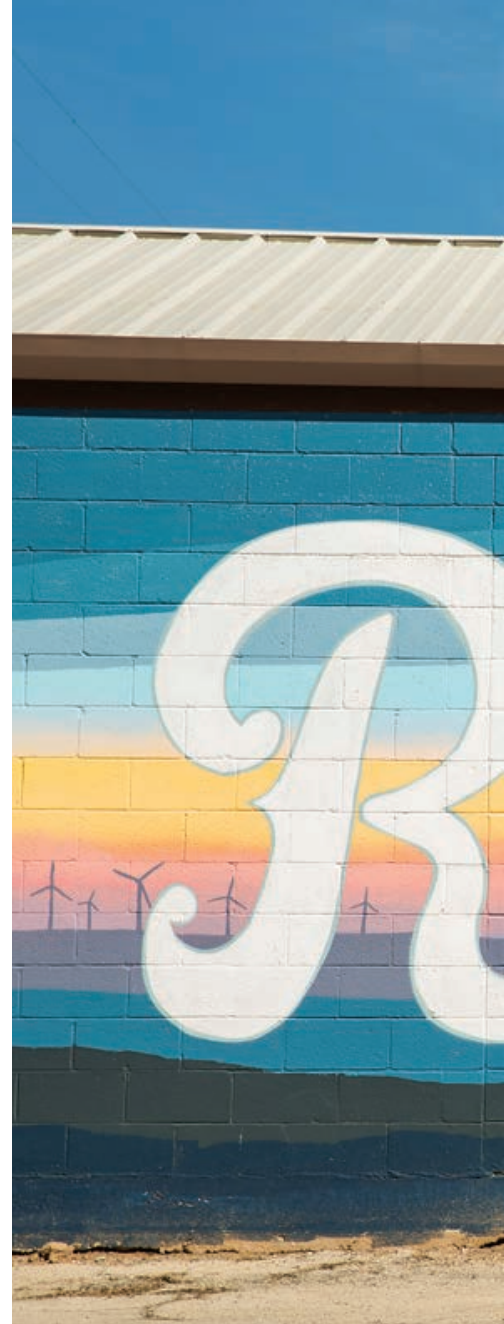
Tumlinson's main business is in "brass canvas" paintings, made on groups of spent bullet casings collected from his uncle's gun range. He also works in oil, painting his view of Texas' quickly changing rural landscapes and drawing influence from Texas singer-songwriters.

"People have this idea that Texas is all boots and cowboys and open range," Tumlinson said. "I just feel like being an eighth-generation Texan, if somebody's going to tell the accurate story of what Texas is today, why not me?"

Rankin, 55 miles south of Midland, didn't offer up its downtown as a canvas randomly. Tumlinson's sister teaches at Rankin High School; his brother-in-law coaches the Red Devils, the school's six-man football team. A local restaurant



ABOVE Tumlinson says the mural of Matthew McConaughey is about being confident in yourself. RIGHT Spray-painting in windblown West Texas can be tricky. OPPOSITE Rankin City Hall.



owner thought a mural would liven things up (which it did). Tumlinson's sister mentioned that her brother was an artist looking for a place to paint a mural, and an invitation was extended. The mural was Tumlinson's first.

Soon, locals suggested he paint the side of the city's water tower. The structure looked rickety to Tumlinson, so instead he painted a scene from Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* on the side of a building owned by the mayor. The mural shows characters Gus and Woodrow riding into San Antonio, marveling at how the city has changed. "It's all grewed up," Gus says in the TV miniseries.

In Tumlinson's version of the scene, the cowboys are holding a selfie stick. He painted it in a single night, using his pickup truck's headlights to illuminate the wall.

"In a world where all the spaces are filled in on a map, I wonder what happened to the guys like that," Tumlinson says of the image. "I'm trying to put that concept of what it is to be Texan into a modern context."

Another mural sprouted on the wall of an abandoned gas station along U.S. 67 a few blocks away. Tumlinson checked tax records to find out who owned the building and then contacted the company to get permission. The CEO granted approval, and Tumlinson illustrated a saintly looking Willie

Nelson, halo overhead and joint in hand. Within a week, Tumlinson got a call. He'd received permission from the wrong building owner, and the true owner wanted the artwork removed. Tumlinson suggested a compromise—he'd erase the joint if the rest could stay.

It did.

A John Wayne mural adorns the other side of that gas station, alongside a graph marked "stupidity" on one axis and "difficulty in life" on the other, a nod to a quote often incorrectly attributed to Wayne: "Life is hard; it's even harder when you're stupid."

Tumlinson painted other murals, too: a pair of oil field workers on one wall, another Rankin sign on another and a state trooper ticketing a kid riding a Big Wheel on a pink cinder block building. (That one was modeled after his uncle but coincidentally looked like a local trooper at the



time. The trooper took it in stride, according to Tumlinson.)

The artist's most popular work decorates a metal tank near the railroad tracks. In it, actor Matthew McConaughey holds a can of spray paint next to the words, "You'd be a lot cooler if more people thought so," a twist on the actor's quote from the Richard Linklater movie *Dazed and Confused*: "It'd be a lot cooler if you did."

Tumlinson tried but never located the tank's owner to get permission to paint it. He decided to put up the artwork—painted in his studio in downtown San Antonio, then applied to the metal structure—anyway. As he worked in broad daylight, a state trooper stopped to inquire. He asked if Tumlinson had painted the city's murals, told him McConaughey looked great, then drove away.

Since painting the Rankin murals, Tumlinson has expanded his reach—part of a long-term goal to paint his way across the state. In San Antonio his *Puro San Antonio* mural is filled with nods to the local culture. One dubbed *King George* depicts country music singer George Strait in

royal garb, and a third features a woman dressed as Davy Crockett swinging a gun.

Tumlinson likes painting murals because anybody can see them. "It's the closest thing an artist gets to being on a stage," he said. "It's more communal."

The Rankin community, apparently, approves. None have been vandalized.

"You see people all the time taking pictures," said Brandon Brown, the mayor. "I don't think we're a destination yet, but I think the murals have sparked a little bit of new life in Rankin." ■

TCP WEB EXTRA See a slideshow of Tumlinson's Rankin murals.



An Unlikely Blueprint

John S. Chase charted a unique course to become Texas' first Black licensed architect

BY MICHAEL HURD

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
John S. Chase with his
sons in front of the fam-
ily's Houston residence,
circa 1959. A rendering
of the home's courtyard.
A street view of the
home from 2019.

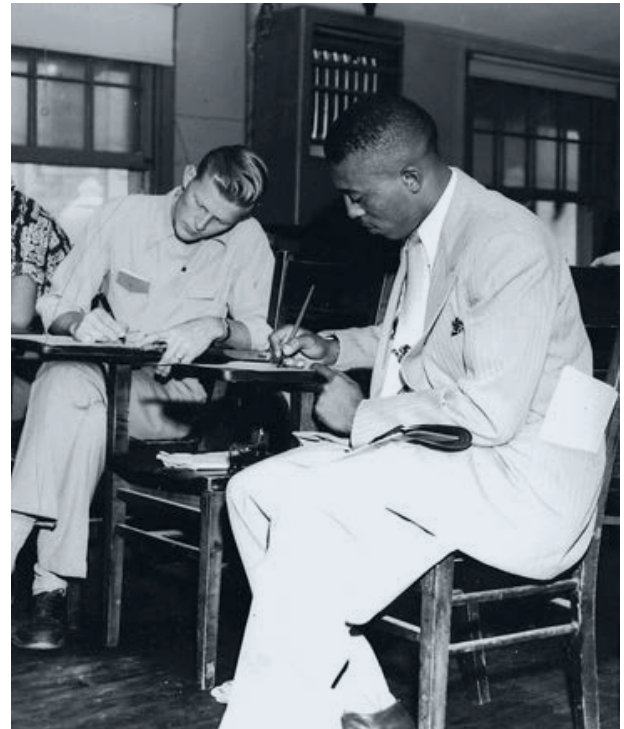


FAMILY: AFRICAN AMERICAN LIBRARY AT THE GREGORY SCHOOL | HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY HOME: HESTER + HARDWAY

JOHN SAUNDERS CHASE didn't want Texas, and the state certainly wanted nothing to do with him. It was 1948, and race relations in the rigidly segregated South were heavily tilted toward nonexistent.

Yet as Chase pursued an education and started his career as an architect, he and the Lone Star State struck up a historic relationship despite an epic perfunctory legal battle, menacing stares, media glares, hate mail and death threats.

Because of this unlikely alliance, it was in Texas where the Annapolis, Maryland, native would, in 1950, become



Chase in a University of Texas classroom in 1950.

One of his most noted residential designs is the Phillips House in Austin—with its distinctive green, diamond-shaped roof; large expanses of windows; and long lines—built for Della Phillips, co-owner of East Austin's Phillips-Upshaw Funeral Home.

In Houston several buildings on the Texas Southern University campus, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Humanities Center and Thurgood Marshall School of Law building, are Chase designs. He also collaborated on construction of Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center and the Astrodome renovation and was commissioned to design the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia. In 1980, Chase became the first Black man to serve on the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

As a young man, Chase could not have imagined doing any of that while based below the Mason-Dixon Line, but in retrospect his iconic, trailblazing career in Texas was fated. Chase had just received his architectural engineering degree from Virginia's all-Black Hampton College in 1948 when the school's placement officer presented Chase with several job possibilities. Chase told him, "You can strike Texas off the list." However, when the job he took in Philadelphia didn't work out, Chase wrote the officer to ask if he had other prospective employers and added a surprising stipulation.

"I underlined the Deep South, and I never did think I'd do something like that," he said in the HistoryMakers interview. "I just figured that in Philly, they got everything they need, but down in the Deep South, the opportunity to build would be greater, and I was right."

the first African American student admitted to a graduate program at a major university in the South—the University of Texas. Chase followed that victory in 1952, when he became the university's second Black graduate and, the same year, the state's first Black licensed architect.

"For the most part, they treated me with respect, and I treated them with respect," Chase recalled in a 2004 interview with the HistoryMakers, a research institution that archives African American oral history. "I got to know some very, very important architects and some very important people because of the work and relationships that I had at UT."

Chase went on to design an estimated 300 Black churches, primarily in Houston and throughout East Texas but also in Austin, where the angular roofs of Olivet Baptist Church and David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, with their minimalist approaches, are indicative of Chase's style. They blend contemporary design with natural materials—wood and stone—and an abundance of open spaces and natural light. Inside David Chapel the amount of natural light increases as you approach the pulpit and a simple wooden cross on the wall, intentional symbolism Chase designed into the building.



David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in East Austin.

Chase started his own business, and his first clients were the congregants of African American churches.

Outside the classroom, heads turned when Chase passed. He was shadowed around campus by reporters and federal marshals and received stacks of explicit hate mail that varied on the theme “You are less than a dog to force your way into someplace that you’re not wanted.”

Yet Chase persevered and completed the program, even making some lifelong friends. He and his wife, Drucie, moved to Houston, where Chase took a teaching position at Texas Southern University. No architecture firms would hire him because of his color.

Chase started his own business, and his first clients were the congregants of African American churches.

“To me, selling architecture is no different than selling insurance—you got to know somebody,” Chase said of his Sunday pilgrimages with Drucie and their three children in tow. “I figured it was the best way to know people—join church. We got so much work out of that.”

However, it is the home he built for himself in Houston’s Third Ward that is the focus of *John S. Chase—The Chase Residence*, a new book by David Heymann and Stephen Fox.

“It was designed around a completely open-air courtyard and exemplified the type of house that was very popular with Houston modern architects in the 1950s—flat-roof, courtyard houses, often with interior walls of glass that opened to the courtyard,” explained Fox, an architectural historian at Rice University. “When he added a second story, it reflected his great admiration for the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, so it kind of changed the tone of the house from an austere modern house to one that had a mixture of materials, a very exuberant interior.”

Chase died in 2012, leaving an inspiring legacy that continues to impact Black architects. He co-founded the National Organization of Minority Architects in 1971.

“He was one person against all odds,” said William Batson, an associate professor at the Prairie View A&M University School of Architecture, the country’s top producer of African American undergraduate architects. “Those people hated him, didn’t want him to succeed, but he did, no matter what. He didn’t have any crutches, he didn’t have any pampering. He didn’t go around protesting, whining and complaining. He set the example and dropped the mic 70 years ago.” ■

TCP WEB EXTRA Enter online to win a copy of *John S. Chase—The Chase Residence*.

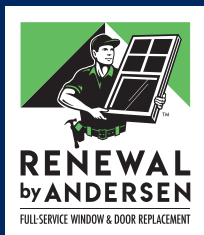
N MOVING TO TEXAS, Chase worked for the Black-owned Lott Lumber Co., a homebuilder in East Austin, but he knew he needed more formal education in architecture, and that meant studying at the state’s segregated flagship university just across East Avenue, now Interstate 35.

Chase got two breaks: first, a friendly face in Hugh McMath, dean of the UT School of Architecture, and then the Sweatt v. Painter Supreme Court decision prompted by Chase’s friend Heman Sweatt, who gained admittance to the UT law school after the high court ruled in his favor in the case that outlawed the separate-but-equal doctrine and opened the door for school desegregation.

“I talked with Dean McMath,” Chase remembered. “He asked if I was familiar with the case in front of the Supreme Court. He said, ‘Well, give it just a little more time, and if that thing comes through, I think your prayers are answered.’”

The decision was handed down June 5, 1950, and two days later Chase registered for UT’s summer session. Chaos ensued.

“All the media made it difficult,” he said, “but you could pick the friends out right away; you could pick out the foes. The ones that thought you were OK would do things like if you’d been drawing and studying, they’d come in, saw you’d been working long enough and say, ‘Let’s go to the Union and get a soda or a sandwich or something; come on, go with us.’”



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*"We delight in the
beauty of the butter-
fly, but rarely admit
the changes it has gone
through to achieve
that beauty."*

— Positivity Sparkles.com



Pendant enlarged
to show
luxurious color.



TRIGGER THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

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MESSAGE
FROM
PRESIDENT/
CEO

**DARRYL
SCHRIVER**

Open and Transparent

An Update for the Members

NOW THAT SUMMER is in full swing, many of us welcome more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather. Summertime brings favorite activities like cooking out with family and friends, afternoons on the water, and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life. I, like many of you, am enjoying the warmer weather. 30886001

From a utility perspective, while the warmup is nice, there are still looming effects of February's winter storm. As I write this column, state representatives and senators have wrapped up the 87th legislative session, and Brazos Electric Power Cooperative (Brazos), our wholesale power supplier, is trudging through their bankruptcy.

As CEO of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, I work for you, the member-owners, and pledge to stay open and transparent with issues facing our cooperative.

Legislative Update

The Texas Legislature wrapped up this year's regular session on May 31. Winter Storm Uri hit our state less than a month after legislators convened in Austin, quickly taking priority in the session. More than 500 bills related to the storm were filed, including more than 300 relating specifically to the electric grid.

Legislators filed bills and debated issues on weatherization of generating assets, ERCOT market design, load shed obligations, creating a disaster alert system, governance over ERCOT and the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) and much more. Below I will highlight just a few items that passed and their associated significance to our industry.

The largest and most encompassing bill that was passed was Senate Bill (SB) 3, which included elements from various bills related to the storm. Key provisions of the bill include:

- ▶ The Texas Energy Disaster Reliability Council – created in House Bill (HB) 13 – is responsible for creating a disaster alert system to notify Texans when capacity on the ERCOT grid is not expected to meet demand.
- ▶ Creation of a committee to map the state's critical gas facilities and electric infrastructure and provide best practices for facilities to prepare for extreme weather. Facilities identified by the mapping committee and designated by the Railroad Commission must implement measures to operate under extreme conditions. The Railroad Commission will inspect facility compliance and report any violations to the Attorney General.
- ▶ The PUCT must establish rules for an emergency pricing program that goes into effect after the pricing cap is in place for 12 hours in a 24-hour period. This program must be reviewed once every five years.
- ▶ Formalization of the Texas Electric Reliability Council to create preparation measures to ensure the delivery of electricity and energy in the state. 800765901

As you can see, this was an active session, and our elected officials are working to ensure the future of the Lone Star State remains bright. A Special Session is highly anticipated, and we will continue to participate and monitor issues that affect our membership.

Brazos Bankruptcy

Brazos's bankruptcy continues to be a very fluid process that is far from over. Important hearing and filing dates are approaching and we continue to work diligently with legal counsel and consultants to navigate this situation. This is a problem not of our making, but we are doing our best to represent the interests of the Tri-County Electric Co-op membership. We are in this together. ■



Change Habits to Beat the Peak

BY ANNIE MCGINNIS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

AS TEMPERATURES RISE and air conditioners get a serious workout, looking for ways to improve energy efficiency at home can help you and Tri-County Electric Cooperative reduce demand, saving energy and money.

Making small adjustments in when, where and how you use electricity will help control your energy costs. Avoid peak times, typically 4–8 p.m. in summer, by putting some chores on hold, at least until power demand dips.

Love 78

At 78 degrees most people are comfortable outside, so why not indoors? Most people aren't sensitive enough to notice much of a difference in air temperature whether the thermostat is set at 73 or raised to 78. The closer your thermostat setting is to the outdoor temperature, the less your air conditioner will run.

Each degree of temperature difference represents a percentage of the total cooling load. That means that when temperatures are in the high 80s, you could reduce your cooling demand by 10%–15% for each degree above 75.

Fans offer an economical alternative to air conditioning on mild days and can pitch in for comfort as temperatures climb. In summer, set ceiling fans to turn counterclockwise and blow air downward to get the most value.

Central AC can use as much as 1 kWh of electricity for each 12-minute cycle of cooling. A ceiling fan can operate for about 13 hours on the same amount of electricity, while a floor or table fan, depending on its size, might run for 10 hours per kilowatt-hour of power. Turn off fans when you leave a room because they cool people, not spaces.

Share the Space

In simpler times families spent more time together in the same room even as they pursued different interests. Some members might've read books or magazines under the light of a shared lamp while others watched TV or played board games.

Today it's common for everyone to retreat to separate spaces, turn on their electronics and close their doors to cocoon in their own environments.

Getting control of your energy use to reduce your home's overall demand can be really challenging when you have to consider the entire home, so bring back family time to beat the peak. 8001659601

LCD televisions generally use 60% as much electricity as comparably sized plasma models. One laptop uses about 20% as much power as a desktop computer and monitor. And today's home assistant devices can play music using about 17% of the energy of a component stereo system.

A video game console consumes about 200 watts of power. One system pressed into service for spirited competition between family members uses about a third of the power of three players engaged in separate games throughout the house. ■

I Work for You



HANNAH TURNER

**System Operator
System Operations**

Hannah started at Tri-County Electric Co-op on March 26, 2018 after interviewing for the job during an ice storm.

A native of Oxford, Mississippi, she was a maintenance dispatcher for the University of Mississippi, then took a part-time job at a co-op. She went full-time and stayed 15 years, handling a variety of tasks. Along the way, she got to know Tri-County Electric Co-op's chief technology officer Nichole Eshbaugh.

"She told me she was working for a co-op in Texas and they were looking for operators. I told her, 'I'm not moving to Texas!' But it just kept coming back to my mind."

At Tri-County Electric Co-op, she was ecstatic to focus on system operations.

"I was like, 'All I have to do is work operations? That's fantastic!'"

She is in her element working with line crews, getting them where they need to be, with the information they need to do their jobs.

"What gravitates me toward this line of work is the relationship I can have with them: they trust me, and I trust them," she said. "In the middle of the storm, that's where I was meant to be."

Hannah has three dogs and is a member of Orange Theory fitness. She rented at first, then bought the house next door and stayed in the neighborhood. She enjoys taking her Mississippi family and friends to the Stockyards in Fort Worth.

"I'm really pretty simple," she laughs. More accurately, she enjoys her complex job – and the simple things in life. ■

2021 Annual Meeting and Election

BY ANNIE MCGINNIS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Value of Member Engagement

MOST OF US live busy lives. We find ourselves multitasking, constantly checking phones and email to keep up with the demands of modern life. Thanks to technology, we can accomplish many tasks electronically and remotely to be more efficient. And with so many pressing obligations, we like to protect our “spare” time

Invitations to attend in-person meetings and gatherings are weighed carefully as we decide whether or not the event is worth our time and effort. The answer to the question, “what’s in it for me?” must be compelling. You may think attending Tri-County Electric Cooperative’s annual meeting would be easy to lump into the “no benefit to me” category. However, I’d ask you to think again.

The employees of Tri-County Electric Co-op stand by our vision to take care of our member-owners. This is because the co-op only exists to serve you by providing safe, reliable electricity, and competitive electric and customer service. Equally important is our mission of enhancing the quality of life in our diverse communities. 8004994301

As a member, you have a perspective that is valuable – and we invite you to share it with the co-op. At the annual meeting, co-op leaders will discuss priorities and challenges, and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years. Annual meeting is also the time to vote for new board members who will represent you – the members of the co-op. Board members are local consumers, just like you. You can read more about this year’s election and director candidates on the next page.

Perhaps you may feel that you have nothing to add to the discussion, so there is no need to participate the annual meeting. However, every energy bill you pay to the co-op signifies cooperative principle number three: members’ economic participation.

District 3



**JORDEN
WOOD**

*INCUMBENT
UNOPPOSED*

District 6



**JOHN
KILLOUGH**

*INCUMBENT
UNOPPOSED*

Save the Date!

**Tri-County Electric
Cooperative’s 82nd Annual
Meeting of the Members will be
Tuesday, October 5, 2021.**

*Watch your Texas Co-op Power magazine for more
Annual Meeting details.*

Your dollars are reinvested locally into improvements that impact the reliability and affordability of your electricity, and Tri-County Electric Co-op wants to hear from you as we make decisions and plan for the future.

If you’ve never attended the co-op’s annual meeting, or if it’s been awhile, I encourage you to make plans to attend this year’s virtual annual meeting on Tuesday, October 5. We have two options for our diverse membership to participate: stream online or listen by phone. Watch for future issues of the *Texas Co-op Power* for additional information on how you can participate in the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Members. ■

District 8



**JARRETT
ARMSTRONG**

INCUMBENT



**MICHAEL
SIVERTSEN**

NOMINATION
CANDIDATE



**RICK
BARNES**

PETITIONING
CANDIDATE

Principle No. 2: Democratic Member Control

AT TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, you are in control. You are more than simply a customer; you are a *member* and an *owner* of the cooperative. Member-owners have the opportunity to get involved in the business of the utility by voting in the election and joining us for the annual meeting.

Each member carries the same vote as all other members, regardless of the amount of services delivered or consumed. One member, one vote – that is the co-op way. Additionally, you have the opportunity to elect the entire board of directors regardless of the district in which you reside. Director candidates are nominated by members within their district but are elected by the membership as a whole each year at annual meeting. 8002809101

To the left, you will see the director districts up for election this year and the candidates approved by the Committee on Nominations and Qualifications. As you may recall, the board of directors approved a new set of bylaws, effective November 1, 2020, that outlined a new process for director nominations. You will see members took advantage of the new nomination process with three types of candidates: incumbent, nomination and petitioning candidates.

Incumbents are **Jorden Wood** (district 3), **John Killough** (district 6) and **Jarrett Armstrong** (district 8). These candidates currently sit on the board of directors and are seeking reelection. **Michael Sivertsen** (district 8) is a director candidate seeking election through the committee. **Rick Barnes** (district 8) is a director candidate seeking election through member petition. Each of the candidates submitted their application packets by the deadline and were ratified by the committee to be placed on the election ballot. Candidate biographies will be published next month in the August *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

The board is the co-op's governing and regulatory body. While directors are elected by the membership to the district based on where they live, the board of directors as a whole is responsible to the members.

The 2021 election ballot will be mailed to members in early September on the *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. Members will have the choice to vote electronically using the credentials on their ballot or vote by mail. Tri-County Electric Co-op partnered with Survey and Ballot Systems to conduct the election. 800629547

Democratic member control is one of the most significant principles in the cooperative business model. I encourage you to exercise your right as a Tri-County Electric Co-op member by participating in this year's annual meeting. ■

Meet the Candidates

Join us virtually at 6:30 pm on Thursday, August 26, for the candidate forum. Each director candidate will be asked a series of questions by co-op staff, as well as take questions from the membership.

The forum will be recorded and available on our website one week after the event. Additional details, including information on how to participate, will be in the August *Texas Co-op Power*.

Partners

Tarrant County deputy works in the saddle

BY BOB BUCKEL,
COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA
REPRESENTATIVE

PHOTO: The good guys - Rusti Wingate and his horse, Goose, spring into action when livestock in Tarrant County escape from their enclosures.



LIKE ELECTRIC LINEMEN, law officers work in pairs. It's a hazardous profession, and even on routine jobs, you never know exactly what's going to happen. You want somebody there who knows you, understands the job, and has your back.

Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Rusti Wingate is a 20-year law enforcement veteran.

His partner is an eight-year-old American Quarter Horse named Goose.

Rusti and Goose are part of the department's LEEP unit – the Livestock Estray Enforcement Program. Under a law that's more than a century old, every sheriff in Texas must be able to catch and hold loose livestock. In Tarrant County, three deputies with horses cover more than 1,000 square miles, with 33 cities and more animals than most people realize.

For Wingate, it's the dream job.

On May 27, the last day of school, he and Goose spoke to six classes at Eagle Mountain Elementary in Saginaw. It was an easy gig – the day before, they'd gotten all the fight they wanted from a "big, mean cow" who rammed Goose and tried to flip him. 7000011402

"We won," Wingate smiled. "This horse is pretty legit. He acts like he's half-dead all the time, but that's just his personality. I've never seen a horse so young that was so chill."

Wingate fielded a barrage of questions, mostly about his partner, an 1,100-pound athlete born and bred to work cattle and respond to his rider's every nudge. Goose can run 25 miles an hour and lead a roped steer like a dog on a leash – and he'll do anything to keep Rusti safe.

Wingate reviewed the roster of animals he and Goose have been called to round up – not just horses and cattle, but llamas, alpacas, zebras, buffaloes, donkeys, mules, pigs, sheep and goats – even ostriches and emus.

Rusti grew up on a ranch north of Azle, in the heart of Tri-County Electric Co-op's original territory. He fed cows, cut, baled and hauled hay, built fences and helped in his grandpa's feed store. After graduating from Azle High School in 1998, he continued working hay and building fences, until he decided law enforcement would offer a steadier paycheck.

At 21, he attended Weatherford College's police academy, graduated in four months and joined the River Oaks PD. He was there three years, earning Officer of the Year honors and picking up a lot of "street-smarts" on patrol. He spent 10 years at the Azle Police Department before signing on with the Tarrant County Sheriff's office. Through it all, he continued to live on his family's land, where he is a third-generation rancher and Tri-County Electric Co-op member.

Six months after he came aboard, the livestock unit had an opening, and he applied.

From Patrol Car to Horseback

The field of applicants was huge.

"Everybody in the sheriff's office wants this job," he said. "They have an opening about once a decade."

Wingate was not an experienced roper, but his farm and ranch background made him a top candidate. He sailed through the background check and an oral exam into the final five. The practical exams included hooking up and backing the trailer – something he'd been doing since before he had a driver's license – as well as unloading livestock panels, setting up a corral and roping a dummy steer's head.

After he connected on all five throws, they put him on a horse.

"They had a two-acre pasture with a round pen in the middle, and there was a cow out there," he said. "They said,



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Rusti Wingate takes questions from a group of kids at Eagle Mountain Elementary, seated atop his partner, Goose.

Goose was "freeze-branded," a process that's much less painful than the traditional hot brand.

Wingate points out the parts of his saddle as Goose waits patiently.

Wingate enjoys letting the kids pet Goose, although he cautions to avoid the horse's teeth.

CENTER: The Tarrant County Sheriff's Department is one of the few agencies in the state that fields a unit equipped to rope loose animals.

"Your horse is over there. Go catch it, bring it over here, saddle it, then go put that one cow in that round pen."

He caught the horse but saw quickly that the saddle belonged to a deputy who stood several inches taller than him. As an "old-school cowboy" he was reluctant to adjust another man's saddle, so he rode it without stirrups. 800789963

"I'm sure I looked a little sloppy at times, bouncing around in that saddle," he laughed. "But I put that horse to work, and he was a really good horse. I got her in there pretty quick."

He started with the LEEP unit on July 11, 2015.

"I wasn't here a year and I was already on horseback," he said. "What's funny is, being a patrolman in River Oaks and Azle, I would see these livestock trucks and trailers going down the road and I would think, 'That guy is an officer just like me, but he has a job I'll never be able to get.' Then, less than a year after coming to the Sheriff's office, I was doing this."

Police Experience Helps

Chasing a steer on horseback at full gallop, swinging a lasso, is rare. Wingate prefers to work slowly, calming the animal down rather than charging in.

"Cattle and horses have that natural herd instinct," he said.

"You can pretty much work them on foot. If you walk over there with a feed sack, they're going to follow you wherever you want them to go."

But if an animal is belligerent, or posing a danger on the highway, Rusti and Goose go to work quickly. If it turns into a race, Goose will win – but they try to avoid collateral damage to landscaping, cars, mailboxes or the animal itself. Thirteen years on patrol helps.

"That street-cop experience helps when you're chasing a horse through people's backyards," Wingate said. "It's not uncommon to get into altercations with people until they figure out what's going on a 3 in the morning."

One morning last fall, Wingate captured two pot-bellied pigs, on foot, with one swoop of a net, for an audience of rush-hour commuters on Loop 820. But in most situations, being on a horse lets him go places an officer on foot or in a vehicle simply can't go. Goose is faster, stronger, and adjusts quicker.

"I'm blessed to get to work on horseback," Wingate said. That's a powerful partnership. ■



Hometown July 4th Celebration
July 2-4

Parker County Peach Festival
July 10

Your Co-op's Community Calendar

July
2-4

Hometown July 4th Celebration
granburychamber.com

3

Keller Lights
keller-lights.com

4

Boomin' 4th
events.hudsonoaks.com

5

Independence Day, observed
Tri-County Electric Co-op offices
will be closed

9

Old Settlers' Reunion & Rodeo
cityofseymour.org

10

Parker County Peach Festival
weatherford-chamber.com

Peach Pedal Bike Ride
unitedwayofparkercounty.org

17

Home, Lawn & Garden Expo
kellerchamber.com

30

Tri-County Electric Co-op offices
will be closed

August

5

Sugar Rush Event
682-615-1992

26

Heroes with Handbags
granburychamber.com

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

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

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ABOUT TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

Tri-County Electric Co-op owns and maintains more than 9,424 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 96,400 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

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Keller

4900 Keller-Hicks Road, Fort Worth 76244

Seymour

419 N. Main, Seymour 76380

IT PAYS TO STAY INFORMED

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

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Spiced Peach Jam

BY ELIZA MONTGOMERY
WILLOW PARK

3 lbs. fresh peaches
¼ cup lemon juice
9 cups sugar
1 ½ tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. cloves
¼ tsp. ginger
1 bottle liquid fruit pectin

1. Cut peaches in chunks and discard the seed. Leave the peaches whole, do not peel.

2. Use a blender to make 5 cups of crushed peaches.

3. Put peaches, lemon juice, sugar and spices into a heavy 6-quart kettle. Stir over high heat and bring to full rolling boil. Boil hard for one minute, stirring constantly.

4. Remove from heat. At once, stir in fruit pectin. Skim off foam with metal spoon. Stir and skim for five minutes to cool slightly and prevent floating fruit.

5. Ladle into jars. Cover with 1/8-inch melted paraffin.

Enjoy!

COOKING TIP: Fresh, local produce is great for making jam, jellies and preserves. Mark your calendar for the Parker County Peach Festival on July 10 in Weatherford.



COKOLATETNICA | PIXABAY

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
200 Bailey Ranch Road
Aledo, Texas 76008



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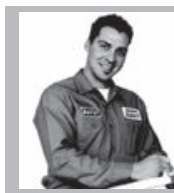
From the publishers of **TexasCoopPower**

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

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

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



Dear
Darryl

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

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

Clogged and Smelly – Lubbock, TX

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

This fast-acting bacteria multiplies within minutes of application and is specifically designed to withstand many of today's anti-bacterial cleaners, soaps and detergents. It comes in dissolvable plastic packs, that you just flush down your toilets. It's so cool. Plus, they actually Guarantee that it restores ANY system, no matter how bad the problem is.

SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septiccleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "TXS13", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.



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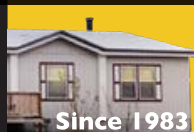
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TCP WEB EXTRA

Listen to W.F. Strong
read this story.



An Early RGV Mover

Col. Sam Robertson envisioned Boca Chica as the place
to launch his highway on the beach

BY W.F. STRONG

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, Col. Sam Robertson stood on the same Boca Chica Beach that Elon Musk owns today and dreamed a different dream. Instead of Musk's spaceport, Robertson dreamed of seaports and an oceanside highway.

Robertson owned 800 acres at Boca Chica, and it was likely some of the same 1,000 acres now managed by Musk's companies. Back then Robertson built the railroad that connected the Rio Grande Valley to the wider world. He had founded the town of San Benito, serving as sheriff and helping to run the Ku Klux Klan out of the region.

He had repurposed the old resacas to irrigate the lower Valley. In 1926 he gathered RGV leaders in Brownsville's El Jardin Hotel to make his pitch for an

oceanside highway that would run from Boca Chica to Corpus Christi and become, in his words, "the most beautiful 150 miles of highway in the world."

Robertson laid out his vision before the Rio Grande Valley Commercial Club. "I have traveled somewhat extensively in this world," he said, "and have never seen any scenery wilder or more beautiful than this stretch of beach."

Robertson was not only an entrepreneur; he was a decorated soldier and noted engineer. In 1916 he served as a scout for Gen. Jack Pershing in the pursuit of Pancho Villa in Mexico. During World War I, he served in Europe as a commander of the 22nd Engineers, building railroads and bridges for Allied troops in France. He was awarded the

Distinguished Service Medal for bravery under fire.

The business leaders of the Valley trusted his vision because they believed his claims. He wasn't pitching a black-top road.

"The beach is as smooth as a billiard table," Robertson said. "No road can be constructed by man as good for autoing as the beach, and the Gulf of Mexico maintains it." All you would need is maintenance crews to move driftwood out of the way, he said, telling those assembled that he had explored the beach from Corpus Christi to the mouth of the Rio Grande River and that a highway was quite possible and would bring in enormous numbers of tourists.

Robertson advocated the laying in of water lines for irrigation because then the beachscapes could be enhanced with "bermuda grass, live oak trees, palms and other beautiful trees along the sand hills of the beaches."

Such a development would be good for the Rio Grande Valley, too, he argued. With good roads to Boca Chica Beach, Valleyites could have a Sunday lunch at home, then drive to the beach for a Sunday afternoon swim at the beach and still be home by 10 p.m.

Robertson's oceanside highway was never developed. But looking at South Padre and North Padre today, with their causeway bridges, carefully maintained beaches, opulent hotels and verdant landscaping, you can see that his dream for the island has been partially realized.

Robertson opened his Del Mar Resort on Boca Chica Beach in 1931, but the resort was virtually wiped out by a hurricane in 1933. He rebuilt within six months and constructed an asphalt road from Brownsville to Boca Chica Beach because his personal mantra was "Civilization follows transportation."

Musk would like that, too. ■

Ice Cream and Sorbets

Churn out flavorful treats sure to take the edge off a Texas summer

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

One blessing of the Texas heat is that we rarely need an excuse to indulge in a cool, creamy bowl of ice cream. When I make ice cream, I tend to opt for Philadelphia-style, which does not use eggs. After chilling the liquid, you can let your machine churn it while you're eating dinner and have fresh soft serve for dessert. Amaretto helps keep this ice cream soft enough to scoop, but if you prefer, you can substitute ½ teaspoon of almond extract.

Cherry Amaretto Ice Cream

1 jar (11 ounces) maraschino cherries, without stems, divided use
1½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
½ cup sugar
2 tablespoons amaretto liqueur

1. Strain cherries over a bowl, reserving liquid. Slice half the cherries into quarters and set aside.
2. Purée remaining cherries with the reserved juice, then pour into a medium bowl. Whisk in cream, milk and sugar. Cover and chill 2 hours.
3. When ready to make the ice cream, add amaretto and mix well. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. In the last few minutes of churning, mix in the reserved sliced cherries. Scoop ice cream into freezer containers and chill completely, until ready to serve.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Chocolate Frozen Yogurt.





Texas Wildflower Honey Ice Cream

MELISSA TURLEY
BANDERA EC

This ice cream is sure to be a hit for honey lovers. Turley re-created the recipe after tasting a similar version at a local restaurant. Note that the honey makes this a very soft ice cream, so be sure to keep it frozen right up until serving.

1 cup whole milk
¾ cup raw honey
2 cups heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1. In a bowl, whisk together milk and honey until well blended. Add cream and vanilla and mix well. Cover and refrigerate 1–2 hours or overnight.
2. When ready to make the ice cream, stir mixture and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

MORE RECIPES >

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

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\$500 WINNER

Pecan Caramel Pear Ice Cream

KRYSABELLE GILBERT
WOOD COUNTY EC



Don't be daunted by the extra steps for the mix-ins in this ice cream—the results are well worth the effort. "It tastes just like eating a pear upside-down cake a la mode," says Gilbert, who came up with the recipe after a neighbor shared a harvest bounty. If you can't find Asian pears, Bosc pears make a suitable substitute.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

ICE CREAM
2 eggs
½ cup sugar
1½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

CARAMEL PEARS
2 Asian pears
¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter
½ cup sugar

PECANS
1 egg white
1 tablespoon water
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups pecans, chopped
¼ cup sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ cup diced crystallized ginger

COOK'S TIP Crystallized ginger can be found in the spice section, but you can also leave it out.

1. ICE CREAM In a small bowl, whisk eggs and ½ cup sugar together until thickened and pale.

2. In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, bring cream and milk to a simmer. Slowly whisk half the heated liquid into the egg mixture to temper, then pour tempered egg mixture back into saucepan.

3. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick and coats the back of a wooden spoon.

4. Strain into a large bowl and let cool to room temperature, then stir in vanilla and cinnamon. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

5. CARAMEL PEARS About an hour before churning, make the mix-ins. Peel pears and chop into ½-inch chunks.

6. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add ½ cup sugar and cook until it starts to turn golden. Add pears, stirring to coat, and cook 10–15 minutes, or until golden brown and caramel has thickened.

7. Pour pears onto a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet to cool.

8. PECANS Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg white, water and vanilla. Add chopped pecans and toss to coat.

9. In a large plastic bag, combine sugar, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg, cloves and ground ginger. Add pecans and shake to completely coat nuts.

10. Spread nuts on a rimmed baking sheet and bake 20 minutes, stirring once halfway through. Stir again and let cool completely.

11. When ready to make the ice cream, stir the ice cream base and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. Add pears, pecans and crystallized ginger in the last few minutes of freezing. Scoop ice cream into freezer containers and let chill completely before serving.





Strawberry Perfection

LAMONT PETERSEN
NAVARRO COUNTY EC
BANDERA EC

Ideal for summer, when strawberries are at their peak, strawberry ice cream is a hit for all ages. The fruit is macerated before blending to soften and release juices, which allows the berry flavor to pop.

1 pound strawberries, hulled and sliced
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt

Which Ice Cream Maker Is Right for You?

BY MEGAN MYERS

When it comes to making ice cream at home, there are two main types of machines: electric and traditional.

Electric

Countertop electric ice cream machines are widely available and make churning at home a breeze. Their smaller size makes them ideal for those who like to make ice cream often or enjoy experimenting with flavors. Keep in mind, however, that the mixing bowl needs to be pre-chilled, so you'll need to plan ahead.

Traditional

If you grew up with hand-churned ice cream makers, you'll be familiar with this style, which uses rock salt and ice packed around a center compartment. While hand cranks are still available, these now have an electric motor option as well. The standard size makes 4 quarts of ice cream, so make room in your freezer.

2 cups heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1. In a bowl, combine sliced strawberries, sugar and salt. Cover and refrigerate 1–2 hours to release juices.
2. Stir mixture well and purée berries with the accumulated juices.

3. Whisk together purée, cream and vanilla. Cover and chill in the refrigerator 2 hours.

4. When ready to make the ice cream, stir mixture and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS



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TEXAS MINT

We are excited to announce the release of the 2021 Texas Silver Round – Revolution Series. This is the second release of a four-year series commemorating the battles of the Texas Revolution. Each Texas Silver Round is one troy ounce .9999 fine silver.

The obverse of the high-quality mint strike features Texas' iconic lone star in the foreground. The smooth engraving of the star is framed by a textured topographical outline of the state of Texas. "TEXAS" arches proudly over the top of the round's obverse in large capital letters, with "Precious Metals" presented inversely along the opposite side. The round's mintage year is engraved in the bottom left of the round, just southwest of what would be the Rio Grande bordering Texas and Mexico.

The reverse of the 2021 release displays a scene from the famous Battle of the Alamo. It depicts two Texian soldiers including the American icon, Davy Crockett, attempting to fend off Mexican soldiers attempting to breach the walls of the Alamo.



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first in the series ● ● ● ●

The stunning 2020 Texas Silver Round depicts a scene from the Battle of Gonzales, with three Texian revolutionaries defending the famous Gonzales cannon, while brandishing the Come And Take It Flag.



BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

second in the series ● ● ● ●

The events of this famous battle took place on the days of February 23rd - March 6th, 1836. At the end of a 13-day siege, President General Antonio López de Santa Anna and his Mexican troops reclaimed the Alamo Mission, killing the Texian and immigrant occupiers.

The Texas Silver Round can be purchased in a monster box produced exclusively for the Texas Mint. Packaged in 20 protective tubes of 25 rounds each, the monster box holds 500 1-ounce Texas Silver Rounds. Built from durable cold-rolled steel and finished with a matte black powder coat, the monster box lid features an orange cutout of the state of Texas. Each sealed monster box is secured with a unique serial number and a holographic seal to ensure maximum product protection.

The Texas Silver Round is also available to purchase in a similarly designed and secured mini-monster box, which contains 10 protective tubes of 25 rounds each for a total of 250 silver rounds.



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

A Serious Undertaking

Houston funeral museum pays its respects to the inevitable

BY CHET GARNER

AN OVERCAST SKY painted the North Houston landscape with a somber shade of gray, which seemed appropriate as I approached the National Museum of Funeral History. Based on the institution's name, I expected an experience akin to a carnival sideshow or a roadside attraction full of plastic corpses and otherworldly burial stories. Instead of a tribute to the bizarre, I found a museum staffed by funeral directors who take their profession—and its history—very seriously.

Starting with a narrative of Egyptian mummies and mummification, I followed a serpentine path through the cavernous building, learning about funerary topics such as custom casket-making and the embalming techniques of the Civil War. Each lesson was communicated through detailed displays or life-size dioramas. Most impressive was the collection of classic hearses, one of which served in the funerals of presidents Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan. Also fascinating was the step-by-step description of how a pope is laid to rest. This sequence chronicled the death and burial of Pope John Paul III, whose funeral was one of the largest in history.

As expected, I saw displays to satisfy the morbidly curious, such as a three-person casket and the ghost stories that accompany one of the horse-drawn hearses. I found one entire room with memorabilia from the funerals of celebrities such as Michael Jackson, Neil Armstrong and Gene Wilder. That room seemed like a funeral home version of Planet Hollywood.

I could have spent hours learning more about every detail of how we humans mourn and pay tribute to those we've lost. It turns out that honoring the dead is a tradition that goes back to the earliest days of humans. This strange yet compelling museum can help us become a little more comfortable with our own inevitable conclusion. ■

ABOVE Even at a funeral museum, Chet's mug is half full.

TCP WEB EXTRA Chet ponders life's grave consequences in his latest video. See all his Texplorations 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.

JULY

03

Bandera [3, 10, 17, 31]
Cowboys on Main,
 (830) 796-3781,
banderacowboycapital.com

Bulverde [3, 10, 17, 24, 31]
Saturday Night Rodeo,
 (830) 980-2226,
tejasrodeo.com

05

Salado [5–Aug. 26] Women, Aviation and WWII,
 (254) 947-5232,
saladomuseum.org

07

Goliad [7, 14, 21, 28]
Wayback Wednesdays,
 (361) 645-3752,
presidiolabahia.org

08

Palestine [8, 10, 15–17, 22–24, 29–31] Diesel Round Trip,
 1-855-632-7729,
texasstaterailroad.net

09

Palestine Wines in the Pines, 1-855-632-7729,
texasstaterailroad.net

Gladewater [9–10] East Texas Gusher Days,
 (903) 845-5501,
gusher-days.com

10

Arlington Micky and the Motorcars, (817) 543-4301,
levittpavilionarlington.org

Corpus Christi Plumeria Passions, (361) 852-2100,
stxbot.org

11

Arlington Courtney Patton,
 (817) 543-4301,
levittpavilionarlington.org

15

Fredericksburg [15-18]
Beauty and the Beast Jr.,
 1-888-669-7114,
fredericksburgtheater.org

16

Taylor [16-17] Taylor
 Rodeo, (512) 238-2101,
wilcoexpo.com

Temple [16-17] Wildflower
 Quilt Guild Quilt Show,
 (254) 220-5597,
wildflowerquiltguild.com

Fredericksburg [16-18]
 Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,
fbgtradedays.com

17

**Fredericksburg Night in
 Old Fredericksburg**, (830)
 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

**Howe Hotter 'N Howe Sum-
 mer Bash**, (903) 532-6080,
howechamber.com

Lockney Christmas in July,
 (806) 983-6228

23

Fredericksburg [23-25]
 Hill Country Swap Meet,
 (254) 751-7958, [earhart
 productions.com/
 hill-country-swap-meet](http://earhartproductions.com/hill-country-swap-meet)

24

Arlington Green Day,
Fall Out Boy and Weezer,
 (817) 533-1972,
hellamegatour.com

**Bandera National Day of
 the Cowboy**, (210) 215-1995,
[nationaldayofthecowboy
 bandera.com](http://nationaldayofthecowboybandera.com)

**Bandera Ridin' the River
 Cowboy Fellowship Ranch
 Rodeo**, (830) 460-0710,
ridintheriver.com

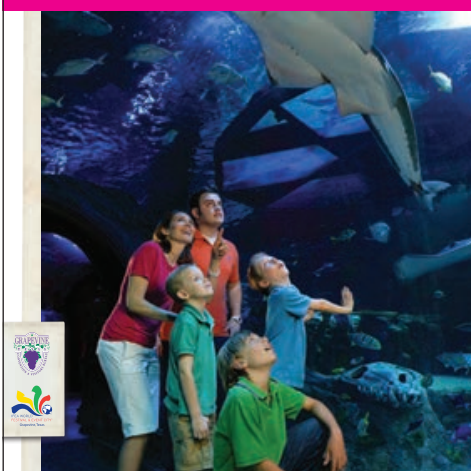
**Waxahachie Indian Artifact
 Show**, (979) 574-6501

MORE EVENTS >

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

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24

Buffalo Gap [24-25] Tour de Gap, (325) 829-0617, tourdegap.com

29

Clute [29-31] Great Texas Mosquito Festival, (979) 265-8392, mosquitofestival.com

Brenham [29-Aug. 1] The Wizard of Oz, (979) 830-8358, unitybrenham.org

Fredericksburg [29-Aug. 1] Hill Country Film Festival, 1-866-224-7714, hillcountryff.com

30

Bonham [30-31] Quilt Hop, (903) 583-9830, visitbonham.com

31

Columbus Country Market, (979) 732-8385, columbusfmtx.org

AUGUST

06

Kerrville [6-7, 13-15, 20-22] Murder on the Orient Express, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

07

Bellville Farmers Market, (979) 865-3407, discoverbellville.com

Fredericksburg Texas Ranger Day History Symposium, (830) 990-1192, trhc.org

Freeport KidFest, (979) 233-0066, freeport.tx.us

Palestine Saturdays on Main, (903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

South Padre Island [7-8] Pro-Am Beach Soccer Tournament, (415) 308-0603, sopadre.com

Bulverde [7, 14, 21, 28] Saturday Night Rodeo, (830) 980-2226, tejasrodeo.com



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Night Life

No, it isn't hot in Texas; and the cool night dews are falling,
And the katydids are chirping in the grass beside the pool;
And from out the moonlit distances the mockingbirds are calling,
And I know the days are hazy and the nights perfumed and cool.

From *Longing for Texas* by Judd Mortimer Lewis

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

MICHELE TECH
UNITED COOPERATIVE
SERVICES

Honky-tonk nights at Billy
Bob's Texas in Fort Worth.

CHARLES BAXTER
COSERV

The Fort Davis Drug Store
and Hotel.

KYLEIGH HOLLE
HILCO EC

The Dallas skyline at night
with car light trails.

ELYSE KANA
BLUEBONNET EC

The other side of nowhere,
Big Bend Ranch State Park.



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



Common Ground

Whether many acres or a pint-size lot, there's pride and joy in land ownership

BY RHONDA REINHART
ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA BLECK

IN THE BLACK-AND-WHITE Westerns that my dad used to watch when I was a kid, a cowboy hat-clad rancher might head out on horseback to survey his domain, a vast expanse of dusty terrain spanning thousands of acres. My father wasn't a rancher by any means, but he did own a 10-acre spread in deep East Texas where he raised all manner of animals, including guinea fowl, hogs and cows.

He loved "going to the land," as we called it back then, and he spent countless hours building pens, planting vegetable gardens, clearing sections of the property and walking mile after mile through the seemingly endless stretch of pines.

I did not share my father's affinity for going to the land, and even though I spent plenty of time out there with

him over the years, I would have much preferred to be back in Houston, reading a book, hanging out with friends or sitting in a cool, dark theater watching a movie—definitely not a Western. In fact after I left home, I spent two decades living in apartments, townhouses and condos—surrounded by land covered in concrete instead of pine needles and serenaded by the sounds of traffic instead of livestock.

About five years ago, however, I reached my limit on sharing walls with nosy neighbors and knowing that I was spending my hard-earned money to live atop ground that would never be mine. So I decided to purchase my own tiny patch of land.

At my little homestead in northwest Dallas, unlike the sprawling ranches in those old Westerns—or even my father's modest parcel in the Piney Woods—I merely have to peek out the back door to take in the full 7,976 square feet of North Texas soil that belongs to me. After 20 years of having little more than a balcony or patio at my disposal, the 0.18 acre on which my 1952 cottage sits feels enormous to me. I've even dubbed the small section of yard behind the garage "the back forty."

My dad died years ago, and his land was sold. While I don't have his knack for animal husbandry or even one-tenth of the acreage he owned in Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's service area, I do have a dog who loves to roll in the grass, sunbathe in the driveway and patrol the grounds for squirrels and opossums. I've also been thinking about starting a garden where I can grow my own tomatoes and cucumbers, some of my dad's favorite crops.

I can't be certain, but I'm betting that if he were still around, those things alone would earn me his signature grin and a nod. ■



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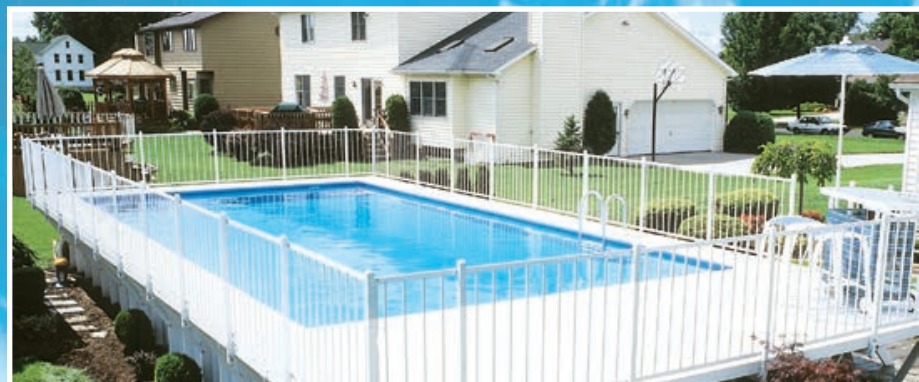


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