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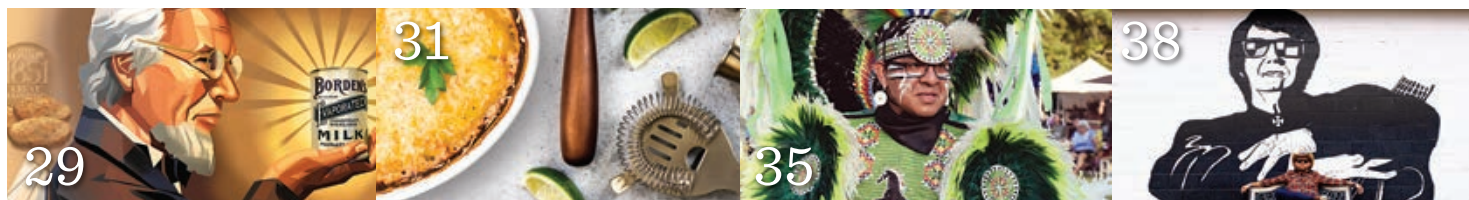
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By Lonny Taylor

NEXT MONTH

Putting Others First Volunteer fire departments, with strong co-op ties, sustain rural life.



MAP BACKGROUND: E. DAN KLEPPER. OUTLINE: ILLPOS | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM. FIRETRUCK: ROB WILSON | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

ON THE COVER *Hikers at a natural arch above the Upper Burro Mesa Pour-Off Trail in Big Bend National Park. Photo by E. Dan Klepper*

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Dorothy Bray is third from right.

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HAPPENINGS

Fighting Kidney Disease

Dorothy Bray has been hit hard by polycystic kidney disease, a genetic disorder that causes the growth of fluid-filled cysts. She has undergone two kidney transplants and watched her father and two older siblings die of the disease. Her son, daughter and a granddaughter also have PKD.

So Bray, a longtime member of Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative, passionately volunteers for the annual **SAN ANTONIO WALK FOR PKD**, which this year is **SEPTEMBER 14**.

"I feel so blessed to live in an age of medical advancement that makes it possible for someone like me to survive much longer than people like my dad ever had a chance to," says Bray, 72.

INFO ► (210) 414-6614, walkforpkd.org/sanantonio

ALMANAC

75 YEARS AGO: Navy pilot George H.W. Bush was hit by antiaircraft fire during a World War II bombing run on Chichi Jima, a Japanese island. Before bailing out into the Pacific Ocean on September 2, 1944, he dropped his four 500-pound bombs on the target, a radio facility. He banged his head on his plane's tail after he ejected, and once in the water, jellyfish stings and swallowed seawater made him sick.



BY THE NUMBERS

Those are the odds of an amateur golfer making a hole-in-one. A pro golfer has a much better chance—2,500-1. This month marks the 150th anniversary of the first known ace. Young Tom Morris hit a hole-in-one September 15, 1869, during the Open Championship in Scotland.

◀ LOOKING BACK AT TRAVEL THIS MONTH



TRAVEL AROUND, over and into Texas has marked many milestones in the 75 years since Texas Co-op Power debuted in July 1944. Here are just a few:

1940s

1945 The Texas Aeronautics Act establishes the Texas Aeronautics Commission as a nonfederal public entity that oversees civilian flying.

1947 The Spruce Goose, a creation of eccentric millionaire Howard Hughes of Houston and the largest wooden airplane ever constructed, makes its first and only flight.

1950s

1950 The Los Ebanos Ferry, connecting Los Ebanos, Texas, to Ciudad Díaz Ordaz across the Rio Grande, is established. It is the last Coast Guard-licensed ferry in the U.S. to be powered by the tug of a rope.



1960s

1963 The state creates the Texas Tourist Development Agency. By 1970, visitors to Texas would triple, totaling 21 million.



1967 The first specialty license plate becomes available from the Texas Department of Transportation.

1969 Houston Intercontinental Airport begins operations.

Tackling Hunger in Eldorado

WHEN BRENDA HARDESTY moved from Austin to Eldorado about 13 years ago, the former social worker didn't know many people in the small town, about 45 miles south of San Angelo. But she eventually came to know Leigh Lloyd, the pastor at her church, First United Methodist, who worked with Hardesty to turn what was an emergency food closet in the church into a full-fledged pantry for those in need.

"Our community has a high rate of unemployment at various times and a high rate of poverty," Hardesty said, adding that stable jobs and reliable child care can be hard to come by in the oilfield town. "So we have a lot of people getting by on very little income."

The Eldorado Second Harvest Food Pantry provides monthly food distributions to more than 60 households, or about 130 people, in Schleicher County. Hardesty, a member of Southwest Texas Electric Cooperative, has coordinated food intake and distribution—the whole process—since the pantry began in August 2016. Lloyd has since moved to another church in another town, but Hardesty now has connections across the county.

"The people that hand out the boxes get a lot of joy from actually giving a box of food to somebody that needs it," Hardesty said. "Seeing how many people in our community are willing to pitch in and help people in need is a fulfilling part to me—to see that a lot of people care in this community and are willing to back it up with some work."

INFO ► facebook.com/eldoradoservicecenter

Brenda Hardesty at the Eldorado Second Harvest Food Pantry.



POWER OF OUR PEOPLE recognizes co-op members who improve their community's quality of life. Nominate someone by emailing people@texascooppower.com.



1970s

1971 You are now free to move about the state. Southwest Airlines begins service to Dallas, San Antonio and Houston with \$20 one-way fares.

1973 The Motorcycle Safety Foundation is established, with curriculum shaped in part by motorcyclists at Texas A&M.

1974 The first commercial flight lands at DFW International, now the fourth busiest airport in the U.S.



1980s

1982 The iconic Pennybacker Bridge over Lake Austin, with its unique untied arch suspension construction, opens in Austin.

1986 Jeana Yeager, born in Fort Worth, co-pilots the first nonstop around-the-world flight over nine days.



1990s

1995 Bernard Harris Jr. of Temple, payload commander aboard space shuttle Discovery, becomes the first African American to walk in space.

1995 The Fred Hartman Bridge between Baytown and La Porte, built to withstand hurricane-force winds, replaces the Baytown Tunnel as a means to cross the Houston Ship Channel.

LOOKING BACK AT OUTDOORS NEXT MONTH ►

2000s



2003 Space shuttle Columbia breaks up over Texas as it returns to Earth, killing the seven astronauts on board.

2018 Mid-South Synergy launches electric vehicle charging stations in the co-op's territory.

Big Bend's

**GOLDEN
TRIANGLE**



Story and photos by E. Dan Klepper

Before you begin a Big Bend adventure, bear one thing in mind: Once you arrive at your destination, you might not want to go home again.

It might be the dry, temperate afternoons and cool evening breezes that keep you here—especially in the summer months, when the rest of the state is sweltering. Or it might be the sensational vistas with their high desert grasslands; rugged, sky-island mountaintops; and miles of empty blacktop countering the traffic-packed freeways and crowded suburbs. Maybe it will be the challenging nature hikes, the one-of-a-kind artworks, the fine dining and luxury getaways, or the quirky vacation rentals. Or perhaps it will be something as simple as the unexpected stillness when you pause during your morning cup of locally roasted coffee and realize that the only things you can hear are birdsong and your own quiet

thoughts. But whatever ends up taking your breath away, rest assured you'll return, if not for good then at least for more.

Big Bend covers a considerable amount of territory. Although composed of only three counties—Jeff Davis, Presidio and Brewster—it encompasses more than 12,000 square miles. That's more area than Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island combined. Its vast size means a lot of driving. To minimize road time and maximize downtime, you may want to focus a trip around the Big Bend's "golden triangle"—Fort Davis, Marfa and Alpine. You'll sample everything Big Bend has to offer with the least amount of tire rotation. In fact, less than an hour separates one town from the next, yet each one offers something unique.

If traveling first to Fort Davis, the triangle's apex, you'll likely be driving south along Texas Highway 17, one of the prettiest routes in the state. You'll be cruising through the Davis Mountains, the second-highest range in Texas, and slowly gaining elevation with each bend in the road. The range is a result of volcanic activity that took place millions of years ago, making it ground zero for geology enthusiasts. Avid birders and wildlife watchers also favor



Visit Fort Davis, Marfa and Alpine—lofty destinations that offer big skies, luxury and down-to-earth adventure



Above: Looking northeast into Alpine. Left: Stellina is a chic dining option in Marfa.

the range, particularly the upper elevations around Mount Livermore—at 8,378 feet above sea level, it's the fifth-highest peak in Texas. Considered a “sky island” for its wetter,

cooler, more diverse habitat than the elevations below it, Livermore offers a friendly environment for hundreds of species, including a variety of birds making their seasonal migration across North America. Much of the mountain is protected by the Nature Conservancy, which provides opportunities to visit its Davis Mountains Preserve on open-to-the-public days.

My own decision to move to the Big Bend, 20-plus years ago, occurred during one of the preserve's open weekends in the late 1990s. Over the course of a 24-hour period, I hiked to the craggy peak of Livermore, took a dip in a rainwater tinaja—a natural pool, saw a Mexican spotted owl and sheltered in a ponderosa pine forest during a torrential rainstorm before camping under a canopy of starlight. “I want all of this right outside my own back door,” I thought to myself that night.



Fort Davis features an assortment of quaint, old-fashioned lodging, including the grande dame of them all—Hotel Limpia. Constructed from locally quarried stone in 1912, the Limpia features 21 rooms and 10 suites, an outdoor patio, indoor fine dining courtesy of the Blue Mountain Bistro, and a pool for you and your fellow “summer swallows” (as guests were known during the hotel’s early years). Or, for adventurers on a budget, try the Stone Village Tourist Camp with its creature comforts, a pool and the best deli market in town.

Once you’ve unpacked and relaxed, get out of

Above: Al Campo in Marfa offers indoor and outdoor spots to chill—and stay warm. Below: El Cosmico, a campground and hotel in Marfa, has a quirky gift shop.

this world with a visit to nearby McDonald Observatory. Check for sun flares through the observatory’s solar program, in which live, safe views of the sun are projected onto a giant auditorium screen. Then join a star party and see the stars the way the observatory’s researchers see them—up close and personal.

To continue, view some luminaries of the art world by heading to Marfa, where the internationally known Chinati Foundation houses works by Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Robert Irwin and Roni Horn—members of the American art canon. Designed specifically for the location, the works include *Things That Happen Again: For a Here and a There*, Horn’s hand-lathed identical copper forms; Irwin’s ethereal *untitled (dawn to dusk)*, an installation of scrimlike material that transforms the interior space as the light changes outside; Flavin’s colorful large-scale fluorescent light piece called *untitled (Marfa Project)*, installed in six Chinati buildings; and Judd’s *100 untitled works in mill aluminum*, in which each of the works retains the same outer dimensions but features unique interior dimensions. They are installed throughout two enormous former artillery sheds on the Chinati grounds.

Marfa offers visitors an opportunity to indulge at the town’s latest lodging addition, the elegant Hotel Saint George. The Saint George adds an international chic to the local character, providing stylishly appointed rooms and fine art throughout. The hotel also offers day passes to its Bar Nadar pool and grill, a fine place to swim and socialize.

If you feel a little more adventurous, set up a tent at El Cosmico, a 30-acre campground within walking distance of downtown. El Cosmico sponsors the annual Trans-Pecos Festival of Music + Love with its lineup of bands from all over the country. If tenting is not your thing, book one of El Cosmico’s luxury tepees, yurts or vintage travel trailers.





A trek around Big Bend's golden triangle won't leave you struggling to fill your time. You'll have plenty to do, even if it's just sitting on a porch rocker sipping a favorite beverage and watching the sun drop.

Then satisfy your hunger at Al Campo, Marfa's indoor-outdoor wine bar and bistro. With a relaxed atmosphere and uncomplicated menu, Al Campo offers rustic countryside cooking, inspired by Chilean and Argentinian cuisines, and a robust selection of wines and beers. Or score a meal at Stellina, where you can order small plates of queso fundido and seafood tostadas or fill up on enchiladas suizas or wild salmon Veracruz. Stellina, possibly the most popular eatery in Marfa, doesn't take reservations. Just walk in and you'll be seated on a first-come, first-served basis. If it's busy, relax. It's worth the wait.

When you're ready to leave the high life behind, head to Alpine and back down to earth. You'll find yourself in cowboy country, home to rodeo cowboys, cowboy poets and plain ol' hardworking ranch hands. Alpine, the largest of the three communities, is also home to Sul Ross State University, considered the frontier university of Texas. The campus is home to the Museum of the Big Bend, where visitors learn about the region's history, from its ancient geology to its 19th-century ranching culture. Changing exhibits complement an array of permanent displays designed to provide a comprehensive overview of Big Bend's unique character.

Explore history and then overnight in some with a room at Alpine's Holland Hotel, designed in 1928 by Henry Trost, the acclaimed Southwest architect. Trost designed the hotel in the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the period, and after decades of renovation and repair, its splendid lobby now reflects its original grandeur. The ground floor also features the Century Bar and Grill, a lively gathering spot for locals and guests.

Alpine offers year-round events for visitors, including the annual Trappings of Texas, an exhibition and sale of contemporary West-



Top: Hikers atop Mount Livermore, northwest of Fort Davis. Above: Spurs from an annual Trappings of Texas exhibition at the Museum of the Big Bend in Alpine.

ern art and custom cowboy gear; an entire professional baseball season featuring the homegrown Alpine Cowboys; and the Viva Big Bend Music Festival, with big-name head-

liners among the more than 50 bands that perform all over the region during the four-day fest.

A trek around Big Bend's golden triangle won't leave you struggling to fill your time. You'll have plenty to do, even if it's just sitting on a porch rocker sipping a favorite beverage and watching the sun drop. But consider this: The triangle comprises only the Big Bend's high country. A vast network of desert and mountains, national and state parks, river drives, hiking, lodging and dining await throughout the rest of the region. In other words, your adventures in the Big Bend have just begun.

E. Dan Klepper is a photographer, author and artist who lives in Marathon.

Which

**West Texas explorers
have many answers to
this enduring question**

Story by Joe Nick Patoski

Photos by E. Dan Klepper

What do you mean, which Big Bend? There's only one Big Bend! That's true, geographically. The Big Bend is where the Rio Grande makes a 100-mile end-around of the Chisos Mountains on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. This Big Bend encompasses three majestic canyons—Santa Elena, Mariscal and Boquillas—all within the 801,000-acre Big Bend National Park. That's the Big Bend most folks have been talking about since the national park was established in 1944.

Now, Big Bend also refers to the neighboring Big Bend Ranch State Park, a 311,000-acre spread west of the national park that first opened to the public in 1991.

My first encounter with the national park was a visit at age 8, when I was immediately awed by the Chisos Mountains and

javelinas. Since then, I've paddled all three canyons as well as the Lower Canyons, hiked 80 miles from Rio Grande Village to the town of Lajitas and completed the 14-mile round trip to the South Rim with my family.

I started visiting Big Bend Ranch as soon as it became accessible. I've paddled Colorado Canyon, hiked 14 miles from the Lower Shutup to near Lajitas, bushwhacked to Madrid Falls and spotlighted scorpions with a black light while taking a desert survival course.

The state park is most definitely part of the geographic Big Bend. That was easy to see flying over the region in a Cessna named Brownie piloted by Marcos Paredes of Rio Aviation in Terlingua. The bending of the Rio Grande starts in Colorado Canyon, which forms the southern boundary of the state ranch, long before the river reaches the national park.

But visitors, especially first-timers, still ask: Which Big Bend?

When asked, six people who know the region well, starting with Paredes, a retired river ranger for Big Bend National Park, had



JOE NICK PATOSKI

Big Bend?



some answers. “What separates the state park from the national park is live water,” he says. “That’s what stands out as you fly over this country. The cottonwood *bosques* and the live streams scattered throughout the arroyos and canyons of the state park are conspicuous and their absence is glaring as you come over the national park.”

Big Bend Ranch State Park is loaded with 118 springs, seeps, tinajas, and Texas’ second- and third-highest waterfalls. The national park has hot springs to soak in, 100 miles of the Rio Grande, a hidden waterfall and Ernst Tinaja—a natural pool, campsite and trail.

“The Chisos [Mountains] are a lot higher than anything in Big Bend Ranch,” explains John Karges, a conservation biologist. “On the other hand, the Big Bend Ranch has the Solitario.”

The Solitario is a volcanic dome, a mile across, that emerged from a collapsed caldera, a wholly unique feature that doesn’t dazzle like the Window in the Chisos or the mouth of Santa Elena Canyon in the national park until you see it from above.

Big Bend National Park is nearly three times the size of Big Bend Ranch and more developed, with paved, RV-friendly road-

Big Bend National Park, opposite, with the Chisos Mountains, is considered more approachable than Big Bend Ranch State Park, with its sparse amenities.

ways, big campgrounds, and a hotel and restaurant. The only paved road in the state park is River Road, FM 170, along the park’s southern boundary. State park campsites are primitive.

“You have to bring your own water and carry out your waste,” Karges says. “It’s a little more of a rugged experience.” The sole alternative to camping is a bed in the bunkhouse at Saucedo headquarters and use of its kitchen.

Karges says the national park is tailored for windshield tourists—the majority of first-timers, who tend to stick to their vehicles. “You spend a day or two driving to the highlights at both ends and the [Chisos] basin,” he says of tourists who seek out Santa Elena and Boquillas canyons. On the other hand, “Big Bend Ranch, you really have to want to go there.”

Photographer Crystal Allbright lives and works between the parks and takes advantage of each. “If I want to go on a multiday river trip in a designated wild and scenic area, I head for the national park,” she says. “For mountain biking trails and a few



MARCOS PAREDES



JOHN KARGES



CRYSTAL ALLBRIGHT



PAM LEBLANC



DON ALEXANDER



KARL FLOCKE

dog-friendly areas, it's the state park. If I have to choose hiking, camping or dark skies ... well, then I might have to flip a coin."

Writer Pam LeBlanc from Austin leans ranch, which she visited six times in 2018, including for several multiday bicycle treks. "They are entirely different worlds," she says. "I go to the national park for the South Rim. I can lay on my belly and peer down on a million miles of what looks like rumpled rhinoceros hide. Or I climb to my secret spot on Mesa de Anguila to take in the best view in the state. But when I feel scrappy and wild, like I need to get lost among the rocks and spiky things, I go to the state park. No one can find me there."

The desert, the remoteness and the heat can test visitors of either destination. Don Alexander, a Big Bend regular from Waco, observes that the popularity of the national park makes it difficult to find absolute solitude, which he says is "one of the highlights of the Chihuahuan Desert."

Big Bend National Park attracts about 4 million visitors annually, peaking at around 8,000 daily. Big Bend Ranch State Park hosts fewer than 50,000 visitors, with 8,000 visiting the park itself, 28,000 stopping at the Barton Warnock Visitor Center in Lajitas and about 5,000 at the Fort Leaton State Historic Site at the western edge of the park, near Presidio.

times I have heard people comment that the state park is how they remember the national park being 'back in the day,' he says.

Flocke nonetheless recommends experiencing the national park first. "This isn't out of any attempt to scare people away or to suggest that the state park is only for people who are worth their mettle," he says. "It is simply that the national park is much more approachable. The Chisos Mountains offer contrast of scenery for those who may not be wowed by desert expanses. There are more restrooms, more trash service, better trails, more ranger programs, convenience stores and restaurants. Intrepid hikers still have the opportunity to get off the beaten path, but no matter where you go, it seems like you are more likely to see people in the national park."

Then try the alternative. "The gravel road into the center of the state park is a portal that transports you to an entirely different time and place," Flocke says. "Something about that washboard road really disconnects you from the rest of the world. It lends a wilderness vibe to the park that is unlike anywhere else in Texas.

"First-timers, inexperienced family campers and RVers—go to the national park. Experienced family campers, backpackers, bikers, horseback riders and Jeepers—give the state park a try. Go there before it gets discovered."

One factor that complicates comparisons is that each park operates differently. "The national park is federal and has more mandates, doctrines and management protocols than the Big



Karges says the national park is tailored for windshield tourists—the majority of first-timers, who tend to stick to their vehicles. On the other hand, "Big Bend Ranch, you really have to want to go there."

Alexander's most recent Big Bend adventures have been with his 75-year-old brother-in-law, who has mobility issues and a fear of heights. "That means 2-mile hikes with rocky scrambles, such as Upper Burro Mesa in the national park, are out," he says.

Alexander found the state park campgrounds at Lower Madera Canyon and Grassy Banks, just off FM 170, to be less crowded than those at the national park but susceptible to sounds of passing traffic. He says they found "perfect desert silence" camping near Big Bend Ranch's Saucedo headquarters, after driving 27 miles of rough gravel road to the center of the ranch.

Karl Flocke's idea of the ultimate Big Bend experience is "solo hiking through a remote canyon, rounding a bend to the next expansive view and wondering if I'm the first modern man to stand in this spot," he says. "While the answer is most likely 'no,' I find it much easier to entertain these kind of thoughts at the state park."

As a former law enforcement ranger at Big Bend Ranch, Flocke, now a woodland ecologist for the Texas A&M Forest Service in Austin, may be biased. But it's not just him. "I can't recall how many

Bend Ranch State Park," explains Bonnie McKinney, wildlife coordinator at El Carmen Land and Conservation Company adjacent to the national park and a onetime Texas Parks and Wildlife Department employee. "They have similar rules and regulations, particularly pertaining to artifacts and historic sites, but differ on wildlife and land management," McKinney explains. "Most national parks let nature take its course. Big Bend National Park doesn't create water sites for wildlife. Big Bend Ranch has built water sites in remote areas for wildlife."

Maybe the best answer to "Which Big Bend?" depends on which way you plan to enjoy exploring the region. Will you be driving through or staying a while? Does the next adventure involve a long hike in the desert or in the mountains, a short one-mile hike from the road, off-road bicycling or four-wheel drive, or a canyon paddle on the river? With all these options, the answer to "Which Big Bend?" really is "Both."

Writer Joe Nick Patoski lives outside Wimberley and is a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative.

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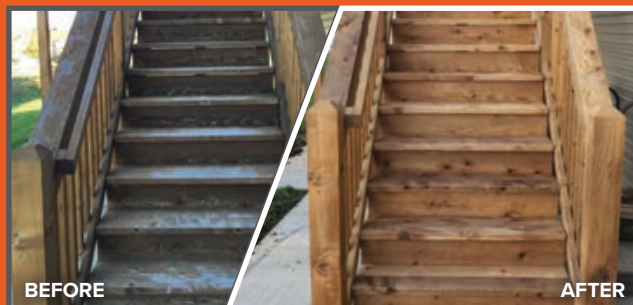


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Every month, Focus on Texas features Texas photos submitted by our readers. Send us your best photos for a chance to see your entry in the magazine!

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Fences

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Power

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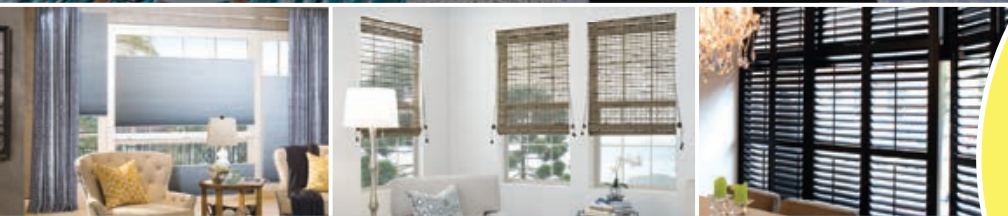
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Together We Strengthen Our Community



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO JEFF LANE

AT TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, OUR PRIMARY mission is to provide the electricity that powers your life—it's what we do best.

But TVEC is more than an electric utility. We're also a part of your community. The directors and employees of this cooperative are your neighbors, friends and even family. And just like you, we want to see our community succeed.

We're local people working for local good. That's the essence of Cooperative Principle No. 7, Concern for Community. 60159941001

First and foremost, we strengthen our community by providing safe and reliable electricity at a reasonable price. We are a dynamic part of our community, and as the area grows, so does our distribution system.

We have strong roots in this community. TVEC has been in business here for more than 80 years, and we are not going anywhere. Our business began here, and we will not pull up stakes to pursue greener pastures elsewhere.

By providing jobs and a steady supply of electricity, the co-op helps the local economy stay strong. We pay our employees fair wages, and when they spend that money here, that helps strengthen the economy. And by offering good jobs, we keep our towns healthy because employees and their families don't have to move away to make a decent living. The more people we have here paying taxes and contributing to the community, the more vibrant it will be.

But the benefits to the community aren't only financial. We open doors for our young people with scholarship programs and other opportuni-

ties. We teach children safety through programs in schools, and we provide safety tips and home improvement advice to adult members so the whole family stays safe. We help our members save money by offering energy efficiency tips. And we strengthen the community by supporting local charities.

The co-op is made up of people who care. Our employees go out of their way to better the communities in which they live. They coach youth sports teams, serve on volunteer fire departments and participate in community activities. Many are co-op members like you, and, like you, they want to make their hometown stronger.

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

Cooperatives—Owned by Our Members,
Committed to Our Communities.



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Power Tip

Insulating your hot water pipes can reduce heat loss, allowing you to lower the water heater temperature setting, and save 3-4% per year on water heating costs.



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Happy Labor Day

Trinity Valley Electric Co-op will be closed Monday, September 2, in observance of the holiday. Crews will be on call for any outages or emergencies.

Unclaimed Capital Credits Submitted to State

Each year, Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative and other businesses are required to turn over unclaimed funds to the state of Texas. For TVEC members, this means that any unclaimed capital credits refunds can be found on the Texas comptroller's official unclaimed property clearinghouse at claimittexas.org.

This year, TVEC sent more than \$1.2 million in capital credit refunds to the state that were left unclaimed from 2015.

"This is not our money, and after a certain amount of time and due diligence to

get these refunds back to their rightful owners, the state requires that we send it to them," said Bobby White, TVEC director of accounting and finance. "We encourage everyone to visit the Texas Unclaimed Property website to see if they have outstanding refunds, and of course, please keep us updated with any address changes so that we can get the money to them for any future refunds."

If you have any questions about capital credit refunds, or to update your contact information, please contact our member services department at 800-766-9576 or email memberrelations@tvec.coop.

TVEC Capital Credits

How Capital Credits Work



At the end of each year, if TVEC has received more revenue than was necessary to cover expenses, the difference is allocated back to members as capital credits based on their share of electricity purchased.



The co-op uses capital for building, maintaining and expanding service. When the co-op's financial condition permits, the board of directors may decide to retire, or pay back, some of the capital credits.



Capital credits are returned to current and former members. It is important to maintain current address information at the co-op for capital credit refunds to be processed efficiently.



Byford Honored for TREWA Efforts

For more than 15 years, Bobby Byford has worked tirelessly in serving the Texas electric cooperative community through the Texas Rural Electric Women's Association.

Byford, TVEC's director of corporate relations, has been on the advocacy group's board, various leadership positions, and currently serves as editor of The Lamplighter, the association's official newsletter.

Her time and efforts were recognized with an honorary lifetime membership award at the Texas Electric Cooperatives annual meeting in August.

"It really is an honor to get to serve the co-ops and I see this as a way to continue educating people across the state about the cooperative difference," Byford said. TREWA supports the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, provides scholarship opportunities, and participates in legislative activities through Rural Friends/Action Committee for Rural Acre (ACRE).

For more information or to join TREWA, visit trewa.org.

Vote in this year's director election, and you could win one of four \$500 electric bill credits.

Four bill credit winners will be chosen at random from ballots that are received by 5 p.m., Tuesday, October 8, 2019, at the offices of Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss, L.L.P.

OFFICIAL BALLOT ON INSIDE FRONT COVER

Candidates for Board Election



DISTRICT 2 • INCUMBENT JERRY PRIEST

I, Jerry Priest was born and reared in Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas. I went on the Kaufman County Electric Cooperative Board in 1981. The cooperative served the rural areas in five (5) counties east of Dallas and had approximately 12,500 meters, 58 employees, with seven (7) Board of Directors. Since the inception of the cooperative the board has always met on the fourth Tuesday of the month. I have seen the Co-op grow from 12,500 meters to 72,000 today. I supported the merger in 1997 of Kaufman County Electric Co-op and New Era Electric Co-op forming Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative. This has provided great benefits to the members by reducing the operating cost and combining the Board of Directors. It provided a reduction in rates.

My family owned and operated a country store (Priest Store) at the intersection of state highway 243 and highway 47, for 50 years. I have owned and operated Jerry's Pizza in Canton, Texas for 44 years and farmed and ranched in Van Zandt and Kaufman County for 52 years. I have been married for sixty 61 years. I have three children, seven grandchildren and two great grand children. TVEC is one of the fastest growing co-ops in the state. I feel my time and experience on the board will benefit the co-op in the future. We are working with our power supplier in hopes of seeing a rate reduction in 2020.

I am asking for your vote and support in the upcoming board election.



DISTRICT 2 GERALD DON BECKER

I am making it known that I am interested in serving on the TVEC board of directors. I feel that I am qualified for the following reasons:

*I bring with me over 35yrs of paid fire service.

*I have served in a number of capacities during my employment with the City of Plano including SOP review committee, advisory committee, training committee; apparatus design committee (designing approx. 10 million dollars of apparatus in the last 6-8yrs, apparatus standardization committee, and served on the interview board to hire the Fire Chief for Plano.

*I already have two years service for ESD1, (Kaufman Emergency Service District) serving as President, and have a clear understanding of operations of the district.

*I have gained the required training and currently have met the requirements to be one of the, if not the first and only, state certified ESD commissioners in Kaufman County.

*I improved the ESD1 by starting the implementation of SOP's for the board to operate under. Implemented a capital improvement fund account. Increased awareness of ESD short falls of health and Safety Codes and began efforts to correct them, reducing the board and service providers liability and increasing transparency to the citizens.

In closing I would be proud to serve as a TVEC Director. I have

a real vision for the betterment of our community and the task of improving our services with better training, better equipment, increased manpower, more programs for members, and above all else a better service to our citizens.



DISTRICT 6 • INCUMBENT HOWARD O. TILLISON

Howard Tillison is a lifelong resident of Henderson County and a co-op member for over 25 years. He is a retired business owner with extensive service, sales and manufacturing experience. His 25 plus years of customer relations serve him well as a Board

member that is dedicated to the TVEC member/owner. He is a fiscal conservative that believes his Board service reflects the manner in which he would want to be represented (The Golden Rule).

Nelda and Howard along with their children Mark and Stacie will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary in August. Their residence is in Murchison and they attend First Baptist Church there. Howard has served on the TVEC Board of Directors since October 2007 and has through NRECA continued education/training been certified a CCD (certified Credentialed Director) and a BLC (Board Leadership Certified) director. Further education/training has earned him Director Gold Certificate through NRECA continued education.

The electric supply grid is the most complicated business or machine in the world. It touches almost every home in America. Right now it is in a rapid state of change and your TVEC Board of Directors along with a superlative organization is keeping abreast of the technical, regulatory and political changes that amass on a daily basis.



DISTRICT 6 KELLI KRIEG

Kelli Krieg was born in Lubbock, Tx on November 25, 1974, where she spent most of her childhood years. Coming from a family of rodeo enthusiasts, Kelli was a competitive barrel racer for many years. In 1995 she

moved to East Texas to start a new chapter in her life. In 1999 her first son Lukas was born. In 2001 she started working for Southside bank where she processed loan documents before moving on to working new accounts. During this time, she also had a blind date and is now married to that man Gary 14 years later. After 8 years at Southside Bank she became pregnant in 2009 with her second son Lance. Kelli decided to stay home a few months with her new baby boy. At the end of those few months Kelli began her career as an award-winning licensed P&C insurance agent. She has enjoyed her position for the past ten years. Starting off with a captive agency before moving on to her current position at an independent agency in Lindale, TX. She and her husband Gary own a sign shop in Brownsboro.

For the past seven years along with her sales, she has donated her time and services for many causes in her community. The family has been active with FFA and 4H projects in previous years with her oldest son and will become more active with her younger son as he gets older. Kelli stays busy with our TVEC Facebook page, approving new members, posting announcements and the Did You Know articles.



DISTRICT 7 • INCUMBENT DAVID LANG

David Lang was born and reared in Anderson County, graduate of LaPoynor HS and Trinity Valley Community College (HCJC). He served four years in the U.S. Air Force and completed his college degree from Texas Wesleyan Univ. in

Fort Worth while working and raising his family. David recalls when REA began operation in Anderson County (1948) and they pulled the string for the first electric light; he is proud of what the Co-Op has become in his lifetime.

David and his wife Ruth returned to Anderson Co. from Parker Co. where he served on the Board for Happy Hill Children's home, was a bank director, raised two sons, Mike & Rita/Brian & Sheree and has 5 grandchildren and 3 great granddaughters. David owned and operated three successful businesses, one of which drilled all the water wells for the US troops in Somalia; In 1987, he was honored as an Outstanding Ex-Student of Trinity Valley Community College for his accomplishments in his community and business. The Small Business Admin. selected him as the Small Businessman of the year for the State of Texas in 1997.

Both Langs are community oriented which speaks to why David was elected to the Board for TVEC and has been a member for nine years. David recently retired from driving U.S. Veterans from Palestine to the VA Hospitals in Waco & Temple logging in 1,000 volunteer hours.

He and Ruth will be married fifty nine years in November and are active members of the First United Methodist Church in Athens.



DISTRICT 7 ROBERT L. BASS

A successful professional career and enthusiastic service to his colleagues and community combine to help introduce Rob Bass.

Rob's professional career spans 35 years in operations, sales and customer relations, primarily in the oil and gas industry. Early in his career, Rob worked for Shell Oil Company in operations. As a director of an oilfield supply company, he traveled to the Far East and Middle East selling instrumentation to drilling companies. As a sales executive with Rig-A-Lite, Rob sold light and motor control centers to oil industry customers. As a regional sales director for Plastic Suppliers, Inc., he sold thin film plastics to varied industry customers throughout seven

Southwestern states and Mexico.

Following his successful sales career, Rob moved to Palestine, Texas, where he runs a small sheep farm. Well respected for his farm management, he was invited to participate in the farm Bureau's leadership program. He is past president and regional director for the St. Croix International Hair Sheep Association and past director of the North American Hair Sheep Association.

Active in his community, Rob is a member of the Palestine Masonic Lodge #31, past president of the Anderson County Master Gardeners and past president of the Tyler, Texas Kennel Club. He currently serves on the Anderson County Rural Economic Advisory Board.

Rob majored in business at San Jacinto College in Deer Park, Texas. He also attended numerous professional sales training seminars.

Currently living in Palestine, Rob enjoys spending time with his wife Joy, helping her raise shelties and tending their sheep.



DISTRICT 7 JEAN RIGGS

Toastmasters International, the World's largest Communication and Leadership organization, awards the DTM (Distinguished Toastmaster) as the highest level of achievement earned in Leadership and Public Speaking.

Previous Board Experience: International Director for Toastmasters, Chair Deer Park Federal Credit Union, City of Deer Park, Parks and Recreation Board Secretary, Ex-Officio Member Wagoner County Senior Citizens, President of Wagoner Animal Guardian Society, Ex-Officio Member Cain Center Board of Directors, Rotary International, Chair of Foreign Exchange Students and among first women to be allowed membership.

We Own It: Applied and accepted in 2018 Fellowship and a 2019 Graduate.

TVEC: I have regularly attended the TVEC Board of Director meetings since 2017. I have recommended Bylaw changes, proposed new ones, requested Policy Changes for Directors, and also requested a change in meeting times or to record them. I introduced energy conservation program and broadband internet. I served on the 2018 Nominating Committee.

Professional Speaker, Consultant: Corporate Clients include but are not limited to the FBI, Social Security Administration, New York City Planning and Zoning Department, Houston Police Department, Denver Police Department, Youth Leadership Programs, Scholastic Books, U.S. Embassies, several colleges and universities.

Retired: City of Deer Park, Texas; primary duties Management of five (5) municipal facilities, Special Events Planner, Programming Development, Managed a large staff. Prepared/implemented multi-million dollar budget. Business Manager, the Art Park Player Dinner Theatre. Co-Owner, The Clown Company in Houston providing entertainment for both corporate and private clients.

Currently: Administrator TVEC One Voice for Choice Facebook page.



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Extend Your Safety With Power Tools

DOES LABOR DAY LIVE UP TO ITS NAME

for your family? While most people get the day off from work, many use the holiday to begin to tackle outside chores.

Before you begin any outdoor project, check that your power tools are designed for outdoor use and their cords are free of damage. Never carry a power tool by the cord or use it near water.

And don't overlook extension cords, which can be dangerous if misused. Some safety tips to keep in mind:

- ▶ For outdoor jobs, use only extension cords designed for outdoor use. They're thicker, more durable and have connectors molded onto them to prevent moisture damage.

- ▶ Check the amperage rating of the extension cord to make sure it is high enough to meet the power demand of the tool you are using.

- ▶ Use three-wire extension cords with three-pronged plugs. Never cut the third prong off of a power tool to make it fit.

- ▶ Push plugs all the way into outlets to ensure a complete connection.

- ▶ Do not plug one extension cord into another. Buy the length of cord you need.

- ▶ Never leave an open extension cord plugged into an outlet. Unplug it when you're finished using it.

- ▶ Store extension cords where they won't be exposed to wet or cold weather.

Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

IF YOU ARE UNDER A HURRICANE WARNING, FIND SAFE SHELTER RIGHT AWAY.

When a hurricane is 36 hours from arriving

- Turn on your TV or radio in order to get the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.
- Restock your emergency preparedness kit. Include food and water sufficient for at least three days, medications, a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first aid supplies. <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

When a hurricane is 18-36 hours from arriving

- Bookmark your city or county website for quick access to storm updates and emergency instructions.
- Bring loose, lightweight objects inside that could become projectiles in high winds (e.g., patio furniture, garbage cans); anchor objects that would be unsafe to bring inside (e.g., propane tanks); and trim or remove trees close enough to fall on the building.

When a hurricane is 6-18 hours from arriving

- Turn on your TV/radio, or check your city/county website every 30 minutes in order to get the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.
- Charge your cell phone now so you will have a full battery in case you lose power.

When a hurricane is 6 hours from arriving

- If you're not in an area that is recommended for evacuation, plan to stay at home or where you are and let friends and family know where you are.
- Close storm shutters, and stay away from windows. Flying glass from broken windows could injure you.
- Turn your refrigerator or freezer to the coldest setting and open only when necessary. If you lose power, food will last longer. Keep a thermometer in the refrigerator to be able to check the food temperature when the power is restored.

Survive DURING

- If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Do not drive around barricades.
- If sheltering during high winds, go to a FEMA safe room, ICC 500 storm shelter, or a small, interior, windowless room or hallway on the lowest floor that is not subject to flooding.
- If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building. Do not climb into a closed attic. You may become trapped by rising flood water.

Be Safe AFTER

- Listen to authorities for information and special instructions.
- Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. If it is safe to do so, turn off electricity at the main breaker or fuse box to prevent electric shock.
- Avoid wading in flood water, which can contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.



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Jo Ann Hanstrom, Secretary, District 4
Jerry Priest, District 2
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Edward Reeve, District 5
David Lang, District 7

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Jeff Lane

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1800 E. Highway 243, Kaufman

Athens District Office

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Cedar Creek District Office

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Mentors Provide Key to Parenting Success

There are plenty of parenting books to go around, but for One by One Ministries, the human connection of a caring mentor is proving to be a great help to young mothers—more help than a book could ever provide.

“One by One started because of seeing the brokenness of families and what was happening in the communities and these churches wanted to do something about it,” said Director Cindy Grucholski. “They saw the first person of contact in these families was the mom, so they pursued a plan to engage them.”

The goal of One By One is to support and teach new mothers how to parent well. Mothers are matched with a mentor in their community and meet once a month throughout the first year of a child’s life. The curriculum includes lessons on health and safety, development of a baby, and most importantly, self-discipline.

“My favorite program we provide is the activities that teach things such as cognitive functions, languages and motor function,” Grucholski said. “There are activities that you can do that you don’t even realize help with your baby’s development.”

One by One is set up as a community model, in which mentors and moms meet wherever they like instead of meeting at a center. Grucholski is the North Texas Regional Ministry Director where the area she predominately services

is Kaufman County. She works with referral agencies in the county who send mothers applications to her, and it is her job to find the right mentor that would be a good match.

“We want to impact the next generations,” Grucholski said. “we need to support, enable and empower moms to do a good job with that little bit of time she has with her child, and our volunteers and mentors are able to do that.”

For more information about volunteering or participating in the program, visit onebyoneusa.org.



TVEC's Joy Long presents an Operation Round Up grant check to Cindy Grucholski of One by One Ministries.

One by One Ministries
\$2,500

THE TVEC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION recently awarded four grants totaling \$15,500. Recipients of the grants include the above and:

Pilot Club of Wills Point
\$3,000

Faith in Action Outreach, Malakoff
\$5,000

Texas Ramp Project
\$5,000

Win \$25 Just for Reading!

Somewhere, hidden on Pages 18-23, is a TVEC account number. Read closely. If the account number is yours, contact the Member Services Department by September 30 to receive a \$25 credit on your electric bill. Don't miss out—you could be a winner!

Founded in 2013, the TVEC Charitable Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization. The foundation was created to serve the community and help improve the quality of life for residents in our service area. **The foundation is funded entirely by donations from TVEC members who participate in Operation Round Up.** For more information, please call 1-800-766-9576 or visit tvec.net.

A Storied Life

Remembering the inspired Bill Wittliff, a prolific teller and keeper of stories

BY LONN TAYLOR

BILL WITTLIFF WAS ONE OF THE MOST talented and creative people I have ever known. When I first met Bill and his wife, Sally, in Austin in 1964, Bill had just quit his job at Southern Methodist University Press, and he and Sally had started Encino Press, a publishing company of their own. Bill had considerable talent as a book designer, and in the 18 years of its existence, Encino Press published 100 or so of the most beautiful books ever produced in Texas.

Wittliff started writing screenplays in the 1970s. The first full-length film he co-wrote was *The Black Stallion* in 1979, followed by a string of hits he either wrote or co-wrote, including *Lonesome Dove*, *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Raggedy Man* (based on his mother's reminiscences of working as a telephone operator in Edna) and *The Perfect Storm*.

He became a mentor to dozens of young screenwriters in Texas and always had time to visit with them when they dropped by his office in the two-story house at Sixth and Baylor streets in Austin, an office that *Texas Monthly* writer Skip Hollandsworth described as "a combination museum and rent-by-the-month storage unit." The last time I visited Wittliff there, much of the space was taken up by a life-size wooden horse, complete with charro saddle, that had been used for a prop by a street photographer in Mexico.

Wittliff died June 9 in Austin. He was 79.

The preservation of stories was the overriding theme of Wittliff's life. In 1985, he received a phone call from J. Frank Dobie's former secretary. Dobie's estate

was being sold, and she wanted to know if Wittliff wanted to buy Dobie's desk. He did, and when he drove to the Dobie house to get it, he noticed about 30 cardboard boxes full of papers. He bought those, too. They turned out to be Dobie's papers that had not gone to the University of Texas after his death. They included extensive correspondence and a diary Dobie had kept when he was a graduate student at Columbia University. Dobie himself thought the diary had been destroyed.

The Wittliffs donated these papers to Texas State University in San Marcos, and they became the foundation of the Southwestern Writers Collection, which, combined with the Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection, the Lonesome Dove Collection and the Texas Music Collection, comprise the expanded Wittliff Collections. The collections now occupy the entire seventh floor of Texas State's Albert B. Alkek Library.

Wittliff was a compulsive archivist himself. When he was 15, he and two high school buddies drove to San Antonio for an Elvis Presley concert. The hall was sold out, and they decided to sneak in. Wittliff climbed a tree behind the building and jumped to a window ledge that opened into Elvis' dressing room. He explained to a surprised Elvis that he and two friends had driven from Blanco to hear him but could not get into the hall. Elvis tore a paper towel from the wall dispenser and wrote on it, "To the doorkeeper. Let these 3 fellows in. I know them. Thanks. Elvis Presley." That paper towel is now in the Wittliff Collections.



My fondest memory of Wittliff is of sitting in the lobby of the Gage Hotel in Marathon with him one afternoon before a *Lonesome Dove* event that philanthropist J.P. Bryan was producing. Wittliff was telling stories about the difficulties of filmmaking. I told him that I had seen *The Black Stallion* and that I loved the shipwreck scene, where the boy and the horse swim to safety through the surf.

Wittliff explained that they used six different horses to shoot that scene. The black stallion they started with proved to be totally unmanageable, so the film company provided six other older horses, but they were all different colors, so they dyed them all black. When the horses got in the water, Wittliff explained, the dye started coming off. They were on the sixth horse when the director decided he had the shot he wanted.

I mentioned that I remembered a lot of underwater shots from that scene, and Wittliff said, "That's because the director and the cameraman hated each other. The

director was always yelling at the cameraman. The cameraman was a scuba diver, and he figured that if he was underwater, he couldn't hear the director. So he tried to stay underwater as much as possible."

I know that Wittliff wrote those stories down and that they are in the Wittliff Collections. There was nothing ephemeral about Bill Wittliff.

Editor's note: For years, Lonnn Taylor emailed his weekly *Rambling Boy* column on Wednesdays. As soon as I received his June 19 Ramble, with his tribute to Bill Wittliff, I asked if we could publish an excerpt in *TCP*. Lonnn responded quickly and enthusiastically the next day with an edited version. How could I have imagined that would be my last email from Lonnn? Less than a week later, on June 26, Lonnn followed Bill into the great beyond. I'm sure the stories will be outstanding. I only wish he would be sending them to us so we could share them with you.

Bill Wittliff in his Austin study with his dog, Chica.

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Gail Borden's Follies

The invention of canned condensed milk followed many failures, including the meat biscuit

BY MARTHA DEERING

GAIL BORDEN JR., AN INVETERATE INVENTOR with just a year and a half of formal schooling and not a scintilla of scientific training, discovered an ingenious method of condensing milk so it could be stored without refrigeration and safely shipped great distances. The 1856 invention reversed the dismal failure of his earlier discoveries.

In 1844, when he lived in Galveston, Borden lost his wife and 4-year-old son to yellow fever. Devastated, he reasoned that, because the disease raged in summer and receded after the first frost, a giant refrigerator could “keep patients for a week under a white frost” and cure them. No one volunteered to test the theory.

Another invention, a terraqueous machine, was supposed to navigate land and sea equally well. The wagon-sailboat combination, complete with mast, sail and wheels that served as paddles in the water, worked admirably when a horse pulled it across land. However, on its first voyage into the Gulf of Mexico, the contraption capsized and dumped its passengers into the surf.

Despite these spectacular failures, Borden was not a buffoon. Born in 1801 in Norwich, New York, he was a teacher and surveyor and was said to have been captain of the local militia before his move to Galveston. In Texas, he founded a newspaper, *The Telegraph and Texas Register*, and prepared the first topographical map of the state.

In 1849, a Borden invention called meat



biscuits promised wholesome, portable nutrition, and the biscuits won a gold medal at London's Great Exhibition in 1851. Borden explained that the nutritive portions of beef or another meat would be separated from the bones and other parts of the body by boiling. Next, the water holding the nutritious matters in solution would first be evaporated to extreme thickness and then made into a dough with firm wheat flour. This meaty dough would be rolled and cut into a biscuit shape, then baked at a moderate heat to achieve the appearance and firmness of crackers—so it would keep for years.

The chairman of jurors at the Great Exhibition called it “one of the most important discoveries of the age.” Borden set up a plant in Galveston to manufacture meat biscuits for a worldwide market. Borden planned to market them with a partner named Ashbel Smith.

“Dr. Smith, a gentleman of scientific reputation,” according to an 1850 article in *Scientific American*, “has communicated a paper on the subject to Prof. Bache, president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science,” in which he

says, “I have several times eaten of the soup made of this meat biscuit. It has a fresh, lively, clean and thoroughly done or cooked flavor.”

In spite of favorable recommendations from Smith; Texas Ranger Rip Ford, who preferred to sweeten and fry the biscuits; and Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, who took a supply on two Arctic expeditions, the meat biscuit failed to win badly needed military contracts.

The Army deemed it “not only unpalatable, but [it] failed to appease the cravings of hunger, producing headache, nausea and great muscular depression.” By 1852, Borden, who had poured his fortune into the manufacture of meat biscuits, was bankrupt.

Just three years later, in 1855, he employed an oddly shaped copper vacuum pan to successfully condense milk. The dairy business boomed. Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk saw many a starving soldier through the Civil War and escorted Gail Borden's bank balance back into the black.

Martha Deering, a member of Heart of Texas EC, lives near McGregor.



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SWEEPS FACTS: Giveaway No. 13000; End Date: 2/28/20; Est. Odds of Winning: 1 in 6,200,000,000. **You Have Not Yet Won. All Entries Have the Same Chance of Winning.** We don't know who the winner is. **Enter For Free.** You don't have to buy anything to enter. **Enter As Often As You Like.** You may submit additional entries by writing to the address provided. Each entry request must be mailed separately. **Buying Won't Help You Win.** Your chances of winning are the same as someone who buys something.



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Happy Hours

THANKS TO THE LAUNCH OF THE Food Network and culinary celebrities like Martha Stewart, Emeril Lagasse and Wolfgang Puck, the 1990s ushered in an exciting decade of “gourmet” home cooking. Salsa surpassed ketchup as the country’s favorite condiment, miniature vegetables and grape tomatoes became salad staples, and instead of spaghetti, we proudly prepared fettuccine, rigatoni, penne and other types of pasta. Recipes that showcase a specialty ingredient (like this Vidalia Onion Dip, which ran in March 1998), seem to say, “This is not your grandmother’s Lipton Onion Soup dip.”

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR

Vidalia Onion Dip

- 2 large Vidalia or 1015 sweet onions, finely chopped
- 1½ cups shredded Parmesan cheese, divided use
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¼ cup fresh dill, lightly chopped (or 2½ teaspoons dried dill), divided use
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, as desired

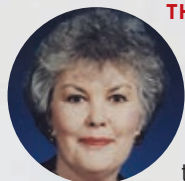
1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
 2. Place onions, 1 cup Parmesan, mayonnaise, sour cream, 3 tablespoons dill (or 2 teaspoons dried), parsley, horseradish and red pepper flakes in a mixing bowl and use a spatula to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then transfer the mixture to a deep-dish 10-inch pie dish. Sprinkle the top evenly with the remaining ½ cup of Parmesan and remaining dill.
 3. Bake 40–45 minutes until lightly browned. Serve with chips or crackers.
- Serves 4–6.

COOK’S TIP To create a crispier top, bake the dip in a 9-by-13-inch casserole and finish it under the broiler.

BACKGROUND: MARCIN JUCIA | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; DIP: IRINA ROSTOVINA | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Retro Recipes

Happy Hours



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

MILLIE KIRCHOFF | NUECES EC

"These are great for family gatherings or parties," says Kirchoff, who has five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. "We have fresh tomatoes often, so those were the inspiration for the recipe. I've tried these with different fillings, but this is the way my family likes them." With their flaky crust and savory filling, we like them, too!

Bacon and Tomato Minicups

- 1 pound bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped
- 1 cup finely shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 8-count tube (16 ounces) flaky buttermilk biscuits

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Mix bacon, tomatoes, green onions, cheese and mayonnaise in a bowl.

3. Apply cooking spray to mini-muffin pans. Cut each raw biscuit into fourths and roll each into a ball. Flatten partial biscuits between 2 sheets of waxed paper with a rolling pin. Gently form each piece of dough into a minimuffin cup.
4. Fill with bacon and tomato mixture. Bake 12 minutes. ▶ Makes 32 minicups.

COOK'S TIP For a zestier flavor, add Mrs. Dash and/or cayenne pepper, to taste.

Texas Rattlesnake Eggs

BETH GERHARDT | GUADALUPE VALLEY EC

"I've been making these Rattlesnake Eggs for over 30 years," says Gerhardt. "It's my most requested appetizer. I take these 'eggs' to parade-watching parties, Super Bowl parties or any get-together. Just a warning—they will disappear quickly!"

- 24 medium-size fresh jalapeño peppers
- 8 mozzarella cheese sticks
- 2 cups buttermilk baking mix
- 1 pound hot pork breakfast sausage
- 1 pound grated cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt

1. Line a cookie sheet with parchment or aluminum foil.
2. Remove the stems and seeds of the jalapeños, keeping each whole.
3. Cut the cheese sticks into thirds and stuff a cheese piece into each pepper. Set aside.
4. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
5. Using a stand mixer, combine the baking mix, pork sausage, cheese and spices; mix until it forms into a stiff dough. Form dough into 24 rounded balls of equal size using a cookie scoop or heaping tablespoon. Take one piece of dough, flatten it and shape it around one stuffed jalapeño to completely seal it inside. Continue to form the dough pieces around each pepper until all are covered.
6. Place the "eggs" on the prepared baking sheet and bake 30–40 minutes, or until lightly browned. ▶ Makes 24 appetizers.

COOK'S TIP Wear disposable gloves when deseeding the peppers.

Grilled Onion Mushroom Cheeseburger Dip

MARIAN EVONIUK | PEDERNALES EC

Evoniuk loves caramelized onions and mushrooms, and she knows almost everyone loves cheeseburgers, so she decided to create a dip with all those flavors. "It's like a cheeseburger with onions and mushrooms in a bowl and maybe just a little easier to eat," she says.

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 sweet onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups (8 ounces) cremini mushrooms, coarsely chopped



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\$100 Recipe Contest

February's recipe contest topic is **Forget Chocolate, My Sweetie Likes...** Not everyone is wild about chocolate. What unexpected treat do you make for your valentine? The deadline is **September 10**.

ENTER ONLINE at TexasCoopPower.com/contests; MAIL to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; FAX to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.

- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon dried dill
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 tub (7.5 ounces) chive and onion cream cheese spread
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- ¾ cup sour cream
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 baguette, cut into ½-inch slices and toasted

1. Melt butter in a large nonstick skillet. Add onion, cover and cook on low heat about 30 minutes or until onion begins to caramelize.

2. Add the mushrooms, garlic, salt, pepper and dill. Raise heat to medium, cover and cook 10 minutes. Uncover and continue cooking until any remaining liquid from the mushrooms has evaporated, about 7–10 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to a large glass mixing bowl. Set aside.

3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Happy Hour in Just Minutes

The recipes on these pages require some shopping and forethought. But what do you do when a happy hour breaks out unexpectedly? Friends drop over, wine corks are loosened, and you need something to munch on. You may be able to find what you need in your pantry, fridge and freezer.

Make up a quick relish tray with any pickles, olives, peppers or other marinated vegetables you might have.

Cut vegetables from the crisper drawer into sticks or bite-size pieces and serve

with any creamy dressing you have on hand.

Raid the pantry for crackers, cut sandwich cheese from the fridge and slice an apple.

Voilà! Instant party!

—SHANNON OELRICH



4. Crumble ground beef into the same skillet. Cover and cook over medium heat until beef is cooked through. Drain juices and transfer meat to the same bowl as the onion-mushroom mixture.

5. Add the cream cheese spread, mayonnaise, sour cream and Parmesan to meat mixture. Mix well and transfer to an 8-by-8-inch (or similar) oven-safe baking dish.

6. Bake until top is light brown and bubbly, about 20–30 minutes. Remove and serve hot with toasted baguette slices.

► Serves 12–14.

WEB EXTRAS

► Read these recipes on our website to see the original Vidalia Onion Dip recipe from March 1998.

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WEB EXTRAS ▶ See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.

◀ **TANYA MURPHY**, Pedernales EC: Murphy's granddaughter enjoys her pool with spraying water. Her cow friends seem to want to join her.



▲ **DAVID LARGENT**, HILCO EC: The Light-house formation at Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

▼ **VALLERY ORR**, Houston County EC: The iconic Gulf Glider at Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier.



▲ **VICTORIA JOHNSON**, Sam Houston EC: Dancer at the 50th annual Alabama-Coushatta Powwow in Livingston.

▼ **MICHAEL CULOTTA**, Cherokee County EC: Surf fishing at Sea Rim State Park in Sabine Pass.



UPCOMING CONTESTS

JANUARY FENCES	DUE SEPTEMBER 10
FEBRUARY POWER	DUE OCTOBER 10
MARCH FIRST RIDE	DUE NOVEMBER 10

All entries must include name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo.

ONLINE: Submit highest-resolution digital images at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.
MAIL: Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We do not accept entries via email. We regret that *Texas Co-op Power* cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.

Pick of the Month Texas Arts & Crafts Fair

Ingram September 28-29

(830) 367-5121, txartsandcraftsfair.com

Renowned Southwestern artist Amado Peña returns to his Texas roots as the featured heritage artist at the fair. Peña, a Laredo native who now lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, got his start at the Texas State Arts & Crafts Fair almost 50 years ago. He is among dozens of artists whose works will be on display.



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September 7

Beaumont Neches River Rally, (409) 543-7967, bigthicket.org

Goliad The Calm Before the Storm, (361) 645-3752, texasarmy.org

Henderson Alive & Kicking Art Show, (903) 475-2604, facebook.com/aliveandkickingartshow

Mansfield Music Alley, (817) 728-3382, mansfieldmusicalley.com

8

Yorktown Holy Cross Catholic Church Festival, (361) 564-2893, holycrossyorktown.net

12

Little Elm [12-15] Autumn Fest, (972) 731-3296, littleelm.org

13

Caldwell [13-14] Creative Memories Quilt Guild Quilt Show, (512) 567-5020

September 7
Beaumont
Neches River Rally



14

Buda Hornet Races, (512) 376-8089, athleteguild.com

Lakehills American Legion Centennial, (830) 751-3711, alpost410.com

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Medina [14-21] QuiltFest, (830) 589-2825, medinacommunitylibrary.us

20

Sulphur Springs [20-21] Lone Star Heritage Quilt Guild Quilt Show, (903) 235-5700, sulphurspringstxquilts.com

Grandview [20-22] Antique Alley Texas, (817) 666-5024, antiquealleytexas.com

Plano [20-22] Balloon Festival, (972) 867-7566, planoballoonfest.org

21

Anson Party in the Park, (325) 823-3259

Bonham Farming Heritage Day, (903) 583-5558, thc.texas.gov

Bulverde Jubilee, (210) 213-4319, bulverdejubilee.com

Hallettsville Rock It, Don't Knock It Benefit Playday, (361) 578-8182, theridingtherapycenter.org

Pontotoc Pontotoc Ranch Fire Department BBQ & Cake Auction, (325) 251-6670

Terrell Flights of Our Fathers Air Show & Fly-In, (972) 551-1122, bftsmuseum.org

Victoria Conquer Chiari Walk Across America, (361) 648-8948, conquerchiari.org

27

Louise [27-28] Louise/Hillje BBQ Cook-Off & Fall Festival, (979) 541-7056

Trinity [27-28] Community Fair, (936) 661-6138

Lockhart [27-29] Western Swing & BBQ Festival, (512) 745-0659, lockhartfest.com

September 21
Terrell
Flights of Our Fathers
Air Show & Fly-In



Round Rock [27-29] Texas All British Car Days, (512) 522-5461, txabcd.org

Burton [27-Oct. 5] La Bahia Antique Show and Sale, (979) 289-2684, labahiaantiques.com

28

Dumas Museum Day, (806) 935-3113, dumasmuseumandartcenter.org

Flower Mound Fido Fest, humanetomorrow.org/fidofest

Mount Selman Bull Nettle Festival, (903) 372-6607, facebook.com/bullnettlefestival

October 4

Forney [4-6] St. Martin of Tours 108th Annual Carnival, (972) 564-9114, stmartinforney.org

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Wink's Spectacle

A dot on the map in West Texas boasts keepsakes from Roy Orbison's career

WHAT DO WILLIE NELSON, JANIS JOPLIN, George Strait and Roy Orbison have in common? Besides being some of America's iconic musicians, all were born in small towns in Texas. From Joplin's Port Arthur to Strait's Poteet, Texans love their home-grown troubadours. I recently made the long drive to Wink to pay homage to Orbison, one of my favorite crooners.

Sandwiched between Kermit and Pyote, Wink is a town with a population under 1,000 and not a stoplight to its name. As they say, "If you Wink, you'll miss it." It's internationally known for nearby sinkholes, named "Wink Sinks," but its true claim to fame is that it was the childhood home of the *Oh, Pretty Woman* singer himself, Roy Kelton Orbison.

I *Drove All Night* to get to Wink (not really, but what a great song) and arrived to find a small building with a mural of Orbison and branded "MUSEUM." It was closed, but posted on the door was a number for a volunteer who was gracious enough to open the museum for me. Note to Orbison fans: If you plan to visit, call first and arrange a time.

My Orbison education began. It turns out the man in the mysterious glasses wasn't born in Wink but 350 miles away, in Vernon, in 1936. When Orbison was 6, his father gave him a guitar and changed his life. In 1946, the family moved to Wink, and by 1949, Orbison had formed the Wink Westerners, playing honky-tonks and getting local radio airtime. Orbison's 1954 Wink High School yearbook stated, "To lead a Western band is his after school wish."



A Roy Orbison mural makes the museum devoted to him hard to miss.

Every inch of the museum, maybe 20 feet wide and 15 feet deep, was full of memorabilia. There were 45s, including *Only the Lonely*, *Love Hurts* and *Crying*. There was a guitar played by Orbison but owned by a neighbor, who received it one Christmas morning and immediately took it to Orbison for tuning. Newspaper clippings sang of his worldwide success; one quoted Elvis Presley calling Orbison "quite possibly the greatest singer in the world."

I was impressed with it all. However, I had yet to see the *pièce de résistance*. As I stared at items in one of the cases, the volunteer asked if I'd like to see the glasses. I assumed she was talking about the dark-rimmed, purple-hued glasses in the case. I said "sure," and she explained that these were Orbison's last pair of prescription sunglasses worn at his last concert, in 1988. "Folks love trying them on," she said. My jaw dropped.

I slowly slid them on my nose and immediately thought, "I can't see anything." Contrary to popular opinion, Orbison wasn't blind, but he did have poor

eyesight and needed the Coke-bottle glasses. The dark glasses became his signature look when he was on tour with the Beatles in 1963 and forgot his regular glasses on a plane. He wore his sunglasses onstage and never looked back. Donning his glasses was like trying on one of Elvis' jumpsuits or one of Dolly Parton's wigs.

The glasses could easily be in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame but are here for folks to try on in Wink. How crazy is that? I nervously handed them back and let out a sigh of relief knowing I wouldn't be responsible for dropping a priceless artifact.

I had walked into the museum a true Roy Orbison fan and left even more so. His unique voice was unmatched. My experience proves what all Texans know—that big things can come from small towns. It also proves that when traveling the back roads of Texas, one can never be sure what one might find. Sometimes reality is even better than what you discover *In Dreams*.

Chet Garner shares his Texplorations as the host of *The Daytripper* on PBS.

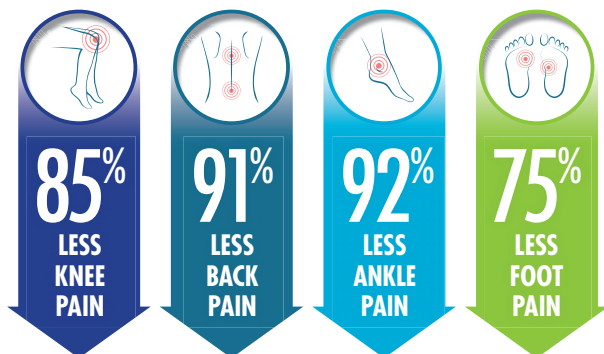
WEB EXTRAS ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of his visit to the Roy Orbison Museum in Wink.

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