

AGGIES' 12TH MAN
TURNS 100

SATISFYING
SOUPS AND STEWS

WINDOW SHOPPING
AT PRADA MARFA

Texas Coop Power

FOR TRINITY VALLEY EC MEMBERS

JANUARY 2022

In the Care of Canines

How rescue dogs
are learning
to help people

TRINITY
VALLEY EC
NEWS

SEE PAGE 18

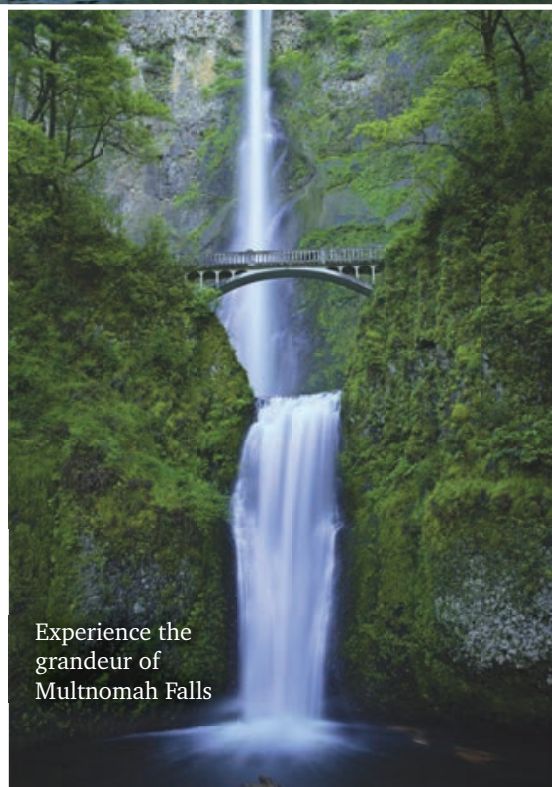


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08 Furred Responders

A Texas organization trains rescue dogs to help people overcome challenges.

Story and photos by Laura Jenkins

Aggie Standouts

Texas A&M's 12th Man tradition, a spirit that 'engulfs you,' turns 100.

By Rhonda Reinhart

ON THE COVER

Peter Slush, a firefighter and paramedic with Bexar County District 7 Fire & Rescue, shares affection with Rudy.
Photo by Laura Jenkins

ABOVE

Members of the 12th Man on the sidelines in the 1980s.
Cushing Memorial Library | Courtesy TAMU Press

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By Martha Deeringer

High Alert

DON'T SAY THEY didn't warn you.

It's long been known that rattlesnakes rattle their tails to alert aggressors or distract prey. But researchers recently reported in *Current Biology* that when a perceived enemy ignores the initial warning, the snakes switch from a low- to a high-frequency rattle to give the impression they are much closer than they actually are. When the initial slow, steady rattling rate of 12 hertz is ignored, rattlers will dial it up to as high as 100 hertz.



TCP Listen to a rattler's rattle with this story online.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE THIS YEAR, I'M FINALLY GOING TO ...

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 November prompt: **A Texan Would Never ...**

Squat with their spurs on.

JULIE BAKER
BLUEBONNET EC
CALDWELL

Pick a bluebonnet.

TRACEY POWELL
TRI-COUNTY EC
ALED0

Miss a chance to brag about Texas (and rightly so).

DONNA FALDYN
VIA FACEBOOK

Turn down barbecue.

THELMA BEASLE
LIGHTHOUSE EC
MEMPHIS

Ask someone else to finish their sentence.

JAY GEIS
HEART OF TEXAS EC
MOFFAT

To see more responses, read Currents online.

A COLD, HARD FACT

A fridge made 30 years ago uses almost four times as much electricity as a modern one.

66

distribution co-ops operate in Texas, from as far north as North Plains EC in Perryton and as far south as Magic Valley EC in Mercedes, and as far west as Rio Grande EC in Dell City and as far east as Jasper-Newton EC in Kirbyville. Co-ops power most of the state's landmass.



TCP Contests and More

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Weeknight Dinners

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS

Feathered Friends

RECOMMENDED READING

Where Birders Perch from April 2018 took readers to the World Birding Center, which spans nine sites in the Rio Grande Valley with ideal photographing opportunities.

What's New, Chet?

TCP's website! The redesigned TexasCoopPower.com is easier to use and more mobile-friendly. Check out the latest in travel, history, recipes and personalities. Point your smartphone at the code below—and throughout the magazine—to get there pronto.



A Farsighted Mission

MOST ASTRONAUTS who spend at least a month in space return to Earth with impaired vision. And as NASA gears up for an eventual mission to Mars, which would require astronauts to spend at least 1½ years in space, the agency is turning to the Texas A&M University College of Medicine to study the effect of long-term spaceflight on the eyes and on the arteries, veins and lymphatic vessels that serve them and maintain vision.





DAVID MOORE

Dad's Service Station

"I too changed lots of tires and melted lots of hot patches on tires at Red's service station on the side of the hill."

EDDIE BOLCH
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES
BRYAN

The Tormenting Cries

I am thankful that Mary Ann Goodnight had a kind heart for animals [*Last of Their Kind*, November 2021]. It must have been tormenting to hear the cries of the bison calves whose mothers were slaughtered for their hides.

The U.S. government came up with the idea of killing off the bison to subjugate the Indians, and what a slaughter of immense proportions the idea produced.

The bison are as much a part of Texas' and this country's heritage as any other living thing. They have earned their right to survive.

Roberta McLaughlin
Heart of Texas EC
Lorena

My mom made meringue where it had little sugar tears [*The Alchemy of Egg Whites*, November 2021]. I could never get it right. She baked it on top of banana pudding. Fond memories.

LETA MASSEY
VIA FACEBOOK



EARL NOTTINGHAM | TPWD

Our Old House

I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed Sheryl Smith-Rodgers' article on the Bendele family house [*Not About To Fixate*, October 2021]. My kids all got a kick out of remembering the details you wrote about. It made us all smile.

Kathy Bendele
Pedernales EC
Hye

Agree—we don't need to make everything new and shiny.

Roberta Dunn Dobie
Via Facebook

Meaningful Learning

I enjoyed the article about the Comstock high school kids doing research on Indigenous rock art with the Shumla Archaeological Research and Education Center [*Learning Rocks*, October 2021]. It sounds like a great way to engage kids in meaningful learning.

Felicity Hannay
Central Texas EC
Golden, Colorado

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

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The Invention of the Year

The world's lightest and most portable mobility device

Once in a lifetime, a product comes along that truly moves people. Introducing the future of battery-powered personal transportation . . . The Zinger.

Throughout the ages, there have been many important advances in mobility. Canes, walkers, rollators, and scooters were created to help people with mobility issues get around and retain their independence. Lately, however, there haven't been any new improvements to these existing products or developments in this field. Until now. Recently, an innovative design engineer who's developed one of the world's most popular products created a completely new breakthrough . . . a personal electric vehicle. It's called the **Zinger**, and there is nothing out there quite like it.

"What my wife especially loves is it gives her back feelings of safety and independence which has given a real boost to her confidence and happiness! Thank You!"

—Kent C., California

The first thing you'll notice about the **Zinger** is its unique look. It doesn't look like a scooter. Its sleek, lightweight yet durable frame is made with aircraft grade aluminum. It weighs only 47.2 lbs but can handle a passenger that's up to 275 lbs! It features one-touch



Available in Green, Black (shown) and Blue



The Zinger folds to a mere 10 inches.

folding and unfolding – when folded it can be wheeled around like a suitcase and fits easily into a backseat or trunk. Then, there are the steering levers. They enable the **Zinger** to move forward, backward, turn on a dime and even pull right up to a table or desk. With its compact yet powerful motor it can go up to 6 miles an hour and its rechargeable battery can go up to 8 miles on a single charge. With its low center of gravity and inflatable tires it can handle rugged terrain and is virtually tip-proof. Think about it, you can take your **Zinger** almost anywhere, so you don't have to let mobility issues rule your life.

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POWER OF OUR PEOPLE

Furred Responders

A Texas organization trains rescue dogs to help people overcome challenges



FROM TOP Trainees at Service Dogs Inc. near Dripping Springs. First responders with Bexar County District 7 Fire & Rescue with Rudy. OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP Sheri Soltes, president and founder of Service Dogs, with Poppy, a trainee. Austin Meredith, a senior computer science student at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, and his service dog, Peaches, live on campus.



STORY AND PHOTOS BY LAURA JENKINS

The room was grim and silent, save for the rustling of papers. Lady, Rudy and Chanel—two yellow Labs and a golden retriever mix—slipped in as police officers studied security camera footage, surveying the aftermath of the shooting that left 23 people dead at an El Paso Walmart in 2019. The dogs knew what to do.

“Lady started making herself known to those who were going through security footage,” says Frankie Trifilio, Lady’s handler and one of three emergency medical services managers who flew to El Paso with the dogs from Methodist Healthcare in San Antonio to support first responders. “When Lady rolled on her back, a tall, muscular guy who looked like a member of a SWAT team asked me, ‘What is she doing?’

“I said, ‘She’s making herself available. She likes belly rubs.’”

The officer went back to what he was doing. But within a matter of minutes, he succumbed.

“He knelt down and started rubbing her belly, saying, ‘Oh come here. Who’s a good girl? Who’s a good girl?’” says Trifilio. “That was the catalyst for others to interact with the dogs, and suddenly everything came alive. Everyone started talking. There was laughter. When we left, people were communicating and collaborating. I can only speculate that it helped with the investigation. But I know firsthand that it helped those officers personally and emotionally.”

Providing trained dogs for people in need is nothing new to Sheri Soltes, founder and president of Service Dogs Inc., the organization that trained and placed Lady, Rudy and Chanel. An attorney by trade, Soltes was headlong into a successful career more than 30 years ago when she realized that the stress of the job was taking a toll on her health. She was living in Houston when she started thinking about a career change. At the time she had no idea what was next.

“One day I was at the eye doctor and picked up a maga-



zine that had an article about dogs helping people with disabilities,” says Soltes. “At the end it said that some of the groups used dogs from animal shelters, and that appealed to me because I’ve always been drawn to animals, especially those in need.”

Soltes saved the article and contacted organizations mentioned to find information that would help her build a nonprofit. She conducted a survey in Houston to see how many hearing-impaired people might be interested in a hearing dog; 75% answered affirmatively. Then she found a local dog trainer who agreed to visit shelters with her and help her find dogs best suited for service.

What began in 1988 as a home-based, one-dog-at-a-time endeavor has grown into a 6-acre campus near Dripping Springs, complete with a training facility, kennel and devoted team of trainers and caregivers. Even though SDI, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative, has placed more than 750 assistance dogs over the years, the operation is no assembly line. Soltes says they’ve developed an “artisan” approach to training because they select, train and match dogs to meet each client’s specific needs.

RIGHT Methodist Healthcare EMS relations managers and their dogs. BELOW Becky Kier, a former trainer at SDI, leaves the Humane Society of the New Braunfels Area with Lily, who is now in hearing dog training.

It might seem like any dog could be trained to mitigate any disability, but Becky Kier, former director of training at SDI, explains that when it comes to assistance dogs, one size definitely does not fit all.

“What they all have in common,” says Kier, “is that they’re all super sociable, obedient and have really good temperaments as far as loving and accepting all humans and animals. They’re not rattled by anything. But beyond that it comes down to the disposition of each individual dog. A hearing dog, for example, must take cues from the environment. We teach them what to do at first, but at some point, they have to take ownership of that.”

Kier says guide dogs for the visually impaired are hardest to find because they must be obedient and proactive without a lot of redirection. Even though SDI does not train animals to serve people with visual impairments, it does get a lot of “career-change” dogs from Guide Dogs for the Blind, the largest guide dog school in North America. Career-change dogs can have an excellent temperament, but they can also have qualities and traits that disqualify them from guide dog service.

“One of our recent graduates, Sensi, was released from GDB for not liking to work in the rain,” says Kier. “She didn’t want to guide through puddles. But she’s an ideal hearing dog.” Kier notes other examples of career-change dogs, such as Artist, who needed more supervision in the home than a blind person could provide, and Tootsie, who didn’t like the guide harness. “Dogs have idiosyncrasies just like people do,” she says.

Before the partnership with GDB provided career-change animals, all of SDI’s dogs came from rescue organizations. Many still do. For more than three decades, Soltes and her team have been searching animal shelters, offering a life of love and service to abandoned and unwanted dogs. Kier found Sherlock, a terrier mix, on a routine visit to the Humane Society of Central Texas. After his training, he was partnered with Megan Harris of Austin, who’s had a hearing impairment since she was 15 months old.

“Before he entered my life, I didn’t feel comfortable being left at home by myself,” says Harris, who has been partnered with Sherlock for more than eight years. “Anybody could enter the house at any moment, and I wouldn’t hear them. I worried about hearing smoke alarms, the doorbell and timers. Once Sherlock became my hearing dog, I felt more relaxed and at ease at home and in public.”

In the beginning Soltes was focused solely on the need for hearing dogs. But before long others began asking if she could train dogs to meet other specific needs, and SDI expanded its programs.



LEFT Patty Maginnis, a district court judge in Montgomery County, with Sumi, who provides victim support in the courtroom. BELOW Sherlock has been assisting Megan Harris of Austin for eight years.



"A couple of years into it, a young man who had become paralyzed from the shoulders down asked if we could train a service dog for him," says Soltes. "Another woman with paraplegia did too. We weren't sure, so we did two as a test run, and it was successful."

Soltes thrives on the challenge of innovating new programs to meet the needs of those who seek help.

"A few years ago, we were at a Texas Medical Association conference in Houston and a battalion chief said to me, 'Our suicide rate is approaching that of veterans. Can you help us?,' " Soltes says. "I took that information, did some research, and we created a program that provides dogs to support first responders."

Lady, Rudy and Chanel are a result of that initiative.

Soltes says it takes approximately \$50,000 to adopt, train and provide lifelong follow-ups for one dog. Despite that cost, SDI provides each one at no cost beyond nominal application fees and personal travel expenses. They rely on donors, sponsors, grants and fundraisers to operate. But Glenda Ann Kea says you can't put a price tag on the profound difference SDI is making in the lives of Texans with disabilities. When her systemic lupus became debilitating, she got so depressed she

stayed in bed for nearly two years.

"At that time the doctors were prescribing me tons of narcotics because I was in so much pain," says Kea, who lives in Allen, north of Dallas. "I couldn't get up on my own and I didn't want to. I didn't see the point. If I dropped something, my day was over because there was nobody there to help me pick it up. Seriously, I wanted to die."

"But when I got DaVinci, I had to brush him and feed him, so I'm moving and breathing and going outside, even if it's only my back-yard. When I'm in my bedroom, he can hear if something drops on the tile. He'll get up, come in here and look at me like, 'Do you need me to get that?' Now I genuinely want to get up every day. In a very real sense, DaVinci saved my life." ■

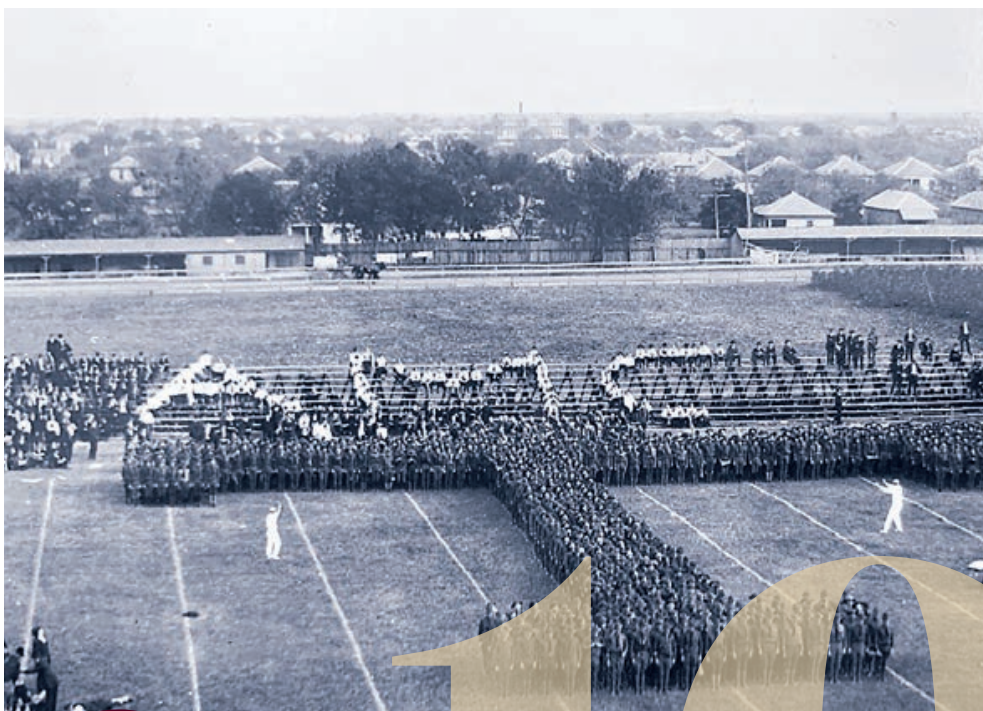


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TCP POWER OF OUR PEOPLE

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AGGIE

10

STANDOUTS

BY RHONDA REINHART

There are long shots—and then there are long shots. On January 2, 1922, at the inaugural Dixie Classic bowl game in Dallas, few fans thought the Texas A&M University football team had even a sliver of a chance at victory. The Aggies’ opponents, after all, were the top-ranked Praying Colonels from Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. Centre included three All-Americans and had just knocked previously unbeaten Harvard out of the No. 1 national ranking.

The outlook was grim for the Aggies. “We were absolutely the unmitigated underdog,” says author and historian John Adams, a member of A&M’s class of 1973. “The papers all had A&M losing 40 to nothing, 30 to nothing, 20 to nothing.”

Then came the bumps, bruises and fractures. A&M’s captain and quarterback, Heine Weir, broke his leg on the third play of the game, and that started a domino effect of injuries, including at least one concussion. “At that time—and I think it’s still a rule—if you can’t have 11 players out there, you have to forfeit the game,” says Adams, a Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative member. “So it’s getting close to halftime, and they have 11 players, but they’ve got five of them that are injured.”

What happens next is the stuff of legend and the beginning of one of Texas A&M’s most revered traditions. With things looking bleak, Aggies coach Dana X. Bible remembered a kid named E. King Gill, class of 1924.

Though Gill was a member of the football team, he wasn’t

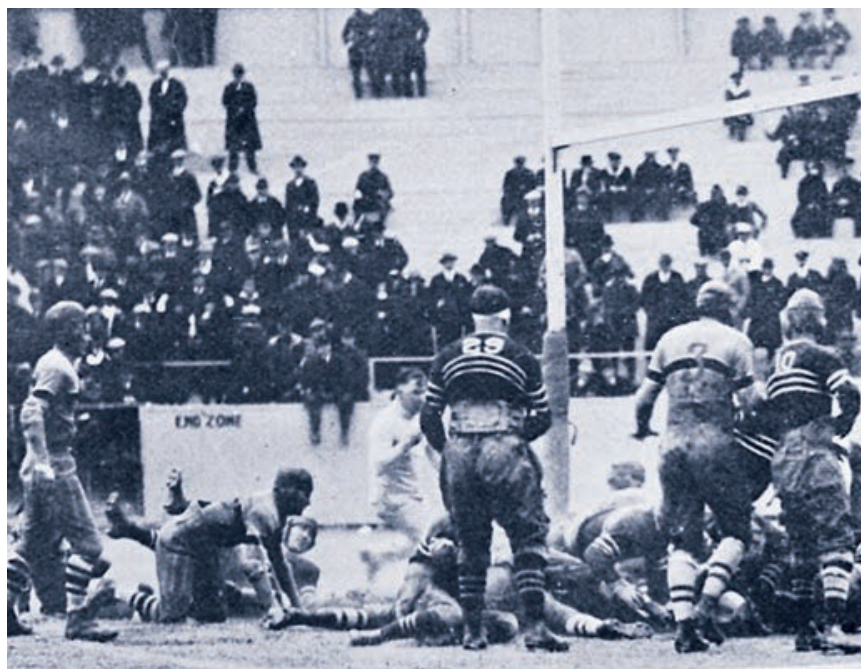
part of the squad traveling to the bowl game. He did, however, hitchhike from College Station to Dallas to see his buddies play at Fair Park, and he was up in the press box helping Waco sports writer Jinx Turner identify players on the field. But as the number of injured players quickly swelled, Bible had other ideas for the unsuspecting sophomore.

“All of a sudden, the coach turns and looks at the press box and waves at Gill,” Adams says. “So he comes out of the press box during halftime, goes under the stands—there’s no dressing room—and changes clothes with Heine Weir, the guy who broke his leg, and puts on his uniform. Gill comes out and stands on the sideline ready to go play. And then, little did they know, there is the beginning of the 12th Man.”

In Adams’ newest book—*Standing Ready: The Golden Era of Texas Aggie Football and the Beginning of the 12th Man Tradition*, published in December by Texas A&M University Press—he recounts the tale of the history-making bowl game, which was replaced by the Cotton Bowl Classic. Along with historical photos and little-known details from the game, *Standing Ready* features interviews with most of the major figures involved in the 1922 outing, including the bowl game’s founder, Joe Utag, class of 1908 and captain of the 1907 A&M football team, as well as Gill himself. “I spent five years working on this book, but I’ve been interviewing these guys for over 40 years,” Adams says. He interviewed Utag and Gill in the mid-1970s, before Gill died in 1976 and Utag in 1977.



OPPOSITE The block Aggie T formed at halftime by the Corps of Cadets at Kyle Field in 1920. LEFT E. King Gill, the original 12th Man. BELOW The Aggies make a goal-line stand in the 1922 Dixie Classic.



TEXAS A&M'S 12TH MAN TRADITION, A SPIRIT THAT 'ENGULFS YOU,' TURNS 100

One hundred years later, in honor of Gill and his willingness to stand up for his team, the A&M student section stands for the entirety of every football and basketball game. And what a student section it is. At every home game at Kyle Field, an average of 38,000 students decked out in maroon and white stand ready, cheering for their team and waving white flags emblazoned with "12th Man." A&M set an NCAA record for largest student section attendance in 2014 when 40,032 students watched the Aggies play Ole Miss.

Annie McGinnis, class of 2017 and director of communications at Tri-County Electric Cooperative, has attended A&M football games since she was a child. "I was born on Thanksgiving Day, so rumor has it I watched the first Aggie game with my dad the day I was born," she says. Her father, David McGinnis, class of 1990 and general manager and CEO at Grayson-Collin Electric Cooperative, confirms the tale. "She came at lunchtime, like 11-ish in the morning," David McGinnis says. "We played TCU that year, and she and I watched that game while Mom slept, sitting in the hospital."

Annie McGinnis describes the A&M student section as having a "spirit that pretty much engulfs you" and says that any potential discomfort from standing for four hours is no issue for Aggie fans. "There's so much adrenaline and camaraderie amongst the students who are standing with the 12th Man that you don't even think about your feet hurting because you're standing on wobbly bleachers," she says.

Cameron Smallwood, class of 1996 and CEO and general

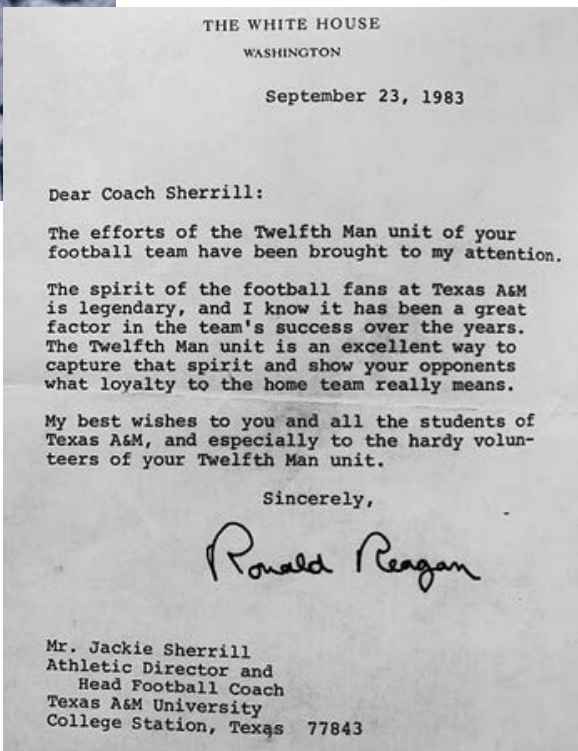


Aggies captain Heine Weir, left, whose injury paved the way for the 12th Man, with coach Dana X. Bible.



LEFT The first A&M football team, organized in the fall of 1894. BELOW A letter from President Ronald Reagan to coach Jackie Sherrill recognizes the 12th Man.

TCP WEB EXTRA Enter online to win a copy of *Standing Ready: The Golden Era of Texas Aggie Football and the Beginning of the 12th Man Tradition*.



manager at United Cooperative Services, attended games as a student and has held season tickets for football and basketball games for many years since. “It’s like being part of a big family there cheering on the team,” he says. He likens the student spirit at A&M—and that eagerness to pitch in when needed—to working with an electric cooperative. “It’s a job with purpose,” he says, “so it fits our training pretty well.”

Like the McGinnises and Smallwood—and so many students before and after them—Gill never had to go on the field that winter day in 1922. The team didn’t need him to play after all. In fact, the banged-up country boys from College Station went on to win 22-14, accomplishing one of the biggest upsets college football has ever seen. The game made newspapers nationwide and, by Adams’ estimation, put Texas football—and Texas sports in general—on the map.

“It put a spotlight on sports in the state of Texas. That’s what the Dixie Classic did,” Adams says. “There had been some great SMU teams during that time. There had been some good TCU teams. University of Texas had a good team in 1919. But none of them got any attention—no All-Americans, no recognition, no ranking.”

While attention and accolades are, of course, welcomed with open arms, those aren’t what propel Aggie students to show up on game day, 12th Man towels in hand, and stand for their team. Gill, a longtime Corpus Christi physician, possibly said it best. In a 1964 campus speech, without even

a whiff of self-aggrandizement, he talked about that day at Fair Park and his role as the original 12th Man: “I’ve never thought that the 12th Man really belonged to a personality. It belongs to the A&M student body,” he said. “And every one of you can be a 12th Man. You stand up—stand up for what’s right and be ready to serve.” ■

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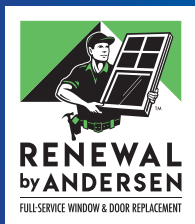
Rating of A+



California residents please call 1-800-333-2045 regarding
Proposition 65 regulations before purchasing this product.

- 5" etched stainless steel blade; 9 1/2" overall length
- Turquoise-colored handle with accent stones including coral, marble, sandstone, tiger's eye, jasper and sunstone
- Leather pouch included

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Goodbye 2021 Window & Patio Door *Event*



• With all that 2021 threw at us, we're happy to see it go **and give you a HUGE discount!**



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• Our Fibrex® composite material is so strong **we're able to build thinner frames with a greater glass area** that allows more natural light into your home.

• **We eliminate the middleman** and manage your entire project—from selling and building the windows to the installation and warranty.



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ends January 31st!**

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for 1 year!²

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Fort Worth **469-606-5229**

San Antonio **210-961-9990**

¹Subject to availability, on a total purchase of 4 or more, buy 2 windows or doors, get the second 2 windows or doors, of equal or lesser value, 40% off — applied to lowest priced window and/or door products in purchase. Initial contact for a free Window and Door Diagnosis must be made and documented on or before 1/31/22, with the appointment then occurring no more than 10 days after the initial contact. ²No payments and deferred interest for 12 months available from third-party lenders to well qualified buyers on approved credit only. No Finance Charges will be assessed if promo balance is paid in full in 12 months. Products are marketed, sold and installed (but not manufactured) by Renewal by Andersen retailers, which are independently owned and operated under Central Texas Windows & Doors LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Austin and San Antonio. North Texas Windows & Doors LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Dallas/Fort Worth and West Texas. See complete information and entity identification at www.rbaguidelines.com. ©2022 Andersen Corporation. ©2022 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved.



MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER/
CEO

JEFF LANE

Resolve To Get Involved

WITH THE FLIP of a calendar and the stroke of a clock, a new year is here. The fresh start is a prime opportunity to reflect and assess—to take stock of the year that’s just wrapped up and consider changes for 2022.

Perhaps you have an annual ritual, as I do, of building on those reflections by setting a resolution or two. Some of my mainstays include reminding myself to practice gratitude and express empathy, spend more time with the people I love, and of course, eat more healthy fruits and vegetables.

In addition to improving the quality of your life and your health, resolutions can help you make the most of your membership with Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative. Here are a few to consider.

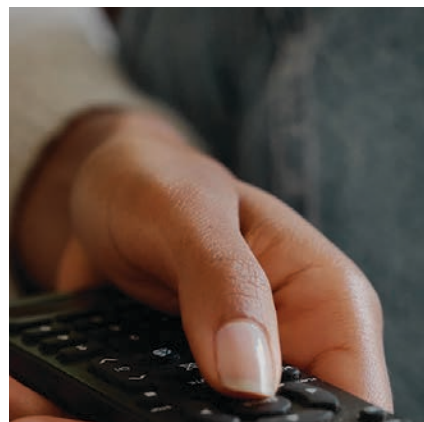
Attend the annual meeting. In person or not, this is one of the best ways to learn about important co-op news and updates and offers an uncommon opportunity to connect with your neighbors who staff the co-op. They’re community members just like you.

Vote. Our director election comes at the same time as the annual meeting. Take a look at your September *Texas Co-op Power* and exercise your Democratic Member Control, one of the Seven Cooperative Principles, by voting to elect directors. Since our board guides the co-op’s development, your participation in the election affects the plans and trajectory of the organization.

Contribute to Operation Round Up. Of all the ways TVEC seeks to support the community, Operation Round Up is especially close to my heart because it comes from the generosity and compassion of our members. Those who round up their bills to the next dollar provide meaningful support to food banks, fire departments and community members in need.

Maybe you’re already doing some of these things, or maybe you’ve thought about them and said to yourself, “I should do that,” then went on about your daily routine, as we often do. Best-laid plans, as they say. But there’s no better time than the beginning of the year to turn over a new leaf.

You might find branching out and engaging with your co-op more fulfilling than you anticipated—a small way to make your 2022 a little happier and healthier. ■



DID YOU KNOW?

Vampire loads come from electronic devices that use electricity when they appear to be off. Primary culprits are chargers, cable TV boxes and gaming systems.

LYNDON STRATFORD | ISTOCK.COM



POWER TIP

Let the sunshine in! For extra warmth, open drapes over windows that receive sunlight, but close them at night to reduce heat loss by up to 10%.

IVAN NADASKI | ISTOCK.COM



4 Tips for Winter Safety

WINTER MONTHS bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. That's because during the coldest months, folks pull out space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators for added heat.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction, resulting in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from Electrical Safety Foundation International.

Don't overload outlets. Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections; they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs.

Never leave space heaters unattended. Turn them off before leaving the room. Make sure they are at least 3 feet away from flammable items, and remember that space heaters take a toll on your power bill.

Inspect heating pads and electric blankets. Look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

Use portable generators safely. Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator to your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator before you plug in appliances and always run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. ■

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

CONTACT US

1800 E. Highway 243

Kaufman, Texas

Local (972) 932-2214

Toll-Free 1-800-766-9576

Web tvec.net

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AUTOMATED ASSISTANCE

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ABOUT TRINITY VALLEY EC

TVEC operates in Anderson, Dallas, Henderson, Hunt, Kaufman and Van Zandt counties.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Kaufman District Headquarters

1800 E. Highway 243, Kaufman

Athens District Office

909 W. Larkin St., Athens

Cedar Creek District Office

1012 W. Main St., Ste. 102
Gun Barrel City

Wills Point District Office

582 N. Fourth St., Wills Point

Lobby Hours

8:15 a.m.–4:45 p.m.

VISIT US ONLINE

tvec.net



The New Year Co-op Checklist



ADOBESTOCK 452948489

BEING A CO-OP MEMBER is more than being just another energy consumer. By participating in the co-op you have a unique place as an owner, an active part in the history of rural electrification and an investor in the community that we all share.

The start of a new year gives us all the opportunity to appreciate where we've been and a great chance to look at some of the things we can change. Sometimes the smallest changes can have big impacts on the year ahead. 60167889002

Below is a handy list of items that can help you manage your electricity usage and maybe learn some things about co-op membership you didn't know before.

At the Co-op

- Update contact info and member details.
- Download MyTVEC mobile app.
- Sign up for outage texting.
- Provide email address for monthly member updates.
- Sign up for usage and bill alerts.
- Download the Co-op Connections app to start saving at local shops, national chains, pharmacies and travel destinations.
- Visit TVEC.NET to find out more about the co-op.
- Read *Texas Co-op Power* monthly.
- Sign up for automatic bank draft payments.
- Sign up for e-billing to get your bill in your inbox.
- Follow TVEC on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Electrical Safety

- Test/replace batteries on smoke and CO detectors.
- Check/replace bad extension cords & Power strips.
- Consider having an electrician check house wiring.
- Inspect/remove obstructions/limbs near service line.
- Inspect/replace worn out wall plugs.
- In older homes, make sure counter/wet area/exterior plugs have GFCI plugs to avoid shocks.

- Install tamper-resistant outlets or plug covers in areas accessed by children.
- Inspect your breaker panel and make sure your breakers are labeled correctly.

Efficiency

- Set your water heater to 120 degrees or less.
- Install water heater insulation.
- Program thermostat to use less energy while you are away from home.
- Replace HVAC filters regularly.
- Inspect HVAC system for damage/ductwork issues.
- Check and maintain refrigerator door seals.
- Clean refrigerator and freezer coils to use less electricity and help your appliances last longer.
- Clean your clothes dryer lint path for safety and efficiency.
- Check and maintain door and window air sealing.
- Set ceiling fan direction to circulate air upwards in winter, down in summer.
- Install attic stair sealing/insulation.
- Switch to LED lightbulbs.
- Use power strips to completely turn off electronics when not in use.

Win \$100 Just for Reading

Somewhere, hidden on Pages 18–25, is a TVEC account number. Read closely. If the account number is yours, contact the member services department by January 31 to receive a \$25 credit on your electric bill. Don't miss out—you could be a winner.



THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME



GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION

YOUTH TOUR

JUNE 12-21, 2022

Entry
Deadline
Jan. 17

Are you a Texas high school student? Would you like to travel, experience a big city and visit historic landmarks—all without spending a dime of your own money? Perhaps you'd like to meet your congressional representative, or maybe you're looking for an inspirational experience in the company of other Texas teens. If that sounds like you, then the **Government-in-Action Youth Tour** trip to Washington, D.C., is your tour.

Apply by January 17. Sponsored by Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative.
Visit tvec.net/youth-tour for more information.

Start your adventure at TexasYouthTour.com
Visit Facebook.com/TexasYouthTourAlumni

It's the Law: Move Over or Slow Down

Lineworkers dedicate long hours to ensuring affordable and reliable electric power. Texas' "move over, slow down" law reminds us to do our part to keep our utility workers safe.

Look for flashing lights.

When you see a utility vehicle on the side of the road with its amber lights flashing, move over a lane. When you move over, you're giving workers the room they need to safely complete their work.

Slower is safer.

If you do not have an extra lane to move into, the law requires you to slow down 20 mph below the posted speed limit. A slower-moving vehicle is a safer vehicle.

And keep in mind, significant fines give this law teeth.

Trinity Valley Electric Co-op encourages you to always practice safety.



CHRIS BURROWS / TVEC

December TVEC Hot Spot: Our Merciful Saviour Church

WITH A RURAL GOTHIC style building constructed in 1909, Our Merciful Saviour Episcopal Church in Kaufman.



Congratulations to the November Hot Spot winner, Jo Skabo of Terrell, who correctly identified our photo of the Statue of Liberty replica located in Forney.

Look for the winner of this month's contest in the March edition of *Texas Co-op Power*.

TVEC
TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**Energy
Quiz**



Rank these household energy uses in Texas households from high to low, according to eia.gov 2009 data.

- Water Heating
- Air Conditioning
- Appliances/Electronics
- Home Heating

Win \$100!

Send your answer and contact information to **contest@tvec.coop** or contact TVEC Member Services by January 31. One \$100 bill credit winner will be chosen from all correct replies. Look for the correct answer in a future **Texas Co-op Power**.

Be Smart With Your Generator

Portable generators are a godsend during a prolonged electrical outage—just be sure to use extreme caution while operating them.

Never try to power your home by plugging the generator into a wall outlet. This dangerous practice, known as backfeeding, reverses the electricity flow and sends it out of your house, endangering electric workers and your neighbors. If you must connect the generator to the house wiring, have a qualified electrician do it.

Plug appliances directly into the generator or use an extension cord that is rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Check that the entire cord is free of damage and that the plug has all its prongs.

Keep the generator dry and do not use it indoors, in a garage, near open doors or windows, or in rainy or wet conditions.

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative encourages you to always practice safety.



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TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



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TVEC ENERGY
MANAGEMENT ADVISOR

CHRIS WALKER, BAP

The Energy Advisor:

Keep What You Make For Maximum Energy Value

WELCOME TO THIS NEW MONTHLY COLUMN about energy and how to get the most out of your electricity budget.

For a quick introduction, I am a former lineman and now spend my days helping Trinity Valley Electric Co-op members with energy usage concerns as well as coordinating our renewable energy program.

In most of my home energy conversations, you are likely to hear “Try to keep more of what you make.” If that sounds more like financial advice, that really isn’t far off the mark.

As we enter the coldest part of the year, a large portion of your electricity usage is spent on heating air for the comfort of your home. And keeping what you make, in that context, is a matter of keeping the heat, and the warmed air, inside the house.

That sounds simple enough, but once your home is up to temperature, it turns out that both the heated air and the heat itself want to get away.

As anyone who slept on the top bunk can tell you, hot air travels up to the ceiling. But it doesn’t just stop there. Any crack, crevice, door frame and leaky window opening is a means of escape, taking the hot air and your dollars out into the world. As a result, colder air from outside is also pulled in creating drafts and causing heaters to run more.

The heat energy itself also wants to equalize with the outdoors. Adding insulation isn’t always an option, but in the key areas of windows and doors it can really pay dividends to use curtains, window films or other treatments to minimize heat loss.

A few winter energy reminders:

- Check door and window seals to locate and repair air escape routes.
- Use ceiling fans in the upward blowing direction to circulate warm air back down from the ceiling.
- Use space heaters as sparingly as possible as they are inefficient heat producers.
- Look for and repair hidden hot air escape routes like light fixtures, HVAC vents and ductwork and attic stair openings.
- Don’t use the “Emergency Heat” setting on your heat pump central heating unit unless it is truly unable to maintain your home’s warmth. The heat strips that come on in that setting use a lot more energy to warm you up.

Every home is different, but no building gets better at energy efficiency as it ages. Just like every other part of home maintenance, energy management is a constant battle. Keeping the heat you’ve paid for is the best start to saving on your energy expenses as the cold of winter sets in. ■



ANATOLII GLEB | ISTOCK.COM

Thinking Solar?

Here are some things to know as you navigate the alternative energy boom

BY DON JOHNSON, MEDIA & CONTENT SUPERVISOR

SOLAR PANEL SALES ARE BOOMING, with more than 700 Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative members currently making some of their own electricity.

Unfortunately, with the boom has come a variety of sales pitches, half-truths and some downright false advertising. As your nonprofit electric co-op, we are happy to help you add solar generation to your power mix, but be sure you have a good idea of what you are signing up for.

First, you will most likely NOT eliminate your power bill. In all but the most elaborate and expensive solar setups—with expensive battery storage and correct safety switch equipment—solar power will not be able to power your home at night or when there is a power outage on TVEC lines.

Be sure to check references for solar installers from other homeowners in our area. Not all sales pitches are true, and some companies are willing to sell a system when the output of the system will never generate enough power to offset the cost. This is particularly true when the solar installation is paid for with expensive multi-year financing.

Solar installation is a long term investment, so be sure to check the warranty terms for both the equipment and installation of your solar setup. Panels and particularly inverters degrade and fail over time, and the cost of maintenance is not usually included in the payback estimate by solar sales representatives.

Finally, some solar salespeople have also represented their companies as “partners with TVEC.” This is not correct. There is no preferred vendor or partner that we have for solar installation. TVEC members may use any company they choose, and we are here to help make sure that your connection is appropriate and safe for our workers.

Check back here next month, and we will discuss how solar panels impact your energy usage and how to maximize your benefits from panels. ■

TVEC

Charitable Foundation

Your Generosity in Action

2021 REVIEW

TVEC Members' Generosity Stands Out in Turbulent Times

THE LAST FEW YEARS have been memorable for many reasons, and it isn't hard to get lost in pandemic difficulties, social and political strife and so many other negatives.

The TVEC Charitable Foundation was started in 2013 as a project to benefit great nonprofit organizations in the TVEC service area by harnessing the collective generosity of TVEC members. Putting the thousands of small donations you make through Operation Round Up together has made a great impact in the communities of our part of East Texas. In total, more than \$2.8 million in grants have been used to support neighbors in need, feed the hungry, save lives, educate kids, beautify places and so much more. Thank You. ■

Grant Totals:

December 2020-November 2021

Advocacy/Counseling/Rehabilitation - \$25,000
Animal Related - \$6,500
Community Outreach - \$207,500
Education/Child Feeding Programs - \$32,900
Food Pantries - \$28,000
Shelters & Family Support - \$23,000
Veterans Support - \$2,500
COVID-19 Bill Payment Assistance - \$15,500

November Operation Round Up News



Kaufman Fire Department fireman Jeremy Hatcher and Fire Chief Ronnie Davis accept a TVEC Charitable Foundation grant of \$3,000 from Laura Melton, TVEC public relations representative.

THE TVEC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION in November awarded three grants totaling \$6,500. Recipients of the grants include: The Forney Education Foundation, Henderson County 4-H Shotgun Sports and Jake E's Riding Round Up. All 57 fire departments in the TVEC service area also received grants again this year. Checks for \$3,000 to each department were disbursed for a total of \$171,000 to support the work our first responders do in our community.

SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



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

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

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and snatched it up for our **Sedona Turquoise Collection**. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique,

one-of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for **just \$99**.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you aren't completely happy with your purchase, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

The supply of Arizona turquoise is limited, don't miss your chance to own the Southwest's brilliant blue treasure. Call today!

Jewelry Specifications:

• Arizona turquoise • Silver-finished settings

Sedona Turquoise Collection

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| A. Pendant (26 cts) | \$299 * | \$99 +s&p | Save \$200 |
| B. 18" Bali Naga woven sterling silver chain | \$149 | | |
| C. 1 ½" Earrings (10 ctw) | \$299 * | \$149 +s&p | Save \$150 |
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** Complete set includes pendant, chain and earrings.

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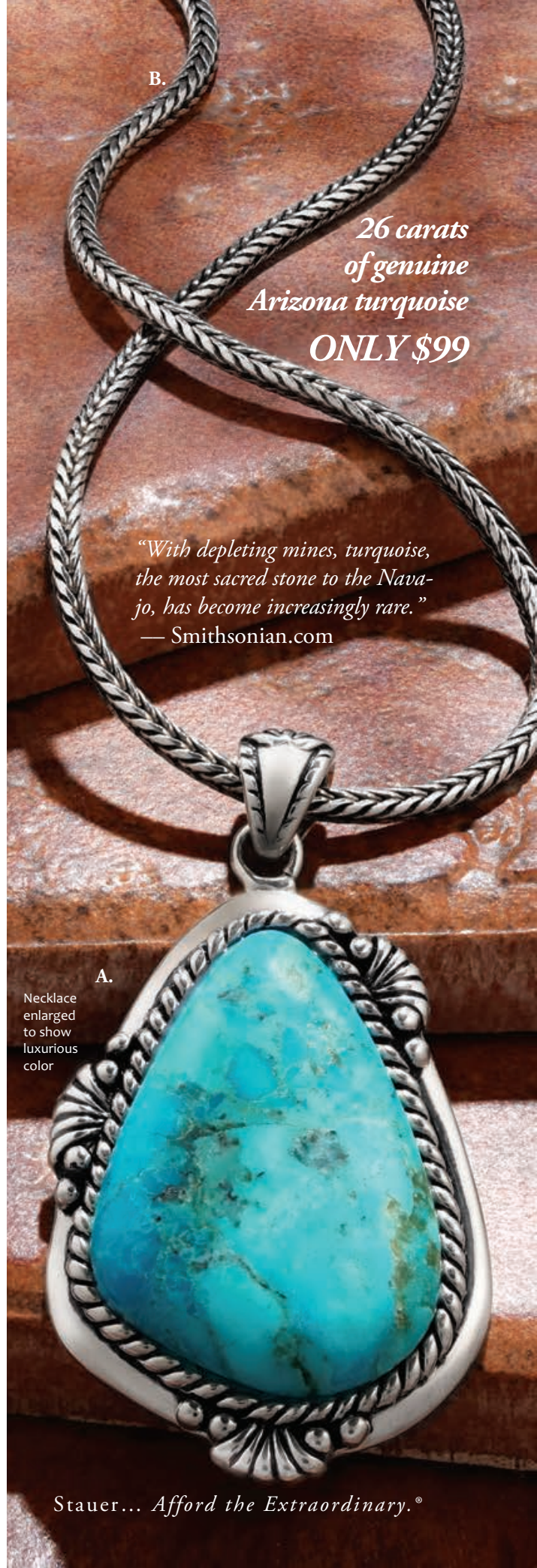
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Bad to the Bone

Full tang stainless steel blade with natural bone handle —now **ONLY \$79!**

The very best hunting knives possess a perfect balance of form and function. They're carefully constructed from fine materials, but also have that little something extra to connect the owner with nature. If you're on the hunt for a knife that combines impeccable craftsmanship with a sense of wonder, the **\$79 Huntsman Blade** is the trophy you're looking for.

The blade is full tang, meaning it doesn't stop at the handle but extends to the length of the grip for the ultimate in strength. The blade is made from 420 surgical steel, famed for its sharpness and its resistance to corrosion.

The handle is made from genuine natural bone, and features decorative wood spacers and a hand-carved motif of two overlapping feathers—a reminder for you to respect and connect with the natural world.

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

But we don't stop there. While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99, 8x21 power compact, binoculars **and** a genuine leather sheath **FREE** when you purchase the **Huntsman Blade**.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the impeccable craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

Limited Reserves. A deal like this won't last long. We have only 1120 **Huntsman Blades** for this ad only. Don't let this beauty slip through your fingers. Call today!

Huntsman Blade ~~\$249~~*

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*Discount is only for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.

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- 12" overall length; 6 1/2" stainless steel full tang blade
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- Includes genuine leather sheath

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BONUS! Call today and you'll also receive this genuine leather sheath!



Rating of A+

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— H., Arvada, CO

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TCP WEB EXTRA

Listen to W.F. Strong read this story.



Joined by a Fence

How rural America turned barbed wire into telephone lines

BY W.F. STRONG

HISTORIAN J. EVETTS HALEY noted that the XIT Ranch was probably the largest fenced range in the world, and its barbed wire enclosed more than 3 million acres. The huge enclosure helped manage enormous cattle herds and deterred rustlers but also gave rise to the creative use of a new technology: the telephone.

Consider these reports from other parts of the West. In 1897, *The Electrical Review* reported that “on a ranch in California, telephone communication had been established between the various camps ... by means of barbed wire fences.” Also in 1897, the *New England Journal of Agriculture* observed that two Kansas farmers, a mile apart, had attached phone instruments to a barbed wire fence that connected their farms and established easy communication.

The Butte Inter Mountain included this notice in 1902: “Fort Benton’s latest development is a barbed wire telephone communication.” The article points out that people of that part of Montana were not happy with barbed wire, but they had decided to look at its practical side and created a telephone exchange that would connect all the ranches to Fort Benton.

On the XIT, given that the ranch covered more than 4,500 square miles, there was interest in creating a communication system that would be more efficient than sending out fast riders to distant camps. “In the early 1900s,” Haley wrote in his 1929 history of the XIT, “a great many telephones were placed upon the ranch. Where possible, the top line of the fences was used as a telephone line, though the ‘service’ was atrocious. It did allow for

quick communication concerning emergencies such as grassfires that required all cowboys immediately.” There was even talk among technology geeks of the era that cowboys could carry phones wherever they went and clip on to the fence to report problems.

The rudimentary use of barbed wire on the ranches led to more creative thinking about rural phone systems. Historian Don Anderson, who earned a doctorate in electrical engineering from Stanford University, told me that barbed wire phone systems led to the conclusion that “using whatever is already in place is smart planning.”

So when rural Texas wanted to extend phone service from town to town, engineers decided they could use the existing rural power lines, already installed by electric cooperatives through the Rural Electrification Administration, and run the phone signal through the electric lines at a different frequency. That saved a lot of money and brought phone service along with electricity to rural areas.

Still, many ranches liked their barbed wire systems and kept them, even though the voice quality wasn’t very good. As late as the early 1970s, a dairy farmer I knew had a barbed wire phone running a half-mile from his house to the barn. He said it was good for talking to his wife about what time to come in for supper. But most of all, he said, “It’s free. I don’t have to pay Ma Bell nothing for that phone, and I enjoy thinking that it’s a burr in their saddle.”

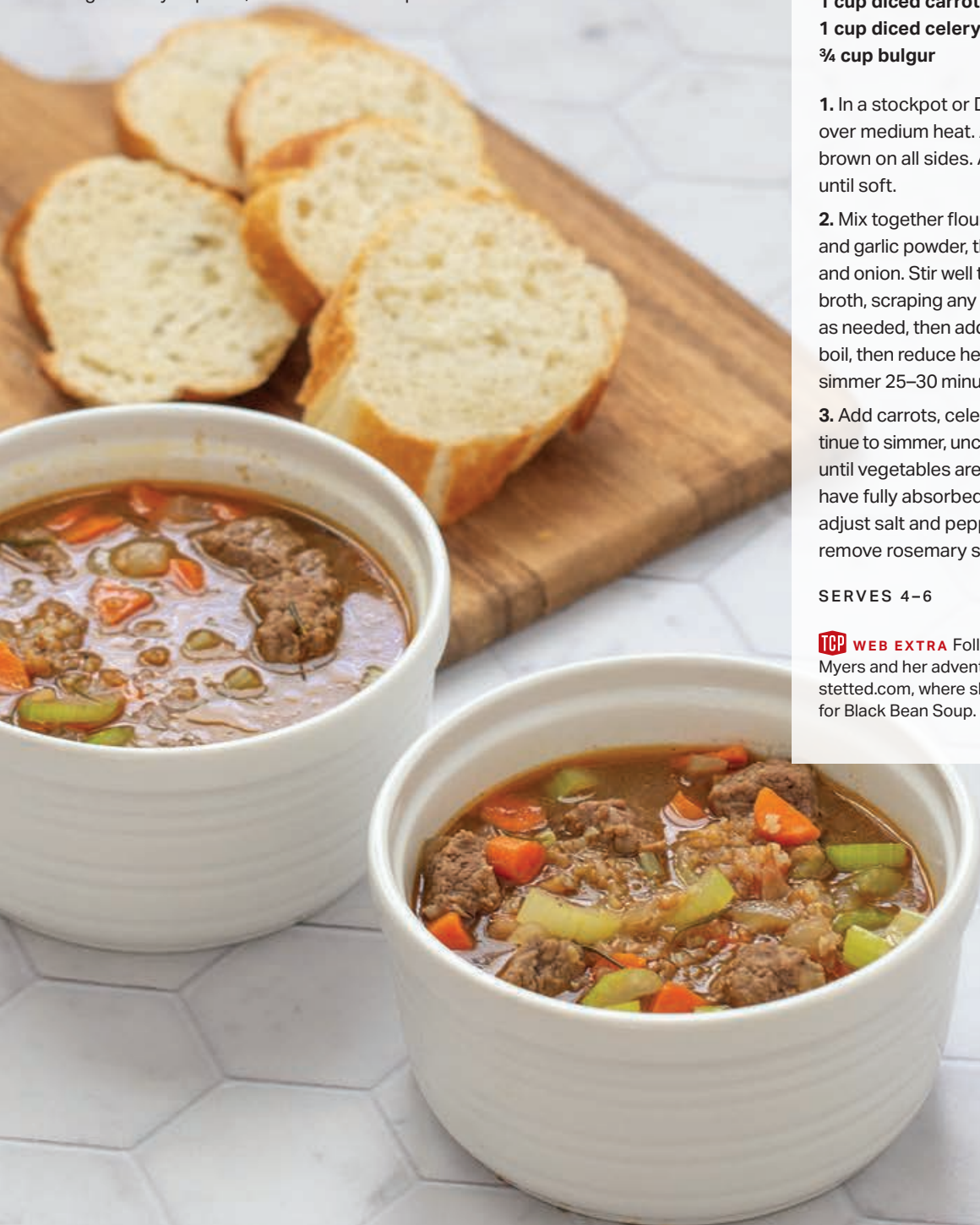
It is fascinating, Anderson said, to consider that what started as a fence system on the XIT evolved into what is XIT Communications, a co-op that provides phone service and high-speed internet to rural communities—some in the footprint of the original ranch. ■

Soups and Stews

Stir up satisfying comfort food with a variety of ingredients

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Soups have always been a go-to dish in my house. Virtually anything can be turned into a soup, so even when I haven't been to the grocery store in a while, I know I can still throw something together. This Beef Bulgur Soup is an economical option, thanks to the tenderized round steak. Bulgur is a parcooked wheat grain that can be found alongside rice, quinoa and other grains. If you prefer, substitute a small pasta such as orzo or ditalini.



Beef Bulgur Soup

1 tablespoon butter
16 ounces tenderized round steak,
cut into ½-inch chunks
½ cup diced onion
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
½ teaspoon paprika
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
4 cups beef broth
2 sprigs fresh rosemary
1 cup diced carrots
1 cup diced celery
¾ cup bulgur

1. In a stockpot or Dutch oven, melt butter over medium heat. Add beef, stirring to brown on all sides. Add onion and cook until soft.

2. Mix together flour, salt, pepper, paprika and garlic powder, then sprinkle over beef and onion. Stir well to coat. Stir in beef broth, scraping any stuck bits in the pot as needed, then add rosemary. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover and let simmer 25–30 minutes, until beef is tender.

3. Add carrots, celery and bulgur and continue to simmer, uncovered, 15–20 minutes, until vegetables are softened and grains have fully absorbed liquid. Taste and adjust salt and pepper as needed, and remove rosemary sprigs before serving.

SERVES 4–6

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



Chicken and Ginger Soup

JENNIFER BRANNEN
BLUEBONNET EC

This Asian-inspired soup is heavy on ginger, livening up the senses whether you enjoy it for dinner or as breakfast leftovers, as Brannen recommends. Keep in mind that fish sauce is very salty, so add according to your taste.

12 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cubed
3 ribs celery, chopped
1½ ounces peeled ginger root, minced (about ⅓ cup)
½ cup finely chopped cilantro
7–8 cups low-sodium chicken broth, divided use
3–4 tablespoons fish sauce
2 cups cooked long-grain white rice
Green onions, thinly sliced
1 serrano pepper, thinly sliced
Fried garlic chips

COOK'S TIP Make fried garlic chips by frying ¼ cup of thinly sliced garlic cloves in ⅓ cup of canola oil until golden. Strain the garlic through a sieve but keep the garlic-infused oil for other uses.

1. In a large stockpot or Dutch oven set over medium-high heat, combine chicken, celery, ginger, cilantro, 6 cups broth and fish sauce and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer 30–45 minutes.
2. Stir in cooked rice and continue to simmer until the rice has absorbed the broth. Add the remaining broth if needed. Serve with green onions, serrano pepper and garlic chips on the side.

SERVES 4–6

MORE RECIPES >

\$500 WINNER

Chicken and Dumplings Soup

AMANDA DECESARO
TRINITY VALLEY EC



Perfect for chilly nights, chicken and dumplings are the ultimate comfort food. Mix the dumpling batter just before adding to the soup to retain the best texture.

SERVES 6



SOUP

1½–2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs
3 tablespoons butter
1 yellow onion, diced
1 teaspoon pepper
1½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon celery salt
4 cups unsalted chicken stock
1 cup water
2 bay leaves
3 cups baby carrots or chopped carrots

DUMPLINGS

1½ cups flour
1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
⅓ teaspoon ground nutmeg
⅔ cup milk
1 egg, slightly beaten
⅓ cup (¼ stick) butter, melted and cooled

1. SOUP In a large stockpot or Dutch oven set over medium-high heat, brown chicken with butter. Once browned, cut into small strips, then return to pot and add onion. Sprinkle in pepper, salt and celery salt. Sauté until onions are slightly cooked but not soft.

2. Add chicken stock, water and bay leaves. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and cover. Let simmer 10 minutes. Add carrots and simmer, covered, for an additional 15 minutes.

3. DUMPLINGS Mix together the dry ingredients. Add milk, egg and butter and stir until just blended.

4. When ready to add dumplings, remove bay leaves from soup, taste, and adjust salt and pepper as needed. Drop spoonfuls of dumpling batter into pot, spacing as much as possible. Cover and simmer 15 minutes, until dumplings are no longer doughy. Serve soup with a few dumplings in each bowl.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

WEEKNIGHT DINNERS DUE JANUARY 10

We're looking for go-to recipes for busy weeknights. Submit yours at TexasCoopPower.com/ contests by January 10 for a chance to win \$500.





Potato Leek Soup With Dill

REXANNE MEAUX
PEDERNALES EC

Potato soup always hits the spot, and dill adds bright flavor to Meaux's version. To wash the leeks completely, slice and add them to a bowl of cold water, swirling to dislodge any dirt between the layers.

1 tablespoon butter

3 large leeks, thinly sliced and washed (white and light green parts only)

2 large russet potatoes, peeled and cubed

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup white wine, divided use

4 cups chicken broth

1 cup heavy cream

2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, plus more to taste

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper

Fresh dill sprigs, for garnish

1. In a stockpot or Dutch oven, melt butter over medium heat. Add leeks and sauté 10 minutes or until tender. Add the potatoes, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine and broth. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer, uncovered, 1 hour and 15 minutes or until the potatoes are very tender.

2. Transfer soup in batches to a blender and blend until smooth. Return the soup to the pot and add remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup wine, heavy cream, dill, salt and pepper. Heat through and serve, garnishing bowls with fresh dill.

SERVES 4–6

Soup Improv

BY MEGAN MYERS

Looking for ways to riff on your soup recipe? Try one (or a few) of these ideas:

Add a cheese rind. Parmesan rinds add umami, which enhances the other flavors in your soup.

Finish with lemon to brighten the flavor. This works especially well in chicken soups.

Serve with a dollop of sour cream or yogurt for tang.

Chopped fresh herbs are a great finish to any soup.

Thicken soups without cream by puréeing beans or vegetables from the soup and adding them back in.

Brown the meat for full flavor, and deglaze the pan with a small amount of white or red wine, depending on the recipe. The alcohol will cook off, leaving only the flavor behind.

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² Based on datasheet review of websites of top 20 manufacturers per IHS, as of April 2021.

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- ✓ Buffalo Nickel (1913–1938)
- ✓ Jefferson “War” Nickel (1942–1945)
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Faux Chic, for Sure

Like a desert mirage, Prada Marfa perplexes

BY CHET GARNER

I'M NOT A SHOPPER and never have been. So I was having an internal struggle when I found myself driving more than seven hours from my Central Texas home to visit a high-end designer retail store in the desert.

Why was I dedicating so much time to this quest when I don't even know Versace from Vuitton? Those are different, right?

But once I arrived at the remote outpost known as Prada Marfa, the answer became clear.

I reached Marfa in record time but was disappointed to learn that my destination was still 36 miles west. I cruised U.S. 90 parallel to a set of train tracks for what seemed like hours, past the crumbling set of the movie *Giant* and through the tiny town of Valentine. I was about to turn around thinking I had missed my destination when I spied a boxy building up the road on my left. I pulled over and stepped into the Texas heat.

This was Prada Marfa, a stark white building that looks like an honest-to-goodness boutique storefront beside an empty highway. It's as if anyone could walk in, slap down some cash and leave with the fanciest footwear in West Texas. However, at this Prada store there is no staff. They don't accept credit cards. In fact, the front door doesn't even open. Because even though it looks authentic, Prada Marfa is a permanent work of art constructed in 2005 by the Swedish duo Elmgreen & Dragset as a comment on consumerism.

I peered through the window at displays of thousand-dollar purses and a wall of elegantly lit high-heeled shoes. I chuckled, wondering if anyone ever trekked out here expecting to buy designer items and left disappointed. I was happy to only window-shop, but even that cost me 14 hours on the road. ■

ABOVE Chet visits the art installation called Prada Marfa, along U.S. 90, about halfway between Marfa and Van Horn.

TCP WEB EXTRA Watch Chet's dispatch from Marfa at TexasCoopPower.com/travel. And to see the front doors Chet does make it through, watch his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

JANUARY

08

Frisco NCAA Division I FCS Football Championship, (972) 292-5250, visitfrisco.com

Kerrville Symphony of the Hills: Outlaws and Heroes, (830) 792-7469, symphonyofthehills.org

Monahans Sandhills Resolution Run, (432) 943-2187, monahans.org

San Marcos Purgatory Trail Run, (877) 806-3987, athletguild.com

Temple Family Day—Cabin Fever: Stargazing, (254) 298-5690, templeparks.com

Boerne [8–9] Market Days, (210) 844-8193, boernemarketdays.com

Dallas [8, 15, 22] The Dinner Detective Murder Mystery Dinner Show, 1-866-496-0535, thedinnerdetective.com

15

Fredericksburg Luckenbach Blues Festival, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

Granbury 7 Bridges: The Ultimate Eagles Experience, (817) 573-5548, thenewgranburylive.com

Lake Jackson Bird Banding, (979) 480-0999, gcbo.org

McKinney Night Hike, (972) 562-5566, heardmuseum.org

Mesquite Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration,
(972) 204-4925,
visitmesquitetx.com

Fredericksburg [15-16]
Hill Country Gem & Mineral Show, (325) 248-1067,
fredericksburgrockhounds.org

16

Fredericksburg Agarita Chamber Players,
(830) 997-6523,
fredericksburgmusicclub.com

17

Elgin Martin Luther King Jr. Walk, (512) 281-5724,
elgintx.com

Houston MLK Grande Parade, (713) 560-8328,
mlkgrandeparade.org

20

Corpus Christi Third Thursdays, (361) 825-3500,
artmuseumofsouthtexas.org

22

Fredericksburg Hill Country Indian Artifact Show,
(830) 329-2636,
hillcountryindianartifacts.com

Irving Fela in Concert: A Tribute to Whitney Houston, (972) 831-8818,
irvingsymphony.org

Orange CeCe Winans,
(409) 886-5535, lutchter.org

Surfside Beach Food and Art Festival, (979) 233-1531,
surfsidetx.org

Victoria Victoria Symphony: José Feliciano,
(361) 576-4500,
victoriasymphony.com

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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



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Pick of the Month

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yagaschiliquest.com

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JANUARY EVENTS CONTINUED

22

Belton [22–23] Sami Show Marketplace,
(512) 441-7133,
samishow.com

23

Lufkin Popovich Comedy Pet Theater,
(936) 633-5454,
angelinaarts.org

27

Corsicana Asia,
(903) 874-7792,
corsicanapalace.com

29

Bay City Wild Game and Wine Camofest,
(979) 245-8081,
facebook.com/
baycitycamofest

Grand Prairie Tom Segura,
(972) 854-5076,
texastrustcutheatre.com

Lufkin Brit Beat,
(936) 633-5454,
angelinaarts.org/
pines-series

Port Aransas Home Tour, (254) 289-4510,
portaransasgardenclub.org

Tyler Charles Yang, Violin Rock Star, (903) 566-7424,
cowancenter.org

FEBRUARY
03

Tyler Beautiful: The Carole King Musical,
(903) 566-7424,
cowancenter.org

San Angelo [3–20] Livestock Show,
(325) 653-7785,
sanangelorodeo.com

05

Abilene Abilene Philharmonic: The Wonderfully Wicked Music of Oz,
(325) 677-6710,
abilenephilharmonic.org

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

El Paso Shen Yun,
1-877-663-7469,
shenyun.com/el-paso

Huntsville Sam Houston Square and Round Dance Association Presidents Ball, (936) 494-8402,
shsrda.weebly.com/
events.html

McKinney McKinney Philharmonic Orchestra: Music in Motion,
(469) 633-9104,
mckinneyphilharmonic.org

Sweetwater Lift Every Voice Art Show and Concert, (325) 235-5488,
sweetwaterauditorium.org

Fired Up!

Whether getting the grill ready for a barbecue or watching the big game, Texans love to get fired up. So put another log on the fire and gather 'round because these offerings are smokin'.

BY GRACE FULTZ

1 TONYA CARLIN
CECA

"Being a mother of a firefighter, this photo represents the brotherhood shared between these individuals."

2 PATTY DISHMAN
PEDERNALES EC

"The hot air balloon festival in Horseshoe Bay always fires me up for great photo opportunities."

3 BROOKE WILLIAMS
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Homecoming parade in Forney.

4 CADEN WILSON
UNITED COOPERATIVE
SERVICES

Cowtown rodeo.



1



2



4



3

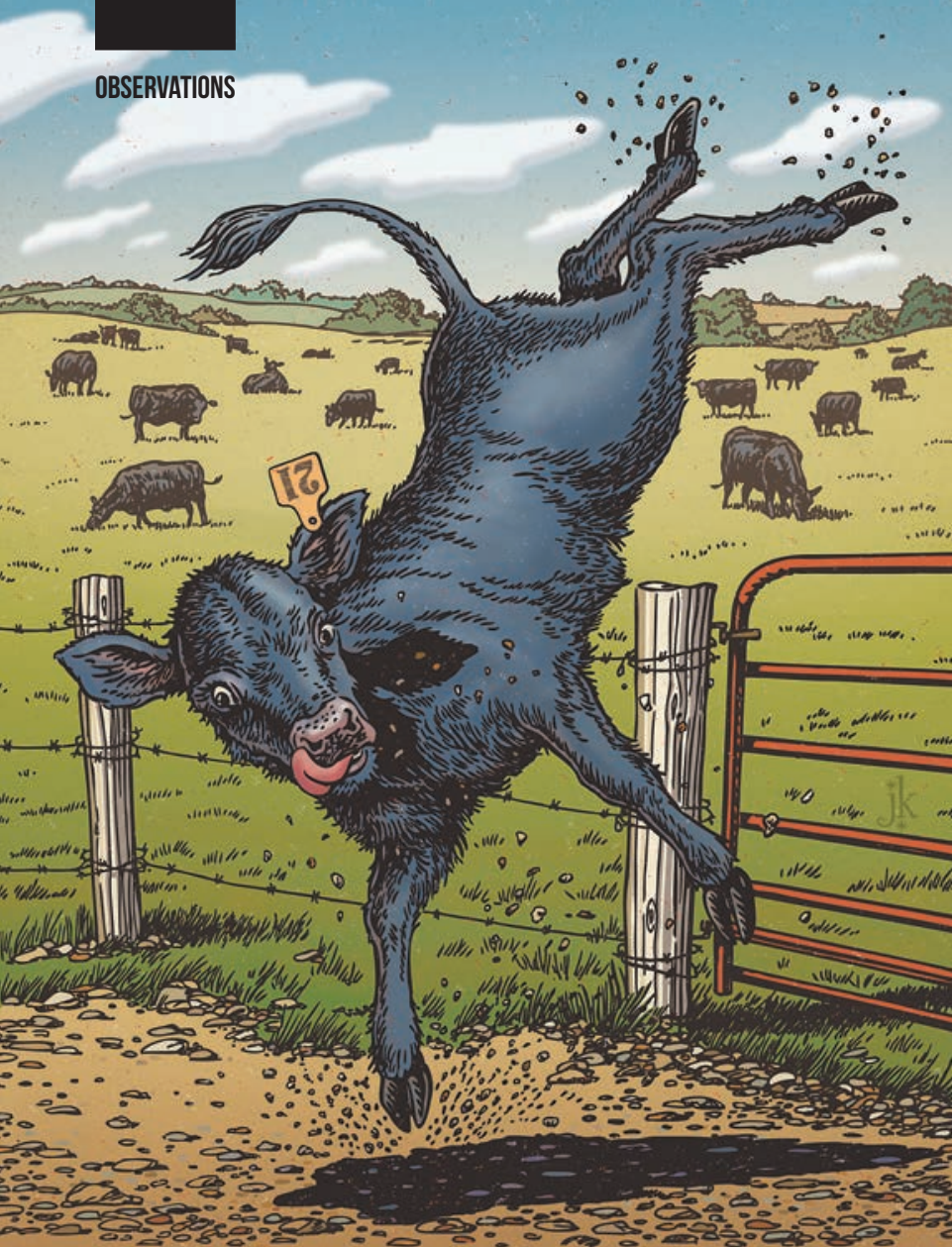
Upcoming Contests

DUE JAN 10 Feathered Friends
DUE FEB 10 Industrial
DUE MAR 10 Morning Glory



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



Buck's Pluck

What we learned from a spunky calf

BY MARTHA DEERING

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN KACHIK

LIFE LESSONS can crop up in the oddest places. Such was the case when an undersized black calf with an oversized personality was born on our farm a few years ago. A green hillside dotted with black cows and new calves is a tranquil scene. It's almost impossible to tell one calf from another without getting close enough to read the numbers on their ear tags.

Except for Buck Rogers.

Within hours of birth, Buck Rogers, a Black Angus bull calf, hopped in circles around his mother with that peculiar tippy-toed new-calf gait, flipping his stubby tail and kicking at the sky with his hind legs. While most newborn calves wobble for a day or two, Buck Rogers bucked and kicked across the pasture with total disregard for his mother's whereabouts. An inexperienced first-

calf heifer, Mama lumbered behind, bawling out warnings about the dire consequences of not minding your mother.

We almost never name cattle. If you grow attached to them, you might find yourself a vegetarian with a bank account drenched in red ink. Buck Rogers was the exception. It was easy to spot him: He was the small black blur galloping through the peaceful scene.

Most folks who own animals will testify that the critters have distinct personalities. Samuel D. Gosling, a University of Texas psychologist, agrees. "Animals have personalities, emotions and thoughts, just as humans do," says Gosling, who has published several articles on the subject.

Across the garden fence one afternoon, we heard a tremendous clatter, something like an explosion in an aluminum pan factory. Buck Rogers, awakening from a nap under a cotton wagon, had launched into one of his outrageous bucking episodes, his head and back hitting the wagon's underside with all the force his 70-pound frame could muster. He finally bucked his way out and dashed off, leaving me wiping tears of laughter from my face. Crystal clear was the notion that the little fella lived with joy!

Like his namesake, a fictional space opera character from the 1930s, the bovine Buck Rogers awoke each morning bent on new adventures. Chasing guineas set off a raucous squawking chorus that seemed to amuse him. Although he never reached outer space as his cartoon namesake did, he sometimes attempted flight by leaping into the air from the top of a large mound of manure scooped from cow and horse pens.

Eventually he grew up and moved on to pastures elsewhere, but he brightened our days and made us think about the importance of living with energy and enthusiasm. ■

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Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and 24-month commitment. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 4/13/22. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$84.99 for AT120+, \$94.99 for AT200, \$104.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D. Reg. No. – 19-08615. ©2021 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly mean that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.