

THE BIG, BIG BOOK  
ABOUT PLANTS

REAL LIFE MEETS  
'LONESOME DOVE'

SO FAR, SNAKES ARE  
OFF THE HOOK

# Texas Coop Power

FOR TRINITY VALLEY EC MEMBERS

AUGUST 2023

## Pathways to Peace

Finding healing in  
labyrinths across Texas



TRINITY  
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NEWS

SEE PAGE 16



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# August 2023



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Scooter Cheatham has dedicated his life to voluminous books that document uses for Texas' plants.

*By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers*

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Labyrinths provide 'a profound sense of renewal and peace.'

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Alison Hannah walks the labyrinth at Unity of Wimberley.

*Photo by Laura Jenkins*

#### ABOVE

Mountain pink is a great plant for rock gardens.

*Photo courtesy Useful Wild Plants*



## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Back to school means ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our June prompt: **Thanks, Dad, for ...**

Never judging us and always giving us your unconditional love and attention.

ELVIRA PULIDO  
MAGIC VALLEY EC  
MISSION

Making me get back on the horse.

LYNNE SINGHOFF  
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC  
HEMPHILL

Teaching me to use your tools, believing in me and forgiving me when I messed up.

ROSE HOLLY  
PEDERNALES EC  
GEORGETOWN

Teaching me when I was 14 to back a trailer load full of cattle through the gate.

SHIRLEY HAMPTON  
PEDERNALES EC  
HORSESHOE BAY

Visit our website to see more responses.



## Talkin' Texan

Not sure what took them so long, but the folks behind the official Scrabble dictionary finally added a few words to the book that have been heard in these parts for generations: guac, queso and yeehaw.

These potentially high-scoring words are among about 500 new words in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary, which gets updated every few years.

# Wreck the Record

**CALL 'EM** the first family of Texas Tech.

With 44 alumni in the fold, the Wuensches set a world record for most members of a family to graduate from the same university.

Francis Wuensche, from the small town of Wilson that's about 20 miles south of Lubbock, started the procession with a degree in zoology in 1953. Three generations later, Andrew Simnacher accepted the family's 44th diploma in December 2021.

And the Wuensches, many of whom are members of electric cooperatives around the state, aren't done. Three more members of the extended family enrolled as freshmen last fall.

## **TCP** Contests and More

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## August 3 National Watermelon Day

Texas ranks fourth in the U.S. in watermelon production, growing 11% of the 3.4 billion pounds harvested annually. Together, Florida, Georgia, California and Texas produce three-fourths of the refreshing fruit.

## In a Whole New Light

“My wife and I just visited the Morse Museum in Florida and its large collection of Tiffany works. We can’t wait to visit the Gelman Stained Glass Museum.”

RICHARD SANTAMARIA  
PEDERNALES EC  
DRIPPING SPRINGS



JOHN FAULK

## Tongue-Tied

My maternal grandparents both immigrated to Texas from Germany and Austria in the decades before World War I [*Auf Wiedersehen*, May 2023]. My mother, born in the early 1920s, was their only child, and her first language was German. Neither my sister nor I were ever taught German.

Much later in life, I oft wondered why we were not given the gift of a second language.

John W. Palm Jr.  
Hamilton County EC  
Lampasas

## Just Dew It

I have dewberries growing all around my house [*Crawling With Trouble*, May 2023]. I fought them for years trying to get rid of them, but you can’t. Then after harvesting some, I made a cobbler and just decided to cultivate them instead.

Sherrie Taylor  
Via Facebook



CHANELLE NIBBELINK

## Westward Bound

*Rise Up West* [April 2023] was hauntingly familiar. An ancestor moved to West around the end of the Civil War from an area that became the Czech Republic. An uncle told me they left the old country because it was involved in a civil war of its own. That they left one country due to civil war only to arrive in the U.S. with its own civil war is ironic.

Ken Konvicka  
United Cooperative Services  
Graford

## Mockingbirds Are Mean

I regret that the mockingbird is our state bird [*Roll Out the Red Carpet*, December 2022]. Whoever put the mockingbird up for this prestigious position obviously knew nothing about the mockingbird.

The mockingbird is very aggressive and mean. On several occasions, I have been fortunate enough to intervene and save the lives of bluebirds and cardinals from mockingbirds.

Roberta McLaughlin  
Heart of Texas EC  
Lorena

**TCP WRITE TO US**  
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power  
1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor  
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**Please include** your electric co-op and town. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

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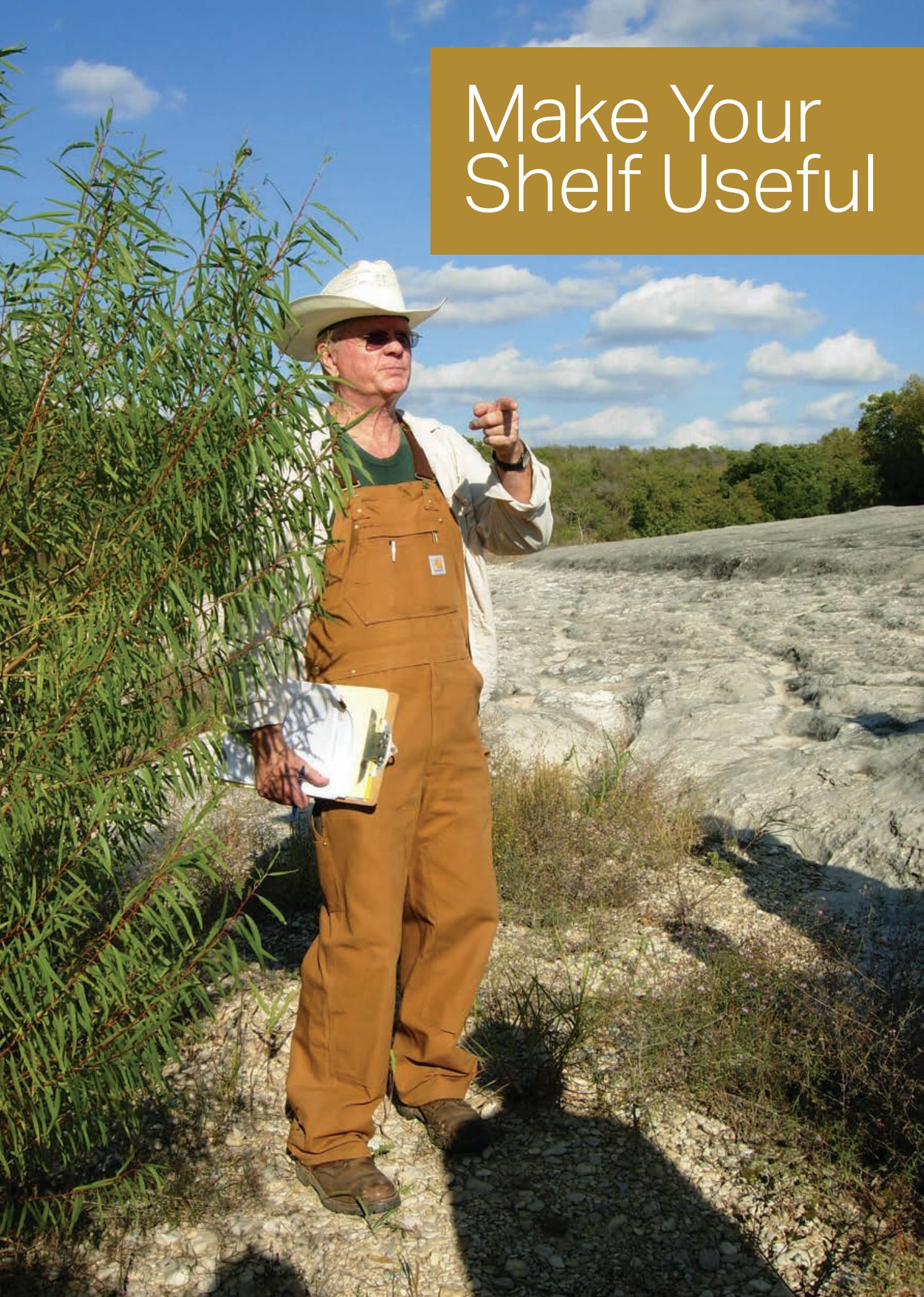
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# Make Your Shelf Useful



BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

## Scooter Cheatham has dedicated his life to voluminous books that document uses for Texas' plants



**Y**EARS AGO Scooter Cheatham asked a classroom of high school sophomores to figure out how plants play a role in everything around them. As an example, he challenged them to connect plants to a pair of scissors. The Austin students, hoping for an easy answer, contacted the manufacturer. “There are no plants in our scissors,” a representative emailed back.

The response forced the teens to do their research. Ultimately “they learned that the manufacturing of steel to make scissors requires coal,” Cheatham says. “The orange plastic handles are derived from petrochemicals. The students also realized that the company representative was as ‘plant blind’ as everyone else about the importance of plants in our lives.”

They matter so much, in fact, that Cheatham has made them his lifelong mission. Plants support our food, health and industry—even contributing to the formation of coal and petrochemicals. For more than 50 years, he and his collaborators have worked to compile the ultimate reference encyclopedia: *The Useful Wild Plants of Texas, the Southeastern and Southwestern United States, the Southern Plains, and Northern Mexico*.

Since 1995, Cheatham’s nonprofit Useful Wild Plants has published four volumes, each counting 600 or more pages and collectively weighing nearly 20 pounds. When completed, the set will include at least 20 volumes and document the economic uses of more than 4,000 plant species, both native and naturalized.

“There’s nothing else like our volumes in the world,” says Cheatham, seated at UWP’s office in East Austin. “They’re the most comprehensive, interdisciplinary treatment of plant species ever done, going back to their prehistoric uses and forward to the most recent chemistry.

“People ask if this is our passion,” adds the self-educated botanist. “I say it’s our obligation to the planet. We’ve got to do this, or we won’t be ready when we run out of oil and gas.

OPPOSITE Scooter Cheatham, 77, has been documenting plants since 1971. THIS PAGE, FROM TOP The sweet, slightly tart berries of an agarita, an evergreen shrub with many medicinal uses, can be made into wine and coffee. A honey-scented agarita in bloom.

COURTESY USEFUL WILD PLANTS



The smallest single plant on our planet has more promise for our future than anything we could study in outer space.”

Whenever his time allows, Cheatham, an architect and community and regional planner by profession, returns to Cuero, where he grew up gardening, milking cows and riding horses. As a boy, he explored and hunted on his grandmother’s nearby ranch along the Guadalupe River, a portion of which he owns today. Back then, he didn’t pay much attention to the live oaks, native grasses and other plants.

That was, until 1971, when he and a pal, both students at the University of Texas, embarked on an “experimental” archaeology project. During spring break, they lived off Cheatham’s family land like Indigenous peoples once did, using tools they’d made themselves. The experience profoundly impacted Cheatham.

“For 10 days, all we ate was a possum and an armadillo,” he recalls. “Out there, we were surrounded by plants. But I knew only a few common ones, like pecans and dewberries. That’s when I realized how much we rely on plants.”

The lightbulb moment inspired a yearning to learn more about the value of flora. Back on campus, Cheatham visited botanist Marshall Johnston, who the year before had co-written and published the 1,881-page *Manual of Vascular Plants of Texas*. Cheatham asked the professor if there was a comprehensive resource on the *usefulness* of plants. “No,” Johnston told the younger man. “You should do it.”

So in 1971, at age 26, Cheatham began what would turn into a monumental, decadeslong undertaking.

Alongside the project, Cheatham, an accomplished artist and photographer, taught architecture and watercolor classes at UT for 10 years. He also led classes that taught students how to forage for wild edibles.

## Plants support our food, health and industry—even contributing to the formation of coal and petrochemicals.

In 1977, a recent UT anthropology graduate named Lynn Marshall signed up for the foraging class and agreed to pay for half her course fees by volunteering with UWP. She never left. Like Cheatham, she has dedicated herself to the endeavor.

At the project’s start, compiling just the species list and project parameters took a year and a half. Then Cheatham and Johnston traveled extensively, photographing plants in various stages of life. Filing cabinets in UWP’s office contain their 350,000 slides. More filing cabinets house thousands of manila folders, each labeled by plant genus and packed with notes, printouts and research.

In 1995, Cheatham; Johnston, who has since retired; and Marshall published their first volume. Subsequent volumes followed in 2000, 2009 and 2015. They may be ordered through the UWP website at [usefulwildplants.org](http://usefulwildplants.org).

The tomes are made to last. “We believe people will need them for several hundred years,” Cheatham says. “So we don’t use cheap paper that would turn yellow in 18 months.”

Altogether, the four volumes published so far document 833 species. Organized alphabetically by genus, Volume 1 begins with *Abronia* (sand verbenas) and ends with *Arundo* (giant cane). Volume 4 covers *Cenchrus* (grassburs) through *Convolvulus* (wild morning glories). Still in progress, Volume 5 will begin with *Conyza* (horseweed).

Each genus section includes species descriptions, range maps and color images. Subheadings enable readers to quickly find specific information, such as “Native American food uses,” “chemical components” and “author dye tests.”



OPPOSITE The drought-hardy damianita boasts aromatic blooms in spring and summer. FROM LEFT Prairie paintbrush blossoms attract hummingbirds and bees. A Texas redbud's young seedpods are edible.



Entries run from less than one page to dozens. For example, *Bowlesia* (Bowles parsley) is a scant page, but *Carex* (sedges)—the largest genus in Texas flora—fills 76 pages.

Most people know about grassburs. When stepped on, their spiny seedheads hurt like the blazes to pull out—hence their reputation as a detestable weed. But surprise: “Some members of the genus *Cenchrus* are highly valued as range grasses that increase the lease value of grazing lands,” according to *The Useful Wild Plants of Texas*. “Native Americans of the Southwest and prehistoric people of Texas used *Cenchrus* for food, therapy and utilitarian purposes.”

With more than a dozen volumes and thousands of entries still to publish, Cheatham hopes to recruit and train more staff.

“Lynn and I are spread extremely thin,” he says. “Right now, we’re in a phase to raise consciousness about the importance of plants and publicize what we’re doing so we can raise the funds necessary to build a team that will finish this project. With a full staff, all the volumes could be completed in seven years.

“People need to know about Useful Wild Plants so they’ll carry it on after we’re gone,” he says. “This project belongs to the world.” ■



## Putting Plants To Use

Gleaned from the pages of  
*The Useful Wild Plants of Texas*:

**Beebrush** A thornless shrub with fragrant flowers. Add its fresh or dried leaves to dishes as a spice that tastes similar to oregano.

**Hackberry** A widespread deciduous tree that grows 50–80 feet tall. Make a toothbrush from a pencil-sized stem. Peel the bark from one end, then chew (or pound with a hammer) to spread out the fibers.

**Inland sea oats** A grass with drooping, oatlike seedheads. Seeds can be toasted and milled into a coarse meal. For best results, use a batter bread recipe that calls for boiling the grains before baking.

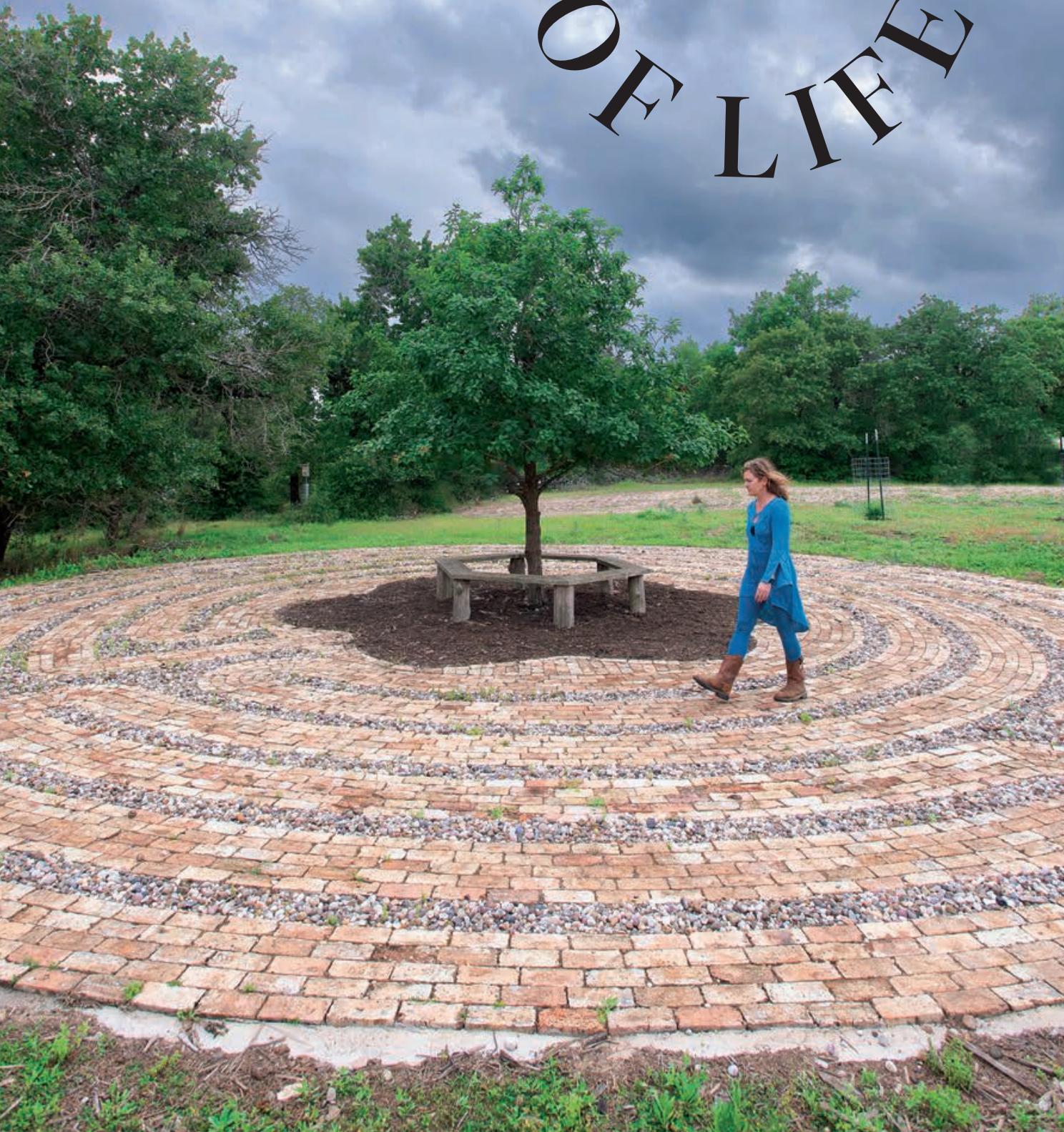
**Ragweed** Flowering plants best known for causing hay fever. A poultice of leaves applied to a poison ivy rash is said to ease the itch.

**Trumpet creeper** A woody vine with reddish-orange flowers. Collect roots to make ropes up to 30 feet long. Peel off the outer layer and boil for two to three hours in lye water, then pound with a wooden mallet to soften. Twist the strands into a half-inch-wide rope.

# CIRCLES

*Labyrinths are providing Texans with 'a profound sense of renewal and peace'*

# OF LIFE



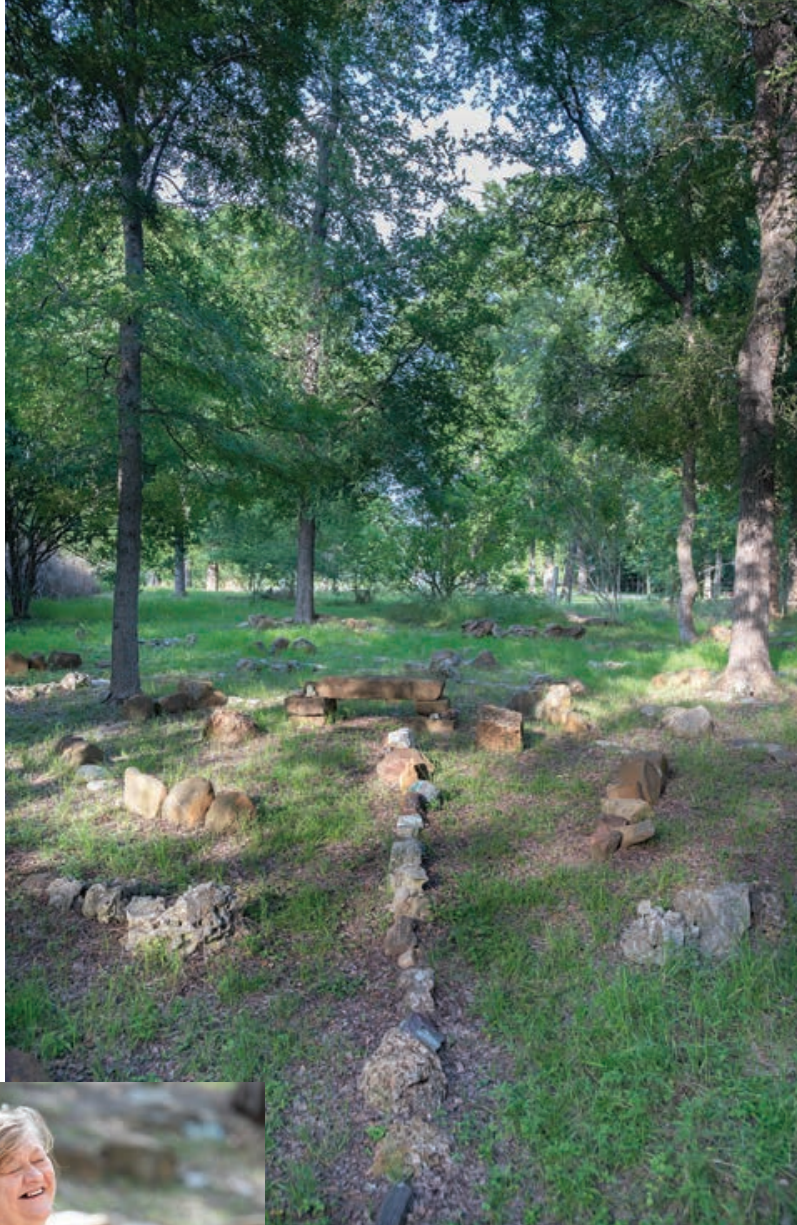
**A**BOUT 20 MINUTES northwest of Bastrop State Park, a labyrinth lies beneath a grove of towering cedar elms. Seven circles of sandstone, Colorado River rock and honeycomb limestone—all native to the area—comprise what’s known as a Cretan, or classical, design at Bastrop Botanical Gardens. A shepherd’s hook, the name of the long, perpendicular row that leads straight to the bench in the center of the labyrinth, is lined with an eclectic array of rocks and stones, gifts that Deena Spellman received for her birthday in 2012.

Each stone has a story. They celebrate friendships, symbolize memories and mark devastating losses. It was loss, in fact, that inspired Spellman to begin constructing the labyrinth she’d been dreaming of building for more than a decade.

“After the Bastrop County Complex Fire destroyed so many of our neighbors’ and customers’ homes in 2011, I wanted to create a space where people could find some peace and maybe a little hope,” says Spellman, the owner of Bastrop Botanical Gardens, a boutique nursery. “Since then, many people who needed a quiet place to heal have walked the labyrinth. The Cretan part gives you time to contemplate what’s on your mind while you’re walking to the center, or source. The shepherd’s hook gives you direct access. Sometimes you just need to get to source.”

Simply put, a labyrinth is a meandering path leading to a center, a geometric framework for walking, meditation and reflection. Many use it as a tool for personal and spiritual transformation. There are more than 4,500 documented labyrinths in the U.S., according to the World-Wide Labyrinth Locator.

OPPOSITE Karen Knight, a certified labyrinth facilitator, walks the labyrinth at her Ardor Wood Farm in Red Rock. ABOVE Deena Spellman created the labyrinth at Bastrop Botanical Gardens so visitors can “find some peace and maybe a little hope.”



At last count, 240 were listed in Texas—most open to the public, though a handful are private.

Many Texas labyrinths are situated at houses of worship or spiritual retreat centers, but they’re not just for religious folks. There’s a labyrinth in the meditation garden at the National Vietnam War Museum in Weatherford. The UTHealth Houston nursing school installed one

for students as a means of reducing stress. You can find labyrinths at parks, schools and retirement centers.

They’re by no means new. The oldest documented labyrinth dates to 1200 B.C. It was found in Pylos, Greece.

Many conflate labyrinths and mazes, but there’s one major difference between the two. Mazes may offer numerous possible routes to the center, some of which are dead ends. But labyrinths feature only one nonbranching route to the center. One way in, and one way out. They’re ancient archetypes—multicultural symbols that have been found on every continent except Antarctica.

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT The Rev. Mike Marsh and Brenda Faulkner, director of programs at Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas. The St. Philip's Episcopal Church labyrinth in Uvalde. Labyrinth guru Robert Ferré.



*“Before we begin, I encourage people to start in a place of gratitude and to keep the three Rs in mind: releasing, receiving and returning,” Karen Knight says.*

Robert Ferré, a retired labyrinth builder and author of the book *The Labyrinth Revival: A Personal Account*, says labyrinths went from being archetypal symbols to walkable structures sometime in the Middle Ages.

“Originally labyrinths were small drawings and illustrations in manuscripts,” says Ferré, who lives in San Antonio and has designed more than 1,100 labyrinths worldwide. “At some point somebody decided to build one large enough that they could walk around in. It became a symbol you could embody.

“I think labyrinths reflect a spiritual need in a society that has wandered into living too shallowly, or on the surface of things,” he says. “They signal our need to go deeper.”

Using a labyrinth as a means of self-reflection is something Karen Knight knows a lot about. She’s a certified labyrinth facilitator and co-owner of Ardor Wood Farm in Red Rock. She became interested in labyrinths in 2011 after visiting Chartres Cathedral in France. Her husband, Graham

Pierce, built a labyrinth in the cathedral’s style at their farm for Knight’s 50th birthday, a gift that their camping and retreat guests often utilize.

Knight also offers “labyrinth magic” experiences, wherein she guides people through the labyrinth using the Veriditas method, which she learned from one of the world’s foremost labyrinth authorities, the Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress.

“Before we begin, I encourage people to start in a place of gratitude and to keep the three Rs in mind: releasing, receiving and returning,” Knight says. “You’re releasing on the way in during your walk. Perhaps there’s a specific thing you’re letting go of, or maybe you’re just releasing the busy chatter in your head. You’re receiving and staying open while you’re in the middle, and as you return you’re taking your experience home.

“I feel like it’s a moving meditation,” she says. “People need a pause. We’re often busy, depleted or distressed, and labyrinths can bring a profound sense of renewal and peace.”



A suspended sculpture by Lewis deSoto creates a labyrinth in shadow on the University of Texas at San Antonio's downtown campus.

to cope with trauma and grief. They've committed to a presence of at least five years in the small town. Brenda Faulkner, the director of programs, moved to Uvalde to take the job—not only because her son, daughter-in-law and two grandsons live there but also because she wanted to help the community heal.

She had used labyrinths as a therapeutic tool for years, so using the one at St. Philip's with some of the children came naturally to her.

"I've found that walking the sacred path, which is what Mike calls their labyrinth, serves a couple of purposes," Faulkner says. "One is that it gets us outdoors. We have a lot of beautiful days in Uvalde. At the beginning of the path I say, 'I'm old, so you're going to have to go slower for me so I can keep up with you.' And as we walk, we talk. It's also great

because it's a very physical thing. As they're moving and we're talking, they're often not even aware that the therapeutic process is going on.

"What's interesting about walking a labyrinth," she says, "is that just about the time you think you're done, you're only a quarter done, which kind of correlates with the grief process."

Marsh has observed the same thing.

"There's a metaphor in the walking," he says. "If you follow the path, you're not going to get lost. You may get disoriented because it looks like you're getting almost to the center and then you're way out on the periphery again. But the discipline is to follow the path. Don't overthink it." ■

**T**HE REV. MIKE MARSH was sold on the benefits of labyrinths long before he became the rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Uvalde in 2005. Nine years later, he and Ferré designed and built one for the church. It was a gift to the community, and now it's a place of respite in the aftermath of the 2022 Robb Elementary School shooting.

"I've seen many individuals and families linger there over the years," Marsh says.

San Antonio-based Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas uses a church building that is adjacent to the labyrinth to serve children in the community struggling

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 San Antonio **210-961-9990** Dallas/Fort Worth **469-606-5229**

**TopWindowSolution.com**

<sup>1</sup>Subject to availability, on a total purchase of 4 or more. Buy 2 windows or doors and 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. \$400 discount valid during first appointment only. Cannot be combined with other offers. To qualify for discount offer, initial contact for an appointment must be made and documented on or before 8/31/23 with the purchase then occurring on or before 9/10/23. <sup>2</sup>No 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. <sup>3</sup>See limited warranty for details at <https://www.renewalbyandersen.com/homeowner-help/warranty>. \*National Replacement Window Month is not a Congressionally-approved designation. 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](http://www.rbaguidelines.com). ©2023 Andersen Corporation. ©2023 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved.



MESSAGE  
FROM  
GENERAL  
MANAGER/  
CEO

JEFF LANE

## We're Here To Serve You

**WE'VE ALL HEARD** the phrase above countless times. The words may sound generic, but to us—your local electric cooperative—they mean everything.

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative was created to serve our community. More than 75 years ago, neighbors banded together and formed our co-op for the common good of the community. In our case, it was the only way to bring electricity to an area where there was none. In doing so, the co-op helped the community thrive. That mission-focused heritage is the golden thread woven throughout our history.

Today we continue to power the community. While our focus has remained steady on providing reliable energy to our members, the current energy landscape and consumer expectations are far different than they were decades ago. That's why we're adapting—to keep pace with changing technology, evolving needs and new expectations.

Serving as your trusted energy adviser means we want to help you save energy (and money) and provide advice and information on a broad range of topics. For example, if you're looking for ways to save energy, check out our website for tips and ideas to increase the efficiency of your home.

If you're considering a rooftop solar installation, our energy advisers are happy to give you an

unbiased view of the pros and cons for your specific situation. Investing in solar power is a major decision, and it's important to fully understand the costs, responsibilities and potential energy savings.

Unlike a solar power company that has one objective—to sell their products and services—we look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home.

Many members are also considering the purchase of electric vehicles. As your electricity provider, we want to supply the energy you need if an electric vehicle makes sense for your needs. As EVs become more numerous, the overall demand on our grid will change, and we are monitoring these developments to make sure we have the correct infrastructure in place. We are also exploring future options for rate structures and demand response capabilities that can benefit members while also contributing to grid reliability.

So the next time you hear your co-op use the phrase “we're here to serve you,” we hope you know that we mean it. Service is deeply ingrained in who we are. We continue to evolve with the times, and in return, we've found new ways to serve you and provide more options for you to power your life. ■



COFFEEKAI | ISTOCK.COM





ALEX POTEMKIN | ISTOCK.COM

## Prevent Power Line Problems

**NEARLY EVERYONE KNOWS** not to touch a downed power line, but you might not know that you don't have to touch a power line to be in danger. High-voltage electricity can jump to anyone who gets too close.

Anytime you're working or playing outside, stay at least 10 feet away from power lines and their connections. If you come across a downed line, keep these tips in mind.

If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. The ground around fallen power lines—up to 35 feet away in all directions—may be energized.

You cannot tell whether a power line is energized just by looking at it. Assume that all downed lines are live.

The proper way to move away from a fallen power line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock.

If you see someone who's in direct or indirect contact with a downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 for help.

Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with it. Even less conductive materials like wood or cloth can conduct electricity if even slightly wet.

Be careful not to touch or step in water near a downed power line.

Do not drive over downed power lines.

If your vehicle comes into contact with a downed power line while you are inside, stay in the vehicle. Honk your horn to summon help, but direct others to stay away. Call 911.

If you must leave your vehicle because it's on fire, jump out of it with both feet together and try not to make contact with the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Then shuffle away from the vehicle. ■

## 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](http://tvec.net)

### Board of Directors

Howard Tillison, Chairman, District 6

Carolyn Minor, Vice Chairwoman, District 1

Jo Ann Hanstrom, Secretary, District 4

Jeff Priest, District 2

Paul Weatherford, District 3

Edward Reeve, District 5

Jack Endres, District 7

### General Manager/CEO

Jeff Lane

**24/7**

**Outage  
Hotline  
Numbers**

For information and to report outages, please call us.

**TOLL-FREE**  
1-800-967-9324

**AUTOMATED ASSISTANCE**  
1-800-720-3584

### 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](http://tvec.net)





# ATTENTION

## IMPORTANT PAYMENT INFORMATION


**NO ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED BETWEEN AUGUST 15TH-21ST**

Mail-in payments, cash, and checks will still be accepted in our lobbies.

As we convert over to our new SmartHub payment system it will require us take our current electronic payment system offline temporarily.

More information regarding our new SmartHub payment system launching October 31st will be available soon!



 No late fees or disconnects for non payment during this time.

Visit [tvec.net/smarthub](http://tvec.net/smarthub) for more information!

## TVEC August Updates: Software Conversion News, Save the Date for Annual Meeting and More

THE YEAR IS GOING BY FAST and our big software conversion is coming up in just a few months. The change to the SmartHub interface for Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative members promises many updates and communication enhancements that we are excited to share with you. Here are a few major upcoming events in that transition process:

- **August 15–21**—TVEC electronic payment systems will be offline during this week. Check and cash payments will still be accepted, but bank transfer, credit card and other electronic payments will not be taken. This includes payments via the myTVEC mobile app and the online member portal. Disconnects and late fees will not be processed during this week.
- **Early October**—Watch for TVEC communications regarding how to register for and use the new SmartHub system. This will include your new account number and important information regarding the setup of automated payments, alerts, reminders and other account details.
- **October 23–27**—This will be another week with no electronic payments as we make the final transition to the SmartHub system.
- **October 30**—On Monday October 30 we will be completely live on the new system. You will want to download the SmartHub app and get familiar with a new way to manage your electrical account, monitor electricity usage and communicate with us through any service issues.

**In other TVEC news, we have some important co-op business coming up with the TVEC Board of Directors Election and upcoming TVEC Annual Membership Meeting.**

- Be sure to mark October 5 on your calendar for the 2023 TVEC Annual Membership Meeting. We will once again head



# ATTENTION

## VERIFY OR UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

With our new SmartHub billing and payment system coming soon, please verify or update your current contact information to ensure you receive all communication regarding the upcoming changes!



Visit [tvec.net/smarthub](http://tvec.net/smarthub) for more information

to the Canton Civic Center for a light dinner and important information from co-op leaders.

- This year's director election will include electronic voting. Watch next month's *Texas Co-op Power* for voting information and ballots. If you have an email address on file with us, you will get an invitation to vote by email in September as well. ■



## Pole Attachment Activity Is Up in TVEC Territory

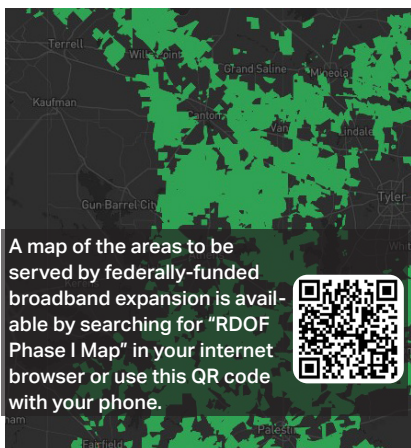
Federal broadband expansion funding means a lot of new wires and a few temporary construction headaches.

BY DON JOHNSON, MEDIA AND CONTENT SUPERVISOR

IF IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE SEEN an increase in bucket trucks and utility crews out and about in Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative territory recently, you are not alone. Along with the normal maintenance of co-op power lines, there are dozens of crews working to install internet lines in many areas.

### So what is going on?

Most of the activity is related to Charter Communications/Spectrum Internet installing fiber data service lines. The company won a large federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund grant in late 2021, aiming to install fast internet to under served areas, including much of the TVEC service area.



This means the installers need access to TVEC poles to complete their work.

In areas where power line easements are not available, they may also seek easements from landowners.

### What can members and landowners expect to see?

While most of the installation crews are independent contractors, they should have identification on vehicles for the installing company.

Some TVEC members have reported unmarked vehicles, and some of the crews that do final installation and wire splicing seem to be in private vehicles or with unmarked trailers.

It has also been reported that many of these crews are working weekend shifts. Crews should request permission to work on your property and postpone work to a weekday if you request that.

Finally, a few members have reported property damage and messy work sites after crews come through. While this has been rare, we will do our best to help rectify the situation.

While this is not a TVEC project, and we do not have any oversight on the crews in the field, we think the addition of high speed internet will be great for many TVEC members in these areas. Please move over and slow down for workers in the field and allow them access to complete their tasks expeditiously. ■

## Win \$100 Just for Reading

Somewhere, hidden on pages 16-23, is a TVEC account number. Read closely. If the account number is yours, contact the member services department by August 31 to receive a \$100 credit on your electric bill. Don't miss out—you could be our winner.





TVEC ENERGY  
MANAGEMENT ADVISER  
**CHRIS WALKER, BAP**

## The Simplest Way To Save on AC

**AUGUST IS PEAK** air conditioning season for a lot of us, and that means your energy bills might be higher now than during any other month.

Raising your thermostat is, of course, the most effective summer cost saving method. After that, it is all about helping your AC unit run efficiently.

And to do that, the one simple thing you can do is keeping a clean filter in your system. 60199184001

This might just be the easiest and most important thing you can do to positively impact your cost for summer comfort.

Air conditioners vary greatly, and some are simply more efficient than others. However, there is one factor that determines how much energy your particular unit will use to do the job: the amount of time it has to run. Most central air conditioning systems are either on or off. That means anything you can do to reduce the amount of time the unit has to run to maintain your desired temperature, the better.

Dirty filters can hinder the air that flows through them, which makes your system work harder than it needs to. Replacing the filter regularly can also reduce wear and tear on your AC system, extending its life. As air filters become older and deteriorate, they can release fibers and debris directly into the moving parts of your system, which can lead to mechanical breakdowns. A clean filter also screens out pollutants, particulates and dust to improve the quality of indoor air.

Replacing a dirty filter with a clean one could lower the amount of energy your AC uses by up to 15%. ■



STEVEN HEAP | IISTOCK.COM

Your AC filter may be located in ceiling air returns, wall air returns in mobile homes, or in the attic air handler units.




### Energy Quiz

**When was the first successful electric car introduced in the U.S.?**  
[energy.gov/articles/history-electric-car](https://energy.gov/articles/history-electric-car)

- A • 1911 (Ford)**
- B • 1890 (Morrison)**
- C • 1908 (Kettering)**
- D • 1971 (NASA)**

Win \$100!

Send your answer and contact information to [contest@tvec.coop](mailto:contest@tvec.coop) or contact TVEC Member Services by August 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*.

## July Energy Quiz: Electrifying Texas

**ELECTRIC LIGHTING WAS STILL** in its infancy in 1883 as Galveston became the first Texas city to install electric lighting and begin electric service. Wabash, Indiana, was considered first in the U.S. just three years earlier. As generation plants and technology improved, urban residents began to see quality of life improve with electricity.

It wouldn't be until the 1930s that rural electrification would take off, as co-ops began putting up poles and wires, including TVEC's predecessors in 1938.

Congratulations to the June Energy Quiz winner, Sheryl Norred, of Murchison.

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



KIMWALKER/ISTOCK.COM

## Stay Ready During Hurricane Season

**EACH YEAR FROM** June through November, a large portion of Texas faces the threat of hurricanes. While coastal communities are most vulnerable, inland areas of the state still can be at risk. Much of the Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative service territory is well within reach of tropical storm-force winds in the case of a major hurricane hitting the coast.

### Make an Evacuation Plan

Plan your evacuation route ahead of time and make sure your car has a full tank of gas.

Assemble a disaster supplies kit with essential items such as water, food, medications and important documents, including a copy of your homeowners insurance policy.

Be sure to plan for family members who are elderly, young or have special health needs. Don't forget to plan for pets too.

### Secure Property First

- ▶ Remove tree limbs that could fall onto your home.
- ▶ If you live in a mobile home, secure it with tie-downs.
- ▶ Board up windows and doors.
- ▶ Move patio furniture, grills and other loose objects indoors.
- ▶ Follow the advice of local officials about whether to turn off gas and electricity before leaving.

### Stay Safe When You Return

Dangers such as high water, downed power lines and broken gas mains are major safety threats after storms. Wait for public officials to give the all-clear before returning home. Once you're home again, follow these precautions:

- ▶ Use extreme caution when entering damaged homes or structures.
- ▶ Beware of unstable trees and limbs.
- ▶ Downed power lines are a serious electrocution hazard. Never touch downed power lines or any objects that are in contact with them, including water.
- ▶ Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long pants, long sleeves, and gloves when cleaning up. ■

## In Memoriam



### Vivian Trout

March 4, 1948–June 30, 2023

Vivian Trout leaves a legacy of faithful, selfless service to Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative members and fellow employees. Her graceful presence, positive influence and almost 53 years of experience will be greatly missed.

As both a coworker and mentor, her professionalism set the standard for all of us here at the co-op.

We have been blessed by her presence and will cherish her memory.



### DID YOU KNOW?

If you wash clothes with cold water, you can cut one load's energy use by more than half.

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# Payment Options

# Savings Opportunities

As a nonprofit, member-owned cooperative, saving money together means we all win. By choosing the lowest cost payment option that makes sense for you, all members win by keeping the co-op's cost as low as possible.

## Why Choose Bank Draft or E-Check?

- Provides the lowest transaction costs.
- Automated bank draft is the easiest way to pay—set up online or by contacting TVEC Member Services.
- Use the myTVEC app or online member portal for easy e-check payments.

Want to help more? Sign up for electronic billing to reduce mailing costs.

## TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

# Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Hurricane season is June 1–November 30

### Preparedness Checklist

- ▶ **Make an evacuation plan.** Find activated evacuation routes at [drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org) or by dialing 1-800-452-9292. Call 211 to find out if you live in an evacuation zone.
- ▶ **Sign up for emergency alerts.** Make sure your mobile device is enabled to receive wireless emergency alerts.
- ▶ **Prepare an emergency supply kit.** Learn how to build an emergency kit at [ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://ready.gov/build-a-kit).
- ▶ **Review your home insurance policy.**
- ▶ **Register with the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry** at [stear.tdem.texas.gov](http://stear.tdem.texas.gov) or by dialing 211 if you live in an evacuation zone and:
  - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have a car or other vehicle to use in an evacuation.
  - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation.

*Information collected for STEAR is confidential.*

### Hurricane Preparedness Online Resources

Texas Division of Emergency Management: [tdem.texas.gov](http://tdem.texas.gov)

Texas Department of State Health Services: [texasready.gov](http://texasready.gov)

American Red Cross: [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: [ready.gov](http://ready.gov)

Office of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott: [gov.texas.gov](http://gov.texas.gov)

## DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

# Preparación para huracanes

La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de junio al 30 de noviembre

### Lista de verificación de preparación:

- ▶ **Haga un plan de evacuación.** Encuentre rutas de evacuación activadas en [drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org) o marcando 1-800-452-9292. Llame 211 para averiguar si usted vive en una zona de evacuación.
- ▶ **Regístrese para recibir alertas de emergencia.** Asegúrese de que su dispositivo móvil esté habilitado para recibir alertas de emergencia inalámbricas.
- ▶ **Prepare un kit de emergencia.** Aprenda como construir un kit de emergencia en [ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://ready.gov/build-a-kit).
- ▶ **Revise su póliza de seguro de hogar.**
- ▶ **Regístrese con el Registro de Asistencia de Emergencia del Estado de Texas** en [stear.tdem.texas.gov](http://stear.tdem.texas.gov) o marcando el 211 si vive en una zona de evacuación y:
  - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene un auto u otro vehículo para usar en una evacuación.
  - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene amigos o familiares para ayudar en una evacuación.

*La información recolectada para STEAR es confidencial.*

### Recursos en línea para la preparación para huracanes

División de Administración de Emergencias de Texas: [tdem.texas.gov](http://tdem.texas.gov)

Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado: [texasready.gov](http://texasready.gov)

Cruz Roja Americana: [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)

Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos: [ready.gov](http://ready.gov)

Oficina del Gobernador de Texas Greg Abbott: [gov.texas.gov](http://gov.texas.gov)

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Charitable Foundation

Your Generosity in Action

# Operation Round Up Spotlight: Larry Sauls and Friends



TVEC | LELAINE FROSCH

**THE NAME LARRY SAULS MAY NOT RING ANY BELLS** for many Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative members, but he aims to change that one charitable cause at a time.

“I would love to grow this in Kaufman County and Henderson County, to where Larry Sauls and Friends is a household name, and where people know they can donate their money and no one gets a paycheck,” Sauls said. “We started with Channel 8’s Santa’s Helpers 22 years ago, with \$2,500 and a pickup truck. Now we’ve grown to over \$250,000 a year for bikes and sporting equipment for kids.”

The Christmastime toy and bicycle donations have become a calling card for the group, but food pantry support is an ongoing, if less visible, project.

“At Larry Sauls and Friends, we try to service where the

donations come from,” Sauls said. “We service five food pantries in Ellis and Kaufman counties. If someone needs our help and we are able to do that, then we will.”

To keep overhead expenses to a minimum, it is strictly a volunteer effort. That means the organization is always looking for more friends to join the group.

“What comes in from our donors goes back out to the community as it was intended, so if we get more members to help,” Sauls said. “The more members to help out, it would be great and we could help a lot more people.”

Aside from individual and corporate donations, the group also hosts a clay shoot fundraiser in the fall. You can find more information and how to get involved at [larrysaulsandfriends.org](http://larrysaulsandfriends.org).

## June 2023 Operation Round Up Awards

Forney Community Ministry  
\$2,000

Henderson County Black History  
Committee - \$2,000

Larry Sauls and Friends - \$2,500

Liberty Baptist Church - \$3,000

Lone Star CASA - \$6,000

Mabank ISD Foundation - \$3,000

Sharing the Love Foundation  
2,500

Shining the Light Food Ministry  
\$5,000

Still Waters Kaufman - \$2,500

## Brand New for 2023!

2023 Pure Silver Dollars  
from FIVE Countries

ADDED this Year! 2023  
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This 2023 Set Includes  
Two "Firsts" and a "Last"!



5 Countries,  
5 Pure Silver  
Coins!

# Your Silver Passport to Travel the World

*The 5 Most Popular Pure Silver Coins on Earth in One Set*

Travel the globe, without leaving home—with this set of the world's five most popular pure silver coins. Newly struck for 2023 in one ounce of fine silver, each coin will arrive in Brilliant Uncirculated (BU) condition. Your excursion includes stops in the United States, Canada, South Africa, China and Great Britain.

## We've Done the Work for You with this Extraordinary 5-Pc. World Silver Coin Set

Each of these coins is recognized for its breathtaking beauty, and for its stability even in unstable times, since each coin is backed by its government for weight, purity and legal-tender value.

**2023 American Silver Eagle:** The Silver Eagle is the most popular coin in the world, with its iconic Adolph Weinman Walking Liberty obverse backed by Emily Damstra's Eagle Landing reverse. Struck in 99.9% fine silver at the U.S. Mint.

**2023 Canada Maple Leaf:** A highly sought-after bullion coin since 1988, this 2023 issue includes the **FIRST** and likely only use of a transitional portrait, of the late Queen Elizabeth II. These are also expected to be the **LAST** Maple Leafs to bear Her Majesty's effigy. Struck in high-purity 99.99% fine silver at the Royal Canadian Mint.

**2023 South African Krugerrand:** The Krugerrand continues to be the best-known, most respected numismatic coin brand in the world. 2023 is the Silver Krugerrand's 6th year of issue. Struck in 99.9% fine silver at the South African Mint.

**2023 China Silver Panda:** 2023 is the 40th anniversary of the first silver Panda coin, issued in 1983. China Pandas are noted for their heart-warming one-year-only designs. Struck in 99.9% fine silver at the China Mint.

GovMint.com • 1300 Corporate Center Curve, Dept. WRD349-05, Eagan, MN 55121

**2023 British Silver Britannia:** One of the Royal Mint's flagship coins, this 2023 issue is the **FIRST** in the Silver Britannia series to carry the portrait of King Charles III, following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. Struck in 99.9% fine silver.

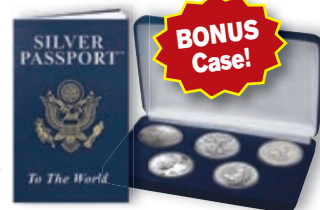


## Exquisite Designs Struck in Precious Silver

These coins, with stunningly gorgeous finishes and detailed designs that speak to their country of origin, are sure to hold a treasured place in your collection. Plus, they provide you with a unique way to stock up on precious silver. Here's a legacy you and your family will cherish. Act now!

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**FREE SHIPPING:** Standard domestic shipping. Not valid on previous purchases.

For fastest service call today toll-free

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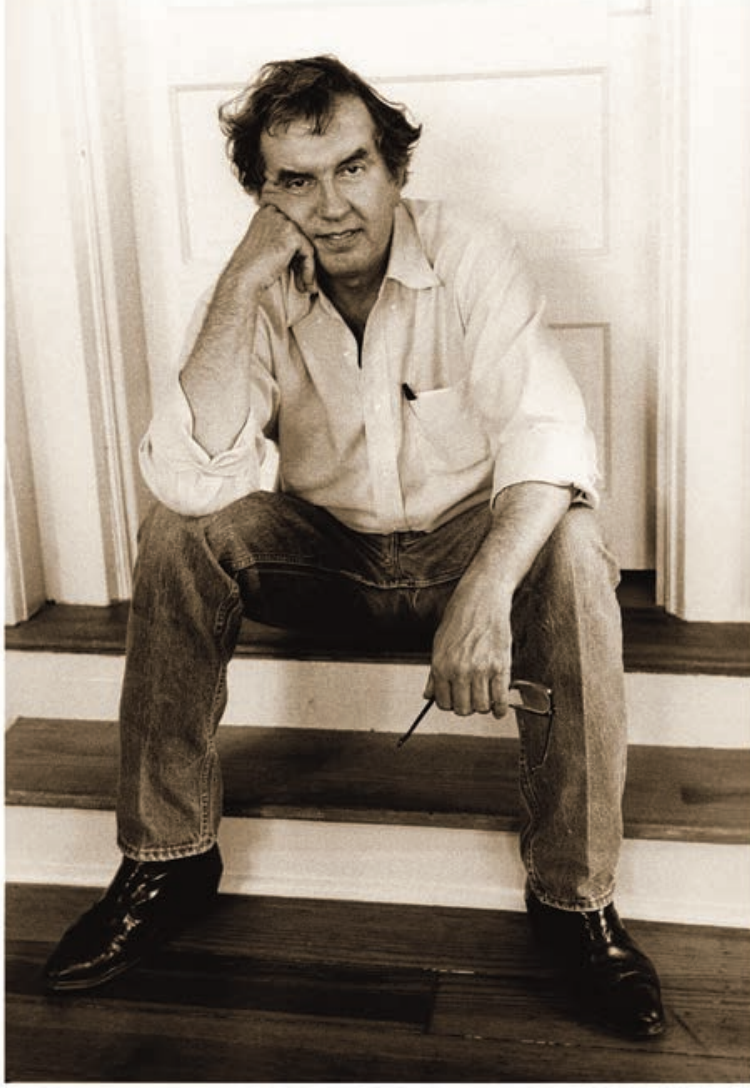
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# A Page of the Past

Traces of real-life Texans ride through McMurtry's 'Lonesome Dove'

BY W.F. STRONG

**MILLIONS OF COPIES** of Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* have sold since the novel was published in 1985. The miniseries that followed in 1989 was likewise immensely popular. McMurtry himself called it the *Gone With the Wind* of the West, but he never loved the book as much as his fans. "You know most writers come to dislike their most popular books," he once told journalist John Spong. "Henry James hated *Daisy Miller*, which is what he is known by. He's probably written 35 other books. I feel a little that way about *Lonesome Dove*."

McMurtry said he never saw the miniseries. Maybe if he had, he would have better understood how endearingly Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones and

Diane Lane brought their characters to life. I can't help but wonder if those characters were modeled after real-life Texans.

But McMurtry said that that wasn't his aim. Though Woodrow Call has some attributes of Charles Goodnight, and Gus McCrae has some attributes of Oliver Loving, the novel's main characters were not modeled after actual historical figures. McMurtry said the book is not meant to be a faithful history of the era but rather one that has echoes of those times.

In fact, he sought to authentically demythologize the life of the cowboy and show how brutally difficult their lives were. "The whole book is permeated with criticism of the Old West from start to finish," he said.

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



Nonetheless, McMurtry acknowledged that somehow Call and McCrae became celebrated heroes. He said a lot of people "were nostalgic for the culture of the Old West, though it was a terrible culture."

Bits of history did however make it into the book.

One event in the actual lives of Goodnight and Loving that's enlarged within the book is Loving's death. Goodnight returned his body from Fort Sumner, New Mexico, to Weatherford. In the novel, Call takes McCrae's body all the way from Montana to Texas, a much longer journey with far more drama.

Antagonist Blue Duck was a real Native American chief, but McMurtry said that was coincidental. He chose the name without realizing that, and that's where the similarity stops. But the character's death is without question similar to that of the Kiowa Chief Satanta, who killed himself while imprisoned.

The character Joshua Deets was inspired by Bose Ickard, a longtime friend of Goodnight. When Ickard died, Goodnight carved a fervent epitaph for him. McMurtry used quite similar words—and some of the exact ones—when Call carves an epitaph for Deets.

As we read on, we do encounter genuine historical figures, though their biographies are massaged—people like Judge Roy Bean, John Wesley Hardin and the ubiquitous Goodnight, who's never very chatty and always on the move.

Near the end of the book, a reporter exclaims to Call that people are saying he's a man of vision. He responds, "Yes, a hell of a vision." The real Goodnight actually said this line in a similar circumstance, referring to all the tough times and horror he had seen as a Texas Ranger and frontier rancher. ■

# Sheet Pan Meals

All-in-one dishes make serving and cleanup a snap

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

If you're looking for the perfect less-mess sheet pan meal, try this flavorful and balanced steak dinner. This recipe, adapted from our friends at Beef Loving Texans, is so easy you'll want to make it all summer.

## Cumin-Dusted Steak Sheet Pan Dinner

**1¼ teaspoons ground cumin, divided use**  
**1¼ teaspoons salt, divided use**  
**¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**  
**1¼ pounds well-trimmed boneless top sirloin or flat iron steak (cut 1-inch thick)**  
**1 pound unpeeled sweet potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes or wedges (about 3 cups)**  
**2 tablespoons olive oil, divided use**  
**¼ teaspoon chili powder**  
**1 bag trimmed fresh green beans (12 ounces)**  
**1 teaspoon garlic powder**

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Combine 1 teaspoon cumin,  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt and pepper in a small bowl. Apply the spice rub to both sides of the steak. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, toss sweet potato cubes with  $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons olive oil, remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon cumin,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt and chili powder. Spread potatoes across a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment. Bake 15 minutes. Turn potatoes and move them to one side of the baking sheet.
4. Increase oven temperature to high broiler setting. Toss green beans with remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoon olive oil, remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt and garlic powder. Place green beans next to potatoes on the baking sheet. Place steak on an uncoated wire rack on top of the sheet pan, positioning the steak so that it's over the green beans.
5. Broil steak on lower rack of oven for about 7 minutes. Turn steak and broil an additional 4–5 minutes for medium-rare to medium doneness (145–160 degrees). Remove steak from wire rack and let it sit for about 3 minutes before slicing and serving. Toss green beans with pan juices.

**SERVES 5**

Reprinted with permission from Beef Loving Texans.

**TCP** Follow along with Vianney Rodriguez while she cooks in Cocina Gris at [sweetlifebake.com](http://sweetlifebake.com), where she features a recipe for Spicy Sheet Pan Hash Browns.





## No-Mess Shrimp Boil

HELENA WALLACE  
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

If you've been craving a shrimp boil without all the hassle, we've got you covered with this delicious no-mess preparation.

- 2 pounds whole, unpeeled small Yukon potatoes**
- 6 ears fresh corn, cut into 2–3 sections**
- 1 large onion, peeled and quartered**
- 2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined**
- 2 packages smoked andouille sausage (12 ounces each), sliced**
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 2 tablespoons Old Bay seasoning**
- 4 tablespoons Italian seasoning**
- 2 lemons, cut into wedges**

1. Preheat oven 400 degrees. Lightly oil 2 baking sheets.
2. Add potatoes to a large pot of boiling, salted water and cook 10 minutes or until tender. Add corn and onion in the last 5 minutes of the potatoes boiling. Drain.
3. Spread potatoes, corn and onion onto baking sheets. Add the shrimp and sliced sausage.
4. In a small saucepan over low heat, combine the butter, garlic and Old Bay seasoning and heat until melted. Remove from heat and stir in Italian seasoning.
5. Pour butter mixture over prepared baking sheets, turning to coat all ingredients.
6. Bake 12–15 minutes or until shrimp is fully cooked. Serve with lemon wedges.

SERVES 6–8

[MORE RECIPES >](#)



\$500 WINNER

## Aunt Glo's Brandied Peach Chicken

BARBARA LOYD  
UNITED COOPERATIVE  
SERVICES



A tasty tribute to Loyd's Aunt Glo, this dish takes baked chicken to the next level.

SERVES 8

- ½ cup peach nectar**
- ½ cup brandy**
- ¼ cup olive oil**
- 2 medium shallots, minced**
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 4 pounds chicken breasts, skin on**
- 1 jar peach preserves (12 ounces)**
- 4 plums, sliced**
- 1 cup halved seedless green grapes**

1. In a large bowl, combine nectar, brandy, olive oil, shallots, brown sugar, salt and pepper.
2. Place chicken in mixture and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Reserve marinade.
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place chicken in a roasting pan, skin side down. Bake 15 minutes.
4. Turn chicken, baste with reserved marinade and bake 30–40 minutes more or until chicken is cooked through.
5. While the chicken bakes, heat the preserves in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add sliced plums and grapes and simmer until softened. Serve warm chicken topped with the fruit sauce.

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

TEXAS CITRUS DUE AUGUST 10

How do you incorporate our state's wonderful grapefruit, oranges, lemons and limes in your recipes? Submit your best online by August 10 for a chance to win \$500.





## Apple Sheet Pan Pancakes

CAROLYN BESSELMAN  
PEDERNALES EC

If you're looking to feed a crowd at brunch, these sheet pan pancakes are the ultimate treat. Apples, pecans, applesauce and brown sugar create a sinfully sweet topping.

- 2 apples, cored and diced
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup applesauce
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 2½ cups buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2½ cups flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon melted unsalted butter

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. In a bowl, combine apples, pecans, brown sugar, applesauce and cinnamon and stir to mix. Set aside.
3. In another bowl, whisk together eggs, buttermilk and vanilla. In a large third bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar and baking soda.
4. Pour the egg mixture into the dry ingredients and stir gently until just combined. Do not overmix.

5. Brush the bottom and sides of a 13-by-18-inch rimmed baking sheet with butter.
6. Add the batter to the baking sheet, smoothing it evenly with the back of a spoon.
7. Dollop apple mixture by spoonfuls evenly over the batter. With a spoon, gently swirl the mixture into batter.
8. Bake 20–22 minutes, until golden brown and the top springs back when touched.
9. Remove from oven and serve with butter and syrup.

SERVES 10–14

**TCP** We have more than 1,000 recipes in our online archive. Check out our website to find other options for entrées, breakfasts and desserts.

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Extracurricular Activities

A small-town schoolhouse is now a community-focused brewhouse

BY CHET GARNER

FOR MOST PEOPLE—including me—the idea of going back to school sends shivers down their spine. But what if the curriculum consisted of craft beer, live music and scratch-made food? That sort of school would have a wait-list the length of the Rio Grande. Lucky for all of us, this sort of continuing education actually exists near San Angelo at Farm Ale Brewing Co., inside an old schoolhouse in Eola. Class is in session!

Eola is a rural community surrounded by cotton fields as far as the eye can see. Its downtown consists of a few blocks, three churches and a single school building that for decades housed every grade in the public system—kindergarten through 12th. The school closed in the 1980s and sat vacant until 2006, when a group of thirsty Texans decided to turn it into a craft brewery. After all, turning grains into beer is a very scientific process.

I stepped inside and was immediately hit with a wave of nostalgia that was even stronger than the smell of fermenting grains. The bones of the old school are still intact. The classrooms are now dining rooms with chalkboards and flags. The wood-floored gymnasium is now full of family-friendly games, and the auditorium houses the entire production process, from brewing to canning. Farm Ale Brewing Co. brews its beer with as many local ingredients as possible and even gives a percentage of profits back to local farmers.

The biggest upgrade came to the school cafeteria, which now serves up incredible pizza, smash burgers and rotating specials such as meat-loaf. Just like in my school days, I polished off my plate in record time and then headed to the schoolyard for recess—with the added bonus of live music. ■

ABOVE Chet does his homework at Farm Ale Brewing Co. in Eola, outside San Angelo.

**TCP** Raise your hand if you want to see a video of Chet's visit to Farm Ale on our website. And see all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



## Know Before You Go

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

## AUGUST

11

**Alpine [11–12] Big Bend Ranch Rodeo,** (432) 837-2326, bigbendranchrodeo.com

**Junction [11–12] Rodeo & Dance,** (254) 212-9160, junctiontexas.com

12

**Chappell Hill Wine and Cheese Stroll,** (979) 337-9910, chappellhilltx.com

**Denton North Texas Book Festival,** ntbfb.org

**Grand Prairie Hatch Chile Fest,** (972) 237-8084, grandfungp.com

**Vanderpool Maples and Meteors Night Sky Fest,** (830) 966-3413, tpwd.texas.gov

16

**Brady [16–19] Heart of Texas Honky Tonk Fest,** (325) 597-1895, heartoftexascountry.com

17

**Corsicana Jimmy Fortune: God and Country,** (903) 874-7792, corsicanapalace.com

**Johnson City [17–19] Blanco County Fair and Rodeo,** bcfra.org

18

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

**Bastrop [18–20, 25–26, Sept. 1–3] Steel Magnolias,** (512) 200-3826, bastropoperahouse.org

19

**Bowie Outdoor Expo,**  
(940) 872-6246,  
959theranch.com

**Chappell Hill Farmers Market,** (832) 720-5685,  
chappellhillrv.com

**Castroville [19-20] St. Louis Day Celebration,**  
(830) 931-2826,  
saintlouisday.com

24

**Fredericksburg [24-27] Gillespie County Fair,**  
(830) 997-2359,  
gillespiefair.com

26

**Crosby Kids Kicking Cancer,** (281) 785-4098,  
addisfaithfoundation.org

**Kerrville River Roadster Show,** (830) 257-7300,  
kerrvillex.com

**Lakeway [26-27] Cool Arts Show and Studio Tour,**  
(512) 261-1010,  
lakewayartsdistrict.com

27

**Stonewall LBJ's 115th Birthday,** (830) 644-2252,  
tpwd.texas.gov

## SEPTEMBER

01

**Bandera [1-3] Western Heritage Music Festival,**  
(830) 796-4849,  
banderacowboycapital.com

02

**Brenham Seth James,**  
(979) 337-7240,  
thebarnhillcenter.com

**Kerrville Kerr County Market Days and Hill Country Swap Meet,** (830) 459-6198,  
kerrmarketdays.org

### TCP *Submit Your Event*

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



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# Hoof and Horn

What a barnburner! This month readers answered the cattle call, and these prizewinning beasts moo-ved into first place. Now that the dust has settled, don't be baa-shful. Let's see who's best in show and who's just horsing around.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ

**1** JEFFREY BENSON  
PEDERNALES EC

"The big boy from Study Butte down by Big Bend."

**2** NICK GROSSMAN  
PEDERNALES EC

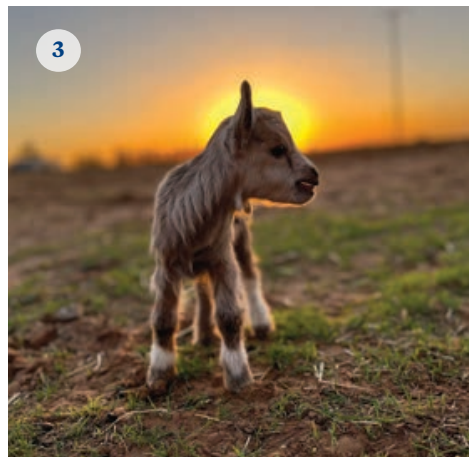
"Two wranglers heel and toe a calf in the arena."

**3** CRYSTAL VALDEZ  
LYNTEGAR EC

"Muffin was born smaller than her two brothers, but she held on to fight against all odds."

**4** MARIA CASTILLO  
COSERV

"This beauty was captured roaming the fields at my daughter's wedding venue in Terrell."



## Upcoming Contests

- DUE AUG 10** Mailboxes
- DUE SEP 10** Local Landmarks
- DUE OCT 10** Vibrant Color



Enter online at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://TexasCoopPower.com/contests).

**TCP** See Focus on Texas on our website for more Hoof and Horn photos from readers.



## Off the Hook?

The perfect tool, unused but ready, awaits the arrival of snakes

BY PATTY MOYNAHAN  
ILLUSTRATION BY  
TAYLOR CALLERY

MANY A NATIVE TEXAN, beholding an expanse of ranchland, will sooner or later think: snakes. A few years ago, my husband and I bought a house in southwest Austin. Our backyard abuts a cattle ranch, and the two properties are demarcated by a wrought iron fence. The fence is by no means a shield. Its spires—a hand’s width apart—offer space enough for critters to wriggle or slither through.

Before moving into the house, we’d heard about sightings in the area: rat snakes, ribbon snakes and garter snakes. Also rattlers, coral snakes and copperheads. I wasn’t entirely sanguine about these reports. But I wasn’t terrified either. When I was growing up in Bryan, my family often visited friends on a nearby ranch, where I’d learned to identify and avoid venomous snakes.

Soon after settling into our new house, a tall, narrow box arrived on our doorstep, a birthday present from my husband. As I unwrapped the gift, I saw a rubber grip and metal shaft and thought, ungratefully, that my husband had bought me a golf club. But it proved to be a tool far more useful to me than a 2-iron: a snake hook—a 43-inch stainless steel beauty, elegant in its simplicity.

The term “snake hook” can be misleading. No flesh is pierced. You ease the U-shaped hook under a snake and lift it. The snake dangles at the shaft’s end, out of striking distance, while you figure out what to do next.

For a sublime moment, as I regarded the gift, I was as excited as *A Christmas Story*’s Ralphie with his BB gun. I imagined myself deftly hoisting a 2-pound rattler and ... and what? Flinging it over the fence? Passing it between the spires and dropping it onto the ranchland? The affronted snake could be back in my yard before I was in the house. The phrase “fool’s errand” came to mind.

Alas, in four years, we’ve seen only one snake: a baby rattler, mortally wounded, perhaps dropped from a hawk’s talons.

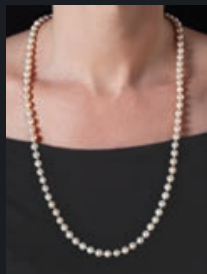
The snakes are out there, I am certain, but they’ve not been in evidence—so far.

My snake hook stands at the ready, on the back porch. I feel both relief and disappointment that I’ve not had to employ it for snake removal.

But we’ve discovered its myriad other uses. Before trimming bottom branches of lantana plants, I wave the hook under the plants to flush out any creatures. My husband uses the hook’s pointy tip to pulverize abandoned mud dauber nests. And a snake hook is the perfect tool for retrieving a grandchild’s stray crayons, puzzle pieces and grapes from beneath the living room sofa. ■

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Available only in the U.S. (excludes Puerto Rico and U.S.V.I.). Some offers may not be available through all channels and in select areas. Different offers may apply for eligible multi-dwelling units. All offers, packages, programming, promotions, features, terms, restrictions & conditions and all prices and fees not included in price guarantee are subject to change or discontinuation without notice. Visit [directv.com/legal/](https://directv.com/legal/) or call for details.

**VIA SATELLITE:** Pricing: \$64.99/mo. for two years. After 2 years, then month to month at then-current prevailing prices unless cancelled. Price excludes Advanced Receiver Service Fee of \$15/mo. (which is extra and applies to all packages) and Regional Sports Fee of up to \$13.99/mo. (which is extra & applies to CHOICE pkg or higher) and certain other add'l fees & charges. Additional Fees & Taxes: \$7/mo. for each additional TV connection on your account. Wireless upgrade with HD DVR \$99.00. Applicable use tax expense surcharge on retail value of installation, custom installation charges, equipment upgrades/add-ons, and certain other add'l fees & chrgs. See [directv.com/directv-fees/](https://directv.com/directv-fees/) for additional information. \$10/mo. Autopay and Paperless Bill Discount: Must enroll in autopay & paperless bill within 30 days of TV activation to receive bill credit starting in 1-3 bill cycles (pay \$10 more/mo. until discount begins). Must maintain autopay/paperless bill and valid email address to continue credits. DIRECTV Svc Terms: Subject to Equipment Lease & Customer Agreements. Taxes, surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), protection plan, transactional fees, and Federal Cost Recovery Fee are not included in two-year price guarantee. Visit [directv.com/legal/](https://directv.com/legal/) or call for details. Equipment Non-Return Fees: If you cancel your service, you must return your leased equipment. Failure to return any equipment will result in fees of \$45 for each standard DIRECTV Receiver, each HD DIRECTV Receiver, each Genie Mini and each Gemini receiver and \$135 for each DVR, HD DVR, Genie® HD DVR and/or Genie 2 DIRECTV Receiver. GEMINI DEVICE: To use the Device, you will need an Internet connection, your use of which is subject to the fees, restrictions, terms, and limitations imposed by your Internet service provider. Gemini Device(s) will deactivate after 90 consecutive days without internet connection. If that happens, you will not be able to receive service through that Device until you (re)connect to the internet.

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