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PREPARE NOW
FOR WILDFIRES

SOLID GROUND
20 YEARS AFTER KATRINA

Texas Coop Power

FOR TRINITY VALLEY EC MEMBERS

AUGUST 2025

Give It a Whirl

Why so many people
are flipping out
over disc golf

TRINITY
VALLEY EC
NEWS

SEE PAGE 16





BREAKING GROUND ON GROUND BREAKING HOMES

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August 2025



10

06 Disc Jockeys

Texas has become a destination for a sport that just about anybody can play.

*By Margaret Buranen
Photos by Kenny Braun*

'Every Part of Texas Is at Risk'

Prepare now for wildfires that can strike anywhere and almost anytime.

By Chris Burrows

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ON THE COVER
Marty Ford tees off at the Flying Armadillo Disc Golf Club in San Marcos as Kenny Roycroft looks on.
Photo by Kenny Braun

ABOVE
A firefighter works the 2024 Smokehouse Creek Fire in the Panhandle.
Photo by Sam Craft | Courtesy Texas A&M AgriLife Marketing and Communications

Kaufman: The Next Frontier



Maybe you've noticed all the moving vans east of Dallas, heading into Co-op Country?

Many are drawn to Kaufman County, the second-fastest-growing county in the country between July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2024, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative is headquartered in Kaufman, the county seat.

"I do think a lot of people are attracted to that small-town vibe," Mayor Jeff Jordan said.

"It's really the next frontier," said Anne Glasscock, Kaufman Chamber of Commerce CEO.

"Education is what remains after you have forgotten everything you learned in school."

—ANONYMOUS



TCP Contests and More

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Country Life

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FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Another day, another ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our June prompt: **It's summer, and I'm ready for ...**

Homemade peach ice cream.

HARRY POWER
FARMERS EC
FORNEY

Sleeping in—I'm a teacher.

STU BERKOWITZ
PEDERNALES EC
MANCHACA

Garden-fresh tomatoes.

JAMES SELF
DEAF SMITH EC
HEREFORD

Watermelon, corn on the cob and potato salad.

STACEY MCINTOSH
TRINITY VALLEY EC
FORNEY

Cheves (beer), trips and vacation.

SYLVIA ARMENDARIZ
MAGIC VALLEY EC
EDINBURG

Visit our website to see more responses.

JUNE 2025 Gorging a Path

“We came from Massachusetts, where we had a dairy goat farm. What a blast these little guys are!”

PAT HOFFMAN
CENTRAL TEXAS EC
LLANO



ERIC W. POHL

Goats Galore

I found it ironic to read about goats “buzz sawing their way through a thicket of brambles” in the cover story [*Gorging a Path*, June 2025], followed by the last piece describing a man using a chain saw to cut through thorns and brush on his newly purchased property [*Cutting Through*, June 2025].

Seems that goats for hire may have been the perfect helpers for his situation.

Peggy Rhea
Pedernales EC
Austin

My dad moved his wife and four young daughters in 1959 from Chicago for a new job at LSS as a mining engineer working on the open pit mines. I remember the Saturday mornings when I would ride with my dad while he drove around the mines. I had my own hard hat.

I also remember the fun we had at the lake playing on the enormous inner tubes from the huge tires off the mining equipment.

Jane Sykes
CoServ
Denton

Memories From the Mill

My daddy, James W. Rich Jr., worked as a millwright at Lone Star Steel [*Steel to the Stars*, June 2025]. He was part of the crew shown in the picture in front of the large piece of equipment.

We lost him six years ago, so to see him in this picture gave us such joy.

Stephanie Lowe
Pedernales EC
Liberty Hill

Slivers of Ice

When Mr. Hessee would deliver ice for the icebox, I remember what a big, muscular man he was [*Texas Chilly*, June 2025]. While he was putting the 50-pound block of ice in the icebox, all the neighborhood kids would wait and then lift the tarp to get a sliver of ice because it was 100-plus degrees outside.

Sterling Hartman
Pedernales EC
Cedar Park



COURTESY LADIES OF LONE STAR

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letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power
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Austin, TX 78701

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

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TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 82, Number 2 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives. Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 76 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power's* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Subscription price is \$5.11 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50. **Co-op members:** Please notify your co-op of address changes or other subscription requests.

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DISC

*Texas has become
a destination for a
sport that just about
anybody can play*



BY MARGARET BURANEN • PHOTOS BY KENNY BRAUN

A downturn in the oil industry in 2018 made for slow days at Lone Star Molding, a family-owned business in Conroe. But as injection molding orders for gaskets and seals from oil field companies dried up, brothers Travis and Synjin Dillard and their sister, Britney Ochoa, had an idea.

They begged their father, Terry, to try making some golf discs, thinking that would be fun, if nothing else. The brothers had been playing disc golf since they were in middle school.

“Things were slow, so my dad said, ‘We’ll try it,’” Ochoa says. It soon soared.

Ochoa, who started playing the sport two years ago, says Lone Star Disc now uses about 60 molds and nine types of plastic to make discs in just about every color combination that range from “stiffer to softer, more flexible and heavier to lighter.” LSD says it’s the only company supplying the world with discs made, stamped and shipped in Texas—selling thousands annually.

The family had tapped into something big. Even decades after it first came to Texas, disc golf—one of the most inexpensive and easiest sports to learn—is still landing new players, from kids to older adults.

Among more than 16,200 disc golf courses in 91 countries, Texas has more than any other state—720—according to UDisc, a mobile scoring app popular among players. The

courses are in state and city parks and on private land. Some are owned by churches, breweries and universities. World-wide, 89% of disc golf courses are free to play.

The sport is a great way to get outdoors, move around and get those steps. That’s one of the appeals for pro player Emily Weatherman of Abilene.

“Disc golf is for everyone,” she says. “It’s a good source of exercise. Get outside, grab a disc, and have fun and always believe in yourself.”

Weatherman has good reason to believe in herself. She won her first Disc Golf Pro Tour event at age 18 and was named the tour’s female rookie of the year in 2024. She says that honor “means so much to me, to be recognized like that.”

Now in her second year as a touring pro, one of the sport’s brightest young stars has played in tournaments all over the U.S. and in New Zealand.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The Flying Armadillo Disc Golf Club in San Marcos features an observation tower and shaded picnic tables. Micah Caldwell, front, and Derek Forrest mimic Leonardo da Vinci’s *Vitruvian Man* drawing. Discs made by Lone Star Disc in Conroe. Synjin Dillard takes a shot on the company’s private nine-hole course. An obstacle on the minicourse at Flying Armadillo. Craig Foster rests with a new disc.

She got started when her parents put a disc in her hand when she was about 5. By 2018, when she was 12, she started playing competitively.

“My dad had played for a long time. He started teaching my brother, my mother and me to play. It was a family activity we did together,” Weatherman says. “I like the competitive aspect of it. I’ve always been competitive. It’s not a team sport, so I didn’t have to depend on anyone else.”

Like the other golf, disc golf involves players moving from hole to hole on a course. But instead of hitting a ball with various clubs, advancing it closer to and into a hole, players throw discs. And the hole is actually an elevated basket of hanging chains. The player with the fewest total throws in a round, generally nine or 18 holes, wins.

Putting—throwing the disc into the basket from about 10 yards or less—is the most challenging part for Weatherman. Even expert players can be challenged by the wind, she says. “You can never stop learning in disc golf.”



One of Weatherman’s favorite courses is at Will Hair Park in her hometown. She says she enjoys encountering kids on the course and helping them or giving them some encouragement. “I love watching kids get excited about learning a new skill,” she says.

Disc golf has relatively little history, much of which can be traced to the Frisbee, a toy patented by “Steady” Ed Headrick in 1967. He opened the first official disc golf course, in Pasadena, California, in 1975 and patented the “pole hole,” which has become a course standard, in 1977. Texas’ oldest known surviving course, at Bartholomew Park in East Austin, was built in 1982.

LEFT Kenny Roycroft with his cart and array of discs needed to navigate a course’s obstacles and challenges.

ABOVE At Flying Armadillo, Marty Ford goes for the opening in a grain hopper on a hole.



GIVE IT A SPIN

Among the most popular and picturesque Texas courses are:

- **Rocky Hills Disc Golf Course** in Ovalo, one of the top 100 courses in the world, boasts 21 holes for advanced players.
- **The Hideaway Disc Golf Ranch** in Terrell has a 19-hole course around a scenic lake.
- **Will Hair Park** in Abilene and **Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park** in Austin offer fun, technical courses in city parks.
- **Dino Hills Disc Golf Farm** in Glen Rose has three courses.
- **Sprinkle Valley Disc Golf Course** in Austin is a new course with a taproom.
- **The Zip Disc Golf Course** in Helotes is in a valley with zip lines running overhead.
- **Shawshank Disc Golf Penitentiary** in Huntsville, **Tom McCutcheon Disc Golf Course** in Lewisville, **Brushy Creek Municipal Utility District** in Round Rock and **Brazos Park East** in Waco are among the most scenic.
- **Lindsey Park** and **South Springs Disc Golf Course**, both in Tyler, offer courses tucked in among beautiful East Texas pines.

UDisc says its 1.26 million global users logged more than 20 million rounds in 2024—a tally that can't account for untold numbers of casual players. College students are a big part of the sport's growth.

Texas A&M University's men's and women's disc golf teams consistently rank among the top 25 U.S. collegiate teams, 285 of which compete through College Disc Golf, founded in 2007. There are 13 other Texas schools with disc golf teams or club programs, including the universities of Texas and North Texas, and Texas Tech and Texas State universities.

But almost no one is too young or old or far from a course to give it a throw.

Michael Lambert and his family, members of Pedernales Electric Cooperative, own the Flying Armadillo Disc Golf Club in San Marcos. The club has an 18-hole course and a shorter minicourse for kids and beginners that was once ranked No. 34 in the world on UDisc.

On a regular course, the holes are 100 yards apart, he says. The shorter course is a third of that distance.

"There's an obstacle or a whimsical something on every hole, so the course is shorter and more engaging," he says. "It's huge with youth and kids."

Lambert started playing disc golf with family as a teenager, about 20 years ago. About 11 years ago, he bought 25 acres flush with woods, cactuses and three plywood deer stands. The family spent two years turning the property into the disc golf club.

His favorite part of owning Flying Armadillo is seeing kids having fun. He says church groups, scout troops and other youth groups come to play. For many kids, such outings are their introduction to the game.

UDisc reports 1,165 disc golf courses were built in 2024—the fifth straight year with more than 1,000 new courses, perhaps helped along by the pandemic, when a lot of folks were looking for more socially distanced outdoor activities.

Lambert says the challenging parts of disc golf are "getting your form correct and learning to throw

the different types of discs." There are three main types—drivers, midrange and putters. An experienced player might carry 15–20 discs.

He thinks that people who've never played a round of disc golf would be surprised "at how beneficial it can be, physically and mentally." And really, all you need to start is one disc, but as the family in Conroe has learned over the years, golfers like to have options.

"We learned that everyone is different," Ochoa says. "People like different colors or different pictures or designs. That was our biggest hurdle."

The family business' discs run \$8–\$30, but any disc will do if you're just looking for a relaxing round on the links.

"I don't typically enjoy lifting weights or jogging, but I can go all day playing disc golf," Lambert says. "It's a great leisure exercise. You can enjoy spending time with friends and family. It's a mental break if you're playing by yourself." ■



‘Every Part of

Prepare now for wildfires that can strike anywhere and almost anytime

BY CHRIS BURROWS

The National Weather Service’s Central Texas office didn’t mince words: “Dangerous, potentially historic, extreme fire weather conditions are forecast Tuesday across our area. Very strong winds and low humidity will support the rapid spread and difficult suppression of any wildfires that may ignite.”

Responding to that warning, earlier this year, an Austin meteorologist quickly posted on Facebook an evacuation checklist.

Keyboard cranks came for her in the comments.

“Quick everyone panic!”

“Talk about causing unnecessary panic.”

“It was raining this morning, so, thanks.”

And it did rain. A frontal system swept across Central Texas early that next morning, March 4, bringing with it 40–50 mph gusts. The wind facilitated a rapid drop in humidity and the wicking of moisture from vegetation—creating ideal conditions for wildfires.

“Those critical jokers must not have been here during the 2011 fires,” one commenter countered on Facebook. “Wildfires are not a joke, something to be laughed at.”

By 7:30 p.m. that day—despite the brief rains—there were nine active wildfires across Texas and four in the Austin-San Antonio area, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service.

In a state as big and geographically diverse as Texas, it’s always wildfire season. And no area of the state is immune. Fires can happen anywhere and almost anytime.

One of the first wildfires of 2025 scorched nearly 4,000 acres in Moore County in the Panhandle. The fire was detected February 1 and burned for four days.



ANDREW MCGUIRE | COURTESY TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE



Texas Is at Risk'



SAM CRAFT | COURTESY TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Firefighters battle the Smokehouse Creek Fire in March 2024. The blaze, the largest wildfire in Texas history, raged for nearly three weeks and burned more than 1 million acres in the Panhandle.

In a state as big and geographically diverse as Texas, it's always wildfire season.

“Under certain weather conditions and fuel conditions, every part of Texas is at risk for wildfires,” says Heather Gonzales, a fire information and education program specialist with the forest service. “Any region that’s had a period of extended drying or little precipitation and then also has increased winds or low relative humidity values has increased wildfire risk.

“The region with the greatest risk can vary week to week or even day to day.”

Over the past 10 years, more than 84,000 wildfires across the state have scorched more than 4.5 million acres. They’re no longer strictly a concern for rural folks. About 85% of wildfires, on average, ignite within 2 miles of a community—a rising trend as Texas continues to grow and more people live in what the forest service calls the wildland urban interface.

The WUI is where developed and undeveloped land come together—where lives and structures are at greater risk from fires. That’s where the forest service focuses its community outreach and support.

Since its inception in 1915, the forest service has been tasked with wildfire suppression, defending the property and lives of Texans through a network of strategically placed firefighters and equipment supported by the state’s more than 1,800 municipal and volunteer fire departments.

But more and more, as Smokey Bear will tell you, the forest service depends on everyday Texans to prevent wildfires from starting in the first place and protect themselves when fires spread.

10 Tips To Stay Ready

1. Clear your roof, gutters and eaves of leaves and pine needles.
2. Space out trees and plants, and plant away from structures.
3. Install or repair metal screens on attic and foundation vents.
4. Check fire extinguishers and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them.
5. Create and discuss an evacuation plan with your family.
6. Talk to your children about fire safety and not playing with matches.
7. Compost leaves and organic waste instead of burning.
8. Clear dead wood and dense flammable vegetation from around your home.
9. Clear vegetation around the base of trees, and prune trees away from your home.
10. Stay informed of weather conditions, area wildfires and burn bans.

Source: Texas A&M Forest Service



SMOKEY BEAR: COURTESY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS

“The best way to mitigate your wildfire risk is to prepare for it well before a wildfire happens,” Gonzales says. “Now is a good time to address any vulnerabilities you might have around your home or any structures on your property, reducing excessive vegetation and removing dead vegetation from the little nooks and crannies around your house and gutters.”

Wildfires can move quickly, up to 14 mph, depending on the wind. That means they can jump from the horizon to your home within minutes.

“A lot of times, it’s not the flame front itself coming directly to your property, it’s embers created from the wildfire that can blow 1–2 miles away,” Gonzales says. “If enough of those embers collect, or if whatever they’re collecting on is dry enough, it could potentially ignite a fire on your home.”

Over the past several years, new technologies have been helping in the battle against wildfires.

In Austin, for example, the city has deployed an artificial intelligence-driven wildfire detection system that employs 13 high-definition, 360-degree cameras.

Texas A&M University researchers partnered with Mid-South Electric Cooperative in 2017 to test special sensors, which the university spent more than a decade developing. While 90% of wildfires are human-caused, these sensors have helped to lessen the risk of fire sparked by electric infrastructure.

Worldwide, a consortium of engineers competed in 2024 for a \$750,000 prize by developing plans for the next generation in AI detection and autonomous wildfire response.

But for homeowners and landowners across Texas, the guidance hasn’t changed: Be aware of the dangers, mitigate the risks to your property and avoid sparking a fire.

“The biggest thing is just to be very situationally aware,” Gonzales says.

That part is easier than ever.

The Texas A&M Forest Service website offers several resources—including a live wildfire risk map and a live map of known fires—at texaswildfirerisk.com. There’s also the free Watch Duty mobile app, launched in 2021, which draws on various data sources to provide live updates on wildfires nationwide. Your local emergency management office also is a great resource and can fill you in on local burn bans and restrictions.

For large plots of land, prescribed burns can be a great tool for mitigating risk, and the forest service awards grants every year to support these efforts—\$951,000 this year alone for 168 landowners to burn 35,138 acres.

When it comes to mitigating the risk to smaller plots, homes and businesses, start with your landscaping. (Don’t set it on fire; prescribed burns are for professionals only.) Keep grass short, but don’t mow during the heat of the day or anytime wildfire risks are high, and check for spark risks, like rocks or metal objects, lurking in your yard.

“Keep the lawn lean, clean and green,” Gonzales says.

Prepare Your Farm or Ranch

Help wildfire first responders by staying ready.

- Maintain a 30-foot barrier free of burnable materials around fields and structures.
- Inform your local fire department about access roads, water sources, fence lines and preferred wildfire suppression tactics.
- Establish contingency plans for feeding livestock, and create a plan to relocate livestock if fire is imminent and time permits.
- Plan evacuation routes, as fire may make your usual routes unsafe.
- Create wide fuel breaks along roads: Prune large trees to 10 feet from the ground, remove ladder fuels such as tall brush and small trees, thin trees to create crown spacing of 25–30 feet, and break up thick brush.
- Maintain fuel breaks with regular maintenance.

Source: Texas A&M Forest Service



COURTESY TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE

Prune trees at least 6 feet up, and remove taller bushes or anything underneath trees that can serve as ladder fuel, allowing fire to climb into the tree canopy. Clear flammable materials from the immediate area around your home, storing firewood at least 30 feet away. Finally, create an evacuation kit and have a plan and route ready for quick escapes.

While Texas doesn’t have fire seasons but rather a “fire year,” Gonzales says August can be a particularly risky time.

“You have high temperatures, low relative humidity values, lack of precipitation and winds also come together to increase fire potential,” she says.

Start planning now. ■



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36	8.77	7.93	10.35	9.44	14	13	22	18	59	30.37	23.51	55.50	38.76	98	67	186	126
37	8.77	8.15	10.52	9.81	15	13	22	20	60	33.49	24.28	60.76	41.71	109	73	206	136
38	8.77	8.16	11.19	10.18	16	14	24	21	61	36.49	25.09	66.43	47.10	122	83	236	154
39	9.13	8.31	11.62	10.55	17	15	25	22	62	39.88	27.91	73.90	51.32	136	92	262	166
40	9.55	8.48	12.04	10.98	18	16	27	24	63	43.69	34.01	81.54	57.25	153	102	287	187
41	10.05	8.72	13.10	11.58	20	17	30	26	64	47.91	38.28	90.20	62.32	170	112	323	200
42	10.48	9.01	14.21	12.30	22	19	33	29	65	52.81	40.88	100.33	68.23	191	125	361	223
43	10.98	9.36	14.72	13.18	23	20	38	31	66	58.71	44.61	114.29	75.40	211	135	392	242
44	11.58	9.73	15.67	14.10	25	22	41	34	67	64.59	49.08	125.27	83.64	234	146	436	261
45	12.17	10.15	16.86	15.16	28	24	45	38	68	72.24	59.65	143.07	105.55	254	173	485	322
46	12.84	10.64	17.85	15.83	30	25	49	40	69	79.34	64.22	158.23	129.28	288	188	547	352
47	13.43	11.16	19.03	16.68	32	27	54	44	70	86.85	68.11	177.24	147.66	318	203	595	375
48	13.48	11.88	20.27	17.37	35	29	58	47	71	102.45	82.60	203.10	159.34	374	235	702	443
49	13.69	12.33	21.73	18.32	37	31	63	52	72	113.68	93.16	232.46	172.23	427	272	807	512
50	14.36	12.98	23.00	19.82	40	33	69	57	73	127.55	106.68	267.15	188.15	493	319	937	596
51	15.37	13.75	25.30	20.65	45	35	78	62	74	142.08	119.36	303.50	204.84	562	367	1074	685
52	16.36	14.87	27.63	22.13	49	38	87	67	75	159.25	140.48	346.45	224.56	644	424	1235	789
53	17.46	15.88	30.95	24.81	54	42	98	73	76	200.03	168.51	418.29	276.67	785	530	1489	982
54	18.68	16.72	33.99	26.20	60	46	110	81	77	249.54	216.74	505.52	339.94	956	658	1797	1215
55	20.70	17.50	37.13	27.85	67	50	121	90	78	310.70	268.40	613.27	418.11	1167	817	2179	1504
56	22.69	19.48	42.01	31.07	74	53	138	96	79	374.78	322.52	726.16	500.00	1389	983	2578	1807
57	24.69	20.63	45.81	33.43	81	58	150	107	80	450.50	386.47	816.15	596.78	1625	1180	3050	2164

* \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 monthly rates are rounded up to the nearest dollar. Therefore, actual monthly rates at \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 may be slightly less.

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MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER/
CEO

JEFF LANE

The Cooperative Difference

MOST CONSUMERS would not equate active involvement in their electric company with helping their community. But Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative isn't an ordinary utility company.

We're a co-op, and our business model is meant to serve the members and the community—not to make a hefty profit for investors five states away. Our customers are more than consumers; they're members and owners of the cooperative. Therein lies the difference.

Our core purpose and mission is to provide our members safe, reliable and affordable power. As a co-op, we're motivated by service to the community rather than profits. After covering our annual expenses, we invest any extra money back into the co-op. Eventually, that extra money is returned to members in the form of capital credits.

We're governed by a board of directors who are elected by our members. Our board comprises members who live and work in our service area because they're in a position to know where community investments are most needed.

As a member, you can actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. This is why we value your participation in our annual meeting and at other co-op events. We depend on the guidance and perspective of our members and board to help set priorities for the co-op and guide our decisions.

In line with our cooperative values, TVEC has numerous ongoing programs that benefit the community. Every June, for example, we participate in the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, which takes local high school students to the nation's capital to meet with lawmakers, enabling students to learn firsthand how our democracy works.

We also have a scholarship program and support local community service initiatives. Like all co-op operations, decisions about these programs are led by member guidance and feedback.

We recognize the vital role our cooperative plays in energizing our local economy. To continue to innovate and effectively serve the community, we rely on you, our members, to provide input.

You're an important part of allowing us to operate effectively and help our community thrive, and we value your perspective. ■



POWER TIP

Run the dishwasher before you go to bed to avoid adding to the heat of the day and to reduce power load during peak times.

MARTIN-DM | ISTOCK.COM

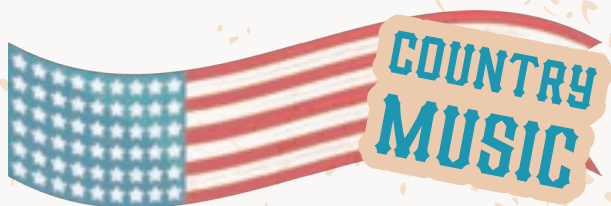


DID YOU KNOW?

A periodic inspection of your dryer vent to make sure it's clear will save energy and could prevent a fire.

BENJAMIN CLAPP | ISTOCK.COM

2025 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER

DOORS SWING OPEN AT 5:15 PM

***** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *****

CO-OP UPDATES, IMPORTANT NEWS & LOTS OF DOOR PRIZES!




★ ★ ★

TVEC

TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

CONTACT US

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Kaufman, Texas

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Toll-Free 1-800-766-9576

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24/7

Outage Hotline Numbers

For information and
to report outages,
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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



Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Hurricane season is June 1–November 30

If you're under a hurricane warning, find safe shelter right away.

When a hurricane is 36 hours from arriving:

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

When a hurricane is 18–36 hours from arriving:

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

When a hurricane is six to 18 hours from arriving:

- ▶ Turn on your TV or radio or check your city or county website every 30 minutes for the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.
- ▶ Charge your cellphone so you will have a full battery in case you lose power.

When a hurricane is six hours from arriving:

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

To stay safe during a hurricane:

- ▶ If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Do not drive around barricades.
- ▶ If sheltering during high winds, go to a Federal Emergency Management Agency safe room; International Code Council 500 storm shelter; or a small, interior, windowless room or hallway on the lowest floor that is not subject to flooding.
- ▶ If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building. Do not climb into a closed attic; you may become trapped by rising floodwaters.

To stay safe after a hurricane:

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

Preparación para huracanes

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

Cuando un huracán está a 36 horas de llegar:

- ▶ Prenda su televisor o radio para obtener las últimas actualizaciones meteorológicas e instrucciones de emergencia.
- ▶ Reponga su kit de emergencias. Incluya alimentos y agua suficientes para al menos tres días, medicamentos, una linterna, pilas, dinero en efectivo y suministros de primeros auxilios. Aprenda como construir un kit de emergencia en ready.gov/build-a-kit.

Cuando un huracán está a 18–36 horas de llegar:

- ▶ Marque como favorito el sitio web de su ciudad o condado para el acceso rápido de las actualizaciones de tormentas e instrucciones de emergencia.
- ▶ Traiga adentro objetos sueltos y ligeros que puedan convertirse en proyectiles con vientos fuertes (por ejemplo, muebles de patio y botes de basura); sujete objetos que no serían seguros para llevar adentro (por ejemplo, tanques de propano); y recorte o retire los árboles que están lo suficientemente cerca como para caer en un edificio.

Cuando un huracán está a 6–18 horas de llegar:

- ▶ Encienda su televisor o radio, o visite el sitio web de su ciudad o condado cada 30 minutos para obtener las últimas actualizaciones meteorológicas e instrucciones de emergencia.
- ▶ Cargue su teléfono celular para que tenga una batería llena en caso de que pierda energía.

Cuando un huracán está a seis horas de llegar:

- ▶ Si no se encuentra en un área recomendada para la evacuación, planifique quedarse en su casa o donde se encuentra y avise a sus amigos y familiares donde se encuentra.
- ▶ Cierre las contraventanas y aléjese de las ventanas. Los vidrios que vuelan de las ventanas rotas podrían dañarle.
- ▶ Ajuste la temperatura de su refrigerador o congelador a la posición más fría y ábralos solo cuando sea necesario. Si pierde la energía, la comida durará por más tiempo. Mantenga un termómetro en el refrigerador para poder verificar la temperatura de los alimentos cuando se restablezca la energía.

Para mantenerse a salvo durante un huracán:

- ▶ Si se le indica que evacue, hágalo inmediatamente. No maneje alrededor de las barricadas.
- ▶ Si se refugia durante vientos fuertes, vaya a una habitación segura de la Federal Emergency Management Agency, refugio contra tormentas del International Code Council 500 o una habitación o pasillo pequeña e interior sin ventanas en el piso más bajo que no esté sujeto a inundaciones.
- ▶ Si queda atrapado en un edificio por inundación, vaya al nivel más alto del edificio. No suba a un ático cerrado porque usted puede quedar atrapado por las crecientes inundaciones.

Para mantenerse a salvo después de un huracán:

- ▶ Escuche a las autoridades para obtener información e instrucciones especiales.
- ▶ No toque el equipo eléctrico si está mojado o si está parado en el agua. Si es seguro hacerlo, apague la electricidad en el interruptor principal o en la caja de fusibles para evitar una descarga eléctrica.
- ▶ Evite vadear en el agua de la inundación, que puede contener desechos peligrosos. Las líneas eléctricas subterráneas o caídas también pueden cargar el agua eléctricamente.



CULTIVATE FARM SAFETY

Because many pieces of farm equipment reach heights of 14 feet or higher, always remember to look up to make sure there is enough room to pass beneath electric lines.

Here are some rules to follow:

The No. 1 electrical farm hazard is the potential contact from a grain auger to a power line. Always look up before raising or moving an auger.

The same is true of metal irrigation pipes, often stored along fence lines under an electric line. Never raise or move irrigation pipes without looking up.

Ensure that the wiring in your workshop is adequate to handle your tools, and be sure they are in good working order.

Read labels and handling instructions carefully and follow them when using chemicals and herbicides. Store them in a locked cabinet and safely dispose of empty containers.

Trinity Valley EC encourages you to always practice safety.



PIXELCATCHERS | ISTOCK.COM



TVEC ENERGY
MANAGEMENT
SUPERVISOR

CHRIS WALKER

Signs Your HVAC Is in Trouble

YOUR HEATING, ventilation and air conditioning system is one of your home's most important and expensive systems. Detecting issues early can help you plan for repairs or equipment replacement.

Equipment functionality issues can affect electricity use, which may result in higher energy bills. The age of your equipment can be a major factor in how it functions. The lifespan of a heating and cooling system is typically 15–20 years.

Proper maintenance and lower use can increase the life of the equipment. To find out the age of your system, look for the manufacture date printed on the nameplate. If you can't find it, search online using the model number or call the manufacturer.

Being thrifty by nature, many of us subscribe to the notion of, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." That said, we need to be prepared for the inevitable. If your system is approaching or past the 20-year mark, start saving for a new system and get replacement estimates.

There are a few warning signs to watch out for if your heating and cooling system needs to be repaired or replaced.

Air conditioning is not cooling as usual. If the air from your AC is warm or not as cool as it usually feels, there's an issue. It could be a problem with the compressor or a refrigerant leak. Fix leaks before adding more refrigerant. Special certifications are required for handling refrigerants, so hire a professional to ensure the work is done properly.

Low airflow. If you aren't getting good airflow, it could be an easy fix, such as filter replacement or opening closed dampers. If you've made these fixes and airflow is still below normal levels, contact a professional. There could be a bigger problem with a motor, fan or something else.

Bad odors. Heating and cooling systems sometimes smell when you first start them up for the season. Those smells should be minor and dissipate quickly. Any serious smells—such as burning metal, melting plastic or noxious odors—are a sign that your system is in trouble. If you smell those odors, turn your system

off immediately and contact a professional.

Strange noises. There is typically noise associated with the fans and motors in heating and cooling systems. Take note of any excessive or new noises. If your system is making any clunking, clanging or whistling noises, turn it off and check the filter. If that doesn't solve it, reach out to a pro.

Running frequently. Your system needs to run more to keep up on extreme weather days, but there might be an issue if it runs too often. Short cycling is when a system cycles on and off before completing the heating or cooling process. Contact a professional to diagnose this issue.

Several factors come into play when deciding to fix existing equipment or invest in new equipment. Consider the severity of the issue, repair costs, the likelihood of additional repairs, equipment lifespan and your budget.

The efficiency of your existing system is also a consideration. Heating and cooling technology improvements have come a long way in the past 20 years. Lower operation costs can offset the cost of a new system over time.

Consider your options before you're in desperate need. Get estimates from at least three contractors. Ask the contractor, "If this was your home, what type of system would you install and why?" The best solution for your home might be a different type of equipment. ■



KNAPPE | ISTOCK.COM

Look Up for Power Lines

THINGS WE SEE every day can almost fade from view. But failure to notice high-voltage power lines can be a deadly oversight. Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative wants to raise awareness about the dangers of overhead power lines and the precautions to take around them.

Often when we go outside, we don't even think about power lines. Taking a few moments to become aware of your surroundings is critical to keeping yourself and your loved ones safe.

Follow these guidelines as you work outdoors.

Look up and around. Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools, like ladders, pool skimmers and pruning poles. Lower your long equipment when moving it. Carry ladders and other long items horizontally.

Be careful when working on or around your roof, installing or removing rooftop antennas and satellite dishes, doing roof repair work, or cleaning gutters. Never go up on the roof in bad weather.

Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house.

Never trim trees near power lines yourself—leave that work to trained professionals.


Never use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines. Contact a professional maintenance contractor.



Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the lines aren't touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to a branch.

If your projects include digging, like building a deck or planting a tree, call 811 before you begin. Never assume you know the location or depth of underground utility lines. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury. ■

Consider IT HOT


A PODCAST FOR MEMBERS




WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The term "hot" in electrical distribution indicates that a line is energized.



Power up your knowledge on the podcast that sparks conversations about energy savings, safety tips, co-op news, and the future of electricity!

New episodes every month!



WARNING

Listening to this podcast may result in:

- Learning how to save energy
- Knowing the latest co-op news
- Staying safe around electricity
- Hearing about Operation Round Up
- Winning a prize...just for listening



Mi Pueblito Tex-Mex and Cantina

The big blue barn holds flavor as bold as the building.

THE TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SERVICE AREA has a great selection of Tex-Mex food destinations. Thankfully, the appetite for our native cuisine is big enough to enjoy the bounty.

On the east side of Cedar Creek Lake, situated about halfway between Mabank and Gun Barrel City, Mi Pueblito Tex-Mex and Cantina makes its home in an easy-to-spot bright blue barn. The food inside stands out in a big way too. 18940001

"It is one of my favorites in the area," said Casey Bagwell, journeyman lineman. "It is all good but the molcajete is awesome."

On the menu as "Mi Favorito Molcajete," that plate might be too much for a quick lunch, with its combination of chicken beef, shrimp, sausage and all of the Tex-Mex side dishes included.

For diners on the go, lunch specials, including fajitas and build-your-own combination plates compete with fast food on price, but deliver much more flavor with chips and fresh salsa.

Mi Pueblito is located at 1504 S. 3rd St. in Mabank. Find them on Facebook at facebook.com/mipueblito [mexicantexmex](https://facebook.com/mexicantexmex). ■



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 29 to receive a \$100 credit on your electric bill. Don't miss out—you could be our winner.



TVEC
TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Energy Quiz



About what percentage of household energy goes to water heating?

eia.gov/energyexplained/use-of-energy/electricity-use-in-homes.php

A. 30%

B. 15%

C. 12%

Win **\$100!**

Send your answer and contact information to 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: Electrical Pathway

FROM THE TINIEST COMPUTER CHIPS to the miles of electrical transmission conductors stretching across the countryside, electricity flow happens in a circuit.

As the name implies, a circuit flows in a pathway that can be drawn as a circle. For small electronic devices, you can see this in how a battery has positive and negative terminals. In the electric grid, the electricity is also flowing in a circuit, but it is all tied together through the earth itself.

Congratulations to our June Energy Quiz winner, Babafemi Adesina, of Heartland.

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

TVEC

Charitable Foundation

CASA Volunteers Work to Support Kids in Court System



ALONG WITH THE RAPIDLY GROWING POPULATION, the Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative service area is also seeing an increase in the number of cases of abuse and neglect of children. Court Appointed Special Advocates programs were set up for the purpose of ensuring that the needs of the children are prioritized in the process.


“The role that we play in the system is really to elevate the children’s voices throughout the civil court system here in Kaufman and Rockwall counties,” said Lauren Rowe, executive director for Lone Star CASA. “We do this through providing trained volunteer advocates who bridge the gap between the court, the caseworkers and the family to make sure the child’s voice doesn’t get lost.” CASA of Trinity Valley provides similar support in Henderson and Anderson Counties. Van Zandt County is covered by CASA for Kids of East Texas.

The TVEC Charitable Foundation has supported CASA programs since its inception in 2013, including a grant of \$5,000 to

Lone Star CASA in June. “We spend at least 86% of donations like that for programmatic needs,” Rowe said. “That includes our people out their recruiting and training volunteers and supporting them ... and then of course we have a case management system that we use for documentation.”

Lone Star CASA is also on the forefront of new developments in how the court handles both abuse cases and juveniles who are in the system. One new program provides oversight and monitoring for kids who have been allowed to remain in their homes, ensuring the children’s safety and compliance with court orders.


Find out more and hear a full interview with Rowe in the July edition of the TVEC Consider it Hot podcast at tvec.net/podcast. Learn how to volunteer or support Lone Star CASA at lonestarcasa.org, or find the CASA organization closest to you at texascasa.org. ■




JUNE 2025

Operation Round Up Awards


Thank you for turning your coins into change!





Operation Round Up is a voluntary charitable program that allows TVEC members to help support local nonprofits and community projects by rounding up their monthly electric bill to the next whole dollar. The change—usually just a few cents—is pooled into a fund managed by the TVEC Charitable Foundation.

Grants	
Lone Star CASA	\$5,000
Texas Youth Advocates	\$4,000



The future of hearing aids has arrived

NEW! HORIZON IX HEARING AIDS

FOX NEWS

NEWSMAX

BUSINESS INSIDER

Forbes

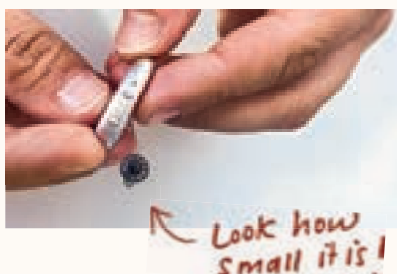
Alarming fact: More than 48 million Americans hear so poorly that their quality of life significantly suffers as a result.

The problem: Most wait too long to act, hoping their hearing will improve on its own. Sadly, it never does. But now, a game-changing device is making waves across the industry, and experts say it's the biggest breakthrough they've seen in over a decade.

It's the new Horizon IX hearing aid.

Horizon IX is currently the best-selling device at renowned U.S. company, hear.com, developed by top audio engineers from Signia. Their goal was to combine the best possible speech clarity with a comfortable, invisible design using cutting-edge German technology.

"It's a hearing aid people actually want to wear," says hear.com co-founder Dr. Marco Vietor. "It offers amazing speech clarity and smartphone connectivity in a virtually invisible design — and all that for a reasonable price!"



What makes them so special?

It's one of the world's first hearing aids with dual processing. This is special because it's the first time engineers have been able to pack not one, but two state-of-the-art computer chips into a device this small. And with double the power comes double the clarity.

What do Horizon IX hearing aids have to offer?

- **Amazing Speech Clarity™**
Effortlessly understand every word, thanks to dual-processing
- **Bluetooth connectivity**
Stream music and phone calls directly to your hearing aids
- **Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries**
28+ hours of battery life and a portable case for on-the-go charging
- **Easy, comfortable fit**
All-day wearing comfort, easy to combine with glasses
- **Free smartphone app**
Adjust settings for every listening situation easily via smartphone

This means that Horizon IX hearing aids offer all of the usual benefits of modern hearing aids with the added bonus of something completely new: they can process speech and background noise independently, then combine them for unparalleled, crystal clear sound.

Where can I get Horizon IX?

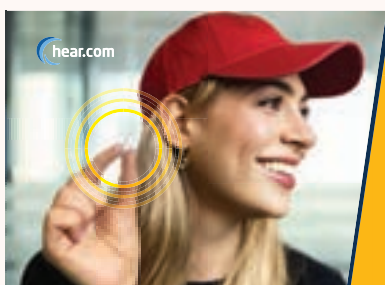
So far, hear.com has helped more than 540,000 Americans enjoy life with better hearing, thanks to Horizon IX. **Now, it's your turn!**

Check if you qualify for a **45-day no-risk trial today**, and have a brand new pair of Horizon IX hearing aids on your doorstep in as little as 48 hours.

START HERE!



Scan the QR code or visit **hear.com/tx** to check if you qualify for a 45-day no-risk trial.





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



History in a Box

Before it housed kittens, it was packed with a tea you may have heard about

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES WESTON LEWIS

THE GOODMAN KIDS in Laredo pulled out an old wooden box anytime they had show-and-tell at school. It was always sure to gather interest. The box, they claimed—with some good evidence backing them up—played an important role in the American Revolution.

Of course there were skeptics.

How could a box make it thousands of miles and two centuries from 18th century New England to 20th century South Texas? And how could a simple, old box have played a role in the Revolution?

The Goodmans brought the receipts, as is often said today.

Helen Ford Waring, the Goodman children's great-aunt, had tracked the box across generations of her family tree to determine who willed it to whom,

where, when and how—even what they used it for.

It once was a nursery for a litter of kittens and was a cat box for some years. In another family, the box was used by a young girl as a doll house of sorts. The Goodmans had stored it under the dining room table for the primary purpose of being at the ready for show-and-tell.

The box had traveled across Texas, by inheritance, from Corpus Christi to San Antonio to Laredo.

Ford Waring did such a good job proving provenance that in 1976, the U.S. bi-centennial, the Smithsonian Institution came calling. It sought artifacts to display during that significant anniversary of the Revolution and had heard about the box. Experts there did their own research,

of course, decided the claims were legitimate and put it on display at the museum that year. They called it the Robinson Half Chest.

What is this box's backstory? Ford Waring was able to prove that a great-great-great-ancestor of hers was up early one morning in December 1773, walking along the shore near Boston. His name was John Robinson.

He found a nice box made of half-inch-thick wood. Robinson had the reaction we all have, even in modern times, when we come across a well-made sturdy box: a shame to let that box go to waste. Ought to be good for something.

Besides, he knew it was a remnant from the night before, when patriots had sneaked aboard three ships and dumped some 340 boxes of tea from Britain's East India Tea Company into the harbor—the Boston Tea Party. So he stashed it.

Many of the boxes floated out to sea or were destroyed on purpose. But this box survived and was passed down from generation to generation, state to state, until it resided for years near another shore, the Rio Grande.

In 2004, Andre Goodman heard that a Tea Party museum was being built in Boston. He felt that the Robinson Half Chest should have a proper home where more people could see it. He approached them and a deal was struck.

Today the box—the only one known from that famous tea party—has a place of honor in the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum. It has made a round-trip journey of thousands of miles over 250 years. It is now on the same docks where it was tossed into the sea so long ago—the place its journey began. ■

Beefy Burgers

Flavorful ingredients and fun twists are sure to add sizzle

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Burger night is about to get *mucho más* tastier. I whipped up the most mouthwatering burgers packed with chiles and seasonings. No need to fire up the grill—these babies are made indoors. Tonight we're spicing up our burgers while staying out of that Texas summer heat.

Green Chile Burger

1 pound ground beef
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
½ teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 can diced green chiles (4 ounces), drained
8 slices uncooked bacon
4 slices Monterey Jack cheese
Mayonnaise
4 hamburger buns
8 leaves romaine lettuce
1 large tomato, sliced

1. In a bowl, combine ground beef, garlic powder, onion powder, cumin, salt, pepper and chiles.
2. Divide the mixture into 4 equal portions, and form into 4 patties. Place patties on a baking sheet, cover with plastic wrap and chill in fridge 15 minutes.
3. In a skillet over medium-high heat, cook bacon until fully cooked. Set aside.
4. In the same skillet, cook patties 3–5 minutes on each side or until the burgers are browned and cooked through. Top each patty with a slice of cheese.
5. Spread mayonnaise on the bottom buns. Add 2 lettuce leaves and tomato slice to each.
6. Place patty on top, add 2 slices bacon and top with bun.

MAKES 4 BURGERS

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for a Poblano Gordita Burger.



Italian Stallion Burgers

BEVERLY NUBER
COSERV

Imagine the cheesy goodness of pizza sandwiched in a burger bun, creating a mouthwatering combination that satisfies both pizza and burger cravings.

- 1 pound 80/20 ground chuck**
- 3 teaspoons ground oregano**
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder**
- 3 tablespoons tomato purée**
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise**
- 2 hamburger buns**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 4 slices mozzarella cheese**
- 16 slices pepperoni**
- 4 tablespoons pizza sauce**
- 1 bunch fresh basil**

1. Combine ground chuck, oregano, garlic powder and tomato purée. Form into 4 patties, about 5–6 inches across.
2. Spread mayonnaise evenly on buns.
3. Heat a griddle or cast-iron skillet on medium-high heat. Place buns on griddle and lightly toast. Remove from griddle and set aside. Reduce heat to medium.
4. Lightly grease griddle with cooking spray, place patties on griddle and season with salt and pepper.
5. Cook 3–4 minutes, flip over and place mozzarella slice and 4 pepperoni slices on top of each patty. Cook an additional 3–4 minutes.
6. Spread 1 tablespoon pizza sauce on each bottom bun. Stack 2 patties on each bun and spread additional 1 tablespoon pizza sauce over top patty. Add a handful fresh basil leaves and top with bun.

MAKES 2 BURGERS

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 >

\$500 WINNER

Juicy Stuffed Grilled Beef Burgers

MONICA ANDREWS
PEDERNALES EC



Get ready to sink your teeth into the juiciest stuffed burger. Not your average cheeseburger, this burger is stuffed with bacon, jalapeños and plenty of buttery Swiss cheese.



COOK'S TIP We kept the toppings simple with a bit of lettuce for crunch, but Andrews says grilled onions, avocado slices, mushrooms and coleslaw can all be excellent additions.

- 4 slices uncooked bacon, diced**
- 1 medium jalapeño pepper, seeds removed, diced**
- 2 pounds 80/20 ground beef**
- 1 small onion, diced**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**
- 1 tablespoon Dash garlic and herb seasoning blend**
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper**
- 4 slices Swiss cheese, diced**
- 4 slices cheddar cheese**
- 4 onion hamburger buns, toasted**
- Additional toppings and condiments, as desired**

1. In a skillet over medium-high heat, cook bacon and jalapeño until bacon is cooked but not crispy. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine ground beef, onion, garlic, olive oil, Worcestershire sauce, herb seasoning and black pepper. Try not to overwork the meat.
3. Divide ground beef mixture into 8 equal portions and form into 8 patties, each a little larger than the bun. Top 4 patties with equal amounts of bacon and jalapeño mix and diced Swiss cheese. Top each of those with remaining 4 patties, pinching the edges to seal patty. With a small spoon, make an indentation on the top of each burger so that juices will puddle.
4. Cover and chill in fridge 30 minutes. Preheat grill to medium-high.
5. Grill burgers about 7–8 minutes on each side. Internal temperature should be at least 160 degrees. Top each patty with a slice of cheddar about 1 minute before removing from grill.
6. Allow burgers to rest 5 minutes before serving. Assemble the burgers with toppings of your choice.

MAKES 4 BURGERS

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

OODLES OF NOODLES DUE AUGUST 10

Twirl, toss and slurp your way to some major dough with your best noodle recipe. Our favorites will noodle their way into the January issue, and the best will win \$500. Enter by August 10.

UPCOMING: CHEESECAKE DUE SEPTEMBER 10





Mediterranean Mushroom Burger

GAIL NUBER
COSERV

Color me surprised—this meatless burger was a delight! It's big and juicy with earthy umami flavor that even my meat-loving husband enjoyed. The grilled portobellos are meaty and delicious and cook quickly.

- 4 portobello mushrooms, stems removed
 - 4 ciabatta rolls, sliced in half
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil, divided use
 - 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
 - 1 small red bell pepper, diced
 - ½ cup tzatziki
 - 1 cup shredded lettuce
 - 1 large tomato, sliced
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 1 small bunch fresh dill, chopped
1. Preheat grill to high.
 2. Gently wipe portobellos with a damp paper towel to clean.
 3. Brush the rolls with olive oil. Grill rolls 1 minute, then move them to the warming rack. Brush the grates with the remaining oil. Grill mushrooms, gills down, 3 minutes.
 4. Flip mushrooms and evenly fill each with ¼ cup feta and ¼ of the bell pepper. Grill an additional 3 minutes and remove from grill.
 5. Spread 2 tablespoons tzatziki over each bottom bun. Top with lettuce and

Pro Burger Moves

Don't overwork the meat. This leads to dry and tough burgers.

Chill the patties before they hit the grill. This helps them hold their shape and prevents them from falling apart.

Toast those buns. They taste better crispy and are less likely to turn soggy.

Top to your heart's delight. Pile on, be creative, experiment—have fun!

—Vianney Rodriguez

sliced tomato. Season each mushroom with salt and pepper. Place mushroom on top of tomato, add chopped dill and top with bun.

MAKES 4 BURGERS

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SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



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

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

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and purchased it 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**.

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Ale as Old as Time

A relic of Austin's distant past still serves up brews and camaraderie

BY CHET GARNER

IF YOU COULD travel back in time to 1866 Austin, our capital city would be almost unrecognizable. There would be just 4,000 residents, no bridges across the Colorado River and a Capitol the size of a county courthouse. The only familiar comfort would be a small boardinghouse at the edge of downtown where a German immigrant named August Scholz could serve you a schnitzel and a pint of beer.

To this day, Austinites still gather at this beloved establishment: Scholz Garten—Texas' oldest restaurant and the oldest beer garden in America.

I love stopping in because it feels like stepping back in time. The walls are covered in old mementos and paintings of bearded German gentlemen, recounting 160 years of history. It isn't hard to imagine cowboys or fellows in lederhosen standing at the wooden bar, which looks like it came over on an old ship from the fatherland.

While the beer is abundant, the food is equally plentiful, with classics like sausage and spaetzle. On a sunny day, it doesn't get much better than sitting outside under the giant oaks with a cold beer, a huge pretzel and good friends.

Downtown Austin wouldn't be the same without Scholz Garten. Given its proximity to the Capitol and the University of Texas, it's been a popular place for politicians and students alike to kick back and enjoy a bit of *gemütlichkeit* (warmth and friendliness). Gov. Ann Richards was known for saying that more legislating went on at Scholz than at the Capitol. The Legislature even recognized the establishment with an official resolution in 1966, calling it a place for Texans of "discernment, taste, culture [and] erudition."

In a changing town like Austin, where nostalgia is getting harder to find, Scholz Garten feels like slipping on a worn-in pair of boots. Nothing new can match it. ■

ABOVE Chet at Scholz Garten, which serves up German food and nostalgia that spans 160 years.

TCP Watch the video 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

8

Anna Carried Miranda: Carrie & Miranda Tribute Duo, (972) 560-4101, barnhillvineyards.com

Alpine [8-9] Big Bend Ranch Rodeo, (432) 294-1640, bigbendranchrodeo.com

Fort Worth [8-10] The Book of Mormon, (817) 212-4280, basshall.com

9

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

Henderson [9-10] East Texas Sacred Harp Convention, (903) 392-8232, easttexasfasola.weebly.com

14

Corsicana [14-17, 19, 21-24] A Monster Calls, (903) 872-5421, thewllac.com

15

Rowlett Luau on the Lawn, (972) 412-6100, rowletttx.gov

El Campo [15-17] Texas Chrome Hero's Foundation BBQ Cook-Off, (979) 275-1600, eclostlagoon.com

Winnsboro [15-17, 22-24] Romeo and Juliet, (903) 342-0686, winnsborocenterforthearts.com

16

Brenham Bee Gees Gold, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

21

Fredericksburg [21-24] Gillespie County Fair, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

22

McKinney [22-23] Mark Clearview, (214) 769-0645, thecomedyarena.com

23

Lufkin Balloon Fest, (936) 632-0490, facebook.com/jaangelinacounty

Perryton Pioneer Day, (806) 435-6400, museumofthepains.com

Castroville [23-24] St. Louis Day, (830) 931-2826, saintlouisday.com

29

Granbury [29-Sept. 1] Granbury Square Labor Day Festival, (682) 936-4550, granburysquare.com

30

Winnsboro Texas Songwriters Showcase, (903) 342-0686, winnsboro.centerforthearts.com

SEPTEMBER

5

Brenham First Fridays Farmer & Artisan Market, (979) 337-7239, facebook.com/brenhamfarmersmarket

Fort Worth [5-6] Erica Rhodes, (512) 817-9535, fortworth.blcomedy.com

El Campo [5-7] Freedom Fest, (979) 275-1600, eclostagoon.com

6

Fairfield Show of Wheels, (903) 389-5792, fairfieldtexaschamber.com

Grapevine ItalianCarFest, (817) 410-3185, grapevinetexasusa.com

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.

TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

Discover the Rich History of the Old Indianola Trail



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"I never expected it to be so beautiful that it takes your breath away."

— Kaya C., on Stauer Opals



In a quaint village, nestled between rolling hills, lived a young woman with a deep appreciation for gemstones. Her grandmother gifted her a delicate cross pendant adorned with opals. The opals shimmered with a mesmerizing play of colors, reflecting hues of blues, greens, and fiery oranges. Her grandmother shared the legend of the opals, believed to bring hope, purity, and luck to those who wore them.

Using this story as inspiration, Stauer brings you the **Opal Spirit Cross Pendant**. With over 2 total carats of Kyocera lab-created opals set in .925 sterling silver encased in yellow gold, this pendant is a radiant celebration of beauty and craftsmanship. Each opal captivates with a kaleidoscopic dance of fiery oranges blending into oceanic blues, streaked with flashes of vibrant green that seem to come alive with every movement. The shimmering opals are skillfully arranged to create an enchanting, otherworldly glow, embodying the spirit of hope and harmony.

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only 930 pieces, making it a rare and treasured addition to your jewelry collection. Plus, when you order today, you'll receive the gold-finished sterling silver chain—a \$69 value—absolutely free!

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College Life

Not to tell tales out of school, but these readers give it the old college try and move to the head of the class. School's in session, and there's no place in Texas they'd rather be.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 CASSIE RAPPOLEE
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

"Freshmen don't get the best seats, but they have the most spirit. Gig 'em Aggies!"

2 MARY BORDEN
VICTORIA EC

The University of Texas marching band heads to the stadium in Austin.

3 NANCY JANE MCMILLAN
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

"Five-year-old Charlie visits his daddy's alma mater and gets in the spirit of cheering on the Texas Longhorns."

4 KATY JAMESON
LAMAR EC

"Caleb Jameson's first win on the mound with Baylor. Living out his childhood dreams."



Upcoming Contests

DUE AUG 10 Country Life
DUE SEP 10 Snakes Alive!
DUE OCT 10 From the Oil Fields



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for many more College Life photos from readers.



A Muddy Path to Texas

20 years ago, Hurricane Katrina sent Louisianans into the open arms of Texans

BY PAIGE EATON
ILLUSTRATION BY TARA JACOBY

STANDING INSIDE OUR Slidell, Louisiana, house, feet buried in slick gray bottom mud from the marshy waters of the Pontchartrain Basin, my husband, Jim, and I agreed to head for Texas. We knew Vicki, Jim's sister, would welcome us if we could get there.

A few days before, on August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina had devastated coastal Mississippi and Louisiana, with us in the midst. It had been hard, yet we knew we were lucky. We eventually learned that 1,833 people died in the storm.

Uninhabitable, except by the minnows swimming in the bathtub, our house was sludgy. But it was still standing, and so were we. A tree had smashed our truck, but it worked. Gas, distressfully, was scarce. The 482-mile journey to Alba, Texas, 80 miles east of Dallas, would be

iffy if we couldn't find more fuel. We chanced it.

After tense highway miles, Lady Luck met us at fume level, and we refilled. Once in Alba, Vicki offered electricity, hot food, warm showers and clean sheets—luxuries I've never taken for granted since. Her home became our command center to rally insurance adjusters and source supplies.

Our truck entered an East Texas body shop. Meanwhile, Vicki loaned us hers for our drive back to Slidell to rebuild. Galahad, our German shepherd, stayed behind. We lived in limbo for months, back and forth, rebuilding in Louisiana and resupplying in Texas.

In St. Tammany Parish, it was disheartening. Goods and services were absent, and friends and neighbors were scattered across the country. Whenever we crossed the Texas threshold, peace and calm enfolded us. On the trips home, we bolstered for hardship.

We burned our candles low as we managed subsistence living along with our jobs and house rebuilding. As able, we'd roll west to visit Vicki and Galahad, and contentment would settle us. That was the balm we needed.

Before Katrina, I was a Louisiana-Mississippi hybrid and glad for it. Living in Texas was never part of my plan. But subtly, Texas burrows under a person's skin to build a cozy den.

In September 2006, we claimed citizenship. Our house is just a pasture away from Vicki's place.

That first night in our new home, I stood in the backyard, listening to crickets and stargazing. I saw lights shimmering at Vicki's, so I phoned her. She grabbed a flashlight and went to her front yard as we talked. There, she winked her light on and off. In turn, I grabbed a flashlight and signaled back. We both giggled.

At that moment, the red Texas dirt felt like solid ground upon which to build a new life. Twenty years later, I wholly confirm that it has been. ■

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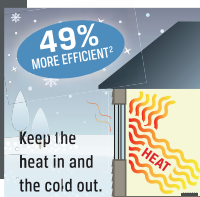
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