

TEXAS CO-OP POWER



SEE NO EVIL

Rattlesnakes deserve
respect and caution,
not universal loathing

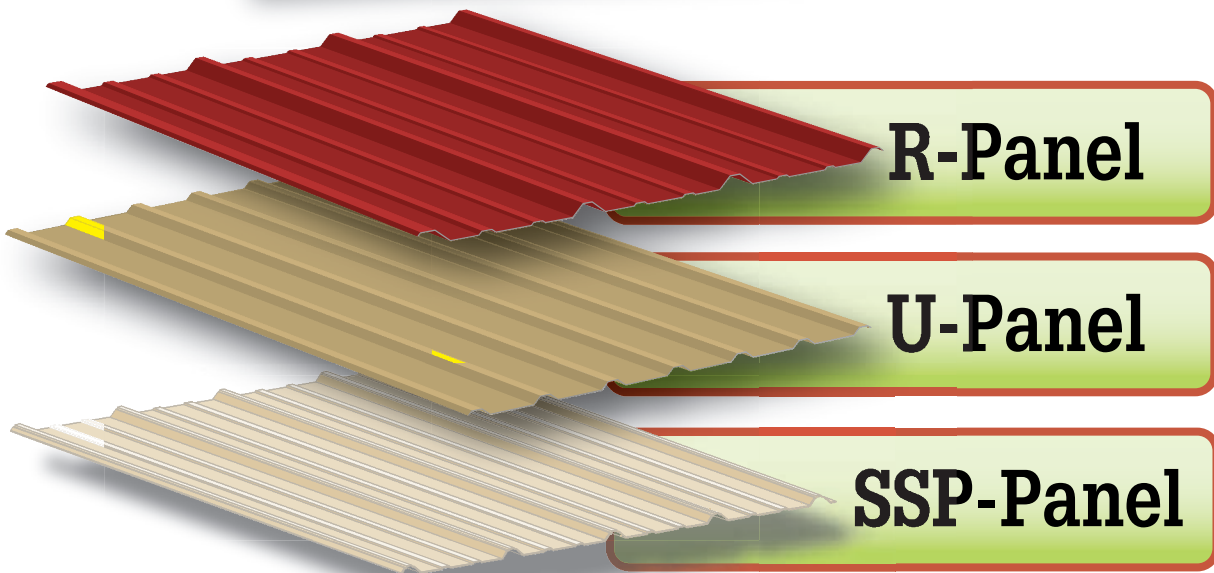
BLUEBONNET NEWS
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Cowboys brand cattle at the XIT Ranch.

FEATURES

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By Gene Fowler

NEXT MONTH

Firmly Rooted The Stark family lumber empire in Orange forged cultural destinations that offer nature, art and history.



ON THE COVER Rattlesnakes are among the most commonly encountered snakes in the state. Illustration by David Danz

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A Tree's Trials

I'm a crape murderer—but not because I'm trying to restrict the height of them [*Crape Murder*, February 2020]. My crape myrtles border our driveway. They bloom beautifully and look great during the warm months.

However, once the first freeze occurs, they turn brown and become a bit of an eyesore. Even worse, left untrimmed, they drop dead leaves and seed pods onto my driveway throughout the winter, much of which is then blown into the garage. Foot traffic then brings them inside.

TOM MILLHOLLON | GRANBURY
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

I enjoyed Sheryl Smith-Rodgers' article, but it should have been titled Crape Assault and Battery because it's almost impossible to kill the average crape. Three years ago, I cut off a 6-inch diameter volunteer crape just above the ground (that was too close to the house), and it came roaring back.

I repeatedly cut it back and finally was able to kill it by pouring a thick layer of concrete over the stump. There's nothing delicate about a crape!

DUDLEY DOBIE | AUSTIN
FAYETTE EC

For all of my 50-year career in Texas horticulture, I have yet to hear even one valid reason for this practice. When author Sheryl Smith-Rodgers quoted Greg Grant, she went to one of Texas' finest resources. Indeed, we must "stop the madness."

NEIL SPERRY | MCKINNEY
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

True Confession

I had never seen a crape myrtle before I moved to Texas [*Crape Murder*, February 2020]. There was a row of them along the property line of my lot in a mobile home park. My neighbor told me to cut them back. Soon afterward, I found out that was wrong. I've felt bad ever since. They were fairly tall.

LISA CULBERTSON | VIA FACEBOOK

Not a Flicker of Doubt

In Focus on Texas in February, you identified a bird as a woodpecker. The bird is a flicker.

MARYLIN DOW | SCROGGINS
WOOD COUNTY EC

Editor's Note: We checked with Clifford Shackelford, an ornithologist at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "It's a male red-bellied woodpecker," he said. "The flicker would never have that much red on the head."

Crawfish Crazy

I am crawfish crazy [*A Tale of Texas Crawfish*, February 2020]. It's a pastime, like baseball or fishing. Conversations over mudbugs and beer—can't beat it.

RYAN WAGNER | VIA FACEBOOK

You left out the best place along the coast in Calhoun County.

Bubba's Cajun Seafood has been serving up its own special seasoning on heaps of steaming crawfish for almost 10 years.

BECKEY BOYD GOODEN | SEADRIFT
VICTORIA EC

I call 'em what they are, crawfish, and the very best come out the Atchafalaya spillway, not farm raised.

DARYL RODRIGUEZ | VIA FACEBOOK



You can call them whatever you want. I call them good.

MICHEAL WOODARD | VIA FACEBOOK

I grew up in West Texas, and we called them crawdads. I never knew people ate them.

MARCIA HERALD | VIA FACEBOOK

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Texas Co-op Power

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BY THE NUMBERS

20 MILLION

That's how many Americans demonstrated on behalf of the environment on the first Earth Day, April 22, 1970. Gaylord Nelson, a Wisconsin governor and U.S. senator, started the movement 50 years ago.

HAPPENINGS

School Launch Program

Brett Williams' push for a STEM-based curriculum at Fredericksburg High School in 1996 certainly took off. Williams found a fun way to teach students lessons in science, technology, engineering and math while building a model rocket, which they then launched.

He called his program SystemsGo, and it spread to other schools. Students design rockets to meet specific criteria, such as sending a 1-pound payload 1 mile high or exceeding the sound barrier.

This year, more than 80 high schools in four states will participate in **ROCKETS 2020** launches. The first event in Texas is **APRIL 24-25** in **JACKSBORO**. Launches in Stonewall and Anahuac will follow later in the spring, and Jal, New Mexico, will host an event.

Rockets will launch throughout the events, which are open to the public and free.

INFO ▶ (830) 997-3567, systemsgo.org

WEB EXTRAS
▶ Find more happenings online.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE



I never should have told my parents . . .

▶ **Tell us how** you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or post them on our Facebook page. Please include your city and co-op.

Below are some of the responses to our February prompt: **My most unforgettable first date was ...**

With two different boys. They both showed up at the same time. Awkward.

BARBARA TALIAFERRO | SPRINGTOWN TRI-COUNTY EC

With a girl who had to stop and go to the bathroom in the woods on the way home.

JIM MORROW | HIGHLAND VILLAGE | COSERV

The one that resulted in my lunch date and I being inseparable from that day forward.

CONNIE THOMAS | VIA FACEBOOK

To see more responses, read Currents on our website.

POWER OF OUR PEOPLE

Sharing Veterans' Voices

WHEN JAPAN'S ENVOYS signed the documents surrendering to the Allies on September 2, 1945, in Tokyo Bay, they could not know they were being watched by a sailor from Fayette County. Charlie Ripper, a shell man for the 16-inch guns on the USS Colorado, had an eye on the ceremony. "I was on lookout duty," Ripper said, "and from the lookout tower I could see them sign the papers."

Ripper and 62 other World War II veterans—men and women—some who remained stateside to support the war effort and others who slogged through muddy battlefields, told their stories to Fayette County Electric Cooperative member Elaine Thomas, who included each narrative in her book, *Veterans' Voices and Home Front Memories*.

"I have been a regular columnist for the *Fayette County Record* for more than a decade," Thomas said. "I was talking to Charlie Ripper and asked him if I could interview him for an article."

Ripper agreed on the condition that he not be called a hero. "The only heroes are the ones who didn't come home," Ripper said.

Thomas' stories about Ripper and others in the *Fayette County Record* drew raves from the community. They led to a special section in the paper and then the book.

Four hundred people turned out for the *Veterans' Voices* book signing in November 2018, and 17 veterans and three female civilians whose stories appear in the book were able to accept appreciation from the community for their service. Proceeds from the book, available on Amazon, support a scholarship at Blinn College's Schulenberg campus.



Elaine Thomas with World War II veteran Charlie Ripper of La Grange.

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

LIFESTYLE

MAKING CENTS

April 1 is National One Cent Day.

That's not an April Fool's Day joke. It's true.

A penny used to be worth something—enough to prompt the centuries-old saying, "A penny saved is a penny earned." In fact, some readers remember penny candy and corner stores, where, for just 1 cent, you could actually get something sweet.

The U.S. first issued a 1-cent coin in 1792. Because of inflation, what used to cost 1 cent then costs 27 cents today.



Though easily disregarded, the penny is the most abundant coin in the country, with about 7.8 billion produced by the U.S. Mint in 2018. But because pennies cost 2.06 cents each to produce, American taxpayers lost more than \$82 million that year minting them.

That's not a joke, either.

WORTH REPEATING

"What is the difference between a taxidermist and a tax collector? The taxidermist takes only your skin."

—MARK TWAIN

(With that, we remind you the tax collector comes calling April 15.)

A close-up photograph of a snake with a brown and tan speckled pattern, coiled in a field of green grass and small red and yellow flowers. The snake's head is visible in the upper left, and its body forms several loops. The background is filled with tall grass and some dried leaves.

**A
SNAKE**

**TO
LOVE**

BY MIKE LEGGETT

FRIEND OR FOE?

What is your experience with rattlesnakes? Tell us at letters@texascooppower.com.

OUTDOORS JOURNALIST COMES TO ADMIRE RATTLESNAKES, WHICH ARE NOT THE EVIL BEINGS OF LEGEND AND MYTH IN TEXAS

I can trace my love affair with rattlesnakes back more than 60 years to a cool, misty October Saturday morning in the mid-1950s when somebody showed up at the little general store in DeBerry with a very large canebrake rattler in the back of a pickup.

I would have been 6 or 7 years old then, and there was no threatened status as there is now for these shy, somewhat gentle reptiles. In those days, when anybody encountered one, the snake invariably lost a war with a load of No. 6 squirrel shot. This one had succumbed to just such a blast, but it wasn't his missing head that fascinated me. It was the full-grown fox squirrel that lay in the slit-open belly of the snake. His last meal.

That rattlesnake was absolutely beautiful to me and kicked off a quest that has kept me fascinated for more than six decades. I loved that snake and hated that it had to die.

I wouldn't see another rattler for at least 30 years. By then I was the outdoors editor at the *Austin American-Statesman*. I

was looking for someone who kept rattlesnakes to allow me to check the efficacy of wading leggings designed to blunt the attacks of stingrays and rattlesnakes. A Texas Parks and

A western diamondback rattlesnake, found in the western two-thirds of the state and one of eight species of rattlesnakes native to Texas.

Wildlife Department employee offered a 3-footer, and I placed my right boot down next to the snake. The strike was surprisingly fast, not even registering as a blow against my calf. There were golden droplets of venom hanging off the ballistic cloth of the leggings.

I went several more years without crossing paths with another rattlesnake, but once I hit my stride, I began to see them and hear them more often. I would catch them when I could and pose them for photos in the wild.

I've seen them during spring turkey season especially, usually crossing a road or *sendero* and trying to go on about their business. I've literally stepped on rattlers, stepped over them and walked within inches of them as they hid in the brush, usually under a guayacan or other shrubby kind of South Texas bush. Only one of those tried to bite me, a big snake—more than 5 feet long—that fired off from under a bush in South Texas one day. I killed it with a deer rifle, something I've always regretted.

Most of the time, rattlesnakes try to stay hidden or move to a hiding place and avoid any contact with humans. In the course of daily life in Central Texas, if you encounter a snake, odds are it will be a western diamondback rattlesnake or a Texas rat snake. But rattlesnakes are not the evil beings of legend and myth in Texas.

RESPECT THEIR LETHAL POWERS

We are too big for rattlers to eat, and they know that. But they will bite if pressured or frightened, and anyone who suffers a bite from a rattler is in for a tough time.

On average, one to two people per year die from snakebites in Texas, according to the Department of State Health Services, and often, those individuals were handling the snake in some way, either by trying to pick it up or fool with it. Most snakebites in Texas are by western diamondbacks, the most common venomous snake in the state.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BITTEN BY A RATTLESNAKE

Here are some steps that could help lessen the nasty effects of the snake's venom.

Don't panic. Head straight for a doctor or hospital. Doctors will have access to anti-venom drugs that can help save lives and limbs.

Throw out those old tales about cutting an X above the fang mark or sucking out the venom. You'll probably do more harm than good.

Remain still. Movements help distribute the venom throughout the body.

Remove jewelry or tight clothing around the bite.

Keep the bite area below the level of the heart to keep the venom from spreading.

DO NOT apply a tourniquet or ice to the bite. And no steroids should be used in treatment.

There is a vaccine for dogs and cats that, with an annual injection, can help reduce the effects of rattlesnake bites. Veterinarians typically keep it in stock.

Except for the big timber areas of East Texas, western diamondbacks are the most widespread of venomous snakes, with a range covering the area along either side of Interstate 35 and on into the mountains of West Texas. The South Texas desert and the coastal plains are home to very large diamondbacks, 6–7 feet long. Prairie rattlers show up in the grasslands and scrub brush of the Texas Panhandle.

There are no regional differences in aggressiveness or venomous status of the local snakes, which all have the equipment to bite and injure or kill humans.

University of Texas herpetologist Travis Laduc has spent lots of time studying rattlesnakes and the way they bite. Capturing many hours of footage with ultrahigh-speed cameras, he's learned that the bite itself, from coiled position to contact and back to coiled position, takes but half a second. In that half-second, the rattlesnake can deliver a load of hemotoxic venom that works through the bloodstream.

THEIR ROLE IN THE ECOSYSTEM

Rattlesnakes are abundant in most of their natural range, and they are there for a reason. Rats and mice might be stacked a foot deep without rattlesnakes around to eat a few from time to time.

However, I'm not saying you should ignore a rattler in your yard or close to your house where kids or pets might be in danger. I've lost two Labs to rattlesnakes over the years myself.

My wife and I came home one night. As we walked up onto the front porch in the dark and I was trying to get the key into the lock, we were shaken by the loudest buzzing I've ever heard—so loud up under the porch I thought it had to be cicadas. However, Rana wasn't fooled. She was back in the truck in seconds and yelling for me to get in as well.

I climbed into the cab and turned the lights on to illuminate a large rattlesnake lying on the doormat, just inches from where I had been standing moments before. We had cats then, and as outdoor cats tend to do, they had choused that snake until he couldn't get away and was cornered against the front door.

I had no choice but to do away with the snake. That's one rule I don't break: No snakes around the house.

In Central Texas, where I live and where a generous portion of Texas rattlesnakes live, that is kind of a classic encounter. Maybe you find one hiding in your flower bed one morning or crawling through your corral. We should be thankful for them and for what they do to keep vermin under control.

Here's a challenge for anyone who comes across a rattlesnake: Let it stay in its hiding place or just crawl away into the brush. If it's hiding, rattle or not, it's just hoping you'll go on by and leave it to hunt in peace.

Mike Leggett was outdoors editor for the *Austin American-Statesman* from 1985 to 2013. He has a lifelong fascination with rattlesnakes and is currently writing a book about rattlers, due out in 2021. He lives in Burnet and is a member of Pedernales EC.

WEB EXTRAS

► [Read this story on our website to learn more rattlesnake facts.](#)

COMMON SNAKES OF TEXAS



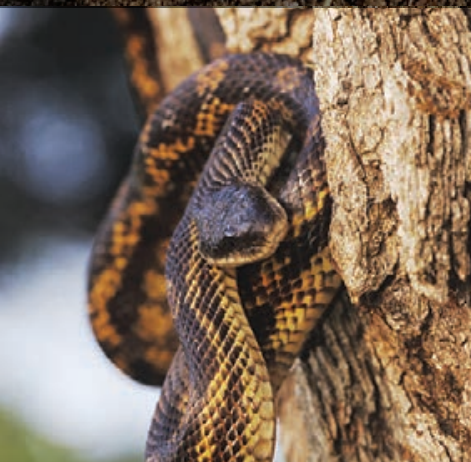
COTTONMOUTH



COPPERHEAD



CORAL SNAKE



TEXAS RAT SNAKE

VENOMOUS

Rattlesnakes are not the only venomous snakes in Texas, though they are by far the most common and tend to strike the most fear in Texans' hearts.

Next on the list of most feared snakes is the **cottonmouth**, or **water moccasin**. Ranging in color from a splotchy gray to nearly black, it is commonly found around swampy, slow-water terrain and habitat.

The **copperhead** is a small, beautifully colored and patterned snake found mostly in yards and wooded areas of East Texas but also Central Texas. It is common in cities and towns and is known to deliver bites to children playing outside or adults walking on the lawn.

Coral snakes, which deliver neurotoxic venom, are found throughout the eastern half of the state, including Central Texas. They are small, slender snakes and must literally chew on a person to get their venom into the bite.

NONVENOMOUS

Texas rat snake Maybe the most common snake in Texas, this acrobatic climber feeds on rats and mice, birds and birds' eggs. It can grow to be quite large but is not dangerous to humans. It will bite, though, and protect itself with an obnoxious musk.

Coachwhip A slender, mostly light brown to tan snake that will kill and eat rattlesnakes, it doesn't attack people by whipping their legs, as folklore suggests. It eats birds, small reptiles and almost anything else it can catch and swallow. The Central Texas whipsnake, a member of this family, has a black head and a black-and-white pattern on the rest of its body.

Hog-nosed snake Most common in East Texas, this little snake has an upturned nose and feeds on insects. It will play dead if threatened. It has a brownish to gray body with broken patterns of brown and black on its back.

Diamondback water snake A brownish snake with yellowish belly, it is common in lakes and ponds through much of Texas, especially the damper eastern half of the state. It eats fish, frogs and other aquatic fauna. It is often mistaken for a water moccasin and killed.

Speckled king snake A large snake, it's commonly known as a chicken snake for its habit of sneaking into hen houses and devouring eggs and baby chicks—though the rat snake is more likely the culprit in those raids.

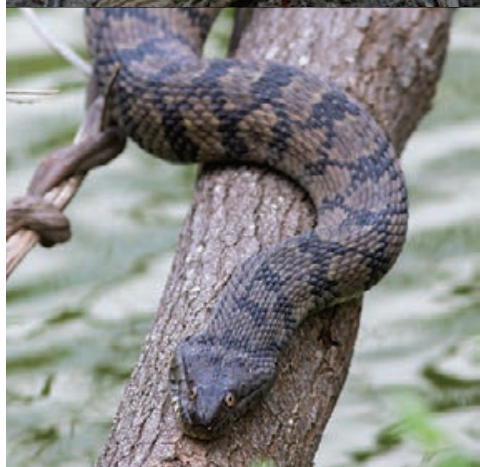
MIKE LEGGETT



COACHWHIP



HOG-NOSED SNAKE



DIAMONDBACK WATER SNAKE



SPECKLED KING SNAKE



XIT

THE RANCH
THAT BUILT THE CAPITOL



JOHN A. WILSON

THE SHORT-LIVED XIT RANCH, THE WORLD'S LARGEST, LEFT BEHIND MYTHS AS LASTING AS THE EDIFICE IT FUNDED

WHEN SAM HOUSTON'S youngest son, Temple, spoke at the state Capitol dedication in 1888, he waxed eloquent about the grand building. "Texas stands peerless amid the mighty, and her brow is crowned with bewildering magnificence!" he said. "This building fires the heart and excites reflection in the minds of all."

Houston also commented on the logistics required to manifest this structure, which started with the creation of the 3 million-acre XIT Ranch and included the construction of the Austin and Northwestern Railroad to deliver red granite for the Capitol from Marble Falls to Austin.

"The XIT looms large in Texas mythology and ranching history because it was the largest fenced ranch in the world during its heyday," says Nick Olson, director of the XIT Museum in Dalhart, which preserves images, stories, saddles and artifacts associated with the XIT. "And it's the ranch that built the largest state Capitol in the country." At the time of its dedication, the Texas Capitol was the seventh-largest building in the world.

Neither the XIT Ranch nor the special, narrow-gauge railroad tracks exist today. The XIT lives on as a carefully tended legend, and the reality of the ranch is difficult to separate from the myths. Capitol and XIT historian Bill Green says the ranch's legacy can be seen as a branding tool because businesses in Dalhart and around the Panhandle adopt the name: XIT Roofing, XIT Real Estate, XIT Feeders, and XIT car dealerships and communications companies. Thousands of area residents own small patches of the fabled ranch. Cattle outfits operate on lands purchased from the original XIT acreage.

Moreover, the XIT legacy looms globally. "I was curator of history at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum for 17 years," Green explains, "and we had visitors from all over the world. They all knew two things about Texas: the Alamo and the XIT."

BUILDING THE CAPITOL

STATE LEGISLATORS realized they needed to plan for a new Capitol in the 1870s, and the Texas Constitution of 1876 set aside 3 million acres of land along the western border of the Panhandle to fund its construction. Even though they allocated the land, they did not articulate a procedure for how to survey the land and execute the legal agreements required to construct the building itself. In 1879, the Legislature approved a process for surveying the land and moving forward with a working plan. Not long after the existing Capitol burned in 1881, the newly appointed Capitol Board, including the governor, treasurer, attorney general and land commissioner, solicited bids.

In 1882, the contract to construct the edifice went to four Illinoisans: brothers John and Charles Farwell, Amos C. Babcock and Abner Taylor, who formed the Capitol Syndicate. Taylor

then hired a 27-year-old German immigrant named Gustav Wilke to serve as contractor. In 1885, the syndicate made an agreement by which it could occupy and ranch on the XIT land even though it did not yet have the title to it. Once the Capitol was complete, the legal title would be conveyed from the state to the syndicate.

To finance the cattle ranching, John Farwell formed the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company of London. He and his partners raised about \$5 million to keep the ranch running until it could be broken up and sold to individual ranchers and homesteaders. Back in Austin, construction started on the Capitol, with the Farwells paying for the initial stages from their own funds.

As Green points out, Europeans of the time had a rather romantic view of Texas ranching, and British investors had bankrolled several large Texas ranches, including Charles Goodnight's JA Ranch. The British Empire enjoyed global reach, and there was little opportunity to pursue the promise of such lucrative investments at home.

OPERATING THE RANCH

THE FIRST LONGHORNS arrived on the XIT range in 1885, delivered by a team of drovers led by Ab Blocker. J. Frank Dobie wrote that Blocker was “the most original-natured trail boss I have known.” At the third XIT Reunion in 1938, where aging cowpokes gathered to swap tall tales and reminisce, Blocker told Lewis Nordyke, author of the 1949 XIT volume, *Cattle Empire*, that he sketched the XIT brand in the sod with his boot heel for the ranch’s manager at the time, B. H. “Barbecue” Campbell. Blocker demonstrated for Campbell that the brand could be accomplished with five applications of a straight-line branding iron and would be nearly impossible for rustlers to alter. XIT it was.

In his 1929 book, *The XIT Ranch of Texas*, J. Evetts Haley explained that managing the sprawling ranch posed huge challenges for Campbell. “Barbecue exercised slight control over his men and allowed the ranch to become a rendezvous for rustlers, outlaws, and hard cases of all kinds,” Haley wrote.

Ranch operations improved when Albert G. Boyce, described by Haley as “a frontier cowman of commanding presence and vast experience,” became manager of the XIT in 1888. When Boyce took over, he fired and replaced most of the ranch’s 150 cowboys. At the same time, John Farwell improved profitability by replacing the ranch’s longhorn herds with Hereford, Angus and other purebred stock.

To further streamline the XIT’s business, Boyce divided the massive ranch into eight sections, each with a separate function, and established ranch headquarters in the town of Channing, where he built a house. The northernmost section was named Buffalo Springs. The others included Middle Water, Ojo Bravo, Alamasitas, Rita Blanca, Escarbada and Spring Lake. The southernmost division was Yellow Houses, named for nearby limestone formations called *las casas amarillas*.

Cowpunchers, well drillers, windmill toilers



Above: Bronco busting at the Yellow Houses division of the XIT Ranch in 1904. Below: The Capitol in Austin in the late 19th century.



and freighters—who kept the ranch’s remote outposts equipped with necessities—came from all walks of life. One cowpoke was even said to have a special love for the poetry of John Keats. When Boyce’s daughter Bessie opened a letter from a farm boy in Maryland who professed to love horses, she hired him by return mail. A hand named Blue Stevens later recalled that he gathered cow chips—used as fuel—for 21 days straight, picking up enough chips “to heat branding irons for every cow in the U.S.A.”

Noted ranching photographer Ray Rector cowboied on the XIT as a youth. According to the 1995 volume *The Papers of Will Rogers*, the cowboy philosopher worked on the XIT around 1901. A photograph of Yellow Houses’ chuck wagon dining includes an hombre identified as Rogers, who later recalled the Plains as “the prettiest country I ever saw in my life.”

Operating under threat of receivership by British investors for most of its existence, the XIT began selling off its acreage in 1901. The last cattle left the ranch in 1912. In 1936, the first XIT Reunion drew a crowd to Dalhart, and the annual event is now known internationally as “the world’s largest free barbecue.”

The Escarbada division headquarters building—deconstructed, moved, reconstructed and restored—can be seen today at the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock. The XIT general office and manager’s residence still stand in Channing, where an annual Christmas in July event began in 2018. (The 2020 event will be July 25.) The Capitol Visitors Center in Austin features a display on the XIT story.

Was the XIT too sprawling and massive to be a successful ranching operation? Manager Boyce thought so. But Andy Wilkinson, playwright of *Charlie Goodnight’s Last Night*, takes a longer view. “When you let all the big windies about the fabled ranch drift off into the sunset,” muses Wilkinson, “what still remains is a spread of 3 million acres, 1,500 miles of barbed wire, tens of thousands of cattle, and enough outlaws and heroes and honest-to-goodness cowhands to populate all the rangeland myths of the American West.”

Writer and author **Gene Fowler** specializes in art and history.

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The White Buffalo stone is as rare as its namesake, and we've given it an even rarer price.

To Native Americans, the buffalo was a symbol of sacred life and abundance, inspiring a legend of a white buffalo calf appearing during difficult times to usher in a new age of hope and peace. So sacred is this prophecy, that the Lakota tribe has named a rare and beautiful stone after the white buffalo calf.

To say this stone is as rare as a white buffalo is an understatement. There are a lot of imitations in the market, but don't be fooled. You want the real thing. And, we have it. White Buffalo is found in only one mine worldwide, the Otteson Mine located in Tonopah, Nevada. Which is where we went. The family-owned and operated mine is located near the Yomba Shoshone Tribe of the Yomba Reservation and is roughly 200 miles from Battle Mountain.

We were able to secure these authentic desert gems for a remarkable price. You could easily spend as much as \$900 for a White Buffalo pendant in sterling silver. But, our philosophy is to pass our good fortune on to our customers, which is why you can own a piece of Native American history for under \$100.

The **White Buffalo Collection** celebrates the unique and rare beauty of this legendary stone. Generous cabochons of White Buffalo are set in filigreed sterling silver settings with an antiqued finish that beautifully complements this stone's distinctive white background and black matrix.

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Splendor ^{IN} THE G

Glamour + Camping = G

Where luxury digs meet the great outdoors — minus the bugs. There's a style for everyone, and they're popping up all around the Bluebonnet area.

Story by Sharon Jayson
Photos by Sarah Beal

W

hen is camping not camping? When the traditional tiny tent is replaced with a cabin, castle, cottage, barn, dome, boxcar, hut, igloo, cave, tiny house, teepee, tree house, yurt or some other surprising, glamorous or kitschy accommodation, that's not camping. That's glamping. The trend is so mainstream the word is in the dictionary. A popular mashup of glamour and camping, this luxury experience takes the sting out of traditional camping. That means a roof, a door, a bed or three or four, a couch and probably a bathroom and small kitchen.



Lone Star Glamp Inn

Vintage travel trailers and teepees, all indoors and air conditioned; specializes in large groups, with space for 56 people. **Pages 22-23**



Flophouze Hotel

Shipping container hotel with six air-conditioned “Houzes,” each with a private bathroom and kitchenette; shared shipping container pool. **Page 20**
Photo courtesy of Flophouze Hotel



Davis Ranch Retreat

Featured on Animal Planet’s “Treehouse Masters” television series; also offers private casita, bunkhouse, barn room and camping site. **Page 21**



Lake Bastrop North Shore Park

Five 25-foot Airstreams are ADA-accessible, with a ramp and patio; each includes fire pit, gas grill, Adirondack chairs and patio lights. **Page 22**



Wahwahtaysee Resort

Three 650-square-foot safari tents, each with king bed, queen sleeper sofa, heating and air-conditioning, TV and private bath. **Page 22-23**

rass lamping

It’s rustic meets deluxe in the great outdoors. Soak up as much nature as you need and then retreat into your temperature-controlled, bug-free swanky spot. Some glamping locations are still tents, but they’re bigger, sturdier and decked out with fine essentials that eclipse your tradi-

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

tional little cookstove and a pair of folding chairs.

Glamping is a global phenomenon, and the region in and around Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's service area offers some diverse getaways. Glamping locations can be found anywhere — from deep in the woods to a riverbank or on a ranch — and the types of accommodations vary wildly.

Keep in mind that camping with comfort and amenities comes with a price tag. A 220-square-foot cottage that sleeps two at The Liney Moon in Dripping Springs, west of Austin, could cost \$149 a night. For a bit more luxury, the Spartan Mansion at Green Acres, a tiny house in Elgin, has rates starting at \$195 a night. Or, for a longer drive and swankier set-up, there's Summit Tent at the Collective Hill Country in Wimberley, 15 miles northwest of San Marcos. Expect to pay \$300 to \$600 a night, excluding taxes and fees that vary seasonally. That gets you complimentary breakfast, 1,500 thread-count linens, luxe surroundings and packages that offer even more perks (at a higher price).

"Glamping is all about making where you stay, why you stay," said Jessica Armstrong, partnerships manager at Glamping Hub, a global website with more than 32,000 listings in more than 110 countries.

Davis Ranch Retreat, a 40-acre haven about 30 miles south of Bastrop, is one such local glamping spot with a variety of accommodations. It offers campgrounds, a casita, a bunkhouse, bed-and-breakfast rooms and a tree house constructed by Pete Nelson and crew from Animal Planet's television series, "Treehouse Masters." The tree house, about 12 feet above ground, was featured on the show.

"I first rented it (out) the week after the show aired in June 2013. It's been rented ever since," said ranch owner Monica Davis, a Bluebonnet member. She sometimes reserves the tree house for family members, and it's not available when she's on vacation. "Other than that, the tree house is booked every weekend," she said.

Glamping fulfills travelers' desires for wellness getaways and ecotourism, and it creates memories of unique experiences unavailable at cookie-cutter hotels or motels. Psychological research shows that experiences bring people greater happiness than possessions, so glamping is made-to-order for an unforgettable experience amid the sights and sounds of nature. With fire pits, grills, Big Green Egg ceramic cookers or Yeti coolers, the upscale accommodations let visitors immerse themselves in the outdoors yet sleep peacefully on real beds. And sometimes there's Wi-Fi.

The glamping market in the United

Flophouze Hotel

1132 W. FM 1291
Round Top, TX 78954
flophouze.com
979-353-2627

SHIPPING CONTAINER HOTEL:

Includes six individual, recycled shipping containers transformed into air-conditioned "Houzes" with private bathrooms and kitchenettes. Each has a front porch with chairs, as well as a hammock and fire pit. The shipping containers are furnished with salvaged items — kitchen cabinet bases from a Brooklyn laboratory, windows from a school in Philadelphia and countertops that were once floors in Texas bowling alleys. Local antiques show finds are also featured. A few other accommodations are nearby.

SETTING: Round Top, a Fayette County town about 45 miles east of Bastrop with a permanent population of about 100. That number swells twice a year during the hugely popular Round Top Antiques Shows in fall and spring.

EXTRA SPECIAL: Modpool is the shipping-container swimming pool with a see-through side. Each Houze is equipped with complimentary snacks and beverages. No TV, but Wi-Fi provided. Free entertainment includes board games, books and music via a record player and a variety of vinyl LPs. Solar panels for the units and pool are planned for the end of this year.

RATES: Range from \$175 to \$200 per night, based upon number of guests and beds (one-time \$50 cleaning fee and taxes are additional). Rates increase during the antiques shows.

OWNER: Matt White

States is projected to grow by more than 15% a year and generates revenue of about \$1 billion by 2024, according to a 2019 report from Arizton, a market research firm. Within this burgeoning industry are global trade shows for operators, such as The Glamping Show in England held every September or the U.S. version of the show near Denver in October. There's also a Glamping Business International trade magazine, as well as the nonprofit American



HISTORY: White, of Barnegat, New Jersey, has been attending the Round Top Antiques Show for about 20 years to find items for his New Jersey architectural salvage company. Eight years ago, he bought five acres in Round Top and moved to Texas three years later. He opened a local architectural salvage business called Recycling the Past in a 12,000-square-foot warehouse he built on his property. It doubles as a Round Top

Glamping Association, founded in 2018.

Websites such as glampinghub.com and glamping.com offer worldwide booking options. The most popular accommodations listed on Glamping Hub are cabins, tree houses and yurts, said Armstrong, the Glamping Hub executive. But tiny houses, typically about 200 square feet with room for only two people, "exploded in a unique way" over the past year, she said.



Flophouse Hotel owner Matt White, above, opened the getaway in 2017. The place is constantly evolving, he said. Left, the interior of one of the containers shows a kitchenette. Photos courtesy of Flophouse Hotel



event venue. He opened Flophouse in 2017. “We’re constantly adding and changing and evolving,” White said. “Every detail is pretty much covered.”

FROM GUESTS: David and Beth Morley of San Antonio visited for a friend’s birthday weekend. “We hadn’t been to Round Top,” David Morley said, “so the idea of having the Flophouse experience — we’re both creative types — seemed like the perfect weekend.”

Glamping Hub began accepting online bookings in 2014. Glamping.com launched in 2013 and now offers bookings for approximately 850 sites around the world. Linda Clark, the website’s director of sales, said visitors are attracted to the opportunity of convenient and comfortable outdoor experiences. “People are more willing these days to think outside of the box,” she said. ■

More Glamping spots on the next two pages



Monica Davis with Chocolate Chip, one of her miniature goats. Below is the inside of the tree house, which includes a bathroom and porch with a view of sunset.

Davis Ranch Retreat

1110 Peach Creek Road
Waelder, TX 78959
davisranchretreat.com
512-921-1500

TREE HOUSE SPA ROOM: Featured as the Sky High Spa from Season 1 of Animal Planet’s “Treehouse Masters” television series. Other accommodations on site include a private casita, bunkhouse, barn room and regular old camping sites.

SETTING: 40-acre Bastrop County ranch in Waelder

EXTRA SPECIAL: Longhorns wander the land, and goats, horses and chickens are on site.

TREE HOUSE RATES: From \$125 to \$250 per night for the small space that sleeps a maximum of two; price includes breakfast. A one-time \$35 cleaning fee and taxes are additional. Prices for the other facilities vary; a

standard campsite is \$25 a night, per person.

OWNER: Monica Davis

HISTORY: Davis and her former husband grew up in ranching families and bought the property in 1986. Ten years later, they built a house and she has lived there since. In 2011, friends offered to pay her to lodge some family members. From that, Davis Ranch Retreat was born.

FROM GUESTS: “We always like to do the unusual,” said Bernadette Kostan of Wolfforth, near Lubbock, who spent a weekend at the tree house with her husband, Dave, to celebrate his birthday. “I knew there were some nice tree houses,” Dave Kostan said, “and then (my wife) told me it was air-conditioned. Then I was all for it. It was an awesome experience.”





Margo Richards, LCRA vice president who oversees the park. Below, a look at the interior of one of the Airstreams.

Lake Bastrop North Shore Park

603 FM 1441
Bastrop, TX 78602
tinyurl.com/rokgul4
512-578-4816

AIRSTREAM TRAVEL TRAILERS:

The park added five 25-foot Airstreams to its overnight lodging in the fall of 2018. Each Airstream is ADA-accessible, with a ramp and patio. Airstreams have a nostalgic appeal to old-school campers and a kitschy chic vibe for younger adventurers. Every trailer has a heated and air conditioned interior, a TV, bathroom with shower, kitchen and outdoor patio. Outside, each is outfitted with a fire pit, gas grill, four Adirondack chairs and twinkling patio lights.

SETTING: A 182-acre park amid tall oak and pine trees with approximately 40,000 visitors a year. The park includes an aquatic playground on Lake Bastrop, just steps from the Airstreams, as well as watercraft rentals, picnic areas and hike-and-bike trails. Five traditional tent camping sites and 11 RV

spots are available for overnight stays.

EXTRA SPECIAL: Each Airstream has a Texas-related name and is decorated with a coordinating color scheme: Lady Bird, Loblolly, Lone Star, Blue Lucy and Willie.

RATES: \$225 per night before taxes and fees, with a 2-night minimum. Admission to the park for two is included in the rate.

HISTORY: Lake Bastrop North Shore Park is one of the Lower Colorado River Authority's parks. It is on the shores of Lake Bastrop, which opened in 1964 as a cooling reservoir for the Sim Gideon gas-fired power plant. The park opened to visitors in 1968. The LCRA operates more than 40 parks in its nearly 11,000-acre system along the Colorado River.

FROM GUESTS: "Airstreams are just so interesting and iconic," said Sarah Stone of Georgetown. "The experience was really exciting. They thought of everything."



Wahwahtaysee Resort

17062-17002 FM 20
Kingsbury, TX 78638
wahwahtayseeresort.com
512-413-4596

Safari Tents: Three 650-square-foot safari tents (named The Little Dipper, The Sanctuary and The Stargazer), each uniquely decorated with a king bed and queen sleeper sofa, heating and air-conditioning, TV and private bath. Tents have been retrofitted with windows rather than tent flaps. Each unit comes with a golf cart, fire pit, Yeti cooler and Big Green Egg.

Setting: More than 100 acres of private land along the San Marcos River in Guadalupe County about 15 miles southeast of San Marcos.

Extra special: For an additional fee, the resort will arrange for delivery of ready-to-prepare meals, a private chef or adventure experiences such as kayak and fly-fishing tours or horseback riding.

Rates: \$350 weekday and \$450 weekends, not including taxes.

Lone Star Glamp Inn

4212 Texas 237
Round Top, TX 78954
lonestarglampinn.com
512-797-9815

Indoor Camping: The Lone Star Glamp Inn includes 10 vintage travel trailers called “glampers” and 18 teepees set up indoors in two buildings that sleep a total of 56 people. The site is designed primarily for large groups. There are multiple seating areas, a large-screen TV, outdoor grill, microwave and coffee maker. Restrooms and showers are centrally located.

Setting: The inn is on the road between Round Top and Warrenton. It is air-conditioned and offers Wi-Fi. The individual glamping units are spread throughout a former car museum as well as another building, together totaling 35,000 square feet on two acres.

Extra special: The cute trailers have proven attractive to many women’s gatherings, such as bachelorette parties, but it is also suitable for reunions and youth groups.



Owners Sterling and Kaci Van Coutren, at left, and a look inside a teepee, above.

Rates: Individual rentals of \$199 each are available only during the two annual Round Top Antiques Show. There is also a \$45 bedding rental that includes sheets, pillow, blanket and towel. Taxes are additional. Group rentals range from \$1,000 to \$1,400 without taxes, depending upon how much of the buildings are rented.

Owners: Sterling and Kaci Van Coutren

History: The couple (he’s a mechanical engineer and she works for a financial

software company) bought the building that housed a car museum from Sterling Van Coutren’s uncle in 2013. They opened the lodging in 2015 and added an additional building in 2018.

From guests: Dee Mock of Cypress, a community near Houston, spent the weekend there as part of a women’s dance group that numbered 36. “We like to find places where we can all congregate,” Mock said. “We filled it up fast and had people on the waiting list.”



Owners: The Dillard family (Sammy Dillard and his wife, Lindsay; his brother, Donny, and sister-in-law, Meagan; and his parents, Bob and Diane).

History: The family bought the property in 2015 and considered options, including dividing for homesites. Instead, they opened Wahwahtaysee Resort (pronounced Wa Wa Tah See)

in April 2018 with three luxury safari tents.

From guests: Trini Foss of Dallas visited the resort in 2019 for a long weekend with her boyfriend, Tucker Rutherford. “We had done a trip to Austin before, but we were looking for something different. I had heard of glamping — it’s like a thing nowadays,” she said.



Above, Sammy and Lindsay Dillard are part-owners of the resort, shown with their son, Sammy Jr. Left, a view inside, with retrofitted windows rather than flaps.

Notification to Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative members about 2020 ANNUAL MEETING

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Because of the Coronavirus threat to public safety and our members' health, as well as government guidelines restricting public gatherings, Bluebonnet's Board has decided the 2020 Annual Meeting will be held without public attendance.

The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 12. Cooperative bylaws require that the cooperative must have an Annual Meeting every May, and members who cannot attend may be represented by proxy.

Proxies sent in by members will be utilized to constitute a quorum for the Annual Meeting.

This year, four incumbent Board members faced no opposition and thus will be re-elected by general consent, not requiring a vote by members. There were no ballot items to be voted on as of the deadline for this publication.

All members who return proxies will be entered to win prizes, including a 2011 Ford F-150 Extended Cab 4x4 that's being retired from our fleet.

If you have questions about the changes, please call a member service representative at 800-842-7708 between Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. or email memberservices@bluebonnet.coop.

VOTE BY PROXY!

NOW, IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.

Due to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, there will be no public attendance at Bluebonnet's Annual Meeting. However, all members can still be represented and entered to win prizes!

Proxy forms were mailed to all members in March. If you have not returned your proxy, fill out the form and mail it back. If you cannot find your form, call 800-842-7708, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. or email memberservices@bluebonnet.coop to have one mailed to you.

Completed proxy forms must be postmarked by May 5.

Every member who returns their proxy will be entered to win prizes, including a **2011 Ford F-150 Extended Cab 4x4** that is being retired from our fleet.*



Get more information at bluebonnet.coop/annualmeeting or call **800-842-7708**.

**Bluebonnet employees, members of the Board of Directors and spouses are ineligible to win.*

Bluebonnet

Bluebonnet ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Election Services Co., P.O. Box 9022, Giddings, TX 78740-9022

Voting Instructions

VOTING BY PROXY

- Mark your selection by placing an X or an O in the appropriate bracket.
- Fold and mail this form in the enclosed postage-paid envelope addressed to: Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, c/o Election Services Co., P.O. Box 9022, Giddings, TX 78740-9022.
- All mailed proxies must be postmarked by May 5, 2020, in order to be valid.
- Proxies that also be registered with Bluebonnet's proxy relationship to any Bluebonnet Member Service Center by May 5, 2020.

VOTING IN PERSON AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

- The Annual Meeting will be Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at 2:30 p.m. at The Silos (formerly State of Tennessee Hall), 1031 CR 223, Giddings, Texas. Registration will begin at 1:30 p.m. and close at 2:30 p.m.
- If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, you have the option to make your proxy.
- If you need voting assistance, please call toll-free 800-770-4357 Monday through Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. (CST) or email bluebonnet@bluebonnet.coop.

PROXY

Unless revoked by me at said Annual Meeting, this proxy shall remain in effect on any subsequent date, time and place to which said Annual Meeting may be recessed or postponed, giving full authority to the appointed proxy to vote for me, as if I were present in person, on all matters that come before such meeting, including election of directors and passing upon reports as well as the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

PLEASE CHOOSE WHO YOU WANT TO VOTE YOUR PROXY.
IF YOU DO NOT MAKE A SELECTION BELOW, YOUR PROXY WILL BE ASSIGNED TO THE PROXY COMMITTEE.

I assign my proxy to the Proxy Committee:
The Proxy Committee of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, Inc. comprised of Ben Fleicher, Bryan Bracewell, Shana Vintohley, Debbi Goertz, and Milton Shaw, with full power of substitution, as my proxy or agent for the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative to be held at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at The Silos, 1031 CR 223, Giddings, Texas.

OR

I assign my proxy to the individual named below: _____ with full power of substitution, agent for the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative to be held at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at The Silos, 1031 CR 223, Giddings, Texas.

DISTRICT 3 (HASTROP COUNTY) Roderick Emanuel* (incumbent)	DISTRICT 4 (LEE, MCMAN, WILLIAMS ON COURTES) Russell Junk* (incumbent)	DISTRICT 6 (JUSTIN, OSBORNE, FAYETTE COUNTIES) Byron Bullock* (incumbent)	DISTRICT 7 (WASHINGTON COUNTY) Robert Mikuska* (incumbent)
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*As the election for the District was uncontested, the candidate was elected by general consent in accordance with Article II, Section 6 of the Bylaws.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____
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Incumbent directors re-elected to Board

Four of the nine seats on Bluebonnet's Board of Directors were up for election this year. The seats are from District 3, Bastrop County; District 4, Lee, Milam and Williamson counties; District 6, Austin, Colorado

and Fayette counties; and District 7, Washington County. Because the four incumbent directors were unopposed, they will be elected by general consent in accordance with Bluebonnet's bylaws.

Roderick Emanuel District 3



Emanuel, vice president/vice-chairman of the Bluebonnet Board of Directors, has been on the electric co-op's Board since 2011. He served as secretary/treasurer for five years and is chairman of Bluebonnet's Member & Employee Services Committee and a member of the Legal & Governance Committee. He has earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and Gold certifications through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Emanuel raises cattle on the family farm with his son. Emanuel previously spent 34 years in education as an economics and special education teacher, and was superintendent for the Bastrop Independent School District. He also worked at Gary Job Corps near San Marcos. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from what is now Texas State University and a master's degree from Prairie View A&M University. Emanuel is a motivational speaker and chairman of the deacon board at Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in Cedar Creek. He serves on the boards of Hopewell Rosenwald School and Bastrop Central Appraisal District. Roderick and Charlene have one son, Roderick Jr.

Russell Jurk District 4



Jurk has served three terms on the Bluebonnet Board of Directors, starting in 2011. He is chairman of Bluebonnet's Audit & Finance Committee and a member of the Energy Services Committee. He has earned both Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board leadership certification through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He is vice president and general manager at Bobby Lehmann Inc., a Giddings-based trucking company that hauls oil field equipment. He has worked there since 1994. Jurk earned a technical degree from Southwest School of Electronics in Austin. He has served several positions with the Giddings Noon Lions Club, and he and his wife, Laurie, own Ashley's Attic, a boutique, home décor and collectibles shop in Giddings. At the state level, Russell is a past chairman of the Texas Trucking Association and has served as the association's foundation treasurer. His hobbies include target shooting, hunting, saltwater fishing and restoring old pickups and Jeeps. He and Laurie have two children, Ashley and Richard.

Byron Balke District 6



Balke, assistant secretary/treasurer of the Bluebonnet Board of Directors, has been on the electric co-op's Board since 2000. He is a member of Bluebonnet's Audit & Finance and Legal & Governance committees. He's a cattle rancher and former shopkeeper from Bleiblerville, a community of fewer than 100 people in northwestern Austin County. There, he helped run his family's historic general store and later operated a fertilizer and seed business. He played baseball at Blinn College in Brenham and had a short pro baseball career with the Houston Colt .45s (now the Houston Astros). He earned a bachelor's degree in agribusiness from what is now Texas State University and served in the Army Reserves. He is treasurer of the Austin County Livestock Association and a member of the 100 Club and the Bleiblerville Volunteer Fire Department. His hobbies include collecting antiques, hunting and fishing on the coast. He and his wife, Annette, have two children, Virgil and Phyllis, and four grandchildren.

Robert Mikeska District 7



Mikeska, secretary/treasurer of the Bluebonnet Board of Directors, has been on the electric co-op's Board since 2008. He is chairman of Bluebonnet's Energy Services Committee and a member of the Audit & Finance Committee. He has earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director certification through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He is senior vice president/controller for Mike Hopkins Distributing Co. in Brenham. Mikeska earned a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Texas at Austin. He has also worked for the Texas House of Representatives, the Texas Office of State-Federal Relations, Wholesale Beer Distributors of Texas and Brenham National Bank. Mikeska is a former Brenham City Council member and Washington County commissioner, an active member of Abiding Word Lutheran Church and former board member of Brenham's Senior Activity Center. He and his wife, Marita, have a daughter and one grandchild, with a second expected in May.

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Death on Tiny Wings

Mosquito-borne yellow fever terrorized Texas multiple times in the 1800s

BY MARTHA DEERINGER

IT BEGAN WITH A HEADACHE, FOLLOWED by chills, fever, muscle and bone pain, and dizziness. “After a few hours, the eyes are bloodshot, and have a peculiar shining, drunken appearance,” wrote Dr. Ashbel Smith, who treated patients on Galveston Island during the yellow fever epidemic of 1839. “A diminution of the pains and febrile excitement very generally takes place, from eight or 10 to 20 hours.”

At this point, the patient either began to recover or progressed to the critical stage. The yellow tinge of jaundice that gave the disease its name appeared, followed by the dreaded “black vomit,” which signaled the approach of death.

From 1668 to 1893, port cities along the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean and Mississippi River basin were stricken by 135 major yellow fever epidemics, according to a 1986 article in *Texas Medicine*. At least nine times between 1839 and 1867, Galveston suffered outbreaks that killed a total of 6,000–8,000.

Yellow fever, also called yellow death or yellow jack (after the yellow flags ships were required to fly when passengers showed signs of illness), terrified early Texans. Once stricken, a healthy person could be dead within three days, and doctors were at a loss to explain the fever’s rapid spread. Smith was correct to believe that it was not contagious. But he and other physicians wrongly believed garbage heaps and unsanitary conditions produced particles called miasmata that infected



those who breathed the contaminants. That theory was questioned during the epidemic of 1853, as increased sanitation and quarantines did not stop the disease and 60% of Galvestonians got sick.

The virus that causes yellow fever likely originated in Africa and was transmitted to the Americas by slave ships as early as the 1600s. Major outbreaks occur in populated areas where breeding mosquitoes transmit the virus from person to person. Frightened residents of Galveston and other cities hit by large outbreaks burned barrels of tar in the streets and sprayed sulfur and lime in the homes of infected patients—believing the substances served as disinfectants. Even so, the agony subsided only after a hard freeze, often resurfacing when spring arrived.

During the 1839 epidemic, a cabin just east of 18th Street in Galveston, built on raised blocks with two windows and a door in the middle, served as the general hospital. It was erected away from town to isolate the sick. Shallow burials nearby revealed bones exposed by the sea washing over them.

A Cherokee woman named Sarah Ridge Paschal successfully treated yellow fever patients in her home with traditional Cherokee herbal medicine, including tea from orange tree leaves. All of her patients survived, and neither she nor any of her three children caught the fever.

Texas doctors were unable to recognize the mosquito vector. Pathologist Walter Reed, experimenting on humans in Cuba in 1900, confirmed Carlos Finlay’s hypothesis of 1881 that mosquitoes transmitted the disease. The experiments proved that mosquitoes flourished in fresh water and transmitted the disease after a viral incubation period of at least 12 days. This essential information spread, and mosquito control improved.

Smith went on to become the driving force behind the establishment of the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. Today, yellow fever can be prevented by a single dose of vaccine.

Martha Deeringer, a Heart of Texas EC member, lives in McGregor. Read more of her work at marthadeeringer.com.

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Farmers Market

IN MY VIEW, FARMERS MARKETS ARE ONE of the best ways to see Texas on display. From rows of stacked peppers to bowls of the sweetest berries to the friendly faces behind the tables, a farmers market is a conduit to all that grows around us—and inspires me to get into the kitchen.

We're coming into the best time to experience these local markets. As the growing seasons converge, you might see collards alongside early tomatoes or strawberries along with the last of the winter citrus. Now is the time to experiment!

This dish is a favorite in my house, and it's a great way to get kids to eat vegetables. Instead of chicken, you can use ground beef—or cooked lentils for a meatless option.

MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Zucchini Taco Boats With Chicken

- 4 medium zucchini
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup tomato sauce or salsa
- ½ cup shredded cheese

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees and lightly coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with nonstick spray.
2. Slice zucchini in half lengthwise and scoop out centers, reserving the flesh in a bowl. Place zucchini hollow-side up into baking dish.
3. Cut chicken into small pieces, about half-inch cubes. Warm olive oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat, then add chicken and cook until cooked through and starting to brown, about 8 minutes. Add onion and reserved zucchini flesh and continue to cook 1 minute.
4. Mix together chili powder, cumin, oregano, paprika and salt and sprinkle over chicken. Stir to coat and cook 2 min-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Recipes

Farmers Market



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

BLAIR SHELTON-TONGSON | LAMAR ELECTRIC

Fresh sweet corn is the star of this dip that is ideal for entertaining. Reminiscent of esquites—Mexican street corn salad—it also features cumin, chili powder and jalapeño. “For an extra kick,” says Shelton-Tongson, “add a dash or two of ground cayenne pepper.” If fresh corn isn't available, use thawed frozen corn.

Baked Street Corn Dip

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon chili powder, plus more for garnish
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter or vegetable oil
- 3 cups sweet corn kernels (about 4 ears)
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 clove garlic, pressed or minced
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro, plus more for garnish
- ¼ cup shredded cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large bowl, mix together cream cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, cumin, chili powder, and salt and pepper. Stir until creamy, then set aside.
3. Melt butter or heat oil in a large skillet over low heat. Add corn, tomatoes, jalapeño and garlic. Sauté gently 8–10 minutes.
4. Remove corn mixture from heat and stir into cream cheese mixture. Add cilantro and shredded cheese, stirring until well blended.
5. Pour into a medium baking dish and bake 12–15 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool 5 minutes. Garnish with chili powder and cilantro and serve warm with tortillas or corn chips. ▶ Serves 12.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

- utes. Stir in tomato sauce or salsa and simmer 5–10 minutes, until thickened.
5. Divide chicken mixture into zucchini and top with cheese.
 6. Cover with foil and bake 35 minutes. ▶ Serves 4.

COOK'S TIP A melon baller works wonderfully to scoop out the insides of the zucchini, but if you don't have one, a spoon will do.

Follow along with **Megan Myers** and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Carrot Fritters.

Chopped Spring Veggie Pasta Salad

MARIAN EVONIUK | PEDERNALES EC

Pasta salad is an easy, versatile way to enjoy everything the farmers market has to offer. If you like, you can skip the step of roasting the peppers and asparagus—just make sure you select thin, tender asparagus stalks at the market.

- ¼ pound asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 6 cups plus ¼ cup water, divided use
- 2 cups uncooked tricolor rotini
- ½ pound green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups peas
- ½ cup chopped red onion
- ½ cup chopped cucumber
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup loosely packed cilantro, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup Italian salad dressing

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Spread asparagus and pepper evenly over a large, parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Roast uncovered 20 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.
3. Bring 6 cups water to a boil in a 2½-quart heavy saucepan, then add pasta. Cook until pasta is al dente, about 8 minutes.
4. Drain pasta in a colander, rinsing with cold water, and pour into a large mixing bowl.
5. Using same saucepan, add the



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You'll want the best **Game Day Snacks**, our September recipe contest, when football season kicks off. Send us your favorites. The deadline is **April 10**. Readers whose recipes are featured will receive a special *Texas Co-op Power* apron.

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

remaining 1/4 cup water and the green beans. Cover and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook 3–4 minutes. Add the peas and continue cooking an additional 3–4 minutes, until veggies are tender but still have some bite. Drain and rinse with cold water to stop the cooking process.

6. Into the large bowl containing the pasta, add the asparagus, peppers, green beans, peas, red onion, cucumber, tomatoes, cilantro, garlic, salt, pepper and Italian dressing. Mix well, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 1 hour before serving. ▶ Serves 6–8 as a side dish.

Zucchini Nut Bread

SILVIA ARNOLD | RUSK COUNTY EC

Zucchini bread is a classic way to use summer squash—and with good reason. “This has been a favorite of the family for years,” says Arnold. Make sure to use quick-cooking oats, which are chopped rolled oats, for this recipe. The oats will help absorb some of the moisture from the zucchini while also keeping the bread tender and delicious.

- 3 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup quick oats
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 8-by-4-inch loaf pans and set aside.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla until well combined.
- 3.** In a separate bowl, stir together flour, oats, cinnamon, baking soda, salt and baking powder. Stir into wet ingredients until no dry bits remain.
- 4.** Stir in zucchini and walnuts, then divide batter between prepared pans.
- 5.** Bake 1 hour, until a toothpick inserted into the center of each pan comes out clean. ▶ Makes 2 loaves.



Know Before You Go

New to farmers markets or need a refresher? Here are some tips for making the most of your trip.

SHOP EARLY for the biggest selection. During peak seasons, items like strawberries, asparagus and even eggs can sell out quickly.

BRING CASH and pay in exact amounts, if possible. Farmers appreciate not having to make change.

PUT A COOLER in your car. Along with a reusable tote, it will help keep items cool and organized for the trip home.

MEGAN MYERS

TEXAS COOP POWER

NEXT MONTH

FIRMLY ROOTED The Stark family lumber empire in Orange forged cultural destinations that offer nature, art and history.

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



▲ **ALTA COCKRELL**, Deaf Smith EC: “My son William the night I took his senior pictures outside of Hereford.”

▶ **CHARLES CARLSON**, Bandera EC: This sunset photo of mammatus clouds was taken on the Frio River near Garner State Park.



▲ **JIMMIE HEIMAN**, Guadalupe Valley EC: “Spring flowers and sunset in rural Lavaca County.”



▲ **TIFFANY ROGERS**, MidSouth EC: A musician stands at the end of a pier on Lake Livingston to play out a tune on his guitar late one August evening.

◀ **LAURA BREWER**, CoServ: “The perfect setting for reflection on the pond.”

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April 11

Onalaska Lew Vail Memorial Easter Parade and Egg Hunt, (936) 646-5000, cityofonalaska.us

Elgin [11-12] Hip Hop Shop, (512) 229-3227, elgintx.com

16

San Saba [16-17] Creative Quilting Event, (325) 372-5141, sansabachamber.com

17

Beaumont Rend Collective Revival Anthem Tour, (409) 838-3435, beaumontcvb.com

Paducah [17-18] Cottle-King Old Settlers Reunion & Rodeo, (806) 492-2143, facebook.com/cottlekingoldsettlers

Terrell [17-18] Kaufman Quilt Guild Show, (972) 979-9152, kaufmanquiltguild.org

18

Burton Cotton Gin Festival, (979) 289-3378, texascottonginmuseum.org

Mason Mason County Republican Women's Home Tour, (325) 347-5516, masontxcoc.com

McQueeney McQueeney Baptist Church Open Car Show, (210) 265-9200

Southlake Bobbyfest, (817) 999-8332, bobbyfest.com



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 <p>Coming King Foundation & Sculpture Garden TheComingKingFoundation.org</p>	 <p>April 23 "Beethoven & Other Olympians" SymphonyoftheHills.org</p>	 <p>Museum of Western Art museumofwesternart.com</p>

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Chappell Hill [18-19] Official Bluebonnet Festival of Texas, (979) 836-6033, facebook.com/bluebonnetfestival

Cypress Mill [18-19, 25-26] Bunkhouse Gallery Art Show and Sale, (512) 517-3453, bunkhousegallery.com

23

Avinger, Hughes Springs, Linden [23-25] 50th Annual Wildflower Trails of Texas, (903) 756-7502, wildflowertrailsoftexas.org

Waxahachie [23-25] Crossroads of Texas Film & Music Festival, (469) 309-4045, facebook.com/crossroadsoftx

Hallettsville [23-26] Fiddlers' Frolics, (361) 798-2311, fiddlersfrolics.com

24

Granbury [24-25] Wine Walk, (817) 964-7993, granburywinewalk.com

Gun Barrel City [24-25] Quilt Guild Annual Quilt Show, (903) 340-6547, gunbarrelquiltersguild.org

Clute [24-26, May 1-3] *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, (979) 265-7661, bcfas.org

25

Cisco Folklife Festival, (254) 631-6501



April 25
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Conroe Relay For Life of Conroe & Walker County, (713) 706-5686, relayforlife.org/conroeeandwalkercotx

Jacksonville North Cherokee VFD Fish Fry, (903) 571-5854

Karnack Earth Day Flotilla, (903) 736-3063

Rising Star Rising Star VFD Crawfish Boil, (254) 433-3285, risingstarfd.org

Tatum Pecan Pie Festival, (903) 947-6403, facebook.com/tatumpecanpiefestival

Brazoria [25-26] Migration Celebration, (844) 842-4737, migrationcelebration.org

May

2

Georgetown Preservation Georgetown Home Tour, (512) 869-8597, preservationgeorgetown.org

Hilltop Lakes Hilltop Lakes Equestrian Association Kentucky Derby Gala, (713) 503-0470

3

Wylie Wylie 500 Pedal Car Race, (972) 516-6016, wylietexas.gov

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Dark Landmark

Dead Man's Hole near Marble Falls remains as a grim reminder of Civil War brutality

MY FASCINATION WITH TEXAS HISTORY inspired me to visit Marble Falls and Dead Man's Hole, the dark landmark south of town.

I started my visit at the Falls on the Colorado Museum, housed in a 129-year-old school building. My education began by peering at the bones of Rockie, a 700-year-old bison whose remains were found on a nearby ranch.

Remnants of the town's pioneer days include artifacts ranging from saddles to railroad ties. I visited the town's namesake falls beneath nearby Lake Marble Falls, and I was fascinated by tales of the town's grim Civil War experience as it relates to Dead Man's Hole.

Of course, I couldn't go exploring on an empty stomach, so I stopped by the legendary Blue Bonnet Cafe, which has been feeding hungry travelers since 1929. My chicken-fried steak was made even better by the towering wedge of coconut meringue pie that followed.

After lunch, I drove 4 miles and found the historical marker for Dead Man's Hole. A few hundred feet away, I saw the hole in the limestone. The 7-foot-wide Dead Man's Hole earned its grisly name during the Civil War, when locals disposed of the bodies of at least 17 Union sympathizers in the cave.

In those days, after Texas seceded, many Hill Country German communities remained loyal to the Union. Burnet County voted overwhelmingly against



Chet Garner at Dead Man's Hole outside Marble Falls.

secession, but local Confederate zealots, called fire eaters, killed some of those who favored the North. Dead Man's Hole became both courtroom and cemetery as hasty trials resulted in slaughter.

After Burnet County Judge John R. Scott was deemed a Union loyalist, he attempted to flee to Mexico but was gunned down, his body tossed into Dead Man's Hole. Even though the historical marker puts the number at 17, legend suggests as many as 36 bodies were thrown into the pit.

Whatever the actual number, it troubled me just to stand nearby, even in the middle of the afternoon more than a century later. The cavity is now covered by a steel panel to keep anyone from slipping in. I hopped down onto the metal and felt an unnerving thump as my weight hit the steel and sent reverberations into the

depths below. I bent down and attempted to peek through. I dropped a pebble down and listened to it bounce off rocks until it faded away. From the sound of it, the hole went on forever.

The cave was not fully explored until 1951, when a group of Austin spelunkers pulled out multiple sets of bones. Local lore suggests that the last skeleton was brought to the courthouse, and while it was awaiting a proper burial, it disappeared.

I stepped away from the hole and made certain I was the only person present that afternoon. As the hair on my neck began to stand up, I decided I didn't want to find out if anyone was nearby. I began to briskly walk (OK, run) back to my truck.

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

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of his visit to Dead Man's Hole.

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