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NOVEMBER 2023

Happy Tales

Cowboy poets gather
in Alpine to spin stories
and make music

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A TRIP
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SEE PAGE 17

PLUS

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at Boggy Slough
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Safety Tips
- 17** Electrical Safety
Tips for Kids

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November 2023



08

'Its Own Sweet Sound'

Cowboy poetry devotees ensure a Western tradition continues to find reverent audiences.

*Story by Jessica Ridge
Photos by Dave Shafer*

ON THE COVER

Burleson singer-songwriter
Kristyn Harris at the Lone Star
Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

ABOVE

An ensemble of artists
performs the finale, a tribute
to Charles Goodnight.
Photos by Dave Shafer

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Like No Other
*By Kathleen Cox
Richardson*

World Renown

WILEY POST, pictured below, famous for his around-the-world flights in the 1930s, was born 125 years ago this month near Grand Saline, east of Dallas.

Post, credited with discovering the jet stream, twice set speed records for circling the globe. The celebrated adventurer, born November 22, 1898, perished with close friend Will Rogers in a plane crash in Alaska in 1935.



Glorious Overtones

Pamela Dawson, choir director at DeSoto High School, south of Dallas, won a Grammy Music Educator Award in February—a lofty honor for a teacher whose students have performed at Carnegie Hall in New York City and have landed on Broadway.

“I am this lady from Detroit, Michigan, who just loves music and wants to impart that into my students,” says Dawson, who began at DeSoto in 2006.



“Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.”

—GEORGE BURNS

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FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Why doesn't somebody invent ...

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 September prompt: **My favorite swimming hole is ...**

As a teen it was Menard Creek, but at 83 it is my bathtub.

PAUL PAGE
JASPER-NEWTON EC
KIRBYVILLE

The creek in my backyard.

RAY WOLBRECHT
PEDERNALES EC
BLANCO

The next one. I have always been a sucker for swimming holes, ever since childhood. They always have a "Huck Finn" feel to me—very nostalgic—so if I see one, and I have shorts nearby, I jump in.

DAVE BOHN
PEDERNALES EC
CANYON LAKE

Balmorhea State Park pool—nothing better.

LISA HOLLOWAY FITZSIMMONS
VIA FACEBOOK

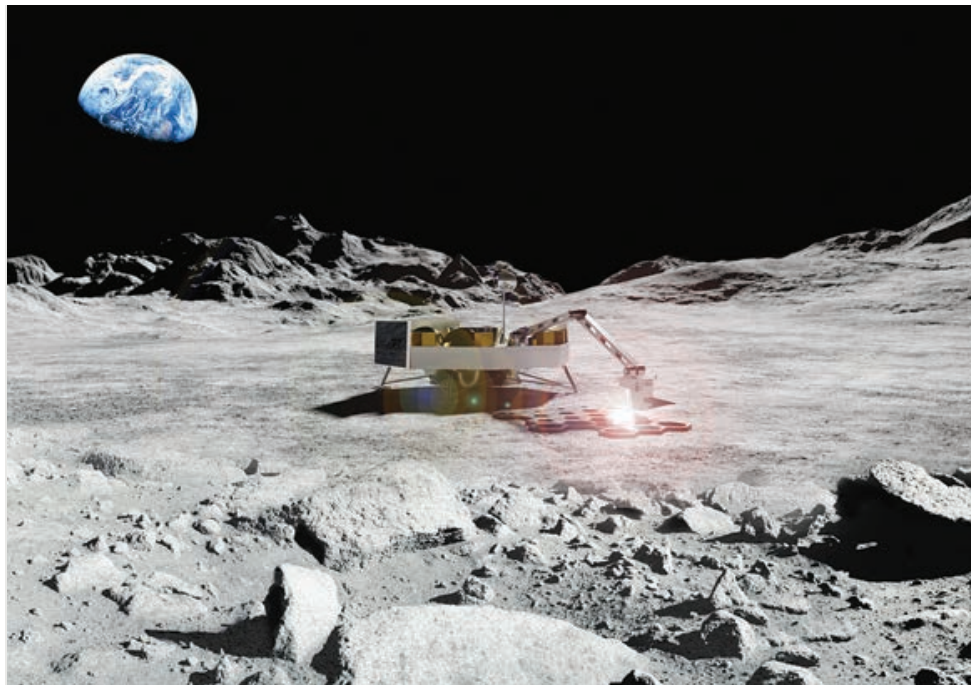
Hamilton Pool.

ALAN ARROWOOD
VIA FACEBOOK

Visit our website to see more responses.

In Favor of Heat Pumps

Heat pumps are gaining popularity in the U.S., outselling gas furnaces by a wide margin in 2022. They're more energy-efficient, using much less electricity than traditional heating and air conditioning units.



There Goes the Neighborhood

TEXAS' STRONG TIES to the moon are indisputable. After all, the world listened in as Neil Armstrong uttered these words during the Apollo 11 mission July 20, 1969: "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed."

Now, as NASA prepares to send astronauts back to the moon and establish a long-term presence there, the agency has contracted Austin 3D printing firm Icon to launch construction technologies for lunar landing pads, habitats and roads.

Closer to home, Icon has been creating 3D-printed houses and military barracks using gigantic robotic printers that layer the company's proprietary concrete mix.

SEPTEMBER 2023 Dance Hall Darlings

“The Triumphs played at our Somerville High School prom, and we went to most of the dance halls mentioned. Brought back many great memories.”

JULIE PAZDRAL FULLER
COSERV
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ERICH SCHLEGEL

Labyrinth Love

My son built a labyrinth in Denton for his Eagle Scout project in 2006 [*Circles of Life*, August 2023]. It's at First Christian Church, 1203 Fulton St., in the grassy area adjacent to the parking lot.

Betsy Deiterman
Sam Houston EC
Livingston

It was always a
good day when the
Triumphs came
to town.

BRUCE GOODWYN
VIA FACEBOOK

Prize of the Pasture

About the only time my mom would submit to bouncing around the pasture in the pickup with my dad and me on our ranch at Big Lake was when she was on her annual quest for agarita berries [*Make Your Shelf Useful*, August 2023].

We would find the plants here and there and pick off the little berries. When she had enough, Mom would make the most succulent pale red agarita jelly that would complement our breakfast table for months.

Jim McCoy
Southwest Texas EC
Big Lake



WYATT MCSPADEN

Massive Mums

I attended San Marcos High School 1968–71. We had Texas-sized mums back then—real mums [*Bigger and Better—Together*, September 2023]. Most had masses of ribbons, buttons, charms and bells attached. It was a big deal to have one.

Paula T. Phillips
Pedernales EC
San Marcos

Literary Great

Lonesome Dove may be the best book I've ever read [*A Page of the Past*, August 2023]. Since I'm 92, I've read a lot of books.

If he had never written anything other than *Lonesome Dove*, Larry McMurtry would still be known among any of the prior great writers.

Jerry Pentecost
Jackson EC
Port Lavaca

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power
1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

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

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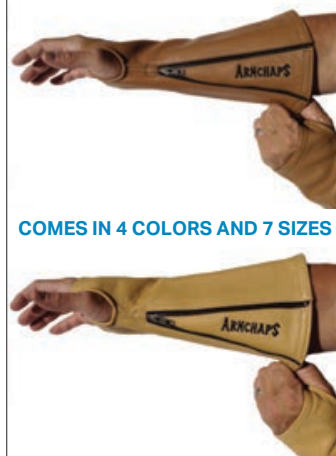
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COWBOY POETRY devotees ensure a Western tradition continues to find rapt audiences

A pint-size poet steps up to a microphone stand that towers over her. It's a February morning in far West Texas as Bethia Baize, 5, recites *The Well-Used Cayuse*, inspired by her horse. Emcee Karen McGuire holds the mic at the kindergartener's height. Bethia speaks softly, from memory, to a rapt audience in a Sul Ross State University lecture hall, her voice and words kicking off a youth poetry contest. When she's finished, the

room thunders with applause, and Bethia claims the first-place plaque for her age group.

For the rest of the session, which is one of dozens at the annual Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Alpine, the energy in the room is electric. Parents, grandparents and other supporters fill every seat and line the walls as 16 young poets recite their award-winning works about cattle and coyotes, cowboys and cowgirls, and the rhythms of




Montana brother-sister duo Brigid and Johnny Reedy rehearse before one of their sessions at the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Alpine. Their stirring vocal harmonies left audiences spellbound that weekend in February.

‘Its Own Sweet, Sound’

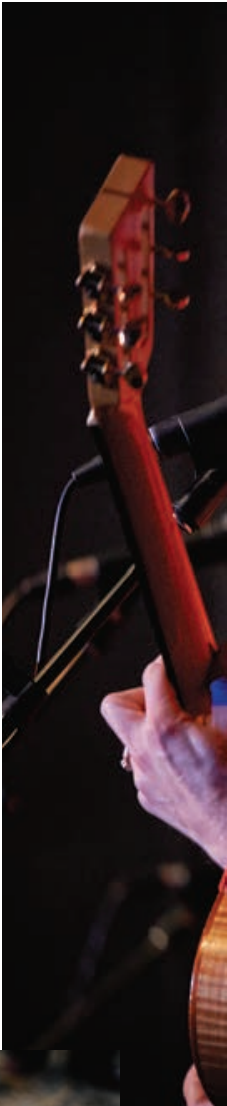
BY JESSICA RIDGE • PHOTOS BY DAVE SHAFER

ranch life. The room pulses with pride, love and nerves—like a spelling bee, but giddier and more exuberant.

Bethia’s aunt, Elizabeth Baize, a member of the poetry gathering’s board of directors, co-hosted the youth poetry contest with McGuire, also a board member. In the weeks before the event, Baize visits area schools to spur students to enter. She encourages them to talk with older relatives who might have ranch life experience and to look at photographs or paintings that might inspire them to write a story in the form of a poem.



*“Poetry is
a language
of the heart.
It’s a language
of emotion.
Prose is language,
but poetry is
what sears it
into our being.”*



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
Andy Wilkinson of Lubbock
reviews his notes back-
stage. Kristyn Harris calls
the gathering a place for
“sharing your art, sharing
yourself.” Mornings begin
outside with cowboy coffee
over a fire.

It’s no mean feat winnowing down the annual crop of entries to the winners. As the judges read the entries, “there are giggles and good belly laughs, tears and sniffles, and ‘Oh my, listen to this!’” McGuire says.

The future of cowboy poetry is in good hands.

McGuire and Baize—and scores of organizers and volunteers—work hard to ensure that future. They helped stage this year’s gathering, which drew north of 2,200 attendees and featured 40-plus performers of cowboy poetry, which encompasses music, spoken-word poetry and storytelling by ranch hands, cowboys and cowgirls and has been enshrined as an oral tradition by Library of Congress folklorists.

In North America, the Texas gathering is second in size only to the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, according to Bob Saul, the gathering’s volunteer event producer. This year’s event delivered at least five times as many free performances and sessions as ticketed





ones. That's by design, Saul says.

"We want people to come. Some of the cowboy poetry gatherings have gone to all paid; there's nothing free you can go to," Saul, 79, says. "But our board has decided that we're going to carry on the tradition and the mission, that we will do our best to provide cowboy poetry, as much of it as possible, free of charge.

"In other words, it's for ranching families."

In 2019, Saul was in the audience at the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering (the original iteration of the event in Alpine) when it was announced that that year's gathering would be the last. Saul immediately began canvassing for volunteers to keep the event, or some semblance of it, alive.

"I just started talking to people and asking if they would be willing to help, if we could get it restarted, would they volunteer," Saul says. "And I came back to Fort Worth after two days with 142 email addresses in my pocket."

Over several months, Bob and his wife, Nancy Saul, a graphic designer who creates the gathering's annual programs, made more than a dozen 15-hour round trips

between their North Texas home and Alpine to help the new gathering find its footing. Those pilgrimages were rooted in a deep affinity.

"Poetry is a language of the heart," Saul says. "It's a language of emotion. Prose is language, but poetry is what sears it into our being. And today poetry is mostly academic. You don't hear, like you used to, people going to hear people quote poetry; except when you go hear the fishermen and the miners and the loggers and the cowboys.

"Those kinds of industries, where people are working long hours and they are more alone, they've got time to think. And they've got time to sing. And they've got time to recite to themselves."

That reverence reverberates across the gathering, which takes place the third weekend in February. At sessions with names like Western Harmony, Ranch Women and Working Ranch Families, audiences are focused and present, bearers of a quietude

punctuated only by bursts of applause or laughter. Almost every cellphone is out of sight, every eye on the performers. Those wearing cowboy hats are kindly asked to remove them so as not to obstruct the view for others.

Kay Nowell, co-chair of the gathering, describes the genre as a celebration of a tradition and a way of life. “What cowboy poetry is real,” she says. “People get taken into rural people’s life, and they get to experience it through their poems and their songs. It’s a culture that adheres to a code.”



The Mellard brothers from outside Marfa found success during the youth poetry contest. From left, Travis and Thomas earned honorable mentions, and Alden claimed second place in his age group.

Nowell has conformed to that code for decades. She was a featured poet at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in 1989, which led to an appearance on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, where she recited her poem *A What?!!*

A chuck wagon breakfast kicks off each day of the Alpine gathering. This year temperatures stay below freezing as Alpine Lions Club members serve scrambled eggs and biscuits and gravy in the peaceful Poet’s Grove at Kokernot Park. Cups of coffee skate across iced-over tables as the sun crests a hill, and a blazing firepit and easy conversation counter the chill.

The spirit of camaraderie and mindful attention extends to the gathering’s open mic sessions, another free daily offering open to the public. Musicians and spoken-word performers sign up in advance, wait for their names to be called and then amble down to speak, sing or play their piece. Jan Hartman is up first Friday and plays *Amazing Grace* and taps on her fife.

The instrument “has its own sweet sound, I think,” Hartman says. “It has more of a country sound than an orchestra sound.” Hartman, who lives in Alpine and has participated in the open mic for the past five years, says she still gets nervous before she plays. It’s worth it, though.

“It makes you stand out a little bit, just to be able to play before some people, and be able to tell a testimony or a story or, there again, a poem that you’ve heard,” Hartman says. “So it just makes you feel a little special.”

One of the musicians Hartman most looks forward to each year is Kristyn Harris, who first appeared at the gathering’s open mic more than a decade ago. The singer and yodeler, songwriter, swing rhythm guitarist, and winner of multiple International Western Music Association awards performed in several sessions at this year’s event.

“The audiences here are really here to soak it up, and you really connect with them,” says Harris, a Burleson resident and member of United Cooperative Services, an electric cooperative in the Metroplex. “Rather than just performing for people, it’s like sharing your art, sharing yourself

PLAN FOR *Poetry*

The next Lone Star
Cowboy Poetry
Gathering is set
for February 15–17,
2024, in Alpine.



Nevada rancher Waddie Mitchell has been a performing poet for decades.

and sharing your history.”

In a Saturday afternoon show, Harris covers the jazz standard *All of Me* in a Western Swing style on the heels

of Juni Fisher’s spare, moving rendition of Simon and Garfunkel’s folk classic *The Boxer*. The talent on display is dizzying, the audience enraptured, and the trio onstage—with poet Amy Hale emceeding—exude a sisterhood in their banter and backing of each other.

“I’ve played festivals that are *festivals*, and then the gathering is different,” Harris says. “There are performers here that I really look up to, that I could see as celebrities, but here no one is a big celebrity.”

Loren Schooley, a musician from Marfa who works in information technology and performs at Friday’s open mic, echoes that sentiment. “Usually you go to a gig, and then you see the band or two, and then that’s it,” Schooley says. “But here it’s almost like a conference. You never know what you’re going to step into if you go into some of these rooms. And when you find the sweet spot—I’ve shed more tears here and laughter. You just can’t get that anywhere else.”

The gathering’s performers are similarly compelled. “The best way I can describe it is it’s family,” Harris says.

“There’s a big, big, big Texas spirit about this gathering that’s also different from some other poetry gatherings that are in other parts of the country. Everyone is just so Texan: friendly, wants to give you a big hug and just gives you that warm feeling.”

The sweet spots and Texas spirit alchemize into what Nowell calls magic sessions. “They’re intoxicating,” she says. “A lot of times when I’ve been in one you just throw away your setlist and feed off the last guy’s stuff. And it’s all one piece. A lot’s going on up there on that stage, and the audience feels it, and they’re taken along on the ride. But the performers are having a blast.”

Community investment helps sustain that improvisation. “Volunteers are critical to this,” Nowell says. “We can’t put this on without support from members and support from sponsors.”

Tradition and fortitude are woven into the gathering’s rough-hewn fabric. “The Lone Star is bound and determined to keep it cowboy,” Nowell says. “Weather, government, markets; it’s a hard life. But it’s something people want to raise their children in.” ■

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Here are some maintenance and safety tips for the garage door.

Keep the garage door's remote control out of the reach of children. They could leave the door open and unattended, which is an invitation to thieves and animals.

Likewise, don't allow your kids to make a game out of opening and closing the garage door, even when you're supervising them. A garage door closes more quickly—and is much heavier—than you might expect and can present a serious hazard to a small child who gets in its way.

If your garage door has panels or sections, keep fingers far away. Closing the joints exerts enough pinching pressure to break or sever a finger. Consider investing in pinch-resistant door panels to prevent accidents.

Inspect the garage door a couple of times a year for wear and tear on springs, cables, rollers and pulleys.

Don't adjust or repair a garage door's moving parts on your own. It truly is a job for a trained technician.

Regularly test the door's reversing mechanism—its ability to automatically reopen if something gets in its way while closing. To test it, place a two-by-four under the door and try to close it. If the door doesn't automatically stop closing and start to reopen, call a garage door professional to repair it.

Replace any garage door opener purchased before 1993. Newer ones have updated safety features.

Disable your garage door before you go on vacation. Most models have a security switch on the wall console that allows you to render the remote useless. ■



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Electrical Safety Tips for Kids

AT SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, we understand that your children’s health and well-being are top priority. With thousands of electrical fires and electric shocks occurring in American homes each year, knowledge of electrical safety is necessary to ensure that your loved ones stay safe. A few tips can teach good habits to keep youngsters safe.

Electrical fires are caused when a wire or electrical device overheats. Make sure your children understand that water cannot extinguish this type of fire. Only fire extinguishers can be used to put out an electrical fire.

Electric shocks are also a common safety hazard. Remind your kids that it’s not safe to mix water with electricity. Keep blow dryers, phone chargers and any other electrical devices away from all water, especially in bathrooms. Make sure ground-fault circuit interrupters are installed in all outlets in areas that might come into contact with water, such as bathrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens and outdoors.

Keep metal objects out of appliances and plugs. If a piece of toast gets stuck in the toaster, never use a metal knife to retrieve it. Unplug the toaster, allow it to cool, and use a different tool or utensil to remove the toast.

Remember, only plugs go into outlets. Sticking fingers or other objects in outlets may result in an electric shock and possibly a fire. If you have children in the crawling stage, use outlet covers to help prevent accidents.

It’s always a good idea to turn off lights when they aren’t in use. You may feel like you tell your kids hundreds of times a day to turn off lights when they’re not using them, but it’s worth the effort. Not only will this save your family money on your electric bill; it could also prevent electrical fires caused by overheated bulbs. ■



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A Forest for the Future

Boggy Slough Conservation Area promotes sustainability and wildlife habitat

BY RANDY MALLORY • PHOTOS BY JAY BRITTAIN

EXAMINE A MAP OF East Texas, and you'll see green all along the 416 meandering miles of the Neches River. A string of green-shaded areas starts in the north, at the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge near Jacksonville, and ends in the south, at the Big Thicket National Preserve near Beaumont. The middle Neches boasts the Angelina and Davy Crockett national forests, plus a large private parcel known for generations as Boggy Slough.

Collectively, the green on the map represents nearly half a million acres bordering the river in a mostly unbroken wildlife corridor that is legally protected from residential and commercial development.

The Neches is known as a wild river; some say the state's wildest. For eons, nature blessed its riverbanks with ancient hardwood bottoms and parklike native pine uplands. Centuries of Indigenous Caddo people lived there and maintained a natural balance of flora and fauna.

Later came 17th-century Spanish missionaries, 18th-century

French traders and 19th-century American settlers. They all adapted to the Piney Woods environment, explains historian and author Jonathan K. Gerland in his 2022 book, *Boggy Slough: A Forest, a Family, and a Foundation for Land Conservation*.

Before the turn of the 20th century, human activity began to dominate these unspoiled forests like never before. Timber barons clear-cut native pines for maximum profit without replanting, leaving behind barren landscapes. In an era of unregulated poaching, hunters likewise killed off all the bears and depleted the deer and wild turkey populations.

When Thomas Lewis Latane Temple of Texarkana brought his Southern Pine Lumber Co. to East Texas, he knew he was late to the East Texas timber boom, says Gerland, who's also the executive director of the History Center in Diboll. Timber barons typically bought timber rights but not the land itself. When Temple bought a portion of Boggy Slough in 1902, he bought the land and timber rights.

Ownership allowed him and his descendants to produce tim-



4



5



6

1. A Stephen F. Austin University faculty member demonstrates how to measure and record certain bird characteristics in the field station course conducted each summer during Wildlife Week, hosted at BSCA.

2. BSCA Executive Director Steve Jack, Ph.D. explains the mission, management and research to a field tour group as part of the Biennial Southern Silvicultural Research Conference held in Nacogdoches in March.

3. A close-up view of a longleaf pine seedling when the bud first starts to elongate in the spring.

4. Kevin Mundorff, wildlife biologist from Raven Environmental Services, prepares a peeper camera at the end of an expandable pole to monitor a red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) nest cavity.

5. An image from the peeper camera shows the interior of an active RCW nest. The nest is 30 feet off the ground.

6. Mundorff climbs a ladder to access an RCW cavity for monitoring.

7. Educational tour participants inspect the grass stage of a longleaf pine seedling during a visit to Boggy Slough.



7

ber income long term through selective cutting and replanting, a pattern that was followed for all company lands. By the 1920s, the Temples added a hunting club at Boggy Slough and cooperated with the state to rebuild and sustain deer herds. By the 1940s, professional foresters were helping manage Boggy Slough's pine forest to produce timber sustainably.

In an early trade publication, Temple's lumber company pledged to "take this work up along scientific lines and accomplish much more than has been in the past."

The Temple family owned Boggy Slough until the 1960s, then came several ownership changes. But in 2013, under the leadership of Buddy Temple (T.L.L.'s great-grandson), the family's TLL Temple Foundation repurchased the site as Boggy Slough Conservation Area.

Before his death in 2015, Buddy Temple saw his dream come true. His beloved Boggy Slough—the property he called the "best land"—would remain under family foundation ownership as a working forest. At the same time, it would have perpetual protection from development through a conservation easement donated via the Conservation Fund, later transferred to the Texas Land Conservancy.

A Balancing Act

Located west of Lufkin on 18 miles of middle Neches riverfront,

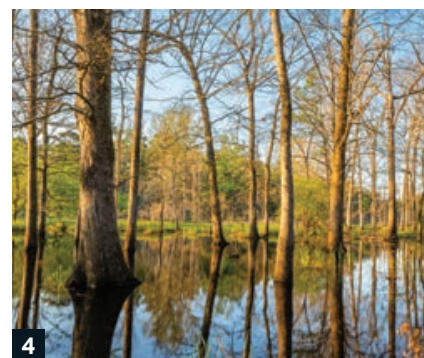
Boggy Slough's 19,000 acres contain ecologically significant hardwood bottomlands and pine-studded uplands. Many trees are a century old or more.

There are three Texas state champion trees—loblolly pine, longleaf pine and white fringe tree—plus other rare plants such as the threatened Neches River rose-mallow and the endangered Texas prairie dawn. As part of the overall Neches River wildlife corridor, this riverside landscape also harbors prized wildlife—from white-tailed deer and eastern wild turkey to the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.

Stewardship and science-based management remain an abiding principle at Boggy Slough Conservation Area, says BSCA Executive Director Steve Jack, Ph.D.

"Our conservation mission is a balancing act," he said. "We are a working forest where timber is a renewable resource, but income is not our main objective. We manage the resources using well-researched conservation principles. We're studying how to balance what we do to create a historically natural open forest canopy of pine and hardwood where there's lots of light and a minimum midstory that provides a natural setting for native species of all kinds."

Such parklike settings offer the perfect habitat for one of BSCA's most important animals, the red-cockaded woodpecker. These rare birds are the only woodpeckers that



excavate nesting cavities exclusively in living old-growth pines, Jack explains.

“It takes a woodpecker months to years to excavate a cavity, so we help out by inserting artificial nesting boxes in live pines. The adults peck into the resin layer surrounding the cavity, creating resin wells so that resin will flow down the tree trunk to deter predators such as snakes.

“When we insert an artificial box, we add paint streaks down the tree to simulate resin wells to encourage active nesting. When the Boggy Slough Conservation Area was formed, the red-cockaded woodpecker count was down to just two active clusters with four adult birds,” Jack said. “Careful habitat management and a little artificial help has doubled the population to four active clusters and eight adult birds.”

Controlled Burns

The open canopy forest preferred by the red-cockaded woodpecker also proves ideal for a range of wildlife, including deer and turkey. But to maintain that ancestral environment, you must introduce fire back into nature, says Robert Sanders, BSCA director of forest and wildlife management.

Fire suppression became the norm decades ago, resulting in East Texas forests clogged with dense shrubs, vines and mid-story trees. Historically, frequent fires kept such thickets under

control so that fire-resistant native shortleaf and longleaf pines could thrive, creating an open canopy. In order to return Boggy Slough to its historical look, managers selectively remove non-native species and burn hundreds of acres each year.

“We first survey the health of the trees on a given site, and some trees get marked for harvest. When we harvest a pine, we use every bit of it,” Sanders says. “We cut the upper part for pulpwood, the main trunk for lumber or poles, and the tops or debris get mulched and spread across the site. Because pine straw is the main fuel for burning, you need to harvest trees in a way that facilitates fire. Following a harvest, we use a series of prescribed burns and targeted herbicide treatments on undesirable species.

“After that, you can use fire alone to maintain an open canopy. In fact, a more open canopy can be burned with a hotter fire because the heated air has more ways to escape. We are a conservation forest, so we’re extremely careful about the mix of plants we want.”

Education and Outreach

Boggy Slough is private property, not open to the public. But an important part of its mission is to work with agencies and groups to research how to care for the land, then share those research results with the public.



5. Technicians from the U.S. Forest Service research station in Nacogdoches collect water samples for environmental DNA analysis.
2. A springtime overhead view of the Neches River, which forms the eastern boundary of BSCA. The view highlights the meandering channel of the river and the adjacent bottomland hardwood forests.
3. A recently burned forest with large woody debris still smoking. The understory quickly greens up to rejuvenate the forest.
4. A flooded slough in the spring. These areas fill with water when the river flow is high and then dry in the summer.
5. Robert Sanders, a BSCA staff member, marks trees with blue paint for timber harvest removal to reduce the canopy density.
6. A recently burned open-canopy pine stand with post-fire green-up of the ground cover.
7. Boggy Slough Conservation Area is a working forest that promotes conservation objectives. Timber is harvested as part of the conservation management. Here, the first thinning of a loblolly pine plantation is harvested primarily for pulpwood.



“Few other places offer all the aspects of our mission to manage for conservation, then demonstrate what we’re doing through education and research,” Jack says. To that end, BSCA regularly welcomes an array of researchers and land managers to Boggy Slough.

Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches brings forestry and wildlife students to Boggy Slough as part of its Wildlife Week, a required field station course for upper-level students focusing on wildlife sampling techniques.

Last spring, the Biennial Southern Silvicultural Research Conference brought 70 researchers, land managers and landowners for a field tour of BSCA’s conservation projects. In mid-September, forest managers came to Boggy Slough for a field day hosted by the Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network and the Texas Longleaf Team. A large group of attendees learned about BSCA’s varied management practices for open pine canopy development and wildlife improvement.

BSCA also partners with various agencies to test improved ways to care for the land. U.S. Forest Service researchers periodically sample Boggy Slough waterways to see if traces of environmental DNA can identify turtle populations without trapping the animals. Texas A&M University-Kingsville is conducting a native plant study on a 3-acre plot at Boggy Slough to grow and monitor a range of native plants. The best native

plants should be available for sale in four or five years to East Texas landowners and rights-of-way managers.

BSCA boosted its educational emphasis by inaugurating the Buddy Temple Visiting Scholars program in 2021, recruiting top academics from around the nation. According to Jack, two scholars have already been engaged in research on forest regeneration and wildlife population dynamics.

BSCA’s land conservation efforts should benefit from project results, and research outcomes will be reported in scientific literature and presentations at professional meetings.

“Some skeptics hear the word ‘conservation’ and get nervous,” Jack says. “But society as a whole is getting more aware of the need to take care of the land for future generations.”

Gerland, the Diboll historian, agrees. “All sorts of people have adapted for centuries to the needs of this land,” he says. “And today, if you can just think carefully about your little spot of the earth, you can look beyond yourself to consider the future of the land.” ■



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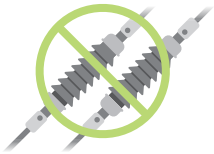


ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

This hunting season, we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.



Take notice of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.



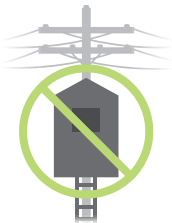
Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.



Know where power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.



Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.



Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.



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



Appraising the Texas Landscape

When Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of New York's Central Park, first laid eyes on a new state

BY W.F. STRONG

SOME SAY TIME TRAVEL will be possible one day, and some say it's the stuff of fairy tales.

For now, books are the next best thing. They can help us understand how people lived, thought and talked long ago, especially when they're written for the express purpose of cataloging such things.

Frederick Law Olmsted did exactly that when he toured Texas in the 1850s.

With his brother, he traveled a couple thousand miles around Texas on horseback, chronicling his experiences for the *New-York Daily Times*, a predecessor of

The New York Times. His book, *A Journey Through Texas: Or a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier*, is an absolute treasure—a priceless, time-sensitive ethnography that includes observations about and objections to slavery.

And it's more than a snapshot. It's an intricate mural of Texas around a decade after it became a state and as the U.S. headed toward civil war.

Many know Olmsted as the father of American landscape architecture. He designed New York's Central Park, the U.S. Capitol grounds and some 100 parks

and recreation grounds.

But before all that, Olmsted arrived in Nacogdoches in December 1853 and then meandered the state. He explored the Piney Woods, Hill Country, coastal plains, Southwest Texas and even some of northern Mexico.

When he arrived in Austin, population 3,000 back then, Olmsted found his hotel dirty and the food inedible. He was also dismayed that there was not one bookstore in town.

But he loved New Braunfels. The German communities and natural magnificence of the lands along the Guadalupe River were so impressive to Olmsted that he almost stayed. He was enchanted by the springtime wildflowers in the Hill Country, and he affirmed the German saying that “the sky is nearer in Texas.”

Riding out west to Eagle Pass, Olmsted killed an enormous 5½-foot rattlesnake. Olmsted worried in the daytime that his horse would get bitten, and at night he worried that a rattler would snuggle up with him in his bedroll. He also saw his first horny toads and so loved the little creatures that he shipped some back home to New York to be kept as pets.

In San Antonio he fell in love with the river. “We are so struck by its beauty,” he wrote. “It is of a rich blue and pure as crystal, flowing rapidly but noiselessly over pebbles and between reedy banks.”

But Texas was still the Wild West, and gunfights were common in the plaza. “As the actors are under ... excitement, their aim is not apt to be of the most careful and sure, consequently, it is, not seldom, the passers-by who suffer,” he wrote.

Maybe time travel is best done at the library after all. ■

Holiday Desserts

Fruity flavors rise to the occasion during the season of sharing

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

This delicious cake makes for a sweet ending to a holiday meal. Cranberry sauce baked into a vanilla-scented batter balances tart and sweet flavors to please palates that like a bit of both.

Cranberry Cake

3 eggs
2 cups sugar
¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter,
room temperature
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
2 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups flour
1 can whole berry cranberry sauce
(14 ounces)
¼ cup powdered sugar
1 cup cranberry jam, optional

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Liberally coat a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, beat eggs and sugar for 5 minutes, until eggs have increased in volume.
3. Add butter and vanilla and continue beating for an additional 2 minutes. Beat in milk and salt.
4. Stir in flour and then fold in cranberry sauce. Spoon into baking pan.
5. Bake 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
6. Let cool, slice and serve dusted with powdered sugar. Top with cranberry jam, if desired.

SERVES 12

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez while she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Cranberry Punch.





Mini Cherry Muffins

ANN BASHARA
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

Mini muffins sweetened with maraschino cherries are the tastiest little holiday bites. Bashara's mother made these tiny treats every year for Christmas parties, and they soon became a family tradition.

- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter, room temperature, plus 2 tablespoons for buttering muffin pans**
- ½ cup brown sugar**
- ½ cup sugar**
- 2 eggs, separated**
- 1 cup flour**
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 jar maraschino cherries (10 ounces), drained, juice reserved**
- ½ cup finely chopped pecans**
- 1 cup powdered sugar, for dusting muffins**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease mini muffin pans with butter.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and creamy. Slightly beat egg yolks and add to mixture along with flour, baking powder and 3 tablespoons of reserved cherry juice and blend.
- 3.** Beat egg whites until light and fluffy. Gently fold into batter.
- 4.** Sprinkle ¼ teaspoon of pecans into the bottom of each muffin tin. Spoon 1 teaspoon of batter over pecans, then place one cherry in center of batter. Top with an additional teaspoon of batter to cover cherries.
- 5.** Bake 10–12 minutes.
- 6.** Dust with powdered sugar and serve warm.

MAKES 3 DOZEN

[MORE RECIPES >](#)



\$500 WINNER

Mom's Pear Cake

GINGER CLARDY
BANDERA EC



A quick and easy Bundt cake is the perfect dessert for the holiday table or feeding a breakfast crowd. Clardy's creation is studded with pears, cinnamon and pecans and drizzled with a sweet glaze.

SERVES 12

CAKE

- 3 eggs**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract**
- 1 cup vegetable oil**
- 3 cups flour**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 cup chopped pecans**
- 4 cups diced pears, plus ½ cup for garnish, if desired**

GLAZE

- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter**
- 2 cups powdered sugar**
- 2 tablespoons milk**

- 1. CAKE** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Liberally coat a Bundt pan with nonstick cooking spray.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, sugar, vanilla and vegetable oil until smooth.
- 3.** Stir in flour, salt, baking soda and cinnamon. Batter will be thick.
- 4.** Fold in pecans and pears.
- 5.** Spoon batter into Bundt pan. Bake 40–50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
- 6. GLAZE** Melt butter over low heat. Add powdered sugar and milk, whisk until smooth. Drizzle over warm cake. Garnish with diced pears, if desired.

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Holiday Bark

RITA PAUL
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

If you're searching for a last-minute holiday treat that everyone will love, Paul's holiday bark has you covered. This bark can easily be adapted to include a variety of nuts, dried fruits or candies. It's done in a little over an hour and makes for the ultimate edible gift.

16 ounces chopped white chocolate
1 cup dried cranberries

1 cup shelled, chopped pistachios
1 cup cashew halves

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment.
2. In a double boiler melt white chocolate, stirring occasionally until smooth.
3. Pour melted chocolate onto baking sheet. Using a knife or rubber spatula, spread into a 9-by-12-inch rectangle.
4. Sprinkle chocolate with cranberries, pistachios and cashews.
5. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Break into pieces before serving.

MAKES ABOUT 1 DOZEN PIECES

TCP Want more dessert options heading into the holidays? We're happy to help with that. With more than 1,000 recipes from Co-op Country in our archives, you're sure to find the perfect sweet treat. You can find them all on our website.

Over the River and Through the Woods

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Tips for traveling with holiday treats:

Use muffin tins for deviled eggs, cupcakes and cold appetizers.

Frost and decorate cupcakes and cakes after you arrive to avoid smudges.

Add ice to a cooler before adding a cold dessert.

Wrap the entire cookie tray in plastic wrap to keep it secure.

When stacking frosted cookies, place waxed paper between each layer.

Place four toothpicks into your frosted cake then gently drape foil over the cake to protect frosting.

Use canning jars to transport sauces, fudge, cocoa mix and spiced nuts.



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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Kid Stuff

Legend has it that outlaw Billy the Kid lived out his days in Hico

BY CHET GARNER

I REMEMBER sitting around the campfire telling stories about the Wild West. Specifically, the story of how infamous gunslinger Billy the Kid outsmarted everyone and lived to old age in Hico under a fake name. Was it true? I headed to the small town southwest of Fort Worth to find out.

There are a couple things I do every time I'm in Hico. First I eat a chicken-fried steak at Koffee Kup Family Restaurant, and then I buy pecan toffee from Wiseman House Chocolates. After that, I'm ready to investigate.

Hico's historic downtown is booming these days, and the Billy the Kid Museum is right in the middle of it. The museum archives all the stories of Hico's history and its infamous (alleged) resident.

I walked the displays and dug deep into the legend of Henry McCarty, aka William H. Bonney, aka Billy the Kid. It seems even his real name is up for debate. What is certain is that Billy was a notorious outlaw who stole cattle and gunned down many men across the Southwest.

Many say that lawman Pat Garrett shot and killed Billy in Fort Sumner, New Mexico, in 1881. There's even a grave in that town with his name on it. But some say Garrett granted Billy mercy on the condition that he promise to never kill again.

In the 1940s, a reporter with a hot tip tracked down a man named "Brushy Bill" Roberts in Hico. Brushy claimed he was indeed the outlaw, with the scars and stories to prove it. However, before he could receive an official pardon from the governor of New Mexico, he died of a heart attack. Many questions remain, but the folks in Hico believe it was Billy himself.

Take a trip to Hico, conduct your own investigation and decide for yourself. ■

ABOVE Billy the Kid, in sculpted form, maintains a presence in downtown Hico.

TCP See more of Chet's search into the Billy the Kid mystery in 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.

NOVEMBER

10

The Colony [10-11] American Heroes: A Salute to Veterans & First Responders, (972) 625-1106, thecolonytx.gov

11

Brenham The Gatlin Brothers, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Fredericksburg St. Martin's Day Celebration, (830) 990-2044, visitfredericksburgtx.com

San Marcos Hangar Dance, (737) 285-0015, hangardance.org

16

Corsicana Holiday Tree Lighting, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

Marble Falls Pastel Demo With Dina Gregory, (830) 693-7324, visitmarblefalls.org

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Bluff Dale Front Porch Christmas Market, (817) 946-0141, facebook.com/thefrontporchbluffdale

Bowie Hanging of the Greens, (940) 872-6246, cityofbowietx.com

Burnet Sip n' Shop, (512) 766-0555, tornalochs.com

Fredericksburg Willow City Quilt Show and Live Auction, (830) 685-3376, willowcityfd.com

Henderson A Very Merry Market, (318) 780-0620, thechurchatlakecherokee.com

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Kerrville Holiday Lighted Parade, (830) 257-7300, kerrvilletx.gov

25

Giddings Sip & Shop Christmas Market, (979) 542-3455, giddingstx.com

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Stonewall Deck the Halls, (830) 644-2252, tpwd.texas.gov

Ingram [25-26, Dec. 1-3, 8-10, 15-16] A Christmas Carol, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

29

Columbus Christmas on the Colorado Lighted Parade, (979) 732-8385, columbustexas.org

Tyler [29-Dec. 2] Mistletoe & Magic, (903) 595-5426, juniorleagueoftyler.org

DECEMBER

01

Bowie Sweet Gingerbread Sip and Stroll With Me, (940) 872-6246, cityofbowietx.com

Kerrville [1-2, 8-10, 15-17] One Christmas Eve at Evergreen Mall, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

02

Lufkin Christmas in the Pines, (936) 633-0359, visitlufkin.com

Post Light Up Post, (806) 495-2811, postcitytexas.com

07

New Braunfels Christmas Market at Historic Old Town, (830) 629-2943, newbraunfelsconservation.org

Submit Your Event

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



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To art nouveau jewelers at the turn of the last century, nothing was more beautiful than the dragonfly. In the dragonfly's long body and outstretched wings, jewelers found the perfect setting for valuable stones. These jewelers' dragonfly designs have become timeless statements of style; a dragonfly pendant designed by French jeweler René Lalique recently sold at auction for \$226,000. Inspired by his stunning artistry, we've crafted our Dragonfly Nouvelle Collection, an elegant jewelry set for JUST \$29!

True artisanship in Austrian crystal and yellow gold. This necklace and earring set features gorgeous multicolored enamel paired with Austrian crystals and a yellow gold finish. Ask any jeweler and they'll tell you it takes true artisanship to properly blend the blues and purples found in this enamel. While art nouveau dragonflies are hard to come by, we're helping to repopulate their numbers with this artfully stylized depiction of some of nature's smallest wonders!

Buy the pendant, get the earrings FREE. If Stauer were a normal company, we'd sell the necklace and earrings for \$199 each, but because we engage the world's best artisans and cut out the middlemen to sell directly to you, we're offering the necklace for JUST \$29! Even better: If you buy within the next few days, we'll throw in the earrings for FREE! That's a nearly \$400 value for JUST \$29!

Act fast! Get this collection now before this offer goes extinct!

Jewelry Specifications:

- Enamel with Austrian crystal. Yellow gold finish
- Pendant: 1 1/2" W x 1 1/4" H. Chain: 18" + 2", lobster clasp.
- Earrings: 1 1/4" L, french wire

Stauer
Buy pendant, get
earrings FREE!
\$29



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|---|--|--|
| a. Total Number of Copies | 1,897,512 | 1,922,849 |
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| c. Total Paid Distribution | 1,886,539 | 1,912,006 |
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Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner Date
Karen Nejtek, Production Manager October 1, 2023

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Golden Hour

There are magical moments each day when the rising and setting sun kisses the surface of all it touches, transforming the world into hues of fiery gold. If you're quick, you can capture it as these Texans have. Now pull up a chair and rest a spell. It's the golden hour.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 RICK KIEFFER
BLUEBONNET EC

"A beautiful spring sunrise over Beaver Lake."

2 ANGELA ROBERTSON
BANDERA EC

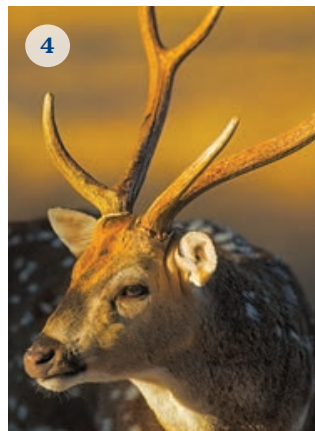
"Dancing on the water."

3 PAUL LAUDER
FARMERS EC

"Canoeing on a small lake near Anchorage, Alaska, at sunset."

4 JOHN TELFORD
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

"Taken in the Hill Country during the last light of a cold December day. One look and then he was gone."



Upcoming Contests

DUE NOV 10 Architecture

DUE DEC 10 Pollinators

DUE JAN 10 Rides



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for more Golden Hour photos from readers.



A School Day Like No Other

60 years ago this month, time stopped for Texans wherever they were

BY KATHLEEN COX RICHARDSON
ILLUSTRATION BY
STEPHANIE SHAFER

ON NOVEMBER 21, 1963, the principal of Dolores School in South Austin told the teachers that President John F. Kennedy and his beautiful wife were coming to visit Austin. We were to take the children downtown from our Catholic school in the old yellow buses, stand along the main drag and wave to them as they drove through the city in an open car.

After lunch the next day, the children lined up in order in the parking lot, first grade up to eighth grade. They stood quietly, but I could sense a wave of controlled excitement rippling through us. This was an opportunity of a lifetime—seeing our hero, our president.

All eyes were on the mother superior, our principal, while we watched for her signal to begin boarding the buses. “Mother, mother!” the school secretary

called as she ran toward us. She whispered to the principal, handing her a transistor radio. Then Mother turned to us and said, “Gov. Connally has been shot. We’re going into the church to pray for him.”

Stunned, we turned around, still in orderly lines, first graders first.

We filed into the pews and knelt, hands clasped, heads bowed. Mother stood in front of us, holding the small radio close to her ear; we heard a muted voice but could not make out the words. Then she moved the radio away from her ear and said to us, her voice steady, “The president has been shot. Pray for the president.”

A universal gasp coursed through the church. The little children squirmed as they knelt. The older girls began crying, softly. The radio continued its secret words. Little candle flames trembled in their blood-red holders, poised for news.

Then we heard the worst: “The president is dead. Pray for our president, John F. Kennedy”—all of this delivered by a calm, tearless woman. Shocked, I mumbled some sort of prayer, tears running down my face.

In orderly lines, we returned to our classrooms. With fearful eyes, my second graders stared at me. They knew something bad had happened but weren’t sure what it was. A few of the girls began crying.

I swiped my face with a tissue and reassured them that I was OK. They returned to their seats. One of the boys raised his hand.

“Miss Cox.”

“Yes, Jimmy.”

“Does this mean we don’t get out of school?”

“Yes, that’s what it means.”

A hushed “aw” came in unison from out of their innocent mouths. What did they know? They were so young; they didn’t comprehend the impact of the horrible news.

Mother stopped by my classroom to tell me the children would be dismissed early.

Thank goodness. I didn’t have to continue the facade. ■

1920s Style for a 1920s Price

It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. It was here that I got the idea for our new 1920s Retrograde Watch.

Never ones to miss an opportunity, we carefully steadied our glasses of bubbly and climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch, a genuinely unique timepiece that marries timeless style with modern technology.

With its remarkable retrograde hour and minute indicators, sunburst guilloché face and precision movement, this design is truly one of a kind. What does retrograde mean? Instead of displaying the hands rotating on an axis like most watches, the hands sweep in a semicircle, then return to their starting point and begin all over again.

Retrograde watches by the big brands can set you back thousands; one recent offering from a big French fashion house is selling for more than \$150,000! But because we've designed the 1920s Retrograde Watch in-house, we can offer it to you for just \$99!

This watch is so wildly popular with our customers that we're actually concerned about running out; we only have 937 729 left for this ad!



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| 40 | 9.63 | 8.76 | 12.94 | 11.01 | 18 | 16 | 27 | 24 | 63 | 43.47 | 34.39 | 84.94 | 59.61 | 151 | 100 | 284 | 187 |
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