

THE VALLEY'S SHRINE TO  
STAINED GLASS

DIVE INTO A HIDDEN  
AMUSEMENT PARK

FINDING DEWBERRIES IN A  
MAZE OF PERILS

# Texas Coop Power

FOR SAM HOUSTON EC MEMBERS

MAY 2023

## Surfing Reigns

Unwavering devotion  
draws Texans to  
Gulf Coast crests

SUMMER'S  
FAVORITE  
BERRY

SEE PAGE 22

### PLUS

- 18 Electrical  
Safety Month
- 19 Vote in  
Board Election
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Scams



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# May 2023



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## 08 Surf Your Turf

Texas doesn't have the best or the biggest waves, but that's never stopped surfers.

*By Jennifer Simonson  
Photos by Kenny Braun*

## In a Whole New Light

A Rio Grande Valley museum showcases a transcendental collection of century-old art.

*By Eileen Mattei  
Photos by John Faulk*

### ON THE COVER

Surfers arrive at the beach on South Padre Island.  
*Photo by Kenny Braun*

### ABOVE

*Te Deum*, the Gelman Stained Glass Museum's largest work, invites contemplation.  
*Photo by John Faulk*

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Trouble  
*By Shane Torno*



# A Most Scenic Century

**ADVENTURER PAM LEBLANC**, a frequent *TCP* contributor, appreciates the splendor of Texas' state parks about as much as anybody: "I don't own a ranch or a big chunk of Texas wilderness, but because of our state park system, I feel like part of this big, beautiful state belongs to me."

Thanks to state leaders 100 years ago, Pam and all Texans can escape to 89 state parks, historic sites and natural areas. The State Parks Board was created in May 1923 to begin setting aside land for parks, and in 1963 it merged with another agency to form the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Happy trails, y'all.

*May 20*

## National Be a Millionaire Day

Texas has some 650,000 million-aire households, second only to California.

## Made in a Shade

Viva Magenta—a nuanced crimson that balances warm and cool—is the color of the year. The hue, announced last winter by Pantone Color Institute experts, was inspired by the red dye derived from cochineals. "This color merges the warmth of the natural world with the endless, rich possibilities of the digital space," says Pantone's Elley Chang. Learn more about the tiny insects called cochineals in our 2019 story *The Bugs That Make You See Red*.



## **TCP** Contests and More

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## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

### MOM ALWAYS SAID ...

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

Here are some of the responses to our March prompt: **If I could fly, I would ...**

Finally take down all my Christmas lights.

WILLIAM MARTIN  
SAN BERNARD EC  
WALLER

Never be stuck in traffic again.

NANCY DABNEY  
HILCO EC  
HILLSBORO

Really hope I wasn't afraid of heights anymore.

JUDI RAISH  
TRI-COUNTY EC  
GRANBURY

Hope I could land.

KENNETH BRINSON  
WISE EC  
PARADISE

Not sit on power lines.

TERRY WOLBRUECK  
HEART OF TEXAS EC  
MOFFAT

Visit our website to see more responses.

## Play It Safe

May is National Electrical Safety Month. It's also when many of us hit the water. Never swim near a boat, marina or launching ramp. Residual current could put anyone in the water at risk of electric shock drowning.

“I’ve learned that success comes in a very prickly package.”

—SANDRA BULLOCK



# Ironing Out the Rough Edges

SOME 1,000 MEN and even more horses and mules trained in San Antonio 125 years ago in preparation for their participation in the Spanish-American War.

By the end of May 1898, Theodore Roosevelt, above center, and his Rough Riders were on their way to Florida before sailing to Cuba, where the future president led the charge up San Juan Hill.

While in San Antonio, the Rough Riders trained at what is now Riverside Golf Course, near the water hazard on the 16th hole.



COURTESY CHET GARNER

**'Lonesome' in a Library**  
 “The Wittliff Collections took us by total surprise. What a gem! This museum within a beautiful campus library offers surprisingly rich, diverse exhibits.”

SARA DUNN  
 PEDERNALES EC  
 WIMBERLEY

### Allies in Aging

A *Pet Project* [March 2023] resonated perfectly. I have an 18-year-old black beauty named Rhiannan. She was my wife's loyal companion until my wife passed away over five years ago and has since become very needy and close to me. She is skin and bones but eats well and fortunately does not appear to be in any distress or pain.

I am 82 myself, so we are dealing with aging together. I hope to outlive her so she won't have to suffer.

Charles L. Glisan  
 Pedernales EC  
 Cedar Park

We need to honor and appreciate these men who risk their lives every day [First Responders, February 2023].

BETH CHAPMAN  
 VIA FACEBOOK

### Readers on a Roundup

Kudos to Eric Schlegel for his excellent photography and capturing the voices of the Huebner Bros. Cattle Co. cowhands in this fascinating story [Until the Cows Swim Home, March 2023].

As readers we felt we were moving across the Matagorda and Colorado waters, past the snakes, onto the island and back to the ranch.

Martha Everman Jones  
 Victoria EC  
 Victoria

### Dove Doings

We had a *Lonesome Dove* party 30 years ago. Everyone had to dress as their favorite character of the miniseries/book. My husband dressed as Augustus McCrae, and I dressed as the stone-throwing Janey. My mother dressed as Peach and carried a live chicken under her arm.

Susan Mansell  
 Coleman County EC  
 Ballinger

### CORRECTION

Though the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives had said in 2016 that the deadly 2013 fertilizer explosion in West was triggered by an intentionally set fire, other experts have since raised doubts about that finding [Rise Up West, April 2023].



ERIC SCHLEGEL

**TCP WRITE TO US**  
[letters@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto: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.

Texas Co-op Power

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# SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



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

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

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and purchased it for our **Sedona Turquoise Collection**. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique, one-of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for **just \$99**.

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# SURF



# YOUR



# TURF



## Texas doesn't have the best or the biggest waves, but that's never stopped surfers

**D**URING THE HOT SUMMER months, thunderstorms develop in Central Africa each afternoon like clockwork. If the monsoon is at least partially active, a disturbance can intensify over North Africa as it marches west before being thrust out over the Atlantic Ocean near Cape Verde. Sometimes storms peter out right there, but if the ocean is warm and the conditions are right, a storm can continue its trek across the Atlantic, picking up power along the way until it reaches the Gulf of Mexico.

That's when a small but mighty group of Texas surf enthusiasts break out their boards.

Hurricanes bring world-class waves to the sluggish waters of the Texas Gulf Coast—waves that area surfers sometimes wait years for. When a storm begins tracking on the radar and swell reports look promising, pent-up surfers call out sick, miss family obligations and put plans on hold to head to the nearest beach.

"Most people are driving away from the ocean during hurricanes, but Texas surfers are driving towards it," says William "Boog" Cram, owner of Ohana Surf & Skate in Galveston.

The existence of a passionate surfing community in Texas might come as a surprise to many—even those who grew up here. But surfing culture in Texas dates back to the 1960s, when the surf craze perpetrated by the Beach Boys, the documentary *The Endless Summer* and Gidget movies swept the nation. Much more recently, a renewed interest in the sport began when the pandemic pushed more people to embrace outdoor activities. Landlocked Texans wanting to escape city lockdowns headed to the beach, rented surfboards and tried their hand at a sport many people don't realize exists here.

"Usually when you tell people that you surf in Texas, the immediate response is: 'There is surf in Texas?'" says Frank Floyd, longtime surfer and owner of Wind & Wave Watersports in Corpus Christi. That question is often followed up with a curiosity of what it's like to surf in Texas.

Are Texas waves large? No.

Do they have power behind them? Also no.

But can one surf in crystal clear water so beautiful that they forget about the waves? Absolutely not.

Surfing in Texas is not for the faint of heart. The state's 367 miles of coastline have a reputation for producing small, choppy, inconsistent surf in water with a less-than-ideal hue, and the Texans who surf here accept that. There's no false bravado that even the waves are bigger in Texas. What there is among surfers is an unwavering appreciation for the waves in their backyard.

"Texans are extremely enthusiastic about surfing in Texas. We have an amazing culture here," Brad Lomax says. "To be a surfer in Texas you need to be an optimist with low standards." A good sense of humor helps, too. Lomax has sold T-shirts that read, "Texas Waves: Slow, mushy and hard to catch" and "Texas Surfing: It is better than it looks."

Lomax has been surfing the waters of the Coastal Bend since the mid-1960s. Originally from San Antonio, he spent his teenage summers selling T-shirts on the beach in Port Aransas just to live near the ocean. The surfer teen grew into a businessman who never left. After the success of his first Corpus Christi restaurant in 1983, Lomax opened the Executive Surf Club in 1990.

"My friends and I all had jobs, but we also surfed as much as we could, so we called ourselves the Executive Surf Club," he says. "I wanted to open a place with a vibe where everyone could come together—guys from the refinery, old ladies, surfers, everyone—and unwind after a long day of work."

There's no missing the surf vibe when walking into the brick building originally built in the 1800s. Surfboards line the walls, hang over the bar and are used as tables.

Fifteen years after opening the Executive Surf Club, Lomax along with a good friend, surfing legend Pat McGee, opened the Texas Surf Museum next door. Before it closed in September, the institution told the story of the evolution of Texas surfing with photos, vintage memorabilia, newspaper clippings, short videos and more than 30 legendary surfboards.

Galveston also draws surfers despite its similarly less-than-stellar waves. The continental shelf along the barrier island is long and shallow, creating small swells. The wimpy waves are welcoming for newcomers to the sport. Every summer, children in surf camps can be seen on the beach practicing pop-ups and in the water riding waves with a face full of concentration, arms up, hands pointed

OPPOSITE FROM TOP Rachel Gore takes on a wave at Isla Blanca Park on South Padre Island. A classic woody, the most iconic of surfmobiles.

## Where To **HANG 10** in Texas

**1 Surfside Beach** Just south of Galveston, in Brazoria County, you'll find a variety of waves, including big swells, for a range of skill levels.

**2 Matagorda Peninsula** Specifically, where the Colorado River empties into the Gulf. The strong waves there, thanks to the area's deep ocean floor, are best for experienced surfers.

**3 Port Mansfield Jetty** The cut that separates North and South Padre islands is incredibly isolated but has arguably the best waves in the state—for seasoned surfers.

**4 South Padre Island Jetties** The gentle beach-break waves here, where the continental shelf drops off dramatically, are great for longboarding—from beginners to pros.

**5 Boca Chica Beach** Just a little farther south, Boca Chica is known for occasionally producing barreling waves when the swells are strong. With sometimes serious undertow, this beach is for the best of the best.



toward the shore—just like they're taught. The shallow water, relatively flat sandy bottom and lack of rocks make area beaches a great place to learn.

"If you can surf here, you can surf anywhere," Cram says from his surf shop in Galveston. "When you can master the wave here, you can take those skills to any waves around the world."

Cram started surfing in Galveston in the early 1970s after inheriting a hand-me-down surfboard from a friend's older brother. He and a friend would ride bikes 1 mile to the 47th Street break, between them holding the 9-foot board weighing close to 40 pounds. He has been surfing and skateboarding the island ever since. In 2005, Cram opened his brightly colored, Hawaii-style surf and skate shop across from one of Galveston's most popular surf spots—





the Pleasure Pier. His team teaches surfers to catch a wave even in the worst conditions.

While the beaches near Galveston are perfect for newbie surfers, as one travels south along the coast, the waves become bigger and more powerful. This is because the shallow continental shelf of the Gulf gradually deepens near the southern point of South Padre Island.

Beaches with the best waves, like Port Mansfield Jetty, are often in secluded areas requiring four-wheel-drive vehicles. Because of that, most surfers stick to their local beaches for an afternoon surf session. Weather patterns can change quickly and never last long. When the perfect conditions don't arrive, surfers make do.

"Texas gets some great quality surfers because we have to make something out of nothing," Floyd says.

When traveling, Texas surfers tend to have the most fun of anyone in the water, Floyd says. They appreciate waves that other surfers might take for granted, knowing that they're probably better than the waves at home. Unless, of course, a hurricane is on its way.

"We have to work at getting good in Texas," he says. "Then we can go anywhere." ■

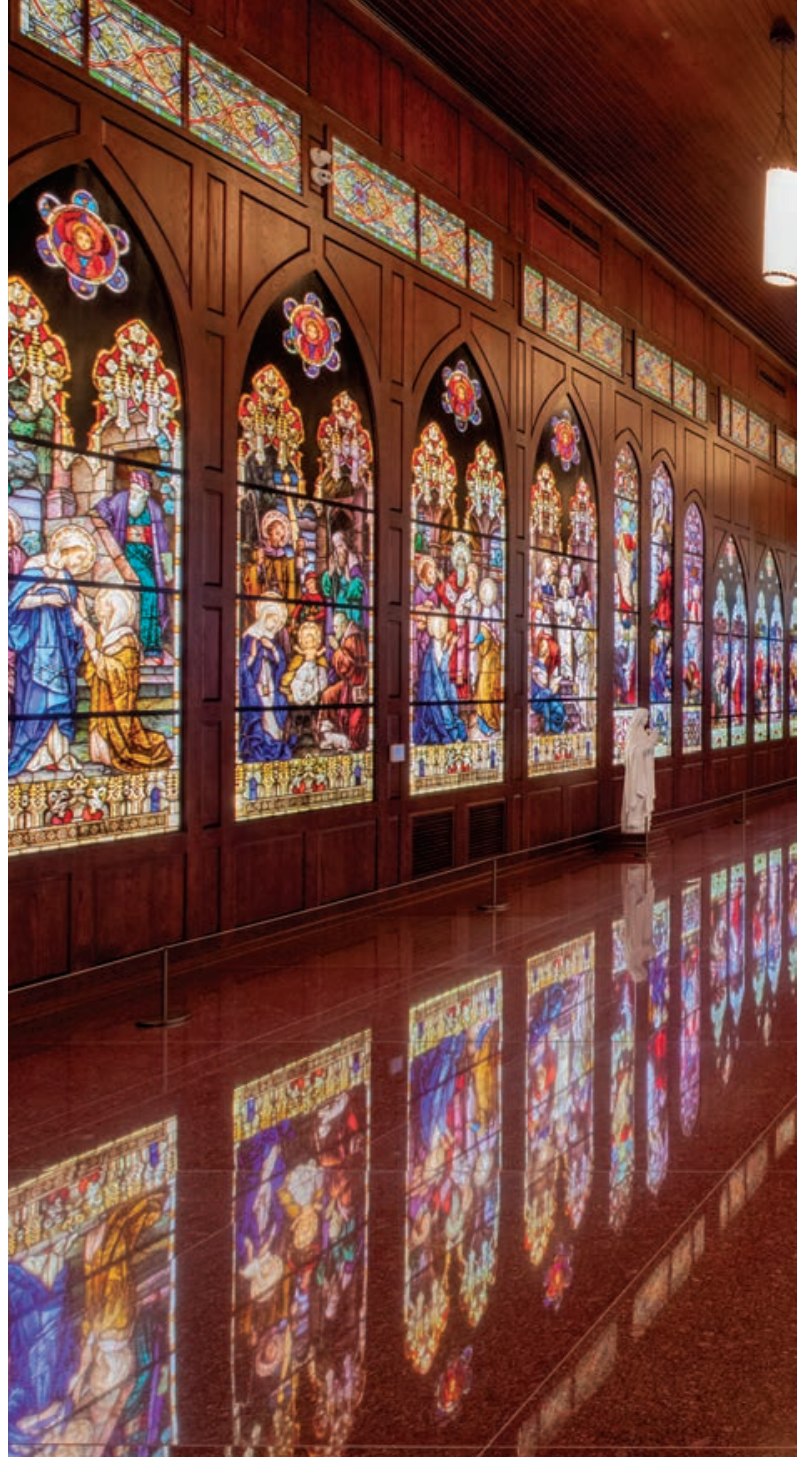
CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE PAGE Catching a wave off Port Aransas. Aarin Hartwell, with baby Brixton, is founder of SPI Sessions, a surf and water sports shop on South Padre Island. Brad Lomax has been surfing the waters of the Coastal Bend since the mid-1960s. A board, a bike and, down the road, a beach. Henry Fry's surfboards were some of the first made in Texas, in the 1960s.



# IN A WHOLE NEW LIGHT



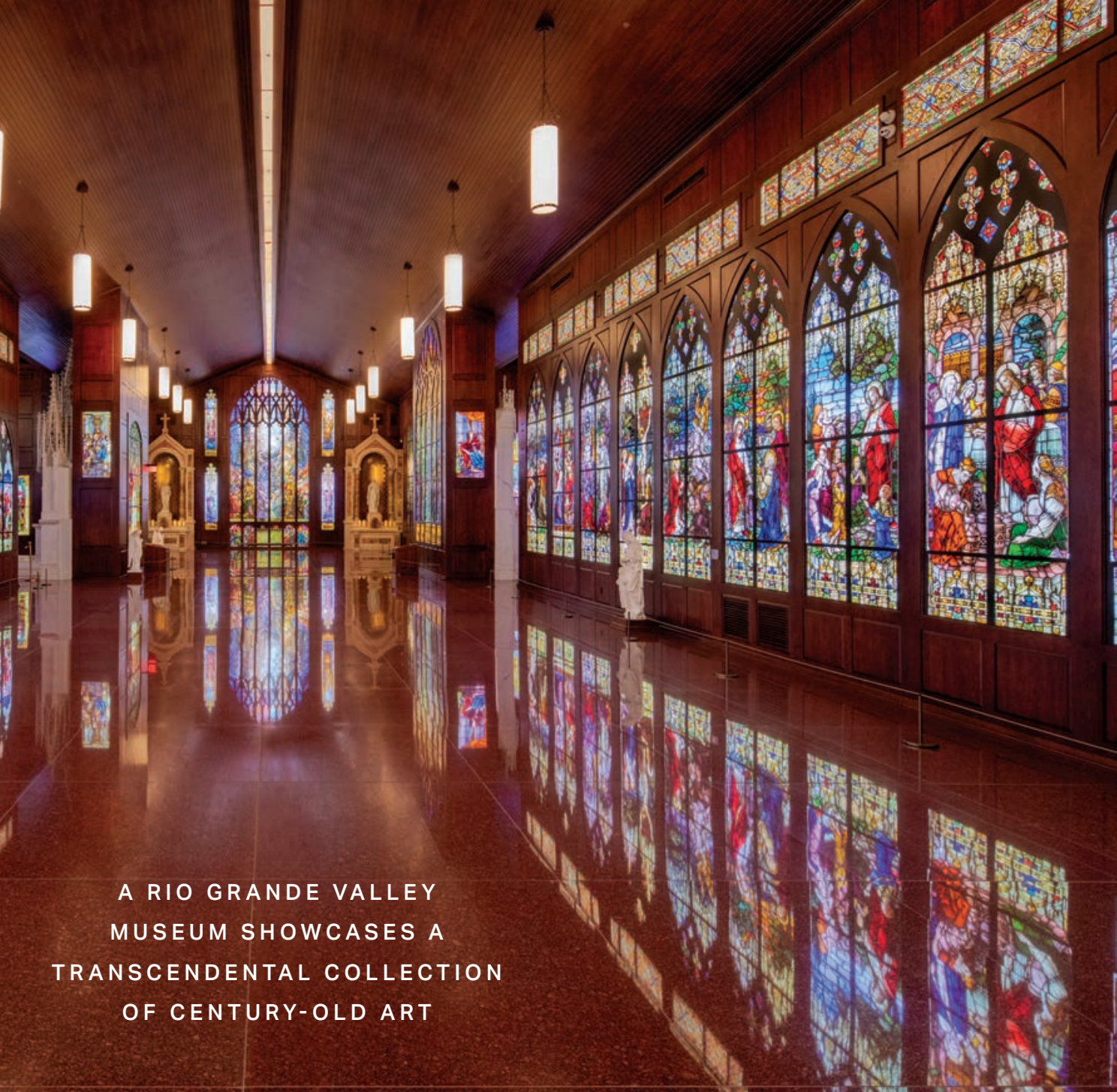
ABOVE The museum boasts eight Tiffany stained-glass windows depicting the Beatitudes, or blessings, including Blessed Are the Merciful. OPPOSITE A navelike passage illuminates works from now-closed churches.



I PULL OPEN THE DOOR of the Gelman Stained Glass Museum and step inside a kaleidoscope. More than 150 stained-glass windows and their reflections in the highly polished red granite floor immerse me in light, color and space. Then my eyes and brain begin to separate the profusion of shapes and colors into windows of religious scenes ranging from 10 to 25 feet tall, illuminated by what seems to be heavenly light.

Inside a gray stone building just off the highway in the heart of San Juan, in the Rio Grande Valley, the narrow, cross-shaped space is cool and dim. Most of the stained-glass windows in the museum, which opened in November 2021, originally graced now-closed East Coast churches, where they had been dedicated as memorials to departed loved ones. In their safe, new climate-controlled home, the complex LED arrays that backlight all the windows provide





## A RIO GRANDE VALLEY MUSEUM SHOWCASES A TRANSCENDENTAL COLLECTION OF CENTURY-OLD ART

a steady, otherworldly glow that compensates for variations in the thickness of the glass and paint amid the absence of natural light.

About 30 years ago, an auction catalog prompted Lawrence Gelman, an Edinburg anesthesiologist, to go to Atlanta, Georgia, to view a stained-glass window as it was being repaired. He later phoned in his winning auction bid and purchased the 4-by-7-foot landscape. “There’s something about the vividness of colors when light passes through stained glass,” Gelman says.

Captivated by the art, Gelman delved into the history and mastery involved, collecting more and more stained-glass windows until he had enough to fill a museum, which he chose to locate in San Juan, near the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle. That shrine annually receives more than 1 million

visitors, an audience primed to appreciate Gelman’s collection.

“Dr. Gelman wanted to replicate a sacred, transcendental experience,” says Miriam Cepeda, the museum’s director.

He has succeeded, no question.

Created between 1880 and 1910 by 12 master glasswork artists and studios of the art nouveau era, the works comprise the largest American museum collection of stained-glass windows. And with 71 Louis Comfort Tiffany windows, the Gelman has the largest collection of Tiffany glass windows in the U.S. Other noted glass artists represented here include John La Farge, Mary Elizabeth Tillinghast and those at J&R Lamb Studios—the oldest continuously operating glass studio in the nation, dating to 1857.

Cepeda gives me a quick explanation of stained glass. Traditionally, stained glass was actually painted glass.





## WITH 71 LOUIS COMFORT TIFFANY WINDOWS, THE GELMAN HAS THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF TIFFANY GLASS WINDOWS IN THE U.S.

The glass panels are supported and joined by flexible channels of lead called comes—and, in some cases, by copper foil. Tiffany Studios popularized the use of opalescent glass and layered glass to achieve shimmering, flowing colors for landscapes. Looking closely, I notice that even the faces and hands of Christ, the apostles and other religious figures have been painted onto the glass.

**MANY OF THE WINDOWS** represent biblical scenes, such as the Nativity, flight into Egypt, Good Shepherd, and Madonna and child, as interpreted by the artists. But La Farge's works here mostly portray medieval scenes.

The vivid jewel tones of Franz Mayer's stained-glass windows contrast with the luminous blues and greens of Tiffany Studios' masterpieces, such as the *Te Deum*. The museum is just one glorious work of art after another.

An eye-catching group of eight Tiffany windows portrays angels as stern warriors and loving guardians presenting the Beatitudes—sayings attributed to Jesus. These windows adorned a private mausoleum, out of the public eye for 108 years, until Gelman put them on display.

Similar memorial inscriptions evoke a bygone time, such as "To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Charles Chamberlain Gay 1835–1913." One narrow window honors the memory of three women who died in the wreck of a ship called the Paul Jones in January 1899 in the Gulf of Mexico.

The small but magnificent north chapel shimmers with windows rich in pastels. In the south chapel, a large pipe organ and an electronic organ, backed by superb sound systems, enhance the sensory feast. The museum hosts orchestral and chamber music concerts and has been the setting for weddings, workshops and secular celebrations.

The museum chose not to add interpretive displays to the windows, instead providing guests a compact map with QR codes that, with a click of your phone camera, link to in-depth descriptions of the windows, their artists and their techniques. The map also identifies the marble altars, statues and mosaics throughout the building.

La Casa del Vitral, an art studio in Edinburg, took on the restoration of the century-old windows and installed the glass art in the museum. They also made replicas of several windows held in other museums.

Admission to the Gelman Museum is by appointment only, made through its website, [gelmanmuseum.org](http://gelmanmuseum.org).

Once visitors are inside, benches invite sitting and contemplating. Subtle light washes over me while I listen to recorded voices raised in Gregorian chant. Peace and beauty. ■

The Good Shepherd, baptism of Jesus and flight into Egypt are among the biblical stories portrayed in stained glass framed by red oak paneling.





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# How To Rock a Walking Stick

*An essential part of a gentleman's wardrobe*



In the 17th century, the walking stick overtook the sword as an essential part of a gentleman's wardrobe. Though it was primarily used as a decorative accessory, it could also function as a weapon if necessary. For men of the era, these walking sticks were a statement piece, and a way to communicate their wealth and refinement.

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Today, walking sticks still represent status and prosperity — a way to show off your deep pockets without being too flashy. In that vein, we present the Santa Fe Walking Stick. Made of eucalyptus wood painted a glossy black with an antiqued silver-finished sculpted handle, what gives this piece of finery a distinctive edge is an 18-carat turquoise inlay that's been enhanced to bring out its best blues. Don't be bashful about your affluence. See why the Santa Fe Walking Stick is the embodiment of sophisticated elegance for the modern gentleman.

**Don't delay:** Our must-have Santa Fe Walking Stick was one of our best-selling items this past year. Because of this, we can only offer 723 walking sticks at this price with this ad! See why Stauer is becoming one of America's fastest-growing sellers of walking sticks today!

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— Chas, Placida, FL

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## Electrical Safety Month Quiz

**MAY IS NATIONAL** Electrical Safety Month. Take this quiz from Electrical Safety Foundation International to find out how much you know about electrical safety in your home.

**1. True or false? Using a corded phone during a lightning storm is safe.**

- a. True      b. False

**2. Why do some power outlets have three holes?**

- a. To provide more voltage  
b. The third prong is the "ground."  
c. To accommodate foreign appliances  
d. It keeps the plug from falling out.

**3. When using a portable generator during a power outage, you should \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. connect generators directly to the household wiring only when an appropriate transfer switch is installed to prevent backfeeding along power lines, which can pose a risk to utility lineworkers making repairs  
b. position the generator outside the house and away from doors, windows or vents that could allow carbon monoxide to enter the home  
c. make sure the generator is properly grounded  
d. plug it into a ground-fault circuit interrupter  
e. All of the above

**4. The most common scenario for electric shocks while using power tools is \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. the equipment coming into contact with water  
b. the equipment coming into contact with electrical wires  
c. the equipment malfunctioning  
d. exposure to bare wires by handling a cord with cracked or broken insulation

**5. Smoke alarm batteries should be changed every:**

- a. month  
b. six months  
c. year  
d. two years

**6. You shouldn't swim near docks or marinas because:**

- a. Boats may not see you and run you over.  
b. There could be lost fishing equipment like hooks or tangled line.  
c. The water might be electrified by docks or boats that leak electricity into the water.  
d. All of the above

**7. In a study conducted by Temple University's Biokinetics Laboratory, what percentage of children 2–4 years old were able to remove the plastic outlet covers from sockets in less than 10 seconds?**

- a. 25%  
b. 50%  
c. 75%  
d. 100%

**8. Across the U.S., a fire department responds to a fire once every:**

- a. 23 seconds  
b. 7 minutes  
c. 28 minutes  
d. 52 minutes

**9. The proper way to safely move away from a downed power line is to \_\_\_\_\_ until you are 35 feet away.**

- a. take small hops with your feet together  
b. skip so that only one foot is on the ground at a time  
c. crawl on all fours

**10. True or false? You can be electrocuted using a tree trimmer near a power line even if you don't touch the wires.**

- a. True      b. False

**11. True or false? Swallowing a button cell battery can be fatal.**

- a. True      b. False

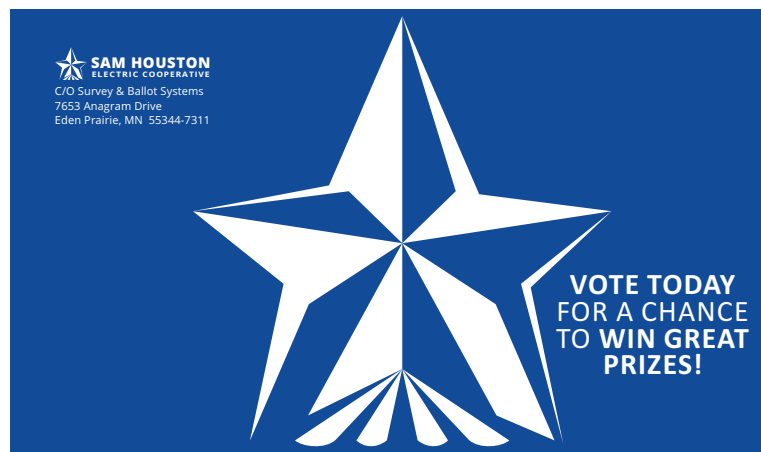
**12. Birds are able to perch on power lines without risk of injury because:**

- a. The unique skin on the feet of birds protects them.  
b. Sitting on one wire does not provide a ground or connect a circuit, so the current doesn't leave the wire and continues on its path.  
c. Birds' bones are hollow, allowing the current to pass through them without harm.

Answers: (1) b; (2) b; (3) e; (4) b; (5) (5) b (6) d; (7) d; (8) a; (9) a; (10) a; (11) a; (12) b



# Sam Houston EC Annual Meeting To Be Held in Person



**JOIN US JUNE 13** at the Polk County Commerce Center, 1017 U.S. Highway 59 Loop N., Livingston, for Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting of Members.

Doors will open at noon for registration, and the meeting will start at 1:30 p.m. Musical entertainment by Walter Plant will begin between noon and 12:30 p.m. Attendees can enter at Joe Pedigo City Park, and shuttles will be available to take attendees from the parking area to the facility.

Members in attendance will be able to visit with other member-owners, the board of directors and Cooperative management. The meeting will include entertainment and door prize drawings, and Cooperative leadership will report on Co-op business, including announcing the results of the directors election. ■

## POWER TIP

During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors.

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## Questions about solar? Call us first.

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## Look for Your Board of Directors Election Ballot

**THE SAM HOUSTON** Electric Cooperative Board of Directors election ballot will arrive in mailboxes and inboxes this month. The election begins May 15, and detailed voting instructions will be provided with the ballot sent to each member.

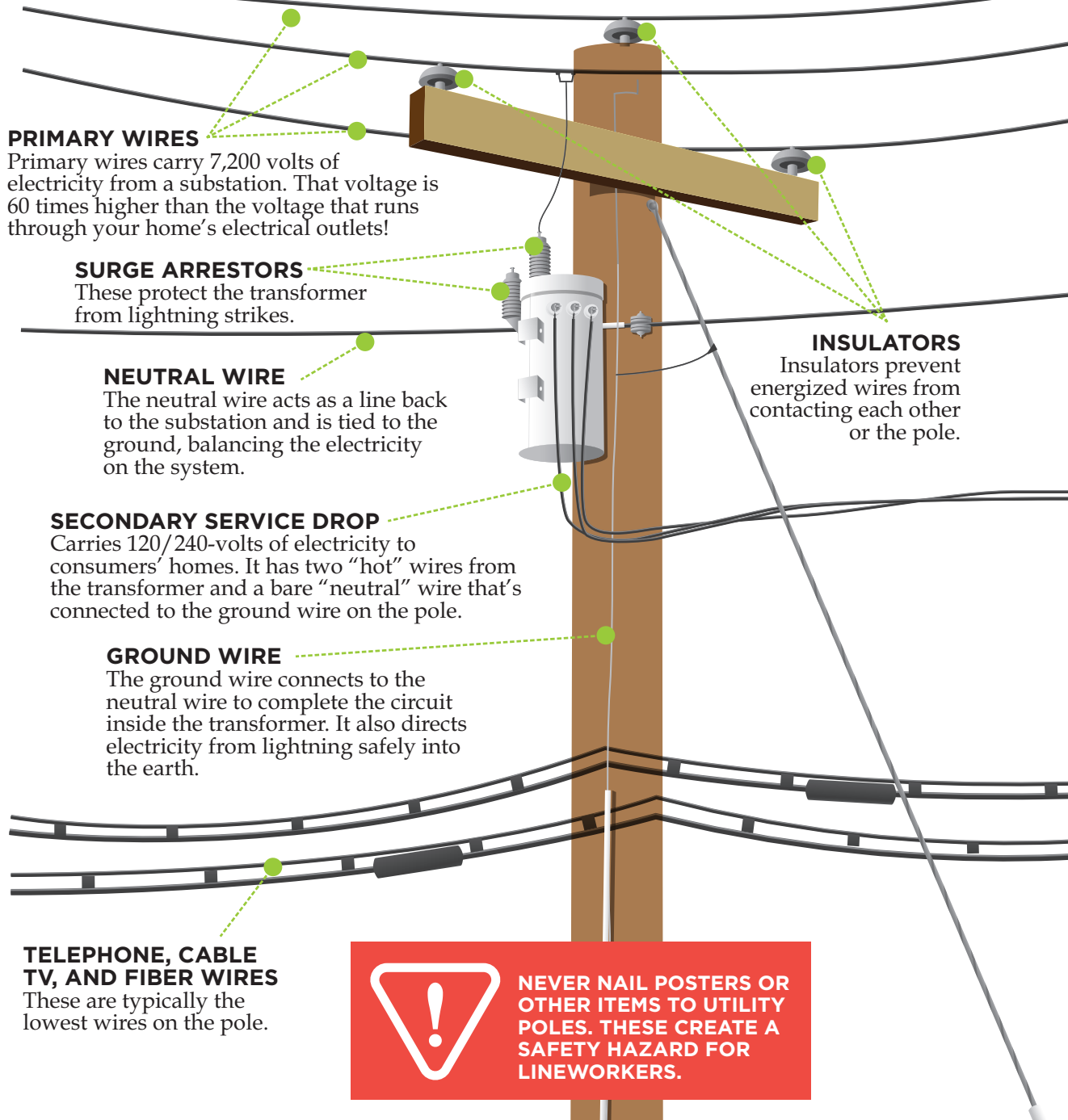
The quickest way to vote is online through your mySamHouston online account. Account holders can log in like they would to pay a bill or review usage, then follow the option to access the ballot.

Mailed ballots will include login credentials for the independent election management firm's secure website. This information will also be sent by email to those who have an email associated with their Sam Houston EC account.

Members will still receive a paper ballot to vote by mail if they prefer.

Online and mail-in votes will be eligible for prize drawings at the annual meeting of members June 13.

Members who submit their ballot by June 6 will be eligible for additional prize drawings at the annual meeting. Members do not need to be present at the meeting to win prizes from the ballot drawings. ■



## PRIMARY WIRES

Primary wires carry 7,200 volts of electricity from a substation. That voltage is 60 times higher than the voltage that runs through your home's electrical outlets!

## SURGE ARRESTORS

These protect the transformer from lightning strikes.

## NEUTRAL WIRE

The neutral wire acts as a line back to the substation and is tied to the ground, balancing the electricity on the system.

## SECONDARY SERVICE DROP

Carries 120/240-volts of electricity to consumers' homes. It has two "hot" wires from the transformer and a bare "neutral" wire that's connected to the ground wire on the pole.

## GROUND WIRE

The ground wire connects to the neutral wire to complete the circuit inside the transformer. It also directs electricity from lightning safely into the earth.

## INSULATORS

Insulators prevent energized wires from contacting each other or the pole.

## TELEPHONE, CABLE TV, AND FIBER WIRES

These are typically the lowest wires on the pole.



**NEVER NAIL POSTERS OR OTHER ITEMS TO UTILITY POLES. THESE CREATE A SAFETY HAZARD FOR LINEWORKERS.**

# Communications Companies Must Acquire Easements From Property Owners

**ELECTRIC UTILITY POLES** can be seen all across our area, and while each pole's specific equipment varies according to the service needs of each area, most poles look similar to the image above.

Many Sam Houston Electric Cooperative utility poles have multiple lines attached to them. In addition to the primary wires and neutral wire that deliver safe and reliable electricity to your home or business, there are sometimes lower lines that deliver cable or fiber communication services to your area.

The providers of these communications services typically contact Sam Houston EC to negotiate an agreement to use our poles. The funds obtained through that agreement are used to

help maintain the poles and provide routine inspections.

Sam Houston EC's existing power line easements with our Co-op members do not cover other entities using those easements. Each third-party cable or fiber company that crosses a landowner's property is required to get its own easement from that landowner. If you have questions regarding an easement for cable or fiber companies that wish to cross your property, please contact them directly.

Our goal is to protect your rights as a Co-op member. Give us a call or contact us via our website if you have questions. ■





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## Watch Out for Door-to-Door Salespeople

**SOME SAM HOUSTON** Electric Cooperative consumer-members have received a door-to-door solicitation from solar companies. Several vendors have even said they are working with Sam Houston EC or on the Cooperative's behalf, which is untrue.

"Sam Houston EC is here to support our members who choose to install solar panels, but the Co-op does not suggest any vendor or have an authorized installer," said Kabe Murphy, grid manager. "We are here to provide factual information our members can trust about installing solar at a location, but we are not selling solar services."

Members are encouraged to call Sam Houston EC if they want to explore their options in distributed energy resources, such as solar panels.

"All Sam Houston EC employees will be able to identify themselves with a company badge and logo on their vehicle," said Rachel Frey, chief communications officer. "Our contractors will also be able to identify themselves with contractor signs on their vehicles and identification. If a member is unsure if they are speaking with a Co-op representative, we encourage them to call us at 1-800-458-0381 to verify a person's identity."

As summer heat approaches, consumer-members should also stay alert for potential phone scammers. Many become more active in summer months and can try to scare members into either providing payment or purchasing prepaid cards.

"Members can trust that Sam Houston EC will never call demanding immediate payment," Frey said. "This is the most common scare tactic scammers use. They demand payment or say that a home's electricity will be cut off shortly if payment isn't received immediately."

If you get a call that demands payment or sounds strange, hang up immediately, call the Co-op at 1-800-458-0381 and ask to speak to a member service representative. ■



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**National Clean Your Room Day**  
Wednesday, May 10

**Mother's Day**  
Sunday, May 14

**Armed Forces Day**  
Saturday, May 20

**Memorial Day**  
Monday, May 29

Our offices will be closed in observance of the holiday.



CASSIE FONTENOT  
1

# Berry Good Farms

East Texas boasts bountiful blueberry producers

**THE ROOTS OF BLUEBERRY** bushes near Honey Island and Kountze are anchored in East Texas dirt, which provides purchase and purpose for the farmers who nurture the bushes and harvest their fruit.

“I retired in 2008, and I wanted to be a farmer,” said Jerry Gates, owner of J&J Blueberry Farms and a Sam Houston Electric Cooperative consumer-member. “I do love it here in East Texas, and don’t you doubt it.”

Gates and his son, Luke, and several other farmers are members of the Texas Blueberry Marketing Association, a cooperative headquartered in Fred. The father and son bought their farm from Don Duhon in 2006 after they were the first ones to give Duhon a deposit.

“He was a man of his word,” Gates said. “Don said the first man who put down a thousand dollars, [the land] was his. I made a phone call, and within 20 minutes I was approved, so I

bought the farm.”

Shortly after purchasing the property, Gates noticed Duhon was preparing to move from the land he had sold. Gates had tremendous respect for Duhon and invited the previous owner to stay at the farm as long as he wanted. Duhon took him up on the offer and stayed on the property for several years before eventually moving to Houston.

Gates was new to farming but not to East Texas or blueberry farms. His father and brother owned a blueberry farm while Gates was a welder in the oil and gas industry. Gates did not work “the patches,” as he calls them, but he did help process the blueberries before they left the farm.

Cooperatives, no matter the industry in which they exist, abide by seven core principles. Education and Training is one of those principles, and it informs the dealings of the farmers of the Texas Blueberry Marketing Association.



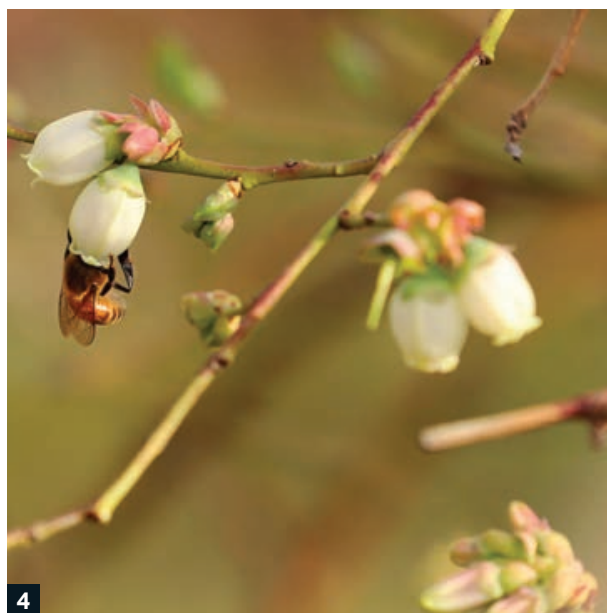


1. Kevin Johnson and his wife, Stacey, with their son Kyle Johnson and his wife, Samantha. Kevin and Kyle started KJ farms before Kyle joined the U.S. Army more than a decade ago. Kyle returned to East Texas to help run and expand the farm recently.

2. Blueberries are picked from Jerry Gates' farm. Workers make up to five passes throughout the farm to pick the berries at their ripest.

3. Blueberry bushes are neatly planted in rows to allow for better care and to make harvesting easier.

4. Bees from Minnesota are transported to blueberry farms to pollinate blueberry bushes during late winter and early spring.



Gates and the owners of nearby KJ Farms share information and equipment to help each other thrive. The two farms are located just a few miles from each other in Hardin County.

"Kevin [Johnson] reads; I am not a reader," Gates said. "He passes information on to me. It is all about helping each other."

In return, Gates stores Johnson's blueberries in his large cooler until a truck comes to pick them up. The blueberries don't stay in the cooler for long, though. They are usually on store shelves within a couple of days of harvesting, according to Stacey Johnson, Kevin's wife.

KJ Farms is also owned by a father and son, Kevin and Kyle Johnson. Kyle worked for Wayne Partlow, owner of Blueberry Basket Farm, while he was in high school. Meanwhile, Kevin was a teacher, coach and athletic director at Lumberton High School.

Stacey, Kyle's mother, is a retired teacher from the Lumberton Independent School District, where she taught for nearly 30 years until 2014. While Stacey is not listed as an owner of KJ Farms, she cares for the blueberry bushes and works the farm as much as her son and husband, although that was not their initial plan.

When Kyle was in high school, he suggested that the family start a blueberry farm. His father, not wanting to discourage him, told Kyle that if he came up with a business plan, he would entertain the possibility.

"We were surprised he did all that work," Stacey said. "We went behind him to check the numbers, and they were correct. We sat down with him and said if this is really what you want to do, we will finance it and you put in the labor."

Kyle cleared land on the family's property and installed the water lines, then they planted thousands of blueberry bushes. It seemed as if the farm was off to a good start, even though it would take several years for the bushes to produce a meaningful quantity of berries.

Then Kyle surprised his parents yet again and enlisted in the U.S. Army to become an Army Ranger.

"I needed to mature, and the Army allowed me to do that," Kyle said.

As Kyle defended the nation for more than a decade, Kevin and Stacey learned what it took to be blueberry farmers, even while Stacey still taught for several years.

"We had them planted in December, then he joined the





Army and left,” Stacey said. “He initially signed up for four years, then we get a video of him during a deployment with him in a helicopter as he was [reenlisting], so he spent 11 years in the military before returning.”

When Kyle returned to the area, he brought reinforcements in the form of Samantha, his wife.

Kyle and Kevin want to see their farm grow. They made their pond larger and added several more acres of bushes recently. The pond will provide water for the overhead irrigation system that protects the berries from overnight freezes early in the growing season.

“We watch the weather real close, and if we know it will freeze at night, we turn the overhead on,” Gates said. “When it freezes, the water makes a blanket on the blooms. That is good, if it thaws out during the day.”

Blueberry farming, like any other farming, is not for the faint of heart. In addition to the hard work during harvest season, there’s a lot of work that needs to be done to prepare for

the next season. Bushes needed to be pruned, since only new growth will produce berries. Mulch needs to be applied. Bushes may need to be removed and replaced periodically. And the blueberry farmers of East Texas desperately hope winter storms and hurricanes avoid the area.

The February 2021 winter storm brought bitterly cold weather to East Texas that had not been felt in the region in decades. Temperatures did not rise above freezing for five days, and the extreme conditions rendered the overhead watering systems useless.

“2021 was the worst year I ever had,” Gates said. “The plastic water pipes busted. Everything went to heck in a handbasket, and our insurance didn’t cover it. All that was wasted.”

Down the road at KJ Farms, the situation was just as dire.

“We could hear the plants cracking under the weight of the ice,” Stacey said. “My son said he had never heard me sob like that. When they break off at the crown, there is no repairing that.”





1. Blueberries are picked throughout the day and packed in the evening. The berries can be in local stores as little as 24–48 hours after harvesting.

2. A worker picks berries from the bushes at KJ Farms.

3. Stacey Johnson of KJ Farms processes blueberries after they have been picked and brought in from the field.



Through hardships, blueberry farmers persevere. Following the harsh 2021 winter, blueberry farmers bounced back with good yields in 2022. There is hope that this summer's crop will be bountiful too.

Gates takes great pride in the production and the appearance of his farm for motorists who drive past on FM 1293. The inspiration for his farm is the memory he has of his father's blueberry farm.

"When his was up and going, it was the most beautiful thing," Gates said. "I try to compete against what my dad's farm looked like. To me, his farm was the standard. I am trying to make my daddy proud with my farm. I love it, and I wouldn't sell it for anything."

As Gates tries to live up to his father's legacy, he also hopes to inspire his grandchildren. He hopes they will catch the farming bug before he did and keep up the tradition of blueberry farming in East Texas.

"My dream is to give my part to the grandkids," Gates said. "I

would love for my granddaughter to do this when she gets older."

Small, local East Texas blueberry farms are not on the scale of bigger operations in Georgia or Florida, according to Gates, but additional patches will push the farms from hobby farming to the commercial farming stage.

Until that happens, Gates will continue to rely on his fellow local farmers at the Texas Blueberry Marketing Association for help, and he will assist others as he is able. The association's farmers embody the cooperative difference by working together to improve lives, serve their community and help one another.

"This is just a home business," Stacey said. "We are in it together, and we are trying to put out the best product possible. We hope to provide something that is good for the community." ■



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## Final Issue



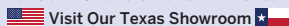
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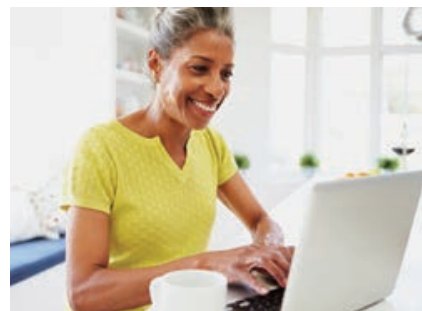


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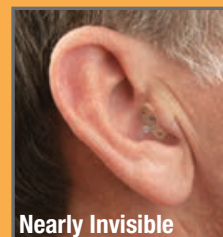
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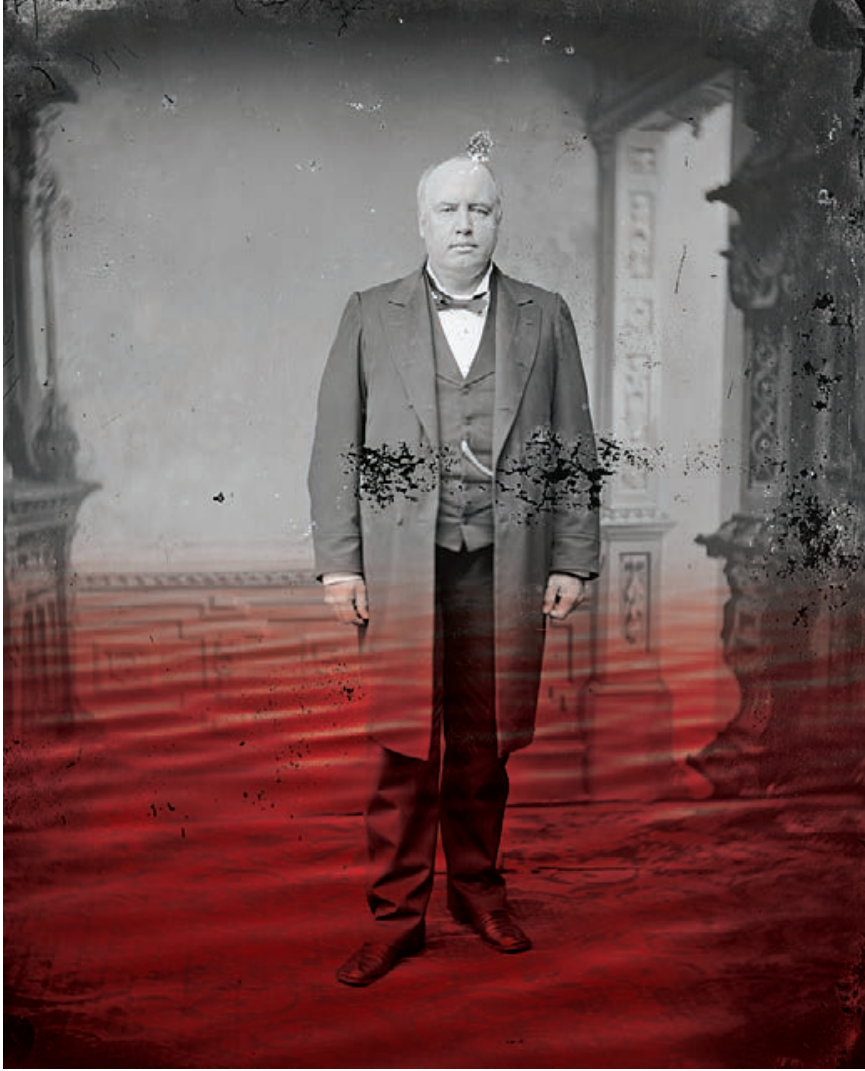
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# Redwater Christening

East Texas residents washed away their sins—and their town's original name

BY W.F. STRONG

**GO EAST OF DALLAS** on Interstate 30 past Sulphur Springs until you reach U.S. Route 67. Take that east and before you reach Texarkana, you'll arrive in a little town of about 1,000 named Ingersoll. Well, it *was* called Ingersoll.

The name was unofficially changed to Redwater about 10 years after its 1875 founding—a change that was made official by the post office almost a decade after that.

Founders of the town admired Robert Green Ingersoll and decided to name their town after him. You may have never heard of Ingersoll, but that's only

because you didn't live in the late 1800s in America.

Back then, Ingersoll was one of the most famous people in the nation. He was friends with presidents and Mark Twain. He was a giant among politicians of the day, and any Republican who wanted to succeed at the national level needed and lusted after Ingersoll's endorsement—and his oratorical talents.

Had he wanted to, he would have made a formidable candidate for the presidency himself, except for the little problem of his nickname: the Great Agnostic.

Despite Ingersoll's reputation as a free-

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



thinker and anti-religious zealot, he was widely liked.

His central creed was this: "Happiness is the only good. The place to be happy is here. The time to be happy is now. The way to be happy is to make others so."

Ingersoll, a devoted reader of Shakespeare and, ironically, the Bible, was known as the most brilliant wordsmith of his age. He mesmerized audiences with his genius for creating poetic oratory. His voice was captivating in tone, and his articulation was flawless.

Ingersoll was ahead of his time. The New York native who served as the 16th attorney general of Illinois after commanding a Union cavalry regiment in the Civil War was an outspoken abolitionist and supported voting rights for Black people and women.

But Ingersoll's fame died with him, in 1899. It seemed he would be confined to the century that had defined him.

Even in Texas. A revival meeting was held in the early 1890s in the East Texas town that was named for Ingersoll, and it was a mighty successful one.

That week 110 people were baptized, or "born again," in the community. It suddenly became thoroughly devout and could not suffer the indignities of living under the name of a famous agnostic. So they agreed to rename the town Redwater, after a well that had recently been dug there was found to yield red water. Perhaps they also saw some religious significance in the name. In the Old Testament's telling, God parted the Red Sea to save Moses and the Israelites.

That's how Ingersoll became Redwater and one more reason that the man himself became, as *The Washington Post* called him in 2012, "the most famous American you never heard of." ■

# Berries

Make a grand entrance with your favorite diminutive delights

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Berries have long been my favorite kind of fruit. Not only are they wonderful eaten out of hand, these versatile little gems shine in recipes of all kinds. For these cornmeal pancakes, blueberries are combined with jalapeño for a tart, sweet, slightly spicy topping.

## Cornmeal Pancakes With Blueberry Jalapeño Sauce

### PANCAKES

**1 cup self-rising flour**  
**1 cup cornmeal**  
**2 tablespoons sugar**  
**½ teaspoon baking powder**  
**1 cup buttermilk**  
**2 eggs**  
**4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter, melted,**  
**plus more for the pan**

### SAUCE

**1½ cups blueberries**  
**2 tablespoons sugar**  
**1 jalapeño, seeded and diced**  
**1 tablespoon lemon juice**

**1. PANCAKES** In a large bowl, stir together flour, cornmeal, sugar and baking powder. Whisk in buttermilk and eggs until smooth. Let batter rest while you make the sauce.

**2. SAUCE** In a small saucepan, combine blueberries, sugar, jalapeño and lemon juice and stir well. Set over medium heat and cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally and mashing blueberries with the back of a spoon. Turn heat to low and let simmer while you cook the pancakes.

**3.** Warm a nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add a small amount of butter to the pan and swirl to coat.

**4.** Stir the 4 tablespoons melted butter into the batter. Scoop ¼ cup of batter and pour into the prepared pan, repeating as allowed for pan size.

**5.** Cook pancakes until edges are dry and bubbles appear (1–2 minutes), then flip and cook an additional 2 minutes. Remove to a plate and repeat until all the batter is used. Serve immediately with warm sauce.

**MAKES 1 DOZEN PANCAKES**

**TCP** Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at [stetted.com](http://stetted.com), where she features a recipe for Raspberry White Chocolate Cookies.







## Strawberry Burfee

SHUBHADA KORE  
PEDERNALES EC

This burfee, an Indian dessert similar to fudge—also spelled burfi, barfi, barfee or borfi—is a wonderfully easy treat. Top it with coconut, sprinkles or chopped nuts for festive flair.

**1 cup strawberries**  
**1 cup almond flour**  
**1 cup brown sugar**  
**½ cup desiccated coconut**  
**1 tablespoon butter**

**COOK'S TIP** Desiccated coconut can be made by pulsing shredded coconut in a food processor until finely chopped.

1. Wash, trim and purée strawberries until smooth. Set aside.
2. In a nonstick pan over low to medium heat, roast almond flour for 5 minutes or until it is lightly browned and aromatic. Pour into a bowl and set aside.
3. Return the pan to the heat and add strawberry purée and brown sugar. Cover and cook 2–3 minutes on low to medium heat.
4. Once the berry and sugar mixture is bubbling, remove lid and stir in almond flour and coconut. Mix well, then stir in butter. Cook on low, stirring constantly, until mixture comes together into a dough, about 5–6 minutes. It will be somewhat sticky, with excess moisture cooked off.
5. Let the mixture cool slightly and then spread onto greased parchment or into a buttered square pan, using a spatula to shape into ½-inch thickness. Let cool completely and slice into squares or diamonds to serve.

**SERVES 8–10**

[MORE RECIPES >](#)

\$500 WINNER

## Berry Burst Pavlova

JUANITA GUERRA  
MAGIC VALLEY EC



Pavlovas are always impressive on the table, especially when layered with a creamy filling and fresh fruit. Make sure not to open the oven during baking and cooling so the pavlova dries fully.

**SERVES 12**



### PAVLOVA

**¼ cup fresh or frozen berries of choice**  
**¾ cup egg whites at room temperature (about 6 eggs)**  
**1 cup superfine sugar**  
**1 tablespoon cornstarch**  
**1½ teaspoons cream of tartar**  
**½ teaspoon lemon or almond extract (optional)**

### FILLING

**¼ cup fresh or frozen berries of choice**  
**8 ounces cream cheese, softened**  
**1 can sweetened condensed milk (14 ounces)**  
**¼ cup lemon juice**  
**½ teaspoon lemon or orange extract**  
**1 pound mixed fresh berries**

1. **PAVLOVA** Preheat oven to 240 degrees. Draw an 8-inch circle on a sheet of parchment and set aside.
2. Microwave berries for 1 minute, smash with a fork and drain off any excess liquid. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, whisk egg whites using an electric mixer on low until soft peaks form, 5–6 minutes. Continue to whisk, adding sugar 1 tablespoon at a time, waiting 15 seconds between each addition. Once all the sugar is added, increase mixer speed to high and whisk meringue to stiff peaks and until mixture is smooth. Sift in cornstarch and cream of tartar, add extract (if using), and whisk to incorporate.
4. Drop the heated berries into five areas on top of the mixture and fold in lightly with a spatula to create swirls.
5. Place a small amount of meringue onto each corner of a baking sheet and set the parchment, pencil side down, on top of it, sticking the corners down. Scoop the meringue onto the parchment, using the spatula to spread and fill the circle shape evenly. Bake 1½ hours, then turn oven off and let the meringue cool with the door closed for at least 2 hours.
6. **FILLING** Microwave berries 1 minute, smash with a fork and drain off any excess liquid. Set aside.
7. In a medium bowl, beat the cream cheese until fluffy. In another bowl, mix together the condensed milk, lemon juice and extract until smooth. Add to the cream cheese and whip until smooth and fluffy. Drop the heated berries into five areas on top and fold in lightly to make swirls.
8. To assemble, carefully transfer the cooled pavlova to a serving plate. Spread the filling into the middle and top with fresh berries.

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

**BEANS** DUE MAY 10

Submit your most delicious bean dishes, and we'll award \$500 for the winning recipe.



## Raspberry Bread Pudding

JANELLE NIX  
NUECES EC

Excellent for breakfast or dessert, this bread pudding is bursting with tart raspberries. It's topped with a creamy vanilla sauce, which Nix's mother has been making for decades.

### BREAD PUDDING

**1 loaf French bread**  
**3 eggs**  
**2½ cups half-and-half**  
**1 cup sugar, divided use,**  
**plus 2 tablespoons**  
**½ cup brown sugar**  
**2 teaspoons vanilla extract**  
**½ teaspoon salt**  
**2½ cups fresh raspberries**  
**¼ cup water**  
**Zest of 1 small orange**  
**Butter for the pan**

### VANILLA SAUCE

**½ cup sugar**  
**2 tablespoons cornstarch**  
**Dash of salt**



**1½ cups half-and-half**  
**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**  
**2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter**

- 1. BREAD PUDDING** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Slice bread into ½-inch cubes to yield 5 cups of cubes and spread onto a baking sheet. Bake 7–10 minutes, until dry. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, half-and-half, ½ cup sugar, brown sugar, vanilla and salt. Fold in the toasted bread, coating evenly. Let soak for 30 minutes.

**3.** Place the raspberries in a bowl. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine water, orange zest and ½ cup sugar, stirring to dissolve sugar. Cool syrup slightly, then pour over raspberries and stir to coat.

**4.** Lightly coat a 9-inch square baking pan with butter. Pour ¾ of the bread mixture into the pan, then spoon raspberries and syrup over the top. Add remaining bread mixture, then sprinkle on 2 tablespoons sugar. Bake 50–60 minutes, until center is set.

**5. VANILLA SAUCE** While the bread pudding is baking, make the sauce. In a small saucepan, whisk together sugar, cornstarch and salt. Whisk in half-and-half, then set over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and coats the back of a spoon, about 10–15 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in vanilla and butter until blended and smooth. Serve on top of the bread pudding.

**SERVES 8**



## Fredericksburg

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Underwater Wonderland

At Mammoth Lake Texas, it's what's inside that counts

BY CHET GARNER

I WAS WALKING like an awkward, eager duck with all my gear shaking like heavy tail feathers behind me. Mammoth Lake Texas attracts divers from all over the country, and I understood why as soon as I submerged myself into its strange underwater menagerie.

You can use your fingers to count the number of inland scuba diving destinations in Texas. Some offer a natural glimpse of spring-fed pools (like San Solomon Springs at Balmorhea State Park), and others offer swims through sunken objects. Mammoth Lake in Clute mixes the natural and artificial to create an underwater amusement park.

Below the depths of this 65-acre lake lie more than 150 objects ranging from small sculptures to the entire fuselage of a C-130 cargo plane. With a reservation and a current dive license, visitors can rent gear and embark on the most unusual underwater scavenger hunt in the state—in the largest and deepest dedicated scuba lake in Texas. Most attractions are in 35–40 feet of water, but a deeper hole reaches down to 75 feet.

I was joined by a knowledgeable divemaster, Alex Amaro, who took us on an epic expedition through a World War II submarine and a fighter jet. There's even a life-size sculpture of a Columbian mammoth marking the spot where fossils were found when this was just a sand pit. My favorite stops were the decommissioned rides from Six Flags AstroWorld, which owner Jason Burleson bought and submerged.

All around us were bass, perch and turtles that seemed to be enjoying the sunken treasures as much as I was. Unfortunately we didn't get a glimpse of the 7-foot paddlefish that call the lake home—just another reason to come back. ■

ABOVE Instructor Alex Amaro, giving the diving OK sign, with Chet and Todd White, producer of *The Daytripper*.

**TCP** Follow along as Chet goes sightseeing underwater. See the video on our website and check out all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



## Know Before You Go

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

# MAY

## 07

**Ennis Cinco de Mayo,**  
(972) 878-4748,  
[visitennistexas.com](http://visitennistexas.com)

## 09

**Amarillo [9–10] Fiddler on the Roof,** (806) 378-3096,  
[amarillociviccenter.com](http://amarillociviccenter.com)

## 11

**South Padre Island [11–13] Shallow Sport Owners Tournament,** (956) 233-9489,  
[shallow sporttournament.com](http://shallow sporttournament.com)

**Abilene [11–14] Western Heritage Classic,**  
(325) 677-4376,  
[westernheritageclassic.com](http://westernheritageclassic.com)

## 12

**Johnson City Movies at the Memorial,** (830) 868-7111,  
[johnsoncitytx.org](http://johnsoncitytx.org)

**Saint Jo Sporting Clay Event,** (817) 296-3104,  
[saintjosportingclay.com](http://saintjosportingclay.com)

**Boerne [12–13] Hand-made Market,**  
[boernehandmademarket.com](http://boernehandmademarket.com)

**Coolidge [12–13] Mesquite Tree Festival,**  
(254) 203-6198,  
[facebook.com/mesquitetreefestival](http://facebook.com/mesquitetreefestival)

**Lindale [12–13] Piney Woods Wine Festival,**  
(903) 881-5103,  
[visitlindale.com](http://visitlindale.com)

**McKinney [12–13] Y'all Had To Be Here Live,**  
(214) 769-0645,  
[thecomedyarena.com](http://thecomedyarena.com)

**Ingram [12–June 23] Of the Earth: Metal and Wood,**  
(830) 367-5121, [hcaf.com](http://hcaf.com)



13

**Brenham T. Graham Brown**, (979) 337-7240,  
thebarnhillcenter.com

**Brownwood Lake Brownwood Bash**,  
(325) 784-5223,  
tpwd.texas.gov

**Fort Davis Mile-High Mountains Fest**, (432) 426-3337,  
tpwd.texas.gov

**Fredericksburg Cherry Mountain School Open House**, (830) 685-3321,  
historicschools.org

**Mesquite Historic Mesquite Inc. Preservation Month Open House and Porch Party**, (972) 216-6468,  
cityofmesquite.com

**Texarkana Dragon Boat Festival**, (903) 798-3211,  
texarkanadragonboat.com

**The Woodlands Buzzfest**,  
(281) 364-3010,  
woodlandscenter.org

**Victoria Mother's Day Brunch**, (361) 573-3734,  
goldencrescentcasa.org

18

**Corsicana Yesterday & Today: The Beatles Experience**, (903) 874-7792,  
corsicanapalace.com

**Giddings [18-20] Lee County Fair**, leecountyfairtx.com

19

**Grapevine [19-21] Main Street Fest**, (817) 410-3185,  
grapevinetexasusa.com

**Plano [19-21] Texas Mineral and Fossil Show**,  
(972) 941-5840,  
planoeventcenter.org

MORE EVENTS >

## TCP Submit Your Event

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

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May 18th - July 1st  
[www.kackkerrville.com](http://www.kackkerrville.com)

**51st Annual Kerrville Folk Festival**  
May 25th - June 11th  
[www.kerrvillefolkfestival.org](http://www.kerrvillefolkfestival.org)



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**[fbgcraftbeerfestival.com](http://fbgcraftbeerfestival.com)**



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## Pick of the Month

### Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Cleburne, May 7

(817) 645-2455

[cleburnechamber.com](http://cleburnechamber.com)

This festive celebration will feature vendors and Mexican dishes, plus ballet folklorico, dancing horses, live music, a custom car show, kids' zone and *luchadores* from Advanced Pro Wrestling.

## MAY EVENTS CONTINUED

19

### Richardson [19-21]

Wildflower Arts and Music Festival,

[wildflowerfestival.com](http://wildflowerfestival.com)

20

### College Station Troubadour Festival,

[troubadourfestival.com](http://troubadourfestival.com)

### Hico Texas Steak Cook-off, (254) 485-4984,

[texassteakcookoff.com](http://texassteakcookoff.com)

### La Grange Pat Byrne, (979)

968-9944, [thebugleboy.org](http://thebugleboy.org)

### Jefferson [20-21] Train

Show, (903) 665-3733,

[visitjeffersontexas.com](http://visitjeffersontexas.com)

21

### Fredericksburg

The Moanin' Frogs,

[fredericksburgmusicclub.com](http://fredericksburgmusicclub.com)

25

### Grapeland [25-27] Memorial Day Gospel Bluegrass

Festival, (936) 687-2594,

[salmonlakeresort.com](http://salmonlakeresort.com)

### Kerrville [25-June 11] Folk

Festival, (830) 257-3600,

[kerrvillefolkfestival.org](http://kerrvillefolkfestival.org)

26

### McKinney [26-27] Erica

Rhodes, (214) 769-0645,

[thecomedyarena.com](http://thecomedyarena.com)

### Bandera [26-28] Memorial

Day Weekend Stampede,

[banderaprorodeo.org](http://banderaprorodeo.org)

### Fredericksburg [26-28]

Crawfish Festival,

[fbgcrawfishfestival.com](http://fbgcrawfishfestival.com)

### Kerrville [26-28] Texas

Masters of Fine Art and

Craft Invitational Exhibi-

tion, (469) 223-4162,

[texasmasters.com](http://texasmasters.com)

27

### Brenham Gunhild

Carling, (979) 337-7240,

[thebarnhillcenter.com](http://thebarnhillcenter.com)

### New Braunfels [27-28]

Randall King,

(830) 606-1281,

[gruenehall.com](http://gruenehall.com)

28

### Lewisville Fiesta Charra,

(972) 219-3401,

[visitlewisville.com](http://visitlewisville.com)

31

### Navasota [31-June 10]

Grimes County Fair,

[grimescountyfair.com](http://grimescountyfair.com)

JUNE

01

### Fredericksburg [1-4]

Hill Country Film Festival,

(866) 224-7714,

[hillcountryff.com](http://hillcountryff.com)

02

### Hillsboro [2-3] Bond's

Alley Art Festival,

(254) 582-5499,

[hillsboromainstreet.org](http://hillsboromainstreet.org)

03

### Fredericksburg Car

Fest, (830) 456-2735,

[fredericksburgcarfest.com](http://fredericksburgcarfest.com)

04

### The Colony Take on

the Heat Triathlon,

(214) 370-9010,

[visitthecolonytx.com](http://visitthecolonytx.com)



# Taking Flight

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**1 LARRY ALFORD**  
PEDERNALES EC

A great blue heron takes flight at Cypress Falls in Wimberley.

**2 CRYSTAL MARTIN**  
FARMERS EC

Blue Angels soar over Pensacola Beach, Florida.

**3 FAIN ZIMMERMAN**  
VICTORIA EC

A female ruby-throated hummingbird and thistle plant.

**4 RACHEL SPENCER**  
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

"The turkeys here on the ranch are very busy in the fall. On this day they were flying across one of our creeks to find more food."



## Upcoming Contests

**DUE MAY 10** Night Sky  
**DUE JUN 10** Helping Out  
**DUE JUL 10** Golden Hour



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

**TCP** See Focus on Texas on our website for more Taking Flight photos from readers.



## Crawling With Trouble

Harvesting wild dewberries takes patience, will—and an armory

BY SHANE TORNØ  
ILLUSTRATION BY  
CHANELLE NIBBELINK

**DEWBERRIES GROW WILD** in the scrub brush country of South Texas, and as a child I would pick them with my grandparents. Most of what we picked we ate immediately, but often we would collect enough for my grandmother to bake a cobbler that she served warm, topped with vanilla ice cream—South Texas springtime perfection.

Over the years, I have found very few locations where wild dewberries grow, and they tend to be hard to access. When I do find berries to pick, I am careful to outfit myself properly.

Usually I pick them as they trail along the ground or climb among taller pasture weeds. I have to get on my hands and knees, sometimes even lying on the ground to pick them. Mind you, dewberry vines are covered in thousands of short,

**TCP** Try your hand at working through the maze to reach the dewberries. See the solution online.

sharp thorns, so I wear thick leather gloves. However, you cannot pick delicate berries with rigid gloved hands, so I cut off the glove tips of my thumb and index finger on my right hand.

Since I'll be kneeling or lying in the pasture, I also wear thick long-sleeved shirts and heavy long pants, which are quite uncomfortable in the May heat and humidity.

I've discovered that these berry vines love the same environment as poison ivy, and often the two plants intermingle. Since I'm focused on berries, I sometimes miss the signature three leaves of poison ivy until I am neck deep. Thus, I keep a trash bag in my supplies so I can change out of and isolate exposed clothes.

Another hazard lurking in the berry patch is the diamondback rattlesnake. The warm spring days are a holiday for them, and a step in any direction is a leap of faith. So before plopping down in the bushes, I probe with a walking stick and listen for the warning rattle.

I have been chased from a berry patch by wild hogs more than once. That's why I keep a pistol on me, though I've never had to use it.

If it's been a wet spring, you can expect good berries but also lots of mosquitoes. Ticks and chiggers are also common pests, so I apply a high-grade bug repellent. I am fair skinned, too, so I wear a large hat and sunscreen to guard against the sun.

I often wonder why no one in my family enjoys the berry picking as much as I do. Oh, they eat them, but they have quit coming with me on the harvest adventure. Once I even offered to get my 15-year-old son out of school early to tag along with me, but he said he had homework. Odd for a Friday. ■



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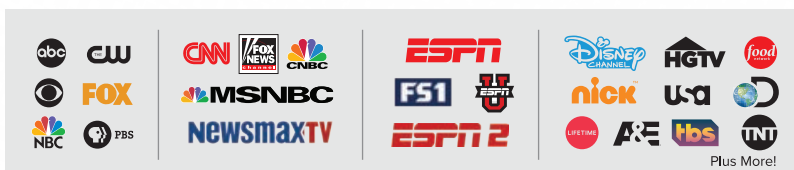


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Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Requires credit qualification and 2-year commitment. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 7/12/23. Offer requires 2-year commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 3-year price guarantee at \$79.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 3-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$94.99 for AT120+, \$99.99 for AT200, \$109.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). NOT included in 3-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$20/mo. for Showtime, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. Other: All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price guarantee are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$10.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 3 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Reliability Guarantee: limited time offer, subject to change. Available only to new or returning former customers. Guarantee covers signal loss outages due to normal weather and/or technical issues. Does not cover signal loss outages due to user error. Does not cover changes in programming content. To receive outage credits, you must contact DISH customer service by phone or chat within 72 hours of the outage. Upon verifying the outage, DISH will issue bill credits in daily increments from the time of the outage until the outage is restored. Not available to DISH Outdoors customers. 99% signal reliability based on data from set-top boxes. Not a guarantee of signal in all weather conditions. Watching live and recorded TV on DISH Anywhere requires internet-connected Hopper and compatible mobile device. Miscellaneous: Taxes or surcharges may apply. All packages and offer subject to change without notice. Additional restrictions may apply. Netflix, Prime Video, HBO Max and Discovery Plus streaming memberships required. Indiana C.P.D. Reg. No. - 19-08615. ©2023 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$50 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability is subject to change without notice. The application of "No Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly means that your access to the Internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.