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JULY 2023

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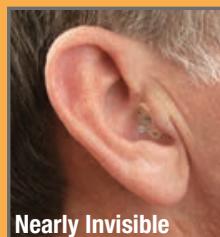
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July 2023



10

06 ‘I Love All the Love Here’

Camp CAMP has fostered community and joy for decades.

Story and photos by Julia Robinson

Sleeping Giants

Henry Trost’s handsome and historic hotels remain welcome West Texas oases.

By Pam LeBlanc

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ON THE COVER
Jacob enjoys the big swing at Camp CAMP—Children’s Association for Maximum Potential.
Photo by Julia Robinson
ABOVE
Hotel El Capitan’s inviting lobby.
Photo courtesy Hotel El Capitan



Ascending Over Arizona

ABILENE'S ARIELLE ASH led the first-ever all-female flyover at the end of the national anthem at the Super Bowl in February.

Ash, a lieutenant in the Navy and a graduate of Texas Tech University, piloted an F/A-18F Super Hornet.

The four-aircraft flyover commemorated 50 years of female pilots in the U.S. Navy. Women were first admitted to Navy flight school in 1973.



Skeeter Bleeders

Rice University bioengineers have teamed with other experts to study the bloodsucking behavior of mosquitoes using patches of synthetic skin made with a 3D printer, eliminating the need for human volunteers.

TCP Contests and More

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FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Darkness is only scary when ...

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 May prompt: **Mom always said ...**

Because I said so!

POLLY HALE
PEDERNALES EC
BLANCO

Kill them with kindness.

PHYLLIS SUTTLE
MIDSOUTH EC
IOLA

The only teeth you need to floss are the ones you want to keep. (She lived to 102 and had all her own teeth.)

KATHRYN SHELTON
WISE EC
PARADISE

Make your words soft and sweet just in case you have to eat them.

GARY L. RAYBON
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO
WHARTON COUNTY EC

Visit our website to see more responses.

July 11

Cow Appreciation Day

Texas has more reasons to celebrate than any other state. With about 12.5 million head of cattle, we have almost twice as many as the next most-populous state, Nebraska.

Berry Burst Pavlova

“Wow! The whole family loved it, which is miraculous. My granddaughter says that’s what she wants for her birthday cake every year—for the rest of her life. She’s 24.”

MARY RILEY
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES
COLLEGE STATION



MEGAN MYERS

A Vanishing Tongue

Auf Wiedersehen [May 2023] was a bittersweet read. Less than a week earlier, in the *Fredericksburg Standard-Radio Post*, it was reported that upper-level studies in German would no longer be offered at the high school, as only half of the minimum registrants required to offer the classes had signed up. How sad.

The UT project participants certainly have their work cut out for them.

Françoise Wilson
Central Texas EC
Gillespie County

I grew up in Fredericksburg hearing Spanish (or Tex-Mex), English and Texas German. Talk about confused. When I moved, someone asked if I was from Fredericksburg. How did you know?, I asked. Your accent.

Julie Ausbrook
Via Facebook



NOAH WOODS

In Texas and Beyond

The assertion that if you can learn to surf the sloppy chop in Texas, you can surf just about anywhere is true, as I have been able to surf in California, Mexico, Hawaii and Japan [*Surf Your Turf*, May 2023].

But I must point out that Brad Lomax’s partner in the Texas Surf Museum was Pat Magee (not McGee). If you look at the background in the photo of Brad Lomax, that’s Pat surfing in the blue trunks to Lomax’s right.

Joe Bonorden
Pedernales EC
Canyon Lake

Recalling Kitty Hawk

Although I didn’t serve aboard the Kitty Hawk, I was deployed in its battle group in 1984 while serving aboard the USS Long Beach, and we were there in the Sea of Japan on March 21, 1984, when the collision with the Soviet nuclear submarine occurred [*Breaking Up*, February 2023]. I have a photo of that damaged Soviet sub in my home office. Thank you for the well-deserved remembrance.

Thomas Mueller
Fayette EC
Rutersville

TCP WRITE TO US
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Austin, TX 78701

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

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A treasured Hill Country summer camp fosters community and joy



It was 44 years ago when Dr. Chris Plauche wrote a letter clearing one of her pediatric patients to take part in summer camp. The child wanted to ride a horse that summer.

But Plauche was devastated to learn that her patient was denied entry anyway. So she, along with other doctors and health care professionals, took 32 children with disabilities for a weekend camp experience themselves.

"It was 1979, so it was before the Americans with Disabilities Act and nothing was accessible and it rained all weekend," Brandon Briery says. "But they pushed wheelchairs through the mud and rode horses and canoed in the rain and had the time of their lives."

The physicians knew that couldn't be a one-time experience.

More than four decades later, participants are still having the time of their lives at Camp CAMP—Children's Association for Maximum Potential—nestled along the Guadalupe River in Center Point. It's a special kind of summer camp that changes lives. Located on a sprawling property about 55 miles northwest of San Antonio, Camp CAMP is a haven for visitors of all abilities, offering them the opportunity to make lifelong friendships, gain independence and have fun. Last year it served more than 1,400 children and adults with weeklong summer camp sessions, respite weekends for caregivers and family retreats.

Nobody Is Invisible

It's a warm cloudless morning, and parents are dropping off their kids for a CAMP weekend. After the COVID tests and medical briefings, each camper is paired with a counselor and assigned a cabin.

Hugs and high-fives abound because many campers and counselors know each other already. One camper-counselor pair plays basketball; others bring out coloring books. Over in the "swing-zebo," several campers sway in the circle of porch swings, a popular spot for those with autism or other sensory processing disorders for whom swinging is a soothing activity.

Camp CAMP was designed to be fully accessible, with wheelchair ramps, accommodating bathrooms and specialized equipment that allow campers with physical disabilities to fully participate. During the summer, more than 70 counselors, many of whom are college students or recent graduates, receive extensive training to work with the campers. More than 100 health care staff are on-site to administer medications, provide overnight care and ensure the safety of participants. Dedicated volunteers return year after year to help as well.

Gia Barrera, a 16-year-old assistant cabin counselor, started out as one of those volunteers and made the transition to full-time staff last summer. She is sitting with Erin, a camper in her early 20s who is nonverbal but communicates with smiles, vocalizations and touch. Erin rocks back and forth as they eat lunch and plan out the afternoon.

"Camp is for the camper," Barrera says. "They have complete autonomy over any decision they want to make." For some, that means no formal activities at all, if that's what they desire.

One of Barrera's campers last summer wanted to make friendship bracelets all day. Another camper who loves machines spent hours with her in the laundry room, watching the spin cycle. "Working here gives you a greater understanding of everything," she says. "It puts a lot of things into perspective for you. I love all the love here."

CAMP's mission is simple: to strengthen and inspire individuals with disabilities and those who care for them through recreation education. Campers are 5–55 years old with mild to severe medical conditions, including physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities. Some campers require breathing assistance, others have Down syndrome, cerebral palsy or autism spectrum disorder. But at CAMP, everyone is simply a camper.

OPPOSITE At Camp CAMP in Center Point, campers and counselors bond over activities that include archery, field sports, outdoor cooking and canoeing. ABOVE Savannah, left, and Audrey share a moment on a swing.



Every activity, including swimming and horseback riding, is adaptable to each person's needs so they all can have fun. Crafts, field sports, canoeing, outdoor cooking, an evening dance party and the big swing, which suspends campers in a harness attached to utility poles, offer a variety of adventures.

First up today is archery, where Michael Maffei, assistant camp director, greets campers as they line wooden bleachers. Maffei first attended as a camper back in 2003, so he knows how special the place can be.

He spent his early working life in the private sector but felt something was missing when he rejoined CAMP as an employee. "In the second hour of being in a full-time role here, I helped a young man named Soren shoot a bullseye," Maffei says. "He was so excited he just vibrated like a teakettle that was about to erupt. In that moment, I had more fulfillment and job satisfaction in my second hour at camp than in the four previous years."

Down at the canoe launch, staff members gently place Cassie into a supportive chair cradled by one of her counselors. She is unable to use her limbs and is nonverbal, but it's clear she loves being on the water.

As the boat is launched into the Guadalupe River, a relaxed smile spreads across her face. Two counselors paddle her downstream and back again—a simple journey that most people would take for granted.

"There are so many times out there in the cold, cruel world that the disabled either get overlooked, purposefully left out, unintentionally left out or they're just invisible," says Briery, CAMP's chief program officer. "CAMP isn't about the buildings, it's not even about the activities. It's about building relationships, building community and bringing people together."

FROM LEFT Kristi takes her turn on the big swing. Caleb readies his archery shot with help from Michael Maffei and Samika Iyer.

Dignity in a Safe Place

For many campers, CAMP is a life-changing experience where they develop a sense of independence. For parents, CAMP provides peace of mind knowing their child is in a safe and supportive environment being cared for by trained professionals. Kristen Reid says sending her son was an easy decision.

"As soon as you drive in and you get out, everyone's so friendly, everyone's so welcoming," Reid says. "They know what they're doing, and they love these children."

At a fall retreat, she got to spend a weekend at Camp CAMP with her whole family. She shared a cabin with Payton, 9; her husband; and 6-year-old daughter.

Reid rode a horse with Payton, who is nonverbal. They share a passion for the animals, and the experience was unforgettable.

"Not only could I see it with his hand movements, I could hear it with the sound that he was making ... I could feel he was shaking with excitement," Reid says. "For me to be there and actually see and feel it for myself was a really, really touching moment for me."

The retreat also connected the Reids to other families with similar needs. "And then you can kind of bounce ideas off each other or sometimes just vent to each other when you're having a bad day and you've spent three hours on the phone with insurance," Reid says.

That community and that belonging are exactly what Briery hopes CAMP provides.

"Some days are super long and hard in different ways, helping to manage what can be challenging behaviors," he says. "It's all worth it in the end because we create this safe space where people are treated with dignity, and they're respected, and they know that they belong." ■



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SLEEPING GIANTS

HENRY TROST's handsome and historic hotels remain welcome West Texas oases

BY PAM LEBLANC



SIT ON A ROCKING CHAIR on the front porch of the Gage Hotel in Marathon, and time slips away.

In the lobby behind you, a worn leather saddle hangs from the wall. Across the street, a train rumbles past. In the distance, a gray-green carpet of cactus and brush ripples into the distance like a prickly runway.

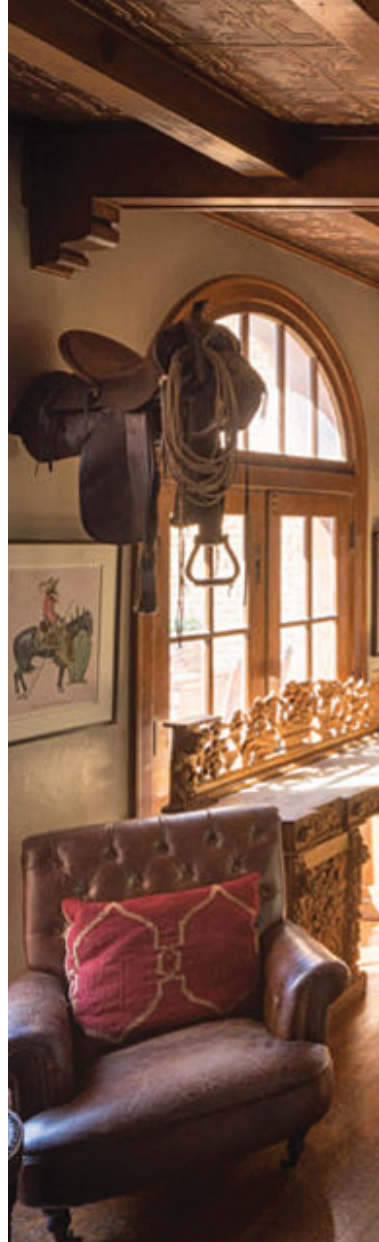
The view probably hasn't changed much since architect Henry C. Trost designed this hotel nearly a century ago.

The two-story brick structure, with its arched entryway and wrought-iron door, is just one of hundreds of buildings—fire stations, city halls, high schools, banks and courthouses—that Trost designed across Texas, Arizona and New Mexico.

But it's the four hotels scattered throughout far West Texas that many know best. They're full of character, thoroughly Texan and located in a region of the state known for its dramatic landscapes and independent-minded residents. There was almost a fifth hotel here, too—architectural documents found at the El Paso Public Library indicate plans for a hotel in the small town of Valentine, also in the Big Bend.

"I would encourage people to get off the interstate, drive down into town to visit the hotels and take a step back in time," says Margaret Smith, great-niece of Henry Trost and secretary of the board of the Trost Society, which works to preserve the architect's work. "Learn the history that was made in the hotels and the history of the area."

PHOTOS COURTESY GAGE HOTEL



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Marathon's Gage Hotel, which opened in 1927, features a grand lobby and rooms that are at once modern and rustic.



Born in 1860, Trost was the son of German immigrants. He moved from Toledo, Ohio, to El Paso in 1903 and co-founded Trost & Trost, an architectural firm, with brother Gustavus (Smith's grandfather). A third brother, Adolphus, a structural engineer, joined later.

The company built its well-appointed West Texas hotels near railroad stations and designed them with spacious lobbies and large dining rooms to accommodate business dealings. Later, the hotels also became popular among families. The firm was also known for its artistic touches and for using reinforced concrete for fireproofing.

"The buildings look like a piece of art and not just a building," Smith says. "That makes them stand out."

GAGE HOTEL Marathon

Trost "was considered *the* architect of the Southwest in those years," says Carol Peterson, general manager. "If you were going to hire the best architect in those days, you would hire Henry Trost if you could."

That's what Alfred S. Gage did. The cattleman, who moved from Vermont to Texas in 1878 to seek his fortune, accumulated more than a half-million acres. He commissioned Trost to build a hotel that could double as a base to oversee his empire.

The hotel opened in 1927, but Gage died just a year later. A series of owners took over after his death, including one who tried to "spruce up" the hotel with dropped ceilings and linoleum floors.

"[Trost] had a very wide-ranging style," Peterson says. "The Gage is a bit more Mission style, as opposed to the Holland and Paisano."

J.P. and Mary Jon Bryan of Houston bought and renovated the Gage in 1978, and they still own it today. In addition to 14 rooms in the original building, with its delightfully creaky wooden floors and ranch décor (including a stuffed mountain lion), guests can book more modern rooms in the Los Portales annex.

"It's really become a very beloved, iconic Texas property," Peterson says. "It's not commercial, it's not cookie cutter. Everything about it has a hand-touched feel."

HOLLAND HOTEL Alpine

Trost wasn't involved in designing the original Holland Hotel, which opened in 1912. But he designed the "new" larger building, which opened next door in 1928 and was later connected to the first.

Sink into a comfy couch in front of the fireplace in the grand lobby, and you'll see the same arched windows and decorative tiles of some of Trost's other properties.

"The thing that makes the Holland special is the position it occupies in the town of Alpine—not geographically but in people's minds," says Alicia Fernbaugh, who manages the 27-room hotel and lives in what once served as the ballroom. "It's very much the heart of the town."

The building stood vacant in the 1960s and '70s, and for a time in the '80s, part of it was converted into offices. Over time, some of the old furnishings were sold off. Now and then, an old bedframe or chandelier discovered in an attic finds its way back home to the hotel.

The Century Bar and Grill, with its shady patio, is known for its margaritas and chicken-fried steak.

"It's very welcoming and warm," Fernbaugh says. "People feel very at home here."



LESLEY VILLAREAL | COURTESY HOLLAND HOTEL



MICHAEL HOWARD | COURTESY HOLLAND HOTEL

FROM ABOVE Holland Hotel décor and the Century Bar and Grill in Alpine.

HOTEL EL CAPITAN Van Horn

Just two blocks off Interstate 10 in Van Horn, the red neon sign of Hotel El Capitan invites travelers to pull off and enjoy a quiet respite in a mostly forgotten town.

The 50-room hotel, named for the rocky peak at Guadalupe Mountains National Park, an hour away, looks much like it did when it opened in 1930, as part of the Gateway chain of hotels operated by Charles Bassett in El Paso. Back then, ranchers gathered in the lobby to sell cattle, make land deals and sip coffee.

The Pueblo Revival-style concrete structure attracted cross-country travelers and tourists exploring nearby national parks.

The hotel closed in the late 1960s, and a bank took over the space. Then in 2007, Lanna and Joe Duncan of Fort Davis, who also own the Paisano, bought it from the bank.

"Although we are sister properties to the Paisano, and the layout inside is almost identical, the exterior is 100% different," says Starvanna Cottrell, general manager. "El Capitan was made to look more like adobe, although it's concrete. The Paisano's exterior is much more European looking."

A fountain bubbles in the courtyard. In the lobby, colorful tiles, exposed wooden beams and wrought iron banisters add character. A sign salvaged from the old coffee shop hangs opposite the fireplace.

"And you can still get a 5-cent cup of coffee, no matter how you want it," Cottrell says.

COURTESY HOTEL EL CAPITAN



COURTESY HOTEL PAISANO

FROM ABOVE The Hotel Paisano's pool was added in 1960. Outside, an inviting courtyard, and inside, a 5-cent cup of coffee.

HOTEL PAISANO Marfa

Another hotel in the Gateway chain, the Hotel Paisano in Marfa, also opened in 1930. "Hotels were built different years ago," says Vicki Barge, general manager. "They were built with more of a sense of community."

Step inside its lobby and you'll find ornate tilework hand selected by Trost, leather chairs and a stuffed buffalo head.

Like the Gage, the Paisano had close ties to the cattle industry. When it opened, trains regularly stopped in Marfa to load and unload cattle. Several ranches kept offices at the hotel.

"He wanted his buildings to look like they belonged to the landscape, and he did a great job of that," Barge says. "They do look like they should be just where they are."

Many guests know the Paisano for its connection to the 1956 film *Giant*, starring James Dean. Photographs of Dean hang on walls, and the movie plays nonstop in the lobby.

Dean, along with co-stars Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson and Dennis Hopper, stayed at the Paisano for about two weeks during filming. Today, guests can book one of the hotel's 42 rooms or suites and swim in a pool that was added in 1960.

"I find it warm and friendly," Barge says. "It's kind of a look back at bygone days but still extremely viable now." ■



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WEEKEND IMAGES INC. | ISTOCK.COM

Energy Efficiency Experiment: Warm Windows

WHILE YOUR KIDS are home for summer, try this science experiment to help teach them about their energy use and the value of a dollar.

Warm Windows

You'll need: Two cardboard boxes with lids (e.g., shoeboxes), black construction paper, glue, tape, clear plastic wrap, box cutter, two thermometers.

Directions

1. Using the box cutter (a parent or guardian should handle the box cutter), cut a rectangular hole into the top of one of the boxes. In that same box, place a piece of plastic wrap to cover the hole and tape it down smooth. The result should leave you with a window to see into your box. Leave the second box as is with no holes.
2. Glue the black construction paper to the inside bottom of both boxes.
3. Place one thermometer in each box.
4. Close both boxes and tightly wrap plastic wrap around the sides of the boxes to ensure they are closed and all openings are sealed. Use tape to secure the plastic wrap.
5. Set the boxes in the sun for about an hour, depending on the temperature. Make sure the window opening is facing up so that the sun shines directly through the window.
6. After the hour is up, open the boxes and record the temperature readings from the thermometers in each box.

Results

The box with the window opening should have a higher temperature.

Explanation

The window in the first box acts like a window in a home that does not have curtains or blinds covering it. The other box acts as a window with the curtains and blinds closed. Keeping curtains and blinds drawn over windows in direct sunlight ensures a home will remain cooler and its air conditioning system won't have to work as hard. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Independence Day

Tuesday, July 4

Our offices will be closed for the holiday.

Macaroni and Cheese Day

Friday, July 14

Day of the Cowboy

Saturday, July 22

Tell an Old Joke Day

Monday, July 24

LIUDMILA CHERNETSKA | ISTOCK.COM

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SAM HOUSTON
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

TIPS FOR PURCHASING NEW APPLIANCES

When shopping for new appliances, there are two price tags you should consider:

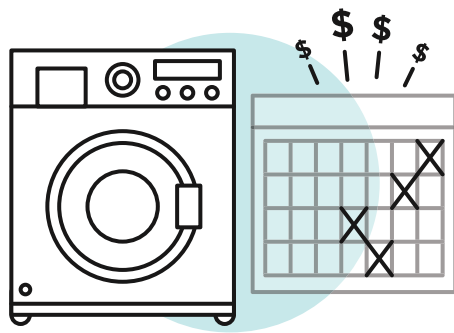
1.

Purchase price of the appliance (think of this as a down payment)



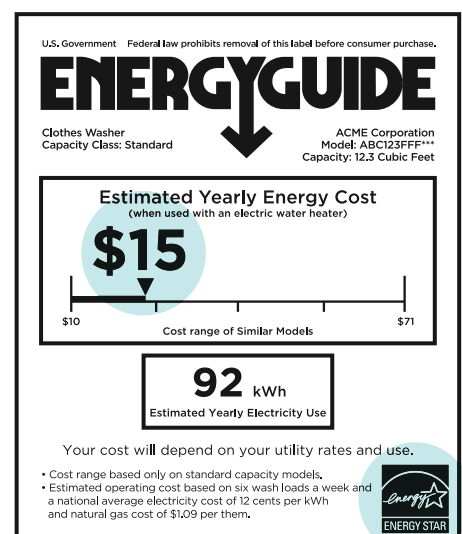
2.

Cost to operate the appliance over its lifetime (how much energy the appliance uses)



That second price is important because you'll be paying for the appliance's energy use for the next 10 to 20 years.

- **Look for the ENERGY STAR® label.** ENERGY STAR-qualified products exceed the federal minimum standards for efficiency and quality.
- **Carefully review the EnergyGuide label on the appliance.** The label provides information about how much energy an appliance uses compared to similar models.
- **Once you choose your make and model, compare prices.** Keep in mind, many retailers will match a lower price offered by competitors.
- **Recycle or sell your old appliance.** Ask the retailer if they'll pick up your old appliance, or you can sell it yourself. Either option is better than the landfill!





Chad Simon, William Holder, Rachel Frey Hawkins and Garrett Wishon accept their Spotlight on Excellence Award.

Communications Team Wins Spotlight Award

THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative earned a Spotlight on Excellence award at a National Rural Electric Cooperative Association conference in Jacksonville, Florida, in May. The silver award was for Best Special Publication—Small, for the Board Election Ballot Booklet.

“The Spotlight on Excellence program allows our department to receive detailed feedback on our work, which helps improve our products,” said Rachel Frey Hawkins, chief communications officer. “We receive comments from members that we use to shape future programs, but the feedback we receive from a panel of judges has more detail in how we can improve tactics and be more effective.”

The Spotlight on Excellence program recognizes outstanding communication and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives nationwide. More than 650 entries were submitted across 18 different categories, including writing, graphic design, digital communications, campaign development and more.

“Because of our team’s strong communication efforts, we can further the cooperative mission to promote and support the communities we serve,” Hawkins said.

The awards are presented at NRECA’s Connect Conference, an annual gathering for co-op communications, marketing and member services professionals. Hawkins and Communications Specialists Will Holder, Chad Simon and Garrett Wishon attended the event, with Holder and Wishon attending for the first time.

“I really enjoyed my first Connect Conference,” Wishon said. “It was great to represent Sam Houston EC and meet people from different co-ops from all over the country. I am really looking forward to next year’s conference and seeing how I grow as a communicator between now and then.” ■

Reduce Demand on Home’s Highest Energy Users

DID YOU KNOW large appliances—refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes dryers and washing machines—account for the largest percentage of electricity use in the average U.S. home?

You can take small steps to save energy when using these appliances.

Give the back of your fridge room to breathe. Keep the door closed and the fridge full. And don’t put hot food in the refrigerator; let it cool down a bit first. Even small containers of hot food raise the temperature inside the refrigerator.

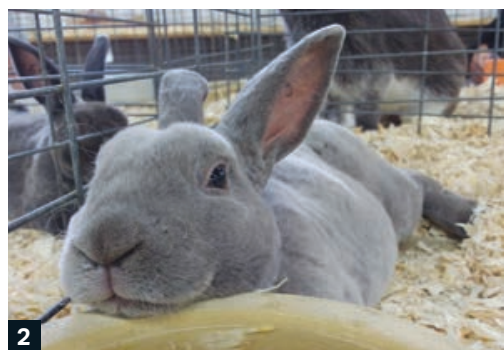
Only run full loads in the dishwasher and be sure to load dishes properly to allow water circulation. There’s no need to rinse first, but thoroughly scrape food from dishes before loading. Turn off the heated dry setting and air-dry dishes instead to save even more.

Wash clothing in cold water to save on the energy used to heat water.

Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight fabrics, and clean the dryer lint screen after every use. When doing multiple loads, switch loads while the dryer is still warm. This will allow you to use the remaining heat inside the dryer for the next cycle. Use dryer balls to help separate your clothes and aerate them, cutting drying time. Air-dry clothes when possible. ■



LIUDMILA CHERNETSKA | ISTOCK.COM



East Texas Rodeos Offer a Family-Friendly Slice of Culture and Heritage

BY JEFF MILLER

MENTION THE WORD “rodeo” to anyone, and more than likely, they’ll immediately think of Texas. While the world’s largest rodeo doesn’t call Texas home (that honor belongs to Canada, home of the Calgary Stampede), Texas does host the second-largest, in the form of Houston’s Livestock Show and Rodeo.

While rodeos and livestock shows appear all over the state, East Texas has some of the oldest and liveliest of those offerings.

East Texas rodeos have long been a vibrant part of the region’s cultural identity. From small community events to large professional competitions, rodeos in East Texas bring together people from all walks of life to celebrate the heritage of the American West.

For the uninitiated, typical rodeo events include calf roping, barrel racing, bull riding, saddle bronc, bareback and other

exciting competitions that showcase the skill and bravery of the riders and their horses. Additional events designed to entertain the younger folks, such as mutton busting, greased pig competitions and chuck wagon races, enhance the experience and boost attendance.

Many rodeos in our part of the state are held in conjunction with county fairs and generally include livestock judging, where entrants, usually students, enter pigs, sheep, cows and rabbits they raised to win scholarship money. In addition, spectators can enjoy live music, carnival rides and all kinds of food while soaking up the festive atmosphere. Rodeos in East Texas tend to be family-friendly, with events and activities for people of all ages to enjoy.

East Texas boasts more than two dozen rodeos per year—



1. A barrel racer competes at the Polk County Youth Rodeo in Livingston.
2. In addition to traditional rodeo events, most rodeos in East Texas feature livestock shows, which includes judging animals, such as the rabbits shown here.
3. This year, the Livingston Lions Club made a \$500 donation to the Polk County Youth Rodeo Association. From left, Patty Gokey, Julie Bergman and Livingston Lions Club President Joseph Pedigo.
4. A sport practiced primarily by women, barrel racing can be extremely dangerous, not only for the horse but the rider as well. Timing the turns requires great skill and years of practice.
5. The Angelina Benefit Rodeo in Lufkin draws huge crowds every year.
6. At the Gladewater Rodeo Round-Up, a youngster holds on to a sheep during the mutton busting competition. Riders must remain on the animal for six seconds as it races across the arena in order to win.
7. Fellow riders watch as a contestant in the Panola County Cattleman's Pro Rodeo in Carthage tries to stay on a bucking bronco for eight seconds.
8. Sam Houston State University and rodeo coach Sonny Sikes won both the men's and women's national championships in 1968. The university still has a very successful rodeo team.

more than most entire states hold. The rodeo business in East Texas is so prolific that it once spawned its own magazine. From the smallest kids wrestling pigs to world champion bull riders, East Texas has played host to them all, making rodeos a very popular outdoor activity.

The exact origins of rodeos are not entirely clear, as the sport evolved over time from various traditions and practices related to ranching and cowboy culture. Rodeos as we know them today are generally believed to have originated in the American West in the late 1800s, although the first "official" rodeo took place in 1869 in Deep Trail, Colorado.

One of the oldest rodeos in East Texas is the Gladewater Round-Up Rodeo. Started in 1937 by famed Texan Jack Yates, the rodeo is held annually in early June and features professional riders from all over the country. In addition to the pro events, one of the highlights is the mutton-bustin' event, which features kids between ages 5 and 7 holding on for dear life as they ride a sheep around the arena. The kids win prizes if they can stay on for six seconds.

The Panola County Cattlemen's Pro Rodeo is another of the

oldest rodeos in East Texas, dating back more than 70 years. Held in Carthage each May, the rodeo continually draws big crowds and some of the largest numbers of entrants of all East Texas rodeos. Terry Holland, Panola Cattlemen's Association president, said numbers took a hit during the pandemic but jumped back to above-normal levels last year.

"Last year we had a total of 325 contestants, including 111 barrel racers," Holland said. "Everything had been shut down for so long, finally guys were getting a chance to rodeo again."

Events in the Panola County rodeo are approved by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, featuring bull riding, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, steer rustling, team roping and barrel racing. They also host a calf scramble each night for kids and a goose scramble for kids ages 6 and younger.

San Jacinto County will host its annual fair and rodeo September 22-30 this year at the fairgrounds in Coldspring. In addition to the rodeo events, the SJC Fair and Rodeo includes a barbecue cook-off, livestock show, carnival midway, a cornhole tournament and a parade. As with many similar events in East Texas, it's the rodeo action that draws the biggest crowds.



SAM HOUSTON EC
1



SAM HOUSTON EC
2



3



4

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One of the most famous rodeos in the country was held in Huntsville for many years. Known as the Texas Prison Rodeo, the event was started in 1931 to provide an activity for inmates while generating income for educational materials within the prison. This rodeo was made famous in the 1980 movie *Urban Cowboy* with John Travolta and Debra Winger, as well as being parodied in the Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder film *Stir Crazy*.

The Texas Prison Rodeo was discontinued in the mid-1980s when structural failures with the facilities and a lack of funding for repairs rendered it unfeasible to continue.

All was not lost for Huntsville, however, as the Walker County Fair and Rodeo began annual events in the late 1970s. A sanctioned PRCA event, the Walker County Rodeo runs in late March and features cowboys from all over North America. Much like the Houston Rodeo, the Walker County Rodeo features concerts by well-known country musicians, unique foods, a carnival midway, livestock show, parade and even a domino tournament.

Also in Huntsville, Sam Houston State University is one of several Texas colleges that has an intercollegiate rodeo team. In 1968, the SHSU men's and women's rodeo teams won their respective National Intercollegiate Champions Finals held in Sacramento, California. SHSU has been a force in collegiate rodeo for decades, winning multiple national titles.

The annual Angelina Benefit Rodeo is held annually in April in Lufkin. The event, which has been held for over a half century, draws huge crowds and generates money for scholarships.

The Franklin County Sheriff's Posse Rodeo is held the first week of September every year. It features traditional rodeo events and adds a few less common ones like cowgirl break-away roping, team roping and steer wrestling.

At the end of March each year, Livingston hosts the Trinity-Neches Livestock FFA and 4-H Show and Rodeo at the Barney Wiggins Memorial Arena. This rodeo, founded by J.E. Seamans in 1945, benefits the Future Farmers of America and area 4-H



SAM HOUSTON EC



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1. A competitor keeps his eye on the prize in the calf roping competition at the Polk County Youth Rodeo in Livingston.
2. A man congratulates a girl after she competed in the mutton busting competition at the San Jacinto County Fair and Rodeo.
3. A young cowboy celebrates with the crowd after his winning mutton busting ride at the San Jacinto County Fair and Rodeo.
4. Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is a proud sponsor of the San Jacinto County Fair and Rodeo.
5. A competitor participates in the calf roping competition at the Polk County Youth Rodeo in Livingston.
6. A boy rides a sheep like a bull rider during the mutton busting competition at the San Jacinto County Fair and Rodeo in Coldspring.

Clubs. In that rodeo's first year, all FFA and 4-H clubs between the Trinity River and Neches River were invited to participate, and the show was held on the grounds of the Livingston Gin Co., where 14 boys showed pigs and chickens.

Slowly adding contestants from Corrigan, Chester, Goodrich, Shepherd, Coldspring and other neighboring towns, the rodeo was added in 1951 and drew a record crowd of more than 3,000. Changes have been made to ensure that this Polk County tradition in agricultural education continues.

The Polk County Youth Rodeo Association holds its annual youth rodeo in July. This year will mark the 62nd rodeo, which features such events as cloverleaf barrels, pole bending, straight-away barrels, goat tying/slapping, speed race, mutton busting and dummy roping. This annual series for youths from Polk and surrounding counties provides competition for every level of rider. Prizes in these events range from saddles to belt buckles and tack.

A few rodeo halls of fame have more than their share of East Texans among their ranks. One recent inductee is Charmayne James, a barrel racer who lives in Clayton, New Mexico, but who spent much of her childhood in Goodrich. She's won 11 Women's Professional Rodeo Association World Championships in barrel racing and was inducted into the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame in 2017.

Bill Pickett was a trailblazing rodeo performer and cowboy originally from the Austin area who spent much of his life traveling and performing across the country, including quite a bit of time in East Texas. He's credited with inventing the rodeo event of bulldogging, also called steer wrestling, and was inducted into the National Rodeo Hall of Fame in 1972.

Lane Frost was a professional bull rider originally from La Porte but who spent much time with family in East Texas. He won the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Bull Riding World Championship in 1987, and his life was the subject of the movie *8 Seconds*. Frost was inducted into the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame in 1990.

PCYRA also hosts playdays in June, August, September and October for kids to practice their skills.

East Texas rodeos offer much more than just entertainment—they serve as platforms for fostering educational opportunities and skill development for children. These events not only showcase thrilling competitions and engaging performances, but also contribute to our local communities by providing scholarships and training programs to support the aspirations of ambitious youths.

Through entertainment and educational initiatives, East Texas rodeos create an inclusive environment that promotes enjoyment and the advancement of young talent. ■

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



then swung north of the most traveled roads, bushwhacking his way through mesquite and mottes of trees.

When the Texians put up the white flag, they asked to return to their homes. Woll told them that “if they did not surrender at discretion, they would be exterminated without exception.”

Woll took 62 prisoners, among them several high-value civilians: seven lawyers, a judge, two doctors, a surgeon and prominent business leaders. He told them they would return with him to the border, where they would be released. Instead, they were marched all the way to Mexico’s infamous Perote Prison, where many were held for two years, subjected to hard labor and chains. A few died en route, and some died in captivity.

Woll didn’t occupy San Antonio long. His goal was to be a disruptive force, preventing Texians from feeling secure and also to inhibit migration from the U.S. Woll’s other objective was to determine if there were credible military buildups for a Texas invasion of Mexico.

Meanwhile, Texians sounded the alarm that San Antonio had fallen. Volunteers grabbed their guns and saddled their horses. They gathered in Seguin, pushed on to Salado Creek and tempted Woll to pursue them. Woll took the bait, and the Texians, from the cover of the woods, killed and wounded more than 60 Mexican soldiers while the Texians lost only one. Sadly, on another portion of the creek, three dozen Texians were killed.

Santa Anna had once again underestimated Texas. He wanted to unsettle the new republic with fear and chaos and keep them isolated. Instead, he drove the Texians toward a collective desire to join the U.S., which they did six years later. ■

Second Sacking

Six years after the Alamo, Mexican troops twice stormed San Antonio

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY TRACI DABERKO

MOST TEXANS BELIEVE the Battle of San Jacinto settled everything. Once Mexican Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna was decisively defeated, he signed a treaty guaranteeing Texas independence. So Mexican troops would never again set foot on Texas soil nor darken our door—right?

Not quite. Just six years after Santa Anna’s Pyrrhic victory at the Alamo, Mexican forces twice tramped to San Antonio. First Gen. Rafael Vásquez showed up with 700 men to a mostly evacuated city in March 1842. They headed back across the Rio Grande after just two days, having set off a panic in Texas.

Then six months later, Santa Anna sent another army to sack San Antonio

and occupy the Alamo. Gen. Adrián Woll led a force of about 1,400 troops who awakened the town with the heart-stopping boom of a cannon blast at dawn, followed by military trumpeters playing reveille. They quickly pacified minor resistance on their way to the central plaza. This was the 19th-century version of shock and awe.

Near the plaza, Texas patriots quickly put up fierce resistance, shooting through rifle loopholes in the walls, but it was fruitless. They were surrounded by a Mexican force of many hundreds.

How did such a large army make it all the way to San Antonio without anybody noticing? Woll, a French mercenary, was quite wily. He crossed the Rio Grande about 20 miles south of Eagle Pass and

Garden Bounty

Harvest time takes on a new twist with these timely treats

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Why not shake things up with a new seasonal take on sangria? A splash of mezcal over fresh peaches, sugar, lemon juice and mint gives this sangria a Mexican twist. It's a refreshing way to beat the Texas heat.



Peach Mezcal Sangria

1 pound fresh peaches, sliced

¼ cup sugar

6 fresh mint leaves, finely chopped

¼ cup lemon juice

¾ cup mezcal

1 bottle white wine (750 milliliters), chilled

2 cups sparkling water, chilled

Fresh mint leaves, for garnish

Lemon slices, for garnish

COOK'S TIP Make it a mocktail by using white grape juice instead of wine and zero-proof mezcal, like that made by Houston-based Cut Above.

1. In a bowl, combine sliced peaches, sugar, chopped mint, lemon juice and mezcal and stir to combine. Refrigerate 1 hour.

2. Add refrigerated fruit and wine to a large pitcher. Stir to combine and top with sparkling water.

3. Serve over ice. Garnish with mint and lemon slices.

SERVES 6

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



Italian Turkey Zucchini Meatballs

LORI BEGGS
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

After a bumper crop of zucchini, Beggs incorporated it into her meatball recipe, knowing her son wasn't a fan and hoping he wouldn't notice. The result: meatballs that are tender, flavorful and taste just like your favorites.

- 1 cup shredded zucchini
- 1 pound ground turkey
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ onion, grated with juices
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning mix
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons olive oil

1. Spread shredded zucchini out onto a paper towel. Add another paper towel on top and press to absorb moisture from the zucchini.
2. In a bowl, mix all ingredients except for the olive oil. Form the mixture into meatballs by hand.
3. Heat oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Add meatballs to skillet, brown on all sides and cook through, about 15 minutes.
4. Serve with your favorite pasta and sauce.

SERVES 4

MORE RECIPES >



\$500 WINNER

Fresh Corn Loaf

CATHY TOWER
HAMILTON COUNTY EC

Perfect for brunch or Sunday dinner, Tower's fresh corn loaf is bursting with garden flavors. A hint of cayenne pepper makes the fresh vegetables pop. Serve warm with butter or honey. This loaf is even tastier the next day.

SERVES 8-10

- 2 cups fresh corn kernels
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ¾ cup chopped green bell pepper
- ⅓ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- ½ cup water

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Apply cooking spray to a 2-quart baking dish.
2. In a bowl, combine corn, tomatoes, onion, bell pepper, cayenne pepper, salt, cornmeal and cheese.
3. In another bowl, whisk together eggs, evaporated milk and water. Add to corn mixture and mix well.
4. Spoon into baking dish. Bake 1 hour, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

SLOW COOKER DUE JULY 10
We want your best set-and-forget recipes. Submit yours online by July 10 for a chance to win \$500.



Candied Jalapeños

JILEEN PLATT
BOWIE-CASS EC

Platt gifts her East Texas pepper bounty by cooking up candied jalapeños. These tasty gems are delicious on sandwiches, burgers, eggs and tacos. The recipe can easily be doubled.

½ pound jalapeño peppers

1 cup sugar

½ cup cider vinegar

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ teaspoon ground ginger

⅛ teaspoon ground allspice

1. Prepare a water bath canner or a large pot and heat to boiling, adding half-pint jars and lids to sterilize.

2. Slice jalapeños into ¼-inch round slices.

3. In a saucepan combine sugar, vinegar, turmeric, ginger and allspice. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Cook until syrup has reduced and thickened.



4. Carefully add jalapeños to warm jars, gently pushing down, filling up to leave ½-inch headspace.

5. Ladle hot syrup over jalapeños, leaving ¼-inch headspace and removing air bubbles. Wipe rims, top with canning lid and screw on bands. Continue until all jalapeños are canned.

6. Return jars to canner and return to a boil. Boil for 10 minutes. Remove jars, allow to cool. Store in a cool, dark place.

MAKES 4 HALF-PINT JARS

Essential Canning Tools

BY MEGAN MYERS

Canning doesn't have to be complicated, but you'll want to have these basics before you start.

Large pot: You don't need a special water bath canning pot; any pot large enough to hold jars covered with water will do. Make sure to keep jars from touching the bottom of the pot.

Jar lifter: These special tongs help you transfer hot jars into and out of the water bath.

Wooden dowel or chopstick: Use either of these implements instead of a knife to remove air bubbles to prevent scratching the inside of the jar.

Fresh canning lids: Wax seal lids cannot be reused, so be sure to have enough on hand. Rings can be reused until they start to rust.



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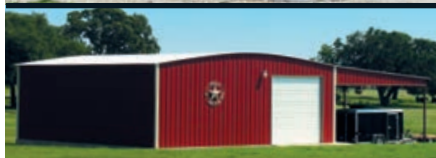
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

One Weird Wonder

Austin's Cathedral of Junk is an unfolding work of ... art?

BY CHET GARNER

THEY SAY ONE MAN'S trash is another man's treasure. If that's true, I was standing atop one of the most valuable treasure heaps in all of Texas. But rather than a pile of gold bullion or Fabergé eggs, this treasure trove consisted of busted TVs, at least one prosthetic leg and about 60 tons of accumulated stuff. It's definitely not the sort of "treasure" that sells at fancy auctions. But for artist Vince Hannemann, this is indeed a priceless work of art.

I was in Hannemann's South Austin backyard, atop his infamous Cathedral of Junk, a 30-foot tower consisting of multiple rooms and countless layers of—for lack of a better word—junk. License plates, wheelchairs and action figures formed into one massive structure that Hannemann started building in the late 1980s using pieces of his own trash.

As it took shape, neighbors started bringing him boxes of refuse that he puzzled and wired into the ever-expanding mass. Over three decades, the pile of trash became something more. It became a cathedral.

As he gave me a tour, Hannemann pointed out some of his favorite items that came with their own mysterious origin stories. One was a dented and burned timecard punch clock. "Did somebody get fired, smash the clock and then set the building on fire?" he wonders.

At first, the cathedral's haphazard form seemed like chaos, but as I walked the grounds, I slowly noticed that every room, wall and panel had a theme. Sometimes the junk was organized by color, other times by its decade of creation. Before long, the junk transformed into a work of art before my eyes. It's a creation too glorious for any gallery and more appropriately exhibited in an Austin backyard. ■

ABOVE Appointments are required to pay homage at the backyard Cathedral of Junk.

TCP See more of the clutter that makes Chet's heart flutter 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.

JULY
01

Cuero [1–August 26] Black Cowboys: An American Story, (361) 277-2866, chisholmtrailmuseum.org

07

Kerrville [7–8] Open Pro Rodeo, (830) 997-1864, kerrvilletexascvb.com

08

Weatherford Parker County Peach Festival, (817) 596-3801, parkercountypeachfestival.org

13

Fort Stockton [13–15] Water Carnival, fswatercarnival.org

14

Hempstead [14–15] Watermelon Festival, (979) 921-5095, hempsteadwatermelonfestival.com

Laredo [14–16] International Sister Cities Festival, (956) 794-2200, visitlaredo.com

Ingram [14–15, 21–22, 28–29] The Last Round-up of the Guacamole Queens, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

15

Brownwood Dino Day, (325) 641-1926, browncountymuseum.org

Burnet 100-Year Boat-a-Thon, (830) 798-7632, tpwd.texas.gov

Friona Cheeseburger Festival, (806) 250-2761, friona-chamber.com

19

Amarillo [19–22] Iron Horse Shoot Out, (806) 353-2911, ironhorseshootout.com

21

Fredericksburg Historic Wrede School Open House, (830) 685-3321, historicschools.org

Palestine [21-23, 28-30] Matilda the Musical, thetexasstheater.com

28

Naples [28-29] Watermelon Festival and Rodeo, (903) 458-0425, facebook.com/naplesmelonpatch

29

Boerne Hot Summer Night Antique Tractor Pull, (210) 445-1080, theagricultural.org

Giddings Sip and Shop: Christmas in July, (979) 542-3455, giddingstx.com

Kingsville Back to School Festival, (361) 500-5892, cbabbq.com

Stephenville Elks Lodge BBQ Cookoff, (254) 979-5019, facebook.com/stephenvilleelksbbq

AUGUST

04

Huntsville [4-5] Genealogy Weekend, (936) 291-5471, huntsvilletx.gov

Olton [4-5] Sandhills Celebration, (806) 285-2292, oltonchamber.org

Kerrville [4-5, 11-13, 18-20] A Murder is Announced, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

05

Camp Wood Old Settlers Reunion, (830) 597-6241, nuecescanyonchamber.org

TCP Submit Your Event

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



Grapevine, Texas is your destination for family fun this summer! Conveniently located between Dallas and Fort Worth, Grapevine is perfectly placed for a summer staycation or day trip. Enjoy family favorites like Grapevine Vintage Railroad, Great Wolf Lodge and LEGOLAND® Discovery Center or make a splash at Gaylord Texan's Paradise Springs Water Park. You definitely won't want to miss the all-new Meow Wolf Grapevine bringing its never-before-seen immersive art experience to Grapevine Mills beginning Summer 2023!

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—From the song *By a Waterfall* by Sammy Fain and Irving Kahal

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1 RANDY DULL
COSERV
Gooseberry Falls in Minnesota.

2 DEANNE BROWN
PEDERNALES EC
"Vernal Falls in Yosemite National Park offers hikers a reminder of the power of nature."

3 MIKE PRESTIGIACOMO
BARTLETT EC
Rainbow falls.

4 SABRENA ST. CLERGY
JASPER-NEWTON EC
"Colorado Bend State Park—a hidden gem."



Upcoming Contests

DUE JUL 10 Golden Hour
DUE AUG 10 Mailboxes
DUE SEP 10 Local Landmarks



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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





Honest-to-Goodness Veggies

In the country, a trusted type of commerce still works

BY MIKE LEGGETT
ILLUSTRATION BY
ANNA GODEASSI

FOLKS DO THINGS differently out in the country, whether it's putting in a garden, processing their own hogs or raising beef to market.

Larry Westphal does a little of everything on his land along County Road 202 in Burnet County. Westphal, 70, has some cows and 200 head of sheep to keep him busy most of the year, but he's taken his garden to a whole new level.

He plants and harvests vegetables and tomatoes in a plot near his house that's about 40 feet square. With his wife, Judy, he picks, eats and cans what he is able to, but he still has a surplus almost every summer.

So Westphal decided to test his entrepreneurial skills and sell some of his annual harvest at local farmers markets. He also built himself a display stand several

years back and sells squash and tomatoes and sometimes peppers to anyone who wants them.

But Westphal doesn't sit by the stand, near the gate to his property. Rather, he hand-letters signs for each vegetable and sells them individually on the honor system.

The money goes into a small box that hangs off the stand, which could present a temptation for some, but this system works for Westphal. "Everybody around here is pretty honest," he says. "Unless it's a cat or one of the neighbor's chickens, I don't lose anything to somebody stealing it."

The little bit of money the stand generates doesn't go very far. "It pays for the seed," says Westphal, a Pedernales Electric Cooperative member. "That's about all it does."

Most of his business is local, too. "I think most of it is just our neighbors," Westphal says. "Everybody has been pretty honest. I figure if they're that hungry, they're welcome to it."

When we're driving past during the week, my wife and I debate how we'd eat our squash, if we bought some. I'm a sliced-and-fried guy, but Rana prefers stewed with onions—each the way our mothers made it.

Westphal comes by his gardening and farming instincts naturally. His grandfather, who emigrated to the U.S. from Germany, ran a dairy in Minnesota for years. "My dad left that place as fast as he could," Westphal says, remarking on what a tough business it was.

His maternal grandfather was a sharecropper in Oklahoma, where Westphal spent some of his early days walking along behind a tractor. "I was 4 or 5 years old, and you can't make a living off a place like that anymore."

There's not much money selling surplus vegetables for a dollar apiece either, but there's more satisfaction. And that's why he does it. ■

To some, sunglasses are a fashion accessory...

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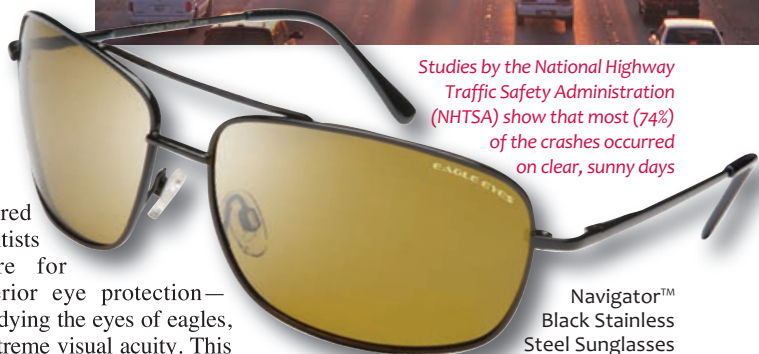
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