

TOTAL ECLIPSE
OF THE STATE

THE PAUL REVERE
OF TEXAS

WHEN ALL IS LOST,
LOVED ONES ARRIVE

Texas Coop Power

FOR SAM HOUSTON EC MEMBERS

MARCH 2024

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and their owners an edge
in competition

**ECLECTIC
EAST TEXAS
MUSEUMS**

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PLUS

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It Matters Most

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Difference

22 Give Electricity
a Spring Break



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Haru, an Australian shepherd, works on his leaping skills.
Photo by Tom Hussey

ABOVE
The ring of fire during the annular solar eclipse October 14, 2023, as seen near Bandera.
Photo by Erich Schlegel

Channeling Safety

WHEN DANNY WILLIAMS, below left, started his career as a lineworker at McCulloch Electric Cooperative—which no longer exists—in 1965, color TVs were the latest technology coming into homes.

Williams and his co-workers in Brady made sure the power always stayed on for those TVs. “I loved linework,” he says. “I loved climbing.”

Williams later became an instructor, teaching work skills and safety to utility employees. And in 2007 he became manager of Texas Electric Cooperatives’ Loss Control program, where he changed (and likely saved) lives at co-ops across the state.

Williams, 80, will retire this month after more than 38 years of teaching generations of lineworkers, in a career that spanned seven decades.

“Oh, my God, how many people has he touched?” says TEC’s Curtis Whitt, a co-worker for 21 of those years. “Countless. To do it as well as he’s done it for as long as he’s done it is a pretty incredible feat.”

TCP Visit our website to read more about Danny Williams.



A Power Trip?

Four electric school buses in South Burlington, Vermont, deliver more than students. When sitting idle during school hours, their batteries store excess renewable energy that can be pumped back onto the grid.

TCP Contests and More

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Shells and Scales

RECOMMENDED READING

Learn how Hoover Alexander, a fifth-generation Texan, came to run Hoover's Cooking, a beloved Austin diner. See *A Full Plate* from March 2009 on our website.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Music makes me ...

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 January prompt: **If I could turn back the clock ...**

It would mean that I finally figured out how to work the buttons.

GEORGE GRAHAM
PEDERNALES EC
WIMBERLEY

I would look at the clock less.

ROSIE PEÑA
NUECES EC
CORPUS CHRISTI

I would talk to my mom and dad for days on end—just to hear their voices again.

LISA STANLEY
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES
JOSHUA

Visit our website to see more responses.

JANUARY 2024 Moment's Notice

"There's an expression around Laredo: 'Six flags over Texas; seven flags over Laredo!'"

SHERI ULAN-SWEET
BLUEBONNET EC AND CENTRAL TEXAS EC
LEXINGTON AND FREDERICKSBURG



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Required Reading

We love *Texas Co-op Power*. We home-school and use a lot of the recipes and articles in our lessons.

Karly Woods
Via Facebook

Shamrock Memories

My wife and I stayed at the old Shamrock Hilton on the last weekend it was open [*The Green Carpet*, January 2024].

The place was still amazing, but it clearly had a lot of deferred maintenance, making it look a little threadbare—a remnant of a time gone by.

In the lounge, if you ordered one drink, they would keep bringing you more of the same—I guess figuring that everything they gave away was one less thing they'd have to pack up or throw away.

Mike Blanche
United Cooperative Services
Morgan



COURTESY HOUSTON HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER | HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

What Desert?

When I flew from my Southern California hometown into San Antonio in May 1968 for U.S. Army basic training at Fort Sam Houston, I was surprised by a lush, green landscape (plus millions of crickets) instead of a barren desert [*How Texas Became a Desert*, December 2023].

Even more shocking was finding that the Alamo had been moved to downtown from the countryside where John Wayne defended it from Santa Anna's forces.

Steve Mallery
Heart of Texas EC
Robinson

On Second Thought

I enjoyed Frederick Law Olmsted's assessment of Austin and New Braunfels [*Appraising the Texas Landscape*, November 2023]. I believe he would be appalled at the destruction of the natural beauty and wildlife he witnessed in the 1850s.

Harvey H. Wetz
GVEC
New Braunfels

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power
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Austin, TX 78701

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

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A Midday Matinee for Millions

Where will you be when a once-in-a-lifetime
total solar eclipse darkens Texas next month?



BY PAM LEBLANC

Back in October

when the moon passed between the Earth and the sun in a celestial display known as an annular eclipse, I headed to Lost Maples State Natural Area in the Hill Country, donned a pair of goofy cardboard glasses and gazed skyward.

The field around me bristled with telescopes and tripods, all directed at the slow-moving phenomenon, which looked to my untrained eye like a frying pan slowly moving in front of a bed of glowing coals. Just as the moon lined up with the face of the sun, creating a halo of yellow, a cheer arose, and someone cranked up Johnny Cash's *Ring of Fire*.

As fun as that was, it was just the warmup for what's coming April 8, when Texans will get front-row seats at an even more impressive spectacle—a total solar eclipse.

The last total solar eclipse viewable from the U.S. occurred August 21, 2017—but Texas wasn't in the path of totality. Those who peered at it (through special safety glasses, of course) from here saw the moon's shadow creep across the sun but never fully blot it out. Other parts of the country experienced totality.

"A really good total solar eclipse is an emotional experience," says astronomer Phil Kelton, former assistant director and superintendent of the McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis. "They're awe-inspiring events, like nothing else in nature. The annular eclipse was a poor second."

In April, the eclipse's path of totality will cross Mexico, enter Texas near Eagle Pass, and slowly crawl northeast across the state. Kerrville, Bandera and Waco are all near the centerline, so watchers there will get a good show. Much of the Metroplex will experience totality, as will parts of Austin and San Antonio.

After crossing into Oklahoma and Arkansas, the eclipse will pass through 10 more states before moving out of Maine and into Canada.

The whole event—from the time the moon first bites into the sun—will last roughly 3 hours in Texas. But the duration of totality will vary by location. In Vanderpool and Ingram,

OPPOSITE Maxine Margolis Smith experiences the thrill of the October 14, 2023, annular solar eclipse from near Bandera. ABOVE The eclipse is projected onto a "screen" that Jeri Evans rigged from a bucket attached to a telescope in Vanderpool.



for example, it will last 4 minutes and 26 seconds; in Austin, farther from the centerline, it will last less than two minutes. The start of totality will also vary, occurring between 1:27 p.m. and 1:40 p.m. depending on where you're viewing.

During those few minutes, skies will grow significantly darker. It'll feel cooler, and some animals may exhibit twilight behaviors. If skies are clear—and chances of a clear sky are historically higher in Texas than they are farther north and east across the U.S. at that time of the year—bright stars will become visible.

"It's one of the great events of nature," Kelton says. "There's an element of majesty and awe that occurs during a total solar eclipse. Only in the last few hundred years has man understood enough about the cosmos to appreciate what was causing it."

Total solar eclipses occur every few years at different locations around the globe. After this year's event, an eclipse in 2033 will impact a small part of Alaska, and one in 2044 will affect Montana and the Dakotas. The next total eclipse to carve a broad swath across the country, though, won't take place until August 12, 2045.

Now's the time to plan. People are traveling to Texas from all over the world for the April eclipse, and many lodges and campgrounds in the path of totality are already booked.

Don't panic.

"The path is huge. You don't have to be in a special place," says Shaun Tarpley, an architect from League City who chases eclipses to photograph them. He and his wife, Ashley, an aeronautical engineer who works at NASA, traveled to Lost Maples with their son for the annular eclipse and plan to return to the Hill Country in April.

“There’s an element of majesty and awe that occurs during a total solar eclipse.”



LEFT Irene Ramos participates in a spiritual drum circle near Bandera.

“As long as you’re in the path, you can get out on the side of a road,” he says. “If you’re in the area, you’ll be able to experience it.”

When I drove to Bandera County for the annular eclipse, I spotted fields with hand-painted “camp here” signs planted among the ash junipers and oaks.

Eclipse watchers had gathered for a celebration at Stonehenge II, a scaled-down version of the British original on the lawn outside the Hill Country Arts Foundation in Ingram. (Festivities are planned next month, too.) And at Lost Maples, campgrounds and day-use areas were packed.

Among those I met was Frederic Allegrini, an astrophysicist and amateur astrophotographer from San Antonio who drove 2,500 miles in four days to see the 2017 eclipse in Tennessee. He and his wife wanted to be in the path of totality because, as he told her, doing anything else is like being 95% in love. “It has to be 100% or nothing,” he says.

And then there was Laura Hermann of Spring, who stood

at a table loaded with snacks and used a Moon Pie and a bag of Sun Chips to demonstrate how the eclipse would unfold.

For those with deep pockets, touring companies like Smithsonian Journeys offer luxurious guided tours through the Hill Country, with eclipse watching at Becker Vineyards near Stonewall and stops at other Central Texas sites.

For a less expensive experience, reserve a day pass at one of the Texas state parks in the path of totality. Enchanted Rock and Lost Maples will be popular destinations, but spots will fill up quickly. Reservations at Enchanted Rock open 8 a.m. March 11, and reservations for all other state parks open 8 a.m. March 8. Lower Colorado River Authority parks are another option, with special activities at some locations, including Black Rock Park on Lake Buchanan.

If your favorite park is booked, check out Campspot’s regularly updated guide of sites in the path that still have availability. At RVshare, you can book an RV directly from the owner.

BELOW Frederic Allegrini sets up his camera gear at Lost Maples State Natural Area. RIGHT Liam Tarpley uses eclipse-safe sunglasses to watch the annular eclipse.



Stare Safely

Never look directly at the sun through a camera, binoculars or a telescope without proper solar filters.

Only use glasses made specifically for eclipse viewing; they're about 100,000 times darker than ordinary sunglasses.

View the eclipse indirectly with a pin-hole projector or see what it does to shadows by holding up a colander from your kitchen.

Plan ahead: Folks from all over the U.S. are already booking rooms in the Hill Country, and traffic could be tricky.

If you want a side of music with your eclipse, consider the family-friendly Eclipse Utopia at Four Sisters Ranch in Utopia. Camping is available, and the event includes workshops, disc golf, hiking, biking, yoga and two days of live music. Closer to Bandera, the Ground Zero MusicFest includes everything from live music and a classic car show to a cornhole tournament and space alien costume contest.

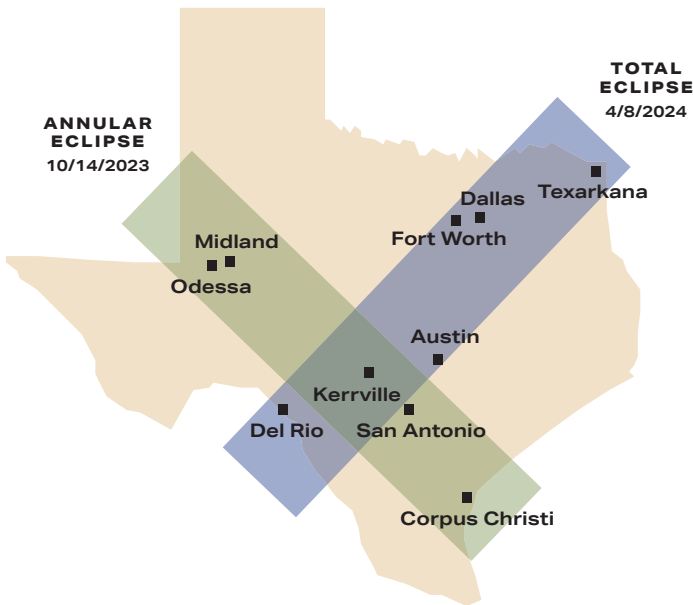
Wherever you go, arrive early, protect your eyes and embrace the experience.

That's what Emma Ransome and Pavol Klacansky, both from Austin, did during the October eclipse. I found them stretched out in the grass at the campground at Lost Maples, listening to a special playlist they had compiled, grinning behind their eclipse glasses.

"We've been able to slowly watch it evolve," Ransome says. "It's very relaxing."

And the opening act only got them more excited about the April main event. ■

TCP For more guidance about viewing safety and making your eclipse experience memorable, visit our website. And for a deeper dive into the wonders of the eclipse, check out nationaleclipse.com.





T O P D



BY MARGARET BURANEN • PHOTOS BY TOM HUSSEY

Coaches help canine competitors reach new heights—and grow closer to their humans

Growing up in South Korea while her dad served in the U.S. military, Abby McMillin had two dreams. First, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, she wanted to return home to Kansas.

When her family did finally move back to Kansas, McMillin started working on her other dream: becoming a veterinarian. In high school she started working at a veterinary clinic. There she met a dog that would change her life and her career path.

Taz was a large German shepherd. He was scared and aggressive. Nobody could get near the snarling animal. McMillin decided to try to reach him anyway.

She tossed kibble into his kennel, not even making eye contact with him. She also sometimes sat with her back to the outside of the kennel door. “I just wanted Taz to know that I was there,” McMillin says.

Gradually Taz calmed down and began to trust McMillin. He allowed her to pet him and put a leash on him. Later he accepted affection from other people. Eventually he was adopted by a woman who gave him the loving home he deserved.

The clinic’s veterinarians were amazed at McMillin’s success with Taz. They sent her to work with a professional trainer to learn more about dog behavior.

“He became my mentor,” McMillin says. She realized that communicating with dogs and other animals, trying to figure out what they needed and why they behaved in certain ways, interested her much more than animal health.

Today McMillin is the owner of Triple H Dog Training, where she teaches classes of humans and canines how to work together at her facility in Mineola, northwest of Tyler.

In short, she coaches dog athletes.

Every year, the American Kennel Club and other organizations host thousands of dog sporting events across the U.S. that draw more than 1 million competitors.

But 35 years ago, in 1988, when the United States Dog Agility Association organized the first major sporting competition for dogs—the Grand Prix of Dog Agility World Championships—just 79 competitors from across the U.S. came to Houston for the three-day event. Today, more than 100 events nationwide qualify dogs and their humans—representing more than 20 countries—for regional championships and, ultimately, the world finals.

Abby McMillin guides Apollo, her golden retriever, over an agility training ramp.

The sports encompass a range of competitions for dogs, including agility and herding, racing and jumping, obedience, and tracking and hunting trials. The growth of dog sports has become big business as trainers like McMillin build careers out of teaching people how to compete alongside their pets.

McMillin, a Wood County Electric Cooperative member, lives in Mineola with her husband, Nick; their 2-year-old son, Levi; and seven dogs. One dog, a Great Pyrenees mix, prefers couch lounging to dog sports. The other six, including three golden retrievers, compete.

Border collies, Australian shepherds and Shetland sheepdogs are among the most popular breeds to produce athletes, but there's something out there for just about every dog.

If one canine sport isn't suitable for a dog and its owner, McMillin urges the owner to try something else. Many dogs enjoy agility training, but their owners may realize they aren't fit enough for this fast-paced sport. Rally, which involves only walking, may be a better choice.

Besides, it's "more about relationship building, so the dog owner and dog develop a lifetime friendship," McMillin says. "I want people to enjoy their dogs."



OPPOSITE McMillin with six of her dogs, which learn balance and control on a seesaw at her training facility. RIGHT Apollo goes airborne to catch a flying disc.

For training at home, McMillin advises dog owners to “keep it short. Keep it fun. Keep it simple. Don’t do 30 minutes once a week. Do five minutes every day. For the first week or so, the owner has to get in the habit of training, too. Remember dogs don’t work for nothing. They’re motivated by treats or toys.”

McMillin uses a hand-held clicker to reinforce behaviors. With this method, she has also trained horses and cats, even an otter. Training allows the dog and owner to become a team and have a closer relationship. “It’s not about the ribbons,” she says. “It’s about going home with the best dog ever.”

Another trainer, Debi Krakar, started the Dog Alliance in Cedar Park, outside Austin, in 2006. There she trains therapy dogs and offers classes in various dog sport disciplines.

Krakar, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative, says that the raft of dog sports offers an excellent outlet for pups. “When they’ve been mentally stimulated and exercised, they won’t eat your shoes,” she says. “Dog sports build a bond between human and dog. They understand each other better.”

Krakar got into dog training after taking her own dog to schools for children to read to. “Teachers kept calling me,” she says. “The demand for these therapy dogs is constant.”

For owners who aren’t sure which dog sport might be best for them and their pups, she offers a dog sports foundation class that covers the basics. Because when it comes to man’s best friend, it’s really about building relationships.

“Have fun and be positive with your dog,” Krakar says. “In the long run you’ll have a much stronger bond with your dog.” ■



Games That Aren’t Far-Fetches

AGILITY Dogs run through an obstacle course that includes tunnels, blocks to jump on and vertical poles to weave through.

BARN HUNT Popular in rural areas, dogs run into barns and signal where rats are hiding.

DISC DOG This is a variation of the basic game of fetch. The dog’s owner throws a flying disc that the dog catches (usually by jumping up in the air) and retrieves quickly.

DOCK DIVING Dogs race down a ramp and leap out into a pool of water to retrieve a toy thrown by the owner.

FAST CAT No felines are involved! Short for coursing ability test, dogs of any breed are timed as they race around a 100-yard track, chasing an artificial lure.

LURE COURSING Sight hounds race around an oval or rectangular course that measures 650–800 yards, chasing an artificial lure.

RALLY Dogs walk to various stations and follow various commands from their owners at each one.

SHED HUNT Pups retrieve shed deer antlers from a field within a set time period.

TRACKING Dogs follow the scent of a lure that was earlier dragged through a course.

TRICKS Beyond the basic commands of sit, stay, come and lie down, dogs learn to perform more advanced commands or follow hand signals.

1920s Style for a 1920s Price

It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. Never ones to miss an opportunity, we climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch.

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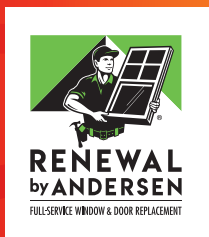
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Performance When it Matters Most

Sam Houston EC's preparations paid off during January's freeze

A WINTER STORM ENVELOPED the Sam Houston Electric Cooperative service area in mid-January, and Cooperative employees were prepared to serve all 65,000 members regardless of weather conditions.

SHEC's engineering department utilized a recently developed cold weather checklist to prepare the distribution system for the increased electricity demand created by heating systems during extreme cold weather. The department initiates the protocol when the weather forecast calls for temperatures below 40 degrees for an extended amount of time.

"Just like all inventions, our cold weather preparedness list came out of necessity," said Kabe Murphy, grid manager. "I was appointed to oversee the enactment of the protocol when I became the grid manager several years ago."

Once the cold weather protocol is activated, typically within three days of the event, the engineering department identifies changes that must be made throughout the Co-op's distribution system of more than 7,000 miles of power lines. Engineers then coordinate with the dispatch, operations and electronics departments to ensure the system is prepared for cold weather.

"Each branch office has devices that may trip if the settings aren't changed, due to the higher demand of our members," Murphy said. "Employees make the settings changes to continue providing power to our members."

The engineering and operations departments have implemented voltage conversions and a fault location, isolation and service restoration program across a significant portion of the system, which also helped keep power on during the subfreezing temperatures of the winter storm.

The Co-op's robust right-of-way program helped keep power on by cutting down more than 35,000 dead or hazardous trees in the 16 months prior to the arctic blast, before the trees could fall onto power lines.

Despite the Co-op's storm preparations, outages did occur during the arctic blast. The Co-op's dispatchers recorded 141 outages during the 52 hours of freezing temperatures, wind and icy precipitation that battered East Texas, according to Kenzie Moore, dispatch supervisor.

When those unwanted and unfortunate outages did occur, Sam Houston EC lineworkers and contractors worked through bitterly cold temperatures to restore power safely and quickly.

"All construction projects were briefly placed on hold," said Larry Horn, director of operations. "Available crews were dispatched as needed to safely focus on responding to member outages in a timely manner as they were not tied up on other pending construction projects."

Member service representatives fielded more than 1,500 phone calls during the arctic blast. Some members were reporting outages, but many were routine calls, according to Valerie Berry, contact center office supervisor.

The engineering department reviewed the system's reliability following the winter storm. Enhancements were made to the cold weather protocol, but early assessments show that the protocol allowed for many members to keep power when they may not have if a similar storm descended upon the Co-op several years ago, prior to the implementation of the plan.

"Each and every Cooperative employee played a part in making the recent winter weather event a success," Murphy said. "Some may not realize it, but everything we do on a day-to-day basis serves as a building block that helps our Cooperative excel in events such as this." ■

ABOVE: Darren Marceaux, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative lineman, uses a rope puller and other tools to get a large power line into service near Moss Hill during the January winter storm.



WE'VE GOT YOU

A lot goes into powering this community. That's why Sam Houston EC wants you to know we've got you. It's a pledge to make sure you're always taken care of. A pledge we honor every day. From our member service representatives to our lineworkers and those making sure the power you use every day is there when you need it. We've got you. Always.

Your source for power. And information.
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SAM HOUSTON
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Eclectic East Texas Museums: Gone With the Wind, Electric Chairs and Logging

BY JEFF MILLER

TEXAS IS HOME TO plenty of museums, mostly ones that house rare art pieces, dinosaur bones, sculptures and precious stones. But East Texas has some unique museums that cater to different crowds—everyone from lovers of *Gone With the Wind* to those who want to learn about electric chairs, country music or the East Texas logging industry.

Let's take a look at a few of the most unique museums in East Texas.

Texas Forestry Museum

Starting off in Lufkin, you'll find a hidden gem in the Texas Forestry Museum. It's home to the story of the forests of Texas and is enjoyed by nature lovers, arborists, history buffs and children of all ages. This museum explores the intriguing story of the industry that built East Texas.

As one of the largest institutions of its kind in the U.S., the Texas Forestry Museum stands as a destination suitable for all ages. It offers a profound and comprehensive exploration into the historical, contemporary and prospective facets of trees. The museum's exhibits detail their cultivation, harvesting, transportation and processing, and the integral role they play in our daily lives.

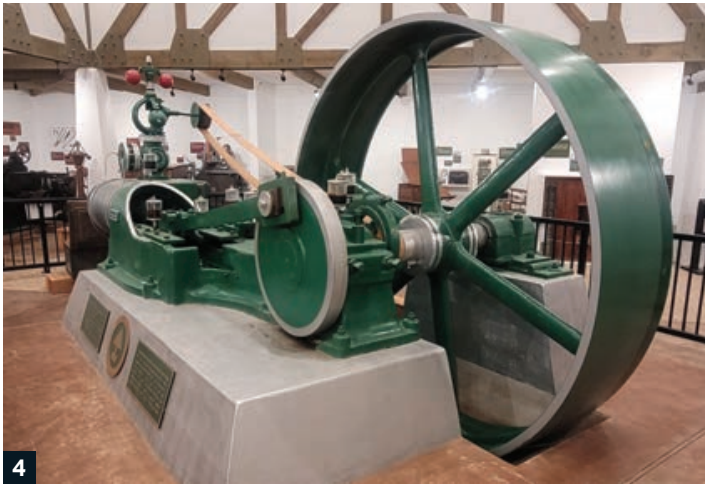
The museum presents curated exhibits of notable significance, including *Sawmill Town History*, *Paper Mill Room* and *Money Trees*, as well as a logging train, fire-spotting tower and the Urban Wildscape Trail. The exhibits provide an enriching and educational experience for visitors.

"Something that really draws people is our children's wing," said Kendall Gay, museum director. "We have a whole wing of the museum that has a lot of interactive things for kids to do. We have a sawmill dress-up house where kids can dress up in overalls or little dresses and bonnets, and they can play in the kitchen with everything that's made of wood. Outside of the little house, there's a fishing pond and a garden and a little farm with animals. We also have a giant train table, which I think is really great for little kids."

The museum attracts more than 25,000 visitors a year and has seen a 51% rise in visitors since the pandemic.

"It's been nice because we're not only an indoor attraction, but we have plenty to do outside as well," Gay continued. "We have small trails, a fire tower and a real steam engine train. We also host scavenger hunts for kids and adults, and the museum can be rented out for events as well."

Placing the museum in Lufkin wasn't a difficult decision.



1. Kendall Gay is director of the Texas Forestry Museum.
2. Visitors to the Texas Forestry Museum are greeted at the entryway by a life-size statue of a Texas logger.
3. Workers who lived in the logging towns were paid in tokens that could only be used in company stores owned by their employer. This forced employees to work for the same company or else lose their earnings. These are actual tokens on display at the museum.
4. The Texas Forestry Museum has an original working steam engine inside the museum. It has been retrofitted to be used with electricity so visitors can see it in motion.
5. An actual fire-spotting tower, used by forest rangers to spot forest fires, is on-site at the museum.



“We are quite blessed to be so close to all of the state and national forests,” Gay said. “You don’t have to drive that far. We’ve got the Davy Crockett National Forest if you’re headed out towards Crockett, the (nearby) Angelina National Forest and the Sam Houston National Forest towards Huntsville. And then there’s the Fairchild State Forest towards Jacksonville.

“Texas has nine state and national forests, and we’re quite close to most of them. Our trails offer a really nice opportunity for families to introduce their kids to nature in a very low-stakes situation. Our trails are circular and only about a quarter mile long, so if the kids get tired or restless, you pretty much can always see your car from the trails.”

Texas Prison Museum

Approximately 70 miles to the southwest, the Texas Prison Museum in Huntsville holds historical significance as the location where the inaugural prison, known as the Huntsville Unit or informally as “the Walls,” was established in 1848 for the newly formed Texas prison system.

In 1847, the Texas Legislature authorized a commission to identify a suitable location to establish the prison system. With the influential Sam Houston, a key figure in Texas independence and a respected statesman, residing in Huntsville, the Texas Legislature designated and established Huntsville as the operational headquarters for the prison system, and so it remains today.

The Texas Prison Museum offers an intriguing glimpse into the lives of those incarcerated in Texas criminal justice facilities. The museum features a number of exhibits detailing the history of the Texas prison system, featuring a look inside the operations behind the fences and walls.

The museum is frequented by a diverse cross section of the public, ranging from grade school students on field trips to tourists from around the world. The museum draws about 36,000 guests annually.

The most popular exhibit continues to be Old Sparky, the decommissioned electric chair in which 361 prisoners were executed between 1924 and 1964. This legendary device, made by prison workers, was in storage at the Walls Unit’s “death house” before being donated to the museum.

The museum also features interesting and unique items such as various guns used in escape attempts, typical prison cell layouts and even last meal requests from death row inmates. Perhaps one of the most intriguing requests came in 1934 from an inmate known as Big Jesse Mott. For his last meal, Mott ordered 3 pounds of steak, a ham, 12 fried eggs, 50 biscuits with “plenty of gravy,” and a half-gallon of ice cream. It was reported that Mott finished every bite before being executed February 9, 1934.

There is also an exhibit of infamous inmates who spent time in Texas prisons, including Clyde Barrow; Huddie Ledbetter, known professionally as Lead Belly, one of the founders of folk music; and David Crosby of Crosby, Stills & Nash.

Another popular exhibit shares the history of the Texas Prison Rodeo. During the Great Depression, this unconventional rodeo emerged in 1931 at the baseball park just beyond the formidable Walls Unit, typically used by the Walls Tigers baseball team. The visionary behind this endeavor was Lee Simmons, the general manager of the Texas prison system, who conceived it as a source of entertainment for employees and inmates alike.

Within a mere two years, the rodeo evolved from a local affair to a grand event, attracting 15,000 enthusiasts to Huntsville.



Soon it claimed the title for drawing the largest crowds at a sporting event in Texas. For more than 50 years, the Texas Prison Rodeo captivated crowds every Sunday in October, surpassing 100,000 attendees in some years.

Some of the stars who performed at the rodeo included Johnny Cash, Ernest Tubb, Johnny Rodriguez, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, George Strait and Tom T. Hall. The popular Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder movie *Stir Crazy* featured the rodeo based on the Huntsville venue.

The grand finale of this captivating saga took place October 26, 1986, when the audience, including several hundred inmates, was regaled by the enchanting performances of the mother-daughter duo, the Judds. As the curtain fell, the chute gates were closed for the last time.

While whispers of a revival persist, the Texas Prison Rodeo now resides as a cherished memory for those who witnessed or were a part of “the wildest show behind bars.”

There is also a gift shop at the museum, where visitors can purchase items made by inmates, including furniture, lamps, household items, original artwork and a collection of custom-made rocking horses. According to prison officials, some inmates make six-figure incomes from the sale of their artistry.

The Texas Country Music Hall of Fame/Tex Ritter Museum
In the heart of East Texas, Carthage to be exact, where the notes of country music echo through the vast landscapes, stands a

shrine to the legends who shaped the genre. The Texas Country Music Hall of Fame/Tex Ritter Museum, a \$2.5 million state-of-the-art facility, opened its doors in August 2002, welcoming over 30,000 country music enthusiasts to step back in time and relive the glorious moments of country music history.

The museum’s roots trace back to 1993, when it began as the Tex Ritter Museum, paying homage to Maurice Woodward “Tex” Ritter, who journeyed from the ranches of East Texas to the stages of Broadway and Hollywood.

Ritter was born near Carthage, where he attended grade school. His family moved to Nederland, where Tex honed his musical talents studying voice, trumpet and guitar as a teenager, graduating with honors from Beaumont’s South Park High School in 1922. His artistic pursuits led him to the University of Texas at Austin to study law, but destiny had a different plan for him.

Ritter’s multifaceted career saw him as a Broadway star, a radio sensation on shows like *The Lone Ranger* and *Tex Ritter’s Campfire*, and a prominent figure in the Hollywood film industry. He starred in 78 films between 1936 and 1948, including winning an Oscar for his rendition of *Do Not Forsake Me*, the theme song from *High Noon*.

The Tex Ritter Museum expanded its horizons in August 2004, incorporating a significant display dedicated to Carthage native Jim Reeves, featuring the radio equipment from Reeves’ station, KGRI, in Henderson. This expansion reflects the museum’s commitment to preserving the rich tapestry of Texas-born



5. This portrait of Bonnie and Clyde was crafted by inmate Ryan Jojola and created entirely from used coffee grounds. The piece won first place in the prison's art show in 2018.

2. Furniture pieces made entirely by inmates, some of which have sold for thousands of dollars.

3. The Texas Prison Museum houses Old Sparky, the actual electric chair where 361 prisoners were executed.

4. Virtually every kind of weapon you can imagine is on display at the museum, including 1920s-style Tommy guns and AK-47s.

5. The Gone With the Wind Museum houses two theater seats from the Loew's Grand Theatre in Atlanta, where the film premiered in 1939.

6. An entire display honoring legend Willie Nelson and his sister, Bobbie, is featured at the Tex Ritter Museum.

7. When Tex Ritter joined the Grand Ole Opry, he helped put Texas musicians on the map.



country music legends, and thereafter it was renamed the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame/Tex Ritter Museum.

Today, the museum stands not only as a repository of memorabilia but as a living tribute to the enduring spirit of Texas musicians who have cemented their stature in the history of country music, including displays featuring Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Bob Wills, David Frizzell, the Texas Tenors, Buddy Holly, K.T. Oslin, Jeannie C. Riley and many others.

Visitors from every corner of the globe, including England, Denmark, Canada, India, Sri Lanka, the Netherlands and Australia, continue to make the pilgrimage to this musical sanctuary. As fans step through its doors, they embark on a journey through time, where the melodies of the past intertwine with the present, ensuring that the legends of Texas country music live on for generations to come.

Gone With the Wind Museum

Just 30 miles south of Atlanta, Texas, lies Jefferson, which contains a tribute to Atlanta (the city in Georgia), in the form of a larger-than-life shrine to everything *Gone With the Wind*.

Scarlett O'Hardy's Gone With the Wind Museum, created by Jefferson's Bobbie Hardy, features one of the world's largest private collections of memorabilia from this epic story of the Old South.

The museum tells the complete story of *Gone With the Wind* with displays focusing on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel

written by Margaret Mitchell; the 1939 film produced by David O. Selznick starring Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh; and the modern-day collectibles that reveal just how pervasive the story's characters and dialogue have become in everyday life.

Movie posters from the U.S. and abroad, still photos, magazines, books, dolls, costume reproductions, jigsaw puzzles, drapery fabric, and figurines track the various rereleases of the film over the years and the continuing love moviegoers have for *Gone With the Wind*.

Among the museum's standout features, and one of its most revered, is the replica of Scarlett's iconic green drapery dress, a masterpiece designed by Walter Plunkett and hailed by many as the most well-known costume in cinematic history.

The novel, published in 1936, has never been out of print. The museum is home to more than 100 foreign editions of the novel including copies from Bulgaria, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Vietnam and Yugoslavia.

A pair of original seats from the Loew's Grand Theatre in Atlanta, where the iconic movie had its world premiere, are also on display at the museum. ■



RISKA / ISTOCK.COM



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Texas Independence Day
Saturday, March 2

Daylight Saving Time Starts
Ramadan Begins
Sunday, March 10

Vietnam War Veterans Day
Friday, March 29

Easter
César Chávez Day
Sunday, March 31

EVGENY ATAMANENKO / ISTOCK.COM

Give Electricity a Spring Break

SPRING BREAK COULD MEAN time off of work or school and some time away from home. Take advantage of the time away to give your electric bill a bit of a break too.

While you're gone, unplug some of your household appliances. Your house has many items that always use electricity when they're plugged in, even if they're off. Unplugging these items not only saves energy but also can prevent fires during your absence. Some of the more common items are TVs, DVD players, cable TV boxes, microwave ovens, toasters and other small kitchen appliances.

Adjust the refrigerator control to a warmer setting. The fridge can be set as high as 40 degrees without spoiling food; the freezer can be set at 5 degrees. On these settings, you can conserve up to 40% of the refrigerator's electric usage.

If you're going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off entirely. Remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew. And empty the ice bin so the cubes don't melt and leave a puddle.

Set the thermostat higher—or lower—than the typical comfort level, depending on expected temperatures. In warmer weather, you can shut off the air conditioner during your absence. If you have a programmable thermostat, you can program the system to bring your home back to a comfortable temperature before you return.

Close blinds in sunny windows to prevent rooms from overheating.

Turn down the water heater. A large percentage of the cost of running a water heater comes from just keeping the water at the selected temperature.

Consider using timers to turn lights on and off every night. Using timers rather than just leaving lights on all the time can save energy and also give the appearance that someone is home. For the lights that will be on the longest—inside and outside—use LED bulbs. These use at least 75% less power than traditional bulbs and last longer.

On a related note, it's a good idea to turn off the valves of your washing machine to ensure that the laundry room doesn't flood while you're gone. ■

The Cooperative Difference— More Than a Slogan

THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE is more than a marketing slogan to Sam Houston Electric Cooperative. Employees and board members see it as their duty to exemplify the cooperative difference by acting in the best interest of our consumer-members, providing high-quality service and educating people about the differences between a co-op and other businesses.

“The cooperative difference is more than genuinely caring about every consumer-member, though Co-op employees often go the extra mile to help members,” said Rachel Hawkins, chief communications officer. “Since many of our employees live on our lines and in the communities we serve, Co-op employees are members too. So are their parents, cousins, neighbors and friends.”

The cooperative difference also means Sam Houston EC operates differently from other utilities. It’s a not-for-profit organization that provides electricity at cost to consumer-members. In fact, Sam Houston EC members paid 25% less from June through November 2023 compared to the same time in 2022.

The 25% decrease illustrates the cooperative difference. Unlike many businesses, when wholesale costs decrease, the savings are passed on immediately to our consumer-members—not used to increase a profit margin. ■



VAASEENAA | ISTOCK.COM

Mixed Berry Pistachio Crisp

**5 tablespoons cold butter, plus
more for coating the dish**

4 cups frozen mixed berries

1 tablespoon lemon juice

¼ cup sugar

4 tablespoons flour, divided use

1 cup rolled oats

¼ cup chopped pistachios

⅓ cup brown sugar

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a 9-inch pie dish or oven-safe skillet with butter.

2. In a large bowl, add berries, then sprinkle lemon juice over the top. Combine sugar and 2 tablespoons flour and sprinkle over berries; mix well. Pour into the prepared pan.

3. In a small bowl, combine oats, pistachios, brown sugar, remaining 2 tablespoons flour, salt and cinnamon. Cut in butter using a pastry blender or two forks until large clumps are formed and no dry bits remain. Sprinkle topping evenly over fruit mixture.

4. Bake 45–50 minutes, until browned and bubbly.

MAKES 8 SERVINGS



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- 4 Gourmet Jumbo Franks (3 oz.)
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- 4 Individual Scalloped Potatoes (3.8 oz.)
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A Revere of Our Own

Young Katy Jennings raced bareback to alert her fellow Texians about the advancing Mexican army

BY MARTHA DEERING • ILLUSTRATION BY KATE GLEYZER

PAUL REVERE wasn't the only patriot who made a courageous ride to warn of approaching danger. In 1836, Katy Jennings rode west from her home in Bastrop to the tiny town of Waterloo (known today as Austin) to alert Texians that the Mexican army was coming and they should run for their lives.

Katy was 10 years old.

Her father, Gordon C. Jennings, was a farmer who moved his family from Missouri to Bastrop in 1833. Gordon enlisted in the Texas militia, encouraged by the promise of a land grant as compensation. He served at the Alamo as a cannoneer, probably manning artillery positions on the north wall. When the

Alamo fell to Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna's army on March 6, 1836, Gordon, 53, was the oldest Alamo defender to die.

Author Mary Jean Kelso, a direct descendent of Katy's brother Samuel—Kelso's great-grandfather—wrote a book about her family, *A Visual History Record of Alamo Defender Gordon Cartwright Jennings' Family*. (Kelso spells her name Katy, but a newspaper obituary called her Katie.)

When word of the Alamo reached Bastrop, most families fled east in a panicked exodus known as the Runaway Scrape. But Gordon's wife, Catherine, and a few of her neighbors stood their ground until

a division of the Mexican army reached the Colorado River at Bastrop.

With no choice but to flee, Catherine, her three children and two stepsons threw their most valuable possessions into a wagon. Then Catherine boosted daughter Katy onto a horse bareback and sent her west to warn others that Mexican soldiers were nipping at their heels. She told Katy not to return to Bastrop because the family would be gone.

Katy was instructed to join another family when she arrived in Waterloo, and the Jennings clan would meet again in a refugee camp along the Trinity River in East Texas.

Clinging to her horse's mane, Kelso writes, Katy rode west at "great speed" for 40 miles, warning settlers along the way. Somehow she found her way back to her family after the Battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, and was with them when they returned to Bastrop.

"According to family stories," Kelso says, "after the Texas Revolution, Katy married Casper Whistler, but the marriage was short lived. Whistler was scalped by Indians while Katy, who had gone to fetch water, hid in a creek bed."

Katy later married a second time, to Sylvester Lockwood, a Texas pioneer. The couple lived near Manor in Travis County for 65 years. According to her 1911 obituary, Katy had eight children, 42 grandchildren, 100 great-grandchildren and 10 great-great grandchildren when she died at the age of 85.

She's still remembered for her famous bareback ride.

"Some people may have called 10-year-old Katy Jennings brave or foolhardy," Kelso says. "Texas calls her a hero." ■

Best Brunch

Savory or sweet, don't oversleep this weekend meal

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Nothing makes this gal happier than brunch. Good friends, amazing food and music in the background is my forever Sunday mood. Breakfast tostadas are so easy to prepare, and a mini version of anything is always greeted with a "wow!"

Mini Breakfast Tostadas

12 mini or street taco corn tortillas
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
6 eggs
4 teaspoons milk
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 cups refried beans, warmed
Pico de gallo or salsa

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place tortillas on a baking sheet and lightly brush tortillas with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Bake until crisp, about 10 minutes.
2. In a bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper.
3. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil (or you can use 1 tablespoon butter) to a skillet over medium-high heat. Pour in eggs and cook until scrambled. Remove from heat.
4. Spread beans over tostadas, spoon eggs over beans and top with pico de gallo or salsa.

MAKES 12 TOSTADAS

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





Sausage in Puff Pastry

PENNY SENGLER
GVEC

Ready in under 30 minutes, this recipe is hands-down the ultimate addition to your brunch spread, and it might be even better the next morning for a go-to breakfast.

- 1 package frozen puff pastry (17.3 ounces), thawed**
- ¼ cup spicy brown, Dijon or whole grain mustard**
- 1 pound ground breakfast sausage**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. On a cutting board, unfold the two pastry sheets. Slice pastry into thirds along the folds. Slice each third in half to make 12 rectangles. Spread a thin layer of mustard onto each pastry section.
3. Divide breakfast sausage into 12 small balls, then roll each ball into a finger-size log. Place sausage log onto end of pastry rectangle and roll it up into pastry.
4. Place sausage rolls onto parchment-lined baking sheet. Slice two small slits across the top of each roll. Brush with egg.
5. Bake 20–25 minutes or until golden brown. Allow sausage rolls to rest 7–10 minutes before serving.

MAKES 12

MORE RECIPES >

\$500 WINNER

Blueberry French Toast With Blueberry Syrup

RUTH FILZ
NUECES EC



Planning on a crowd for brunch? This heavenly French toast has you covered. No need to individually cook slice after slice—this deliciousness bakes in the oven. It can be assembled the night before and refrigerated overnight so the bread can absorb the flavorful eggy mixture. The lightly sweet, perfectly creamy goodness is worth every calorie.

SERVES 10



- 12 slices day-old bread**
- 1 package cream cheese (8 ounces)**
- 2 cups blueberries, divided use**
- 2 eggs**
- 2 cups milk**
- ½ cup maple syrup or honey**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- 1 cup water**
- 1 tablespoon (½ stick) butter**

1. Coat a 9-by-13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray. Cut bread into 1-inch cubes and place half of them into pan.
2. Cut cream cheese into ½-inch cubes and place on top of cubed bread. Top with 1 cup blueberries and then remaining half of bread cubes.
3. In a large bowl, beat together eggs, milk, and maple syrup or honey. Pour over bread mixture. Cover and chill in fridge 8 hours or overnight. Remove from fridge 30 minutes before baking.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake covered for 30 minutes, then uncover and bake an additional 30 minutes, or until center of French toast is set.
5. In a saucepan combine sugar, cornstarch and water. Bring to a boil, then stir constantly for 3 minutes. Stir in remaining 1 cup blueberries.
6. Reduce heat. Simmer 8–10 minutes, or until berries burst. Remove from heat and stir in butter. Serve warm over blueberry French toast.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

PARTY DRINKS DUE MARCH 10

Summer soirees call for a festive frosty drink. Send us your best punch, mocktail and cocktail recipes for a shot at \$500. Go online and submit your favorite by March 10.





Breakfast Strata

DIANE HUNLEY
PEDERNALES EC

A strata is my idea of the perfect brunch. This is prepped the night before so it's ready for the oven the next day.

1 pound spicy breakfast sausage
½ pound diced bacon
4 eggs
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon dry mustard

½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
2 cups milk
6 slices wheat or white bread, cubed
8 ounces grated cheddar cheese

1. Coat a 9-by-13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a skillet over medium-high heat, cook sausage, breaking it up with a spoon until fully done. Remove sausage from skillet, add diced bacon and cook until crispy. Remove from skillet.
3. In a bowl, whisk together eggs, salt, pepper, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and milk.
4. Layer bread, sausage, bacon and cheese in the pan. Pour the egg mixture over the entire casserole. Using a spoon, press down to ensure that all ingredients are submerged. Cover and place in fridge overnight.
5. Remove dish from fridge. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake, covered, 1 hour or until firm in center. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

SERVES 8

Make Brunch a Breeze

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

A small, intimate group is the way to go. Plan accordingly for your space.

Make the morning about mingling. Assemble dishes the night before. Casseroles, quiches, stratas and fruit salads are perfect for this.

While you're at it, set the table, arrange glasses, and lay out serving platters and utensils.

Pick up pastries: less fuss while supporting local bakeries.

Offer a DIY bar with self-serve drinks—coffee, mimosas, mocktails. While guests help themselves, you can finish up preparations or greet guests.

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3 ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

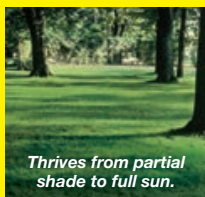
No weeding means no costly chemicals. Amazoy Zoysia lawns naturally resist insects, so you'll save money, while helping to protect the environment. Never expose your family and pets to weed killers and pesticide poison.

4 FOR SLOPES, PLAY AREAS, BARE SPOTS AND PARTIAL SHADE

Can't beat Amazoy as the low-cost answer for hard-to-cover spots, play-worn areas, partial shade and erosion on slopes.

5 IT STAYS GREEN IN SPITE OF HEAT AND DROUGHT

"The hotter it gets, the better it grows!" Amazoy Zoysia thrives in blistering heat, yet it won't winter-kill to 30° below zero. It goes off its green color after hard frosts, and begins regaining its green color as temperatures in the spring are consistently warm.



Thrives from partial
shade to full sun.



Plant it from
plugs.

6 CHOKES OUT CRABGRASS AND WEEDS ALL SUMMER

Your established Zoysia lawn grows so thick, it simply stops crabgrass and most summer weeds from germinating!

7 NOW 3 WAYS TO START YOUR AMAZOY ZOYSIA LAWN!

1) **Freestyle Plugs** come in uncut sheets containing a maximum of 150-1" plugs that can be planted up to 1 ft. apart. Freestyle plugs allow you to make each plug bigger and plant further apart — less cutting and planting — you decide.

2) **Precut Super Plugs** come precut into individual 3"x3" plugs ready-to-plant (minimum 1 per 4 sq. ft.). They arrive in easy to handle trays of 15 Super Plugs. Save time and get your new lawn faster!

3) **Amazoy Approved Seed** – As The Zoysia Specialists for 70 years, we now have a Zoysia seed that meets our standards and homeowners expectations.

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1100	+400	10	\$110.00	\$47.50	36%
2000	+1000	20	\$185.00	\$75.00	47%
3000	+1500	30	\$245.00	\$90.00	55%

Super Plugs Precut plugs 3 inches by 3 inches READY TO PLANT Packed in trays of 15 Super Plugs. Plant minimum 1 plug per 4 sq. ft.

Super Plugs	Free Plugs	Tray	Your PRICE	+Shipping	SAVINGS
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Doing Time

Brown County's history museum lets visitors lock into law and order

BY CHET GARNER

ONCE WAS in Europe and wondered, "Why don't we build more castles in Texas?"

But I was oblivious to the fact that there are already castles all around us in the form of historic courthouses and jails. That's especially true in Brown County, where the old jail looks more like a medieval fortress than a place to dive into history.

I started my time-traveling adventure across the street from the jail at the Brown County Museum of History. From woolly mammoth bones to frontier homes, this collection covers every era of this corner of Texas between Abilene and Austin. I sat around the (fake) campfire inside a full-sized Comanche dwelling. I learned that Gilligan (aka Bob Denver) was raised in Brownwood. I also got hands-on lessons because this museum actually encourages visitors to touch the artifacts.

Most amazing was the story of Camp Bowie, which was one of the largest army training camps in the U.S. during World War II, bringing more than a quarter-million troops to Brownwood.

Things got especially interesting, and spooky, when I crossed the street and stepped inside the old jail. This lockup opened in 1903 and served Brown County until the 1980s. The smell of stone and rusted metal permeates every room. The ground floor, which was once the sheriff's private residence, is now an incredible museum about Texas rule of law and includes stories of famous outlaws and jailbreaks.

Upstairs is where things got even creepier as I explored three floors of metal cells with heavy iron doors. I unknowingly stepped across the drop floor for the old gallows, which luckily didn't spring open. If I was plotting a crime 100 years ago in Brown County, this simple tour would have quickly cured me of any ill intent. ■

ABOVE The old county jail in Brownwood doesn't escape Chet's attention.

TCP Join Chet's captivating visit to Brownwood 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.

MARCH

07

Austin Lakeway Garden Club Spring Mixer, (512) 263-2885, lakewaygardenclub.com

Denton [7-10] Texas Storytelling Festival, (940) 380-9320, tejasstorytelling.com

Irving [7-10] Texas Steel Guitar Jamboree, (817) 558-3481, texassteelguitar.org

08

Corsicana An Evening with Amy Grant, (903) 874-7792, corsicanapalace.com

09

Luling Rajun' Cajun Throwdown and Gumbo Cookoff, (830) 875-3214, lulingmainstreet.com

McKinney [9-10] Heard Museum Family Campout, (972) 562-5566, heardmuseum.org

14

Dublin [14-16] St. Patrick's Day, (254) 300-6263, dublintxchamber.com

15

Round Top [15-16] Pioneer Unit of Herb Society of America Plant and Gift Sale, (713) 503-9981, herbsocietypioneer.org

Tolar [15-16] Ceramic Expo and Handcrafted Items, (254) 716-5227, westceramicshow.com

22

Georgetown [22-23] Star Struck: Georgetown Quilt Show, (512) 869-1812, handcraftsunlimited.com

Burton [22-30] La Bahia Antique Show, (979) 289-2684, labahiaantiques.com

23

Brenham Mark Lowry with the Sound and Endless Highway, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Huntsville Herb Festival at the Wynne Home, (936) 891-5024, texasthymeunit.org

25

Johnson City [25–April 19] Wine and Wildflower Journey, (872) 216-9463, texashillcountrywineries.org

30

Burnet Hill Country Lawn & Garden Show, (512) 756-3059, burnetcountyhighland lakesmastergardener.org

Sabinal [30–31] Wild Hog Festival and Craft Fair, (830) 486-8549, sabinalwildhogfestival.com

APRIL

02

Corsicana [2–4] Janet's Planet, (903) 872-5411, navarrocouncilofhearts.com

05

Dimmitt [5–6] Ogallala Quilters' Society Quilt Festival, ogallalaquilters.org

Luling [5–6] Roughneck Chili and BBQ Cook-Off, (830) 875-1922, lulingoilmuseum.org

Kerrville [5–7] Texas Lions Camp Eclipse Celebration, (830) 896-8500, kerrvilletexasclubb.com

06

Quitman [6–8] Northeast Texas Eclipsefest, netxeclipsefest.com

TCP Submit Your Event

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



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here.

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TCP E-news

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Architecture

From modest to magnificent, architecture old and new is used for housing, education, entertainment and more. These structures surround, engage and inspire Texans to even greater heights. This month we appreciate designs found right here in the Lone Star state.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 SUMMER EVERILL
PEDERNALES EC

A new installation at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin.

2 CAROLYN WILLIAMS
COSERV

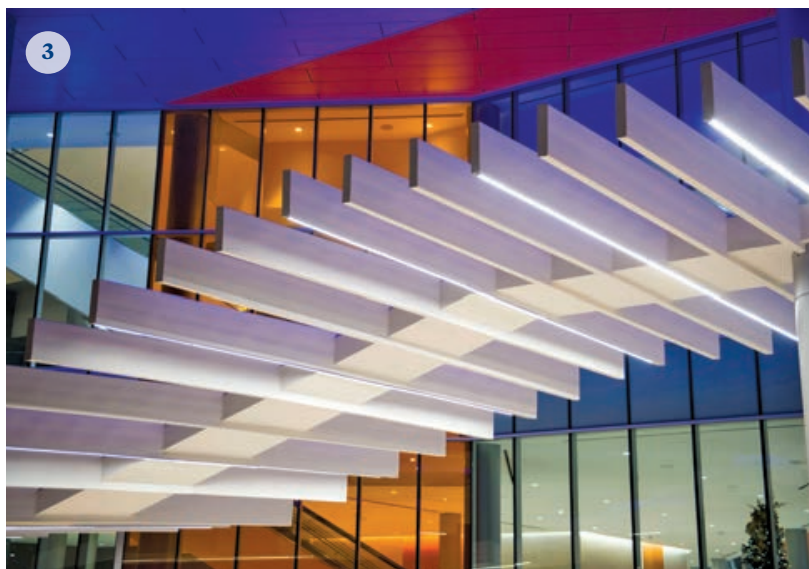
"While exploring senior photo locations, I had heard that this University of North Texas pedestrian bridge was a wonder. As I got up to the edge, the sun and clouds created these amazing shadows."

3 MARK MCCLENDON
BANDERA EC

The Henry B. González Convention Center in San Antonio.

4 TOM BRENTS
FAYETTE EC

The Ashbel Smith Building, also known as Old Red, is a Romanesque Revival-style structure in Galveston. Built in 1890 with red brick and sandstone, it survived the great 1900 hurricane and 2008's Hurricane Ike.



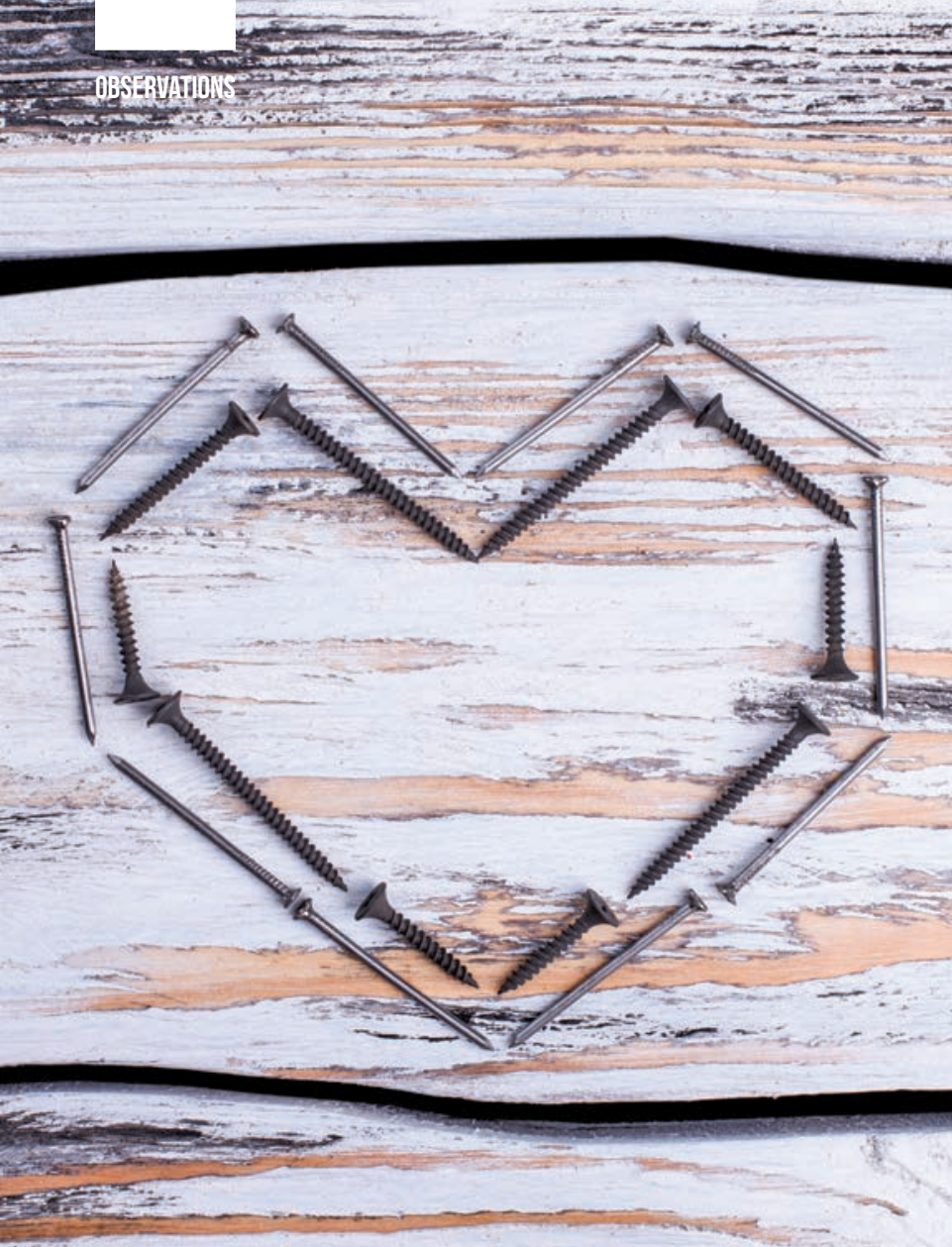
Upcoming Contests

- DUE MAR 10** Shells and Scales
- DUE APR 10** Textures
- DUE MAY 10** Parenthood



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



It Takes a Family

When all seems lost,
loved ones rebuild a life

BY DALE ROBERSON

SOMETIMES IT TAKES a tragedy to bring a family and friends together. I know. It happened to me.

My children were scattered to the four winds. Kathy in New Braunfels, Pat and Vicki in Denton; Shannon had settled in Richmond, Virginia. Kalli and Tony were in Little Elm. We weren't estranged, just widely spread.

Since retirement, I hadn't kept up with several friends.

The tragedy occurred in the middle of the night November 18, 2018, when my house outside Driftwood caught fire. I escaped with one night in the hospital. My wife, Joyce, died in the blaze.

Not only did I lose my wife of 41 years, I was left with only the pajamas I had on. I didn't even have shoes.

That was when family and friends re-

grouped to help put my life back together.

Kathy took me to her house to stay until I devised a plan.

Tim McKenzie, whose late father had been a friend, called to offer an unoccupied apartment he owned.

Everyone came together to solve my problems.

As a newspaper editor, I had written about businessman Tracey Dean, then president of the Wimberley school board. When Tracey heard about my misfortune, he appeared with a sizeable check from members of his church. Then he arranged a line of credit for building materials at McCoy's and hired a carpenter to help me rebuild.

My granddaughter, Bethany Kraft, set up a GoFundMe to raise money. Friends I hadn't seen in some time mailed personal checks with condolences.

Granddaughters Melissa Niland and Rachel Nielsen helped set up the apartment as friends contributed furniture and clothing. Tim and grandson-in-law Brian Nielsen cleared cedar and built a pad for a foundation.

We purchased an unfinished 16-by-40-foot building as my future home. With much help and my building skills, we finished the inside to my design. Grandchildren as young as 5-year-old McKinley, 12-year-old Ned and teen Chase contributed. Grandson Cliff Roberson, a professional electrician, provided lights and power. Pat hung a storm door and installed cabinet shelves while Vicki, my daughter-in-law, joined the girls.

My former wife Vicki and her friend Joe nailed down the oak flooring furnished by Tracey from a remodeling job he'd done.

Now—thanks to all their love and efforts—I'm settled and happy in my new home. It's been said that it takes a village. A tragedy can prove what it really takes is family and friends. ■



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