

TEXAS CITY DISASTER'S
SCARS ENDURE

TWO-FISTED WEST TEXAS
LAW AND ORDER

WEEDS GET THE
LAST LAUGH

Texas Co-op Power

FOR SAM HOUSTON EC MEMBERS

APRIL 2022

Wheel Deal

Food Truck Championship
challengers draw big
crowds to a small town

**SANDLOT
BASEBALL
REVIVAL**

SEE PAGE 22

PLUS

- 18 Lineman
Appreciation Day
- 20 Members Rate
Co-op Highly
- 21 Energy-Saving
Claims



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April 2022



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Seventy-five years after the Texas City disaster, those who rushed in haven't been forgotten.

By Bill Minutaglio

Best in Tow

Chefs bring big-time flavor to small-town Graham for the Food Truck Championship of Texas.

*By Amanda Ogle
Photos by Tom Hussey*

ON THE COVER

Lyn Sharp awaits the next order in Danibelle's Lebanese Cuisine food truck.

ABOVE

The crew from Rack Attack Barbecue celebrates winning the grand champion belt.
Photos by Tom Hussey

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By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

Count on Lineworkers

ELECTRIC CO-OPS proudly celebrate their lineworkers, even proclaiming the second Monday in April—April 11 this year—as National Lineworker Appreciation Day.

Co-op members, too, are quick to look up to lineworkers.

When we asked readers to finish this sentence—“The hardest job in the world has to be ...”—Pablo Sanchez, a Magic Valley Electric Cooperative member, was the first to respond:

“Being a lineman during cold weather. Knowing someone is counting on Magic Valley to keep us warm.”



“Genius is 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration.”

—THOMAS EDISON

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I REMEMBER
WHEN A DOLLAR
COULD BUY ...

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.

Below are some of the responses to our February prompt: **The baby of the family always ...**

Remembers things differently.

STEVE AND LISA BOSTON
VIA FACEBOOK

Gets his way and mom's attention.

SANDRA GONZALEZ
SAN PATRICIO EC
BAYSIDE

Had a stomachache when it was time to help with dishes and cleanup after dinner.

MARY ANN CULEY
TRINITY VALLEY EC
FRANKSTON

Gets the hand-me-downs.

LORA GRAHAM
COLEMAN COUNTY EC
GOLDBUSK

Stays the baby even when he's 6 feet, 2 inches tall; 31 years old; and has his own baby.

SHERRI LENOIR
NAVASOTA VALLEY EC
GROESBECK

To see more responses, read Currents online.

TCP *Contests and More*

ENTER CONTESTS AT
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM



\$500 RECIPE CONTEST

Pizza Night

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS

Motorsports

RECOMMENDED READING

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11.

Line of Duty from October 2016 tells about the challenges and rewards for these co-op first responders.



April 7

National Beer Day

Celebrating is easy: *Texas Feels a Draft* from January 2020 includes a map of 96 craft breweries in mostly rural and suburban Texas.

GUARD AGAINST SURGES

Your electric cooperative reminds you of two ways you can protect electronics in your home from power surges: using power strips that include surge protection and installing a whole-home surge protector.

Have You Heard?

Before the Industrial Revolution, roughly 1760–1840, the principal sources of loud noise were thunder, church bells and cannon fire.



Emergency Tax Break

TEXAS MERCHANTS will participate in a sales tax holiday for emergency preparation supplies this month, allowing tax-free purchases of items that can alleviate hardships after natural disasters like hurricanes, flash floods and wildfires.

More than a dozen products, such as portable generators, hurricane shutters, batteries and fire extinguishers, can be purchased without incurring sales tax April 23–25. Details are available at comptroller.texas.gov.



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Not Fade Away

I grew up on an Iowa farm about 20 miles south of where Buddy Holly and the others met their end [*A Glimpse of Buddy Holly*, February 2022]. I was 11 then. We didn't learn of the crash until we got to school. All the girls were crying, dashing in and out of the restroom to wash their tears away, only to cry even more as others came through the doors and were told of the crash. Some were so upset they even went home.

Doug Siskow
Pedernales EC
New Braunfels

That's when they
made barbed com-
ments [*Joined by
a Fence*, January
2022].

CHUCK BURGESS
VIA FACEBOOK



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Aggie Standouts

“The lore of the 12th Man is always inspirational. Big kudos to the editors who made sure the story started on Page 12. How perfect.”

JULIA TRIGG CRAWFORD
LAMAR ELECTRIC
DIRECT

Royal Recollection

Our Stephenville neighbor June Shannon was personally invited by Queen Elizabeth II to visit her in Austin in 1991 [*Her Majesty's Visit*, February 2022]. What do you take the queen to welcome her to Texas? A pecan pie, of course. June baked a pie and enjoyed it with her majesty over tea.

June, our Stephenville High School English teacher, was selected to read her poem *Happiness Is* at the queen's silver jubilee in London in 1977. There they became friends, sharing a love for country life.

Suzan Garner
CECA
Mullin

Telling Good Stories

We subscribe to several state and national, globally recognized magazines, many of which get quickly scanned and recycled. *Texas Co-op Power* is one that I read cover to cover and look forward to.

Thank you, Texas Electric Cooperatives, for your support of journalism and for understanding the importance of a good story.

Abbie and Charles Cotrell
Bandera EC
Waring



WRITE TO US

letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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

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

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My Zoomer is a delight to ride! It has increased my mobility in my apartment, my opportunities to enjoy the-out-of-doors, and enabled me to visit the homes of my children for longer periods of time. The various speeds of it match my need for safety, it is easy to turn, and I am most pleased with the freedom of movement it gives me.

Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

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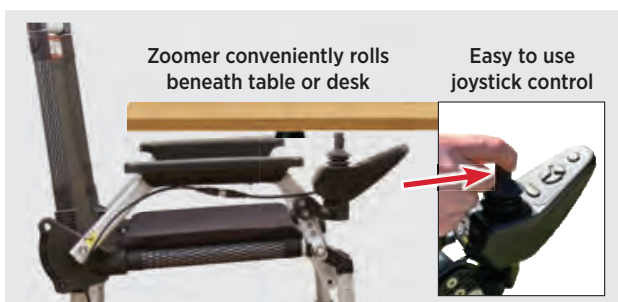
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Heroes Next Door

Seventy-five years after the Texas City disaster, those who rushed in haven't been forgotten

BY BILL MINUTAGLIO

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I received a message that just didn't seem right: An indomitable and indestructible Texan, someone so brave it felt like he could live forever, had passed away.

He was a former soldier who had fought in some of the deadliest moments of World War II. And then, after surviving the ravages of battle, he and others had stared down what some have called the greatest human-made tragedy of 20th-century America—an event that came to be called the Texas City disaster.

COURTESY WOODSON RESEARCH CENTER, FONDREN LIBRARY, RICE UNIVERSITY

Curtis Trahan had lived through so many things that it wasn't all that unusual to assume he could march on and on. But his family let me know that he had indeed succumbed. They wondered if I would speak at his memorial service.

Of course, I agreed—while knowing it would be virtually impossible to give proper tribute to him and all the other ordinary folks in Texas City who displayed unyielding courage, empathy and humanity during the most profound tragedy imaginable.

Tall and soft-spoken, Trahan was mayor of the small port town near Houston on April 16, 1947. That morning, as kids and families gathered to watch firefighters tackle what seemed like a small fire on a dock, there was suddenly a massive explosion.

It was what some imagined an atomic bomb blast to be like. Others simply thought that Judgment Day had abruptly arrived.

The earth rumbled and shuddered, oceangoing ships were heaved out of the water, buildings collapsed, airplanes were sucked from the sky—and hundreds of men, women and children instantly perished. Almost every member of the Texas City Fire Department was killed in the blink of an eye. Dozens and dozens of people were never seen again.

The final numbers were debated, but it appears that the Texas City disaster killed as many as 500. It's possible that more died but were never accounted for, and another 5,000 were injured. Dozens of human remains went unidentified.

Despite unrelenting fires, carnage and chaos, hundreds of people, including Trahan, raced to the scene. They organized rescue efforts, comforted the wounded and asked for help from lawmakers in Austin and Washington. They refused to sleep, marshaled volunteers and demanded answers for the pained community. So many Texans and more than a few souls from out of state stayed for weeks and months on end to treat the victims, donate blood, clear the rubble and help families search for loved ones.

The FBI arrived to investigate whether it had been some sort of attack. Soldiers were sent to restore order. Frank Sinatra agreed to do a fundraiser. Hundreds of cars, homes and buildings needed repairs. The financial toll, in today's dollars, would reach into the billions. Scientists were in awe at how the detonations were felt dozens of miles away

It was what some imagined an atomic bomb blast to be like. Others simply thought that Judgment Day had abruptly arrived.

in Houston and even registered on measuring devices in other states.

The blast was ultimately deemed an

accident. One theory held that a carelessly tossed cigarette had set fire to tons of ammonium nitrate fertilizer sitting in the hold of a ship. It was, ironically, fertilizer that the United States was sending to Europe to nourish war-ravaged farms and speed the healing of a decimated continent.

Investigations and court cases would stretch on for years, circling around whether or not more could have been done to warn the good people in Texas City that the bags and bags of fertilizer were not just lifesaving—they were also deadly.

Ammonium nitrate was already well-recognized by then to be both a powerful fertilizer and explosive. Bombmakers used it in World War I, and later, terrorists also sought it out. The compound was used by Timothy McVeigh to blow up a federal building in Oklahoma, and in 2013, there was an explosion at a fertilizer facility in West, Texas, that led to 15 deaths.

Now, as another aching anniversary for the Texas City disaster approaches, I think of the last conversation I had with Trahan. For many long years, he had watched as the stricken city rebuilt bit by bit. Businesses eventually reopened, the freighters came back, and school classes and church services resumed.

But for Trahan and others, the wounds from the Texas City disaster never went entirely away. He and many more had seen too much, endured so much, for the mental and even physical scars to truly vanish.

We sat in his little home, and he talked about how he had first moved to Texas City because he thought it would be a quiet place to raise a family. That he had run for mayor so that anyone from any race or background would be treated the same.

He said that when hell on earth came to his little town, he simply did what he had to do. What he believed most people would do: You race to rescue your neighbors. You pull them from the rubble. You give them balm, hope and resolve.

And then Trahan waved his hand and suggested quietly that he hadn't done anything that merited remembering.

Later, when I spoke at his memorial service, I tried to convey the essence of that final visit with Trahan. How a disaster can reveal both courage and humility—and how you often don't have to look very far to find everyday angels.

Some reside right next door. ■

The Texas City explosion, so powerful it blew two planes out of the sky, killed as many as 500 people in April 1947.





BEST IN TOW

Chefs bring big-time flavor to small-town Graham for the **Food Truck Championship of Texas**

After parking my car across from a feed store, I make my way up Fourth Street in Graham toward the downtown square. It's a little after noon, and the area is buzzing with activity. Live music rattles through the streets up ahead, and I pass a group of people heading back to their vehicles, toothpicks in hand. "Scrumdiddlyumptious!" one of them says, patting his stomach in satisfaction. I get excited.

Forty-two food trucks are competing today in the Food Truck Championship of Texas, an annual contest that has been held in Graham since 2015. Admission is free for all guests, who can also enjoy live music, an artisan showcase, children's activities and a late-night concert at the Young County Arena after the food.

Up for grabs are numerous awards, bragging rights and the coveted \$10,000 grand championship prize for the best food truck—crowned by a panel of expert judges. The stakes are high for competitors who arrive from hundreds of miles away—rigs in tow—in a test to be the best. This year's event is June 4.

For folks like me, choosing what to eat is the real food truck challenge. And we can't lose.

As I approach the competition, my mouth waters and my nostrils are filled with the scent of fried seafood—no doubt coming from the combination of Mac's Cajun Shack, Catch Me If You Can Southern Creole and Blazin Cajun—all positioned near Fourth and Oak streets and serving dishes such as seafood pot pie, gumbo, shrimp and grits, boudin egg rolls, crawfish, and smoked alligator.

In a nearby building, judges Debbie Workman, a chef and restaurateur; Ched Pagtakhan, a chef, culinary arts teacher and food truck owner; and Dante Ramirez, a restaurateur and catering consultant, sample fare from all 42 trucks.

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Folks in line ponder the menu at one of the 42 food trucks. Brandon Anderson of Rack Attack Barbecue displays his team's grand champion prize. Attendees dig in. An entry labeled with a number for anonymous judging.

FROM LEFT Merle takes in the sights and scents. Corn dogs proved hard to pass up. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP Shaved ice makes a hot ride nice. Event volunteer Jayne Beale shows off the grand champion belt.



Picked-at plates litter tables across the room, each dish assigned a number to make the entries anonymous.

"I really like that egg roll," Pagtakhan says.

Workman agrees. "The texture was good and flaky. And that pizza, No. 37, was so delicious and unique."

No Small Wonder

One mile around, it's no wonder that Graham calls its business district "America's largest downtown square." About an hour south of Wichita Falls and home to the Young County Courthouse and about 9,000 residents, Graham comes alive each June, when the chefs pull into town.

The smell of beef cooking on a flattop makes my stomach rumble as I approach Big Kat Burgers, but I press on, wanting to see all my options before diving in. A long line for Happy Dogs Corn Dogs tempts me, as does the mega line for Cousins Maine Lobster's fresh lobster rolls.

Maya Justice, who is at the event with friends, recom-

Up for grabs are numerous awards, bragging rights and the coveted **\$10,000 grand championship prize** for the best food truck—crowned by a panel of expert judges.

mends Bada Bing Wood Fired Pizza, and several people are buzzing about the fried alligator from Crawldaddys Cajun Kitchen.

"To be able to have pad thai and a Maine lobster roll at the same time here in Graham, America, is incredible," says Grant Ingram, executive director of economic development with the city of Graham. "It's so hard to pinpoint a favorite because the variety of trucks we're able to attract in north central Hill Country is amazing."

I decide the best approach here is sampling smaller items from multiple trucks, and I hop in line at Treviños Craft Smokehouse truck and wait.

"That Dr Pepper pulled pork taco from the Gypsy Kit truck is oh-em-gee," says Jenny French, who's behind me in line at Treviño's. She and her husband, Ken, came to support their neighbors, the Treviños, at the championship and are getting their fill like everyone else. "I wanted that



The Big Kat Burgers crew.

The Trucks in This Story

- Addie Cakes & Lily Pies, Paradise
- Bada Bing Wood Fired Pizza, San Angelo
- Big Kat Burgers, Fort Worth
- Bite My Biscuit, Fort Worth
- Blazin Cajun, Graham
- Catch Me If You Can, Tyler
- Cousins Maine Lobster, Houston
- Crawdaddys Cajun Kitchen, Bridgeport
- Gypsy Kit, Wichita Falls
- Happy Dogs Corn Dogs, Gainesville
- Mac's Cajun Shack, Fort Worth
- Rack Attack Barbecue, Burleson
- Sakura Southern Seoul, Wichita Falls
- Treviños Craft Smokehouse, Jacksboro
- Yatai Food Kart, Fort Worth

Maine lobster, but the line is so long," Ken says. "I'll never know how it tastes."

I grab a pulled pork taco on a homemade tortilla and head for a table on the courthouse lawn for my first bite of the day. The tender pulled pork and soft tortilla hit the spot on this hot day, and after perusing a few craft booths, I hit the streets again to walk it off and make room for more samples.

The growing line at Addie Cakes & Lily Pies gets my attention, and dessert sounds like just the thing after walking three laps around the square. Toe-tappin' tunes fill the air, making my wait for a white chocolate Key lime cheesecake more enjoyable. The tart yet sweet treat is perfect for summertime and makes waiting in line feel like a no-brainer.

While visiting with more foodies, I hear lots of chatter about a chicken sandwich on a biscuit. I have to have it, so I make my way to the Bite My Biscuit truck—the 2016 grand champion—for the Nashville hot fried chicken sandwich on a buttermilk biscuit with honey coleslaw and pickles. The \$5 dish is the perfect size (and price) for an event like this, and upon trying the spicy, buttery, delicious concoction, I see why everyone is talking about it.

2021 Winners

- Grand Champion** Rack Attack Barbecue
- Best Signature Dish** Pokey O's
- People's Choice** Daddy Bob's Smokewagon
- Best Food Truck Spirit** Blake's Snow Shack
- Best Food Truck Design** Sakura Southern Seoul
- Best Menu** Cousins Maine Lobster
- Best Dessert Dish** Addie Cakes & Lily Pies
- Best Barbecue Dish** Smokin 3 C's
- Best International Dish** Yatai Food Kart
- Best American Dish** Bite My Biscuit



Judges, from left, Ched Pagtakhan, Debbie Workman and Dante Ramirez experienced a day of tasting and hearty discussions.

There's the Beef

Full and satisfied, I grab a chair and wait for the awards ceremony.

"To go through 40-plus plates and taste them all and go through each one on uniqueness, presentation and flavors, it's tough," Ramirez announces. "This was difficult for us."

The audience cheers and whoops for each winner, including Bite My Biscuit for that tasty Nashville hot fried chicken biscuit, Yatai Food Kart for their signature ramen dish, Addie Cakes & Lily Pies for their pecan praline cheesecake, Cousins Maine Lobster for the best menu award, and Sakura Southern Seoul for best food truck design.

As the emcee inches closer to announcing the grand champion, the crowd grows quiet. "The 2021 Food Truck Championship grand champion: Rack Attack Barbecue with their dino beef rib and taking home a check for \$10,000." The crowd erupts in applause as the Rack Attack team roars with excitement, hugging each other as they claim their prize and a professional wrestling-style belt emblazoned with "2021 Grand Champion."

It was Rack Attack Barbecue's first time competing in the event, so a championship win makes owner Brandon Anderson, who opened the business in March 2018, ecstatic.

"This is the first time I've ever presented food that I've made to real chefs and real food critics, so it's a big deal for us," he says. "I'm really happy."

Anderson knew they'd won something when they were dispatched to the awards ceremony, and as the ceremony progressed, they knew through the process of elimination that grand champion was a possibility—as astonishing

"To be able to have pad thai and a Maine lobster roll at the same time here in Graham, America, is incredible."

as that seemed. "I still can't believe it," he says after the ceremony. "We've worked so hard."

Anderson says he thought the winning dish might relate to Texas, which inspired him to serve a beef rib—what he calls "king in Texas."

"I figured everyone would want to try it, so we smoked them, pulled the meat off the bones and served it on top of smoked mashed potatoes," he says.

It worked. "Their dish was very unique," Pagtakhan says. "The doneness on the smoked beef rib was perfect, the flavor was balanced, and the smoked mashed potatoes was a perfect pairing."

Unfortunately, Rack Attack Barbecue ceased operations a few months after the 2021 Food Truck Championship, so this year's showdown will have a new grand champion in addition to plenty of friendly competition and delectable grub up for grabs.

Gina LeGrand, owner of Addie Cakes & Lily Pies, which won the best dessert category last year, will be ready. "I hope we continue our winning streak—or maybe win overall," she says. "Winning the grand prize with a dessert is challenging, but how incredible would that be?" ■

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14TH ANNUAL

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To our heroes in hard
hats, thank you for
keeping the lights on.

Celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day, April 11



SAM HOUSTON
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Helping Hands Supports Those in Need

SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S Helping Hands program provides funding to help members in distress pay their electric bills.

"The last two years have been incredibly challenging for many local families," said Rachel Frey, manager of communications. "We encourage our employees and members to contribute to Helping Hands."

The program is funded entirely by contributions from Sam Houston EC employees and members. Since the launch of Helping Hands in 1992, Sam Houston EC members have donated more than \$400,000 to their friends and neighbors in need. Older adults, people with disabilities, families who have experienced extraordinary circumstances and people of all kinds have received a helping hand from the program.

Call Sam Houston EC at 1-800-458-0381 to add a contribution to your monthly bill or make a one-time donation. The amount you give can make a big difference. ■



Celebrate Earth Day With Sam Houston EC

SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE is partnering with our members to celebrate Earth Day on April 22. Visit any Sam Houston EC location that day to receive a free LED lightbulb while supplies last.

Since 1970, Earth Day has been an annual reminder for us to be good stewards of our planet. For the past decade, the Cooperative has distributed free CFL or LED bulbs annually to honor Earth Day and help our member-consumers use less electricity.

At Sam Houston EC, we're proud to lead the way to a cleaner energy future by expanding the use of cost-effective renewable energy sources.

We also help members reduce their energy use with tips in *Texas Co-op Power* and at samhouston.net. Check your progress in reducing electricity use by logging on to your mySamHouston account or downloading the mySamHouston app on your mobile device. ■

Members Report High Satisfaction

SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE has once again received high marks in satisfaction from its members. For the second consecutive year, the Co-op's American Customer Satisfaction Index score topped 92.

"The 2021 ACSI of 92.25 ties our highest ever, which was set last year," said Keith Stapleton, chief communications officer. "It's a reflection of the great effort our Co-op employees put into serving our consumer-members during a time of rapid growth, a pandemic and other challenges."

ACSI is the only national cross-industry measure of customer satisfaction in the U.S. Companies from every business sector measure their performance with ACSI, and more than 600 electric cooperatives utilize the index.

To gauge Sam Houston EC member satisfaction in 2021, representatives from SkyBase7—formerly known as Oppenheim Research—surveyed a randomly selected group of members each month via phone.

The researchers asked four questions for the ACSI survey, with responses scored on a scale from zero to 10:

- ▶ How satisfied are you with Sam Houston EC?
- ▶ To what extent does Sam Houston EC exceed your expectations?
- ▶ How close is Sam Houston EC to the ideal electric company?
- ▶ If given a choice, how likely is it that you would choose Sam Houston EC?

Sam Houston EC's ACSI score of 92 is much higher than the electric utility industry's 2021 average score, which was 72. ■

Make Plans for the Online Annual Meeting June 14

THE SAM HOUSTON Electric Cooperative Meeting of Members will be held online June 14. Attending the annual meeting is a great way to be actively involved in your Cooperative.

"We are eager to return to holding a meeting in person to connect with our consumer-members," said Keith Stapleton, chief communications officer. "However, a virtual meeting is the safest option again this year."

The meeting will be conducted using the same technology as the 2021 annual meeting, streaming to consumer-members through their mySam-Houston portal at samhouston.net. Cooperative management will report on co-op business, including the results of the board of directors election.

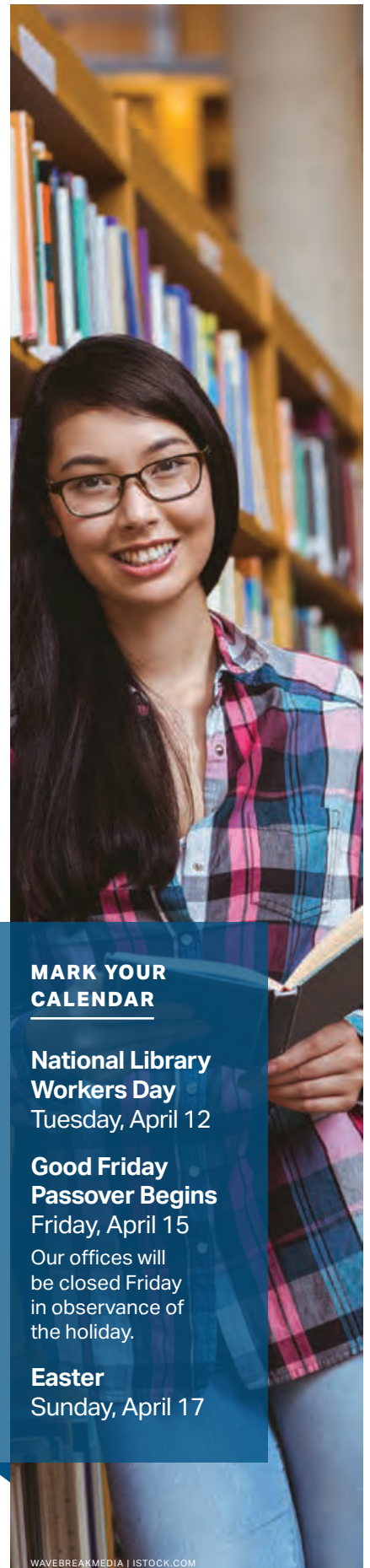
Election ballots will be sent out in May to allow voting online or by mail.

Sign up for a mySamHouston account to receive an email reminder to vote. Members who return their ballot by the early bird deadline will be eligible to win a prize.

Watch your inbox or your mailbox for full voting instructions and information. ■



RYAN J. LANE | ISTOCK.COM



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

National Library Workers Day
Tuesday, April 12

Good Friday Passover Begins
Friday, April 15

Our offices will be closed Friday in observance of the holiday.

Easter
Sunday, April 17

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Energy-Saving Claims: Do They Work?

WITH SO MUCH GUIDANCE out there about how to save electricity, it's sometimes hard to determine what's useful and what isn't. But the answer isn't always a clear-cut yes or no.

Keeping the thermostat set to a constant temperature while you're away saves more energy than setting it higher and lower when you leave and come back, right?

Not true. Keeping your thermostat at a constant temperature while away is a waste of energy. Together, heating and cooling make up almost 50% of annual household energy costs. When you leave for the day, set your thermostat a few degrees higher if using air conditioning. It requires much less energy to resume a comfortable temperature when you get home than it does to keep it at the target temperature all day long.

Is the dishwasher just as efficient as washing dishes by hand?

Yes—in fact, it's usually more efficient. Properly used dishwashers actually use less water while doing a better job, and as a bonus, they can save you more than 200 hours a year. For maximum energy savings, make sure your water heater is set to about 120 degrees and use the most efficient dishwasher settings.

Does turning lights off and on use more energy than just leaving them on?

No, and turning off lights definitely reduces energy use. Turn off LED and incandescent bulbs every time you leave the room. The situation is a little different with CFLs. Turning them off does save energy but can shorten the life of the bulb. Turn CFLs off any time they won't be used for 15 minutes or more.

Does it save energy to close the vents in rooms that aren't being used?

No. Closing air registers forces your furnace or air conditioner to work harder. Keep all your vents and doors open. If your system supplies too much heat or cold to some rooms and too little to other rooms, you should talk to a heating and air conditioning professional about modifying your ductwork.

Will keeping a fan on cool an unoccupied room?

Nope. Fans move air around; they don't cool the air. Having a fan on makes people inside a room feel cooler as air moves across their skin, but the air is not actually changing temperature. Leaving a fan on when you leave your home is simply wasting energy while the room temperature is not cooling off at all.

Does setting the thermostat temperature way lower cool a home faster?

No. No matter what temperature you set your thermostat, your air conditioning system will work equally hard and fast to meet that goal. The only difference achieved by setting the temperature lower is that the system will work for a longer period of time, using more energy.

Do appliances use energy when they're turned off?

Absolutely. Thanks to standby power settings, most appliances constantly use energy to be ready for immediate usage. These "energy vampires" cannot be turned completely off without unplugging the device altogether. The same is true for most phone, battery and other chargers. Leaving them plugged in wastes energy. ■



PHOTO COURTESY HERITAGE HOUSE MUSEUM, ORANGE

Sandlot Baseball Is Back

The game's original spirit is alive in East Texas, and you can see for yourself

BY RANDY MALLORY

AFTER THE CIVIL WAR ended, Union Maj. Gen. Abner Doubleday landed in Galveston in 1866 to command federal forces in that important Texas city. He surely didn't think that his mission would lead him to one day being wrongly credited with inventing the game of baseball.

Two decades earlier, a New York sports enthusiast named Alexander Joy Cartwright invented the game by writing new rules for the old English game of rounders, thus formalizing the basics of modern baseball. Doubleday, like many Civil War leaders on both sides, endorsed "base ball" (originally spelled as two words) as a way for troops to exercise and build morale.

On April 11, 1861, a Houston newspaper announced the formation of Texas' first team, the Houston Base Ball Club. Players who joined the club were asked to meet at an open field in town at 5 a.m. three days a week, weather permitting, for "field exercise," *The Weekly Telegraph* wrote.

The day after this newspaper account, Confederate troops

bombarded Union forces at Fort Sumter near Charleston, South Carolina. The war was on, and the effort to start baseball teams ceased. At prisoner-of-war camps during the war, however, Union troops taught the game to captured Confederate soldiers.

After the war, those Confederates brought the game home to Texas and other Southern states. A few games might have been played during the war, pitting Union against Confederate troops, but the first baseball diamond in Texas was drawn on Galveston Island's east end, according to the Galveston Historical Foundation.

That's where the newly formed Galveston Base Ball Club held its first game, in early 1867. A year later, *The Daily Telegraph* reported the first intercity game in Texas. The Galveston Robert E. Lees took on the Houston Stonewalls (both named for Confederate generals) at the San Jacinto Battleground near Houston.

The April 21 game was part of the state's annual celebration of Texas' 1836 victory over Mexico and was later described in a



2. Kids play baseball at the Riverside housing development in Orange during the 1940s.

3. A baseball game during recess at a San Augustine grade school, photographed in 1939 by Russell Lee for the Farm Security Administration.

4. Bats and balls take a different shape at the 2008 Texas Forts Trail Vintage Base Ball Tournament.

5. A 1939 night baseball game in Marshall, photographed by Russell Lee for the Farm Security Administration.

6. The Longview Cannibals baseball team in 1903.



1940s book sponsored by the Harris County Historical Society.

The teams traveled by boat to the battleground turned ballfield. The Stonewalls left their Houston dock after a rousing send-off complete with German band music and a few San Jacinto battle veterans aboard. The team wore “showy uniforms consisting of red caps, white flannel shirts and black pants,” *The Daily Telegraph* reported. Their boat also pulled a barge suitable for celebratory dancing, an act that proved providential as the Stonewalls romped the Lees, 34-5.

Sandlot Revolution

Baseball’s early players were amateur members of local clubs, competing mainly for exercise and camaraderie. Today’s top players are professionals, of course, vying for fame and fortune. Yet that original spirit of camaraderie—tempered by a healthy dose of competition—remains alive and well for those who play an increasingly popular version of the sport: sandlot baseball.

Hal Rochkind, who runs an insurance agency on Galveston Island, is one such player. Wearing No. 14, Rochkind plays second base for a 10-year-old sandlot team called the Gulf Coast Sugar. Its players are baseball lovers of various ages from Galveston and Houston. Like many sandlot teams, the Sugar play only a few games a year. Team members do have families

and day jobs, after all.

They play at a city park not far down the island from that first Texas ballfield. They also play on fields of varying quality at away games and the occasional tournament.

“We all grew up playing baseball as kids, some in Little League and some even in high school or college. Most of us grew up following the Astros,” Rochkind explains. “Sandlot is a way we hold on to our baseball memories while enjoying a healthy activity out of doors. We bring our families to watch the games so maybe they’ll keep the tradition alive.”

The Texas sandlot revolution began to take off in 2006 after architect and baseball fan Jack Sanders and friends formed a team in Austin called the Texas Playboys, named after Texas music legend Bob Wills’ Western swing band. They challenged friends in Austin and other cities to form pickup teams to play the game they loved.

After several years of rising interest in sandlot, Sanders built a field just east of Austin called the Long Time. His 5-acre field of dreams hosts games played against a family-friendly backdrop of Austin-style live music and beer. The games are generally played on the second Saturday of the month from March to October.

The sandlot phenomenon remains a relatively unorganized



1



2

PHOTO COURTESY PORT ARTHUR PUBLIC LIBRARY



3

JESSICA WOCHNER

loose-knit group of teams that play largely by standard hard-ball rules. The goal is to keep play flowing in a fun-loving way without runaway scoring or injuries.

Home-field rules, for example, stipulate that if a player hits a home run, then that player should bat from the other side of the plate on his or her next at-bat. If a team hits five homers, each additional homer is ruled an out and everyone gets a chance to hit. Pitchers may wear a cowboy hat if they so choose.

Fans spread out on picnic blankets eating barbecue as a horse watches beyond the left field fence. Fun overrides winning, but a sign at the Long Time still warns onlookers that “foul balls are real.”

Over the past decade or so, other sandlot teams have formed across Texas and beyond to join in on the fun. In addition to the Gulf Coast Sugar, other Southeast Texas sandlot teams include the Houston Buffs, Memorial Moonshots, Houston Gamblers, Space City Baseball Club and the Texas Oil Dawgs. Several of those teams play at the Long Time on May 14.

The newly formed Texas Oil Dawgs generally follow Long Time home rules, says Houston photographer Mark Champion, the team’s manager and a player. “We have players 50 years or older, so if former college players show up, we ask them to tone it down,” Champion says. “We don’t want anyone to get hurt. Fun is the name of the game.”

Vintage Baseball

Another small group of baseball aficionados play by even older rules and jargon that differ delightfully from the modern game. Vintage baseball, as it’s known, calls for original 1860s rules. Players wear period uniforms and use vintage-style bats and balls. You make an out by catching the apple (ball) on the fly or after one bounce—a pain-saving rule for ballists (players) who play without gloves. Hurlers (pitchers) throw underhanded from 45 feet away, and the Blind Tom (umpire) calls no balls or strikes—though he may do so if the striker (hitter) unduly delays the game.

There’s no sliding into base—that’s too undignified for the 1860s. Nor can one overrun first base (though that rule is sometimes overruled out of concern for older, less agile ballists). A welcome rule change allows a fielder to put a runner out by tagging him rather than “plugging” (hitting) the runner with a thrown ball, as was once common.

The number of vintage baseball teams has dwindled in the past few years. A remaining Dallas-area team, the Farmers Branch Mustangs, still plays a few games a year at Farmers Branch Historical Park, including two upcoming spring demonstration games April 2 and May 7. San Angelo’s historic Fort Concho hosts occasional games, including one December 3 at the early Texas frontier fort, which was deactivated in the late 1880s.

About the same time West Texas forts like Fort Concho were

1. The Memorial Moonshots and the Gulf Coast Sugar play a sandlot game on Galveston Island.
2. The Port Arthur Sea Hawks' 1915 opening game against the Beaumont Exporters. The stadium is located on the southwest corner of Orange Highway (16th Street) and Stadium Road.
3. Players of the Memorial Moonshots and the Gulf Coast Sugar celebrate during a sandlot baseball game.
4. Gameplay at the home field of the Gulf Coast Sugar on Galveston Island regularly stops to let kids run the bases and, during this game at Halloween, to collect candy.
5. The Southern Pine Lumber Co. baseball team of the Diboll Athletic Society gather on the baseball grounds in November 1907. According to the January 18, 1908, edition of *American Lumberman*, the athletic society was created by the company for young men with "semiexecutive positions such as office work and the various positions that are given out to young men of quality."
6. Camaraderie is key for the Gulf Coast Sugar, a sandlot team made up of players of varying ages from Houston and Galveston.



closing, baseball activity was heating up across the state. Almost every town had an amateur ball club, sometimes sponsored by a local industry, such as a sawmill or oil company.

As baseball was spreading like wildfire, some promoters saw the chance for profit. The Texas League formed in 1888 as the state's first professional baseball league and held its first game between the Houston Babies and the Galveston Giants. The era of rapid industrialization saw many farm families moving into towns for jobs that brought disposable income that allowed leisure time for watching minor league games. The Texas League lasted off and on until 2020, when it became part of Major League Baseball's Double-A Central.

Even smaller towns could support semipro teams, such as those in the East Texas League of the early 1900s. Those teams bore names such as the Lufkin Lumbermen, Kilgore Drillers, Longview Cannibals, Nacogdoches Cogs, Rusk Governors, Texarkana Twins and the Jacksonville Tomato Pickers.

The East Texas League, like other minor leagues, survived the tough times of the Great Depression and World War II. But during the 1950s and 1960s, it was the easy times of modern life—brought about by TV and air-conditioning—that caused their demise. "East Texans turned on the window unit and plopped down in front of a television set," writes historian Bill O'Neal in a study of the East Texas League in the *East Texas Historical Journal*.

The rise of youth baseball also reduced minor league atten-

dance. "Parents who took kids to practice and games two to three times a week were less likely to attend a minor league game as well," O'Neal writes.

A couple historical relics of the East Texas League still host baseball games—Tyler's Mike Carter Field, built of red bricks during the Great Depression, and Kilgore's Driller Field, built of oilfield pipes and boilerplate in 1947.

Family Game

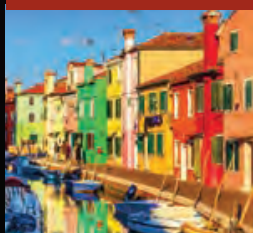
Rochkind looks forward to another season of starting at second base for the Gulf Coast Sugar down on Galveston Island. He comes by his love of baseball naturally. As a board member of the Galveston Historical Foundation, he sees himself as part of baseball history. His father, Barry Rochkind, was a batboy for the Houston Astros, where he bumped into baseball greats such as Mickey Mantle and Ernie Banks. Later he called ballgames as a sports reporter for a local radio station and managed to get press passes for major league games in Houston.

"As a kid, I got to watch the games from the press box," Rochkind says. "My dad put me into baseball, so he still comes to watch me play. I have two young boys, so it's very special to have three generations together at the ballfield. That's one way we can keep America's pastime going." ■

"In recent years, a group of international designers and artists has rediscovered the innate modernity of Italian blown glass, turning to Murano as inspiration..." — New York Times, 2020



The brightly-painted fisherman houses on Burano Island in Venice are the inspiration behind The Murano Rainbow Necklace



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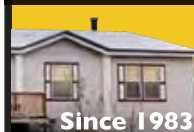
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From that moment on, the tennis bracelet has been on the lips and on the wrists of women in the know. Once called eternity bracelets, these bands of diamonds were known from then on as tennis bracelets, and remain *the* hot ticket item with jewelers.

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with D Flawless diamonds from another company that costs \$57,000!

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Two-Fisted Law and Order

Judge Roy Bean made the rules and found fame in his remote corner of West Texas

BY W.F. STRONG

IN THE BIG BEND TOWN of Langtry, Judge Roy Bean opened a saloon on the railroad right-of-way. It was 1882, and even though he was squatting, the railroad allowed him to stay. Bean named his bar the Jersey Lilly after actress Lillie Langtry.

When trains stopped for water, the passengers could order a drink at the Jersey Lilly. But Bean never had change, so if a customer paid a dollar for a 25-cent beer, he wouldn't get the other 75 cents. If he complained, Bean fined him 75 cents for disturbing the peace.

Bean had proclaimed himself the "law west of the Pecos" and preferred his own interpretation of the law. When he re-

ceived new state statutes every two years, he burned them. Once he sentenced a young man to hang but left the jail unlocked the night before the hanging so the condemned could escape.

In Bean's early years, he lived in San Antonio, where he found success with a saloon but sold the business to pursue opportunities in the railroad camps of West Texas. He gained notoriety when he took the law into his own hands.

When Bean held court in the Jersey Lilly, he would assemble a jury and swear the members in. The case would be presented, the verdict determined and sentencing pronounced quickly. Often the

sentence for misdemeanors was a round of drinks for the jury. He was very patriotic about Texas, too. He often preceded sentencing with words like: "You have offended the great state of Texas by committing this crime on her sacred soil."

One of his most famous cases had to do with a man who fell to his death off a bridge in Langtry. Bean found \$40 and a pistol on the man's body and fined him \$40 for carrying a concealed weapon. That was enough to get him buried.

Bean rose to international prominence when he organized a world heavyweight boxing championship between Bob Fitzsimmons and Peter Maher in 1896. Prizefighting was then illegal in Texas.

At first, the fight looked like it might be held on the sly in El Paso, but the governor sent 25 Texas Rangers over there to make sure it didn't happen. Then it seemed like it might be held in Juarez, but the governor of Chihuahua sent troops to prevent a fight there. Finally Bean sent a telegram to the promoter saying they could have it in Langtry—actually, right across the river on a Rio Grande sandbar, miles from any authority that would stop it.

So a menagerie of unlikely associates, boxers, gamblers, Texas Rangers, high rollers and spectators of all stripes boarded a train bound for parts unknown. The destination was kept a secret. Bean met them at his railside saloon, sold them beer at the exorbitant price of a dollar apiece and then escorted them across a pontoon bridge to the Mexican side of the river.

Fitzsimmons knocked out Maher after 95 seconds, so the fight was over before the spectators could settle in. But the big winner—as ever—was Bean. He became known worldwide as the man who made the fight possible. ■

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



Brunch

Crowd-pleasing additions for this much-anticipated meal

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

Hosting brunch is one of my favorite things to do for friends. Whether for a group of four or 30, embracing the sweet and savory sides of brunch always gets my creativity in the kitchen going. This month I've taken a spin on the classic bagel breakfast and turned it into a scrumptious smoked salmon turnover. Pre-made puff pastry keeps it incredibly easy so you can put the dish together in a snap.

Smoked Salmon Turnovers

1 sheet prepared puff pastry, thawed if frozen
3 ounces smoked salmon
4 ounces cream cheese, softened
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
1 egg
1 tablespoon water
1 tablespoon everything bagel seasoning

COOK'S TIP Everything bagel seasoning can be found in most grocery stores, or make your own blend with sesame seeds, poppy seeds, salt, dried minced garlic and dried onion flakes.

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment. Place puff pastry on a lightly floured surface and gently roll out to a rectangle, approximately 9 by 14 inches.
2. Roughly chop salmon and place in a bowl. Add cream cheese and chives and stir until evenly mixed, breaking up the salmon more as you stir.
3. Cut the puff pastry into 8 equal pieces. Add about 2 tablespoons filling to each piece, then fold pastry over to form a triangle. Press edges to seal and crimp with the tines of a fork. Repeat with remaining pastry and filling. Place filled turnovers on prepared baking sheet.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and water, then brush over the tops of the turnovers. Sprinkle bagel seasoning evenly over the turnovers. Bake 15–18 minutes, until puffed and golden brown. Let cool slightly before serving.

SERVES 8

TCP Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Blueberry Coffee Cake.





Whole-Grain Cinnamon Rolls

MOLLY BRET
COSERV

Overnight cinnamon rolls are perfect for a make-ahead brunch, and this recipe uses wheat flour to help balance the sweetness. Don't worry if any filling falls out as you shape the rolls; you can sprinkle it on top in the pan.

ROLLS

- 1 cup milk, warmed to about 100 degrees**
- 1 packet instant yeast**
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup sugar or honey**
- 2 cups whole-wheat flour**
- 2–2½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more as needed, divided use**
- 2 eggs**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 stick) butter, softened and cut into chunks**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt**
- 1–2 cups prepared cream cheese frosting**

FILLING

- 6 tablespoons ($\frac{3}{4}$ stick) butter, softened**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon**

1. ROLLS In a large bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer, combine warmed milk, yeast and sugar. Let rest 5 minutes, then gradually mix in wheat flour, 2 cups all-purpose flour, eggs (one at a time) and butter. If using a stand mixer, start speed at low and then turn to medium, mixing until a soft dough is formed. Add additional flour as needed to prevent sticking. Sprinkle in salt and

\$500 WINNER

BLT Strata

BARBARA REISS
PEDERNALES EC



Perfect for using up leftover bread, this strata has all the flavors of a classic BLT sandwich. Make sure to chill it for at least an hour, or overnight, to ensure the bread soaks up the custard.

SERVES 6



- 6 ounces thick-cut bacon, cut into small pieces**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion**
- 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes**
- 2 cups baby spinach or arugula**
- 6 ounces day-old bread, such as sourdough or challah, cut into cubes**
- 6 eggs**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed shredded Gruyère or white cheddar**

- 1.** Grease a 2-quart baking dish and set aside.
- 2.** In a large skillet over medium heat, cook bacon until crisp. Drain bacon on a paper towel-lined plate and pour off all but 1 tablespoon of fat.
- 3.** Sauté onions in the same skillet over medium heat until they begin to soften and become translucent, 3–5 minutes. Add halved tomatoes and increase heat to medium-high. Cook, scraping up any browned bits in the pan, until onions have started to caramelize and tomatoes have softened. Stir in the spinach until wilted, then remove the pan from heat. Stir the bacon into the onion mixture.
- 4.** Add half the bread cubes to prepared baking dish, then top with half of the onion mixture. Repeat with remaining bread and onion mixture.
- 5.** In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper, then pour evenly into the baking dish. Sprinkle cheese over the top, then cover with foil and refrigerate at least 1 hour and up to overnight.
- 6.** When ready to bake, remove strata from the refrigerator and preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Bake uncovered 40–45 minutes, until lightly browned on top.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

PIZZA NIGHT DUE APRIL 10

What makes your pizza irresistible? Submit your recipes on our website by April 10 for a chance to win \$500.



CONTINUED >

RECIPES CONTINUED

mix a few minutes more. Gently knead dough into a ball and place in a large greased bowl. Cover and let rise 1–2 hours or until doubled in size.

2. Once dough has risen, place it on a lightly floured surface. Roll dough into a 12-by-18-inch rectangle.

3. FILLING Spread softened butter over the surface of the dough. In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon, then sprinkle over the dough evenly.

4. Roll up dough on the long end, then cut into 12 rolls. Lightly grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and place rolls cut-side up in the pan. Sprinkle any excess filling over rolls, then cover dish tightly and chill overnight.

5. When ready to bake, remove rolls and let rise 1–2 hours or until puffy. Preheat oven to 375 degrees and bake rolls 20–25 minutes. Let cool slightly and then top with prepared frosting.

SERVES 12



Tex-Mex Bacon and Egg Squares

MARILYN BURGESS
TRINITY VALLEY EC

Easy to make and crowd-pleasers, these squares are ideal for those who love the combination of chiles and cheese. Serve as is or with guacamole, sour cream or additional hot sauce.

2 cans (10 ounces) whole green chiles, drained
8 ounces grated sharp cheddar cheese

6 slices thick-cut bacon, cooked and cut into bite-size pieces
6 eggs
Dash of hot sauce
Salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Arrange chiles evenly in the dish, then sprinkle on cheese and bacon.

2. In a bowl, beat together eggs, hot sauce, and salt and pepper, then pour evenly into the dish. Bake until eggs are firm and cheese has melted, 25–30 minutes. Cool 5 minutes, then cut into squares to serve.

SERVES 9

TCP Find more recipes to punch up your brunch at [TexasCoopPower.com/food](https://www.texascooppower.com/food), where you can search through nearly 1,000 recipes.

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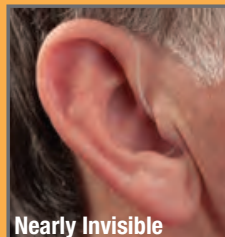
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Swinging Through Time

The Regency Bridge is the state's last drivable suspension bridge

BY CHET GARNER

I COULD FEEL MY ENTIRE vehicle swaying as I cruised, ever so carefully, across the last drivable suspension bridge in Texas. I felt like a squirrel on a power line, but instead of being 30 feet above the ground, I was 75 feet above the Colorado River. To make matters even more tense, I could hear the wooden boards flexing and creaking beneath my tires.

I was deep in the northern Hill Country for this adventure of driving across the Regency Bridge, part road and part roller coaster. The bridge is truly the last of its kind and may only still exist because it connects two quiet gravel roads with very little traffic.

The Regency Bridge was built in 1939 to link the rural communities of San Saba and Mills counties and spans more than 400 feet from bank to bank. The drivable surface consists of planks suspended by metal cables, earning it the nickname Swinging Bridge.

Yes, it really swings. And in its 83 years of existence, it's seen everything from buggies to cattle drives to electric cars.

I was about halfway across when I realized the bridge is so narrow that I could only see the road in front of me and the metal cables out each of my side windows. It left me with a really beautiful view of the expansive Colorado River basin marked by high limestone bluffs. I had to constantly remind myself to keep my eyes on the road or else my trip was going to meet a very abrupt end.

Those who might be nervous to cross should know that the Texas Department of Transportation has done multiple inspections and overhauls—the most recent in 2021. I survived my trip and had so much fun, I immediately turned around and did it all over again. ■

ABOVE Chet braves the Regency Bridge high above the Colorado River.

TCP See Chet's crossing of the Regency on our website. Watch all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

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

APRIL

08

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

Kerrville Montopolis:
The Living Coast,
(830) 315-5483,
thearcadialive.org

**Canton [8-9] Antique Tractor/
Truck Show and Swap Meet,**
(214) 837-8861

**Corsicana [8-9] Texas
State Camping Squares,**
(832) 877-6534,
texasstatecampingsquares.com

**Kerrville [8-10, 15-16,
22-24] For Such a Time
as This,** (830) 896-9393,
caillouxperformingarts.com

09

**Grand Saline Main Street
Festival,** (903) 962-3122,
grandsalinemainstreet.com

**Newcastle Crawfish and
Cannons,** (940) 549-0401,
goodnightlovingrun.com

**New Braunfels [9-10]
Folkfest,** (830) 629-6504,
texashandmadefurniture.com

**Stanton [9-10] Old Sorehead
Trade Days,** (432) 756-2006,
stantontex.com

**Quintana [9-May 8] Spring
Fling,** (979) 480-0999,
gcbo.org

12

**Paris [12-14] Lamar County
Junior Livestock Show
& Sale,** (903) 784-7984

15

**Alpine [15-17] Big Bend
Gem and Mineral Show,**
(432) 244-9503

16

Grandview [15-17] Antique Alley Texas, (817) 666-5024, facebook.com/antiquealleytexas

Lufkin The Queen's Cartoonists, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

San Marcos Easter Egg Hunt & Festival, (214) 641-5841, heritagessanmarcos.org

20

Corpus Christi [20-24] The Birdiest Festival in America, (361) 852-2100, birdiestfestival.org

21

Lake Jackson [21-24] [title of show], (979) 230-3000, onstage@brazosport.edu

22

Brenham Billy Joel Tribute by Brett Cline, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Henderson [22-23] East Texas Antique Tractor & Engine Club Show and Pull, (903) 646-3769, north-texas-antique-tractor-and-engine-club.org

Coleman [22-24] Great Western Trail Days, (325) 669-2292, greatwesterntraildays.com

New Braunfels [22-24] Car Club Swap Meet, (830) 708-1372, newbraunfelsareacarclub.com

23

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

Fredericksburg Luckenbach Bluegrass Festival, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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

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COURTESY ANGELINA ARTS ALLIANCE



Pick of the Month

**An Evening With Renée
Elise Goldsberry**

Lufkin, April 30
(936) 633-5454
angelinaarts.org

Goldsberry, who won Tony and Grammy awards for her inspired performance in *Hamilton*, brings a four-piece band and a complement of backup singers to the Temple Theater.

APRIL EVENTS CONTINUED

23

**Karnack Earth Day
Paddling Flotilla**,
(903) 736-3063,
tinyurl.com/2022flotilla

**Lake Jackson Kids
Reel Big Fish Event**,
(979) 297-4533,
visitbrazosport.com

**La Porte San Jacinto Cele-
bration**, (281) 479-2431,
thc.texas.gov

Wimberley Pie Social,
(512) 965-2662,
wimwic.org/pie-social

**Bryan [23-24] Bryan-
College Station Friends
of the Library Spring Book
Sale**, (979) 209-5600,
friendsbcs.org

**Granbury [23-24] Wine
Walk**, (817) 573-5548,
granburywinewalk.com

24

**Marble Falls [24-30] Paint
the Town**, (830) 693-4449,
hlcart.com/ptt-2022-event

28

**Kerrville Symphony
of the Hills: Primitive
Echoes**, (830) 792-7469,
symphonyofthehills.org

**Freeport [28-30] River-
fest**, (979) 233-6061,
brazosport.org

**Turkey [28-30] Bob Wills
Day**, (806) 336-1471,
bobwillsday.com

29

**Fort Davis [29-30] Dark
Skies Festival**,
(512) 475-6763,
mcdonaldobservatory.org

**Gun Barrel City [29-30]
Gun Barrel Quilters Guild
Annual Quilt Show**,
(903) 391-3241,
gunbarrelquiltersguild.org

**Fredericksburg [29-May 1,
6-8, 13-15] Lend Me a
Tenor**, (830) 997-3588,
fredericksburgtheater.org

30

**Surfside Beach Old
Guys Surf Reunion**,
(979) 233-1531,
surfsidetx.org

**Waxahachie Bling Bang
Bash Designer Bag Bingo &
Gun Raffle**, (972) 937-1455,
casaofelliscounty.org

**Nacogdoches [30-May 1]
Multicultural Festival**,
(936) 564-7807,
sacredheartnac.org/mcf

MAY

01

**Surfside Beach Market in
the Park**, (979) 233-1531,
visitbrazosport.com

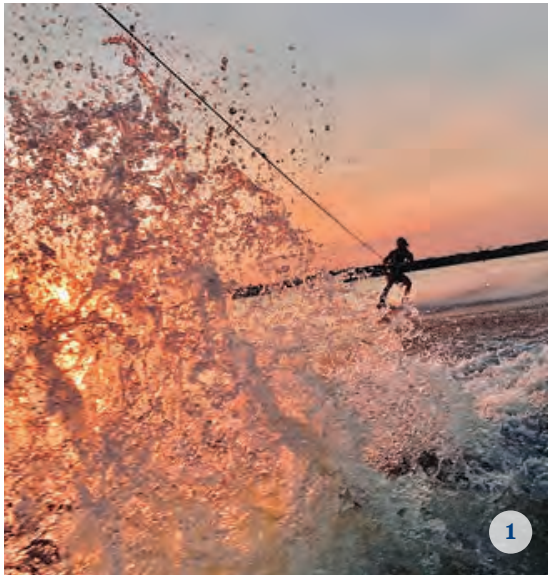
05

**Fredericksburg [5-8] 175th
Anniversary Grand Finale
Weekend**, (830) 997-6523,
175th.org

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2 MARK HOLLY
BANDERA EC

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3 PAUL LAUDER
FARMERS EC

"Cruising in a vintage 1960s automobile-boat."

4 ERIKA ORDOG
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

Raindrops.



Upcoming Contests

- DUE APR 10** Motorsports
- DUE MAY 10** Light and Shadow
- DUE JUN 10** Hometown Pride



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



No Hedging

Waging a battle—but losing the war—against vengeful hedge parsley

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS
ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREA COBB

I NEVER SUSPECTED a thing. As I pulled and yanked, I had no clue that the weeds I sought to eliminate planned a revenge I'd never forget.

"You better stop," my husband warned as I worked that spring evening in what we call the meadow, our adjoining lot turned nature preserve. "You're going to overdo it."

"I'll be fine," I retorted, bending down to pull another and another and another.

James rolled his eyes and left me knee-high in firewheel, prairie verbena, Engelmann's daisies, Texas stars and—horror!—common hedge parsley. The introduced species did not belong among our native beauties. So I was determined to get rid of them.

Honeybees flitted among the wildflowers as I used my right arm to tug out

another slim stem of hedge parsley. Their tiny flowers and fernlike leaves reminded me of their carrot cousin, Queen Anne's lace. Their bright white umbels also made them easy to target in my execution march across the meadow.

Occasionally I surveyed my progress, which was not impressive. I sighed. Hundreds more of the intruders swayed in the breeze, taunting my efforts. I knew it would take hours more to pull them all. But I kept going.

At least I'm making a dent, I convinced myself. There won't be as many next year.

But I knew the truth. Next year, *beaucoup* of their sticky seeds (that latch onto fur and socks) would germinate by the thousands. No matter what, hedge parsleys would flourish as they always have. The only difference, I would soon learn, was I'd never declare war against them again.

Just a few days later, on the road for a trip, my right shoulder began to ache. Gingerly, I rotated my upper arm and brushed off the pain. Yeah, it'd go away. I'd be OK.

But I wasn't. The week after we got home, James drove me to our medical clinic.

"I did the same thing," said the nurse practitioner as she checked my shoulder and arm. "I scrubbed floors by hand one afternoon. Then I stirred hot chocolate at the football stadium's concession stand. Took six months for my shoulder to heal."

"Six months," I echoed.

"Sure did," she said. "Don't worry." She patted my shoulder. "You'll get better. Just give it some time."

I did. Six months later, though, my right shoulder still reminded me of how I sinned in the meadow. Would it ever truly heal?

In the meantime, I dreaded the next spring. I could already envision the hedge parsleys waving their leaves in victory, sense their roots snaking deep into the soil.

Somehow I *had* to ignore them. Because, trust me, revenge of the hedge parsleys is for real. Just ask me and my right shoulder. ■



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