

TEXAS CITY DISASTER'S
SCARS ENDURE

TWO-FISTED WEST TEXAS
LAW AND ORDER

WEEDS GET THE
LAST LAUGH

Texas Coop Power

FOR TRI-COUNTY EC MEMBERS

APRIL 2022

Wheel Deal

Food Truck Championship
challengers draw big
crowds to a small town

**TRI-COUNTY
EC NEWS**

SEE PAGE 18



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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*

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By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

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

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 CLULEY
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*

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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?

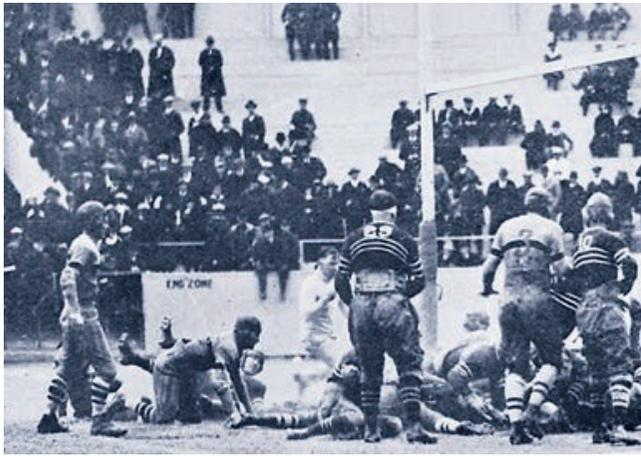
Before the Industrial Revolution, roughly 1760–1840, the principal sources of loud noise were thunder, church bells and cannon fire.



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 comments [*Joined by a Fence*, January 2022].

CHUCK BURGESS
VIA FACEBOOK

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



COURTESY CHET GARNER

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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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Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

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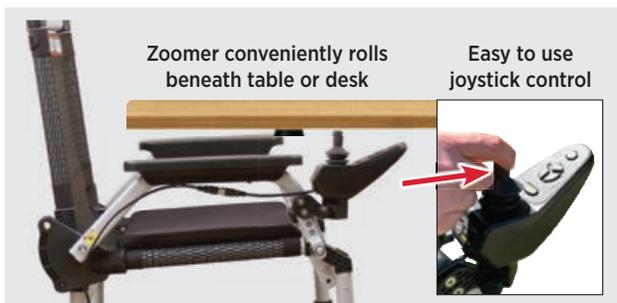
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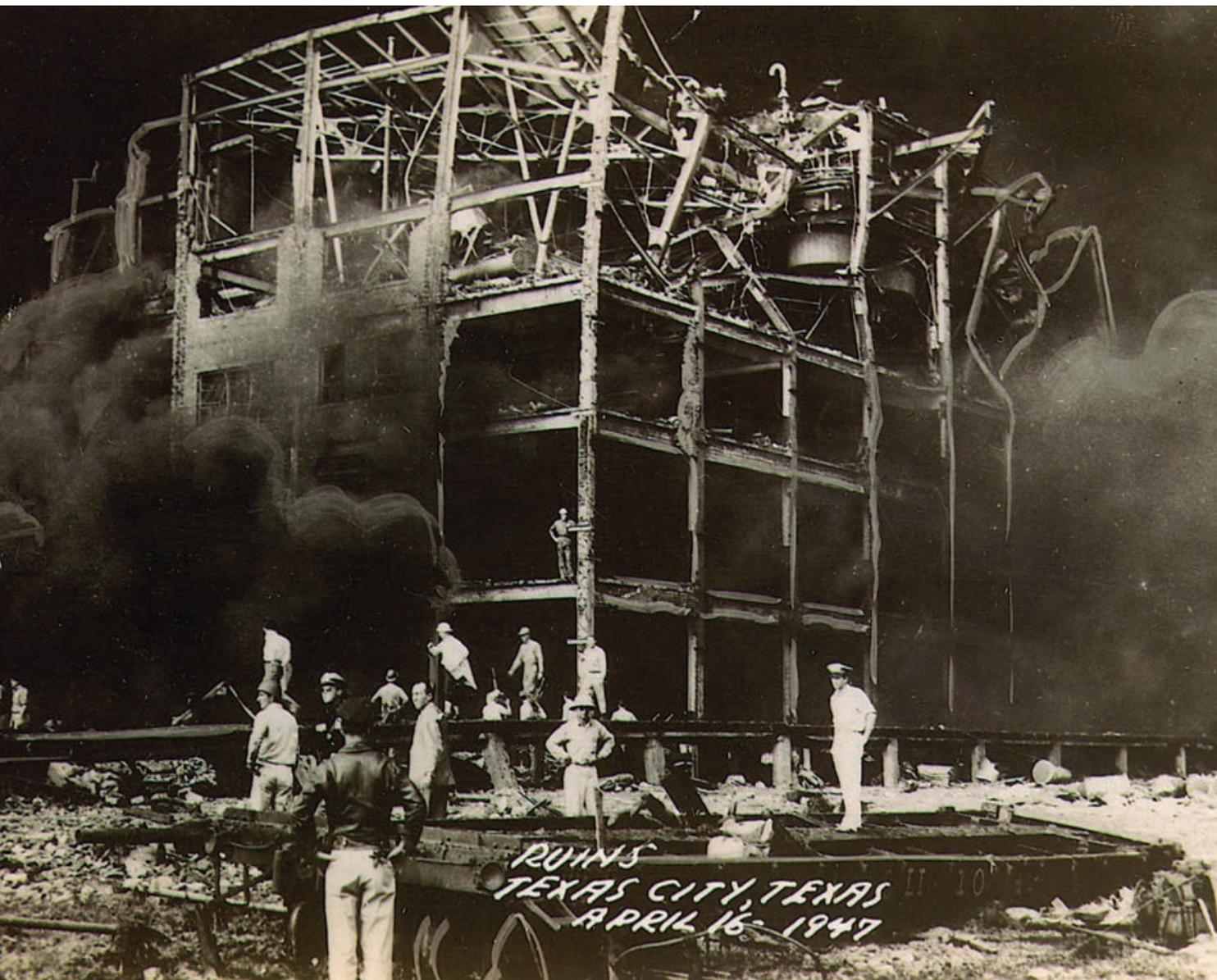


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RUINS
TEXAS CITY, TEXAS
APRIL 16, 1947

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

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

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

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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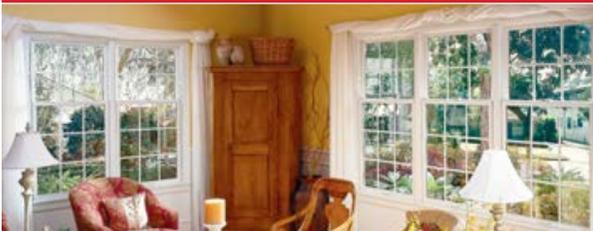


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**DARRYL
SCHRIVER**

PRESIDENT/
CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

Help us Thank a Lineman

EACH APRIL, we take the time to thank the group of dedicated men who build and maintain the distribution system that keeps the electricity flowing to your homes and businesses. Here at Tri-County Electric Cooperative, we have over 80 linemen who work day in and day out to serve you, our members.

They work through the snow, ice, rain, wind, extreme heat and everything in between. They work high on the pole, and down in the mud. They put their lives on the line all for one reason: to provide power to the members. 800857350

Often the work they do goes unnoticed and is caught in the hustle and bustle. I know I am proud to say I work with this selfless group of men who not only love their job, but work endlessly for this co-op. Additionally, I am thankful for the families behind them. When the phone rings, more often than not, that lineman is leaving precious time with his family to help the co-op and its members.

Lineman Appreciation Day is Monday, April 11. Please join me in thanking a lineman not only on April 11, but every day. Without these brave men, Tri-County Electric Co-op would not be the electric utility it is today.



Brazos Bankruptcy Update

Over the past year, I have provided you with periodic updates surrounding our wholesale power supplier, Brazos Electric Power Cooperative (Brazos), and its decision to file for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy protection. We have communicated that the bankruptcy has been a long, costly, and difficult process for all involved. Even today, the situation remains very fluid, far from over, and the ultimate impact to Tri-County Electric Co-op and you, our member-owners, remains unclear.

The highly anticipated trial to decide the size and priority of the ERCOT claim in the adversary proceeding Brazos vs Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) began on February 22, 2022, in the US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District. After seven days of testimony, the parties agreed to suspend the trial and engage in mediation. Tri-County Electric Co-op is considered an interested party and will have a seat at the table during mediation. The scope of the mediation will not be limited to the ERCOT claim and will relate to the entire bankruptcy case in an attempt to reach a global resolution of all disputes.

Through all of this, my commitment to you remains the same. We are in this together.

Members Come First

Tri-County Electric Co-op's vision statement is to take care of our member-owners. That's you! We strive to take care of you in everything we do. It has been a tough few years, but please rest assured we have your best interest in mind. 800836531

We do have some new benefits that put the value of your electric co-op in your hands. Last month, we launched the Home Audit Program and now offer home energy audits. These audits show you where you use electricity, and may be losing energy, so you can save energy and money.

Additionally, we now offer outage texting for members to quickly text their outage. Learn more about this new benefit and how to enroll on page 23.

As your President/CEO, I work for you. I will do everything I can to take care of you and keep you at the forefront of all decisions. ■



**MAX
WADDELL**

CHAIRMAN

DISTRICT 9

A Seat at the Board Table

AS YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS, we will continue to be open and transparent to you, the member-owners. We are all being hit from multiple directions and tension is rising due to inflation, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and so much more. Trust me when I say this, we are all in this together.

During the February board meeting the board of directors discussed the following topics that are of interest to you:

Governance. The board voted to have Survey and Ballot Systems conduct the 2022 election. This will be the third year for SBS to administer the election, and we are looking forward to expanding our voting options. The Governance team is working with SBS to offer balloting via email, as well as the usual electronic web ballot and voting by mail. Stay tuned for more information on this year's election.

We are in our second year with the new director nomination process. Members in director districts 5, 7 and 9 are up for election and nomination applications were due on March 10. The Committee on Nominations and Qualifications, which is comprised of one member from each of the nine director districts, met on March 14 to accept, review and approve applications. The committee recommended a slate of candidates to the board of directors to set the official 2022 ballot. Director candidates will be published in an upcoming *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. 800757390

Member Service. You, the members, are the core of our business. We are member-owned and member-governed, so member engagement is something we look at constantly. Tri-County Electric Co-op's Member Service team stands by our vision to take care of our members. They are here to answer your calls, emails and inquiries, and always look to make your experience better. One example is the online electric service application. Members asked for a way to sign up for service online, so the team, along with our IT team, made it happen.

The Member Service team is working to roll out more benefits to you, including outage texting and more bill payment options. Soon, members will be able to pay electric bills at more than 2,500 locations like CVS and Dollar General. 800805890

Budget Committee. The budget committee meets once a quarter to look at where the co-op stands financially. The next meeting was held before the March board meeting, and we will report to you in the May *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you on the board of directors. ■

LEFT: The board's budget committee meets quarterly to monitor the co-op's financial status.

RIGHT: Melissa Watts, CFO, and director Michael Sivertsen discuss the budgeting process.



Like Father, Like Son

Shared profession deepens father-son bond

BY BOB BUCKEL,
COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA
REPRESENTATIVE

THE BOND BETWEEN a father and son is built on a lot of things: shared DNA and shared experiences, memories formed while eating at the same table, riding in the same car, tossing a ball, opening birthday presents and much, much more.

Kevin and Kash Helton share another bond – one that exists only among those who work high off the ground, connecting lines that deliver power to a busy world.

Kevin is still a young man, but he's been with Tri-County Electric Cooperative for nearly 28 years. Kash has been at the co-op for three years. Now, among the things they share are a healthy respect for the danger of what they do, and a deep sense of pride in their profession.

Starting as a groundman straight out of Northwest High School, Kevin worked his way up the ladder to journeyman lineman, then project coordinator. About a year ago, he was named assistant line superintendent in the co-op's Keller office.

Kash is on the same ladder. He graduated from Paradise High School and came to work for Tri-County Electric Co-op as an apprentice D. Three years in, he has made it to apprentice B, working out of the Granbury office. His goal is to make journeyman, have a career and retire at this co-op.

But he didn't grow up wanting to follow his dad's footsteps.

"I didn't think this was what I wanted to do, at first," he said. "It was just kind of something I fell into – but it was always cool to me."

His dad said as a kid, Kash was more impressed with the trucks and the tools.

"He was always real big on the equipment," he

said.

Kevin remembers being drawn to the profession as a kid after watching a lineman work near his house.

"I was outside playing, and I watched a truck pull up, and watched an old man go up a pole," he said. "I just remember watching him, and it didn't ever cross my mind that I could do that."

But a connection at Tri-County Electric Co-op helped him land an apprentice job, and college plans were tossed.

"Once you get in this business and get going, you get somebody to take you under their wing," he said. "It's a sense of pride – it's a job not everybody can do."

"There's not that many people who want to do it anymore," Kash added. 800807624

After more than 15 years, Kevin took two-and-a-half years away from Tri-County Electric Co-op before returning 12 years ago. He spent four years at the Azle office, still pulling call even as a project coordinator.

"My last weekend, I worked 40 hours straight and climbed five poles after a storm came in," he said. "It was kind of a holiday weekend, so there weren't very many people around."

TOP: Kevin, left, works on a line from the bucket. Kash, right, discusses the job with an employee.

RIGHT: The duo always have smiles on their faces, both at work and when wrestling in the pool or celebrating family milestones.





“But even now, if the guys called, I’d go back up.”

As a young lineman, Kevin watched guys glove off the pole and do other things a lineman would get in trouble for these days. Better equipment, more help, and an increased emphasis on safety have taken the job to a different level – but he’s glad he got to see how things used to be done.

“You can’t be scared of it, but yet you still have to have a sense of fear,” he said. “If you don’t have any fear, something’s wrong, I believe.

“You’ve got to go at it with an open mind and always know your next step.”

Kash said most accidents happen at the stage when linemen get complacent and tasks get routine.

Both of them say they appreciate the way Tri-County Electric Co-op takes care of its linemen, and the support and appreciation they are shown by their co-workers.

“They’re behind us 100 percent, and it’s mutual,” Kevin said.

At the end of the day, that co-op family bond is one we all share. ■

Lineman Appreciation Day Monday, April 11, 2022

#ThankALineman



Your Opinion Matters

BY ANNIE MCGINNIS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

AS A MEMBER-OWNED electric cooperative, we are always looking for ways to better the member experience. We value our members and strive to add services and programs that are of interest to you.

Our Engineering team is developing member programs that are environmentally-friendly, offer energy-savings, and put the power of your electricity in your hands. Help guide us through the development by completing a member interest survey.

Kelsey Gustainis, Engineering Manager, is taking the lead on program development. She said this survey will help the team identify programs that members are interested in to better meet your needs.

“The electric industry is changing and we now have a variety of programs that we can offer to our members.” Gustainis said. “Between solar, generators, batteries, and smart energy devices, we pretty much have never-ending options offer.”

The survey includes questions on what members may currently have, what members are interested in installing, knowledge of devices and equipment, and comfort level of grid technology.

Gustainis said the Engineering team is relying on members to complete the survey to guide the team. 800772776

“Member participation in the survey is extremely important so the team can develop programs and offer services that are relevant to our members,” she said.

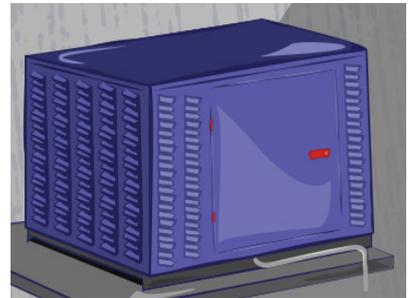
To participate in the survey, visit tccetexas.com/my-energy. ■

Share your Opinion

Tri-County Electric Co-op's Engineering team wants to hear from you!

Complete the survey at tccetexas.com/my-energy

- ▶ Visit tccetexas.com/my-energy and click “Complete the Survey”
- ▶ Complete as much of the survey as possible to give our Engineering team a better idea of your interests.
- ▶ Survey closes Wednesday, May 11.



Member Notices

REGULAR NOTICE TO MEMBERS: ELECTRIC LOAD SHED & CRITICAL LOAD DESIGNATION

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE constantly strives to keep our members informed. The Electric Load Shed and Critical Load Designation informational document is provided to members under Senate Bill 3 passed by the Texas State Legislature during the 2021 legislative session. The document is available on our website at <https://www.tccetexas.com/sites/default/files/Documents/ElectricLoadShedAndCriticalLoadDesignation.pdf>.

ANNUAL NOTICE TO MEMBERS: REMOTE CONNECT & DISCONNECT OF ELECTRIC SERVICE

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE attempts to use all available technology in an efficient manner. With our advanced meter infrastructure system, we have the ability to disconnect/reconnect your electric service without dispatching a Tri-County Electric Co-op to your meter location. This technology allows more flexibility, efficiency in time management, and safety of co-op employees, thus benefitting all Tri-County Electric Co-op members. Please be aware this technology does not require the Tri-County Electric Co-op member to be at the meter site when a member is disconnected or reconnected, and power may be connected or disconnected at any time when pertinent conditions prevail.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

CONTACT US

200 Bailey Ranch Road
Aledo, TX 76008

Phone 817-444-3201

Email customer_service@tcectexas.com

Web tcectexas.com

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24/7

Outage Reporting

For information and to report outages, please contact us.

Online: oms.tcectexas.com

App: TCEC Connect

Phone: 817-444-3201

Text: OUTAGE to 25069

ABOUT TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

Tri-County Electric Co-op owns and maintains more than 9,600 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 99,800 members in Archer, Baylor, Denton, Foard, Haskell, Hood, Jack, King, Knox, Palo Pinto, Parker, Stonewall, Tarrant, Throckmorton, Wilbarger, and Wise counties.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Aledo

200 Bailey Ranch Road, Aledo 76008

Azle

600 NW Parkway, Azle 76020

Granbury

1623 Weatherford Highway, Granbury 76048

Keller

4900 Keller-Hicks Road, Fort Worth 76244

Seymour

419 N. Main, Seymour 76380

IT PAYS TO STAY INFORMED

Find your account number in pages 18-25 of *Texas Co-op Power*, and you will receive a \$20 credit on your electric bill. Simply contact one of the offices listed above and make them aware of your discovery!

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OUTAGE TEXTING

Text "OUTAGE"
to 25069
to report your outage



For more info: tcectexas.com/outage-texting

Introducing Outage Texting

BY ANNIE MCGINNIS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS now have a new way to report outages. Starting this month, members can notify the co-op of an outage by texting "OUTAGE" to 25069.

Nichole Eshbaugh, Chief Technology Officer and Vice President of Business & Technology says the new service allows members to report outages directly to system operations to dispatch a crew.

"Outage texting is a quick and efficient way to report an outage directly to our control center," Eshbaugh said. "Members can send a text in a few seconds rather than picking up the phone to speak to a member service representative."

Registering your Number

To get started, members need to ensure cell phone numbers are up-to-date in our system. You can do this by logging to the online member portal or TCEC Connect. If you don't have access to the internet, our member service team can assist you. 800849238

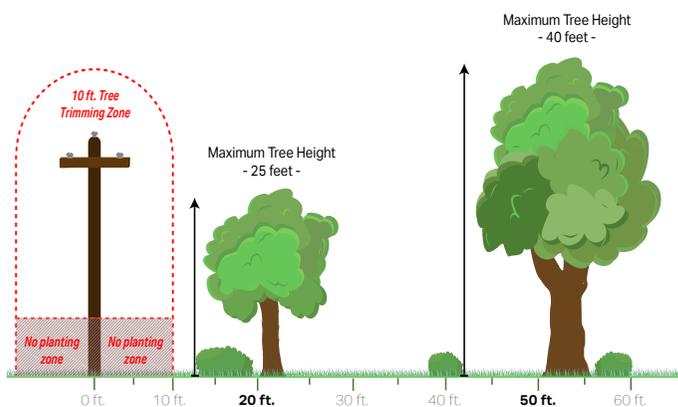
Next, visit tcectexas.com/outage-texting to enroll.

We encourage members to take advantage of this free benefit. Add 25069 to your contacts and be prepared next time you experience a power outage. ■

POWER PLANTING

POLES + TREES

Tri-County Electric Cooperative knows how important trees are to our members and the community. We also know how important it is that you have reliable electric service. That is why we regularly trim trees – to ensure your power is both safe and reliable. Help us manage our utility rights-of-way by following these guidelines!



Short trees: Trees that grow up to 25 feet tall should be planted at least 20 feet from power lines. Desert willow, common crape myrtle, redbud, and vitex trees are good examples.

Tall trees: Plant trees that grow taller than 40 feet at least 50 feet from power lines. Oak, maple, pine, or pecan trees are good examples.

Whether you're looking for shade, a windbreak, or just to enhance your property's aesthetic, start by selecting the right tree for your location. Consult with your local nursery or county agricultural extension office for advice and recommendations. 800867385

And always remember to dial 8-1-1 before you dig!

Learn more about our Right-of-way and vegetation program at tcectexas.com/vegetation-management.

I Work for You



BRENNAN SEBASTIAN Director of Business Development & ROW

Brennan Sebastian came to Tri-County Electric Co-op as right-of-way coordinator in December 2018. Last year, the title of business development director was added to his list of responsibilities.

For right-of-way, he provides oversight as well as does easement and title research when needed. In business development, he's in up to his ears, every day.

"Right now, I've got 96 projects going," he said.

Working with developers is Brennan's favorite part of the job – knowing what's coming in and helping make it happen. But he's passionate about right-of-way, too.

Growing up in Fort Cobb, Oklahoma, he studied engineering technology in college and took a job with Oklahoma Gas & Electric, stepping straight into right-of-way and easement work. He worked in Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia and Indiana before coming to Tri-County Electric Co-op.

"I was always dealing with easements, access, trees, things like that," he said. "So the things I'm doing here, my experience plays into those areas pretty well."

Tri-County Electric Co-op has 17 tree-trimming contract crews, a backyard bucket and a mechanical crew that runs a big right-of-way machine. The big mulching machine and the sky-trim blade can clear a lot of right-of-way in a hurry.

"They are doing a wealth of good on areas that have been pretty well overgrown," he said. "There's a lot of work that still needs to be done, but we are on the right path."

Sometimes he gets pushback from members about getting their trees trimmed. But it's an absolute necessity.

"We love trees," he said. "But we need to be able to deliver reliable power."

Sebastian wants to get the co-op on an eight-year trim cycle. With nearly 10,000 miles of line – a number that grows constantly – that's an ambitious schedule.

Right now, his mission is to let developers and new members know in advance where and what to plant, to have a beautiful landscape without interfering with power lines and line workers.

Brennan and his wife Whitney have one child, four-year-old Henley. He's still involved in the farm, back in Fort Cobb, and in his spare time, he likes to work on anything mechanical. ■

Easy Frozen Lemon Pie

BY ANN M^oCOOL
FORT WORTH

FILLING

- 1 large can evaporated milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 8 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

CRUST

- 1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup finely chopped almonds (food processor works best)
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/4 cup melted butter

1. Place the evaporated milk in the freezer. Chill to the icy stage.
 2. To make the crust, mix together all ingredients and press firmly against bottom and sides of 2 9-inch pie plates.
 3. Bake at 375°F for 8 minutes. Cool and set aside.
 4. To make the filling, whip the chilled, icy evaporated milk until stiff and thick. Slowly add sugar and beat until dissolved. Add lemon zest. Slowly add fresh lemon juice. Don't overbeat.
 5. Pour mixture into pie shells and freeze for 6 hours or overnight.
 6. Serve with whipped cream or cool whip.
- Enjoy!

COOK'S NOTE: The pie crust ingredients will make two crusts. You can also use store-bought if desired.



CHRISTIAN BOWEN | UNSPLASH

Tri-County Electric Co-op Member Recipe Submission Form

MEMBER _____

CITY _____

EMAIL or PHONE NUMBER _____

RECIPE NAME _____

SUBMITTING YOUR RECIPE:

EMAIL: Please include the above information with your recipe and send to pr@tcectexas.com

ONLINE: tcectexas.com/recipe-submission

MAIL: Please detach and submit this form with your recipe and mail to:

Tri-County Electric Cooperative
Attn: Recipe Submission
200 Bailey Ranch Road
Alledo, Texas 76008



Did you know you can sign up for text and email notifications?

Members can sign up to receive text and emails to stay up-to-date on your account or to receive special alerts.



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2. Go to "Notifications"
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How to Win at Love

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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.

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

Want to look like a million bucks without stressing over losing or damaging something that cost you a fortune? The Love Wins Tennis Bracelet is a simple strand of glittering gems in precious sterling that epitomizes elegance.

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“Jewelry and Gems – The Buying Guide,” praised the technique used in our diamond alternative DiamondAura®: “The best diamond simulation to date, and even some jewelers have mistaken these stones for mined diamonds,” it raved. For comparison, we found a similarly designed 10 carat tennis bracelet

The first time we offered this bracelet, we sold out literally in minutes. It was our fastest selling product of 2021. It took six months to get it back in stock — Get yours before we run out! And there's more... we will also include our Ultimate Diamond Alternative™ DiamondAura® stud earrings for FREE!

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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

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



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. ■

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, where you can search through nearly 1,000 recipes.

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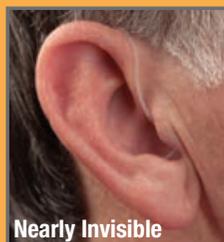
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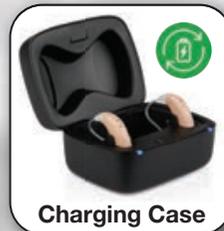
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

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,
texasahandmadefurniture.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, heritagesanmarcos.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, texascottonginmuseum.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,
hlcarts.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

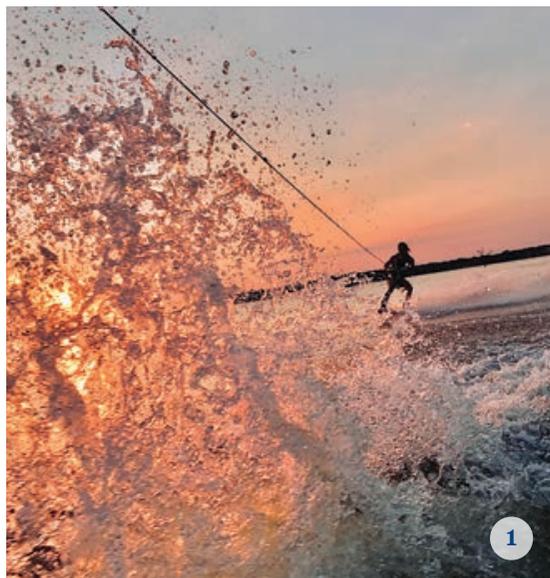
05

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

All Wet

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1

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FARMERS EC

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2 MARK HOLLY
BANDERA EC

Horses enjoy a pond in a field of bluebonnets.

3 PAUL LAUDER
FARMERS EC

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

4 ERIKA ORDOG
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

Raindrops.



2



3



4

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.

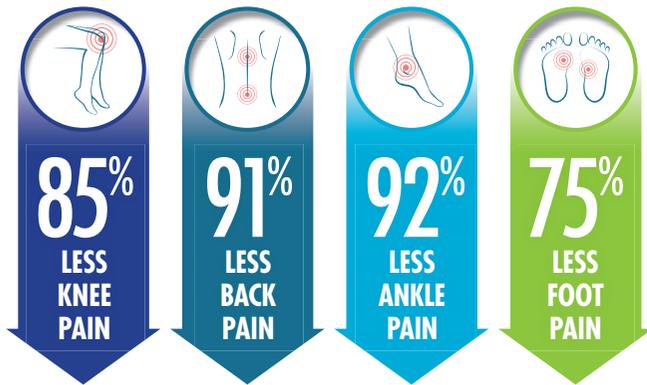
Somehow I *had* to ignore them. Because, trust me, revenge of the hedge parsleys is for real. Just ask me and my right shoulder. ■



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