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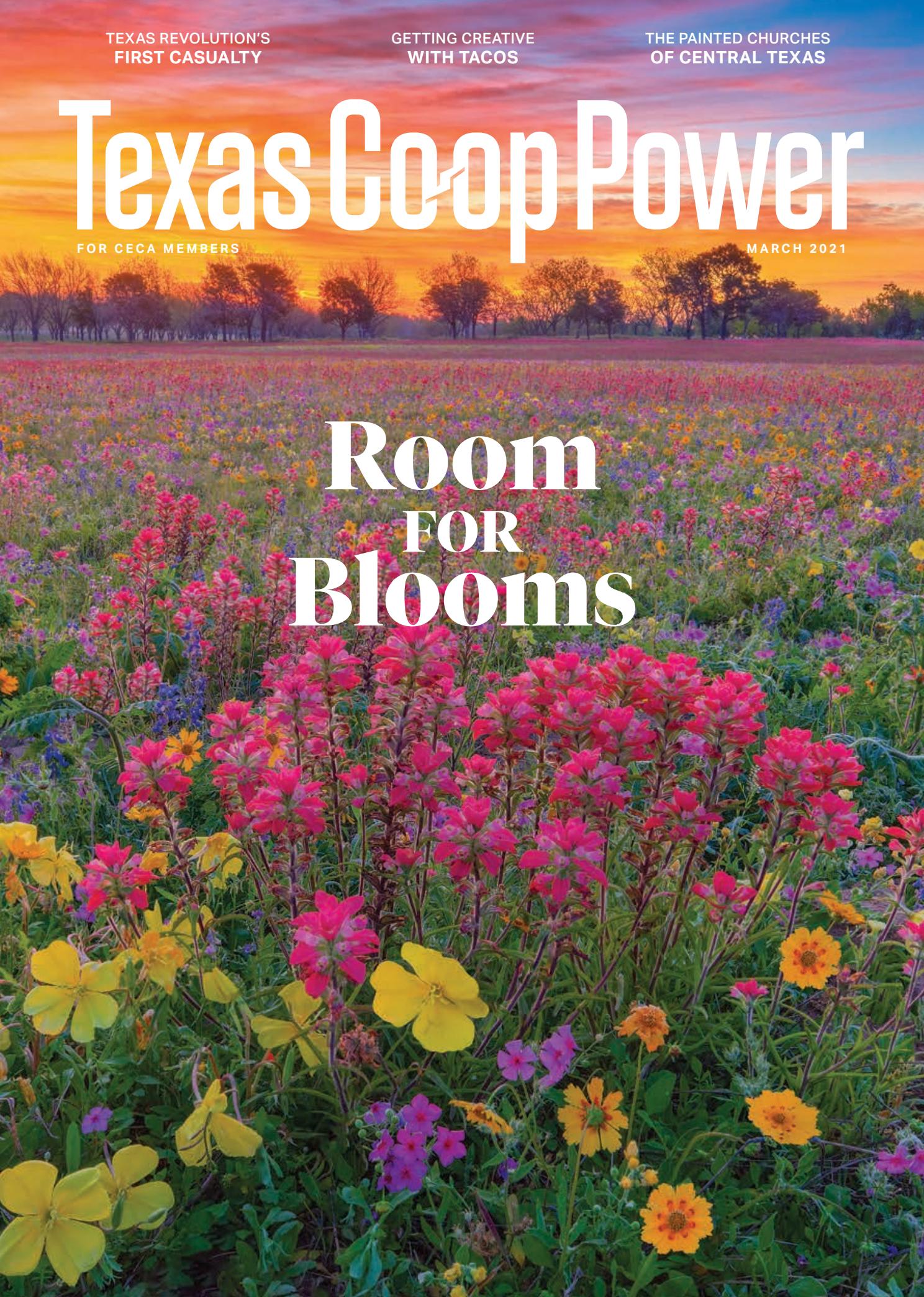
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Texas Co-op Power

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MARCH 2021

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March 2021



08

Flower Power

Wildflowers proliferate in an explosion of color along the highways and byways of Texas each spring, inspiring artists to capture the state's wild beauty and luring travelers off the beaten path.

By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

ON THE COVER

A red patch of Indian paintbrush highlights a field of wildflowers near New Berlin.

ABOVE

A firewheel.

Photos by Rob Greebon

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By Eli Winter

Month of Tweets

OF THE 654 SPECIES of birds documented in Texas, over half are migratory. Millions of these will fly the Texas skies starting this month on their way to northern breeding grounds after wintering in Mexico and Central and South America.

Some species, such as the prothonotary warbler, below, and red-eyed vireo, will go no farther north than Texas, where they'll make their home until the fall, when they migrate south again.



Hank the Cool Dog

Texas' coolest dog meets Texas' coolest character.

A new podcast series stars Matthew McConaughey as Hank the Cowdog, based on the long-running series of children's books written by Texan John R. Erickson, illustrated by Gerald L. Holmes and set in the Panhandle.

The podcast, which debuted in the fall, is available on all major podcast platforms.

Scout's Honor

Since the Boy Scouts of America created the Eagle Scout rank in 1911, about 2.6 million Americans have earned one of Scouting's highest honors. Until last year, all Eagle Scouts were boys.

When Abby Winkelman, whose family is a member of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, became an Eagle Scout in October, when she was 14, she made history, becoming one of the first girls to reach the rank.

"I don't think I've ever set a goal this ambitious for myself, so I'm just really proud of myself that I met my goal," said Winkelman, of Troop 5131 in Austin, "and I planned and I got help from all my friends and all my community."



“I will never forsake Texas and her cause. I am her son.”

—JOSÉ ANTONIO NAVARRO

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

THE SONG THAT GOT ME THROUGH A YEAR OF PANDEMIC IS ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town. Here are some of the responses to our January prompt:
Life was better ...

When my skate key was hanging around my neck, my knees were scabbed and the wind was blowing my hair from my face.

JANICE F. CONWAY
TRINITY VALLEY EC
KEMP

Before COVID-19.

GARY GALLOWAY
TRI-COUNTY EC
WEATHERFORD

When we could reach out and touch someone, literally. I miss hugs and handshakes.

CARMEN LOCKSTEDT
VICTORIA EC
VICTORIA

When the only screen we had was in our door, and we could see through it.

PATRICIA RAPACKI
MIDSOUTH EC
MONTGOMERY

After I recovered from ovarian cancer.

SHERRI JEFFERY
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC
MCKINNEY

To see more responses, read Currents online.



Drink to That?

USING HOUSTON as a model, researchers at Rice University have developed a plan to recycle wastewater economically and make it drinkable, which could reduce the need for surface water—from rivers, reservoirs and wells—by 28%.

“All the technologies needed to treat wastewater to drinking water quality are available,” Rice researcher Qilin Li said. “The issue is that today they’re still pretty expensive.”

This proposed system makes up for that by bringing down the cost of a city’s water supply. Recycled water doesn’t have to travel as far and is therefore cheaper.

Cheers.



TCP Contests and More

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Night Life

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Enter to win *Texas Wildflowers: A Field Guide*.

**No Fan of the Span**

My wife drove across it with our teenage son in 1985 and could not drive back [*The Scariest Bridge in Texas*, January 2021]. It was so traumatizing for her that she has not been able to drive over any multilevel highway overpass, interstate or other even moderately high bridge since.

It should have a warning sign.

William Hamlin
Tri-County EC
Keller

Thank you for the article about the fear of crossing bridges and high overpasses. I am that person. I will go out of my way to avoid the flyovers in Houston and any other high or narrow bridge.

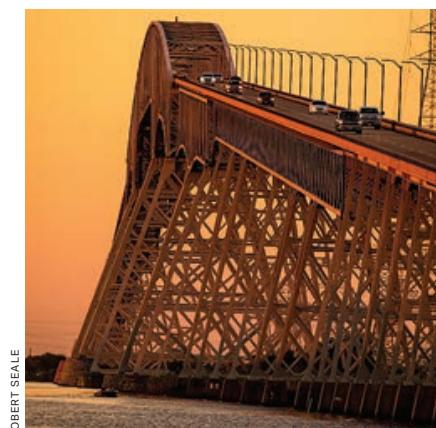
I no doubt annoy drivers behind me when I have no choice but to use one of these structures, and I crawl across it, white-knuckled, at 40 mph.

Linda Sechrist
San Bernard EC
Magnolia



Crossed it pulling a six-horse trailer with a truck full of squealing little girls [*The Scariest Bridge in Texas*, January 2021]. Not something I care to repeat.

KAY MOTLEY
VIA FACEBOOK

**Captured!**

“Katmai National Park and Preserve holds a contest every year to name the fattest bear at Brooks Falls.”

JULIA FRANKENFIELD
MIDSOUTH EC
MONTGOMERY

A World Opens

The Carnegie library of my hometown of Terrell did indeed fill a real need [*Literary Fortunes*, January 2021]. As a boy I was able to jump on my bike and spend time looking through the stacks and especially enjoying the reference room. The whole world opened for me.

Dan Wood Jr.
Trinity Valley EC
Terrell

Dialect in Danger

The Texas German dialect and culture are slowly dying out as they are not passed on to younger generations [*Burgs in a New Land*, December 2020]. Within the next 20 years, the Texas German dialect will become extinct after being spoken for close to 200 years.

In 2001, I founded the Texas German Dialect Project at the University of Texas to record this unique dialect.

Hans Boas
Pedernales EC
Austin

TCP 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.

Texas Co-op Power

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TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 77, Number 9 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power's* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Subscription price is \$4.20 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each.

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Flower POWER

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

NATURE'S PALETTE CAPTIVATES Texans every spring. Sapphire blue, lemony yellow, crimson red, golden orange, lavender purple and ivory white. We love our wildflowers so much that we'll drive great distances to see them. Frame their colors in countless photos. Designate official state titles in their honor. Celebrate their return with festivals, parades and dances. Spread their seeds across our yards, campuses and roadsides. Pen words, compose music and paint landscapes that hail their natural glory.

We also revere the Texans who've promoted our 5,000-plus species of wildflowers and native plants. Foremost was Lady Bird Johnson, who started her national highway cleanup campaign during Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency and co-founded the National Wildflower Research Center in 1982. Now called the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the 284-acre complex in Austin supports the Botanic Garden and Arboretum of Texas as well as cultivated gardens and wild natural areas.

Another wildflower hero is Carroll Abbott of Kerrville, a native plant expert who lobbied in 1981 to establish the fourth Saturday in April as Texas Wildflower Day. That same year he was instrumental in founding the Native Plant Society of Texas, which now boasts 34 chapters with 2,800 members.

Other wildflower advocates made a difference, too. San Antonio civic leader Sallie Ward Beretta launched a state-wide campaign in the 1920s to stop the bluebonnet from being overpicked. As president of the City Federation of Women's Clubs and the San Antonio Council of Girl Scouts, she recruited volunteers to gather seedpods in fields around the city. Then they shared the seeds with other cities across the state and nation.

Large or small, every effort to protect our wildflowers makes a difference. You can do your part: Please don't pick, trample or uproot bluebonnets or any other wildflowers. No law prohibits Texans from picking bluebonnets unless they're on private property or state park land, but any flower picked or damaged can't reseed for the next spring's bloom.

So welcome back, wildflowers. We look forward to yet another glorious show!

ROB GREENON | IMAGESFROMTEXAS.COM





A field of bluebonnets in the southern Chisos Mountains welcomes the sun as it rises on Big Bend National Park.

WELL, I DO DECLARE!
OFFICIAL STATE DESIGNATIONS

Officially WILD

STATE FLOWER

Most U.S. states claim one official state flower. Not Texas. We have at least 16. In 1901 the bluebonnet (*Lupinus subcarnosus*) went up against the prickly pear and cotton boll for the right to be named state flower. Rep. John "Cactus Jack" Nance Garner of Uvalde lobbied for the cactus bloom. Other legislators argued that cotton had made Texas rich. In the end, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America carried the day, and the bluebonnet won.

But floral dissent wasn't over. Many didn't like the bluebonnet choice. Of the state's six bluebonnet species, *Lupinus subcarnosus* was the "least attractive," opined botanist Howard S. Irwin in *Roadside Flowers of Texas*. So in 1971 state lawmakers amended legislation to include the more popular Texas bluebonnet (*Lupinus texensis*) in addition to *Lupinus subcarnosus* and all other varieties of bluebonnet as the official state flower.

Since then, horticulturalists have developed different colors of bluebonnets, such as white and maroon. To date, they've introduced at least 10 bluebonnet varieties. Thus, Texas has at least 16 official state flowers ... for now.

WILDFLOWER CAPITAL OF TEXAS

DeWitt County

Wildflower trails crisscross DeWitt County, northwest of Victoria, where more than 1,000 wildflower species have been documented. A 1999 resolution adopted by the Texas House recognized the county as the Wildflower Capital of Texas.



TEXAS WILDFLOWER DAY

Fourth Saturday in April

In April 1981 the Legislature declared the fourth Saturday of April as Texas Wildflower Day. The resolution asks the governor "to issue an appropriate proclamation annually" to encourage the proper observance of the special day.

BLUEBONNET CO-CAPITALS OF TEXAS

Burnet and Llano counties

Every spring visitors admire wildflowers along the Highland Lakes Bluebonnet Trail, which winds through Burnet and Llano counties in Central Texas. In 1981 the Legislature designated the pair as Bluebonnet Co-capitals of Texas.



EDDIE WHITE

STATE FLOWER SONG

Bluebonnets

Our state flower song, *Bluebonnets*, has roots in Washington County. Julia D. Booth of Chappell Hill wrote lyrics for the song, which was composed by piano teacher Lora C. Crockett. On February 8, 1933, Alice Clay Routt of Chappell Hill, accompanied by Crockett on the piano, sang the tune for the Texas House. It was then adopted as the state flower song by the Legislature.

OFFICIAL BLUEBONNET FESTIVAL OF TEXAS

Chappell Hill Bluebonnet Festival

The Chappell Hill Historical Society hosted its first bluebonnet festival in 1964, calling it the Bluebonnet Antique Show. In 1983 the name changed to Chappell Hill Bluebonnet Festival. In 1997 the Legislature named the event, in the town east of Brenham, as the Official Bluebonnet Festival of Texas.

WILDFLOWER SEEDING
BRIGHTENS ROAD TRIPS

Take It ON THE ROAD

SINCE THE 1930s the Texas Department of Transportation has planted native flowers and grasses along state highways. In 1934 the agency directed staff not to mow until wildflowers had set seed, a policy that still guides mowing schedules.

TxDOT's wildflower program has expanded in both scope and vision, and the department now maintains 800,000 acres of roadside along with 80 safety rest stops and 12 travel information centers. Every year TxDOT must reseed approximately 4,800 construction projects.

Enter native plants, which require less care, provide wildlife habitat and increase biodiversity. "Every fall we sow approximately 30,000 pounds of native flower and grass seed mixes," says Travis Jez, a TxDOT vegetation specialist. "Because monarch butterflies have become a species of major concern, we're also planting pollinator gardens and milkweeds, such as zizotes. What's cool is that all pollinators benefit."

No single seed source can supply the 15 tons that TxDOT sows annually. So Jez works with six Texas companies that specialize in producing seeds for native species. TxDOT also collaborates with Texas Native Seeds of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, a nonprofit program that develops commercial seed supplies of native plants for use in restoring habitats on private and public lands. The program supports six regional projects that select and grow plants endemic to their areas.

While you're searching for wildflowers, look out for bright green carpets along Texas roadsides. Those indicate that the areas have been hydro-seeded with a slurry of seeds, mulch and water. "The process is used for spreading seeds and to control erosion," Jez explains. "The mulch also holds in water and helps the seedlings get started."

As for the green color, "It allows applicants to see where they've sprayed the slurry," Jez says.



ROB GREENBERG | IMAGES FROM TEXAS.COM



Bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush accompany travelers along a stretch of Texas 16 in Gillespie County.

MARY MOTZ WILLS'
WILDFLOWER WATERCOLORS

Picture THIS

IN APRIL 1961 nature enthusiasts hurrahed the publication of *Roadside Flowers of Texas*. The classic guide written by botanist Howard S. Irwin showcases 257 wildflower paintings by Mary Motz Wills, a prolific artist and amateur botanist whose work was exhibited nationally. Her attention to the smallest details led to floral watercolors that were, as one columnist noted, “botanically accurate as well as artistically superb.”

Wills attended formal art schools and began painting flowers in 1913 while recovering from an illness in Panama, where her husband, a U.S. Army colonel, was stationed. After his death in 1925, Wills moved to Georgia and then to Abilene, where she aspired to record as many Texas flowers and plants as she could.

At her home studio, Wills painted plants that she collected or were sent to her by friends. She sometimes woke at 4 a.m. or worked through the night to capture blooms in their most natural form. “Some flowers only bloom at night, so I stay up until I get them painted,” she told a newspaper reporter in 1958.

A stickler for accuracy, Wills often noted on her paintings the common and botanical name of plants and where they grew in the wild.

In all, Wills produced more than 2,000 Texas botanical paintings. Many of the plants that she painted “were endangered species in her day, and some have disappeared entirely since then,” writes Cecilia Steinfeldt in *Art for History’s Sake: The Texas Collection of the Witte Museum*.

Wills died at 86 in 1961. Today, many of her delicate watercolors are housed for safe-keeping in Austin’s Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, San Antonio’s Witte Museum and Abilene’s Grace Museum. ■

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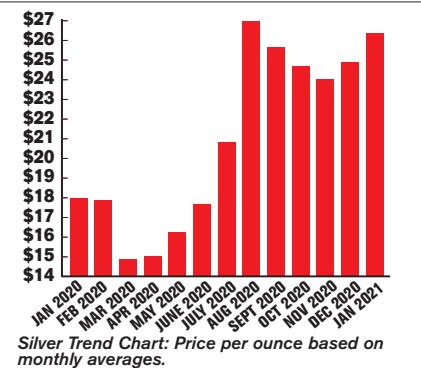
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Comanche Electric Cooperative

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CONTACT US

349 Industrial Blvd
Comanche, TX 76442
Toll-Free 1-800-915-2533

Web ceca.coop

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Alan Lesley

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Pete McDougal, District 2
Ruby Solomon, District 3
Monty Carlisle, District 4
Troy Stewart, District 5
Loren Stroebel, District 6
Phil Taylor, District 7

24/7 Outage Hotline

CECA crews are available 24/7 in the event of a power quality issue.

TOLL-FREE
800-915-2533

ABOUT COMANCHE EC

CECA operates in Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Mills, Shackelford and Stephens counties.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Headquarters

349 Industrial Blvd.
Comanche, TX 76442
Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Early

1801 CR 338
Early, TX 76801
Monday, Wednesday and Friday,
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed from 1 to 2 p.m.

Eastland

1311 W. Main St.
Eastland, TX 76448
Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

VISIT US ONLINE

ceca.coop



MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER
**ALAN
LESLEY**

Saving Energy Is Just as Green as Solar Panels

MOST ELECTRICITY COMES from large power plants that produce many megawatts for widespread consumption, but concerns over the environment and electricity costs have prompted some consumers to invest in their own power supplies.

Known as distributed generation, or DG, on-site power sources draw electricity from wind turbines and solar panels. But not everyone is interested in or can afford to install DG equipment. Here at CECA, we'd like to remind you that reducing electricity consumption can be just as green as generating your own power.

Options for energy conservation can include simple techniques such as wrapping water heaters with a thermal cover or using a solar clothes dryer (i.e., a clothesline). More involved procedures include upgrading your home's insulation and adding roof vents.

For more ways to conserve electricity, whether it's to save money or protect the environment, visit ceca.coop or texascooppower.com.

We encourage members to work with us before investing in DG. We have experts on hand who can help you understand the upfront costs and long-term savings of solar power and discuss the best options for our area.

Power installations connected to the electric grid must be approved by the co-op and follow safety and electric reliability guidelines for the protection of our employees and other co-op members. The guidelines also ensure that the performance of the entire electric distribution system is not jeopardized.

Also please be aware that there are scammers and dishonest installers hoping to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers who are in the market for renewable energy options. Before signing a contract, please call us at 1-800-915-2533 to verify the legitimacy of sales companies and contractors.

We recognize our members' diverse approaches to energy conservation and want to remind you that we are a resource no matter which direction you go—using less power or generating your own. ■



CURRENT NEWS

CECA Vehicles To Be Auctioned

CECA HAS FOUR RETIRED vehicles that will be auctioned through a closed-bid process. These vehicles have a few battle scars and are well broken in, as expected for work vehicles.

You may come by the shop yard at 201 W. Wrights Ave. in Comanche to inspect them in person.

Sealed bids can be mailed to CECA, Attn: Sealed Vehicle Bid, P.O. Box 729, Comanche, TX 76442, or dropped off in person at the office at 349 Industrial Blvd. in Comanche.

In all correspondence, please include a phone number where you can be reached. Questions can be directed to Dale Ogle at 1-800-915-2533. The deadline for bids is noon March 19. Bid winners will be notified by March 25.

CECA reserves the right to reject any or all bids at the discretion of the board.

Mileage is current as of December 31, 2020, but is subject to change as vehicles could still be used.



*2003 Chevrolet 1-ton flatbed 4x4; Duramax diesel with standard transmission; 92,324 miles.
VIN 1GBJK341X3E207526
Minimum bid: \$3,000*



*2006 Chevrolet 2500 HD 4x4; 202,459 miles.
VIN 1GCHK24G16E289871
Minimum bid: \$3,000*



*2011 Toyota 4x4; 170,908 miles.
VIN 5TFUU4EN8BX010206
Minimum bid: \$3,000*



*2015 Chevrolet 3500 crew cab 4x4 without bed; 137,584 miles.
VIN 1GB4KYCG2FF511495
Minimum bid: \$3,000*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Texas Independence Day
Tuesday, March 2

Daylight saving time begins
Sunday, March 14

St. Patrick's Day
Wednesday, March 17

NIC TAYLOR | ISTOCK.COM

Cutting Losses Through Vegetation Management



WE LOVE OUR TREES. They help protect our homes from the elements, beautify our neighborhoods, clean the air and bring color to our lives. But trees can also be dangerous. In storms the weakest, oldest and sometimes even the healthiest trees can fall on homes and cars. More often they fall on power lines and disrupt electric service. Occasionally, a tree becomes a pathway for injury when a person comes into contact with one that is caught in a downed power line.

CECA's primary responsibility is to provide safe, reliable electricity to you, our members. Keeping our lines clear of trees is necessary to deliver the highest caliber of service to you.

For years, CECA has employed crews that are dedicated entirely to right-of-way management. Each year, the co-op allocates a large portion of its maintenance budget to trimming and clearing vegetation from its rights-of-way. Prior to 2018, CECA's annual vegetation management budget was \$500,000. In 2019 that budget was more than doubled to \$1.2 million. Chemical treatment was also added to the vegetation management program's toolbox, and the number of crews working year-round was doubled. The current plan should allow the cooperative to trim our entire service territory in six years, with crews on pace to meet that goal.

CECA currently employs five full-time Horton Tree Service crews dedicated to clearing trees and other vegetation from lines. Occasionally an extra crew or two is added for special projects.

Our employees and the vegetation crews we contract with work a planned, rotating schedule to clear trees and other vegetation from our distribution rights-of-way. Our crews cut branches, trees and brush next to and underneath electric lines. In some cases, trees will be removed. When this is necessary, a CECA representative will attempt to contact relevant property owners before the work is done.

Type of Clearing

With the exception of the Gustine area, all brush clearing is done by mechanical trimming, with a footprint 10 feet below and 10 feet from both sides of power lines.

This year chemical treatment was added south of Comanche in the Gustine area. All small vegetation within the CECA right-of-way was sprayed with a chemical herbicide to remove new growth that could become an issue in the coming years. This technique leaves the lines clear of underbrush and small trees

and curbs future growth.

Moving forward, more chemical treatments will be incorporated, allowing the crews to adjust how right-of-way clearance is managed. This will hopefully leave our lines with two types of vegetation: old growth—large trees that are slow and cumbersome to trim but are too large and overgrown to cut down—and new growth, which can be managed with a minor trimming followed by a chemical treatment.

If your property is located in an area where chemical treatment is scheduled, you will receive a letter notifying you before any action is taken.

Miles of Line Cleared

Each crew clears an average of about 4,500 feet of trees per week. That's tree footage, not line footage, which means they cut 4,500 feet of trees out of the line—roughly 1 mile a week or 250 miles annually.

Locations Cleared

Starting south and moving north over the past two years, CECA's right-of-way management crews have trimmed the following areas:

- Gustine substation: east of 1476 to the Comanche County line, south to Energy and north to FM 2823.
- Shiloh substation: the north feed, just north of Comanche, west to Sidney, and the west feed, which runs southwest of Comanche toward Zephyr.
- DeLeon metering point: the north feed to Leon River, between Highway 6 and Highway 16, and the south feed, south of Sabana River.
- Gorman metering point: all three feeders trimmed, 5 miles east and west of Gorman and north to Lake Leon.
- Rising Star: north, east and west feeders, east of Rising Star to Duster and north to Carbon, and west of Rising Star to Cross Plains south of Highway 36. The south feed is expected to be completed this year.
- Olden south and east: the Lake Leon area, from Highway 6 east to Highway 16 and from I-20 south to Kokomo.
- Wayland: currently trimming northwest of Ranger, from FM 1852 east to FM 717 and then north about 10 miles.

Vegetation Management Plans

- Digital mapping: CECA plans to switch to a digital map that



will overlay our current mapping system. This will give our linemen more information about the condition of trees entangled in power lines and will provide more information during outages and when the co-op performs regular maintenance. It also allows us to better record and manage locations for future vegetation management.

- **Chemical treatment:** Our crews will adjust the way they cut trees to better incorporate chemical treatment of smaller trees after they are trimmed. When trees are cut to an appropriate height, it's then safe to apply chemical treatment with minimal to no drift. We are hopeful this will greatly increase the amount of vegetation whose growth we can slow or eliminate entirely.

- **Bulldozing:** We will work to strategically bulldoze key lines that have had issues caused by trees in the past or that are difficult to access by our linemen because of vegetation.

- **Working with the membership:** CECA would like to partner with our members who are looking to clear any trees that fall within our right-of-way. We are aware that some members are upgrading fences and clearing property for aesthetic and agricultural purposes. If you are looking to do anything requiring you to clear vegetation in CECA's right-of-way, please contact Riley Hilliard at 1-800-915-2533. He can work with you to offer some reimbursement for your costs and to ensure that the right-of-way can be safely cleared.

Safety First

If you have trees near service lines that need trimming, we recommend that you call us first to determine if it's safe for you to trim them. Do not attempt to trim branches away from power lines by yourself. If an object, such as a kite, is caught in a tree, stay clear of power lines when removing it. Also, when using a ladder, be careful not to let it touch a power line.

There are outages we can't prevent—such as those caused by extreme weather, lightning and curious animals—but we can prevent some of the outages caused by trees and brush. Trees and brush in the right-of-way make it harder for crews to get to lines and can prolong outage restoration work.

We can't control the weather, but a good vegetation management program can help reduce outages. From small limbs that cause "blinks" to big branches that can bring down lines and poles, vegetation management is a vital part of a safe and reliable power delivery system. ■



BENEFITS OF TREE TRIMMING

Clearing trees and overgrown vegetation is vital to providing safe, reliable power to our members.

We clear certain areas in our service territory, known as rights-of-way, to:

- ▶ **Keep power lines clear of tree limbs.**
- ▶ **Restore power outages more quickly.**
- ▶ **Keep crews and members of our community safe.**
- ▶ **Reduce unexpected repair costs.**

Vegetation management improves service reliability for you—our members.



Tame Your Trees

We love our trees, but when branches are too close to power lines, they can cause power outages, fire hazards and other safety concerns. Here are some rules to follow:

If a tree or a large branch is touching—or falls on—an electric line, call your electric cooperative immediately.

Never trim trees that grow close to power lines; that is a job for professionals. Call your electric cooperative for assistance and guidance.

Use extreme caution when doing any overhead trimming. Branches often fall in unexpected places.

Don't allow children to climb trees or build treehouses close to power lines.

Plant appropriate distances from all power lines.

When planting a tree, consider how tall the tree will grow. At maturity, trees should be at least 10 feet away from power lines.

CECA encourages you to always practice safety.



MINERVA STUDIO | iSTOCK.COM

Look Up Before You Prune Your Tree:

Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines when pruning trees. If you need to prune a tree that is too close to a power line, call CECA at 1-800-915-2533. Accidents can happen even without coming into direct contact with a line.

TREES MAY SEEM HARMLESS on a calm, sunny day, but add a bit of wind or ice on a stormy night and those towering pillars may threaten your home's electric supply. CECA advises members to consider where they plant new trees. While a sapling may seem fine where it is planted, members should consider what the tree will look like at maturity.

Because different trees have different mature heights, pay special attention to where you plant each tree. Good landscaping helps frame your home rather than hide it and incorporates trees and plants that are compatible with existing facilities and structures.

Planting the right tree in the right place will enhance your property value and prevent costly maintenance and damage to your home. Good landscaping will also utilize shrubs and low-growing trees that are compatible with electric utility lines. Low-growing trees will not reach electric lines and, therefore, will help prevent power interruptions for you and your neighbors.

Right Tree in the Right Place

Sometimes selecting the wrong tree and planting it near utility rights-of-way can cause safety concerns and service interruptions. If you want to avoid the hassle of tree trimming, the following list of trees and shrubs can help you. Average adult tree heights are given to help you select the right tree or shrub depending on its location. If you can help it, avoid planting tall-growing trees such as oaks, maples, willows and most pine trees near electric distribution power lines.

Trees and power lines can coexist and potential problems can be avoided by selecting and planting trees with the appropriate growth characteristics.

When planting trees near power lines, choose medium-sized trees with a mature height of 25–35 feet. Plant these trees at a distance away from the power line equal to their maximum crown radius (half the width of the tree at its widest point). Avoid trees with weak wood because their limbs break easily during storms. Talk to your nursery or county AgriLife extension agent for suggestions on low-growing trees that can be planted near power lines.

Planting Around Padmount Transformers

If you have a padmount transformer in your yard, your instinct may be to conceal it with landscaping or a fence. This 3-foot-square metal box contains important electrical equipment that supplies your home or neighborhood with underground electrical service.

CECA crews need safe access to the box for routine maintenance and to restore power during outages. Please maintain a safe zone by keeping any fencing, landscaping and

other obstructions at least 10 feet from the front and 3 feet from the sides and back of the transformer. This will ensure proper air circulation and prevent landscaping from getting damaged by our equipment. And because of underground high-voltage wiring leading to the box, always call 811 before digging around a padmount transformer.

Trees and Power Lines

CECA spends an enormous amount of time and money clearing and trimming dangerous trees. Trees that grow into power lines cause flickering lights, outages and fires.

When fully grown, the canopy of trees should be at least 20 feet away from an overhead power line. For large trees, such as oaks, this means planting a tree more than 50 feet from a power line. You should also plant bushes and trees at least 12 feet away from padmounted equipment.

Plant Safely

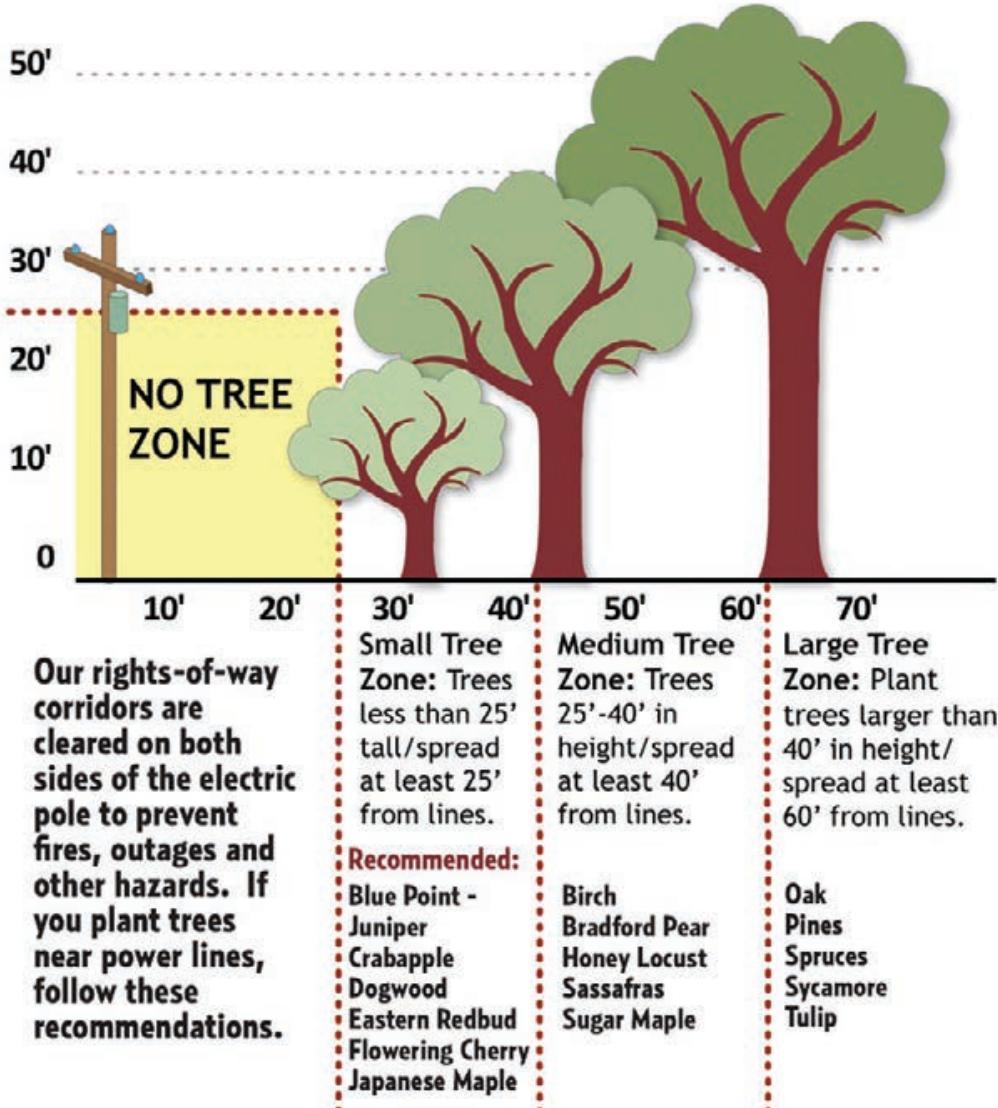
Don't forget to have utility lines located before you even

touch your shovel. Underground lines could include electrical, telephone, cable and gas lines. Some utility lines are not buried deeply. Hitting any type of line could be dangerous and very costly to repair. Call 811 at least two days before you dig to have lines located.

Right-of-Way Maintenance

CECA maintains a 10 foot right-of-way on either side of power lines. The right-of-way reduces outages and keeps you safe from electrical accidents and fires. If you notice a tree that is growing into a power line, please let us know.

Before you plant a tree, look up, look down, look all around. Texas 811, Texas utilities' computerized one-call protection service, is available by dialing 811 or 1-800-344-8377 to help you safely locate underground cables on your property. Please call three days before you plan to dig. Texas 811's website is texas811.org. ■



Attention Students: \$15,000 IN Scholarships Available

CECA will award eight scholarships to local students to assist with educational expenses. Applicants must be a member or dependent of a member of the cooperative.

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIPS

- 5** One of the scholarship types that will be awarded is CECA's \$2,000 Scholarship for Excellence.
- 2** Operation Round-Up Scholarships, also \$2,000, will be awarded to students whose parent or guardian receives service from CECA and also participates in the Operation Round-Up program.
- 1** A \$1,000 Technical Scholarship will be awarded to a student who plans to attend a technical school and whose parent or guardian receives service from CECA and also participates in Operation Round-Up.

**TO APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP,
VISIT CECA.COOP/SCHOLARSHIPS.**

The deadline for applications is March 26.

For more information please contact Shirley at 1-800-915-2533 or sdukes@ceca.coop.



BOY WINDOW_1178700357_R.JPG

Start Warm-Weather Savings on First Nice Day

THE WEATHER OUTSIDE can be as frightful in March as in January, but the early spring usually sneaks in a few warm-weather days here and there. Take advantage of them.

Turn off your furnace and treat your home—and its occupants—to a taste of the pleasant weather to come. Here's how to take advantage of those early glimpses of spring—and save some household energy while you're at it:

Open the windows. If it's warm enough to let some fresh air in during this in-between season of no heaters and no air conditioners, do it. Leave the windows open overnight to air out the house and stave off the need for the air conditioner. It's good for your health to bring in fresh air after a long winter of homes being mostly closed up.

Let the sunshine in. Open the drapes on sunny days and let nature keep your home warm. As it starts getting hot, though, cover windows up so incoming sunrays won't compete with the air conditioner.

Cook outdoors. Dust off the grill and start cookout season early this year.

Switch the direction of the blades on your ceiling fan. For warm weather, return the blades to a counterclockwise rotation. And be sure to turn off the fan when the room isn't occupied.

Readjust your water heater's temperature to 120 degrees if you cranked it up a few degrees for the winter.

Give your clothes dryer a rest and line dry clothes. When you need to run the dryer, run full loads only and make sure to clean the clothes dryer lint trap after each use.

Use LED bulbs. Replace all your old incandescent lightbulbs with LED bulbs. They use less energy and last longer. Remember to turn the lights out when you're done!

Schedule your home's air conditioner maintenance now, before you need to turn on the air conditioning for the summer. ■



RICK PATRICK

Susan's Sriracha Bacon Chicken Bites

4 small boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (6 ounces each or about 1½ pounds total)
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons Sriracha sauce
½ teaspoon cumin
16 slices bacon
¼ cup packed light brown sugar

1. Cut each chicken breast into large bite-size (about 1-inch) chunks and put them in a 1-gallon zipper bag.
2. Stir together oil, lime juice, Sriracha sauce and cumin and pour over the chicken. Let marinate for about 1 hour.
3. Cut each bacon slice into 2 pieces and drape each piece over and around a chicken cube, securing with a toothpick. Arrange wraps on a flat surface and sprinkle evenly with brown sugar.
4. Spray top rack of a broiler pan with high-temperature grilling spray and arrange chicken wraps on top.
5. Bake 6 inches under the broiling element at 350 degrees for 25–28 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.
6. When chicken is cooked, set oven to broil and broil about 3–6 minutes, watching carefully all the while, until sugar starts to brown and edges of bacon are crisp.

Makes 32 appetizers.

 Find this and more delicious recipes online at TexasCoopPower.com.

SECRETS OF A BILLIONAIRE REVEALED

"Price is what you pay; value is what you get."

Whether we're talking about socks or stocks, I like buying quality merchandise when it is marked down."

— wisdom from the most successful investor of all time

We're going to let you in on a secret. Billionaires have billions because they know value is not increased by an inflated price. They avoid big name markups, and aren't swayed by flashy advertising. When you look on their wrist you'll find a classic timepiece, not a cry for attention—because they know true value comes from keeping more money in their pocket.

We agree with this thinking wholeheartedly. And, so do our two-and-a-half million clients. It's time you got in on the secret too. The *Jet-Setter Chronograph* can go up against the best chronographs in the market, deliver more accuracy and style than the "luxury" brands, and all for far, far less. \$1,150 is what the *Jet-Setter Chronograph* would cost you with nothing more than a different name on the face.

With over two million timepieces sold (and counting), we know a thing or two about creating watches people love. The *Jet-Setter Chronograph* gives you what you need to master time and keeps the superfluous stuff out of the equation. A classic in the looks department and a stainless steel power tool of construction, this is all the watch you need. And, then some.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Experience the *Jet-Setter Chronograph* for 30 days. If you're not convinced you got excellence for less, send it back for a refund of the item price.

Time is running out. Now that the secret's out, we can't guarantee this \$29 chronograph will stick around long. Don't overpay to be underwhelmed. Put a precision chronograph on your wrist for just \$29 and laugh all the way to the bank. Call today!

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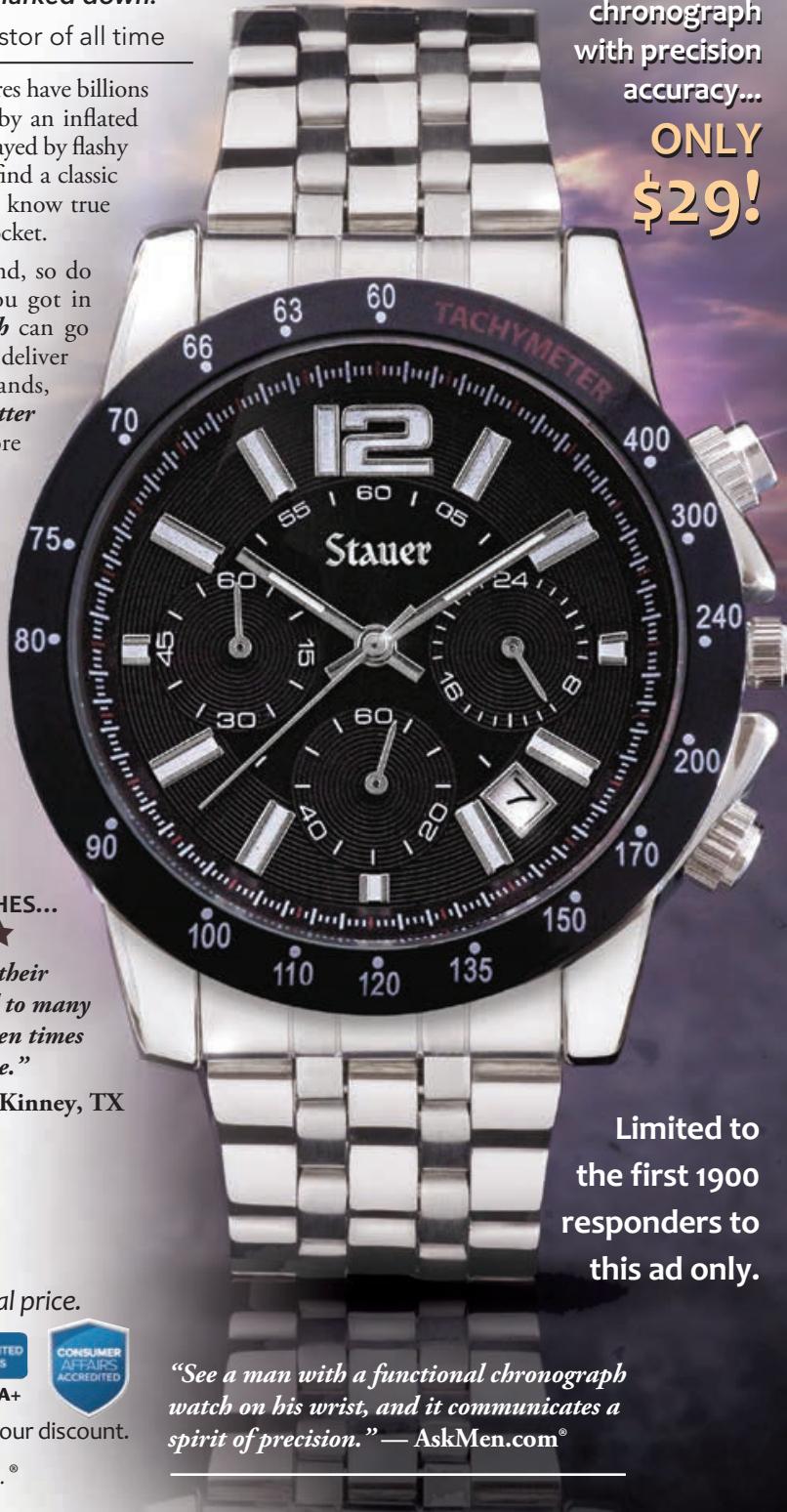
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— J. Fitzgerald, VA

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Wounded— Then Rejected

The first casualty of the Texas Revolution, a free Black man, had to fight for his residency in the new republic

BY MICHAEL HURD

SAMUEL MCCULLOCH JR. was biracial but considered a free Black man when, as a soldier with the Texian army, he was wounded during the Battle of Goliad on October 9, 1835, and considered the first casualty of the Texas Revolution. A musket ball shattered his right shoulder, and despite his injury and service, the postwar Texas government ordered him and all other free Blacks to leave.

Then, in a series of conflicting legislative moves, things got confusing. Could he stay, or did he have to go?

McCulloch was born in 1810 in South Carolina. His father was white, and his mother was Black, but no other records

of her status exist. McCulloch Sr. moved his son and three daughters, all considered free, to Texas, where they settled near the Gulf Coast in what is now Jackson County in May 1835.

The Battle of Goliad was the second skirmish of the revolution, coming one week after the brief skirmish known as the Battle of Gonzales and just four days after McCulloch joined the Texian army as a private with the 50-man Matagorda Volunteer Company. When the force attacked a Mexican army camp, McCulloch was first to enter the fort and the lone soldier wounded. The injury left his shoulder permanently disabled.

After the war McCulloch's residence status quickly began to twist and turn. Initially, the republic's constitution, adopted in September 1836, prohibited citizenship for "Africans and the descendants of Africans and Indians" and required all free Blacks to apply to the Congress for permanent residence. McCulloch made the required application for himself and his sisters in 1837, recounting his military service and stating that he had been "deprived of the privileges of citizenship by reason of an unfortunate admixture of African blood."

On June 5, 1837, the republic passed a law that permitted free Blacks to keep their residency if they had been living in Texas before the Republic's Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836.

With his petition still pending, McCulloch saw his residency status further imperiled on February 5, 1840. That's when an act was passed to prohibit the immigration of free Blacks and demand that all free Black residents vacate the republic within two years or be sold into slavery.

McCulloch filed a successful second petition, likely because of the Ashworth Act, passed December 12, 1840. This legislation provided that the Ashworth families, Black relatives in Jefferson County, could remain in Texas after influential whites intervened.

As a disabled veteran, McCulloch was eligible for a land grant and was awarded one league (4,428 acres) of land, two-thirds of which he chose to ranch and farm near Von Ormy.

Despite his land and his disability, McCulloch soldiered again, fighting in the battle of Plum Creek in 1840 against Comanches and serving as a spy during the Mexican invasion of San Antonio in 1842. He died in Von Ormy on November 2, 1893. ■

Tacos

Some of the most creative and complex flavors ever to meet a tortilla

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

This month, readers treat us to a variety of taco recipes, so naturally we crave salsa. We turn to Austin food advocate and community coordinator Héctor González, who has been sharing his recipes since moving from Mexico. "There are taquerías there that established their fame based on their salsas," González says. But, he says, you don't have to limit the versatile ingredient's use to a condiment—it is also the perfect base for cocktails. This salsa can easily be adapted to your tastes. Increase or decrease the jalapeño pepper or try a habanero if you want an extra kick.

Roasted Red Salsa

6 plum tomatoes

1 medium white onion, halved

3–5 cloves garlic

1–2 hot peppers, such as jalapeños, serranos or habaneros

Fresh cilantro (optional)

Salt, to taste

COOK'S TIP You can turn this salsa into a michelada. Press $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salsa through a fine mesh strainer into a pint glass. Add 1 tablespoon lime juice and 1 teaspoon salt, or more to taste, then slowly pour in 12 ounces of Mexican lager. Cheers!

1. Roast the tomatoes, onion, garlic and peppers on the stovetop or under a broiler. Turn vegetables as needed, blackening all over. Keep an eye on the garlic and peppers, as they will roast faster than the tomatoes.

2. Add roasted vegetables, and cilantro if you like, to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. A couple of pinches of salt will bring the salsa's brightness to the fore. Taste and adjust seasoning to your liking. You can serve this salsa warm, or chill until ready to serve.

MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Butternut Squash Tacos With Black Beans.





Fajita Tacos With Chimichurri Sauce

KITTIELE POTTS
BOWIE-CASS EC

For her fajita tacos, Potts uses a zippy chimichurri sauce that pairs beautifully with sweet caramelized onions.

FILLING

32-ounce sirloin steak
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon salt
1 tablespoon pepper
1 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon paprika

CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

1 cup parsley
1 cup cilantro
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 red onion
20 green pitted olives
4 cloves garlic
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon capers
1 teaspoon oregano
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 teaspoon cumin

CARAMELIZED ONIONS

4 onions
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted
1/3 cup olive oil
1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

TO SERVE

Tortillas

COOK'S TIP The sauce is best made in advance to allow flavors to meld.

CONTINUED >

\$500 WINNER

Grilled Garden Harvest Tacos

CHERYL SCHULMAN
FAYETTE EC



These vegetarian tacos pack a surprising amount of flavor into each bite, thanks to the crisp slaw and cool avocado crème. If you can't find ancho chile powder, substitute regular chili powder and a pinch of ground cayenne.

MAKES 6 TACOS

FILLING
3 large carrots
2 medium zucchini
1 large sweet potato
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground ancho chile powder, or to taste
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 ears corn, shucked

"BRING THE HEAT" SLAW
3 cups shredded green cabbage
1/3 cup chopped cilantro
1 small jalapeño pepper, chopped
1/3 cup diced jicama
1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon sugar



AVOCADO CRÈME

1 large avocado
1/2 cup Mexican crema
2 teaspoons lime juice

TO SERVE

12 corn tortillas
Crumbled cotija cheese
Pico de gallo
Lime wedges

1. FILLING Prepare grill to cook over medium-high heat.

2. Peel carrots and cut in half lengthwise. Slice zucchini into strips 1/4 inch thick. Peel sweet potato and dice into 1/4-inch cubes. Toss all in olive oil, cumin, ancho chile powder and salt. Set aside.

3. SLAW Mix cabbage, cilantro, jalapeño, jicama, bell pepper, vinegar, salt, pepper and sugar. Set aside.

4. CRÈME Combine avocado, crema and lime juice in a blender and blend on low until smooth. Set aside.

5. Place a sheet of foil on half of grill grates. Place carrots flat side down on foil along with sweet potato cubes. Place zucchini strips and corn directly on grill. Turn vegetables to char on all sides. Remove vegetables once they're well charred and tender all the way through, about 6 minutes total for the zucchini and 10 minutes for the carrots, corn and sweet potato. Let cool slightly, then slice zucchini and carrots into quarters and cut corn kernels off the cob.

6. To assemble tacos, grill or warm the tortillas. Layer two tortillas, then top with grilled vegetables followed by slaw and avocado crème. Garnish with pico de gallo, cotija or lime juice.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

KIDS COOKING DUE MAR 10

Have your kids turned into sous-chefs? Share their kitchen creations with our readers. Enter at TexasCoopPower.com/Contests by March 10.



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Night Life

Deadline: March 10

Portraits

Deadline: April 10

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RECIPES CONTINUED

1. FILLING Place steak in a shallow baking dish. Combine vinegar, olive oil and Worcestershire sauce and pour over steak. Cover and refrigerate; let marinate at least 4 hours.

2. SAUCE Combine ingredients in a blender or food processor and pulse until ingredients are completely chopped but not liquefied. The sauce should be somewhat thick and chunky.

3. ONIONS Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Peel off the outer paper layer of the onions, leaving the ends on. Halve onions lengthwise from stem to root. Place the onions in a casserole dish cut-sides up. Combine melted butter, olive oil, sugar, salt and pepper. Drizzle onions generously with the mixture. Cover loosely with foil and bake 30 minutes. Flip onions over and bake an additional 25 minutes, or until onions are tender and caramelized.

4. When ready to cook steak, prepare grill for direct heat cooking. Combine salt, pepper, cumin, garlic powder, onion powder and paprika, and season steak on all sides. Grill to desired doneness, about 10 minutes per side for a medium sirloin. Let steak rest 5 minutes.

5. Slice steak thinly and layer on tortillas with caramelized onions and chimichurri sauce.

SERVES 8



Instant Pot Carnitas Tacos

MELALEE WINKLER
COSERV

These carnitas tacos are made in an Instant Pot for all of the flavor in half the time. Instead of frying, Winkler finishes the carnitas under the broiler to get the crispy edges carnitas are known for. If you have leftovers, save some of the cooking liquid for reheating.

6–7 pounds boneless pork butt shoulder

1 tablespoon salt

1 tablespoon dried Mexican oregano, crumbled

1 tablespoon smoked paprika

1 tablespoon cumin

1 teaspoon chipotle powder

½ teaspoon garlic powder

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 cup orange juice

¼ cup chicken stock

1 yellow onion, quartered

TO SERVE

Flour tortillas

Diced red onion

Sliced radishes

Chopped cilantro

Crumbled queso fresco

Lime wedges

COOK'S TIP If you don't have an Instant Pot, you can also cook this in a heavy, covered pot in the oven at 325 degrees for 3½ hours.

1. Cut the pork butt into six or seven chunks. Mix together the salt, oregano, paprika, cumin, and chipotle and garlic powders. Rub the pork with the spice mixture on all sides.

2. Set the Instant Pot to sauté setting high. Heat the oil in the pot and, working in batches, brown the pork on all sides. Remove the pork and deglaze the Instant Pot with the orange juice and chicken stock, scraping up the browned bits.

3. Place the quartered onion in the pot and turn off the Instant Pot. Place all of the pork on top of the onion. Put the lid on, making sure the valve is set to seal, and set the Instant Pot to pressure cook, high, 1 hour.

4. When the time is up, allow natural release for 15 minutes, then manual release. Remove pork, reserving some of the cooking liquid. Discard the onion.

5. Pull pork with two forks and spread on a baking sheet. Drizzle with a small amount of the cooking liquid and place under the broiler until the pork is slightly browned and crispy on the edges, 3–5 minutes. Serve with grilled flour tortillas, red onion, radish, cilantro, queso fresco and lime wedges.

SERVES 12

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Where Artistry Congregates

Czech and German painted churches in Central Texas are sparkling shrines

BY CHET GARNER

A TOUR OF TEXAS back roads takes you past prosaic scenes such as pastures full of grazing cows, profiles of spinning windmills and rural churches quietly awaiting their Sunday congregations. For most of these outlying houses of worship, a simple exterior foreshadows a modest sanctuary. That expectation changes in Fayette and Lee counties, where, concealed within unassuming facades, you'll find Old World decorative glory inside the region's painted churches.

I started my own churchgoing road trip with an apricot kolach because that's what you do when visiting Texas Czech country. I was on a mission to visit the area's five painted churches that are hidden in plain sight within the Czech and German communities that dot the map. My first stop was Dubina.

I pulled into a dirt parking lot and shrugged at what appeared to be an ordinary white building known as Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church. As soon as I stepped inside, I was transported to a world of sacred traditions and intricate religious art. From floor to ceiling, the room dazzled in bright colors and inlaid metals adorning the altars and statues of saints. It was clear that the Czech immigrants who built this church in the late 1800s took great pride in their work and sought to recreate the traditions and artistry of their European homeland here in Texas.

I spent the entire day driving, relying on my GPS so I didn't miss a turn down an obscure road in Fayette or Lee counties. From St. Paul Lutheran in Serbin to St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Ammannsville, each sanctuary had its own feel and history. In the ornately painted St. Mary Catholic Church in High Hill, known as the "Queen of the Painted Churches," the wooden columns looked just like marble. I felt transported to Europe without leaving Texas. ■

ABOVE Chet inside St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Ammannsville.

TOP WEB EXTRA See Chet's video from the painted churches in Fayette County and check out his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.

Know Before You Go

Some events may have been affected by COVID-19. Call or check an event's website for scheduling details.

MARCH

01

College Station [1–11] **Territory: The Exhibition in a Box,** (979) 458-0539, arch.tamu.edu/inside/services/wright-gallery

06

Bulverde [6, 13, 20, 27] **Saturday Night Rodeo,** (830) 980-2226, tejasrodeo.com

09

Houston **Viano String Quartet**, (713) 348-5400, chambermusicohouston.org

11

Tyler [11–14] **Texas Rose Spring Kickoff II Hunter/Jumper Horse Show,** (903) 882-8696, texasrosehorsepark.com

12

Shiner [12–13] **Pink Chandelier Market Barn Sale,** (361) 798-0573, facebook.com/pinkchandeliermarket

13

McKinney [12–14] **Third Monday Trade Days,** (972) 562-5466, tmtd.com

14

Huntsville [13–14] **Rusty Chippy Vintage Hippy & Garden Show,** (936) 661-2545, huntsvilleantiqueshow.com

Dallas [14–June 20] **Building on the Boulevard: Celebrating 20 Years of the Meadow's New Home,** (214) 768-2516, meadowsmuseumdallas.org

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Fredericksburg [15-20]
Spring Break at the Pioneer Museum, (830) 990-8441, pioneermuseum.net

16

Austin [16-20] South by Southwest Online, (512) 467-7979, sxsw.com

18

Brenham [18-21, 25-28]
The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey, (979) 830-8358, unitybrenham.org

19

Abilene [19-20] Outlaws and Legends Music Fest, (325) 660-8458, outlawsandlegends.com

Wichita Falls [19-20]
Cowboy True, (940) 767-2787, arts council wf.org/cowboy-true

Tyler [19-21] United States Dog Agility Association Agility Trials, (903) 882-8696, texasrosehorsepark.com

Palestine [19-April 4]
Texas Dogwood Trails Celebration, (903) 723-3014, www.texasdogwoodtrails.com

20

Corpus Christi Lecture: Kitchen Herbs, (361) 852-2100, stxbot.org

Irving Las Colinas Symphony Orchestra: Jonathan Jones, (972) 252-4800, lascolinassymphony.org

Luckenbach Mud Dauber Fest, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

Mesquite Eggcitement With the Bunny, (972) 216-6273, cityofmesquite.com/pard

[MORE EVENTS >](#)

TCP Submit Your Event

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your event online for May by March 10, and it just might be featured in this calendar.



HOWARD DANIEL JR.
serves as board chair of Burke, an organization that assists with mental health needs and developmental disabilities.

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Event Calendar

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27

Abilene Triple Concerto: Beethoven at 250,
(325) 677-6170,
abilenephilharmonic.org

Burnet Hill Country Lawn & Garden Show,
(512) 756-9396,
burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org

Burton Texas Ranger Day,
(979) 803-0393,
burtontx.org

Sabinal [27–28] Wild Hog Festival and Craft Fair,
(830) 486-8549,
sabinalwildhogfestival.com

San Antonio [27–May 9] Night of Artists,
(210) 299-4499,
briscoemuseum.org/noa

Pick of the Month

Classic Car Stampede

Bellville, March 13
(979) 865-3187
austincountycruisers.com

Austin County Cruisers is a small group of die-hard car enthusiasts who share a passion for the mixture of mechanics and art that creates a vehicle. Cars, trucks and motorcycles from 1976 and earlier will be on display.

MARCH EVENTS CONTINUED

APRIL

01

Levelland [1–3] American Business Club Pro Rodeo,
(806) 777-1510,
abcrodeo.com

Karnack [1–24] Earth Day Flotilla, (903) 736-3063,
tinyurl.com/flotilla2021

Ennis [1–30] Bluebonnet Trails, (972) 878-4748,
bluebonnettrail.org

02

Jefferson [2–4] City-Wide Rummage Sale,
(903) 665-2672,
jefferson-texas.com

03

Llano Fiddle Fest,
(325) 247-5354,
facebook.com/llanofiddlefest

21

Kerrville Celtic Angels Ireland, (830) 896-9393,
caillouxtheater.com

26

Belton [21, 28, April 11, 18, 25] Healthy Kids Running Series, (254) 340-4577,
healthykidsrunningseries.org

West [26–27] West, Central Texas Ceramic Expo & Handcrafted Items,
(254) 716-5227,
westceramicshow.com

Burton [26–April 3] La Bahia Antique Show and Sale, (979) 289-2684,
labahiaantiques.com

TEXAS CO-OP POWER MARCH 2021

Diners

Diners sprinkled across the state offer cooking that tastes like home no matter where you travel. Here's what our members served up, and we're coming back for seconds!

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

CHRIS MILLER
BLUEBONNET EC

A diner Miller stumbled upon during a road trip on Route 66.

REAGAN MAZY
SAM HOUSTON EC
Sunset at Ranch Hand Cafe in Cleveland.

SHELLY BORGFELD
FITZPATRICK
PEDERALES EC

"We spent our anniversary in the charming town of Blanco and had a delightful experience at the Chess Club."

SANDRA DRAKE
BLUEBONNET EC

Drake's grandson at Mama's Daughters' Diner.



Upcoming Contests

DUE MAR 10 Night Life

DUE APR 10 Portraits

DUE MAY 10 Rust & Decay

Enter online and review submission rules at TexasCoopPower.com/Contests.

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



Few and Far

Young musicians find out just how much luck and money Far West Texas requires

BY ELI WINTER
PHOTO BY WYATT MCSPADDEN

CAMERON KNOWLER AND I rang in Christmas next to a trailer in the Christmas Mountains. It was 2018, and we had just done a show at Terlingua's Starlight Theatre. For breakfast we'd eaten cowboy omelets with Catfish, a legendary river guide who punctuated slow bites with a groan—"Oh, merciful days!"

Later that night, toward the end of an 11-hour drive to Austin, we sat in an empty Kerrville IHOP for 45 minutes without being served and wolfed down fast food in a parking lot late at night.

That's how touring goes sometimes: No matter the crowd size, guarantee or delusions of grandeur, whether you play bars, basements or arenas, you spend a lot of time driving. Especially in far West Texas.

We were just 21 and 22 but already seasoned touring musicians. My music re-

volves around instrumentals for six-string, 12-string and Weissenborn acoustic guitars. Cameron's guitar and banjo playing draws influence from old-time and bluegrass musicians of the rural South.

This tour marked the first time we had performed together regularly, reinterpreting traditional folk songs and devising our own, and our Christmas Eve concert marked a halfway point, for which we'd traveled from Houston to the desert and back—a route we had looked forward to.

Growing up in Houston, I thought of Far West Texas as a region of stark beauty and mystery. I listened to *StarDate* on the radio and gave a presentation on Fort Davis in fourth grade. It seemed impossibly far.

We were surprised to have made it. On the way out of Lubbock, we stopped by Buddy Holly's grave. Holly toured similarly, and his plane use began from a desire to avoid freezing on a tour bus between shows in the rural Midwest. Our concerts, perhaps like his, were small—a nonprofit record store in Dallas, a backyard barn in Austin and a hotel bar in Marfa—but they didn't need to be big. Cameron thought of it like Hollywood, less charmed by the \$10 cacao nibs we attempted to snack on during long drives or the person who asked him before a gig if we were together, then asked, "Are you any good?"

Each day we made enough money for the next, aware of the luck that permeated our travels: playing to a packed house in a repopulated ghost town the night before Christmas, the night after playing for an attentive handful on the outskirts of Austin.

At the homecoming show in Houston, we cracked jokes about our travels, and I thought back to Catfish, as I often do. These days had been merciful indeed. ■

TEXAS MINT

We are excited to announce the release of the 2021 Texas Silver Round – Revolution Series. This is the second release of a four-year series commemorating the battles of the Texas Revolution. Each Texas Silver Round is one troy ounce .9999 fine silver.

The obverse of the high-quality mint strike features Texas' iconic lone star in the foreground. The smooth engraving of the star is framed by a textured topographical outline of the state of Texas. "TEXAS" arches proudly over the top of the round's obverse in large capital letters, with "Precious Metals" presented inversely along the opposite side. The round's mintage year is engraved in the bottom left of the round, just southwest of what would be the Rio Grande bordering Texas and Mexico.



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BATTLE OF GONZALES

first in the series



The stunning 2020 Texas Silver Round depicts a scene from the Battle of Gonzales, with three Texian revolutionaries defending the famous Gonzales cannon, while brandishing the Come And Take It Flag.

The Texas Silver Round can be purchased in a monster box produced exclusively for the Texas Mint. Packaged in 20 protective tubes of 25 rounds each, the monster box holds 500 1-ounce Texas Silver Rounds. Built from durable cold-rolled steel and finished with a matte black powder coat, the monster box lid features an orange cutout of the state of Texas. Each sealed monster box is secured with a unique serial number and a holographic seal to ensure maximum product protection.

The Texas Silver Round is also available to purchase in a similarly designed and secured mini-monster box, which contains 10 protective tubes of 25 rounds each for a total of 250 silver rounds.



BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

second in the series



The events of this famous battle took place on the days of February 23rd - March 6th, 1836. At the end of a 13-day siege, President General Antonio López de Santa Anna and his Mexican troops reclaimed the Alamo Mission, killing the Texian and immigrant occupiers.



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