

HE TAUGHT HOLLYWOOD  
STARS TO TALK TEXAN

BESSIE COLEMAN'S REACH  
KNEW NO BOUNDS

CHAGRIN OVER  
MY FATHER

# Texas Coop Power

FOR CECA MEMBERS

JUNE 2021

## After Nature Strikes

How co-ops join forces  
to get the power back on



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# June 2021



07

## 'That's What Co-ops Are For'

Three months of historic weather in 2020 and the February polar vortex unleash the full force of Texas' co-op family.

*Stories by Chris Burrows*

**ON THE COVER**

A co-op crew works to restore power near Lake Charles, Louisiana, after Hurricane Delta.

*Photo by Chad Simon | Sam Houston EC*

**ABOVE**

Lineworkers across Texas scrambled to restore power during the polar vortex in February.

*Photo courtesy Pedernales EC*

## 12 Texas Talk Man

Robert Hinkle had some of Hollywood's biggest stars talkin' and dressin' the part.

*By Jessica Ridge*

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*By Martha Deeringer*



# Sunset Cinema

**DRIVE-IN THEATERS** have enjoyed a resurgence since last spring as the COVID-19 pandemic forced folks to find forms of entertainment that didn't risk their health. Even before that, drive-ins were thriving in Texas, as we wrote about in *Drive in, Chill Out* in June 2019.

## June 6 National Drive-In Movie Day

Grab some popcorn and celebrate.

“Noble fathers have noble children.”

—EURIPIDES

## Can-Do Perspective

Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a 14-watt CFL for 20 hours, a computer for three hours or a TV for two hours.



## Storm Surge

A record 30 named storms formed in the Atlantic Ocean in 2020. Thirteen of those named storms turned into hurricanes, and three of them—Hanna, Laura and Delta—brought high winds or heavy rain or both to Texas, which mobilized lineworkers across the state. See *'That's What Co-ops Are For'* on Page 8.

As the planet warms, scientists say, hurricanes are lingering longer and staying stronger once they make landfall.

Alas, hurricane season begins again June 1 and runs through November.

# Heavy Metal

**THE LARGEST PLAYABLE GUITAR** in the world is 43½ feet tall, 16½ feet wide and weighs 1 ton, according to Guinness World Records. Built by students from the Conroe Independent School District Academy of Science and Technology, it's modeled on a 1967 Gibson Flying V and was first played in June 2000 with the opening chord of *A Hard Day's Night*.



## TCP Contests and More

[ON TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM](https://www.texascooppower.com)

### \$500 RECIPE CONTEST

Pies

### FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS

Fillin' Stations

### RECOMMENDED READING

*Gas With Class* (January 2013) visited a fillin' station that still offered full service.



## A CAREER TAKES OFF

Nothing is cooler for an aspiring writer than to see her work in print for the first time.

Ainsley Shaw gets that thrill this month with the publication of *Queen Bess Soared* on Page 29.

Shaw is a first-year student at Maastricht University in the Netherlands, but she began writing about Bessie Coleman, the Texan who became the first African American woman and first Native American woman to earn a pilot's license, in 2020, when she was a senior at Leander High School.

Shaw, a Pedernales Electric Cooperative member, participated in the Leander school district's Career Opportunities on Location week by shadowing the staff at *Texas Co-op Power*. "Being in a real writing environment has only reinforced my intention to pursue writing as a career," she said of her COOL experience.

## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

### I ALWAYS LAUGH WHEN MY DAD ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to [letters@TexasCoopPower.com](mailto:letters@TexasCoopPower.com) or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town. Below are some of the responses to our April prompt: **I thought I was smart until ...**

I realized I was mis-taking knowledge for wisdom.

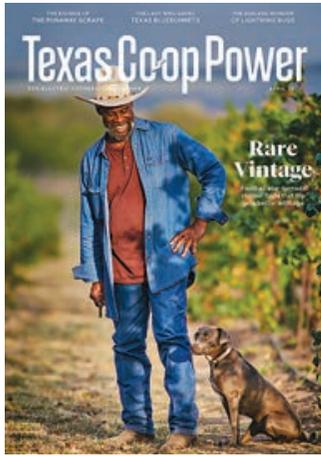
GAIL DURFEE  
MAGIC VALLEY EC  
MCALLEN

I left home.  
PATTY LONGINO SMITH  
VIA FACEBOOK

I began talking less and listening more.

TAMMIE MANCHESTER  
JACKSON EC  
SARGENT

To see more responses, read Currents online.



DAVE SHAFER

**The Seed Flourishes**

“Great story on vintner Alphonse Dotson. Michael Hurd could have added that Dotson shows great character by his choice of dog—the blue Lacy pictured on the cover.”

**BEN ROBERTS**  
HAMILTON COUNTY EC  
GATESVILLE

**Runaway Scrape’s Anguish**

Janice Woods Windle wrote about her family’s involvement in the Runaway Scrape in her historical novel *True Women* [*The Runaway Scrape*, April 2021]. One detail I’ll never forget is that a child who died on the way east was later dug up and reinterred near home, after the danger was over.

Mary Pritchard  
HILCO EC  
Midlothian



Gotas de Oro is the best wine, and I’m not a wine drinker [*The Seed Flourishes*, April 2021]. I could get used to it.

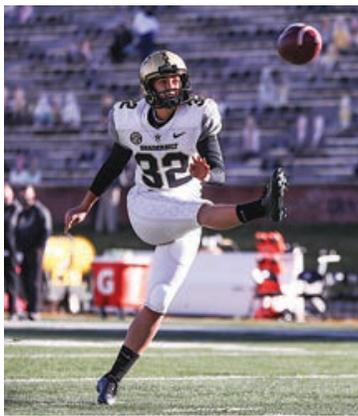
TERESA ATOR  
LEIFESTE  
VIA FACEBOOK

**Botched Attempt**

You state that Sarah Fuller was the first female athlete to play in a major college football game and two weeks later was the first woman to score in such a game [*A Big Step*, Currents, April 2021]. Wrong on both counts.

Katie Hnida played for the University of Colorado in 1999 and New Mexico 2002–04. On August 30, 2003, she kicked two extra points against Texas State to become the first woman to score in a Division I game.

Mike Lusk  
Medina EC  
San Antonio



COLLEGIATE IMAGES / GETTY IMAGES

**Real as It Gets**

I must say that in today’s world of polemic divisiveness, your homey, well-written and informative magazine is a breath of fresh air. In a world of hypercommercialism at mind-blowing speeds, thanks for being so real.

Douglas Stewart  
Pedernales EC  
Wimberley

**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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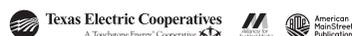
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BY CHRIS BURROWS

# WALKING THE LINES

WHEN FEBRUARY'S polar vortex brought to Texas enough snow, ice, cold and wind to strain every bit of infrastructure, Cody Hansen, a Bandera Electric Cooperative lineworker, parked his bucket truck on the side of a Hill Country road. He was hoofing it.

"The roads were super snowed over. Then instead of patches of black ice, we had all black ice," he said. "It's a lot more difficult when you have to walk the lines out and try not to break an ankle."

Bandera EC and many of the state's 65 other distribution cooperatives supplied line crews with foul-weather gear—even if they couldn't supply their homes with power—and the lineworkers in turn restored power to millions between grid-mandated rolling outages. Those workers faced fender benders, exhausting conditions and 12-plus-hour shifts as they knocked ice from poles and hammered at frozen gates and chains to keep power flowing to co-op members.

But for many, the work wasn't done when their lights were back on. Not when others still needed help.

About a dozen co-ops sent workers to other cooperatives after ice broke thousands of poles across Co-op Country and residential heating demand overwhelmed other electrical equipment, stretching thin co-ops and crews.

"When our system was on the ground and members were without power, it was reassuring to know we had support from our co-op family," said Kathi Calvert, general manager at Houston County EC.

Borne out of hardship and guided by the Seven Cooperative Principles, including Cooperation Among Cooperatives, Texas' electric co-ops worked together, helped along by the very members they serve, to do what they've always done.

"Our crews in the field were constantly stuck and having to be pulled around due to the icy conditions," said Bryan Chandler, operations manager at Heart of Texas EC. "Our members came to our aid with food, fuel and tractors to help pull trucks."

It took everyone working cooperatively.

"This was definitely the worst winter storm I have worked in," said Doug Grimm, a 20-year linework veteran for Bluebonnet EC. "We did what we always do: Come together and get the job done." ■

**AFTER TEXAS THAWED AND THE LIGHTS CAME BACK ON IN FEBRUARY, CO-OP LINEWORERS STILL WEREN'T DONE**

COURTESY FEDERNALES AND SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES





# 'THAT'S WHAT CO-OPS ARE FOR'



BY CHRIS BURROWS



### THREE MONTHS OF HISTORIC WEATHER IN 2020 UNLEASHED THE FULL FORCE OF TEXAS' CO-OP FAMILY

**I**T wasn't the 16-hour days or the searing heat. It wasn't the meager accommodations—a 100-man tent—or the fact that he'd had only five days off in seven weeks. Speaking from a mud-caked work truck in southwest Louisiana, James Warden didn't bring up any of those things.

"The hardest part is being away from home," Warden said. He had just missed his youngest son's eighth birthday. "When I'm working at home, I still get to see my kids and wife when I come in late at night. I at least get to kiss 'em good night, but here it's just a phone call."

The construction foreman for Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative was five days into his second trip in about a month to DeRidder, Louisiana, where he was helping an electric co-op severely damaged by hurricanes Laura and Delta. It was mid-October 2020, and Warden's crew, based out of San Augustine in East Texas, was setting poles and hanging lines, some of which they'd already reset and rehung weeks before, following Laura. That hurricane knocked out power to Warden's own home and heavily damaged his own co-op's lines.

But the day after the lights were back on in East Texas, Warden was in Louisiana. He left his own family to help another family—the co-op family.

In his 24 years as a lineworker, Warden has worked the front lines of major recovery efforts, including after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. But he had never experienced anything like this. He'd never had to miss one of his four kids' birthdays.

"When we first got here, there weren't hardly any lines up in the air," he said. "Their whole system was tore up. It was just wiped. When you drove down the highway, just about every pole you would look at was broke."



Co-ops follow the Seven Cooperative Principles, including Cooperation Among Cooperatives, through which they seek aid from and offer assistance to fellow co-ops during times of crisis.

COURTESY BLUEBONNET, HILCO, HOUSTON COUNTY, PEDERNALES, SAM HOUSTON AND SWISHER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



**'EVERY TIME WE HAVE A STORM AT HOME AND IT GETS REAL BAD, PEOPLE VOLUNTEER TO COME HELP US. BEING A LINEMAN, WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO IS GO HELP PEOPLE.'**

Relentlessly dedicated lineworkers like Warden have for more than 80 years ensured that the lights stay on across Co-op Country, where cooperatives rely on one another when disaster strikes. The full force of that network was on brilliant display last fall, when Laura in August, Hurricane Sally in September and Delta in October ripped through the South, including parts of Texas, killing dozens, displacing many more and destroying electrical infrastructure. And then an unprecedented ice storm tore apart co-op grids in West Texas and the Panhandle.

By the end of last October, lineworkers from every part of Texas had helped restore power for more than a quarter-million co-op members in Texas, Louisiana and Alabama—resetting thousands of poles along hundreds of miles.

But lineworkers like Ben Perry don't measure progress in miles or meters. They measure it in relieved faces.

"That's probably what will stick with me the most—the people that were there, the hospitality," said Perry, a foreman for United Cooperative Services, a co-op based south of Fort Worth. Perry, like Warden, was part of a crew dispatched to Louisiana to help Beauregard EC, whose entire electrical system was taken offline by Laura—the strongest recorded hurricane to ever make landfall in Louisiana. The Category 4 storm killed 77 after it made landfall August 27, 2020, packing 150 mph winds.

Laura dealt serious damage to several Texas co-ops but decimated Beauregard EC, prompting a call for help that

drew more than 1,200 lineworkers from across the South and Midwest, including Warden and Perry, for a massive monthslong power restoration effort. "We really couldn't do it without them," said Danielle Tilley, communications specialist at Beauregard EC.

"The devastation from that storm was unreal," said Brad Morrow, another United lineworker. "It seemed like everywhere you drove, there were trees and debris, and any sort of house or building was destroyed."

Twenty Texas co-ops sent help to Jasper-Newton EC, where 90% of that East Texas co-op's 22,900 meters had no power. General Manager Mark Tamplin was grateful. "Assistance from other cooperatives was extremely critical to the restoration effort," he said.

"Every time we have a storm at home and it gets real bad, people volunteer to come help us," Warden said. "Being a lineman, what you're supposed to do is go help people."

Cooperation Among Cooperatives, one of the Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all co-ops, ensures that help is just a phone call away when any co-op anywhere needs it.

"Whenever they call us, we're obligated to go help because there'll be times in the future when I know we'll need help," Perry said. "That's just what you do."

Tate Glasscock knows firsthand.

The foreman at Lighthouse EC, based in the Texas Panhandle, also made the trip east after Laura's onslaught, driving eight hours to spend 10 days helping Jasper-Newton EC.



From August through October, Texas lineworkers faced sweltering and then arctic conditions after hurricanes in the Gulf and an ice storm in West Texas and the Panhandle devastated co-ops' infrastructure.

“That’s what co-ops are for—to help each other,” Glasscock said.

Just a few weeks after returning from East Texas, Glasscock’s own co-op was hit by a devastating ice storm that snapped upward of 3,700 power poles and knocked offline more than 63,000 meters across 15-plus cooperatives in West Texas and the Panhandle. The October storm coated power lines with half-inch-thick ice, which can add 500 pounds to a single span of line, toppling crossarms, lines and poles across sparse stretches of plains.

Help poured in to the co-ops affected by the ice, which a South Plains EC spokesperson called “the most devastating storm we’ve had in 20 years”; Lighthouse EC general manager Albert Daniel said was “the worst storm to ever hit Lighthouse by all recollections”; and Lyntegar EC called “likely the largest single outage event ... in the history of the cooperative.”

Suddenly Glasscock and many fellow first responders were the ones in need of help after they just provided it.

“In my nearly 20-year career, I’ve never seen anything this detrimental to our system,” Glasscock said. “Most of the time it’s in one specific area. This was our whole system.”

United lineworkers Perry and Morrow headed west, just weeks after their tireless work out east, joining a major rebuilding effort in the Panhandle.

“Just seeing those guys roll through the gates, I thought, ‘Man, we’ve got help,’” Glasscock said. “I knew we were in

good shape then.”

Progress was much slower in the Panhandle, where homes can be separated by miles.

“I believe the first day that we went out, there were 13 or 14 poles that were on the ground that fed one house,” Morrow said. “In Louisiana that might have gotten 30, 40, 50 people on, if not more.” But the payoff was no different. “The relief in people’s eyes and the joy that they experience is the same.”

Between the hurricanes and ice storm, Perry spent about three weeks away from his family over the course of about two months. “I don’t know that I’ll ever forget this year,” said Perry, a 16-year line work veteran. “This has been one of the craziest years that I’ve been a part of in this work.”

Those in need kept him going. That was just as true this past February, when co-op members supported crews through an unprecedented polar vortex. Dangerous roads, iced-over lines and poles, and grid-mandated outages made lineworkers’ jobs even more challenging.

“There was the normal fatigue that comes from working so many 12-hour days in a row, but sometimes that was compounded by coming home to a cold house,” said Kendal Fiebrich, a Bluebonnet EC lineworker.

Sympathetic members lent support online and in the field—like a woman in Moss Bluff, Louisiana. She cooked up a meal of gumbo “and any kind of Louisiana fixin’s you could think of,” Morrow said, for linemen from Texas and Missouri who restored her power after weeks of living off a generator.

Strangers united by the co-op family.

“It’s the people who make it worthwhile,” Morrow said. “You’ll never find someone more thankful and willing to help you when you’re there to help them.” ■

# Texas Talk MAN

A photograph of an older man with a goatee, wearing a black cowboy hat, a white long-sleeved shirt, and a black leather vest. He is leaning on a thick, mossy tree branch. He has a large silver bolo tie, a gold watch, and a diamond ring. In the background, a brown horse is grazing in a field under trees.

He had some  
of Hollywood's  
biggest stars  
talkin' and  
dressin'  
the part

# Robert Hinkle

likes to sit where he can see everyone in the room and who's walking through the door. He leads me to the corner of a long table at the back of a pandemic-emptied Masonic Lodge in Leander and chooses a seat with a clear view of the entrance. He wears an Air Force cap and a sky-blue Mason's shirt embroidered with "N. Hollywood," each emblematic of the twists and turns of his prolific career.

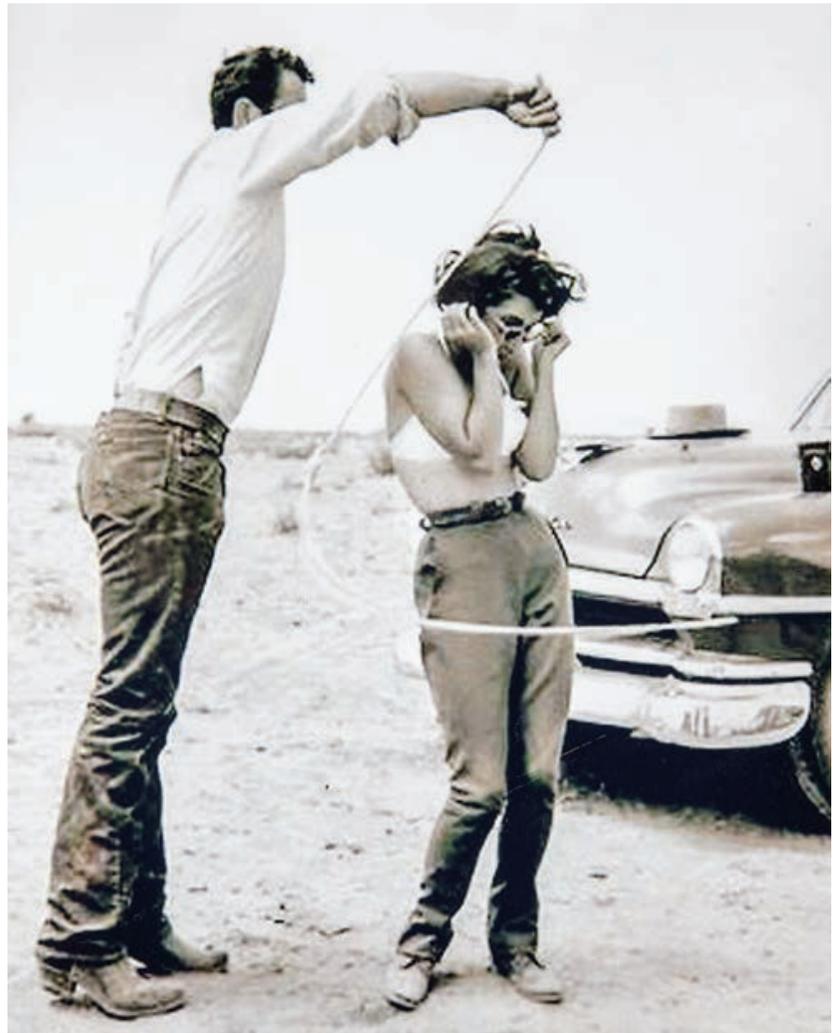
Attention to wardrobe figured into Hinkle's duties as unofficial technical adviser on the West Texas and Panhandle sets of *Giant* and *Hud*, two better-known entries in the catalog of midcentury Texas cinema. When costume design choices went awry—a hat that wasn't creased correctly or was impractical for work, jeans too short for horseback riding—he would issue a concise verdict: "A Texan wouldn't wear that," then figure out a fix.

That was just one duty on two projects over an entertainment career that spanned decades and comprised a raft of roles: stuntman, actor, writer, producer, director and Texas talk man, as *Giant* director George Stevens dubbed him.

Hinkle's preference for an unobstructed view isn't surprising, either. A few years before he coached Hollywood luminaries Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman on the nuances of a type of Texas dialect—leaving the "g" off words like "walking" and emphasizing r's when they ended a word such as "mother" or "father"—he enjoyed an embarrassment of bird's-eye views.

Born and raised in the South Plains of Texas, Hinkle left high school in 1947 to join the Air Force at 17 after securing a promise from a recruiter that he could continue his education while enlisted. "Nobody in my family ever had a high school diploma," he says. After earning that credential, he spent several months in Europe working on a crew that flew coal from Frankfurt to Berlin.

On one trip, the co-pilot had a heart attack midflight. Hinkle took over co-pilot duties for the rest of the round



Robert Hinkle lassos Elizabeth Taylor on the set of *Giant*.

trip, thanks to the private pilot's license he'd earned at 16.

While stationed overseas, Hinkle's first stop in Vienna was to board the Riesenrad, a 212-foot-tall Ferris wheel. It was a precursor to a ride he'd take a few years later, on a Ferris wheel much closer to home, with his good friend James Dean.

Not bad for a kid from Brownfield who didn't officially exist on paper until his 20s.

The country doctor who attended Hinkle's birth on an unelectrified Terry County ranch in 1930 misrecorded his first name as "Bobbie." It didn't get corrected until some 22 years later, when Hinkle went to the courthouse with his aunt and uncle in tow to vouch for his identity. Today, the nonagenarian takes that misnomer in stride, along with the doctor's weeklong delay in recording his birth on the county rolls. "That old doctor," he says, not unkindly. "At least he got me here."

Hinkle's family followed the crops around for work for a time after his birth. "We were poor," he says. "They were



James Dean shows Hinkle how well he's learned to hogtie.

intense focus on getting the part of Jett Rink, the anti-hero of *Giant*, just right.

"He told me, the day I met him, 'I want you to help me be a Texan 24 hours a day,'" Hinkle says. During filming, the pair grew close as the dialogue coach modeled Texan sensibilities for Dean. They shared meals, pulled pranks and hunted rabbits together. "He was like a brother," Hinkle says, "just like I was raised with him there in Brownfield."

Hinkle says Dean wasn't a big star then, having only one film credit at the time. But his commitment to his craft

and his precision in shaping a character in the likeness of his mentor precipitated a friendship.

"He was so dedicated," says Hinkle, a Pedernales Electric Cooperative member. "He wanted to be with me all the time. Because he wanted to be a Texan. I mean, he watched everything I did and everything I said, watched every person that I met, how I met 'em and things like that, and he just studied it."

That osmosis translated to the screen. Dean received a posthumous Oscar nomination for the role, which came as no surprise to his grieving friend.

"He could have played *Giant* a different way, you know," Hinkle says. "He wanted to play him just as an old down and out cowboy, didn't have anything and didn't figure he'd ever have anything, except a dream."

After filming of *Giant* ended, Dean gave a replica Oscar to Hinkle, inscribed with his name, to thank him for creating the character.

Back at the Masonic Lodge, the afternoon unspools. Just before he tells me about recruiting Buddy Holly to headline a car-selling telethon starring Western character actor Chill Wills, strains of *El Paso* fill the room. It's Hinkle's iPhone ring tone. His eyes crinkle. "That's Marty Robbins," he says. "I managed him for 14 years."

Looking back on his half-century career, spanning roles from cowboy stuntman to mentor to manager and many points in between, I ask if there's anything he'd change.

"No," he says. "I'd just love to do it again. I've had a lot of rough times and things—boy, I'd take them right along with the good ones, if I could just do it one more time." ■

**TCP WEB EXTRA** Want to see more from Hinkle's Hollywood days? Visit our website.

poor people." After the military and before setting out for Hollywood, Hinkle worked as a weekend rodeo cowboy and in construction, among other jobs. His 12-hour shifts in a West Texas oil field in 1950 and 1951 earned him \$1.76 an hour and, years later, a foothold in a conversation with Howard Hughes, the manufacturing scion and film producer.

An uncredited role in a 1956 film, *The First Traveling Saleslady*, led to a chance meeting of the two Texas transplants in Hollywood. After being instructed by the director to all but pretend not to even see Hughes as he visited the set, Hinkle was wrangled into meeting him anyway when the film's star, Ginger Rogers, walked him over. The inventor didn't offer to shake hands, Hinkle says, but the two quickly found common ground: Much to the magnate's approval, the drill bits the supporting player had used in his oil field days were manufactured by Hughes Tool Company.

During *Giant*'s 1955 production, Hinkle, James Dean and Elizabeth Taylor, along with a handful of other cast and crew members, repaired to Dallas over the Fourth of July weekend, all because the famously violet-eyed star couldn't resist the siren song of Neiman Marcus. Hinkle called the luxury retailer and dropped a few names. Stanley Marcus, the store's owner, not only agreed to allow the group entry to the store on a Sunday, when it would typically be closed, but also sent a plane to Marfa to whisk the group to Love Field.

After being feted by Dallas society in Stanley and Billie Marcus' Highland Park mansion, Hinkle, Taylor and Dean embarked on their shopping excursion, followed by an outing to an offseason Fair Park, home to the state fair, where they rode a rickety wooden roller coaster, sampled carnival fare, played midway games and boarded the soaring Texas Star.

The lighthearted weekend contrasted with Dean's



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Take one look at this coin, and you know exactly where it was created. The reverse features an iconic design featuring a single sugar maple leaf, the national symbol of Canada. This lifelike design features superior texture and detail, and comes surrounded by a vivid burst of radial lines—lines that serve a dual function...

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In addition to its high purity, the Silver Maple Leaf boasts special security features, such as laser-engraved radial lines and a small micro-engraved maple leaf, that make it nearly impossible to forge. It's not just one of the world's purest silver coins, but also one of its most secure—an important benefit for silver buyers.

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On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and snatched it up for our *Sedona Turquoise Collection*. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique, one-

of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for just \$99.

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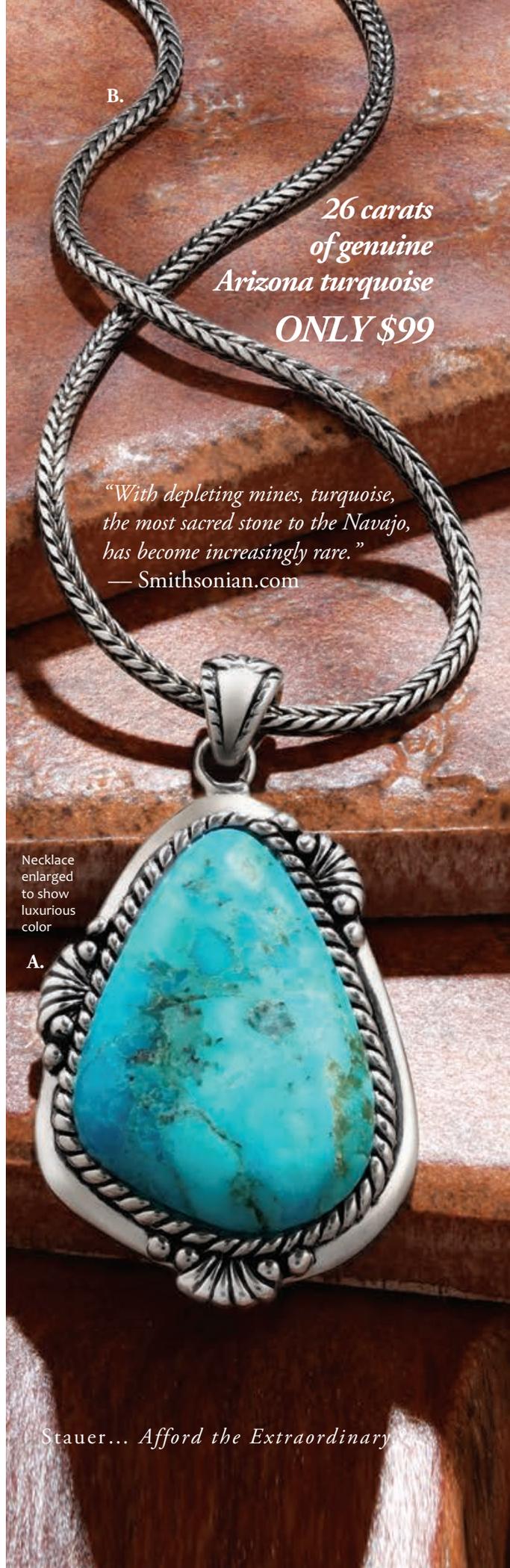
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CECA operates in Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Mills, Shackelford and Stephens counties.

### OFFICE LOCATIONS

#### Headquarters

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

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MESSAGE  
FROM  
GENERAL  
MANAGER

**ALAN  
LESLEY**

## We're Ready for Storm Season. Are You?

**NOW THAT SUMMER** is in full swing, like many of you, I welcome more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy the warmer weather. Summertime brings many of my favorite activities such as cooking out with family and friends, afternoons on the water, and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

But summer months also make conditions right for dangerous storms. These potential weather events can cause destruction to our electrical system, but I want you to know that CECA crews are ready and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area.

When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines. I encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) for additional resources.

- ▶ Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials such as diapers and toiletries.

- ▶ Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.





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► Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials and make sure your prescriptions are filled.

► Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and a portable, battery-powered radio or TV.

► Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

► In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored. If you plan to use a small generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check CECA's app or website for power restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs, including on your property.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings, and download our app to stay abreast of power restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information.

I hope we don't experience severe storms this summer, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At CECA we recommend that you act today because there is power in planning. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and wonderful summer. ■



Old Cora, shaded by the majestic Fleming Oak on the courthouse square in Comanche, is the oldest standing courthouse in Texas.

## Historical County Courthouses

BY SHIRLEY KIDD DUKES

*Information for this story comes from [texascourthouses.com](http://texascourthouses.com), [254texascourthouses.net](http://254texascourthouses.net) and [texasescapes.com](http://texasescapes.com) as well as conversations with county judges and historians. Dates did not always match on all sites, but I have presented the dates based on best matches.*

**ACROSS OUR GREAT STATE**, iconic courthouses dot the landscape and help define the history of each county.

There are seven county seats in CECA's service territory, each with a courthouse that serves as a community hub and a cultural landmark that tells its own story. Join me on a brief tour of each building's rich history.

### Brown County

**County seat:** Brownwood

**1858:** Brown County's first courthouse was a single-story, 16-by-18-foot log building constructed of wood harvested from Pecan Bayou. The building was moved twice, the first time in 1859, due to lack of water. Around 1870, the courthouse was moved again.

**1876:** A larger two-story courthouse was completed; it housed a jailhouse on the bottom floor. That facility was destroyed by fire in 1880.

**1884:** A two-story sandstone structure with a clock tower was completed, though no clock was ever installed.

**1917:** The current courthouse, while intended to be a remodel of the 1876 building, wound up being mostly new construction, with the exception of a few walls that were incorporated in the treasurer's office and the commissioner's courtroom.





### Callahan County

**County seat:** Baird

**1877:** The original county seat and home of the first courthouse was Belle Plain, now a ghost town south of Baird.

**1884:** Due to the Texas and Pacific Railway bypassing Belle Plain, the county seat moved to Baird, and construction of the new courthouse was completed in 1884.

**1900:** A larger courthouse designed by architect J. Riely Gordon was constructed.

**1929:** The current three-story Classical Revival-style courthouse was built.

**2020:** Callahan County received a \$4.7 million grant from the state for a full restoration of its courthouse as part of the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.



### Comanche County

**County seat:** Comanche

**1856:** The first Comanche County Courthouse, a log building, was constructed in Cora, a community that has since disappeared. One of the few original county courthouses in Texas still standing, the structure, now known as "Old Cora," can be found on the Comanche town square next to the current courthouse.

**1875:** A two-story red brick courthouse was built in Comanche, where the county seat had moved from Cora in 1859.

**1890:** Having outgrown the smaller courthouse, the county constructed a new, ornate three-story courthouse in the Renaissance Revival style.

**1939:** The current courthouse is an art deco three-story structure that was built with New Deal-era Works Progress Administration funding and local bond money and constructed using local stone.



### Eastland County

**County seat:** Eastland

**1875:** The first courthouse of Eastland County was a stone building across from the town square, where the commissioners met.

**1883:** The second Eastland County Courthouse was built. It burned in 1896, precipitating a battle between the towns of Cisco and Eastland over which would be the county seat, with Eastland prevailing.

**1897:** A new three-story courthouse was erected in Eastland using stone from the burned building.

**1928:** The current courthouse is a seven-story brick and concrete structure. Eastland made national news in 1928 when the current courthouse replaced the town's 1897 courthouse. The old structure's cornerstone was opened and, according to witnesses, inside lay a Texas horned toad, supposedly still alive after a 31-year slumber. Dubbed Old Rip, the toad died after a nationwide tour and was enshrined in a glass-top casket, which is still on view at the courthouse.



### Mills County

**County seat:** Goldthwaite

**1890:** The county's first courthouse was a two-story stone structure that served the community until it was destroyed by fire in 1912.

**1913:** A three-story Classical Revival structure with a basement, paid for in part by bonds, was built. The courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. In 2008, Mills County was awarded a grant of \$4.6 million by the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program for the building's restoration.



**Shackelford County**

**County seat:** Albany

**1875:** A two-room picket structure was the county’s first courthouse.

**1883:** Shackelford County’s current courthouse was constructed. The county budgeted \$27,000 for the building, but the project ended up costing \$49,433.75.

**2001:** The building was the first courthouse restored under the state’s courthouse preservation program. Out of several Texas courthouses built by architect James E. Flanders of Dallas, the Shackelford County Courthouse is one of the only ones remaining.



**Stephens County**

**County seat:** Breckenridge

**1876:** A log cabin served as the county’s first courthouse.

**1883:** A three-story red sandstone courthouse was built. It included a large cistern to provide the town with water.

**1926:** The current four-story courthouse was built during the oil boom, and little expense was spared to create the ornate building. The demolished former courthouse’s arched main entrance remains on the lawn of the current courthouse as a reminder of the county’s pioneer heritage. ■

**Kevin and Joyce Moss and Their 1966 Galaxie**

Joyce Moss from Comanche and her husband, Kevin, “accidentally” purchased a 1966 Ford Galaxie in 2013. One of the couple’s goals for the car, affectionately named “Godot” by Joyce, is to take a photo of the Ford in front of every county courthouse in Texas. The Mosses have so far visited 97 of the 254 county courthouses in the state. You can follow along with their travels at [1966galaxie.com](http://1966galaxie.com). Pictured is the Galaxie in front of each of the seven courthouses in CECA’s service territory.

**Brown**



**Callahan**



**Comanche**



**Eastland**



**Mills**



**Shackelford**



**Stephens**



# Tornado Season Peaks in June

**BE BETTER PREPARED** for tornado season, which peaks in June, with this safety information from the Texas Department of Insurance.

A tornado watch means tornadoes are possible in the area, and a tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.

When a tornado warning has been issued for your area or if you see an approaching tornado, follow these safety tips.

**If you are in a school, hospital, factory, shopping center, business or home:**

- ▶ Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls.
- ▶ Do not open windows.
- ▶ Go to a basement, if one is available.
- ▶ Find an interior room on the lowest floor, if there is no basement.
- ▶ Cover yourself in blankets, towels or anything that will protect you from flying debris.
- ▶ If you are in a car or mobile home, get out immediately. Find a substantial structure or designated tornado shelter. If no suitable structure is nearby, lie flat, face down, in the nearest ditch or depression and use your hands to cover your head to protect against flying debris. ■



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**Flag Day**  
Monday, June 14

**Juneteenth**  
Saturday, June 19

**Father's Day**  
Sunday, June 20

**National Chocolate Pudding Day**  
Saturday, June 26

# Do Words Bug You?

A master naturalist spins a web around the tangled language of the natural world

BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS • ILLUSTRATION BY GORDON STUDER

**A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN** six years ago captured me pointing to a warning sign posted on a Galveston beach. The sign read: CAUTION—POISONOUS SNAKES IN DUNES. The choice of adjective still irks me. But I understand. I, too, made the same mistake before I learned my first naturalist lesson. Since then, I've learned many more.

Poisonous or venomous? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines poison as “a substance that through its chemical action usually kills, injures or impairs an organism.” Venom is “a toxic substance produced by some animals ... that is injected ... chiefly by biting or stinging and has an injurious or lethal effect.” Poison must be consumed whereas venom must be injected.

Bite or sting? A venomous bite happens when a creature sinks its fangs into a victim and injects venom through special structures in its mouth. Stings occur when a creature jabs venom into a victim through its stinger. Spiders and snakes bite; bees and wasps sting.

Bee or wasp? To tell the difference, look at the body. Honeybees, carpenter bees and bumblebees have plump, fuzzy bodies with thick legs. Honeybee colonies generally build their honeycomb nests inside tree cavities or human-made boxes. They sting once, then die. Carpenter bees and bumblebees, which respectively nest in wood and underground burrows, can sting but rarely do. The majority of native bees in Texas are solitary, meaning they nest alone.

Wasps have slender, smooth bodies with narrow waists, skinny legs and bright markings. They usually build papery nests and can sting repeatedly. Examples include yellow jackets and paper wasps. As for hornets, they're larger than wasps. Texas has only one kind—the bald-faced hornet, which is actually a yellow jacket. Aren't common names confusing?

Bug or insect? First, all bugs are insects. But not all insects are bugs. Bugs are classified as insects because they all have six legs, segmented bodies and exoskeletons. But not all insects have a mouth part called a proboscis. Only true bugs do. Examples include stink bugs, leafhoppers, cicadas, aphids and bedbugs. True bugs also hatch from eggs as tiny versions of their adult selves. Insects, such as butterflies, ants, flies and beetles, go through the stages of egg, larva and pupa.

Butterfly or moth? Most butterflies fly during the day. They're usually brightly colored and have slender, smooth bodies with club-tipped antennae. At rest, they hold their wings up. In contrast, most moths fly at night. They're usually drab in color and have fuzzy, thick bodies with feathered or tapered antennae. At rest, most fold their wings back.

Chrysalis or cocoon? Butterflies and moths pupate. That is, both metamorphose from caterpillars (larvae) into pupae, which then transform into adults. Most moth caterpillars spin a silk case called a cocoon around themselves. Inside, they pupate and emerge as adults. Butterfly caterpillars attach themselves to a safe place. Then they wiggle out of their caterpillar skin, leaving behind a smooth chrysalis that hardens and protects the pupa inside. Later, an adult butterfly breaks out of the chrysalis.

Spider or daddy longlegs? Another taxonomy lesson first. Spiders and daddy longlegs both have eight legs and exoskeletons. That makes them arachnids. The two differ in that spiders have two body parts and spin silk; daddy longlegs (also called harvestmen) have one body part and spin no silk. Unlike spiders, they have no fangs or venom.

Turtle or tortoise? All tortoises are turtles. But not all turtles are tortoises. Both are classified in a group of hard-shelled animals known as turtles. True turtles live in or near water and most have webbed feet and a smooth shell. Not so for tortoises, which have stumpy feet and live exclusively on land. Tortoises eat only plants; turtles eat plants and animals.

Frog or toad? Look at the skin. Generally, toads have bumpy, dry skin and don't need to live near water. Frogs have smooth, moist skin and require a watery habitat. Both live in my yard. Gulf Coast toads, warty and blackish gray, show up in my flower beds sometimes. They're harmless. Not so for the resident Rio Grande leopard frogs. To my dismay, they hang out in my stock tank and trample the aquatic plants, but they can't hurt a human.

What's a gardener to do? That's a lesson I haven't learned yet. ■

## TCP WEB EXTRA

Go online, where the author corrects William Shakespeare.

COCOON



Chrysalis

Moths



Sting



HORNET

Caterpillars



Spiders

BITE

POISONOUS

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# 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.

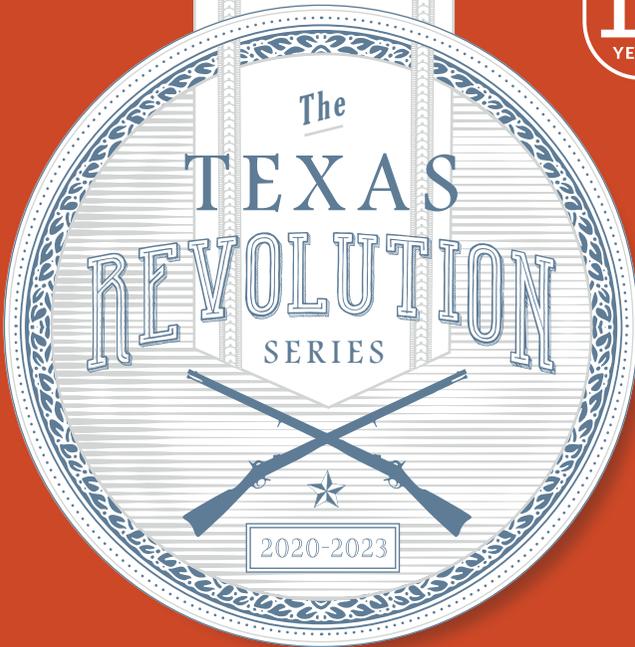
The reverse of the 2021 release displays a scene from the famous Battle of the Alamo. It depicts two Texian soldiers including the American icon, Davy Crockett, attempting to fend off Mexican soldiers attempting to breach the walls of the Alamo.



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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.



### 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.

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.



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**TCP WEB EXTRA**

See Gigi Coleman's performance as Bessie Coleman.

Back in the U.S. a year later, she became the first Black woman to perform in an air show. She toured the country making speeches, executing tricks, stunting like a daredevil and working as an activist against discrimination. Coleman, nicknamed Queen Bess, had a reputation for refusing to perform for segregated audiences. Using money she earned from barnstorming, she purchased her own plane, a Curtiss JN-4.

Tragedy struck during a test flight April 30, 1926, over Florida, when a loose wrench jammed the control gears and flipped the plane upside down. She wasn't wearing her seat belt, and the plane had no canopy. Coleman, 34, fell to her death.

Black newspapers gave her death front-page coverage, but the mainstream press barely noted it. In 2019, *The New York Times*, as part of an effort to recognize the lives of remarkable people whose deaths went unreported at the time, ran a complete obituary. "Coleman saw aviation as a way to empower Black people in America and dreamed of opening a flight school," it wrote. "Future pilots said they had been inspired by her, and flight clubs have been named in her honor."

The Challenger Air Pilots Association of Chicago began an annual tradition of flying over Coleman's grave there in 1931. The U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp in her honor in 1995 after Marion Coleman, Bessie's niece, persistently petitioned for it. Texas historical markers stand in Atlanta and Waxahachie, Bessie's former hometowns.

A great-niece, Gigi Coleman, portrays Bessie Coleman in a one-woman show that she performs around the country.

"When I do my performance, people cry," Gigi Coleman says. "I'm very proud to be a relative of hers. She was a trailblazer, and she didn't take no for an answer." ■

# Queen Bess Soared

Bessie Coleman slipped from the grips of gravity and Jim Crow to become the first African American female pilot and first Native American female pilot

BY AINSLEY SHAW

**JIM CROW SEGREGATION** laws seemed to have a grasp like gravity on Bessie Coleman—as they did for most African Americans in the early 20th century—keeping her from rising very high in life.

Coleman, born in 1892 in Atlanta, Texas, to an African American maid and a Native American sharecropper, spent her youth picking cotton. She likely never dreamed she would go on to become the first African American woman and first Native American woman to earn a pilot's license—two years before Amelia Earhart earned hers—100 years ago.

When she was 23, Coleman moved in with two of her brothers and found work as a manicurist in Chicago. Her brother John, who served in Europe during

World War I, drunkenly teased her one day about the wider range of opportunities for women in France. He told her, "Women ain't never goin' to fly, not like those women I saw in France," according to *Queen Bess: Daredevil Aviator*, a biography by Doris L. Rich.

Coleman took that as a challenge and responded, "That's it! You just called it for me." She decided to head to France, where she would face fewer obstacles for being Black and a woman.

After spending her nights learning French and days managing a chili restaurant, Coleman sailed to France and found a pilot to train her. Seven months later, she earned her pilot's license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, on June 15, 1921.

# Tomatoes

Sliced is nice, but you can also bake them into saucy desserts

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

For years I avoided eating tomatoes in anything but pasta sauce or pizza. Thankfully those days are behind me, and now I look forward to when my garden starts producing piles of cherry tomatoes and sandwich-ready slicers. This cake helps use up any extra tomatoes you might have on hand—and gets kids to eat them. This recipe was one of the first to appear on soup cans, and this iteration's use of fresh tomatoes only improves it. Filled with spices and wonderfully moist, it will become a summer staple.



## Tomato Cake

### CAKE

- 1 pound tomatoes, or more as needed to yield 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons purée, divided use**
- 2 cups flour**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom**
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger**
- ½ cup packed brown sugar**
- ½ cup sugar**
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, softened**
- 2 eggs**

### GLAZE

- 1½ cups powdered sugar**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- Reserved tomato purée**

- 1. CAKE** Preheat oven to 350 degrees and coat a 10-cup Bundt pan with cooking spray.
- 2.** Core and quarter tomatoes. Purée in a blender or food processor until completely smooth. Measure out 2 cups and set aside, reserving remainder.
- 3.** In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cardamom and ginger.
- 4.** In another bowl, beat sugars and butter until the batter is creamed and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time.
- 5.** Alternate adding flour mixture and tomato purée to the batter, starting and ending with the flour. Incorporate fully before each addition.
- 6.** Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake 40 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.
- 7.** Let cake cool in pan 10 minutes, then invert onto a rack to cool completely.
- 8. GLAZE** Mix powdered sugar, vanilla and 2 tablespoons tomato purée until completely smooth. Add more sugar or liquid as necessary. Drizzle over cooled cake.

SERVES 10

**TCP WEB EXTRA** Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at [stetted.com](http://stetted.com), where she features a recipe for Roasted Corn and Tomato Salad.



## Broiled Stuffed Tomatoes

JOYCELYN SKIDMORE  
LAMAR ELECTRIC

The ideal starter for any summer dinner, these stuffed tomatoes are ready in a flash. If you have one handy, a melon baller makes easy work of removing tomato seeds.

- 4–6 tomatoes**
- ½ cup breadcrumbs**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil or parsley**
- 3 tablespoons minced green onion**
- 1–2 cloves garlic, minced**
- ¼ teaspoon salt, plus more for sprinkling**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper, plus more for sprinkling**
- ⅛ teaspoon dried thyme**
- ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling**

- 1.** Core tomatoes. Using a spoon, scoop out seeds and juice, taking care not to break the sides of the tomatoes. Set tomatoes upside down in a colander to drain.
- 2.** In a small bowl, combine breadcrumbs, basil or parsley, green onion, garlic, salt, pepper, and thyme. Stir in olive oil until mixture is well combined and looks like wet sand.
- 3.** Sprinkle salt and pepper into each tomato. Fill tomatoes with breadcrumb mixture and set on a rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with additional olive oil. Broil at 400 degrees 5–10 minutes, keeping an eye on the breadcrumbs so they don't burn.

**SERVES 4–6**

[MORE RECIPES >](#)



\$500 WINNER

## Tangy Tomato Slices

DALA BURK  
WISE EC



This simple yet flavorful dish brings back summer memories for Burk, who has been enjoying this recipe for 40 years. Enjoy the slices on their own or tucked into a warm biscuit for a best-ever tomato sandwich.

**SERVES 6**

- 6 tomatoes, thinly sliced**
- 1 onion, thinly sliced**
- 1 cup olive oil**
- ⅓ cup vinegar**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley**
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**

- 1.** Layer tomato and onion slices in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and set aside.
- 2.** In a small bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients. Pour over tomatoes and onion, using a spatula to spread herbs evenly. Cover and chill 4–5 hours before serving.

## TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

**PIES** DUE JUNE 10

OK, time to show off. We know readers all over the state serve up prize pies. Could yours be the \$500 winner? Enter at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](http://TexasCoopPower.com/contests) by June 10.



## Savory Tomato Bread Pudding

VALERIE KRUSE  
TRI-COUNTY EC

This dish is ideal for using up day-old bread. Since the tomatoes cook down, feel free to use not-so-perfect ones.

- 8 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
- 1 large baguette, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 pounds tomatoes, cored and cut into chunks
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup grated Parmesan, Asiago

or Romano cheese  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a large casserole dish with cooking spray and set aside. Heat 6 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the bread cubes and stir to coat. Sauté about 5 minutes or until bread is lightly browned and toasted, working in batches if needed. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Add remaining olive oil to the skillet and cook the garlic 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, sugar, salt and pepper and stir well. Cook until tomatoes have released their juices and are submerged, about 10 minutes.
3. Add tomato mixture to bread cubes. Stir well to combine. Pour mixture into casserole dish and top with cheese.
4. Bake 40–45 minutes, loosening the edges with a spatula after 30 minutes to allow juices to distribute. Remove from oven and let rest 15 minutes, then sprinkle with chopped basil and serve.

SERVES 6–8

## Tasty Tomato Types

BY MEGAN MYERS

While there are more than 10,000 varieties of tomatoes, most of us return to our tried-and-true favorites when cooking.

### Globe

Alongside beefsteak tomatoes, this round, firm and juicy variety is what you'll most likely find at the super-market. They're delicious raw and cooked, and their shape makes them suitable for stuffing.

### Roma

Roma and plum tomatoes are oblong and most commonly used for sauces thanks to their lower water content.

### Cherry and Grape

These bite-size tomatoes are perfect raw for salads but also are delicious sautéed or roasted with herbs. Sweet varieties are a hit with kids, making them a great healthy snack.

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

## Deep Dip

Wimberley's seemingly bottomless Jacob's Well invites a plunge

BY CHET GARNER

**STANDING ON A** limestone ledge and staring into Texas' strangest swimming hole, I remembered my mother's warning, "Don't jump unless you know what's underneath you." I wasn't completely sure what was beneath the surface, but with a crowd of cheering onlookers, chickening out was not an option. I held my breath and braced for the unknown.

This is the thrill of Jacob's Well, a spring-fed swimming hole near Wimberley that's been attracting visitors for centuries. The hole itself measures less than 20 feet across but looks like it plummets to the center of the Earth. In reality, it descends into a series of caverns that extend a mile back into the Earth. Every minute of every day, the Edwards Aquifer pushes a river of fresh water out of the cave and feeds Cypress Creek.

As I completed the plunge, my only thought was, "Wow! That's cold." The spring water holds at a chilly 68 degrees year-round. Once I regained my composure, I could appreciate the fact that I was floating above what seemed like a bottomless pit of water. I had to see what was down there.

I grabbed my goggles, pointed my head toward the bottom and started kicking. I could feel the mass of water pushing against me with its invisible current, and the water was so clear that I could see every detail of the algae-covered walls and the ledge 25 feet down. With every bit of strength and air that I had, I propelled myself to the stone shelf and from there could see the small opening to the deeper and darker caves.

That was enough to freak me out, so I quickly turned and swam to the sunshine and safety of the surface. It was time for another jump. ■

ABOVE Chet leaps into Jacob's Well.

**TCP WEB EXTRA** See Chet's video from Jacob's Well and check out his Explorations 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.

## JUNE

### 04

**Bandera** [4, 11, 18, 25; July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Aug. 6] **Riding on Faith Rodeo**, (830) 777-7129, facebook.com/ridingonfaithrodeoseries

**Denton** [4–Sept. 4] **Soul Art Renewal: General Art Exhibition**, (940) 382-2787, dentonarts.com

### 05

**Bulverde** [5–July 31] **Saturday Night Rodeo**, (830) 980-2226, tejasrodeo.com

**Hunt** [5, 12, 19, 26, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31] **Crider's Rodeo and Dancehall**, (830) 238-4441, cridersrandd.com

### 07

**Mesquite** [7, 21] **Jazz Breaks**, (972) 216-8132, mesquiteartscenter.org

**Jacksonville** [7–12] **Tomato Fest Week**, (903) 586-2217, jacksonvilletexas.com/tomato-fest

### 08

**Victoria** [8–12] **Bach Festival**, (361) 570-5788, victoriabachfestival.org

### 11

**Luckenbach** [11–12] **Thomas Michael Riley Music Festival**, (830) 997-3224, thomasmichaelriley.com

**San Antonio** [11–Aug. 7] **Fiesta Noche del Río**, (210) 226-4651, fiestanochesa.com

### 12

**East Bernard Czech Kolache-Klobase Festival**, (979) 335-7907, kkfest.com

**New Braunfels Granger Smith**, (830) 964-3800, whitewaterrocks.com

**Terrell [12-13] Antique Tractor and Engine Show and Pull**, (214) 837-8861, north-texas-antique-tractor-and-engine-club.org

14

**Mesquite [14, 28] Music in the Park**, (972) 216-8132, mesquiteartscenter.org

17

**Big Spring [17-19] Cowboy Reunion and Rodeo**, (432) 267-5053, facebook.com/bigspringrodeo

**Stonewall [17-19] Peach JAMBoree**, (830) 644-2735, stonewalltexas.com/peach-jamboree

18

**Kerrville Urban Cowboy Reunion**, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

**Lufkin [18-19] Pineywood Heifer Futurity**, (979) 277-2656, arklatexlonghorns.com

**McKinney [18-20] Third Monday Trade Days**, (972) 562-5466, thirdmondaytradedays.com

19

**Palestine Dogwood Jamboree: Country Music at Its Best**, (903) 724-2556, dogwoodjamboree.com

**New Braunfels [19-20] Old Gruene Market Days**, (830) 832-1721, gruenemarketdays.com

24

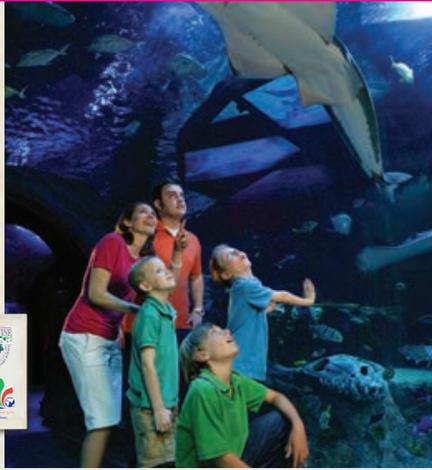
**Elgin [24-26] Western Days**, (512) 285-4515, elgintxchamber.com

MORE EVENTS >

### TCP *Submit Your Event*

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

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Event Calendar

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**Pick of the Month**  
**Honey Festival**  
Uvalde, June 11-12  
(830) 278-4115  
[mainstreetuvalde.com/honey-festival](http://mainstreetuvalde.com/honey-festival)

Pioneers of the late 19th century found an abundance of trees and caves loaded with honey around what is now Uvalde, which is 85 miles west of San Antonio. The town celebrates this history with a festival featuring street food, a 5K race, live music, kids activities and late-night shopping.

JUNE EVENTS CONTINUED

**26** **Bandera RiverFest**, (830) 796-3045, [banderariverfest.com](http://banderariverfest.com)

**Belton [26-July 4] 4th of July Celebration**, (254) 939-3551, [beltonchamber.com](http://beltonchamber.com)

**JULY**

**02** **Llano [2-4] Rock'n Riverfest**, (325) 247-5354, [llanorocknriverfest.com](http://llanorocknriverfest.com)

**El Paso [2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, Aug. 6-7]**  
**Vival El Paso**, (915) 534-0600, [vivaelpaso.org](http://vivaelpaso.org)

**03** **Stephenville 4th of July Concert and Fireworks**, (254) 918-1295, [stephenvilletx.gov](http://stephenvilletx.gov)

**04** **Fredericksburg 4th of July Parade & Fireworks**, (830) 997-6523, [visitfredericksburgtx.com](http://visitfredericksburgtx.com)

# Man-made vs. Nature

Beauty can be found where the natural and the human-made collide. Over time some things once shiny and new return to the elements, often forming a new beauty all their own and leaving us to wonder at nature's awesome power.

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

**KIM LEATHERWOOD**  
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Nature reclaims this old service station in Glen Rose.

**DEBRA CZERNY**  
BLUEBONNET EC

Cactus flowers growing out of asphalt.

**JACK ROBERTSON**  
CECA

A rainbow scarab impaled on barbed wire.

**STEVEN LACKIE**  
PENTEX ENERGY

The Continental Avenue Bridge over the Trinity River near downtown Dallas.



## Upcoming Contests

**DUE JUN 10** Fillin' Stations

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## Parent Imperfect

Love outdistances cool  
in appreciation of a good father

BY MARTHA DEERING  
ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN FALES

**WHAT AWFUL AFFLICTION** is it that makes preteens view their parents' idiosyncrasies through a monstrous magnifying glass?

I cringe to admit this, but in middle school I was embarrassed by my father. Born with cataracts after his mother contracted German measles, he wore Coke-bottle glasses and walked with an exaggerated high-stepping gait to avoid tripping over things. Worse, he couldn't drive like other dads. Surgery improved his vision slightly, but he was still considered legally blind.

Perhaps that was why music was so important to him; being deprived of one of his senses had sharpened another.

When my friends came over, I engineered excuses to avoid my father. He told the awfulest jokes: "What did the

mayonnaise say to the icebox? Close the door, I'm dressing." In my adolescent imagination, my friends were laughing *at* him, not *with* him.

"Your father is playing with the orchestra tomorrow night at Baylor before freshman orientation," my mother explained one night. "It's the same night as my writing class. Could you walk over there with him?"

As we crossed a busy street in the dark, my father tripped over the curb and fell forward onto his chest. His battered violin case landed with a clatter on the sidewalk along with his glasses, which suffered a spiderweb of cracks across one lens. Horrified by my inattention, I helped him up and brushed off the front of his suit coat.

"Are you all right?" I asked. "Do you want to go home? You won't be able to see the music with your glasses smashed."

"No, I can't go home," he said, checking his 200-year-old violin for damage. "They can't play the violin parts without me. I can't see the music unless I'm up close anyway, so I always memorize my parts. If you'll help me get set up on the stage, I'll be OK. Why am I so clumsy?"

Years later in high school, I began to recognize the courage it took for this gentle, loving man with a disability (he hated the designation "handicapped") to get a doctorate and then a job just after the Depression; to play Mozart, Bach and Beethoven in front of large crowds; to teach psychology to classes of graduate students; to lead brain exercise groups at local nursing homes; and to raise three children, willingly wearing out the knees of his suit pants to play the part of the horse to our cowboys and Indians.

I'm sure that my father recognized and forgave my adolescent foolishness. He was that kind of guy. ■



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