

JOHN S. CHASE CHANGED
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ICE CREAM AND SORBETS

CHET PAYS HIS RESPECTS
AT THE FUNERAL MUSEUM

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JULY 2021

A man with a beard and a white cowboy hat, wearing a blue button-down shirt, stands with his hands in his pockets, smiling. Behind him is a mural of a bearded man with a red bandana, playing a yellow guitar. The mural is on a yellow wall with the words 'WILDLIFE' and 'OF TEXAS' visible. The man in the foreground is looking towards the camera.

Painting the Town

Mural artist
Matt Tumlinson
turns Rankin
into his canvas

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July 2021



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Artist Matt Tumlinson interprets the state's culture in murals around a West Texas town.

*By Pam LeBlanc
Photos by Erich Schlegel*

An Unlikely Blueprint

John S. Chase charted a unique course to become Texas' first Black licensed architect.

By Michael Hurd

ON THE COVER

Thanks to Matt Tumlinson, Willie Nelson has a permanent residency in Rankin.

Photo by Erich Schlegel

ABOVE

John S. Chase and his sons in front of his signature Houston home, circa 1959.

Photo courtesy African American Library at the Gregory School | Houston Public Library

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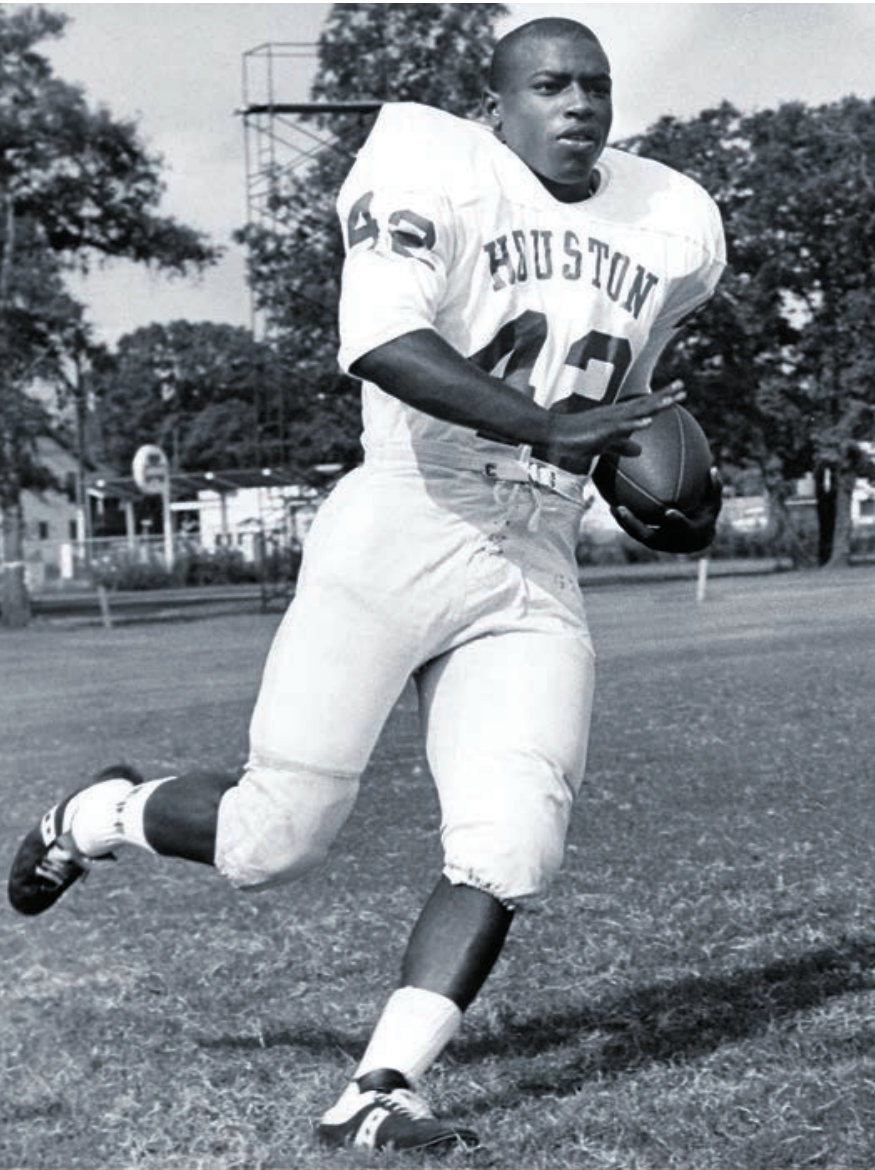
Common Ground
By Rhonda Reinhart

Groundbreaking Cougar

WARREN MCVEA was a high school football phenom—arguably the best running back in the country—at San Antonio’s Brackenridge High School in 1964, when he turned down more than 70 other scholarship offers and elected to play for the University of Houston.

The decision was historic, making McVea, who turns 75 this month, the first Black player to receive a scholarship to play football at any of the major college programs in Texas. He was a two-time All-American for the Cougars and later played six seasons in the NFL.

McVea was born July 30, 1946.



July 5

National Bikini Day

This year’s celebration takes on special meaning as it marks the 75th anniversary of the skimpy swimsuit.

Dancer Micheline Bernardini debuted the bikini, designed by Louis Réard, at a poolside photo shoot July 5, 1946, in Paris. A world just emerging from World War II considered the suit scandalous because it showed a woman’s navel.

Réard named the swimsuit, which used about a napkin’s worth of fabric, after the Bikini Atoll, the Pacific Ocean coral island where the U.S. tested nuclear weapons for more than a decade starting in 1946.



That’s roughly the number of times a person breathes in a day.



FERTILE FELINE

No cat on record has given birth more than a tabby born in 1935 in Bonham, in North Texas. Dusty produced 420 kittens during her life, according to Guinness World Records, giving birth to her last litter, a single kitten, in 1952.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I SHOULD HAVE PAID MORE ATTENTION ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town. Below are some of the responses to our May prompt: **This Memorial Day I remember ...**

All the fallen. War is hell, and we better remember too few come back from it.

SALLY WOLFE
VIA FACEBOOK

Not only those who fought and died in battle for this country but also those front-line heroes who fought and died in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

W. GRANT BRALY
GUADALUPE VALLEY EC
CUERO

Maj. Marie T. Rossi, the first female aviation combat commander to fly into battle. She was killed in action March 1, 1991.

TAMMY DUPLECHIN
TRINITY VALLEY EC
NEW YORK, TEXAS

Too many to list.

STEVE AND LISA BOSTON
VIA FACEBOOK

To see more responses, read Currents online.



Best Foot Forward

SOME PEOPLE in this country have two feet, and it's causing all kinds of problems. That's about to change, however.

Wait. What?

One foot is the old U.S. survey measuring foot from 1893, according to *The New York Times*, that takes Earth's curvature into account. The other is the shorter and slightly more exact international foot from 1959, used by nearly everybody in the U.S. except surveyors in some states. The two feet differ by about one-hundredth of a foot per mile, or 2 feet for every 1 million feet.

But come January 1, 2023, the old foot gets the boot when the National Institute of Standards and Technology adopts the international foot as the official standard in the U.S.



TCP Contests and More

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RAUL ALLEN

The Hero of Cinco de Mayo

“You have made me feel very proud of being a Tejano. Thank you for your great story on Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín.”

ANTHONY BARRON
TRINITY VALLEY EC
TERRELL

San Jacinto Stands Alone

While I enjoyed the article about the Battle of Puebla and admire Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín’s part in it, I take exception to calling it “Mexico’s San Jacinto moment” [*The Hero of Cinco de Mayo*, May 2021].

San Jacinto was a victory that ended the war with Mexico and gave Texas independence, whereas the Battle of Puebla was just a lone victory in a war Mexico eventually lost to France the next year. Cinco de Mayo is not nearly as important as San Jacinto Day.

Steve Yates
Pedernales EC
Wimberley



I love any and all yarns [*Serendipity Spinners*, May 2021].

WENDY L. VERA
VIA FACEBOOK

Dear Texas

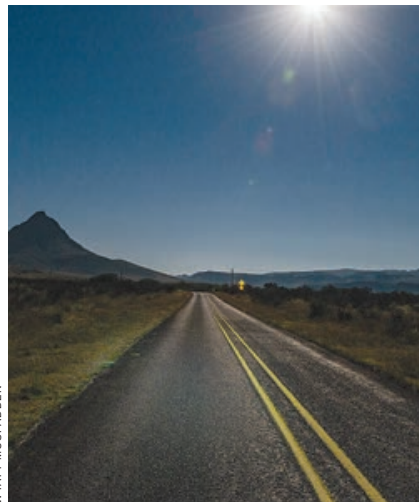
The writing and great photo of Eli Winter’s piece [*Few and Far*, March 2021] were so beautiful. It was a poignant, personal and perfect love letter to the entire state of Texas.

Suzanne Howalt
Pedernales EC
Austin

Falfurrias Beef

At one time the Lasater ranch encompassed 350,000 South Texas acres, and in 1912, somewhere on that huge spread, my mother was born [*A Name That Sticks*, February 2021]. The Lasaters were not only famous for their butter, but they were also known for developing the Beefmaster cattle breed in 1931.

Jerry Klumpp
Central Texas EC
Kingsland



WYATT MCSPADDEN

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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Austin, TX 78701

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

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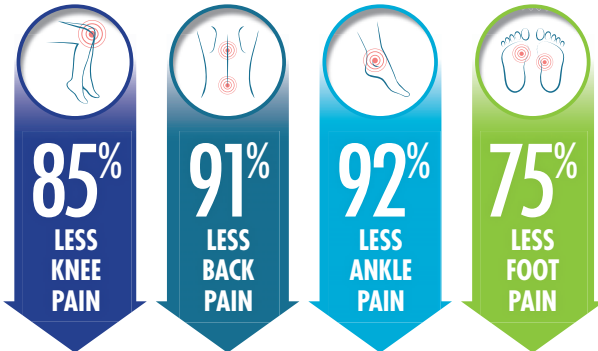


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Rankin as a Canvas

Artist Matt Tumlinson interprets the state's culture in murals around a West Texas town

ABOVE Life imitates art as Matt Tumlinson grabs a selfie in front of his modern take on a *Lonesome Dove* scene. RIGHT A palette of spray paint.

BY PAM LEBLANC • PHOTOS BY ERICH SCHLEGEL



Matt Tumlinson wanted to create a painting that stretched across an entire building, so when the opportunity arose to splash one on the side of a restaurant in tiny Rankin, he headed west, paintbrushes in tow.

“I was thinking if it turns out bad, very few people will see it in Rankin,” the San Antonio-based artist said.

The 8-foot letters that spell out the town’s name, in a style reminiscent of what you’d find on a cowboy’s belt buckle, turned out pretty good, in fact. And since that 60-foot mural went up in 2015, Tumlinson has painted seven more in the West Texas oil town, population about 850.

“With murals, it’s really tough to get permission or access to a wall and even tougher to get access without stipulations on it,” Tumlinson said. “I only wanted to do one if I could paint something I wanted to paint, and Rankin’s been really good about ‘I’ve got a wall you can paint.’”

Tumlinson grew up in Early. After graduating from Texas Tech University, he worked briefly as a history teacher

but disliked it. When he and his wife, Allison, moved to Nantucket, Massachusetts, he sold his first painting—a watercolor map. In 2013 they moved back to Texas, where he worked as a guide on the San Antonio Riverwalk while trying to kickstart his art career.

Tumlinson’s main business is in “brass canvas” paintings, made on groups of spent bullet casings collected from his uncle’s gun range. He also works in oil, painting his view of Texas’ quickly changing rural landscapes and drawing influence from Texas singer-songwriters.

“People have this idea that Texas is all boots and cowboys and open range,” Tumlinson said. “I just feel like being an eighth-generation Texan, if somebody’s going to tell the accurate story of what Texas is today, why not me?”

Rankin, 55 miles south of Midland, didn’t offer up its downtown as a canvas randomly. Tumlinson’s sister teaches at Rankin High School; his brother-in-law coaches the Red Devils, the school’s six-man football team. A local restaurant



ABOVE Tumlinson says the mural of Matthew McConaughey is about being confident in yourself. RIGHT Spray-painting in windblown West Texas can be tricky. OPPOSITE Rankin City Hall.



owner thought a mural would liven things up (which it did). Tumlinson's sister mentioned that her brother was an artist looking for a place to paint a mural, and an invitation was extended. The mural was Tumlinson's first.

Soon, locals suggested he paint the side of the city's water tower. The structure looked rickety to Tumlinson, so instead he painted a scene from Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* on the side of a building owned by the mayor. The mural shows characters Gus and Woodrow riding into San Antonio, marveling at how the city has changed. "It's all grown up," Gus says in the TV miniseries.

In Tumlinson's version of the scene, the cowboys are holding a selfie stick. He painted it in a single night, using his pickup truck's headlights to illuminate the wall.

"In a world where all the spaces are filled in on a map, I wonder what happened to the guys like that," Tumlinson says of the image. "I'm trying to put that concept of what it is to be Texan into a modern context."

Another mural sprouted on the wall of an abandoned gas station along U.S. 67 a few blocks away. Tumlinson checked tax records to find out who owned the building and then contacted the company to get permission. The CEO granted approval, and Tumlinson illustrated a saintly looking Willie

Nelson, halo overhead and joint in hand. Within a week, Tumlinson got a call. He'd received permission from the wrong building owner, and the true owner wanted the artwork removed. Tumlinson suggested a compromise—he'd erase the joint if the rest could stay.

It did.

A John Wayne mural adorns the other side of that gas station, alongside a graph marked "stupidity" on one axis and "difficulty in life" on the other, a nod to a quote often incorrectly attributed to Wayne: "Life is hard; it's even harder when you're stupid."

Tumlinson painted other murals, too: a pair of oil field workers on one wall, another Rankin sign on another and a state trooper ticketing a kid riding a Big Wheel on a pink cinder block building. (That one was modeled after his uncle but coincidentally looked like a local trooper at the



time. The trooper took it in stride, according to Tumlinson.)

The artist's most popular work decorates a metal tank near the railroad tracks. In it, actor Matthew McConaughey holds a can of spray paint next to the words, "You'd be a lot cooler if more people thought so," a twist on the actor's quote from the Richard Linklater movie *Dazed and Confused*: "It'd be a lot cooler if you did."

Tumlinson tried but never located the tank's owner to get permission to paint it. He decided to put up the artwork—painted in his studio in downtown San Antonio, then applied to the metal structure—anyway. As he worked in broad daylight, a state trooper stopped to inquire. He asked if Tumlinson had painted the city's murals, told him McConaughey looked great, then drove away.

Since painting the Rankin murals, Tumlinson has expanded his reach—part of a long-term goal to paint his way across the state. In San Antonio his *Puro San Antonio* mural is filled with nods to the local culture. One dubbed *King George* depicts country music singer George Strait in

royal garb, and a third features a woman dressed as Davy Crockett swinging a gun.

Tumlinson likes painting murals because anybody can see them. "It's the closest thing an artist gets to being on a stage," he said. "It's more communal."

The Rankin community, apparently, approves. None have been vandalized.

"You see people all the time taking pictures," said Brandon Brown, the mayor. "I don't think we're a destination yet, but I think the murals have sparked a little bit of new life in Rankin." ■

TCP WEB EXTRA See a slideshow of Tumlinson's Rankin murals.



An Unlikely Blueprint

John S. Chase charted a unique course to become Texas' first Black licensed architect

BY MICHAEL HURD

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE John S. Chase with his sons in front of the family's Houston residence, circa 1959. A rendering of the home's courtyard. A street view of the home from 2019.

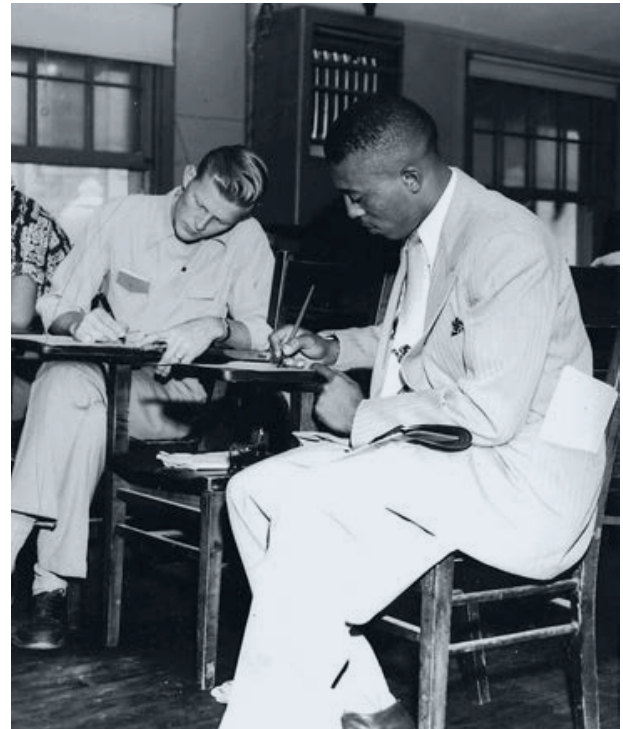


FAMILY: AFRICAN AMERICAN LIBRARY | HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY; HOME: HESTER + HARDWAY

JOHNSAUNDERS CHASE didn't want Texas, and the state certainly wanted nothing to do with him. It was 1948, and race relations in the rigidly segregated South were heavily tilted toward nonexistent.

Yet as Chase pursued an education and started his career as an architect, he and the Lone Star State struck up a historic relationship despite an epic perfunctory legal battle, menacing stares, media glares, hate mail and death threats.

Because of this unlikely alliance, it was in Texas where the Annapolis, Maryland, native would, in 1950, become



Chase in a University of Texas classroom in 1950.



the first African American student admitted to a graduate program at a major university in the South—the University of Texas. Chase followed that victory in 1952, when he became the university's second Black graduate and, the same year, the state's first Black licensed architect.

"For the most part, they treated me with respect, and I treated them with respect," Chase recalled in a 2004 interview with the HistoryMakers, a research institution that archives African American oral history. "I got to know some very, very important architects and some very important people because of the work and relationships that I had at UT."

Chase went on to design an estimated 300 Black churches, primarily in Houston and throughout East Texas but also in Austin, where the angular roofs of Olivet Baptist Church and David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, with their minimalist approaches, are indicative of Chase's style. They blend contemporary design with natural materials—wood and stone—and an abundance of open spaces and natural light. Inside David Chapel the amount of natural light increases as you approach the pulpit and a simple wooden cross on the wall, intentional symbolism Chase designed into the building.

One of his most noted residential designs is the Phillips House in Austin—with its distinctive green, diamond-shaped roof; large expanses of windows; and long lines—built for Della Phillips, co-owner of East Austin's Phillips-Upshaw Funeral Home.

In Houston several buildings on the Texas Southern University campus, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Humanities Center and Thurgood Marshall School of Law building, are Chase designs. He also collaborated on construction of Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center and the Astrodome renovation and was commissioned to design the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia. In 1980, Chase became the first Black man to serve on the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

As a young man, Chase could not have imagined doing any of that while based below the Mason-Dixon Line, but in retrospect his iconic, trailblazing career in Texas was fated. Chase had just received his architectural engineering degree from Virginia's all-Black Hampton College in 1948 when the school's placement officer presented Chase with several job possibilities. Chase told him, "You can strike Texas off the list." However, when the job he took in Philadelphia didn't work out, Chase wrote the officer to ask if he had other prospective employers and added a surprising stipulation.

"I underlined the Deep South, and I never did think I'd do something like that," he said in the HistoryMakers interview. "I just figured that in Philly, they got everything they need, but down in the Deep South, the opportunity to build would be greater, and I was right."

DRAWING: DAVID HEYMANN, BROOKE BURNSIDE, SARAH SPIELMAN AND WEI ZHOU. CLASSROOM: THE DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in East Austin.

Chase started his own business, and his first clients were the congregants of African American churches.

Outside the classroom, heads turned when Chase passed. He was shadowed around campus by reporters and federal marshals and received stacks of explicit hate mail that varied on the theme “You are less than a dog to force your way into someplace that you’re not wanted.”

Yet Chase persevered and completed the program, even making some lifelong friends. He and his wife, Drucie, moved to Houston, where Chase took a teaching position at Texas Southern University. No architecture firms would hire him because of his color.

Chase started his own business, and his first clients were the congregants of African American churches.

“To me, selling architecture is no different than selling insurance—you got to know somebody,” Chase said of his Sunday pilgrimages with Drucie and their three children in tow. “I figured it was the best way to know people—join church. We got so much work out of that.”

However, it is the home he built for himself in Houston’s Third Ward that is the focus of *John S. Chase—The Chase Residence*, a new book by David Heymann and Stephen Fox.

“It was designed around a completely open-air courtyard and exemplified the type of house that was very popular with Houston modern architects in the 1950s—flat-roof, courtyard houses, often with interior walls of glass that opened to the courtyard,” explained Fox, an architectural historian at Rice University. “When he added a second story, it reflected his great admiration for the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, so it kind of changed the tone of the house from an austere modern house to one that had a mixture of materials, a very exuberant interior.”

Chase died in 2012, leaving an inspiring legacy that continues to impact Black architects. He co-founded the National Organization of Minority Architects in 1971.

“He was one person against all odds,” said William Batson, an associate professor at the Prairie View A&M University School of Architecture, the country’s top producer of African American undergraduate architects. “Those people hated him, didn’t want him to succeed, but he did, no matter what. He didn’t have any crutches, he didn’t have any pampering. He didn’t go around protesting, whining and complaining. He set the example and dropped the mic 70 years ago.” ■

TCP WEB EXTRA Enter online to win a copy of *John S. Chase—The Chase Residence*.

N MOVING TO TEXAS, Chase worked for the Black-owned Lott Lumber Co., a homebuilder in East Austin, but he knew he needed more formal education in architecture, and that meant studying at the state’s segregated flagship university just across East Avenue, now Interstate 35.

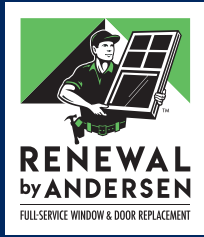
Chase got two breaks: first, a friendly face in Hugh McMath, dean of the UT School of Architecture, and then the Sweatt v. Painter Supreme Court decision prompted by Chase’s friend Heman Sweatt, who gained admittance to the UT law school after the high court ruled in his favor in the case that outlawed the separate-but-equal doctrine and opened the door for school desegregation.

“I talked with Dean McMath,” Chase remembered. “He asked if I was familiar with the case in front of the Supreme Court. He said, ‘Well, give it just a little more time, and if that thing comes through, I think your prayers are answered.’”

The decision was handed down June 5, 1950, and two days later Chase registered for UT’s summer session. Chaos ensued.

“All the media made it difficult,” he said, “but you could pick the friends out right away; you could pick out the foes. The ones that thought you were OK would do things like if you’d been drawing and studying, they’d come in, saw you’d been working long enough and say, ‘Let’s go to the Union and get a soda or a sandwich or something; come on, go with us.’”

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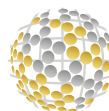
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MESSAGE FROM YOUR GENERAL MANAGER/CEO
GARY RAYBON

When You Use Electricity Matters

DID YOU KNOW you can help Wharton County Electric Cooperative and your fellow members by simply making a few small adjustments to your daily routine? The key to that help is an energy industry concept called time of use.

The electric grid follows the basic economic laws of supply and demand. When a lot of people want something, it's more expensive; when they don't, it's cheaper. That's why energy prices increase during certain times of the day, when more people are using it.

When people wake up in the morning and turn on their coffee makers, take showers, get ready to go to work and the arrive at the office, demand for electricity swells as computers and buildings power up—and this peak demand has to be met. Electricity use also rises later in the day, when people return home from work and school, turn on their lights, cook dinner, and go about their evening routines. In all cases, infrastructure must be in place to meet that demand day after day. And those peaks in energy use get even higher when it's especially hot or cold outside, as air conditioners and heaters use extra power.

WCEC pays more for electricity during those morning and evening energy rush hours in two ways: by generating enough

electricity at its own power plants to meet the demand peaks or by paying more to purchase electricity from another utility with excess power at those times.

Electric cooperatives are part of a complex industry that's changing as fast as digital technology, and energy

prices can change by the minute. There are many ways you can help your co-op save during these peak hours. Occasionally, you will see us post Beat the Peak alerts on our social media outlets. This is when we need our members' help the most. During these times especially, follow the tips and tricks on the next page. You can also participate in WCEC's Load Management program. Details about Load Management can be found on our website or by calling 979-543-6271.

As a member of an electric cooperative, you and your neighbors own your power provider. Adjusting your time of use can translate to money saved for the co-op and all of its members.

So consider adjusting when and how you use electricity by doing some of those energy-intensive chores outside of peak hours to help level out those energy peaks and valleys. ■

BEAT THE PEAK!

WCEC asks our members to reduce energy consumption between the hours of 3-7 p.m.

Take these steps to use less energy during these peak hours to help us save on transmission costs for next year — savings we pass directly back to you!

- Set thermostat 2-3 degrees higher during peak hours.
- Use fans to feel 4-6 degrees cooler.
- Turn off and unplug non-essential lights and electronics.
- Avoid using large appliances (i.e. ovens, washing machines, etc.) during peak hours.
- Set pool pumps to run early morning or overnight; shut off during peak hours.
- Businesses should minimize the use of electric lighting and electricity consuming equipment as much as possible.
- Large consumers of electricity should consider shutting down or reducing non-essential production processes.

Source: www.ecoc.com/about/conservation



GILAXIA | ISTOCK.COM

Change Habits To Beat the Peak

AS TEMPERATURES RISE and air conditioners get a serious workout, looking for ways to improve energy efficiency home can help you and Wharton County Electric Cooperative reduce demand, saving energy and money.

Making small adjustments in when, where and how you use electricity will help control your energy costs.

Avoid peak times, typically 4–8 p.m. in summer, by putting some chores on hold, at least until power demand dips. Consider some of the jobs 1 kilowatt-hour of electricity can do before you use it:

- ▶ Wash three loads of laundry.
- ▶ Complete one dryer cycle.
- ▶ Vacuum two average-size homes.
- ▶ Iron five shirts
- ▶ Run three cycles in a loaded dishwasher.
- ▶ Use the oven for 30 minutes.

Love 78

At 78 degrees most people are comfortable outside, so why not indoors? Most people aren't sensitive enough to notice much of a difference in air temperature whether the thermostat is set at 73 or raised to 78. But the closer your thermostat setting is to the outdoor temperature, the less your air conditioner will run.

Each degree of temperature difference represents a percentage of the total cooling load. That means that when temperatures are in the high 80s, you could reduce your cooling demand by 10%–15% for each degree above 75.

Fans offer an economical alternative to air conditioning on mild days and can pitch in for comfort as temperatures climb. In summer, set ceiling fans to turn counterclockwise and blow air downward to get the most value.

Central AC can use as much as 1 kWh of electricity for each 12-minute cycle of cooling. A ceiling fan can operate for about 13 hours on the same amount of electricity, while a floor or table fan, depending on its size, might run for 10 hours per kilowatt-hour of power. Turn off fans when you leave a room because they cool people, not space.

Kitchen Comfort

Appliances on your countertops or stashed in your pantry use less energy and could keep you cooler. Microwaves use about 60% as much energy as full-size ovens, and a toaster oven or induction cooktop consumes about half as much power. Because these appliances are designed to heat food more efficient in less space, the surface areas available for heating are smaller, which means less heat goes unused, keeping your kitchen cooler.

Share the Space

In simpler times families spent more time together in the same room even as they pursued different interests. Some members might've read books or magazines under the light of a shared lamp while others watched TV or played board games.

Today it's common for everyone to retreat to separate spaces, turn on their electronics and close their doors to cocoon in their own environments.

Getting control of your energy use to reduce your home's overall demand can be really challenging when you have to consider the entire home, so bring back family time to beat the peak.

LCD televisions generally use 60% as much electricity as comparably sized plasma models. One laptop uses about 20% as much power as a desktop computer and monitor. And today's home assistant devices can play music using about 17% of the energy of a component stereo system.

A video game console consumes about 200 watts of power. One system pressed into service for spirited competition between family members uses about a third of the power of three players engaged in separate games throughout the house. ■



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We're Ready for Storm Season. Are You?

NOW THAT SUMMER is in full swing, many of us welcome more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy the warmer weather. Summertime brings favorite activities like 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, which can wreak havoc on our electrical system. But we want you to know that Wharton County Electric Cooperative's crews are ready 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. We encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency offers these recommendations as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness.

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- ▶ Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener, and a battery-powered radio or TV.
- ▶ Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible.
- ▶ 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 generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need and always operate it safely, including the proper use of a transfer switch.

We hope we don't experience severe storms this summer, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At WCEC, we recommend that you act today because there is power in planning. Visit [Outage Central at MyWCEC.coop](http://OutageCentral@MyWCEC.coop) for more information on preparing for extended outages. ■

Family of Former GM/CEO Contributes to Scholarship Fund

IN 1987, UPON HIS RETIREMENT, former WCEC GM/CEO Frank N. Stubbs initiated a scholarship fund for the children of WCEC employees in memory of his daughter Shirley Stubbs Feinstein.

In 2020, Mr. Stubbs' daughter and son-in-law, Sugar and Mike Barnes, made a generous donation to the scholarship's endowment fund and the non-profit Shirley Stubbs Feinstein Endowment Fund was officially formed.

This gift will ensure that Shirly Stubbs Feinstein will be honored for many years to come by WCEC and its employees.

WCEC was able to honor Mr. Stubbs' family at a recent luncheon in gratitude for their gift. ■



▲ Mrs. Sugar Barnes addresses the employees.

▼ Mrs. Sugar Barnes and current GM/CEO Gary Raybon.



HOME TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Meet WCEC's Willie Stavena

AT WCEC, WE PRIDE ourselves on outstanding member service and make every effort to play a ke role in our community.

As our employees interact with you, our members, we want you to get to know them beyond their job title. Each month, we feature a TEAM member here.

This month's HOME TEAM SPOTLIGHT features Willie Stavena.

Willie has been a member of the WCEC HOME TEAM for 16 years. He has worked part-time in our warehouse since 2005.

Willie worked for the Coca-Cola Bottling Company for 38 years seeing many changes come about in that industry.

After retirement, he was looking for part-time work. His friend, Donald Priesmeyer, contacted him about a position at the co-op, and he was excited to take the job.

"Working here is rewarding!" Willie says. "I get to learn about all the equipment our line crew needs on a daily basis, and my co-workers treat me with respect. We are like family. Plus the hours are great and I get weekends off!"

Willie was born in Wharton and grew up in the Friendly Corners area. He is one of 10 kids and attended school in Crescent. He and his wife, Diane, celebrated 55 years of marriage this year. They have one grown son.

The couple enjoys small town living with no traffic and where everyone knows everyone.

"It feels safer in a small town," he says.

In their spare time, they enjoy family road trips and dining out. Willie also enjoys yard work and barbecuing. He explains that he and his family love to eat!



When asked who he would have lunch with out of anyone, alive or dead, he says, "John F. Kennedy. He loved his country and the American people."

Willie and Diane enjoy the mountains especially around Cripple Creek, Colorado.

"You can't beat the fresh mountain air and the wildlife," he says.

In ten years, he sees himself retired 100% and traveling! The best advice he's ever received is to always think ahead to what can happen. Also, if you can't afford it, don't buy it; and do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Always trust in God.

He encourages others around him at work to always think safety first, work hard, and do your best in whatever position you might have.

Willie describes himself as fair, funny, honest, and dependable. We couldn't agree more. His warm smile and always positive attitude make Willie a very special part of our WCEC family.

We are proud to have him on your WCEC HOME TEAM. ■



RUSLAN DASHINSKY | ISTOCK.COM

Stay Safe From the Sun

PROTECTION FROM ultraviolet radiation is important all year, but the summer sun requires additional precautions.

Sun protection is important because overexposure to UV light can cause skin cancer—the most common form of cancer in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The invisible radiation from the sun, tanning beds and sunlamps can damage skin cells in as little as 15 minutes. Other harmful effects from exposure to UV rays include sunburn, premature aging of the skin and eye conditions such as cataracts.

While it may be easy to remember to take protective measures when the sun is out, remember that UV rays shine through even on cloudy days.

Protect your skin this summer with these tips from the CDC:

- ▶ Stay in the shade, especially during the middle of the day.
- ▶ Wear clothing that covers your arms and legs. Keep in mind that clothes made with tightly woven fabrics offer the best protection, and getting fabric wet diminishes its protective capacity.
- ▶ Wear a hat, choosing one with a wide brim to shade your face, ears and neck. A baseball cap may only shade part of your face, leaving your ears and neck at risk.
- ▶ Wear sunglasses with lenses that block harmful rays. Most sunglasses in the U.S., even inexpensive ones, block most UV rays and protect the eyes themselves, as well as the tender skin around the eyes.
- ▶ Use sunscreen with an SPF, or sun protection factor, of at least 15. Reapply if you're out in the sun for more than two hours and after swimming, sweating or drying off with a towel
- ▶ Avoid indoor tanning, which exposes users to UV radiation. ■

Fourth of July Safety Reminders

SOME COMMUNITY FIREWORKS shows might still be on hold this summer as public health recommendations evolve. If you plan to use your own fireworks, check first if it is legal in your area, and remember these safety pointers from the American Red Cross and National Safety Council.

- ▶ Never give fireworks to small children.
- ▶ Never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.
- ▶ Always follow the instructions on the packaging.
- ▶ Keep a supply of water such as a garden hose or bucket of water close by as a precaution.
- ▶ Make sure the person lighting fireworks wears eye protection.
- ▶ Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight a "dud."
- ▶ Never use fireworks while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ▶ Don't light fireworks indoors.
- ▶ Don't try to relight or handle defective fireworks.
- ▶ Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets. ■



ALEKSANDARNAKIC | ISTOCK.COM

DIY Energy Efficiency Ceiling Fan Tips

Ceiling fans don't actually cool the air in a room. They circulate the air, and anyone in the room while one is running will feel a breeze. That makes the person feel cooler. **So there's no point in running a ceiling fan in an empty room.**

But a ceiling fan can make a room feel like it's up to 8 degrees cooler than a room without one. And because the fan circulates cool air, it gives the air conditioning system a break. In fact, with a ceiling fan running, you can turn your thermostat up by about 4 degrees without sacrificing comfort, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

A few tips for getting the most energy savings from ceiling fans:

- ▶ Change the direction that the fan blades spin when the weather warms up. In the summer, ceiling fans should rotate counterclockwise. That way the blades push cool air down into the room. In the winter, they should rotate clockwise so the updraft pushes warm air that is near the ceiling down into the room's occupied space. To switch rotation you have to manually flip a switch on most models.
- ▶ Hang the fan 7–9 feet above the floor. Fan blades should be at least 8 inches away from the ceiling and 18 inches from walls.
- ▶ Large ceiling fans move more air than small ones. For a large room, choose a larger fan. Likewise, large fan blades move the air around more forcefully. So if you're installing one in a home office or another room where you keep loose papers, choose one with small blades.
- ▶ Generally, the more expensive the fan, the more quietly it runs.
- ▶ Fans with an Energy Star label are about 20% more efficient than standard models. ■

Edison Room No Longer Available

Public use of the space ended June 30

Wharton County Electric Cooperative is sad to announce that after 50 years of being open to the public for parties, meetings, and gatherings of all kinds, the Edison Room will no longer be available for booking.

WCEC leadership and the board were forced to weigh liability concerns against the benefits of the meeting space to the public at a recent board meeting. Ultimately, the sparse use of the building did not justify the added liability costs to the cooperative.

The room will not be available for non-cooperative business beginning on July 1. The space will continue to be used for employee training and cooperative meetings.




SVARIOPHOTO | ISTOCK.COM

Grilled Jalapeño and Tomato Salsa

**6 jalapeño peppers,
seeded and stemmed**
3 tomatoes
**1 tablespoon chopped
fresh rosemary**
2 cloves garlic, chopped
**½ teaspoon olive oil,
plus more as desired**
Salt, to taste

1. Prepare a grill for direct heat cooking and build a medium-high fire.
2. Grill the jalapeños and tomatoes until blistered, turning as needed for even cooking, then place in a paper sack to steam.
3. Combine the rosemary, garlic and olive oil in a food processor and pulse into a coarse purée, then allow the mixture to macerate for a few minutes. Add jalapeños and pulse until the peppers are chopped. Remove to serving dish.
4. Place the grilled tomatoes in the food processor, add a pinch of salt and pulse 4–5 times, then fold into the pepper mixture. Taste for seasonings and adjust salt as desired.

MAKES 1 ½ CUPS

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

Co-ops Helped America Grow

AS THE UNITED STATES celebrates its 245th birthday July 4, Wharton County Electric Cooperative is observing its 83rd year. That's just a fraction of the age of our nation, but over time, WCEC and the 900-plus other electric co-ops across the country have greatly enhanced the quality of life of Americans.

When rural electrification took hold, fledgling co-ops powered the American dream for farmers and townfolk, helping them achieve the prosperity that their urban countrymen had enjoyed for years.

And the origins of our co-op and the hundreds of others like it across the nation have their roots in American democracy. The Rural Electrification Administration was created in 1935 by executive order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and it quickly became a permanent institution with a stamp of approval from Congress.

The REA harnessed the power of the federal government to help rural residents organize cooperatives to provide electricity to their neighbors in places that for-profit companies would not serve. The loans that made it possible to start these democratically governed nonprofits would eventually be paid back, and the program was so successful that within a generation, virtually all rural areas in the U.S. had access to reliable electricity.

Electricity changed life not only in those small towns but also across the country as a whole. The availability of electricity opened up a whole new market because people in rural areas could finally take advantage of it labor-saving power.

Electricity increased productivity on farms by replacing back-breaking labor with machines. The demand for electric appliances created wealth with increased manufacturing and sales, which created jobs for electricians and plumbers. Cooperatives themselves provided good careers in the office and in the field. WCEC is still a major employer in our community.

Electric co-ops haven't forgotten that our roots are planted in democracy. Our very structure depends on governing boards of members elected to make decisions for everyone's benefit. And we work with our statewide and national organizations to represent the interests of rural Americans in the Texas Legislature and the U.S. Capitol.

And this Independence Day, as we celebrate our nation's founders, we also would like to salute those who founded this and other rural electric cooperatives. They helped transform the U.S. into the prosperous nation that it is today. ■



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GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Gary Raybon

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Independence Day Sunday, July 4

Our offices will be closed
Monday, July 5, in observance
of the holiday.



Beachcombing at home.

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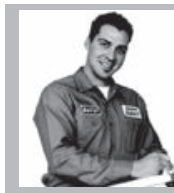
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From the publishers of **TexasCoopPower**

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.



Dear
Darryl

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option.

I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly – Lubbock, TX

DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY: As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unclog the drain field as well. **SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs** deliver your system the fast active bacteria and enzymes needed to liquefy solid waste and free the clogs causing your back-up.

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SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "TXS13", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.



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TCP WEB EXTRA

Listen to W.F. Strong read this story.

An Early RGV Mover

Col. Sam Robertson envisioned Boca Chica as the place to launch his highway on the beach

BY W.F. STRONG

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO. Col. Sam Robertson stood on the same Boca Chica Beach that Elon Musk owns today and dreamed a different dream. Instead of Musk’s spaceport, Robertson dreamed of seaports and an oceanside highway.

Robertson owned 800 acres at Boca Chica, and it was likely some of the same 1,000 acres now managed by Musk’s companies. Back then Robertson built the railroad that connected the Rio Grande Valley to the wider world. He had founded the town of San Benito, serving as sheriff and helping to run the Ku Klux Klan out of the region.

He had repurposed the old resacas to irrigate the lower Valley. In 1926 he gathered RGV leaders in Brownsville’s El Jardin Hotel to make his pitch for an

oceanside highway that would run from Boca Chica to Corpus Christi and become, in his words, “the most beautiful 150 miles of highway in the world.”

Robertson laid out his vision before the Rio Grande Valley Commercial Club. “I have traveled somewhat extensively in this world,” he said, “and have never seen any scenery wilder or more beautiful than this stretch of beach.”

Robertson was not only an entrepreneur; he was a decorated soldier and noted engineer. In 1916 he served as a scout for Gen. Jack Pershing in the pursuit of Pancho Villa in Mexico. During World War I, he served in Europe as a commander of the 22nd Engineers, building railroads and bridges for Allied troops in France. He was awarded the

Distinguished Service Medal for bravery under fire.

The business leaders of the Valley trusted his vision because they believed his claims. He wasn’t pitching a black-top road.

“The beach is as smooth as a billiard table,” Robertson said. “No road can be constructed by man as good for autoing as the beach, and the Gulf of Mexico maintains it.” All you would need is maintenance crews to move driftwood out of the way, he said, telling those assembled that he had explored the beach from Corpus Christi to the mouth of the Rio Grande River and that a highway was quite possible and would bring in enormous numbers of tourists.

Robertson advocated the laying in of water lines for irrigation because then the beachscapes could be enhanced with “bermuda grass, live oak trees, palms and other beautiful trees along the sand hills of the beaches.”

Such a development would be good for the Rio Grande Valley, too, he argued. With good roads to Boca Chica Beach, Valleyites could have a Sunday lunch at home, then drive to the beach for a Sunday afternoon swim at the beach and still be home by 10 p.m.

Robertson’s oceanside highway was never developed. But looking at South Padre and North Padre today, with their causeway bridges, carefully maintained beaches, opulent hotels and verdant landscaping, you can see that his dream for the island has been partially realized.

Robertson opened his Del Mar Resort on Boca Chica Beach in 1931, but the resort was virtually wiped out by a hurricane in 1933. He rebuilt within six months and constructed an asphalt road from Brownsville to Boca Chica Beach because his personal mantra was “Civilization follows transportation.”

Musk would like that, too. ■

Ice Cream and Sorbets

Churn out flavorful treats sure to take the edge off a Texas summer

BY MEGAN MYERS, FOOD EDITOR

One blessing of the Texas heat is that we rarely need an excuse to indulge in a cool, creamy bowl of ice cream. When I make ice cream, I tend to opt for Philadelphia-style, which does not use eggs. After chilling the liquid, you can let your machine churn it while you're eating dinner and have fresh soft serve for dessert. Amaretto helps keep this ice cream soft enough to scoop, but if you prefer, you can substitute ½ teaspoon of almond extract.

Cherry Amaretto Ice Cream

1 jar (11 ounces) maraschino cherries, without stems, divided use
1½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
½ cup sugar
2 tablespoons amaretto liqueur

1. Strain cherries over a bowl, reserving liquid. Slice half the cherries into quarters and set aside.
2. Purée remaining cherries with the reserved juice, then pour into a medium bowl. Whisk in cream, milk and sugar. Cover and chill 2 hours.
3. When ready to make the ice cream, add amaretto and mix well. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. In the last few minutes of churning, mix in the reserved sliced cherries. Scoop ice cream into freezer containers and chill completely, until ready to serve.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

TCP WEB EXTRA Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com, where she features a recipe for Chocolate Frozen Yogurt.





Texas Wildflower Honey Ice Cream

MELISSA TURLEY
BANDERA EC

This ice cream is sure to be a hit for honey lovers. Turley re-created the recipe after tasting a similar version at a local restaurant. Note that the honey makes this a very soft ice cream, so be sure to keep it frozen right up until serving.

1 cup whole milk
¾ cup raw honey
2 cups heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1. In a bowl, whisk together milk and honey until well blended. Add cream and vanilla and mix well. Cover and refrigerate 1–2 hours or overnight.
2. When ready to make the ice cream, stir mixture and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

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\$500 WINNER

Pecan Caramel Pear Ice Cream

KRYSABELLE GILBERT
WOOD COUNTY EC



Don't be daunted by the extra steps for the mix-ins in this ice cream—the results are well worth the effort. "It tastes just like eating a pear upside-down cake a la mode," says Gilbert, who came up with the recipe after a neighbor shared a harvest bounty. If you can't find Asian pears, Bosc pears make a suitable substitute.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS

ICE CREAM
2 eggs
½ cup sugar
1½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups whole milk
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

CARAMEL PEARS
2 Asian pears
¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter
½ cup sugar

PECANS
1 egg white
1 tablespoon water
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups pecans, chopped
¼ cup sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ cup diced crystallized ginger

COOK'S TIP Crystallized ginger can be found in the spice section, but you can also leave it out.

1. ICE CREAM In a small bowl, whisk eggs and ½ cup sugar together until thickened and pale.

2. In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, bring cream and milk to a simmer. Slowly whisk half the heated liquid into the egg mixture to temper, then pour tempered egg mixture back into saucepan.

3. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick and coats the back of a wooden spoon.

4. Strain into a large bowl and let cool to room temperature, then stir in vanilla and cinnamon. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

5. CARAMEL PEARS About an hour before churning, make the mix-ins. Peel pears and chop into ½-inch chunks.

6. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add ½ cup sugar and cook until it starts to turn golden. Add pears, stirring to coat, and cook 10–15 minutes, or until golden brown and caramel has thickened.

7. Pour pears onto a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet to cool.

8. PECANS Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg white, water and vanilla. Add chopped pecans and toss to coat.

9. In a large plastic bag, combine sugar, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg, cloves and ground ginger. Add pecans and shake to completely coat nuts.

10. Spread nuts on a rimmed baking sheet and bake 20 minutes, stirring once halfway through. Stir again and let cool completely.

11. When ready to make the ice cream, stir the ice cream base and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. Add pears, pecans and crystallized ginger in the last few minutes of freezing. Scoop ice cream into freezer containers and let chill completely before serving.





Strawberry Perfection

LAMONT PETERSEN
 NAVARRO COUNTY EC
 BANDERA EC

Ideal for summer, when strawberries are at their peak, strawberry ice cream is a hit for all ages. The fruit is macerated before blending to soften and release juices, which allows the berry flavor to pop.

1 pound strawberries, hulled and sliced
¾ cup sugar
⅛ teaspoon salt

Which Ice Cream Maker Is Right for You?

BY MEGAN MYERS

When it comes to making ice cream at home, there are two main types of machines: electric and traditional.

Electric

Countertop electric ice cream machines are widely available and make churning at home a breeze. Their smaller size makes them ideal for those who like to make ice cream often or enjoy experimenting with flavors. Keep in mind, however, that the mixing bowl needs to be pre-chilled, so you'll need to plan ahead.

Traditional

If you grew up with hand-churned ice cream makers, you'll be familiar with this style, which uses rock salt and ice packed around a center compartment. While hand cranks are still available, these now have an electric motor option as well. The standard size makes 4 quarts of ice cream, so make room in your freezer.

2 cups heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1. In a bowl, combine sliced strawberries, sugar and salt. Cover and refrigerate 1–2 hours to release juices.
2. Stir mixture well and purée berries with the accumulated juices.

3. Whisk together purée, cream and vanilla. Cover and chill in the refrigerator 2 hours.

4. When ready to make the ice cream, stir mixture and pour into an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKES 1.5 QUARTS



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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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first in the series ● ● ● ●

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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.



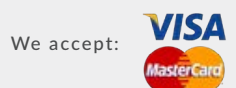
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

A Serious Undertaking

Houston funeral museum pays its respects to the inevitable

BY CHET GARNER

AN OVERCAST SKY painted the North Houston landscape with a somber shade of gray, which seemed appropriate as I approached the National Museum of Funeral History. Based on the institution's name, I expected an experience akin to a carnival sideshow or a roadside attraction full of plastic corpses and otherworldly burial stories. Instead of a tribute to the bizarre, I found a museum staffed by funeral directors who take their profession—and its history—very seriously.

Starting with a narrative of Egyptian mummies and mummification, I followed a serpentine path through the cavernous building, learning about funerary topics such as custom casket-making and the embalming techniques of the Civil War. Each lesson was communicated through detailed displays or life-size dioramas. Most impressive was the collection of classic hearses, one of which served in the funerals of presidents Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan. Also fascinating was the step-by-step description of how a pope is laid to rest. This sequence chronicled the death and burial of Pope John Paul III, whose funeral was one of the largest in history.

As expected, I saw displays to satisfy the morbidly curious, such as a three-person casket and the ghost stories that accompany one of the horse-drawn hearses. I found one entire room with memorabilia from the funerals of celebrities such as Michael Jackson, Neil Armstrong and Gene Wilder. That room seemed like a funeral home version of Planet Hollywood.

I could have spent hours learning more about every detail of how we humans mourn and pay tribute to those we've lost. It turns out that honoring the dead is a tradition that goes back to the earliest days of humans. This strange yet compelling museum can help us become a little more comfortable with our own inevitable conclusion. ■

ABOVE Even at a funeral museum, Chet's mug is half full.

TCP WEB EXTRA Chet ponders life's grave consequences in his latest video. See all 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.

JULY

03

Bandera [3, 10, 17, 31]
Cowboys on Main,
 (830) 796-3781,
banderacowboycapital.com

Bulverde [3, 10, 17, 24, 31]
Saturday Night Rodeo,
 (830) 980-2226,
tejasrodeo.com

05

Salado [5–Aug. 26] Women, Aviation and WWII,
 (254) 947-5232,
saladomuseum.org

07

Goliad [7, 14, 21, 28]
Wayback Wednesdays,
 (361) 645-3752,
presidiolabahia.org

08

Palestine [8, 10, 15–17, 22–24, 29–31] Diesel Round Trip,
 1-855-632-7729,
texasstaterailroad.net

09

Palestine Wines in the Pines, 1-855-632-7729,
texasstaterailroad.net

Gladewater [9–10] East Texas Gusher Days,
 (903) 845-5501,
gusher-days.com

10

Arlington Micky and the Motorcars, (817) 543-4301,
levittpavilionarlington.org

Corpus Christi Plumeria Passions, (361) 852-2100,
stxbot.org

11

Arlington Courtney Patton,
 (817) 543-4301,
levittpavilionarlington.org

15

Fredericksburg [15-18]
Beauty and the Beast Jr.,
1-888-669-7114,
fredericksburgtheater.org

16

Taylor [16-17] Taylor
Rodeo, (512) 238-2101,
wilcoexpo.com

Temple [16-17] Wildflower
Quilt Guild Quilt Show,
(254) 220-5597,
wildflowerquiltguild.com

Fredericksburg [16-18]
Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,
fbgtradedays.com

17

**Fredericksburg Night in
Old Fredericksburg**, (830)
997-2359, gillespiefair.com

**Howe Hotter 'N Howe Sum-
mer Bash**, (903) 532-6080,
howechamber.com

Lockney Christmas in July,
(806) 983-6228

23

Fredericksburg [23-25]
Hill Country Swap Meet,
(254) 751-7958, earhart
productions.com/
hill-country-swap-meet

24

**Arlington Green Day,
Fall Out Boy and Weezer**,
(817) 533-1972,
hellamegatour.com

**Bandera National Day of
the Cowboy**, (210) 215-1995,
nationaldayofthecowboy
bandera.com

**Bandera Ridin' the River
Cowboy Fellowship Ranch
Rodeo**, (830) 460-0710,
ridintheriver.com

**Waxahachie Indian Artifact
Show**, (979) 574-6501

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24

Buffalo Gap [24-25] Tour de Gap, (325) 829-0617, tourdegap.com

29

Clute [29-31] Great Texas Mosquito Festival, (979) 265-8392, mosquitofestival.com

Brenham [29-Aug. 1] The Wizard of Oz, (979) 830-8358, unitybrenham.org

Fredericksburg [29-Aug. 1] Hill Country Film Festival, 1-866-224-7714, hillcountryff.com

30

Bonham [30-31] Quilt Hop, (903) 583-9830, visitbonham.com

31

Columbus Country Market, (979) 732-8385, columbusfmtx.org

AUGUST

06

Kerrville [6-7, 13-15, 20-22] Murder on the Orient Express, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

07

Bellville Farmers Market, (979) 865-3407, discoverbellville.com

Fredericksburg Texas Ranger Day History Symposium, (830) 990-1192, trhc.org

Freeport KidFest, (979) 233-0066, freeport.tx.us

Palestine Saturdays on Main, (903) 723-3014, visitpalestine.com

South Padre Island [7-8] Pro-Am Beach Soccer Tournament, (415) 308-0603, sopadre.com

Bulverde [7, 14, 21, 28] Saturday Night Rodeo, (830) 980-2226, tejasrodeo.com



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Night Life

No, it isn't hot in Texas; and the cool night dews are falling,
 And the katydids are chirping in the grass beside the pool;
 And from out the moonlit distances the mockingbirds are calling,
 And I know the days are hazy and the nights perfumed and cool.

From *Longing for Texas* by Judd Mortimer Lewis

GRACE FULTZ



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

MICHELE TECH
 UNITED COOPERATIVE
 SERVICES

Honky-tonk nights at Billy Bob's Texas in Fort Worth.

CHARLES BAXTER
 COSERV

The Fort Davis Drug Store and Hotel.

KYLEIGH HOLLE
 HILCO EC

The Dallas skyline at night with car light trails.

ELYSE KANA
 BLUEBONNET EC

The other side of nowhere, Big Bend Ranch State Park.



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



Common Ground

Whether many acres or a pint-size lot, there's pride and joy in land ownership

BY RHONDA REINHART
ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA BLECK

IN THE BLACK-AND-WHITE Westerns that my dad used to watch when I was a kid, a cowboy hat-clad rancher might head out on horseback to survey his domain, a vast expanse of dusty terrain spanning thousands of acres. My father wasn't a rancher by any means, but he did own a 10-acre spread in deep East Texas where he raised all manner of animals, including guinea fowl, hogs and cows.

He loved "going to the land," as we called it back then, and he spent countless hours building pens, planting vegetable gardens, clearing sections of the property and walking mile after mile through the seemingly endless stretch of pines.

I did not share my father's affinity for going to the land, and even though I spent plenty of time out there with

him over the years, I would have much preferred to be back in Houston, reading a book, hanging out with friends or sitting in a cool, dark theater watching a movie—definitely not a Western. In fact after I left home, I spent two decades living in apartments, townhouses and condos—surrounded by land covered in concrete instead of pine needles and serenaded by the sounds of traffic instead of livestock.

About five years ago, however, I reached my limit on sharing walls with nosy neighbors and knowing that I was spending my hard-earned money to live atop ground that would never be mine. So I decided to purchase my own tiny patch of land.

At my little homestead in northwest Dallas, unlike the sprawling ranches in those old Westerns—or even my father's modest parcel in the Piney Woods—I merely have to peek out the back door to take in the full 7,976 square feet of North Texas soil that belongs to me. After 20 years of having little more than a balcony or patio at my disposal, the 0.18 acre on which my 1952 cottage sits feels enormous to me. I've even dubbed the small section of yard behind the garage "the back forty."

My dad died years ago, and his land was sold. While I don't have his knack for animal husbandry or even one-tenth of the acreage he owned in Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's service area, I do have a dog who loves to roll in the grass, sunbathe in the driveway and patrol the grounds for squirrels and opossums. I've also been thinking about starting a garden where I can grow my own tomatoes and cucumbers, some of my dad's favorite crops.

I can't be certain, but I'm betting that if he were still around, those things alone would earn me his signature grin and a nod. ■



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